

**Hudibras and its Literary Context**

by John Donovan, M.A.

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## SYNOPSIS

The thesis is approximately 80,000 words in length and is divided into three parts. Part I (Chapters 1 - 4) deals with Hudibras in relation to seventeenth century literary traditions. Chapter 1 introduces the poem and its author, places Hudibras within its immediate historical context, describes its popularity, and states the problem of determining its genre; several possible solutions to the problem are considered, notably those of seventeenth and eighteenth century writers; "mock-heroic" is defined and adopted. Chapter 2 is a survey: it begins by citing two adverse modern criticisms of Butler's method of ridiculing his principal character, and then sets out to test the justness of them. A number of romances popular in the seventeenth century are described; criticism of them is considered; and several satirical and burlesque works using romantic characters, motifs, and plots are analyzed. Chapter 3 places Hudibras with respect to the works and attitudes described in the previous chapter. The generating circumstances of the first part of the poem are considered in the light of Butler's presentation of them as a romance; Hudibras and Ralpho are examined in relation to other mock-knights and squires, especially Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, and Braggadocchio and Trompart. Chapter 4 treats Hudibras in connexion with the seventeenth century tradition of classical burlesque, analyzes Butler's treatment of classical themes and characters for the purpose of satire, and in an extended comparison between Hudibras and Gondibert examines Butler's criticism of the heroic



ideals of love and military valour. Part II (Chapters 5 and 6) comprises studies of several elements of Butler's literary method in Hudibras. Chapter 5 analyzes Butler's use of metaphor and of dramatic argument as satirical techniques. Chapter 6 treats the mock-speeches (III,11) and the burlesque heroical epistles, as well as the narrative method of Hudibras, and the device of the comic narrator. Part III consists of three appendices. Appendix A deals with the question of the identity of the 'West Country knight' upon whom Butler says that he based the character of Hudibras. The evidence in favour of Sir Samuel Luke and Sir Henry Roswell is examined, and Sir Samuel Rolle is presented as the most likely 'original' of Hudibras. A certain amount of evidence in his favour is given for the first time in this appendix. Appendix B criticizes the identification of Ralpho in the 'Key to Hudibras' (1715), presenting for the first time the source from which the author of the 'Key' drew the portrait of 'Isaac Robinson,' the man upon whom (he claims) Butler based his characterization of Ralpho. Appendix C criticizes the attribution to Butler (currently accepted) of Mercurius Menippeus, a political pamphlet first published in 1680 and containing a passage of invective against Sir Samuel Luke. It is argued that the attribution is virtually without foundation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### WHAT KIND OF A POEM IS HUDIBRAS?

Butler was ... admirable in a Manner in which no one else has been tolerable: A Manner which began and ended in him; in which he knew no Guide, and has found no Followers.

John Dennis

Hudibras, then, may truly be said to be the first and last satire of the kind ...

Reverend T.R. Nash

## I

Hudibras, a poem of eleven thousand five hundred and four octosyllabic lines, divided into three parts and each part into three cantos, was published over a period of fifteen years: Part I in 1662, Part II in 1663, and Part III in 1677.<sup>1</sup> The three parts form a continuous narrative of the adventures of Sir Hudibras, a Presbyterian Justice of the Peace, and his squire Ralpho, an Independent tailor, in the course of which the hypocrisy, pedantry, and self-interest of the knight and the enthusiasm, ignorance, and disloyalty of the squire are revealed. These adventures may be divided into six principal episodes: their encounter with a mob of bear-baiters; their rescue from gaol by a widow; their rout by a group of revellers; their visit to a charlatan astrologer; their second meeting with the widow; and their consultation with a lawyer. Each episode is fully developed and distinguished from the others, though as a whole the poem is brought to no logical conclusion. These events take up all of Parts I and II, and the first

and third cantos of Part III. The second canto of Part III, the longest one of the poem, has nothing to do with the main narrative, but is Butler's grotesque fantasy on the political events of 1658 and 1659. Besides the nine cantos, there are three 'Heroical Epistles,' one from Hudibras to Sidrophel the astrologer; one from Hudibras to the widow; and her reply to him. The first, though it belongs at the end of Part II, did not appear until the 1674 edition of Parts I and II; the second and third, coming at the end of Part III, were printed with the first edition of that part in 1677. Counting the short verse 'arguments' at the beginning of each canto, Hudibras contains nine hundred and thirty-nine more lines than Paradise Lost; though allowing for its shorter octosyllabic metre, Butler's poem has about nine-tenths the number of words of Milton's.

Though it is almost exclusively the basis of Butler's literary reputation, Hudibras represents in number of words less than one-fifth of his work. The rest is an assortment of pieces, none of them very long, the most sustained effort being a group of one hundred and seventy-seven prose 'Characters.' There are about two dozen miscellaneous poems -- satirical, for the most part -- in a variety of metres, treating both general and occasional themes, as well as two translations, a prologue and an epilogue to a play, and hundreds of lines of verse fragments of different sorts. In prose, besides the 'Characters,' there are several pamphlets, most of them upon political subjects, and a collection of more or less desultory notes and observations of a philosophical kind. Almost all these pieces were written after Parts I and II of Hudibras, and the greater part were not published until the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Hudibras was a popular poem from its publication until the author's death in 1680, especially during the two years

1663-64. Nine editions of Part I, four of them unauthorised, were published in the first year. Only two editions of Part II appeared in 1663; though this was partly because four editions of a spurious poem entitled Hudibras: the Second Part had stolen a march upon the genuine article. There was an edition of Parts I and II in one volume with revisions and annotations by the author in 1674 and another in 1678; and between 1677 and 1680 there were four editions of Part III. There is ample contemporary testimony to the popularity of Hudibras as well. In February 1663, Pepys described it as 'that which all the world cries up to be the example of wit'; in March it was, according to Richard Oxenden, 'ye most admired peece of Drollary y<sup>t</sup> ever came forth.'<sup>3</sup> In November it was still, according to Pepys, the book 'which the world cry so mightily up,' and in December he says that Parts I and II are 'now in the greatest fashion for drollery.'<sup>4</sup> According to Antony à Wood it was read by King, courtiers, scholars, and gentlemen, and the poet himself claimed for his work the approbation of 'ye King & y<sup>e</sup> best of his Subjects.'<sup>5</sup>

The fame that Butler achieved through Hudibras came to him relatively late in life. Born in the parish of Strensham in Worcestershire, where he was baptised on 8 February 1613, he died in London on 25 September 1680; and was therefore of the same generation as Milton, Cowley, Lovelace, Denham, Waller, John Cleveland, and Sir Roger L'Estrange.<sup>6</sup> Butler earned his living mainly as a clerk or secretary, first, apparently, to a Worcestershire Justice of the Peace, either Leonard or Thomas Jeffrey; and later in Bedfordshire to the dowager Countess of Kent, the patroness of John Selden. Here, according to Aubrey, he studied and cultivated skills in painting, drawing, and music. After the Restoration Butler became steward to Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, at Ludlow Castle, a post he held

until January 1662. In 1670 he accompanied the Duke of Buckingham to Versailles on a mission of negotiation with Louis XIV; and in June of 1673 was secretary for the Duke's affairs in his capacity as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge. A gift of £100 and an annual grant of the same amount was awarded to him in November, 1677; and in the year of his death he received another royal gift, this time of £20. Aubrey says that his last years were spent in a room in Rose Alley, Covent Garden, where he apparently died in relative poverty. His funeral expenses are said to have been paid by a lawyer friend, William Longueville. Among his friends were John Aubrey, Thomas Shadwell, Thomas Hobbes, Sir William Davenant and his son Charles, and Samuel Cooper, the painter.

Butler has a reputation as a loyal satirist and Hudibras as a scourge of rebellion. 'The advantage which the royal cause received from this poem,' wrote Hume of Hudibras in his History of England (1754-57), 'in exposing the fanaticism and false pretensions of the former parliamentary party, was prodigious.'<sup>7</sup> This view doubtless contains a certain truth, but we should have from the beginning an accurate idea of the nature of the poem in relation to the time in which it was published.

Except in Part III (1677) Hudibras depicts no political or military events. The majority of references to public issues are to those of the 1640's; and among the characters of Parts I and II, we can find no veiled political figures. During the year from December, 1662 to December, 1663, when the first two parts were published, professions of loyalty to Charles II were commonplace. Public feeling was strongly favourable to the King and his policies and against Presbyterians and other dissenters.<sup>8</sup> Many leaders of the rebellion were either dead or had fled abroad.

Revenge had already been taken upon the regicides, ten of whom had been executed. The bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, Bradshaw, and Pride had been exhumed and dishonoured.

Charles II had been crowned on 23 April 1661, and married on 21 May of the following year. His authority and that of the established religion were entrenched by a series of uncompromising measures enacted by the 'Pensionary Parliament,' which met on 8 May 1661. The Solemn League and Covenant was ordered to be burnt on 20 May, and shortly after was passed an act for the safety and preservation of the King's person. Bishops were restored to their former places in Parliament, and ecclesiastical courts were revived. Control of the militia was vested in the Crown. Mayors and officials of corporate towns were required to pledge allegiance to the King and submission to his supremacy; to take an oath of non-resistance; to declare that The Solemn League and Covenant was invalid; and to take the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. The Act of Uniformity, which imposed ordination by a bishop, assent to the liturgy of the newly revised Prayer Book, repudiation of The Solemn League and Covenant, and an oath not to take up arms against the King, deprived about one-fifth of the total number of beneficed Anglican clergymen of their livings after 24 August 1662. At the time of its publication late in 1662, therefore, Hudibras was not attacking a powerful or dangerous group. 'Sir John Presbyter' had already been knocked down; in Hudibras the reader of the 1660's could see him kicked in the backside.

This no doubt accounts in part for the blaze of popularity that Hudibras enjoyed in 1663. It provided in the realm of wit a counterpart to what was being done in that of law: the repudiation and punishment of a conquered

enemy. Less coarse than the songs and ballads of Wit Restor'd (1658) and less polite than The Cutter of Coleman Street (1661), Hudibras ridiculed Puritanism as they did, but did it in such a way as to appeal tellingly to the mood of the early Restoration.<sup>9</sup> Fifteen editions -- counting Part I, Part II, and the spurious Second Part -- between late 1662 and late 1663; this was a remarkable success. But it was also short-lived, for after 1663 there was a falling-off of interest, and no new edition appeared until the combined publication of Parts I and II in 1674.

But this decline was a temporary one, and Hudibras was far from dead. The popularity of Parts I and II in 1663, and to a lesser extent the revival of interest shown by the four editions of Part III between 1677 and 1680, is only one of two strains in the reactions the poem has provoked since its publication. The second, less spectacular though no less interesting than the first, is that slower process by which Hudibras has been kept alive and gradually assimilated into English literary culture. The outlines of this second period in the 'life' of Hudibras may be sketched as follows.

In the British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books alone are listed sixty separate British and American editions of Hudibras between Butler's death in 1680 and A.R. Waller's edition of the poem in 1905. There are also listed in the same place twenty-two editions of Butler's 'Poetical Works' between 1777-1893. We are often told that Hudibras is more quoted than read; that is to say that access to its more celebrated pleasantries can be had elsewhere than through the text itself, and there is truth in this. Dr. Johnson spoke of the 'sententious distichs [from Hudibras] which have passed into conversation, and



are added as proverbial axioms to the general stock of practical knowledge' (The Life of Butler, 1779), and Hazlitt says of Butler that 'nearly one half of his lines are got by heart, and quoted for mottos' (Lectures on the English Comic Writers, 1819).<sup>10</sup> In the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (third impression, revised 1943), a work that claims 'popularity' as its criterion of inclusion, there are sixty-nine entries for Hudibras. For the combined works of Dorset, Sedley, Rochester, Waller, Denham, and Cowley there are fifty-seven. Bunyan has thirty-nine. Even remembering that the nature of Hudibras, peppered as it is with brief, sententious observations, invites quotation, and that fifty-one of the entries in the ODQ are single lines or couplets, sixty-nine is an impressive total, and indicates a considerable general familiarity, at least with Part I of the poem, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. To add to these statistics we have a formidable list of authors who have praised Hudibras for its vitality and intelligence; among them Dryden, Pope, Prior, Dr. Johnson, and Hazlitt.<sup>11</sup> Hume thought that 'no composition abounds so much as Hudibras in strokes of just and inimitable wit;' and Voltaire considered it, 'de tous les livres que j'aie jamais lus, celui où j'ai trouvé le plus d'esprit.'<sup>12</sup>

The fortunes of Hudibras, then, have been of two kinds. In the few years immediately following its publication, it was devoured mainly for the originality and aptness of its presentation of issues of current interest, and in later years, when these issues were no longer quite intelligible without commentary, for its peculiarity, its inventiveness, and its comic energy. These are facts of critical history. Starting from them, the present study is intended as an analysis of those artistic qualities in Hudibras that account for both its immediate and its

enduring success.

The first part of this dissertation (Chapters 1-4) takes as matter the literary form of Hudibras, and as central proposition that it can be better understood in relation to certain seventeenth century literary traditions not necessarily familiar to the modern reader. It attempts therefore to describe these traditions and to explain Butler's use of them, to indicate how much he owed, generally, to other writers, and in what sense he was original.

The last of these aims, to explain the originality of Hudibras as a work of art, has been the main general theme of Butler criticism from the first serious attempts to assess the nature of his literary achievement. There have been critics, like John Dennis in the seventeenth century and the Reverend T.R. Nash at the end of the eighteenth, both of whose remarks in this context are quoted as epigraphs to this chapter, who have declared this originality to be absolute. Others -- Dryden is among them -- unwilling to admit complete originality, have at least allowed that Butler was master in a way of writing distinctively his own. But what was this way? In fact there is no lack of answers. On the contrary: after finding Hudibras described as a 'burlesque,' a 'mock-heroic,' a 'mixed mock-heroic,' a 'low satire,' a 'Varronian satire,' a 'satiric allegory,' a 'political allegory,' even a 'Hudibrastic,' we are disposed to take refuge in another of Dennis's remarks: 'Butler was a whole Species of Poets in one.'<sup>13</sup>

The number and the ingenuity of the critical terms used to describe it are a good indication of the complexity of the poem we have to deal with. Each of them describes a certain aspect of it, and each is useful from a certain point of view. Had Butler been another author, he might have made of the raw artistic energy that he poured into

Hudibras several poems, distinguishable according to their several kinds. As it was he wrote one, and Hudibras may, indeed must, be considered a conglomerate, to whose composition several distinct literary kinds have contributed. To seek or to formulate a single term magically to resolve this fact, would be to follow that 'ignis fatuus' ridiculed by our author. No, our immediate problems are: what are these component kinds? and, what is the most logical order in which to consider them?

There is another problem, which it is convenient to consider simultaneously with the preceding two, and which in any case should logically be dealt with straight away: the meaning of certain critical terms frequently applied to Hudibras. With these three purposes in view, the first part of our enquiry -- that concerning the classification of Hudibras according to its tone and style -- begins in the period from about 1660-1760, when the genre of a poem was a more important question for criticism than it is today.

## II

In an age in which criticism in general was preoccupied with the relationships between ancient and modern literature, Hudibras was naturally categorized and judged with reference to its supposed classical antecedents. As such, it was normally considered a 'burlesque' poem or a poem of 'ridicule.' What did these terms mean and from what Greek and Roman works did they derive? The answers to these questions depended upon the writer using the terms and when they were used, for the type of modern writing described by them was developing rapidly during this period, and critical terminology reflected this development. We can, however, find general agreement on one point. 'Burlesque' and 'ridicule' were felt to be more appropriate to and more highly developed by the modern world.

This is exactly the argument adduced by Addison in The Spectator (No.249, 15 December 1711) in a general comparison of ancient and modern culture. The moderns, he says, are inferior to the ancients in all the arts that depend upon native genius and largeness of mind -- poetry, painting, architecture, oratory, and history. But in doggerel, humour, and burlesque ('the trivial Arts of Ridicule') they excel the ancients as much as they fall below them in the former. The reason for this unhappy situation is simply that the moderns have more to ridicule. Elaborate and studied manners have replaced the noble simplicity of the first ages of the world. The preponderance of triviality in modern art merely reflects the meanness and vulgarity of modern behaviour.

This glum pronouncement was modified in 1754 by Joseph Warton. In two essays in The Adventurer, he takes the justness of Addison's observations as a starting point and proposes to illustrate them by particular examples.<sup>14</sup> Yet, surprisingly, he comes to quite a different conclusion. He finds little with which to quarrel in the comparison of achievements in the noble arts. He is inclined to rank Paradise Lost with The Iliad and The Aeneid, though he admits that Milton's Christianity is an advantage the pagans did not enjoy. In painting he nearly, though not quite, prefers the moderns. The acknowledged mastery of the ancients in the design and expression of their compositions finally wins out over the advantages of oil paints and a more sophisticated use of light and shade. But when he comes to the comparison of comedy, satire, and burlesque, farewell deferential timidity! The comedies of Aristophanes, Terence, and Plautus seem insipid beside the liveliness and variety of Molière. The more correct and therefore finer satires of Boileau, Pope, and Dr. Johnson are to be preferred to the cruder Horace and Juvenal, who sometimes descend to obscenity. Lucian's burlesque is surpassed by Don Quixote

and Gulliver's Travels, and no burlesque in antiquity can equal Hudibras, The Splendid Shilling, Gil Blas, A Tale of a Tub, or The Rehearsal. Moreover, these gains in polish and correctness are due to a positive social advantage, the improved state of conversation, which in turn is due to the organization of society under monarchical governments. It is true that most of the geniuses of serious art were nourished by the ancient democracies, the condition (according to Longinus) best productive of sublimity. But the court, by bringing men into closer contact, places greater value on the arts of civility. It also allows greater opportunity to observe the minutiae of human folly. The result is not the trivial versifying that Addison deplored, but a tasteful and disciplined literature, rich in the variety of human experience.

Addison was not the only critic in the period who was disinclined to give even Warton's qualified praise to that tendency to merry ridicule in modern literature. Nor was he the only one unwilling to admit an advance in the quality of social intercourse and a consequent refinement in the arts of civility. In Warton's more accommodating attitude towards modern writing personal taste certainly plays a rôle, but so does the greater number and variety of works that he can cite in support of his views. Going back to the 1690's, we find that of Don Quixote, Hudibras, The Rehearsal, Gil Blas, A Tale of a Tub, and Gulliver's Travels, the last three were not yet published. Sixty years before Warton wrote, a group of poems that he does not even mention largely determined attitudes towards 'burlesque' and 'ridicule.'

These poems were what we should now call 'classical travesties,' but then they were more often described as a type of burlesque. The best known of them were Paul Scarron's Virgile Travesti (1648-52), its English counter-

part, Charles Cotton's Scarronides, or, Virgile Travestie (1664), and Charles d'Assoucy's Ovide en Belle humeur (1650). Loose adaptations of the Greek and Roman classics, they aimed at a kind of humorous incongruity by the substitution of vulgar characters and familiar or gross language for the ancient heroes and noble diction. The first six lines of Cotton's Scarronides (nine editions by 1700) is a good indication of the character of the whole.

I Sing the Man (read it who list,  
A Trojan true as ever pist)  
Who from Troy Town, by wind and weather  
To Italy (and God knows whither)  
Was packt, and wrackt, and lost, and tost  
And bounc'd from Pillar unto Post.<sup>15</sup>

Not only Virgil and Ovid but also Homer and Lucian received similar treatment in the numerous English burlesques of the latter half of the seventeenth century. They were almost all written in octosyllabic couplets, with deliberate perversions of normal prosody. In combination, this metre and these eccentricities of versification became known as the burlesque style, and, irrespective of subject, poems written in this manner were considered members of a single literary family.

As a literary kind, burlesque was held in low esteem in the late seventeenth century. Boileau (l'Art Poétique, I, 79-97) had criticized in the persons of Scarron and d'Assoucy, the meanness of style and the triviality of intention of the travesties that appeared in France around the middle of the seventeenth century. Paul Pellison's l'Histoire de l'Académie Française (English translation, 1657) told of the fashion of burlesque run wild, of court pages and chambermaids turned burlesque poets, and of serious, even sacred, subjects debased in short verses. Pellison's disapproval was cited by Thomas Rymer in A Short View of Tragedy (1693).

One section of Sir William Temple's essay Of Poetry (1690) will serve as an example of the criticism of Hudibras within the context of a general dissatisfaction with the burlesque manner. 'Ridicule' and 'conceit,' writes Temple, are the two veins in modern literature by which incompetent poets mask inferior matter. Of the two, ridicule is the more pernicious, no matter how cleverly executed, because it proposes to measure the value of men and ideas without distinguishing sufficiently between good and evil. Striking out at all things without regard to guilt or innocence, the author of burlesque aspires to merit by the poor pretence of enumerating the faults of other men.

It is well to remember that Sir William Temple's essay is a critical survey of all of ancient and modern poetry from which he attempts to draw general conclusions. The terms of his argument do not permit him to make fine distinctions between kinds of writing. What he is saying about burlesque is that it is a poor way to choose when compared to the highest achievements of classical poetry, but it must be admitted that he is uncomfortable when faced with a style for which he can find no clear precedents in Greek and Roman literature. Moreover his account of the progress of burlesque verse, though conceived on the same general level as the rest of his essay and therefore consistent with his reasoning, is misleading.

It began first in Verse with an Italian Poem,  
called La Secchia Rapita, was pursued by  
Scarron in French with his Virgil Travesty,  
and in English by Sir John Mince, Hudibras,  
and Cotton ...<sup>16</sup>

This grouping takes account of certain similarities of style and attitude, but makes no distinction between poems of manifestly different scope and purpose. Even in the 1690's Sir William Temple's discussion of burlesque and

ridicule sounds like a voice from the past, for on other fronts modern burlesque poems, and especially Hudibras, were the objects of more sympathetic, and at the same time more rigorous, classification and analysis.

Even writers like Dryden, whose opinion of burlesque in general was not very high, made an exception of Hudibras. In Sir William Soame's translation (1683) of Boileau's l'Art Poétique, it was Dryden who supplied the English counterparts for the French writers that Boileau praises or blames. The original couplet,

Que ce style jamais ne souille votre ouvrage  
Imitons de Marot l'élégant badinage (95-96),<sup>17</sup>

becomes in Soame's version:

Let not so mean a Stile your Muse debase;  
But learn from Butler the Buffooning grace.  
(95-96).<sup>18</sup>

Dryden thought highly of Hudibras despite his personal preference for iambic pentameter, or English heroic verse, in imitation of the manner of Tassoni in Italian and Boileau in French. He admitted that Butler's choice of metre was suitable to his purpose and that he had managed it well, indeed that he was the master in his way. But the eccentricities of burlesque metre and rhyme, especially double rhyme, ran so counter to his taste that he could not suppress his regret that Butler had not written in a less awkward and limited medium:

We thank him not for giving us that unseasonable  
Delight, when we know he cou'd have given us a  
better, and more solid. He might have left  
that Task to others, who not being able to put  
in Thought, can only make us grin with the  
Excremence of a Word of two or three Syllables  
in the Close. 'Tis, indeed, below so great a  
Master to make use of such a little Instrument.

(Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress  
of Satire, 1693).<sup>19</sup>



It was not entirely fair to Dryden that this passage should have been the best remembered of his remarks on Butler. For the evident contradiction of literary value that it contains is partly due to the loose organization of his treatise. He himself admits (blaming his aging memory) that Butler ought to have been spoken of in another context. As it is, the versification of Hudibras is considered within the broader discussion of the most desirable medium for the modern satirist who wants to achieve 'that sharp, well-manner'd way, of laughing a Folly out of Countenance.' From this point of view he finds burlesque verse wanting. But even though he takes pains to point out his admiration for Butler, it takes a careful effort to separate his opinions of Hudibras from his opinions of burlesque verse in general. It is not immediately obvious that Dryden's views are different from those of Addison, who wished that Hudibras had been written in heroic verse.

Not surprisingly, many writers interpreted Dryden's remarks as more damaging to Butler than they were intended. And many admirers of Hudibras defended it from so powerful and influential an authority. Dr. Johnson was positively scornful of the suggestion that Butler might better have chosen another metre. 'To the critical sentence of Dryden,' he wrote, commenting on Dryden's views in the Life of Butler, 'the highest reverence would be due, were not his decisions often precipitate, and his opinions immature.'<sup>20</sup> John Dennis, himself a burlesque writer, was less severe in the 'Preface' to his Miscellanies in Verse and Prose (1693). His volume contains a good number of his own burlesques, for which Hudibras is the acknowledged model; so it is in defence of himself and of his master that Dennis seeks to free Butler from the onus of critical censure.

He organises his preface as a defence of Butler from the general charges of Boileau and the particular criticisms

of Dryden. The former, in fact, is not so much a defence as a clarification of literary history. Boileau intended to censure the French burlesque, especially Scarron's, which was, says Dennis, a mere exercise in literary ingenuity, having no moral purpose. Butler, on the other hand, did have a just design, to expose hypocrisy; so Boileau's disapproval does not apply to him. Against Dryden, however, he demonstrates with considerable sensitivity and in some detail the peculiar suitability of Butler's metre and rhyme to his purpose. These two arguments are neatly managed. But Dennis's preface has a wider significance. It articulates very persuasively the view that burlesque poetry as Butler wrote it could make an important criticism of human life and as such was worthy of serious attention:

There is so much Wit and Good sense to be found in him, and so much true observation on mankind, that I do not believe there is more, take Volume for Volume, in any one Author we have, the Plain-Dealer only excepted.<sup>21</sup>

Most readers do not find Butler's wit so congenial. But Dennis had a special point of view. He was one of a long line of burlesque writers who were perhaps more inclined than others to accept Butler's satirical view of life, and who were no doubt more aware than others of the difficulty of writing in the 'Hudibrastic' way. These disciples, of whom there were a substantial number, upheld the value of their chosen style and the pre-eminence of their master with a vigour born of defensiveness.<sup>22</sup> One is led to conclude that their elevation of Butler to such dizzy heights of poetic eminence must have been in the way of indirect support for their own writings. Prior's graceful tribute in Alma,

Yet he, consummate Master, knew  
 When to recede, and where pursue ...  
 But, like poor Andrew, I advance,  
 False Mimic of my Master's Dance' (II, 5-18),<sup>23</sup>

is unusual, among professed imitators of Butler, for its restraint. And Dr. Johnson's is a lonely voice when he warns that 'we must not ... suffer the pride, which we assume as the countrymen of Butler, to make any encroachment upon justice, nor appropriate those honours which others have a right to share.'<sup>24</sup> It is Dennis's praise of Butler's manner that is echoed so frequently by burlesque writers: '[It] began and ended in him ... he knew no Guide, and has found no Followers.'<sup>25</sup>

The originality of Butler became a commonplace of criticism. Hardly a writer on Hudibras between 1660 and 1760 does not mention it. Sir Thomas Pope Blount, in his De Re Poetica (1694), could not decide where, at a banquet of the dead English poets, the author of Hudibras should be seated. He finally places him 'like Apemantus in the Play, at a Side-board by himself.'<sup>26</sup> 'Scriptorum in suo genere, Primus et Postremus' was the phrase the Londoner John Barber had inscribed on Butler's monument in Westminster Abbey. The fact that he had his own name inscribed on it as well accounts for the indignation of Pope in his couplet on Shakespeare's monument:

Thus Britain lov'd me; and preserv'd my Fame,  
 Clear from a Barber's or a Benson's Name.<sup>27</sup>

But the uniqueness of Hudibras was nowhere more enthusiastically celebrated than in the writings of Butler's imitators, where it signified much more than the 'unborrowed and unexpected' sentiments and the 'original and peculiar' diction admired by Dr. Johnson. William Meston, whose The Knight (1723) attacked Scotch Presbyterianism in Hudibrastic doggerel, argued in his preface that ridicule and burlesque were the proper instruments to combat

hypocrisy, as had been shown by the great example of Butler,

whom it can be no greater Crime to imitate (tho' 'tis in vain to expect to come up to the Pattern) than it was in Virgil to copy afte [sic] Homer, and our Modern Poets, to propose the Ancients for their Example.<sup>28</sup>

This analogy between Butler and the ancient epic writers was taken a step further by a writer in the Grubstreet Journal (Number 39, October 1, 1730). He felt that neither 'burlesque,' nor 'mock-heroic,' nor 'mock-epic' did justice to Hudibras, for they merely described in relation to other kinds of poetry a poem clearly demanding its own definition.

Give me leave to call this way of writing Hudibrastick ... [it] is to differ from the Epick, as Comedy does from Tragedy. It must be narrative like the Epick: it must, like that species of Poem, have its Fable, its variety of Characters, and its proper style: but all these in such a manner, as to move not terror or compassion, as in Tragedy; but laughter, as in Comedy. The Fable must be form'd by the narration of one, entire, ridiculous Action ...

We realize before long that this is a waggish parody of Aristotle's definition of tragedy, and indeed in the same essay Hudibras is compared to Homer's lost Margites, from which, according to Aristotle, dramatic comedy took its origin. The author has his tongue in cheek when he uses the serious terms of formal criticism to describe a burlesque poem, but Butler was after all the comic Homer of a group of writers in a minor but persistent genre. It was in Hudibras that a style and a set of attitudes, which continued for more than a generation, had their origin; and this is one of the ways in which Butler can be said to be an original writer.

## III

Some of the important issues in the seventeenth and eighteenth century debate over the genre of Hudibras are no longer matters of such serious interest. We do not now derive our categories of thought and our standards of evaluation so largely from the Greek and Latin classics, and the instructive value of a poem so minutely concerned with the intellectual and political life of the seventeenth century cannot now claim such lively attention. The terms 'burlesque' and 'ridicule' were meant to describe a relationship of style and of tone between Hudibras and certain other literary works, whose character as a group was constantly changing and whose limits were in any case never firmly fixed. Some of the literary traditions represented by these terms and Butler's connexion with them are considered in Chapters 4 and 6.

Our immediate concern is with the plan of Hudibras. Once this is clearly established and analyzed we can deal more systematically with separate parts of the poem and with the many related issues that come together under the heading 'style.' There is no difficulty in identifying the general organization of Hudibras. The scheme of the action, its division into 'Cantos,' the nature of the episodes and the connexions between them, and the formal rôles of the characters are all so evidently derived from romances of chivalry, that our problem is rather the point of view from which this fact should be considered. In other words, in what literary context should we place it, and with what other literary works should we compare it, in order to focus our attention most effectively upon the main concern of the first part of this study -- Hudibras as a successful seventeenth century poem? There are more factors in this choice than one might suppose, and they can be brought to light by considering two alternative

proposals.

The first is Dryden's, and occurs in his Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire. The grand design of this treatise, which was prefixed to the translation (by Dryden and others) of the satires of Juvenal and Persius, was to outline the history of satire from its beginnings to the late seventeenth century. But Dryden also considered, rather in the manner of the familiar essayist, a whole range of ethical and technical issues, which he had encountered in his career as a satirist. He does not apply these considerations specifically to Hudibras, but rather to the literary kind to which he thought it should be assigned.

In his historical survey, Dryden distinguishes between two types of satire deriving from antiquity, the one discursive, the other narrative. Discursive satire as such (he says) was a Roman invention, though its origins could be traced to the Greek Old Comedy through the imitations of the playwright Livius Andronicus. As a non-dramatic genre it developed in successive stages under the hands of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Lucilius, until it was brought to completion by Horace in his Satires. Persius and Juvenal each used the Horatian scheme, though each changed it slightly to suit his own purpose. The history of narrative satire, also known as 'Menippean' or 'Varronian' satire, was not as easy to piece together. The writings of its originator, the Greek cynic philosopher Menippus of Gadara, were completely lost, and the surviving fragments of the satires of Marcus Terentius Varro, the polymath and contemporary of Cicero, were too meagre to permit any firm conclusions about their nature. Nevertheless the ancient writing in imitation of Menippus and Varro formed a body of work that was large enough and distinctive enough to be considered a genre in its own right, and whose

characteristics could be abstracted and formulated. The best known classical Varronian satires were: some of Lucian's dialogues (especially his True Story), The Satyricon of Petronius Arbiter, and Apuleius's Golden Ass. Dryden adds several modern poems to this group, among them his own Absalom and Achitophel and MacFlecknoe, Spenser's Mother Hubbard's Tale, and Hudibras.

The subjects of the Varronian satires were as diverse as those of their discursive counterparts. The works of Varro (a list of their titles having survived) contained as comprehensive a picture of human vice and folly as did those of Horace and Juvenal. But the Varronian satire was distinguishable by several criteria. It was cast in narrative form, often, like Lucian's Menippus, or the Descent into Hades, a parody of a familiar story. Its verse was rough and unpolished and mixed with prose, Greek sometimes being mingled with the Latin. Its characteristic tone was sprightly, amusing, and cynical. In fact, this mocking ribaldry was, in Dryden's view, so preponderant as seriously to limit the ability of the Varronian satire to instruct; and to make it necessary to distinguish between it and the mainstream of Roman satire on moral as well as on technical grounds.

Both the Varronian satires themselves and what general information could be gleaned from ancient authors about them indicated to Dryden that they lacked educational value. They displayed neither the high-minded concern for moral rectitude of Juvenal and Persius nor the sophisticated common sense of Horace. It was not always easy to see where these authors stood on the moral issues involved in their works. They seemed too negative, too fond of mockery for its own sake, and more studious to draw the absurdity of their subjects than to indicate or imply an acceptable standard of conduct. Moreover, there were in antiquity

some unflattering portraits of the Varronian authors. Menippus appears as a character in some of Lucian's dialogues, where he is made to parody the verses of Homer and the tragedians. He dresses (in The Descent into Hades) in a felt cap and a lion's skin. In the Icaromenippus he recounts to a friend the undignified episode of his own leaping and flapping with birds' wings strapped to his back in order to learn to fly. He refuses to take some very respected persons and ideas seriously, always acting (in Dryden's phrase) the 'perpetual buffoon.'

Varro could hardly be considered such a figure of comedy. He was the author of a prodigious number of scholarly works on a variety of subjects and had been referred to by Quintilian as 'the most learned of the Romans.' Judging from the first book of the Academica, he was an intimate and respected friend of Cicero. Yet in this very dialogue, a discussion between Cicero, Varro, and Atticus upon the feasibility of writing philosophy in Latin, his poems are criticized. Asked by Cicero to explain why he has never written any philosophical works as such, Varro justifies himself in part by an appeal to his satires in imitation of Menippus. They contain, he says, a good deal of philosophical truth but it is hidden or tempered by gaiety in order the better to recommend it to the unlearned, who might be overwhelmed by more ponderous matter. Cicero rejects this sophisticated defence, judging Varro's poems insufficient for the highest moral instruction. Dryden agreed with him. On the principle that 'Satire is of the Nature of Moral Philosophy, as being instructive,' he gave the place of pre-eminence in its kind to the discursive satire.

Taking the term 'Varronian satire' from classical scholarship, Dryden used it in its accepted signification to denote those ancient narrative satires composed in a mixture of verse and prose, but he broadened its meaning



by applying it to the narrative verse satires of his day and a few others. He also made the moral judgement that, negative and mocking as they were, and because they were more comic than corrective, these satires were as a type less valuable than the discursive ones. This division suits the purposes of Dryden's historical survey very well. In general terms it accounts for major differences in literary form and artistic purpose among a large and diverse group of works, all of which were considered satires. 'Varronian satire' was quite a useful term for him; whether it answers our need for a 'kind' to describe the plan of Hudibras will be revealed upon closer examination.

There is a strong general similarity of attitude among certain of the authors that Dryden brings together under the heading 'Varronian satire.' It is fair to say that Teiresias's advice to Menippus in Lucian's The Descent into Hades,

... spit your scorn at those clever syllogisms,  
and counting all that sort of thing nonsense,  
make it always your sole object to put the present  
to good use and to hasten on your way, laughing  
a great deal and taking nothing seriously,<sup>29</sup>

and Butler's bitter reflexion,

All the Business of this World is but Diversion,  
and all the Happiness in it, that Mankind is capable  
of -- anything that will keep it from reflecting  
upon the Misery, Vanity, and Nonsense of it: And  
whoever can by any Trick keep himself from  
Thinking of it, is as wise and Happy as the best Man  
in it,<sup>30</sup>

indicates a common artistic stance toward the limitations and the pretensions of the intellect. But despite the criticism of philosophical deception and human gullibility characteristic of many of these satires, the differences are too outstanding to be overlooked. Certain other of

the Varronian satirists -- Dryden and Spenser among them -- recommend their positive ideals too openly to be classified with the arch cynics Lucian, Petronius Arbiter, and Samuel Butler.

The criterion of plot, too, is useful only for general purposes. For the kinds of stories in the Varronian satires and the ways in which they are used are very different indeed. Lucian's True Story, a tale of incredible adventures on the sea, in the sky, even in the belly of a whale, is designed to mock at fantastic narratives of exotic people and places. But it does not concern itself with social satire on a large scale as does (for example) Gulliver's Travels, a work on a similar plan. In Mother Hubbard's Tale one's attention is not directed at a parody of the sources of the plot. The travels of the fox and the ape through the various estates of life is in part a beast fable, the kingdom of animals representing the kingdom of men, in part a direct criticism of social ills, since the two also encounter human characters in quite a realistic world. Absalom and Achitophel satirizes contemporary men and events under the guise of biblical figures, and Seneca's Apocolocyntosis is a mock-apotheosis of the emperor Claudius, who is not deified but cast into Hades to receive a degrading punishment for his crimes on earth.

Dryden's classification of Hudibras is part of an interpretation of literary history suited to the purposes of a comprehensive history of satire. Based upon the idea that literature, from its beginnings, develops according to certain perennially recurring moral and social tendencies, it allows a great deal of writing to be treated from a general point of view. But it would be an awkward starting-point for a study whose sphere is limited, insofar as possible, to seventeenth century English literary tradition. It is more practical to adopt a classification that will allow

more detailed comparisons between Hudibras and a relatively familiar group of works. 'Mock-heroic' answers quite well to these requirements.

Hudibras is not generally described in this way. Its diction is familiar, often vulgar, and those poems ordinarily termed 'mock-heroic' are written in a formal and elevated style. In fact, to a large extent, the term 'mock-heroic' is used to distinguish between kinds of style. It has still the meaning intended by Boileau when he described his Le Lutrin as

un burlesque nouveau ... car, au lieu que dans  
l'autre burlesque Didon et Enée parloient comme  
des harangères et des crocheteurs, dans celui-  
ci une horlogère et un horloger parlent comme  
Didon et Enée;<sup>31</sup>

that is to say when he made very clear the difference between his poem and the French classical travesties for which he had little taste. It was, however, a small step on grounds of style from the travesties to Hudibras. What Boileau called 'le langage des Halles' and what Dryden and his contemporaries referred to as the 'Cant of Belinsgate' was the staple diction of both, and both were described by the same general term, 'burlesque.' Moreover, in Hudibras certain ancient people and fictional characters and certain classical literary forms are treated flippantly. John Ozell's distinction, using an English example, in the dedication to his translation of Le Lutrin (1708),

If I distinguish right, there are two sorts  
of Burlesque; the first where things of mean  
Figure and Slight Concern appear in all the  
Pomp and Bustle of an Epic Poem; such is this  
of the Lutrin. The second sort is where great  
Events are made Ridiculous by the meanness of  
the Character, and the oddness of the Numbers,  
such is the Hudibras of our Excellent Butler,<sup>32</sup>

was a common one in the eighteenth century and remains so today. But it has only a partial validity. Despite the level of its language, which is in any case not consistently

low, Hudibras resembles mock-heroic poetry in many ways. The differences, however, do exist; and because it is they that have most frequently been emphasized, it is best to set them out at once.

Our normal experience of those English poems that fit Ozell's definition is slight. Dryden's MacFlecknoe, Pope's The Rape of the Lock and The Dunciad, and Dr. Samuel Garth's The Dispensary are the best known. They would perhaps more accurately be named 'mock-epic' (as they sometimes are), for they all use the elaborate manner and noble language of the ancient epics to describe certain ridiculous or trivial or grotesque contemporary actions. Their aim is to point up the incongruity of this combination and thereby the unworthiness of the persons and events so described. It is difficult to generalize about the particular effects of these poems, which (especially in one of substantial length like The Dunciad) can be very subtle and complicated indeed. The mock-heroic plan allowed quite a free hand in the choice of subject, and each subject required a different manner of treatment. Nevertheless, the type, as represented by these four poems, has certain characteristic features.

The mock-heroic poet affects the fiction that the events he recounts are in fact worthy of treatment on the epic scale. He pretends that they deserve the solemnity and gravity of his style. But it is an obvious pretence. By dozens of hints the perceptive reader is invited to see through the poet's transparent pose. His response, conditioned by the familiar epic techniques, may be amused and tolerant,

First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores  
With Head uncover'd, the Cosmetic Pow'rs

(The Rape of the Lock, I, 123-24),<sup>33</sup>

or disgusted and horrified,



it is not Virgil's hyperbole but Shadwell's unfitness that we laugh at.

These practices follow a consistent rationale. It is in the poet's interest to let the commonplaces of ancient heroic poetry assume a positive moral value, thereby taking full advantage of the moral and literary esteem with which the epics were regarded. He can thus bring to bear on his subject their immense prestige and in a more general way the weighty classical values for which they were the spokesmen. The mock-heroic poem is therefore a satirical form par excellence, because one judges the objects of satire not by one's normal standards but by some of the highest values. It combines the moral perspective of massive incongruity and the subtle pleasures of discovering oneself among the informed few who can appreciate the trick.

The general resemblance between Hudibras and the mock-heroic type is clear. Each is a critical examination of certain aspects of contemporary life in terms of the language, the literary conventions, and the ideals of a body of heroic literature. This comparison or controlling metaphor determines not only the outlines of the plot and many of the individual episodes but also much of the incidental detail of the poems. In each, the complex effects of this combination -- including the implicit moral judgements -- constitute one of the primary artistic insights of the authors. Both Hudibras and the mock-heroics demand for their highest appreciation some prior literary knowledge, though in neither case need it be very specialized or extensive. The epics and the romances of chivalry were part of common literary experience in the seventeenth century, and both the mock-heroics and Hudibras are intelligible in their broad implications with little more acquaintance with their sources than is provided in the poems themselves.

Despite these similarities, there are considerable differences. Traditionally, the mock-heroic poem treats a brief, self-contained episode. This is true of Tassoni's La Secchia Rapita and Boileau's Le Lutrin as well as of three of the four poems we are considering. The Dunciad is an exception, running to some one thousand seven hundred and fifty lines and containing several incidents. But then Hudibras is more than six times longer than The Dunciad. And besides its length there is its loosely connected, episodic plot, with its multitude of arguments and ideas.

The primary standard of literary heroism, against which the characters and their actions and ideas are weighed in Hudibras, is chivalric romance. The less frequent occurrence of passages in reference to other forms of heroic literature has a limited effect on the overall character of the poem. The style of Hudibras is mixed. It is sometimes (within the limits of Butler's droll octosyllabics) elevated, more often coarse or vulgar, and it is frequently eccentric in prosody. On the occasions when he does write in a high style, he is not at pains to preserve the illusion of propriety between style and subject. At the beginning of the famous description of Sir Hudibras, Butler assumes a solemn air:

A wight he was, whose very sight wou'd  
Entitle him Mirroure of Knighthood;  
That never bent his stubborn knee  
To any thing but Chivalry,  
Nor put up blow, but that which laid  
Right Worshipfull on shoulder-blade:  
Chief of Domestick Knights and Errant,  
Either for Chartel or for Warrant:  
Great on the Bench, Great in the Saddle,  
That could as well bind o're, as swaddle. (I,i,15-24).

By the references to the profession and station of his hero and by the use of legal terms, Butler shows us that the

language of romance is here used to describe a Justice of the Peace, who is also a knight and a soldier. And by the double edge of the words 'stubborn' and 'great', as well as by the mention of The Mirrour of Knighthood (a popular Spanish romance of chivalry) we can anticipate some of the foolishness of the knight's character. So far, the method is similar to that of the mock-heroics. But Butler soon abandons this ironic praise for a direct attack:

Mighty he was at both of these,  
And styl'd of War as well as Peace.  
(So some Rats of amphibious nature,  
Are either for the Land or Water.)

and

... his Brain  
Outweigh'd his Rage but half a grain:  
Which made some take him for a tool  
That Knaves do work with, call'd a Fool. (I, i, 25-36).

Butler refuses the pretence of taking his characters seriously, at least for very long. What is more unusual, he refuses to take his standard of literary heroism seriously. Hudibras and Ralph continually demonstrate their unfitness as heroes of romance, but Butler himself will not allow the romances to assume the position of a moral ideal. He will not take them seriously as a standard of conduct and he will not allow them to stand unchallenged. He goes out of his way to laugh at the exaggeration, fatuity, and stylistic extravagance of the romances just as he mocks his characters for not being able to sustain their conduct on the level of romantic heroism.

Taken together these features add up to a poem very different in detail and in effects from the mock-heroics. If we are to say that Hudibras is a species of mock-heroic poem, we must admit that it is a very peculiar and individual species. That admission made, we have



to face the more important and more delicate question whether its specific peculiarity and individuality are artistic virtues or faults; and it is to answer this question that we turn to our study of the position of chivalric romance in the seventeenth century.

Notes to Chapter 1.

1. The quotation from John Dennis in the epigraph is taken from Remarks upon Mr. Pope's Translation of Homer in The Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. E.N. Hooker (Baltimore, 1939-43), II, 121; that from the Reverend T.R. Nash from his edition of Hudibras (London, 1835), I, xxii-xxiii. Bibliographical information on all the editions of Hudibras, authorized and unauthorized, genuine and spurious, published between 1662 and 1680 is to be found in James L. Thorson, 'The Publication of Hudibras', Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, LX (1966), 418-438. See also 'Textual Introduction' to Hudibras, ed. John Wilders (Oxford, 1967), pp. xlviii-lix. All subsequent references to Hudibras are to this edition.
2. For the dating of Butler's minor works, see E.S. de Beer, 'The Later Life of Samuel Butler,' RES, IV (1928), 159-166. Most of them were published for the first time by Robert Thyer in The Genuine Remains in Verse and Prose of Mr. Samuel Butler.. (London, 1759). More complete modern editions are: Characters and Passages from Notebooks, ed. A.R. Waller (Cambridge, 1908); Satires and Miscellaneous Poetry and Prose, ed. René Lamar (Cambridge, 1928). See also: N.E. Bentley, '"Hudibras" Butler Abroad,' MLN, LX (1945), 254-59, and 'Another Butler MS,' MP, XLIV (1948), 132-35; C.J.Q. Hindle, 'A Broadside by Butler,' TLS, 21 March, 1936; P.B. Anderson, 'Anonymous Critic of Milton: Richard Leigh? or Butler?,' SP, XLIV (1947), 504-518; J. Bauer, 'Verse Fragments and Prose Characters by Butler not Included in Complete Works,' MP, XLV (1948), 160-68.
3. Pepys, Diary, 6 February 1663. Letter of Richard Oxenden to his cousin, Sir George Oxenden, part of which is reprinted in Hudibras, ed. Wilders, p.450.
4. Diary, 28 November 1663; 10 December 1663.
5. Athenae Oxoniensis, ed. P. Bliss (London, 1813-20), III, 876; Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden, in Hudibras, ed. Wilders, p.451.
6. Biographical information about Butler is to be found in: John Aubrey, Brief Lives, ed. A. Clark (Oxford, 1898), I, 135-38; Anthony à Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, ed. P. Bliss (London, 1813-1820), III, 874-76; an anonymous biography, first published with the 1704 edition of Hudibras; René Lamar, 'Du Nouveau sur l' Auteur d' Hudibras,' Revue Anglo-Américaine, I (1924), 213-27; E.S. de Beer, 'The Later Life of Samuel

Butler,' RES, IV (1928), 159-66; Michael Wilding, 'Samuel Butler at Barbourne,' NQ, n.s., XII, I, 15-19; N.E. Bentley, '"Hudibras" Butler Abroad,' MLN, LX (1945), 254-59; H.F. Brooks, 'Gift to Samuel Butler,' TLS, 1940, 327; N.E. Bentley, 'A Grant to "Hudibras" Butler,' MLN, LIX (1944), 281; René Lamar, 'Samuel Butler à l'Ecole du Roi,' Etudes Anglaises, V (1952), 17-24; 'Introduction' to Hudibras, ed. Wilders, pp.xiii-xxi.

7. London, 1841, VI, 344. In An Historical Account of the Lives and Writings of Our Most Considerable English Poets... (1720) Giles Jacob writes of Butler that 'Upon the Restauration of King Charles the Second, tho' his poem did the greatest Service to the Royal Cause, and Intitled him to the best Preferment, yet he was neglected...., p. . [207, C2v.
8. An outline of the events and mood of the times may be found in David Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1967), Chapters 1-5.
9. Other anti-Puritan satires of the early Restoration are: John Phillips, Religion of the Hypocritical Presbyterians (1661) [originally Satyr against Hypocrites (1655)]; Rump; or an Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs relating to the Late Times (1662); among plays there are: John Tatham's crude and poisonous The Rump (1660), and the more good-humoured comedies, Sir Robert Howard, The Committee (1662) and John Lacy, The Old Troop (1663).
10. Life of Butler in Lives of the English Poets by Samuel Johnson, LL.D., ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), I, 213. In The Life of Johnson, Boswell cites Wilkes as saying that the authors chiefly quoted in England are Shakespeare, Pope, Prior, Butler, Waller, and (sometimes) Cowley; ed. G.B. Hill, revised L.F. Powell (Oxford, 1934), IV, 102. Lectures on the English Comic Writers (III, On Cowley, Butler, Suckling, Etherege, etc.) in The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P.P. Howe after the edition of A.R. Waller and Arnold Glover (London and Toronto, 1931), VI, 62.
11. Dryden, Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire in The Poems of John Dryden, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford, 1958), II, 663-64; Joseph Spence reports that Pope considered Butler and Swift the two authorities for the language of the burlesque style (Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men, ed. James Osborn [Oxford, 1966], I, 171); Prior, Alma: or, The Progress of the Mind (II, 5-18) in The Literary Works of Matthew Prior, ed. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (Oxford, 1959), I, 485; Dr. Johnson, Life of

- Butler, op.cit.; Hazlitt, Lectures on the English Comic Writers in The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. Howe, VI, 49-69.
12. Hume, History of England, op.cit., VI, 344; Voltaire, Lettres Philosophiques, ed. Gustave Lanson, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1924), II, 134.
  13. The first two of these terms have been too commonly applied to Hudibras to need specific citation. The others may be found in the following works: Ruth Nevo, The Dial of Virtue (Princeton, 1963), p.236 /mixed... mock-heroic/; Ian Jack, Augustan Satire (Oxford, 1952), Chapter 2, passim /low satire/; Dryden's Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire /Varronian satire/; E.D. Leyburn, Satiric Allegory: Mirror of Man, Yale Studies in English, Vol.130 (New Haven, 1956), Chapter 3, passim /satiric allegory/; Ward S. Miller, 'The Allegory in Part 1 of Hudibras,' HLQ, XXI (1958), 323-43 /political allegory/; 'W.G.', The Grub-street Journal XXXIX (1 October 1730) /Hudibrastic/. Dennis's elegant compliment was made in Remarks upon Mr. Pope's Translation of Homer (1717) in The Critical Works of John Dennis ed. E.N. Hooker (Baltimore, 1939-43), II, 121. Hereafter cited as Works.
  14. Numbers CXXVII (Tuesday, 22 January 1754) and CXXXIII (Tuesday, 12 February 1754) in Harrison's British Classicks, II, 326-28 and 339-41.
  15. Scarronides, or, Virgile Travestie. A Mock-Poem on the First and Fourth Books of Virgil's Aeneas. In English Burlesque (London, 1691), A2.
  16. Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, ed. J.E. Spingarn (1908; rpt. Oxford, 1957), II, 215. Hereafter cited as Spingarn.
  17. L'Art Poétique, ed. D. Nichol Smith (Cambridge, 1919), p.4.
  18. The Art of Poetry in The Poems of John Dryden, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford, 1958), I, 334. Hereafter referred to as Poems.
  19. Ibid., II, 663-64.
  20. Lives of the English Poets, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 217.
  21. Works, I, 7.
  22. Lists of and discussions of poems in imitation of Hudibras are to be found in E.A. Richards, Hudibras in the Burlesque Tradition (Columbia, 1937) and in R.P. Bond, English Burlesque Poetry 1700-1750, Harvard Studies in English, Vol.VI (Cambridge, Mass., 1932).

23. The Literary Works of Matthew Prior, ed. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (Oxford, 1959), I, 485.
24. Lives of the English Poets, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 209.
25. Works, II, 121.
26. Cited in Bond, op.cit., p.34.
27. The Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt (New Haven, 1963), p.834. Hereafter cited as Poems.
28. Cited in Bond, English Burlesque Poetry 1700-1750, p.312.
29. Lucian, trans. A.M. Harmon (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1961), IV, 109.
30. Characters and Passages from Note-Books, ed. A.R. Waller (Cambridge, 1908), p.271. Hereafter cited as Characters.
31. From 'Au Lecteur' to Le Lutrin in Oeuvres Poétiques de Boileau, ed. F. Brunetière (Paris, 1911), 250-251.
32. Cited in Bond, English Burlesque Poetry 1700-1750, p.37.
33. Poems, p.222.
34. Ibid., p.783.
35. Ibid., p.737.
36. Poems, I, 268.

## CHAPTER 2

### Romance and Anti-Romance

As if the world were not vaine enough of it self,  
wee Derive our Delights from those things that  
are vainer then it: As Plays, Maskes, Romances ...

Butler, 'Virtue and Vice,' in Characters, p. 347.

## I

Generically a mock-heroic, Hudibras is specifically a mock-romance, bringing together the conventions of chivalric literature and familiar mid-seventeenth century character-types and situations. The plan and the incidents of the poem are determined by this combination, whose ample possibilities for comedy and satire are systematically exploited. Butler's general purpose is clear; it is his execution of it that has puzzled modern readers. Consider these two passages from books dealing with special domains of seventeenth and eighteenth century poetry, both of which bring Hudibras within their boundaries.

Sir Hudibras is neither a trivial nor a dignified personage as Butler gives him to the reader. He represents an influential body of conquering saints and is possessed of some learning; in short, he is a potential hero. But his vanity and foibles and meanness are emphasized until we regard him as something of a low rascal. Butler caricatures him and also places him in an heroic framework, a procedure antithetical and dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

... he [Butler] has ... seen the advantage for satire of the implied contrast between a generally accepted standard of the heroic (Spenserian Christian knighthood), and the behavior of his True-blue Presbyterian militant. But he has blurred the effect by double exposure. He is debasing his heroic currency ... the gold standard of knighthood, the Spenserian epic, is no longer taken sufficiently seriously by Butler himself to inform the style and provide a positive norm of conduct, attitude, and evaluation.<sup>2</sup>

The two major differences in technique between Hudibras and the mock-heroics, which we noticed in the last chapter, are here taken to be artistic faults. Butler is accused of following 'a procedure both antithetical and dangerous,' and of 'debasing his heroic currency'. These are serious criticisms, based, it seems to me, on the following arguments. Butler sets up Hudibras as a hero of romance and at the same time refuses to treat him with the ironic dignity that this method would seem to demand. Instead he belabours his shortcomings to the point of caricature. He also measures the actions of the knight against an imaginative ideal of which he clearly does not approve, thereby losing his satirical advantage. He devalues that which should provide him with an artistic and moral point of view. His poem is therefore seriously damaged. There are flaws in the conception and in the realisation of his work that he did not understand, but which we, from our more advantageous historical perspective, recognise as mistakes.

Such judgements are informed by standards whose origins are to be sought in the works of Dryden and Pope. The mock-heroic poem as written by these two authors is tacitly taken as a standard of literary excellence and a touchstone of artistic practice, and Hudibras is said to be an imperfect composition, insofar as it fails to conform to the pattern. The danger here is in taking the comparison between Butler and other mock-heroic writers -- revealing as the comparison is -- too far. The practice of Dryden and Pope is in large measure foreign to Butler, and to use it as a standard of judgement is to do Hudibras an injustice.

I take it that the literary experience from which Hudibras grew and the literary sensibility to which it was directed are different from those of MacFlecknoe, The Rape of the Lock, and The Dunciad, and that these differences are substantial enough to warrant detailed attention. Instead of placing Hudibras in a genre where it does not quite fit, and then blaming the incongruity upon Butler's lack of artistic skill, let us begin with the major difference distinguishing it from the three other poems -- they are mock-epics, it is a mock-romance -- and try to discover the implications of this fact.

Dryden's and Pope's mock-heroic poems lead us directly to Homer and Virgil. Where does Hudibras lead us? One of our critics thinks to Spenser. Butler's 'generally accepted standard of the heroic' is said to have been 'Spenserian Christian knighthood'; and on that ground Hudibras is 'imperfectly conceived because of the dubiety of the heroic standard'.<sup>3</sup> The argument is that The Faerie Queene has the function in Hudibras that the ancient epics have in Dryden and Pope. Butler's mistake was that he chose a literary form that he could not or would not take seriously.

Butler does parody The Faerie Queene in Hudibras, but it would be a mistake to conclude from this fact that it was the only romance he had in mind or the only one his readers would have recalled as they read his poem. Between 1596, when the last three books of The Faerie Queene were published and 1662, when the first part of Hudibras was published, a good many changes in literary taste had taken place. Older romances had been replaced in public esteem by newer forms. Different attitudes



towards romance had grown up. The literary forms of chivalric romance had been used for purposes of satire. Neither The Faerie Queene nor the ideals it represents were typical of mid-seventeenth century romance. It is to this body of literature, this set of attitudes, and this tradition of satire that we must turn our attention to understand better what Butler was trying to do and to see more clearly why Hudibras was received with such applause.

## II

For the writing, translation, and publication of chivalric romance in England, the last quarter of the sixteenth century forms a watershed. On the one hand the older metrical romances, with the exception of Bevis of Hampton, virtually stopped being printed around 1575; and the number of prose romances originally translated from French declined sharply. On the other, many newly translated Spanish and Portuguese romances, as well as some original English works showing the marked influence of them, appeared for the first time between 1580 and 1600. So fertile were the writers and translators of these works that they provided material for booksellers throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, and in the case of special favourites, through the second half and well into the eighteenth.<sup>4</sup>

A good idea of the resulting changes in public taste with respect to chivalric romance can be had by comparing three lists of books from three different dates between <sup>about</sup> 1575 and 1657. The first is the library of the Coventry mason Captain Cox, as described in a letter of 1572 by Robert Laneham, a London mercer.<sup>5</sup> Among Captain Cox's books were

thirteen romances of chivalry. These are almost equally divided between prose and verse, and most have their origin in French works of the Arthurian and Carolingian cycles. Romances of this type had been available in English in relatively expensive editions from the days of Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde, and only a man of some prosperity like Captain Cox could have owned them. Between the thirteen romances listed by Robert Laneham and the twenty-four enumerated by Francis Meres in Palladis Tamia (1598) there is an overlap of only five: Arthur of the Round Table, Bevis of Hampton, Huon of Bordeaux, Oliver of the Castle, and The Four Sons of Aymon.<sup>6</sup> Nearly half the romances that Meres considers dangerous reading for youth are of the newer peninsular type, such as Palmerin d'Oliva and The Mirror of Knighthood, or are English imitations of them. They would hardly have been known to Captain Cox, for they had begun to be published only after 1580. The third list indicates still greater changes. Under the heading 'Romance' in William London's Catalogue of the Most Vendible Books in England (1657) there are fifty-nine works, most of them pastoral or sentimental romances based upon Alexandrian or Italian models and translations of the heroic romances of La Calprenède and Mademoiselle de Scudéry.<sup>7</sup> Only six are romances of chivalry, and of these only two -- Prince Arthur and Valentine and Orson -- were known in English before 1580.

Despite the different character of each of these three lists, they indicate with fair accuracy the comparative popularity in the seventeenth century of the three types of chivalric romance available

in currently printed editions. By the 1650's metrical romance was moribund, and there were only a few surviving examples of the older romances of English heroes, such as Guy of Warwick and Bevis of Hampton. A translation of the medieval French romance Valentine and Orson was the great exception among the older types, being reprinted fifteen times, including two abridgements, between 1657 and 1700. The counterpart of this decline is the popularity of the Spanish and Portuguese romances -- Amadis of Gaul, Palmerin of England, Palmerin d'Oliva, Palladine, Palmandos -- and the quite spectacular success of the native English romances Montelyon, Parisus, and The Seven Champions of Christendom. William London's Catalogue illustrates another important fact: that in the middle of the century chivalric romance accounts for only a small fraction of romantic fiction. The more numerous pastoral and sentimental romances and the heroic romances, both French and English, were the dominant forms. The statistics for all works of prose fiction printed in the seventeenth century show a steady falling-off in the percentage of chivalric romance: 10 per cent between 1600 and 1640; 7.5 per cent between 1640 and 1660; and 3.3 per cent between 1660 and 1700; even though the number of editions published in the latter period was greater than those in the first two combined.<sup>8</sup>

To describe all the chivalric romances that formed part of mid-seventeenth century literary culture would be both tedious and of little practical value. Their extensive similarities make it possible to gain an acquaintance with them sufficient to understand their overall character by familiarity with a few works representing each main type.

Among the first group, comprising romances of English heroes and translations of French prose romance, Guy of Warwick is perhaps the best known. Originally a metrical romance, Guy of Warwick was published in the seventeenth century in three different prose versions: Samuel Smithson's (1661), 1686; Martin Parker's (licensed 24 November 1640 but lost), John Shirley's (1681, 1685, 1695), as well as Samuel Rowlands's version in six-line stanzas of verse (1609, 1632, 1635). A quasi-historical figure, Guy's victory, in the reign of King Athelstan (925 - 940), over the gigantic Danish champion Colbrun is recorded in the chronicles of Fabyan, Stowe, Grafton, and Holinshed. His other famous exploit was the defeat of the savage 'Dan-Cow' on Dunsmore Heath. Together, these two feats account for most of the many incidental references to Guy in seventeenth century literature. But he was also the subject of ballads, even of plays.<sup>9</sup>

With the exception of a few episodes, all three seventeenth century versions give the same account of Guy. A model of militant Christianity, patriotism, and faithfulness in love, he rises from his position as son of the steward to the Earl of Warwick to marry the Earl's daughter and to inherit the earldom himself. He first sets out in quest of adventure to win renown and thereby to soften the heart of Faelice, who has refused his profession of love on the grounds of insurmountable difference in social position (in Rowlands's version she is converted by Cupid in a vision, and it is the father, not the daughter, who scorns him). During his travels in Europe Guy wins tournaments, disposes of ravenous beasts, frees innocent men and women

from a felon giant, from false accusation, from unlawful disinheritance, from unjust seige. He also patches up a quarrel between two Christian noblemen, advising them to turn their energies to the spilling of pagan rather than Christian blood. He himself saves the city of Byzantium from the attacks of the Saracen army, and even kills the Soldan as well as his most repated champions. By these actions he wins reputation, esteem, and influence throughout Europe, and at home the hand of his love and her father's estates.

Then Guy has a change of heart. Repenting of what seems to him wanton killing, he renounces the enjoyment of wealth and position, the comforts of home and of marriage-bed, and travels as a palmer to the Holy Land to do penance for his sins and to see at first-hand the sacred places of Christianity. On the way he has adventures and effects several rescues, but it is a chastened Guy who returns to England. After his last two great successes, the slaying of the 'Dun-Cow' and the freeing of his country from foreign invasion by the defeat of the Danish champion, he retires to live as a hermit and finishes his days peacefully contemptuous of the world.

Bevis of Hampton was published in the seventeenth century in both metrical (1609, 1620?, 1625?, 1626?, 1630, 1639) and prose (1689, 1691, 1700) versions. Bevis is much the more specifically Christian hero than Guy, and since the greater part of his adventures take place in 'Heathenesse,' he has ample opportunity for public demonstration both of his vigorous faith and of his contempt for paganism. Sold into slavery at an early age by his mother, who has murdered her husband and together with her lover usurped her son's patrimony, Bevis early finds

himself alone in a heathen country. Entering the service of the Saracen King Ermyr, he leads the royal army to victory and wins the love of the princess Josyan, who secretly pledges to become a Christian. All the while he has regularly to put down with severity the intrigues against him of various Saracen courtiers. In one quite fantastic episode in Damascus, he cannot restrain himself from desecrating an effigy of Mohammed in the midst of a crowd of worshippers. Having thus provoked their wrath, he slays great numbers of them and even insults the religion of the Syrian king to his face. The supernatural element is strong in this romance. While in prison, Bevis is visited by an angel, who cures him of an adder's wound; his chains magically fall from him and he is delivered from confinement. He later kills a dragon with the aid of water from a magic well, whose efficacy derives from the female saint who had once bathed in it.

Josyan, the Saracen princess, eventually embraces Christianity. She and Bevis return to England, where he destroys the usurper, regains his patrimony, and weds his love; but he has soon to depart again, because one of his followers kills the King's son, and Bevis relinquishes his estates in expiation of the deed. Back in Ermony, the King and all his subjects become Christians, and Bevis's son accedes to the monarchy. At the request of a knight who has wrongfully lost his inheritance, Bevis and his sons travel to England again, where they slay sixty thousand of the King's men. The King then agrees to marry his daughter to another of Bevis's sons, who becomes King of England. After their deaths, within minutes of one another, Bevis and Josyan are

buried in a church where frequent miracles are worked through their power.

One other work in this group merits attention because of its remarkable popularity. Valentine and Orson, a medieval French romance attached to the Carolingian cycle, was first published in England by William Coplande in 1565. It subsequently showed great staying-power, being reprinted fifteen times between 1637 and 1700. Valentine and Orson are twin sons of the Emperor of Greece and the French King Pepin's sister Bellisant, who, having been banished from the court of Constantinople for suspected adultery, gives birth to them in a wood. A bear carries Orson away, and while his mother is attempting to follow, the infant Valentine is found by King Pepin (his unsuspecting uncle) and carried to the court, where he grows up to be the most valiant and accomplished of knights. Orson, meanwhile, having been suckled by the bear, grows to manhood a hairy savage, having human sense but ignorant of language. He is in fact a dangerous killer until he is defeated in combat and later civilized by his brother. The two reside at King Pepin's court, performing noble feats. They defend the city of Constantinople from besieging Saracens, win tournaments, slay giants, eventually discover their parentage, and rescue their imprisoned mother, whose innocence is vindicated and former place restored. After a lifetime of heroic adventure, Valentine dies in the palace of Constantinople and Orson becomes a hermit.

The Spanish and Portugese romances of chivalry published in English translation in the late sixteenth and during the seventeenth century

may conveniently be considered as a group. Their bibliography, a complex and specialized subject, need not be dealt with here.<sup>10</sup> It is sufficient for our purposes to note that between 1580 and 1693 eight of them were published, often broken up into separate parts, which did not always follow the order of the originals. The names and dates of first appearance of each are: The Mirror of Princely Deeds and Knighthood (1580); Palmerin of England (1581); Palmerin d'Olive (1588); Palmendos (1589); Amadis of Gaul [1590?]; Primaleon of Greece (1595); Amadis of Greece (1693). Their various parts, including abridgements, accounted for some forty-five separate editions until 1700. Garcia de Montalvo's version of Amadis of Gaul, first published in Spain in 1508, where it had gone through about thirty editions by 1587, was in large measure the sire of this numerous progeny, and contains most of the important characteristics peculiar to the rest. The principal difference between Amadis and the romances of the preceding group is the diminished importance of Christian zeal as a motivation for personal valour, and the correspondingly greater rôle of romantic love. The main conflict is between the rival claims of Amadis and the Emperor of Rome for the hand of Oriana, daughter of Lisuarte, King of Great Britain. Amadis, the natural son of Perion, King of Gaul, and the daughter of the King of Lesser Britain, is placed as an infant in an ark on the river. Early in the story he becomes enslaved by love to Oriana, who loves him in return; and the incidents of the plot are contrived to keep the hero and heroine apart until their final meeting on the Enchanted Island where they are enthroned



as the most perfect lovers in the world. The intervening misunderstandings, physical hardship, plots against the hero, and chance adventures are designed as ritual demonstrations of Amadis's pre-eminent prowess in arms and faithfulness in love. Both Amadis and Oriana are from the beginning paragons of human virtue. There is no hardness of heart to be softened as with Guy of Warwick's mistress Faelice, no savagery, such as that of Orson, to be civilized, no Saracen princess like Josyan, who must be converted to Christianity before she is an acceptable mate for the hero. Valour, loyalty and a surpassing fitness for one another have their appropriate reward in the union of the lovers; and the married state is treated as a sufficient end in itself. Amadis, unlike Guy, does not leave his wife to become a hermit.

The characters in Amadis are chivalrous and courteous, their speech formal and elevated, the author's narrative and descriptive style elaborate and rhetorical. These things are also true of Palmerin d'Oliva in which the hero, exposed like Amadis at the beginning of the romance, is led through many adventures to his rightful inheritance (the throne of Constantinople) and marriage to his lady, Palinarda, to whom he has been unfalteringly loyal. Enchantment, in the form of sorcerers, transformation of human beings into beasts, magic healing ointments, fabulous animals, and invincible weapons, plays an important part in the Spanish romances. There is a marked tendency to hyperbolical description, especially of the beauty of ladies and the valour displayed by knights in combat. The 'wonderfull and cruell bataille made beetwixt' the knight of the Sun and the knight of Cupid,' in the second part of The Mirror of Knighthood, a work which exaggerates

many of the incipient faults of the others, is an extreme example of this extravagance of style.<sup>11</sup> The combatants continually redouble what have been described as matchless efforts, and the words 'great(ly)', 'furious(ly)', and 'valiant(ly)' are overused to the point of inadvertent comedy.

There are altogether fewer incidents of personal combat in the romances of the English author Emanuel Forde (Fl. 1607). In Parismus, the Renowned Prince of Bohemia (Part 1, 1598; Part 2, 1609), and in The Famous History of Montelyon, Knight of the Oracle (1633), battles, whether between individuals or armies, are less important for the development of plot and the revelation of character, and the author shows relatively little interest in military detail. King Persicles in Montelyon even pities the enemy soldiers he reluctantly dispatches. Love, in the form of the consuming passion of hero and heroine, as well as the affairs of minor characters, form the principal matter of these works. In Parismus, besides the love of the main character and Laurana, we have the unhappy affair of Phillipus and Freneta related as an inset tale; and the attachment of Violetta and Pollipus, Parismus's squire, provides a sub-plot and even some comedy. The comic element is stronger in Montelyon, where mistaken identity several times leads to amusing results, including the 'merry jest that befel Helyon, Prince of Arabia'. This prince, the rival of Persicles for the love of the princess Constantia, plans to enter her chamber secretly at night to plead his suit. Constantia has meanwhile changed clothes with Selia, a country wench, who agrees to sleep in the princess's bed. She greets

Helyon's proposals with an embarrassed silence, which he interprets as maidenly assent, and thinking that he is enjoying Constantia, spends the night with a milk-maid. There are multiple love affairs in Montelyon also, and the rescue of imprisoned ladies provides the main episodes. Forde's combination of romantic motifs of different kinds must have been an appealing one, for Parismas and Montelyon between them had some thirty-two editions in the seventeenth century.

The characters in Forde's romances often don disguises and occasionally enjoy an amorous pastoral idyll. There are, to be sure, giants to be slain, rival knights to be subdued, enchanted castles to be stormed, and pitched battles to be fought, but there are fewer of them than in Richard Johnson's The Famous History of the Seven Champions of Christendom (Part I, 1596; Part II, 1597). This romance of the adventures of Saint George of England, Saint Denis of France, Saint <sup>St. James of Spain,</sup> Anthony of Italy, Saint Andrew of Scotland, Saint David of Wales, and Saint Patrick of Ireland went through twenty-one editions, including abridgements, between 1596 and 1696. The exploits of the seven champions are epitomized in the long-title of Part I:

Shewing their honorable battailes by Sea and land: their Tilts, Iousts, and Turnaments for Ladies: their Combats with Giants, Monsters, and Dragons: their adventures in forraine Nations: their Inchauntments in the holie Land: their Knighthoods, Prowesse, and Chivalrie in Europe, Affrica, and Asia, with their victories against the enemies of Christ.

Saint George, born with the image of a dragon on his breast, a blood red cross on his right hand, and a golden garter on his left leg, is destined to become the greatest of the seven. In his first adventure he frees the other six champions from imprisonment in the cave

of Kalyb, the enchantress, a service he repeats in different circumstances on two subsequent occasions. The main purpose of most of the Saints' adventures is the freeing of captive or enchanted maidens, but they achieve military glory as well. They bring together an army composed of soldiers from their respective countries and defeat the massed forces of Asian and African pagans, who plan to invade Europe. The second part recounts further adventures of the champions as well as those of Saint George's three sons. The Seven Champions, especially the second part, bristles with gory scenes, supplied by the author with an abundance of pictorial detail. Saint George's lament over the bloody corpse of his dead wife, an image of crystal in the form of a murdered maiden found by the champions, and the discovery by Saint George's three sons of the crimes of the Knight of the Black Castle against the Queen of Arminia are strikingly rendered.

The pre-eminence given by Richard Johnson to Saint George among his fellow national saints must have been pleasing to English readers, but the marriage of romance elements and patriotic sentiment probably reached its zenith in London's Glory: or, the History of the Famous and Valiant London Prentice (n.d. c. 1630?). Like the tales of Thomas Deloney, the Valiant London Prentice is a story of commercial success through shrewdness, industry, and cleverness, but it is notable for the number of traditional romance motifs it adapts to its middle-class world. Aurelius, born in Chester in the reign of Queen Elizabeth and named after a British prince who had defended his country from pagan attack, kills a snake in his cradle, thereby giving symbolic notice of

his future greatness. Educated in an ordinary school, his training in arms consists in learning to wrestle and to use the cudgel and the long-bow, and his discourse is formed by accompanying his father to fairs and wakes. Apprenticed to a London merchant trading with Turkey, Aurelius falls in love with his master's daughter, only to be scorned as a country clown. Heartsick, he leaves for Constantinople as his master's factor. When the ship in which he is sailing is menaced by pirates, and the crew are for surrendering, Aurelius reminds them of English valour and exhorts them to fight for the honour of their country. Encouraged, they repulse the attack. In Turkey Aurelius rescues the daughter of the Sultan from a tiger and is rewarded handsomely. The princess, Teoraza, is married to the Prince of the Georgians, and at the tournament in celebration of the union, Aurelius appears in armour with a double device on his shield: a phoenix, and the ocean chained, signifying respectively the virgin queen Elizabeth and English mastery of the seas. He easily subdues all the competitors, so that to save Saracen honour, the Georgian prince himself is constrained to joust with him. Using his spear as a truncheon, Aurelius slays him.

This greatly enraged the Turkish Sultan, insomuch that he swore by his Father's Scalp, and the Beard of Mahomet, that our Youth should die the cruell'st Death that ever was invented for Men; causing him immediately to be unarmed, and brought before him, demanding who he was, and of what Nation he was; he as undauntedly reply'd, He was a London Prentice, come over to manage his Master's Affairs, and had done this according to the rule of Justs and Law of Arms, in Honour of the Maiden Queen, to whom he was a Subject, and was ready to do more if permitted. The Turk amazed at his bold reply, turning to his Nobles, said, By Mahomet, if all the London Prentices be as stout as this, they are able to beat me out of my Empire: The German Armies, I have so often baffled, are but Pignies to them.<sup>12</sup>

The indignant Sultan then pits Aurelius against two lions, and when he tears out their hearts, offers him a high place at court, if he will become a Mohammedan. Aurelius scornfully refuses and returns to his master's business.

The Sultan's daughter, having fallen in love with Aurelius, disguises herself as a sailor, and bringing quantities of gold and jewels with her, accompanies him to England, where she is baptized by the Bishop of London. They are married at a sumptuous ceremony, paid for by Aurelius's master, and attended by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen. The Queen herself intervenes to mollify the wrath of the Sultan, who makes his new son-in-law the richest merchant in the world, and authorizes a special trading relationship between England and Turkey.

In point of outspoken contempt for pagans and effortless victory against all opponents,, Aurelius is a true descendant of Bevis of Hampton. But his character and the account of his adventures also owe something to the jest-book and to the middle-class conduct book. As a young man in Chester, Aurelius was beloved of a much courted maiden, and four of her other suitors, wanting to disfigure his face, surprise him outside of the town. He disarms them, makes them confess their intention, and then, to the delight of the townspeople, binds them naked to trees for the night so that they may cool their boiling passions. After having become a rich merchant, Aurelius is given some fake jewellery by a dishonest Jew. He takes his revenge by having the culprit suspended from a pole and bumped through the streets, a custom commemorated each Easter Monday by the prentices of Billingsgate. Aurelius's philanthropy in his

declining years recalls that of the Black Knight and the Fairy Knight in Richard Johnson's The History of Tom-a-Lincoln (6th ed. 1631 is the earliest extant). These two grandsons of King Arthur, after lives of adventure, give much money to the poor and erect many almshouses.

The mixture of bourgeois sentiment and morality and a plot based upon romances of chivalry brings home the fact that The Valiant London Prentice was intended for a particular class of reader. Aurelius's devotion to the interests of his master, his aggressive patriotism, and his plain speaking were presumably considered exemplary behaviour by tradespeople. But for a contemporary reader with aristocratic outlook and sympathies or for the modern reader necessarily detached from the seventeenth century tradesman's point of view, it is a different matter. Such episodes as Aurelius's defiance of the Turkish Sultan, overblown and amusing to us, can only have appeared as the most extreme bathetic absurdity to a seventeenth century reader predisposed to be contemptuous of the commercial classes. And indeed there is an inherent contradiction when a character with homespun manners holds forth in a literary form designed to idealize the behaviour and the fantasies of the high aristocracy. Aurelius's virtues would show to good advantage in a domestic tale, but at the Court of Constantinople, traditional proving-ground of the noble Christian warrior, he seems only to be aping his betters. This appropriation by middle-class writers of literary motifs for long held to be aristocratic prerogatives contains within it an explosive charge, which is always threatening to burst into comedy against the author's wishes, particularly when he attempts the high style.

In this context Heywood's The Four Prentices of London (1615) contains an enlightening passage, similar to Aurelius's speech to the Sultan. The play is set in the eleventh century. The Earl of Boulogne, having lost his estates while serving with William the Conqueror, is forced to live in London and, because he cannot provide for his four sons, to bind them apprentices. When the eldest, Godfrey, apprenticed to a mercer, is asked whether such an employment be not below him, he replies:

Bound must obey: Since I have undertooke  
To serve my Maister truley for seven years,  
My duty shall both answer that desire,  
And my old Maisters profite every way ...  
I hold it no disparage to my birth,  
Though I be borne an Earle, to have the skill  
And the full knowledge of the Mercers Trade.<sup>13</sup>

Even here, where style, situation (the four sons are only apprentices for the nonce) and character are better adapted to one another, the inherent comedy cannot entirely be subdued. The possibilities in this incongruous combination of social ideals and literary form did not fail to appeal to satirists and parodists in the seventeenth century. And in Hudibras itself, though as we shall see in a characteristically singular way, it is turned to comic and satiric effect.

### III

To have a general view of seventeenth century attitudes towards the romances of chivalry, we need go no further back than the time of Ascham. In The Schoolmaster (published 1570) he expresses the extreme position of those opposed to romance on grounds of moral repugnance.



For him the Morte Darthur is composed entirely of 'open manslaughter and bold bawdry; in which those he counted the noblest knights that do kill most men without any quarrel and commit foulest adulteries by subtlest shifts.'<sup>14</sup> Romances were not proper reading for young and tender minds, he thought, a view that is repeated by Francis Meres in Palladis Tamia (1598), who also considered that the young should not be exposed to them.<sup>15</sup> The fact that so many ordinary people were familiar with versions of Bevis of Hampton, Guy of Warwick, and Lancelot du Lac, said Edward Dering in 1568, only rendered more blameworthy the papists who permitted this idle reading while neglecting their responsibility for translating the Bible.<sup>16</sup> In Ascham's mind too there was a connexion between popery and romances, 'which (it is said) were made by monks and canons in monasteries.'<sup>17</sup>

In the seventeenth century the newer Spanish and English romances were also brought within the pale of moral censure, especially with respect to their putative effects upon susceptible minds. Robert Burton (The Anatomy of Melancholy, 1621) speaks of 'such Inamoratoes as read nothing but Play-books, idle Poems, Jests, Amadis de Gaul, the Knight of the Sun, the Seven Champions, Palmerin de Oliva, [Sir] Huon of Bordeaux, & c. Such many times prove in the end as mad as Don Quixote.'<sup>18</sup> John Davies, in the introduction to his translation of Sorel's The Extravagant Shepherd. The Anti-Romance ... (1653), calls attention to the danger of romance-reading for melancholy temperaments, 'not to be overborne by such follies.'<sup>19</sup> The principal character of Samuel Rowland's The Melancholy Knight (1615) seems to be living proof of

the justness of these warnings. Fantastically dressed and contemplating even more fantastic schemes -- one of them is to recover King Pepin's lance from France -- this splenetic fellow's mind has been affected in about equal measure by tobacco smoke and the reading of romances. Penniless and without prospects, his imagination is nonetheless filled with scenes from romance -- castles, towers, cheering wine. It is his 'haughtie swelling thoughts' that have undone him.

The youthful Francis Kirkman in The Unlucky Citizen (1673) is the very type of the young mind warped by romances, and the follies he therein confesses are intended to serve as cautions, particularly to citizens and their sons and servants. As a boy Kirkman devoured such romances of chivalry as he could buy, or borrow from his school friends, and in his naïveté believed the adventures of the knights to be true. So credulous did he become by his reading, that he thought the Chronicles of Speed, Stowe, and Holinshed to be incomplete when he could find in them no mention of Palmerin of England. Though he is (apparently) a mere London citizen's son, he hopes that, like Amadis de Gaul, he will one day be revealed as the offspring of some great person, or at any rate that he can eventually become the squire to a knight. Faced in later years with the choice of a profession, he settles on that of a surgeon, because it is a calling mentioned in books of knight-errantry. As a ship's surgeon he plans to travel the world to see the places, such as Constantinople and Trebizond, that have been the setting for romantic adventure, and to heal the wounds of any knights-errant he may meet. When his mother forbids him to leave the country, he determines instead

to become a bookseller so that he can at least read as many stories as he pleases. If he has had a former existence, he says, it must certainly have been as a knight-errant.

Despite the seriousness of his declared purpose, Kirkman retains a certain comic detachment when recounting his youthful indiscretions, and even confesses to a lingering fondness for the very romances that bedevilled his early years. He belongs, in fact, to that familiar character-type of seventeenth century social comedy, of which Ralph the grocer's boy in The Knight of the Burning Pestle is the best known example, the impressionable young man led into extravagant fantasies and behaviour by the reading of romances. Young girls, especially serving girls, were also felt to be endangered by romance-reading, though their reactions were thought to be less violent. '[She] is so carried away with the Mirrour of Knighthood,' writes Sir Thomas Overbury in his character of 'A Chambermaid' (1614), 'she is many times resolved to run out of herself, and become a lady-errant.'<sup>20</sup> The maid in Wye Saltonstall's Picturae Loquentes (1631) 'reades now loves historyes as Amadis de Gaule and the Arcadia, & in them courts the shaddow of love till she know the substance.'<sup>21</sup>

In 1589 Thomas Nashe (The Anatomie of Absurditie) accused romance authors of deliberately flattering women in order to win them as readers.<sup>22</sup> Nashe was contemptuous of the romances of chivalry because they stimulated a taste for medieval wonders and marvels, because they enjoyed 'that forgotten legendary licence of lying,' and because they were badly written. As an illustration of the 'scambling shyft ... to

ende his verses a like,' he quotes, 'among others, this couplet from the metrical Bevis of Hampton:

This almes, by my crowne,  
Gives she for Bevis of South-hamptonne.<sup>23</sup>

Ben Jonson in 'An execration upon Vulcan' (c. 1623) judges their value as about equal to that of riddles, anagrams, logogriphs, and palindromes. Later in the century criticism was directed less against the frivolity of romances and their lack of intellectual substance than against the outlandish extravagance of their plots and their want of decorum. John Davies, the translator of Scovel's The Extravagant Shepherd (1653) complains that the events in the older romances are needlessly improbable, that character is not preserved, that the same actions are endlessly repeated though in a new dress, and that to untie all the tangled threads of the plot 'somebody must be fresh discovered, some suddenly change their affections, and others rise as it were from the dead.'<sup>24</sup> Even Sir George Mackenzie, who defends the reading of romance in the 'Apologie for Romances' prefixed to his Areteina; or, the Serious Romance (1660), condemns Anadis de Gaul and Pulmerin d'Olive because their characters perform feats above the reach of human powers.<sup>25</sup>

The romances of chivalry continued to be printed and read despite this barrage of criticism. It is, however, a measure of the disesteem in which they were held by the serious-minded that their authors so often undertake their own defence. The obverse of the psychological argument that the romances do moral harm by inviting readers to imitate the actions of the characters is marshalled by Margaret Tyler, translator

of The Mirrour of Princely Deedes and Knighthood (1578). She claims magnanimity and courage as the chief matter of the work whose purpose is to 'animate ... and to set on fire the lustie courages of young gentlemen.'<sup>26</sup> This same argument is elaborated a century later for the intention of humbler readers in the printer's remarks in Laurence Price's abridgement of The Famous History of Valentine and Orson (1693):

... For here may the Princely Mind see his own model; the Knightly Tilter his Martial Atchievement; and the Amorous Lady her Dulcet Passages of Love. Here are Countries, with the Courts of Kings deciphered; the Magnitude of Honours laid open; and the true form of Turnaments described ... Let no man therefore think his Time ill spent, or his Labour lost, where the Matter affords such Copiousness of Pleasure. It also gives a Working to the Minds of the Dull Country-Swains; and (as it were) leads them to search out for Martial Atchievements, befitting many Pastimes. ... no unseemly Words or Speeches are herein contained, but such as are modestly carried.<sup>27</sup>

Sir George Mackenzie's 'Apologie for Romances,' prefixed to his Aretina; or, the Serious Romance, may be taken as applying to the better romances of chivalry as well as to those in the vein of the French heroic romance.<sup>28</sup> He considers that there are three serious charges against romances: they waste time; they contain lies; they are incentives to the fire of love. To the first two he answers that bad romances may waste time but good ones do not, and that romances cannot be lies since their authors do not claim that they contain more than a kernel of truth delightfully set out. As a reply to the third charge, he simply asks who, when he has read of a Philoclea or a Cleopatra, would be likely to settle for one of the common beauties of the age.

We can find further evidence for the unfavourable attitude towards romance nearer the publication of Hudibras by considering a particular linguistic development of the time. During the 1650's and 1660's the many attempts to introduce an adjective formed from the noun 'romance' testify to a need to describe aspects of things, of mind, and of personality thought to have a kinship with the romances. The significations of these adjectives are another indication of current opinions of the works from which they derived.<sup>29</sup> In general, the sense of 'romantic' at this time was 'unreal', 'fantastic', 'extravagant', 'whimsical'; that is to say it reflected those qualities commonly attributed to romance.

In 1650 Thomas Bayly described his Herba Parietis as 'a History which is partly true, partly Romantick, Morally Divine: whereby a Marriage between Reality and Fancy is solemnized by Divinity.' Evelyn, who elsewhere uses the adjective 'romantic', tells of (Diary, 6 Sept., 1651) '... a valiant gentleman, but not a little given to romance when he spake of himself.' R. Sanders (Physiognomie and Chiromancie, 1653) warns that his subject 'is best seen in a homely and plain dress, and will not admit of a Romancial strain.' Henry More (The Immortality of the Soul, 1659) describes the most unrestrained faculty of the mind as 'that imagination which is most free, such as we use in Romantick inventions.' A character in John Tatham's The Rump (1660) refers to Harrington's Utopian Commonwealth of Oceana (1656) as 'Mr. Harrington's Romantick Commonwealth.' It is, says Nathaniel Walker (The Refin'd Courtier, 1663), 'a strange Romantick courage to

run merrily upon a Cannons mouth.'

Finally, in seventeenth century plays we find the romances used to define those very qualities of mind and behaviour that were beginning to be described as 'romantic'. Ralph the Grocer's boy immediately comes to mind, but he was only one of dozens of fatuous characters who in one way or another were connected with romances of chivalry.<sup>30</sup>

There is the amorous old knight Sir Quintilian Shorthose in Decker's Entiremastix (1602), who is compared to an entire romance:

Tucca: Dost love her, my finest and first part of  
The Mirreour of Knighthood?

There are vulgar fellows, like Clotpoll in Brome's The Weeding of Covent Garden (1658), who show their poor taste and self-delusion by revealing themselves as readers of romance:

Clotpoll: I shall be as forward to fight for a She-friend,  
as ever the best man in the Mirroure of Knighthood  
was for an honest woman.

There are those also, like Dotterel in Thomas May's The Old Couple (1658), who take the lives of the romance heroes as patterns for social ambition:

Barnet: And in those books he says he finds examples  
Of greatest beauties that have been so won.

Euphues: O, in Parismus and the Knight o' the Sun!  
Are those your authors?

Dotterel: Yes, and those are good ones.  
Why should a man of worth, though but a shepherd,  
Despair to get the love of a King's daughter?

Still another note is struck in Eastward Ho! (1605) when Gertrude, the goldsmith's daughter, complaining of her treatment by Sir Petronel Flash, compares the heroes of the old romances to modern knights:

Gertrude: ... But he is e'en well enough served, Sin, that so soon as ever he had got my hand to the sale of my inheritance, run away from me, an I had been his punk, God bless us! Would the Knight o' the Sun, or Palmerin of England, have used their ladies so, Sin? Or Sir Lancelot or Sir Tristram?

Sin: I do not know, madam.

Gertrude: Then thou know'st nothing, Sin. Thou art a fool, Sin. The Knighthood nowadays are nothing like the knighthood of old time. They rid a-horse back; ours go a-foot. They were attended by their Squires; ours by their lackeys. They went buckled in their armour; ours muffled in their cloaks. They travelled wildernesses and deserts; ours dare scarce walk the streets. They were still prest to engage their honour; ours still ready to pawn their clothes. They would gallop on at sight of a monster; ours run away at sight of a sergeant. They would help poor ladies; ,ours make poor ladies.

Sin: Ay, madam, they were knights of the Round Table at Winchester, that sought adventures; but these of the Square Table at ordinaries, that sit at hazard.

The plays provide us with our first experience of the ambiguous rôle of the romances of chivalry in satirical contexts. As idle and frivolous books they could be used to make a character seem credulous and fantastic because of a secret addiction to them or the desire to take them as a pattern of conduct. Yet they did service in another way, too; and many effective contrasts were pointed up between the noble behaviour of the romance hero and the mean, pedestrian, effeminate, or affected bearing of his modern counterpart.

#### IV

This double critical attitude, towards the outdated and extravagant romances and at the same time towards the modern knight so ludicrously



unworthy of comparison with the old literary heroes, finds its most elaborate expression in the anti-romance. Properly speaking, an anti-romance is a romance written to ridicule romances. To put it another way, it is a work that adopts the very form of the genre it aims to criticize and achieves its end by an exaggerated and distorting imitation of the style, narrative motifs, and characterization of its originals. Though there were many sub-species of the type, it is in its pure form comparatively rare. We may take two examples, one from near the beginning of the century, one from near the middle, as representative of the main characteristics of the genre.

Moriomachia (1613) by Robert Anton appeared when both the Spanish and the English romances were in the heyday of their popularity.<sup>31</sup> The name of the hero, Tom Pheander, is borrowed from Henry Roberts's Pheander, the Maidyn Knight (1615) but the extraordinary title he receives when knighted at the age of thirty -- 'Sir Tom Pheander, the Maiden Knight, or Fairy Champion, otherwise The Knight of the Sun, otherwise The Knight of the Burning Pestle' -- places beyond doubt, if need there be, the author's intention to poke fun at the romances of chivalry in general. Moriomachia is a short prose work with a sprinkling of doggerel verse, running to some eleven thousand five hundred words, and recounting the adventures of the aforesaid Tom Pheander. Beginning life as a bull, Tom is transformed into a human being by the Fairy Queen, and, dressed in an ass's skin, is set adrift in a rickety boat, which is eventually blown by the wind upon the coast of Morotopia (England).

In this country Tom has the usual Quixotic adventures, mistaking two ploughmen threshing corn for enchanted knights, a dairy-maid churning butter for their enchantress, and a whore with a lapdog for a spotless virgin and her fawning lion. These errors earn him the usual comic punishments: a servant attacks him with a cudgel, and the indignant whore bloodies his lips and teeth. Tom proceeds to Moropolis, the capital of Morotopia, where he is knighted at court. When she learns of this, the Fairy Queen entrusts a suit of armour intended for her knight to one Madam Moriana, a fairy lady. But she, enamoured of Sir Archmoriander, the Knight of the Moon, conveys the armour to him instead. (Here is given an inset tale of the rescue of the lady Moriana from the giant Andromago by Sir Archmoriander). Seeing his misappropriated prize in a vision, Tom Pheander (now known as the Knight of the Sun), seeks out the Knight of the Moon to demand its return. His request is refused and a tournament is arranged to determine the rightful owner, but the fearful combat ending without decisive advantage on either side, the Knight of the Moon is given the custody of the armour provided he relinquish the use of it to his adversary upon reasonable notice.

This is the sum of the heroic adventure in Moriomachia. The sparseness of incident is accounted for in part by the leisurely descriptive style, often the instrument of a rather heavy parody of romance commonplaces.

About that time of the year when sylvan Pan  
pipes roundelays and nimble satyrs frisk  
about the timely palms, old Titan turned swaggerer

and revelled in the taverns of the earth so late that he durst not appear ... before the fresh Aurora fetched him forth with a fiery face, and allayed his high color with the cool morning's dew.<sup>32</sup>

The martial accoutrements of the Knight of the Sun, his combat with the Knight of the Moon, and the latter's victory over Andromago, 'a mighty, huge, and choleric pygmy giant ... a full half yard broad betwixt the eyes, and almost eighteen inches by the rule,' are similarly treated. The plot is a patchwork of conventional episodes: the exposure of the hero in a boat, the rescue of the lady, the single combat between the principal rivals, as well as such minor ornaments as the knighthood ceremony, the exalted harangue to the enemy, and the sleeplessness of the knight on the eve of combat. Tom makes his way, stumbling but earnest, along this well-trodden path, the comedy of his situation deriving in about equal measure from his naïveté and his clumsiness. Thinking that he sees an adventure at every turn he is still no more able than his antagonist Sir Archmorlander to carry off the simplest physical manoeuvre.

The Knight of the Sun ... took hold of the saddle pommel with one hand and checked in his courser with the other so fiercely and short that he made a sudden stand in less than a quarter of an hour, to the great pleasure and wonderful applause of all the beholders.<sup>33</sup>

To his parodies, his paradoxes, and the comic ineptitude of his characters, the author adds a strain of coarse humour, an instinctive reaction against the mannered expression of noble character and sentiment in the romances. The Fairy Queen, an inexperienced

dairymaid, attempts to milk a bull; the device carried before the Knight of the Sun as he enters the lists represents a man suffering from 'wind-colic' and unable to be at ease until he break wind; and Madame Moriana's escutcheon figures:

a halfmoon gules in <sup>a</sup>jagged cloud  
sable, and the lower, or  
back, charge was three drops or under a  
fess argent. This coat she gave, which was  
the most ancientest in all the Fairy Land, and  
ever continued hereditary to the heirs female  
of that house.<sup>34</sup>

There is also a good deal of social satire only incidentally connected with the main narrative. The author strikes out, in scattered passages, at 'the gallant-seeming courtier,' 'the gouty usurer,' and 'such ordinary company as use to make great talk of their small travels.' Moropolis, where the dispute for the armour is settled by tournament, is London thinly disguised; and when, having fallen to wrestling, the combatants topple to the ground, the Knight of the Sun undermost, the author declares a solar eclipse. The story is suspended, and we are shown the effects of the general darkness upon the citizens and professions of the capital. From lawyers and brokers to tapsters and carmen, the eclipse is universally made the occasion for cozenage, petty fraud, and drunkenness. The roll-call of vices and misdeeds is painstakingly detailed, and by the time we return to the weary knights, there is little left to do but bring their dispute to a close.

Even in such a thoroughgoing spoof as Moricmachia, in which the romances of chivalry are directly or indirectly burlesqued on nearly every page, the idealized conduct of the old knights errant can still

serve as a goad for the venal Morotopians. Tom Pheander is surprised at the practice of selling knighthoods in Moropolis, for in fairy land, he knows, such titles are only had by desert.

Don Zara del Fogo: A Mock Romance (1656) by Samuel Holland is both more ambitious in plan and more inventive in episode than Moriomachia.<sup>35</sup> But though the episodes in Don Zara del Fogo are more numerous and more diverse, there is virtually no social criticism, explicit or implied, to be found in them; and this is the main difference between it and its predecessor of forty-three years. Literary mockery, as well as the comic doings of his two principal characters, are the main interests of the author, who never assumes the position of the moral satirist.

The adventures of the knight, Don Zara, and his squire Soto fill more than two hundred octavo pages and are divided into three books, corresponding to the three main divisions in the narrative. The first book introduces the principals, takes the knight and squire on two commonplace excursions, and shows us Zara's addresses to the lady Gylo. We learn that the knight is not only an admirer of the great heroes of chivalry, Sir Eglamour, Sir Guy, Sir Bevis, and the Knight of the Sun, but that he actually prays to the souls of the dead worthies, Saint George, Amadis de Gaul, Palmerin d'Oliva, and the Knight of the Ruby Rose. In his first sally, Zara demonstrates his prowess as a trencherman and argues with a cheating host who tries to overcharge him for a meal. His suit to Gylo gives occasion for parodies of the rural setting of amorous dalliance as well as the conventionally hyperbolic description of the lady's beauty. Zara's lack of success in his

advances leads to his renunciation of love:

A Fox upon thee,  
and thy Sea-born Mother.<sup>36</sup>

The note of travesty here struck dominates the second book, which recounts Zara's visit to the underworld. He sets out on this journey in company with Lamia the witch in a chariot drawn by dragons. In Hades they see that the Greeks and Trojans continue their fighting. Hesiod is struck on the head by Homer, whose equal he has claimed to be; Statius claims similar equality with Virgil; and the dead English poets squabble unceasingly for supremacy. Zara's thirst for honour constrains him to quit the underworld and Lamia's society. Armed with a magic belt that she gives him in a sealed box, he and Soto embark for No-land to vindicate the wrongfully accused Princess Maulkina.

In No-land we return to the world of chivalrous adventure burlesqued. The two heroes are shipwrecked on their way, rescued by a sea-horse, and cast upon an island inhabited by a race of fishermen, who catch a courser and armour in their nets and give them to Zara. Thus fittingly accoutred, he arrives at Gardona-pola-Mancha, the capital of No-land, and enters the tournament to which knights from all parts of the world have come. His rivals include the Knight of the Dog, the Knight of the Toothless Lion, the Knight of the Pudding, the Knight of the Jackanapes, the Knight of the Toasted Cheese, and the Knight of the Civet Cat. The last-named bears a standard with this remarkable device:

a Civet-Cat disburthening herself a posteriore into  
the Helmet of a Knight in shining Armour, who held  
forth his Head-piece very handsomely, his Motto:

True type of her,  
whose breath's perfum'd I find,  
Whether she vent it  
forward or behind.<sup>37</sup>

The coarseness that we met in Morlomachia is here more ingeniously  
managed. The tournament is a ceremonious one, preceded by a feast and  
a masque of 'Venus and Adonis,' in which the bear as well as the two  
lovers engage in a kind of scolding cross-talk. In the lists Zara  
routs no less than two thousand knights but is himself conquered by the  
sight of the Lady Madonna-del-Simplicio. He is less proficient in love  
than in combat, however, for the epistle he sends to his beloved begins  
with these lines:

Fair Nymph, whose beauties all admire,  
Whose face does set the World on fire;  
Within whose brow (above the beak)  
The Graces play at Barley-break.  
Whose every curl a Cupid hides,  
And many a sightlesse God besides.<sup>38</sup>

The lady's reply is appropriately indignant and scornful; so much so  
in fact that Zara looses his disappointment and rage upon Soto, the  
bearer of the message. In the fray, the squire loses his ears and the  
knight the tip of his nose. Zara is eventually bested in public  
combat by Don Pantalone, the Knight of the Pudding, and, still smarting  
from his lady's disdain, he and Soto leave No-land. They travel on a  
winged hog provided by Lamia and see many strange sights before, the  
story coming to an abrupt and unexpected end, they are left standing  
before a castle on a rock.

Travesty and a kind of fantastic comedy in a literary setting are the two main aims of Don Zara del Fogo, and the hero's rôle as well as that of the places he visits and the people he meets are determined by these ends. Puffed-up, deluded, and inept, the knight and the squire make us laugh both at the conventions of romance and at themselves for falling so hopelessly short of their aspirations to noble conduct. Their bathetic attempts at heroic behaviour are paralleled in the episodes of the poets in Hades and the burlesque masque of Venus and Adonis. The parody, the outlandish hyperbole, and the vein of debasing humour that we have noticed are all managed, it must be emphasized, within a world whose inspiration is purely literary and whose boundaries are strictly respected. Neither Don Zara, nor his adventures, nor his surroundings can be connected with the public personages, events, or institutions of the mid-seventeenth century.

Just the opposite is true of another group of works in which romance elements are subordinate to political commentary and satire. The poetry and prose in which contemporary happenings and personalities turn up in romance dress is a peculiar part of that congeries of political sub-literature of the years 1640-1660. Within this group, the two ballads, 'Sir Eglamor and the Dragon, or a relation of how Gen. George Monk slew a Most Cruel Dragon' (11 February, 1660) and 'The Gang or the Nine Worthies and Champions ...' (1662) form an interesting pair.<sup>39</sup> In the first the political and the literary are well adapted, for the rôles of hero and defeated beast are neatly paralleled in the account of Monk's overcoming the Pump. In the second the method is reversed, and we have



the ironic comparison of, among others, Lambert, Desborough, and Hewson to the old heroes of romance. It is the first of these methods that is used also in The Faerie Leveller, a pamphlet of 1648 described on the title-page as 'a lively representation of our times'.<sup>40</sup> This short work is an attempt to bring to bear upon the political situation of 1648 the prestige and supposed prophetic powers of Edmund Spenser and thus to marshal support for King Charles I. The pamphlet is substantially a reprinting of the episode in Book Five (Canto 2, xxix-liv) of The Faerie Queene relating to the confrontation between Artegall and Talus with the Giant who wants to set the world aright by levelling it in every way. Their conflict is made into a 'livre à clef' in which Artegall represents King Charles; Talus, the King's forces; Pallante the Saracen, the reform party in Parliament; Munera (the Saracen's assistant), tax-raisers, committee-men, sequestrators, and excise men; the Giant Leveller, Oliver Cromwell. Spenser's verses have proved to be accurate predictions of current events, says the author, who publishes them in order to undeceive the people as to the intentions of the dominant parliamentary faction, which, claiming to restore rights and liberty, is really scheming to enslave all Englishmen.

At the other end of the spectrum is Don Juan Lamberto; or, a Comical History of The Late Times. By Montelion, Knight of the Oracle (1661).<sup>41</sup> Where The Faerie Leveller seeks to warn, Don Juan Lamberto aims only to ridicule. The first points to similarities between contemporary political developments and a story from Spenser containing its own dissuasive lesson; the second simply retells recent history in

the form of a romance. The events that we meet thus barely disguised begin with the death of Cromwell and continue through the Restoration to the discomfiture of leading Puritans and the punishment of the regicides. It was an extravagantly eventful time, and we have not read far in Don Juan Lamberto before we see the aptness, even the inevitability, of making a burlesque romance of it.

The author's method is to recount the major happenings of 1658-1661 as though they were the several episodes in a romance. The actors in this drama are presented as traditional romantic characters, and the style recalls the worst passages of, say, The Seven Champions of Christendom or The Mirror of Knighthood. At the beginning of the narrative, the paynims are in control of Britain, though their Soldan (Cromwell) has just died. His son, 'The Meek Knight', succeeds to the throne, but is bullied into abdication by the 'Giant Desborough' at the urging of Sir Lambert, 'The Knight of the Golden Tulip.' This latter has already been plotting to make himself king with the assistance of Sir Vane, 'Knight of the Most Mystical Allegories.' Forty paynim tyrants are set up in place of the Meek Knight. For a while they maintain themselves in power, defeating a rising in favour of the exiled King by 'The Paladine of Chester' (Sir George Booth), but they are eventually overcome by 'The Loyal Knight' (Monk) and the Christian king is restored.

The Restoration brings the main historical conflict to a close and so lessens the interest of Part II of Don Juan Lamberto. But the lack of significant events is compensated for by clothing the few incidents it contains in a garb of wildly satirical farce. Thus Colonel Hewson's

flight from England is rendered as the Giant Fusonio's ocean voyage, in which by breaking wind he manages not only to subdue Neptune and his retinue but actually to blast the ocean dry and walk comfortably to land. A scandal concerning an intrigue between Hugh Petros and a butcher's wife is transmuted into the love affair between the arch-priest Hugo Petros and Tolcomona, married to Sir Almadox, Knight of the Bloody Cleaver. After many passionate addresses Hugo Petros succeeds in leading his love to the forest of 'Maribona' where they are discovered in 'the combat of love' by a group of ribald swains. The arch-priest's eloquence is equal to the occasion:

My good friends, first read ye the lives of  
the holy fathers, and then condemn me if you  
think fit to the gallows; it was Pluto in my shape,  
and with my voice that hath done this mischief,  
and not I, for the arch-priest of Britain could  
do no such evil.<sup>42</sup>

One of the few major public events treated in Part II is the rising of the Fifth Monarchy men under Thomas Venner, who is represented as the Vandal Vennero. He is a wild man who has been suckled by a mare and (like Orson) has grown to manhood in a forest. One day he kills a Christian and likes the blood so well that he continues this destructive sport until, after attacking the city of London, he is captured and executed. The same fate is meted out to most of the forty tyrants, and with this the narrative ends.

Don Juan Lamberto applies literary form to a series of public (and some private) events, and the way in which the application is made is revealing for our study. The progression of the narrative is in large

part determined by the historical events themselves, so that we begin in 1658 with Cromwell's death and move in chronological order to the punishment of the regicides in 1661. But we are shown these events from a satirist's, not from a historian's, point of view; for though King Charles I, Sir George Booth, and General Monk are mentioned, only the Parliamentary and army leaders, who are to be ridiculed, are represented and characterized. The literary technique is adapted to this partisan point of view. The author does not make use of the full range of romance techniques at his disposal, but presents his story essentially as a train of internecine squabbles among the pynims, traditional villains of the older romances of Christian chivalry, where they were often the objects of particularly ignominious defeat and sometimes given to half-comic outbursts of frustrated bombast. The story begins when the enemy is on the point of being totally vanquished, and of course they fall out amongst themselves.

When we examine the relationship between the satirical form, the mock-romance, and the objects of satire, certain leading political and military figures, we notice that it is one of ingeniously executed correspondences. The author's most telling device is to point out similarities between the events and personalities of the time and the plot and characters in the romances of chivalry. Thus Cromwell is 'The Soldier of Britain,' and rôles are assigned to other characters according to their real or reputed personal characteristics: Feaborough for his blunt manners and almost legendary violence of temper; Richard Cromwell for his weakness and pusillanimity; Sir Henry Vane (the

younger) for the proverbial subtleties of his esoteric religious beliefs. It is to this resourcefulness in finding parallels between life and romance that Don Juan Lamberto owes its liveliness and its continuing power to amuse. Its satirical force is based on these parallels too; and by exaggerating the romance elements to the point of parody the author shows us both characters and events as even more fantastic and absurd than they were.

## V

With Don Juan Lamberto this survey ends, and since it has been a long one, we may usefully resume its main points. From about 1580 to 1660 we can trace a steady decline in the position of romance as a serious literary form. The nature of the criticism directed against romance in these years indicates the extent of this decline, for by mid-century the moral censure and critical scorn of the earlier part of the period were giving way to the more condescending imputations of improbability and indecorum. Accompanying this decline is the use of the romances for purposes of satire. Here we may distinguish two strains, according to the satirical context. A character or event could be very effectively belittled by comparison or association with an exaggerated version of a romance situation or romance character, or with the romances themselves. This method serves well in cases where outlandish bravado, self-delusion, or generally extravagant behaviour is to be ridiculed. But where meanness, faint-heartedness, or effeminacy are the vices, contrast with the ideals represented by the old heroes

(not with their style of conduct) was the natural technique.

In the anti-romances we have the general method of combining a systematic parody of romance conventions with characters of remarkable ineptitude, whose attempts to fill the rôle of the romance hero are rich sources of comic effect. This procedure is taken up in Don Juan Lamberto, where degrading satire is made fantastically amusing with the aid of exaggerated parody. Parody, exaggeration, self-delusion, ineptitude, meanness of character -- we are not far from Hudibras; and indeed it is within this general tradition that Hudibras is to be situated. By considering it in relation to the works and tendencies whose main characteristics we have just outlined, we shall be in a position to appreciate not only Butler's use of satiric tradition, but also the peculiar elements he combined with it.

Notes to Chapter 2.

1. R.P. Bond, English Burlesque Poetry 1700-1750, Harvard Studies in English, Vol. VI (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), p.6.
2. Ruth Nevo, The Dial of Virtue: A Study of Poems on Affairs of State in the Seventeenth Century (Princeton, 1963), pp. 234-235.
3. Ibid., p. 236.
4. The position of the romances of chivalry as popular reading matter is discussed by L.B. Wright, Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1935) and R.S. Crane, The Vogue of Medieval Chivalric Romance in the Renaissance (Menasha, Wisconsin, 1919).
5. Robert Laneham's Letter ...., ed. F.J. Furnivall, The Shakespeare Library (London, 1907).
6. fols. 268-268v.
7. William London: A Catalogue of the Most Vendible Books in England (1657, 1658, 1660), ed. D.F. Foxon, English Bibliographical Sources, Series 2: Catalogues of Books in Circulation (London, 1965).
8. The statistics are based upon the lists of works of prose fiction printed in the seventeenth century in Arundell Esdaile, A List of English Tales and Prose Romances Printed Before 1740, The Bibliographical Society (London, 1912) and in Charles C. Mish, English Prose Fiction 1600-1700: A Chronological Checklist, Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia (Charlottesville, 1952).
9. R.S. Crane, 'The Vogue of Guy of Warwick from the Close of the Middle Ages to the Romantic Revival,' PMLA, LXX, no. 2 (New Series, XXIII, no. 2, 1915). 125-94.
10. Bibliographical information as well as literary analyses are provided in Henry Thomas, Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry (Cambridge, 1920) and in Mary Frances Patchell, The Palmerin Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction (New York, 1947).
11. The Second part of the first Booke of the Myrrour of Knighthood (London, 1599), pp. 112 ff.
12. p. 27.
13. The Dramatic works of Thomas Heywood, ed. R.H. Shepherd (London, 1874), II, 169.

14. The Schoolmaster, ed. L.V. Ryan (Ithaca, New York, 1967), p. 69. Nearly identical charges are made against the romances of chivalry in the prefatory address, 'To the Gentle Reader,' in Thomas Underdowne's translation of Heliodorus's An Aethiopian History (1587), The Tudor Translations, V (London, 1895), p. 4.
15. fol. 268.
16. A Sparing Pestraint of many leuish Vntruthes ... (1568), p. 6. Cited by R.F. Jones, The Triumph of the English Language (Stanford, California, 1953), p. 54.
17. The Schoolmaster, ed. Ryan, p. 68.
18. The Anatomy of Melancholy, ed. A.E. Shilleto (London, 1923), II, 107.
19. a 2.
20. 'A Chamber-maid' in Characters Or Witty Descriptions of the Properties of Sundry Persons (1614), reprinted in A Book of Characters, ed. Richard Aldington, Broadway Translations (London, n.d.), p. 127.
21. Lutterell Reprints (Oxford, 1959), p. 47.
22. in G.G. Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays (Oxford, 1904), I, 323-324.
23. Ibid., 329.
24. London, 1653, a 1v - a 2
25. a 4v. 'An Apologie for Romances' is reprinted in Prefaces to Four Seventeenth - Century Romances, ed. Charles Davies, Augustan Reprint Society Publications, Number 42 (1953).
26. A iii.
27. A3 - A3v.
28. Edinburgh, 1660, a3 - a6
29. The meaning of 'romantic' in the 1650's and 1660's is treated by L.P. Smith, Words and Idioms, 2nd ed. (London, 1925), Chapter 3, 'Four Romantic Words'; W.L. Ulstick, TLS (21 December 1933), p. 909; Fernand Baldensperger, ' "Romantique," ses Analogues et ses Equivalents: Tableau Synoptique de 1650 à 1810,' Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, XIX (1937), 13-105. I am indebted to these studies for the examples in the following paragraph.



30. References to the older romances of chivalry as well as to Spanish and English romances in English drama to 1660 are collected by H. Koeppel in Ben Jonson's Wirkung auf Zeitgenössische Dramatiker und andere Studien Zur inneren Geschichte des englischen Dramas, Anglistische Forschungen, Vol. XX (Heidelberg, 1906), Chapter 3, 'Reflexe der Ritter-Romane im Drama.' The following excerpts are taken from this study.
31. Moriomachia has been reprinted in Short Fiction of the Seventeenth Century, ed. Charles C. Mish, Anchor Anthology (New York, 1963). All citations are to this reprint.
32. Moriomachia, p. 48.
33. Ibid., p. 71.
34. Ibid., p. 59.
35. Don Zara del Fogo was published under three separate titles:
  1. Don Zara del Fogo: A Mock-Romance. Written originally in the Brittish Tongue, and made English by a person of much Honor, Basilus Musophilus (1656).
  2. Wit and Fancy in a Maze. Or the incomparable champion of love and beauty. A mock romance ... (1656).
  3. Romancio-Matrix: or, A romance on romances ... (1660).
 All citations are to an edition bearing the first title and date and printed 'by T.W. for Tho. Vere.'
36. p. 47.
37. p. 149.
38. p. 181.
39. 'Sir Eglamor and the Dragon' is reprinted in A Collection of Loyal Songs (1731), II, 30. 'The Gang or the Nine Worthies and Champions' is printed in the second volume of Rump: or an Exact Collection of the Choycest Poems and Songs relating to the Late Times (1662), 104-108.
40. The Faerie Leveller; or, King Charles his Leveller described in Queene Elizabeth's dayes. By Edmond Spenser in his unpareleld Poeme, intituled The Faerie Queene, 1648.
41. Don Juan Lamberto; or, a Comical History of The Late Times. By Montelion, Knight of the Oracle is reprinted in The Somers Collection of Tracts, VII, 104-155, where it is attributed to Thomas Flatman. The citation is to this reprint.
42. pp. 149-150.

### CHAPTER 3

#### Hudibras as a Mock-Romance

Love and Fighting is the Sum  
Of all Romances from Tom Thumb  
To Arthur, Gundibert, and Hudibras,  
And all those worthys that De Scudry has.

Butler, from 'Love' in Satires, p. 209.

#### I

Hudibras, whose roots descend so deeply into, and spread so widely through, seventeenth century political and literary experience, had its generating circumstance in the chance meeting of two men. Sometime during the late 1640's Samuel Butler and a knight from the West Country became acquainted while lodging in the same house in Holborn.<sup>1</sup> The knight, who was then serving the cause of Parliament both as a colonel in the army and as a committee-man, was a Presbyterian. His clerk was an Independent, and the two argued continually about religion. Butler witnessed a number of these disputes and, a keen student of cant and nonsense, was thereby prompted to begin the composition of a satirical poem in which the knight and his clerk figured, though not by name, as principal characters. For the plot of the poem he adapted a humiliating incident that had happened to the knight in his county. As a Justice of the Peace he had dispersed a group of bear-baiters and arrested and punished a fiddler for his participation in the (then) illegal sport. But the fiddler later received legal redress for what must have been an unjustified action, a turn of events so embarrassing

to the knight that he left his country residence to settle in London. These circumstances, inferring from the poem as well as from Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden, were the genesis and the raw materials of the first part of Hudibras.<sup>2</sup> The warm exchanges between the Presbyterian and the Independent, Butler apparently reproduced very closely. He even says in his letter that 'as neere as I could I sett downe theire very words.' The character of the knight was also faithfully rendered for, again quoting from Butler's letter, those who knew him 'found him out by it at y<sup>e</sup> first vei<sup>w</sup>.' Moreover, the enterprise proved a grand success. When Hudibras was published in 1662 it became the fashionable book of the hour and was read with delight, even by the King himself. Fate thus kindly placed in the way of an obscure middle-aged secretary not only the main characters but also much of the plot and conversation of a poem which, if it brought him only a moderate financial reward, was to win him both immediate and lasting fame. Yet we must not minimise Butler's rôle in the process, for in one particular at least he is to be credited with a stroke of uncommon felicity. Taking the materials so casually provided, he made a romance of them.

Nor is this all. To the author too must go the credit for having recognized the dramatic and comic possibilities in the characters and situations he witnessed, as well as their representative quality. Butler was no mere amanuensis either, and Hudibras bears throughout the strong impress of his mind. He possessed the breadth of experience necessary to place his characters in their political and religious

context, and the critical faculty to make them appear in a revealing light. He had the learning to add intellectual substance to the poem and the liveliness of spirit necessary to do it in an entertaining way. But for all this, his most brilliant touch, and perhaps his most lasting success, was his choice of a literary form by which he fixed once and for all the dramatic image of the religious quarrels of the time. For even when the sometimes long-winded debates and the ingenious metaphors have faded from the memory, it is the picture of the Presbyterian knight and his Independent squire, zealously meddling and endlessly wrangling, that remains clearly in the mind.

The two principal characters as well as the incidents of the first part of Hudibras are thus the result of precise observation enlivened by a critical fancy. We do not know whether the plot of Parts II and III is to be assigned to the same source or whether it is wholly the product of Butler's invention. Yet our ignorance here just as much as our knowledge in the case of the first part is of little consequence for the interpretation of Hudibras. Butler's declared purpose in writing the poem was to expose to ridicule not individuals but groups. 'Butt I Assure you,' he writes to Sir George Oxenden, 'my cheife designe was onely to give y<sup>e</sup> world a Just Acco<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Ridiculous folly & Knavery of y<sup>e</sup> Presbiterian & Independent Factions then in power.' He carries out his intentions so well that one would not know, without reading his letter, that the first part of the poem derives so largely from facts. In managing the adventures of Hudibras and Falpho localization and particularization are studiously avoided. The action

is played against a generalized background and the characters, excepting some of those in Part III, Canto ii, are not meant to be identified with public figures. Butler seems to have no interest in directly involving his hero in the political events of the years 1640-1660. 'He sends him out a colonelling,' says Dr. Johnson, 'and yet never brings him within sight of war.'<sup>3</sup> Nor, we may add, does he bring him within sight of church or committee-room.

Instead he and his squire are made to ramble a countryside got up to resemble the landscape of a romance. In their wanderings they encounter a series of characters with whom they come in conflict and by whom, apart from Sidrophel the astrologer, they are bested. In the intervals of these adventures there is ample leisure for disputation on a number of subjects. This loose, episodic plan -- it is also that of Don Quixote -- is well suited to the tendency in Hudibras to repeated satirical degradation of its two heroes. Vigorous physical humiliation at the hands of their foes is their normal fate each time they intervene to set things to right, and they are granted respite only to condemn themselves the more effectively when, invariably, they begin to argue. The drubbings, the cudgellings, the basting with eggs that they receive are the perennial devices of low comedy, but in Hudibras they count for more than this and are better understood when considered in fuller context.

Butler, as well as readers sympathetic to his purpose, probably thought of the poem as something of a rejoinder in kind. It would have been implicitly in their minds that the Presbyterians and

Independents had been motivated in their unsuccessful attempts at government by the most audacious delusions of grandeur. They had made a claim to consideration on a heroic level, and the satirist's business was to show how ludicrously ungrounded it was. This position is not unique to Butler. Cleveland characterizes the accounts of Parliamentary victories in newsbooks as 'the Roundheads' legends, the rebels' romance; stories of a larger size than the ears of their sect, able to strangle the belief of <sup>a</sup>/Solifidian.'<sup>4</sup> He further sneers at their tales of 'Waller's knight-errantry,' and predicts that they shall soon begin to print fantasies based upon Cromwell's exploits, 'for the knight must always beat the giant, that's resolved.'<sup>5</sup> That the rebels had already cast themselves in the rôle of heroes in a romance is the unstated assumption of Hudibras as it is of Don Juan Lamberto. In both cases the humiliation of their pretensions by means of the mock-romance must have been felt to be especially appropriate.

As for the arguments that fill so many pages in Hudibras, they are the inevitable medium for dramatizing the main critical perspective from which Butler views the knight and squire as representative figures. Again Cleveland may appositely be cited:

Thus the Quixotes of this age fight with the windmills of their own heads, quell monsters of their own creation, make plots, and then discover them; as who fitter to unkennel the fox than the terrier that is part of him?<sup>6</sup>

In Hudibras, as elsewhere in his writings, Butler evinces an extensive and lively concern with the capacity of the mind for self-delusion. The literary form of Hudibras permits him to make a copious exploration

of his heroes' minds from this point of view.

In defining the relationship between subject and literary form in Hudibras, it is important to keep in mind that the poem seems to have been conceived and executed as a comic rebuttal of an unjustified claim. The Presbyterians and Independents had pretended to a heroic seriousness which it was Butler's purpose to reduce to its true proportions. To do so he casts the adventures of his characters into the form of a mock-romance, and with the means thus provided him he makes a thorough dissection of their pretensions. In this general sense Hudibras is a 'burlesque'. We have seen that by the mid-seventeenth century chivalric romance had long ceased to be considered a serious literary form. The knights and squires of the old romances were no longer anything but comic figures. Hudibras aims to show the essential similarity between the overblown comportment of the knights errant in the romances and the fantastic conduct of the Puritans during the Civil Wars.

Butler carries out this design within a limited compass. We are not shown public figures in motley busily misgoverning the country as in Don Juan Lamberto. There is only enough familiar detail in the characterization of Hudibras and Ralpho to assure their recognition as types. To this, as well as to the general character of the plot, they owe their representative nature. The story that Butler heard from the West Country knight is wonderfully compatible with a mock-heroic treatment; and, whatever their source, so are most of the incidents of Parts II and III. The organization of the poem is therefore not

historical but literary. It is determined by the romances of chivalry. Arms and love are the two activities traditionally practised by the knight, and it is in the exercise of them that we meet Hudibras. To them Butler adds a third -- dispute. His literary presentation of it may well have been suggested by the example of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

Limited in this way, Hudibras is inclusive in another. The canon of Toledo in Don Quixote found one good quality in the romances of chivalry, that they offered an inventive mind the occasion to show itself to good advantage. Butler's fancy seems to have warmed to this potential in the mock-romance, for in Hudibras he brings to his subject all the resources of the tradition of satire we examined in the last chapter. He is thereby enabled to present his hero not from one but from several satirical perspectives, emphasizing now his mannered pomposity, now his self-interest, now his unworthiness as a soldier. Insofar as the knight errant was a figure of fun, Hudibras is compared to him. But the comparison cannot be complete, for beneath the trappings of outdated literary fashion the old knight was also high-minded and courageous. From this point of view Hudibras is contrasted to him. Hudibras thus comprises the two strains of satire that grew up in connexion with the decline of the romances of chivalry in the seventeenth century. To see how Butler manages the satirical elements available to him, it will be convenient to consider separately the two components of his attitude towards his hero as a knight of romance.



## II

In tracing the history of literary mockery of romance in the seventeenth century we have had to do not with a consistently developing tradition but with the continued existence of a set of instinctive reactions to a genre fallen into disfavour. Hudibras, no less than Don Zara del Fogo and Don Juan Lamberto, is a product of a marshalling of these common instinctive reactions for a particular purpose. A comparison of the first part of Hudibras and Book I of Don Zara del Fogo, a work whose purpose is literary parody and comedy and which is free of political satire, will show something of the soil from which they both spring. In each there is an early reference to the Mirror of Knighthood. Don Zara's 'good steed Founder-foot' and the drooping beast that bears Hudibras are similarly unheroic mounts. Both authors exploit the comedy to be derived from the incongruous combination of the language and implements of battle and the everyday activity of eating. Both introduce coarse language and gesture in ludicrous combination with exalted style and sentiment. In one work as in the other there are parodies of the hackneyed vocabulary of pastoral description and of hyperbolic compliments addressed to ladies, as well as travesties of classical commonplaces. Don Zara (in Book III) even sends, like Hudibras, a wildly ridiculous epistle to his lady.<sup>7</sup>

Hudibras's indignant rejoinder to Talgol the butcher, who has challenged him:

Not all that Pride that makes thee swell  
 As big as thou dost blown-up Veal;  
 Nor all thy tricks and slights to cheat,  
 And sell thy Carrion for good meat;  
 Not all thy Magick to repair  
 Decay'd old age in tough lean ware ...  
 Shall save or help thee to evade  
 The hand of Justice, or this blade (I, ii, 745-58),

recalls Don Zara's to the host of a cottage who has tried to overcharge him for a meal:

hast thou a mind to have thy Fabrick fired in so many  
 places, that all the Ale thou art Master of shall not  
 be able to quench it? (Book I, Chapter 3, p. 26).

These are largely resemblances of detail. But the plan, too, has its antecedents. In Hudibras one of the principal methods of ridiculing the knight and squire (and the parties they represent) is a detailed comparison of them to the characters of the romances while simultaneous parody keeps the outlandish silliness of this literary form constantly before the reader's eyes, and even exaggerates it. In this Hudibras is like Don Juan Lamberto. Where it goes beyond the pamphlet is in the inventiveness with which Butler elaborates this basic plan, in the skill with which he disposes the resulting parts, and in the fullness with which he draws the characters.

Consider the nature and arrangement of the major episodes in Hudibras. The knight and squire ride out to seek adventure, they encounter dangerous foes, do battle with them, and are victorious. The knight turns his thoughts to love, but the defeated enemy reappear, attack, and turn the tables. Released from prison by his lady, the knight is charged with the performance of a painful labour to win her.

He and the squire have another violent encounter with malefactors and are again laid low. They seek the advice and prognostication of a wizard, disagree with him, and once more fall to fighting, this time successfully. The two comrades are separated. The knight manages to reach the castle of his love, where he pleads his suit, but is enchanted by goblins. He escapes with the help of a devil, who in the morning light is discovered to be his squire. They apply for help to a conjurer of another sort, and on his advice the knight sends his lady an epistle, to which she replies.

This skeleton is amply fleshed with detail from the romances. Each part of the poem is divided into 'cantos', and each canto, as in The Faerie Queene and Gondibert, is headed by an 'argument.' The poet assumes the rôle of recorder of legendary deeds already set down by various hands, and attributes the story to 'our authors.' Narration and description are peppered with archaisms: 'yerst,' 'hight,' 'wight,' 'y'cleped.' The endowments of knight and squire are described, as are their dress and arms. The ancestry of the squire and those of some of the rival warriors are given. The knight addresses lofty challenges to his opponents and claims to act according to the law of arms. He thirsts for fame but has cause to lament his treatment at the hands of Fate. There are, finally, both magic forts and castles.

Butler modifies our apprehension both of the pattern and of its subordinate parts in two ways: by a general criticism of romance, and by the comic management of incident, style, and character. The seasonable introduction of passages of direct criticism serves to apprise

us of the author's feelings towards the type of action the knight is about to undertake. He begins to perform romantic deeds in the second canto of Part I, which is introduced by Butler's famous allusion to the 'ancient sage Philosopher':

That had read Alexander Ross over,  
And swore the world, as he could prove,  
Was made of Fighting and of Love:  
Just so Romances are, for what else  
Is in them all, but Love and Battels?

(I, 11, 2-6).

He continues, preparing us for the high martial feats of the next two cantos, by blaming the authors of romances for the lengths to which they go to create types of ferocity:

They never care how many others  
They kill, without regard of mothers,  
Or wives, or children, so they can  
Make up some fierce, dead-doing man,  
Compos'd of many ingredient Valours,  
Just like the Manhood of nine Taylors.

(I, 11, 17-22).

Hudibras's protracted attempts to ensnare the elusive widow are preceded by a passage (II, 1, 9-22) invoking the insipid sameness of the behaviour of knights in pursuit of their ladies, and his visit to Sidrophel is ushered in by dry reflexions (II, 111, 1-38) on the pleasure of being cheated and the fecklessness of trying to discover the future. Elsewhere, the widow, who is unmoved by the knight's assurances of his noble attachment to her, throws doses of cold water on the ardours of his heroic passion (III, 1, 693ff.; Lady's Answer, 343ff.). And Trulla, equally unmoved by his blustering threats,

coarsely jibes at the custom of wearing ladies' favours by decking him in her mantle (I, 411, 919-928).

With the rigidity of caricature, Hudibras is made to act out the comic rôles of warrior and lover whose general excesses are thus defined. At various points in the poem Butler takes care to point out specific absurdities in the parts that the knight and others are made to play. The widow, for example, is given a jeering aside at the:

Punctilio's, and Capriches  
Between th' Petticoat, and Breeches,  
More petulant extravagancies,  
Than Poets make 'em in Romances.

(III, 1, 689-692).

She and the tirelessly argumentative knight have, we remember, themselves divided many a hair on the subject of love and marriage; and their relationship has been governed by the elaborate punctiliousness of mutual self-interest. In the course of his prolonged and unsuccessful suit for her hand and fortune both the knight and the lady mock from their own mouths -- he unknowingly, she with shrewd irony -- the well-established rules governing their behaviour. On the way to her castle Hudibras reflects upon the conduct of his exemplars:

Thought he, the Ancient Errant Knights,  
Won all their Ladies Hearts, in Fights,  
And cut whole Gyants into fitters,  
To put them into amorous twitters:  
Whose stubborn Bowels scorn'd to yield,  
Until their Gallants were half kill'd:  
But when their Bones were drub'd so sore  
They durst not wooe one Combat more;  
The Ladies Hearts began to melt,  
Subdu'd with Blows their Lovers felt.

(III, 1, 83-92).

The peculiarity of the widow that causes Hudibras so much bootless effort -- she cannot love those who love her -- is the reductio ad absurdum of the haughty disdain of romance heroines for their suitors, which forces them to hazard their lives in proof of their passion. This insistence, direct or indirect, that their lovers suffer purifying chastisement before they be granted favours is parodied in the task that the widow sets Hudibras. She cites precedents in romances for a knight's suffering whipping for his lady's sake and demands that he do the same as the price of freeing him from the stocks and as a necessary prelude to enjoying her good graces:

As skilful Coopers hoop their Tubs,  
 With Lydian and with Phrygian Dubs;  
 Why may not Whipping have as good  
 A Grace, perform'd in time and mood;  
 With comely movement, and by Art,  
 Rayse Passion in a Ladies heart?

(II, 1, 849-854).

Many of the clichés of romantic narrative were worn so smooth by Butler's time that in order to ridicule both them and Hudibras, he needed only to put him through the familiar motions. After his victory over Sidrophel the knight 'relaps'd again t'a lover.' He lies sleepless because of his love (I, iii, 401-02; II, ii, 33-34), and calls her name before engaging the enemy (I, iii, 477-78). The arbor to which the wounded bear is led by Trulla and Cerdon is provided with roses, eglantine and a 'softly-murm'ring stream'; it wants only

a Song,  
 And a well-tun'd Theorbo hung  
 Upon a Bough, to ease the pain  
 His tugg'd ears suffer'd, with a strain.

(I, iii, 165-68).<sup>8</sup>

The style, too, is variously used in the attack on worn out conventions and on Hudibras, their hapless champion. In the rare passages of sustained ironic loftiness, it is normally the style alone that is the object of comic deflation, for Butler so describes only the innocent. He can feel no rancour towards the country fellows who serve as Hudibras's opponents in the two battles of Part I, and his good-humoured presentation of them in terms of heroic cliché is carried off with notable success. There is the murderous butcher:

Inur'd to labour, sweat, and toyl,  
And, like a Champion, shone with Oyl.  
Right many a Widow his keen blade,  
And many Fatherless, had made.  
He many a Bore and huge Dun Cow  
Did, like another Guy, o'rethrow.

(I, ii, 301-306).

The formidable tinker:

But Brass was feeble to resist  
The fury of his armed fist;  
Nor could the hardest Ir'n hold out  
Against his Blows, but they would through't.

(I, ii, 339-42).

The cobbler, champion of the underdog:

Cerdon the Great, renown'd in Song,  
Like Here'les, for repair of wrong:  
He rais'd the low, and fortify'd  
The weak against the strongest side.

(I, ii, 411-414).

Towards this rustic crew Butler is freely indulgent. They are, after all, only 'such as Commonly make up Bearebaitings.' But towards Hudibras he is relentless, and in the scenes of battle the style is his

most effective instrument of degradation. Sometimes a stately idiom is plummeted to bathos by a pun or the introduction of a ludicrous detail. Here is the knight preparing to accost his foes:

Meanwhile he stopp'd his willing Steed,  
To fit himself for martial deed:  
Both kinds of mettle he prepar'd,  
Either to give blows, or to ward,  
Courage within, and Steel without,  
To give, or to receive a Rout.  
His Death-charg'd Pistols he did fit well,  
Drawn out from life-preserving vittle.

(I, ii, 81-88).

Here Ralpho urges his master to show clemency towards Crowdero:

Will you, Great Sir, that glory blot  
In cold bloud which you gain'd in hot?  
Will you employ your Conqu'ring Sword,  
To break a Fiddle and your Word?

(I, ii, 1041-44).

Here the battle between Hudibras and Talgol is rendered in such a mixture of styles that it is impossible to say whether the high or the low is dominant:

Meanwhile fierce Talgol gath'ring might,  
With rugged Truncheon charg'd the Knight.  
And he his rusty Pistol held  
To take the blow on, like a Shield;  
The Gun recoyl'd, as well it might,  
Not us'd to such a kind of fight,  
And shrunk from its great Master's gripe,  
Knock'd down and stunn'd with mortal stripe.  
Then Hudibras with furious haste  
Drew out his sword; yet not so fast,  
But Talgol first with hardy thwack  
Twice bruiz'd his head, and twice his back.  
But when his nut-brown Sword was out,  
Couragiously he laid about,  
Imprinting many a wound upon  
His mortal foe the Truncheon.

(I, ii, 785-800).



This robust composition of exalted and commonplace diction, swift-moving and spiced with surprising turns, perfectly accommodates the meddling antics of knight and squire in their attempt to subdue the bear-baiters.

### III

There is no doubt that Hudibras owes a debt to Don Quixote, the first part of which had been translated into English by Thomas Shelton as early as 1612. References in the text of Hudibras and the evident similarities of detail, of plan, and of procedure establish this debt beyond question.<sup>9</sup> The influence of the romances on Hudibras's conduct, his perception of menace and evil intent in the most innocent occurrences, the altercations between knight and squire, the whipping the knight so dextrously avoids, Butler's disclaiming (through Hudibras) the spurious second part of the poem, all have their parallel in Don Quixote; as do the epistle to the lady, the knight's refusal to engage with base foes, his calling upon his mistress's name before battle, and other particulars. The precise extent and nature of the debt is, for all this, difficult to define. Romances of chivalry are notoriously similar, and the burlesque and mockery of them in the seventeenth century (as we have seen) took similar forms. Cervantes and Butler had also, no doubt, many of the same romances in mind; so that the lineage of motifs common to Hudibras and Don Quixote is often impossible to determine. Yet the exact identification of specific borrowings is of little importance for our study. The general similarities are

undeniable, and the modifications Butler is led to make in them to serve his purpose -- very different from that of Cervantes -- is the aspect of the comparison most enlightening for the understanding of Hudibras.

When one thinks of the descendants of Don Quixote in English, Hudibras is not the first to come to mind. One recalls first such works as Smollet's Sir Launcelot Greaves (1762), Richard Graves's The Spiritual Quixote (1773), and Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742). Bristling with incident, leisurely in pace, rich in social detail, animated as well by good humour as by satirical wit, they bear the traits of their literary ancestry more evidently than Hudibras. Butler, in drawing from Don Quixote, left behind most of what the eighteenth century novelists took. Unlike Cervantes, he does not appropriate the narrative amplitude of the romances to the advantage of his poem. Here are Hudibras and Falpho preparing to set out for the lady's castle:

But first with knocking lowd and bauling,  
He rows'd the Squire, in Truckle lolling,  
And, after many Circumstances,  
Which vulgar Authors in Romances  
Do use to spend their time, and wits on  
To make impertinent Description;  
They got (with much ado) to horse,  
And to the Castle bent their Course.

(II, ii, 39-46).

Of social detail there is very little, of good humour less still. The incidents are few. But in one respect at least Butler follows, and even goes beyond, his original: the length and fullness of the discussions and arguments, especially those between knight and squire.

Yet how different the arguments are in one work and in the other! Ralpho does, it is true, sometimes play Sancho Panza to Hudibras's Don Quixote, particularly as a counterpoint to the fantastic pedantry and perverse logic that so often addle the knight's perceptions and reasoning. Overthrown, beaten, and confined in the stocks, Hudibras argues that genuine valour is not only unaffected by such circumstances but actually shines the brighter in adversity. Sullen and matter-of-fact, Ralpho is unconvinced:

How great I do not know  
We may by being beaten grow;  
But none that see how here we sit,  
Will judge us overgrown with wit.

(I, iii, 1057-60).

Here, as in the adventure with the skimmington, his rôle is to prick the bubble inflated by the knight's wild misinterpretation of the commonplace. But in the arguments about Synods and bear gardens he is only slightly less deranged than his antagonist, and on the subject of learning and 'light,' he quite equals him.

They do not always disagree. Hypocrisy can hardly be more effectively exposed than in candid conversation between hypocrites. Although of different parties, the knight and the squire are both of 'the godly', and therefore in fundamental accord on certain ethical matters. That the 'saints' may apply to a conjurer and that they are not bound by oaths (except where something is to be gained) elicit their ready assent, according to that established principle:

No argument like matter of fact is.

(II, iii, 192).

Personal interest carries the greatest weight. Ralpho quickly takes another tack when his argument that Hudibras may suffer the whipping by proxy is turned against him and threatens to put him in his master's place. He is cleverer than the ponderous knight, who is attracted by his suggestion that the law may provide the means to win the widow. But his method is not to accept the idea outright, but so to befog the discussion that after appearing to disparage and reject the squire's suggestion, he actually adopts it as his own. In the course of these disputes both are made to appear obstinate and hypocritical but the knight, who never wins an argument with the squire, comes off the worse by far.

'But for poor Hudibras, his poet had no tenderness.' Dr. Johnson's remark is made in the context of a comparison between Hudibras and Don Quixote, in which he notes Butler's lack of that generous sympathy and toleration for his hero that Cervantes has for his.<sup>10</sup> Hudibras is contemptible as Don Quixote never is, and though he shows a convincing skepticism in his arguments with Sidrophel, he has no trace of that general soundness of judgment and practical wisdom that Don Quixote commands on any subject but knight-errantry. Nor does Don Quixote have any of that self- and party-interest which prompt Hudibras to lies and deceit. To Dr. Johnson, as to the modern reader, the contrast could hardly be more striking. Yet it would have been less so to the English reader of the 1660's, who saw Don Quixote with other eyes. A consideration of all the known allusions to Don Quixote before 1660 reveals the extent of the difference.<sup>11</sup> Putting aside the incidental

references to battles with windmills and flocks of sheep, most allusions make no distinction between Don Quixote and other knights errant in point of extravagant behaviour. He is almost always the object of the same condescending jibes as the heroes of the books that turned his wits. He seems to have been considered as a thoroughgoing lunatic, ridiculous, outlandish, and foolish, a living burlesque, a figure of fun, and unworthy of serious attention. The First Part of Don Quixote seems to be the principal source of these impressions; the Second Part, in which Don Quixote comes into his own as literary character, was not published in England until 1620, eight years after the First Part.

There is no evidence that Butler thought any differently about Don Quixote than most of his contemporaries. Of the four allusions to it in Hudibras one is to the windmills, one to the flock of sheep, and one to Sancho's being tossed in a blanket. The remaining one occurs in the widow's long speech urging Hudibras to whip himself in which she cites the example of Don Quixote as well as that of the Illustrious Bassa and Florio of Boccaccio's Filocolo. Talgol, Hudibras, and modern virtuosi are compared to Don Quixote, and in each case the comparison functions as a kind of demeaning joke. It is a pathologically disordered and ludicrous Don Quixote whose literary presence is felt in Hudibras, for he is the only one consonant with the nature of the poem and with Butler's satirical design.

We have insufficient grounds for determining Butler's general attitude towards Don Quixote, but we may amplify upon our deductions from the allusions in Hudibras by citing a passage from his notebook observations on 'Wit and Folly':

Men that are mad upon many things, are never so extravagant, as those who are possess'd with but one. For one Humor diverts another, and never suffers the Capricch to fix ... For sottishness and Folly, which is nothing else but Natural Madnes, is neither so ridiculous, nor Serious in its way, as that which men fall into by Accident or their own ungovern'd Passions ... For Nature never made anything so bad as the Deviations from her have render'd it: Nor is she more Improv'd by Art, and Ingenuity, then Impayr'd by Artificiall Folly, and Industrious Ignorance. And therefor the Author of Don Quixot, makes Sancho (though a Natural Fool) much more wise and Politique then his Master with all his Study'd, and acquir'd Abilities.

(Characters, pp. 327-8).

If this seems a bit harsh on Don Quixote, we do well to remember that Butler, like the other men of his age, was less tolerant of madmen than we are. The categories of moral thought and the bias of moral feeling evidenced in this passage do not easily accommodate the bizarre and the eccentric. Insofar as we can judge from his prose writings -- and they are nothing if not extensive moral comments -- Butler shared the repugnance of many of his contemporaries for deviations from the path of conduct traced by a clear understanding directed upon the evident lessons of common experience. As a moralist he counted such lapses among the most serious and dangerous -- and also among the most rampant -- of sins.

The nature of the times, no less than Butler's moral convictions, must have determined his attitude towards Don Quixote. Shaw's principle that 'the degree of tolerance attainable at any moment depends on the strain under which society is maintaining its cohesion' may be held to influence literary taste as well as legislative and judicial activity.<sup>12</sup> After years of war and political instability, the stolid

Sancho Panza might well seem not only a serviceable fellow but a socially desirable one. And his volatile master, no matter what his other personal qualities, might understandably raise a shudder in view of the painful consequences recently brought about by well-intentioned dreamers. The comparison between Don Quixote's futile attempts to impose the ideals of chivalry on an unwilling world and the efforts of the 'saints' to bring about the kingdom of God was therefore a natural one. We have already noted Cleveland's shot at the 'quixotes of this age' who 'fight with the windmills of their own heads.' This was in 1645. In 1660 the comparison was taken up in a broadside entitled Don Pedro de Quixote, or in English the Rt. Reverend Hugh Peters, which attacks the intemperate chaplain whose eloquent sophistries were to be burlesqued a year later in Don Juan Lamberto.

#### IV

Both Hudibras and Don Quixote perceive reality through the distorting prism of their disordered fancy. In each case the distemper is of a different order and their attempts to set the world to rights differ accordingly in motive and in execution. Hudibras, for all his sinister interpretation of bear-baiting and folk-procession, sees his financial interests with unclouded vision. As he confesses to the 'elf' who interrogates him in the lady's 'castle':

What makes all Doctrines Plain and Clear?  
About two Hundred Pounds a Year.  
And that which was prov'd true before,  
Prove false again? Two Hundred more.

(III, 1, 1277-80).

This predilection governs his feelings for the widow, whose 'jointure land' he is set on, and in the pursuit of which he consults the astrologer in the second part and the lawyer in the third. This is a marked contrast between him and Don Quixote, whose elevated passion for Dulcinea does not comprehend a yearning for her fortune, and a potentially fruitful one for the satirical degradation of Hudibras. But, here as elsewhere, Butler does not develop the difference between the two as such. He is content that Hudibras's relationship to Don Quixote remain within the limits that we described in the preceding section.

Yet Don Quixote resembles other knights errant: in nobility of motive and innocence of heart, in courage, steadfastness, and loyalty, virtues one would be hard pressed to find a trace of in Hudibras. Insofar as he lacks these and similar qualities traditionally ascribed to knights errant, the gulf separating them is traced with evident gusto -- and in generic terms. This is nothing new. In our survey of the satirical use of romance in the seventeenth century we have seen the discrepancy between the heroic ideal realized in the conduct of the literary knights and the unworthy behaviour of modern men elaborated, generally as a component part of longer works. The effectiveness of the contrast will be found to depend upon a technique of evoking (directly or indirectly) the ideals of knight errantry while representing in comic detail the corresponding failings of the characters to be belittled. Butler's management of this procedure, in a poem in which commonplaces of the romances are burlesqued throughout, repays close attention.



Criticism according to an ideal, though carried out in the lightest vein and in the most restricted context, implies approval of that ideal. The men of Butler's age had no difficulty believing in the value of courage, dedication, and generosity, and his burlesque of the romances of chivalry can hardly be said to evidence the opposite in him. An extensive acquaintance with a literary type, such as his with the romances, argues a partiality for them, and not only an attachment of fascinated dislike; for a man who is genuinely revolted by a kind of book will not read many books of that kind. This is not to claim that Butler was secretly addicted to romances of chivalry. It is clear that, as a man in whom truth to nature was a moral and literary ideal, he found them idle and insipid from many points of view. But this is not all. His was an inquiring mind, able to penetrate beneath the surface of literary convention, and (as with so many satirists) not one to remain unmoved before a spectacle of innocence and nobility. Here is the beginning of his 'Character' of 'A Romance Writer':

Pulls down old Histories to build them up finer again, after a new Model of his own designing. He takes away all the Lights of Truth in History to make it the fitter Tutoress of Life; for Truth herself has little or nothing to do in the Affairs of the World, although all Matters of the greatest Weight and Moment are pretended and done in her Name; like a weak Princess, that has only the Title, and Falshood all the Power. He observes one very fit Decorum in dating his Histories in the Days of old, and putting all his own Inventions upon ancient Times; for when the World was younger, it might, perhaps, love, and fight, and do generous Things at the Rate he describes them; but since it is grown old, all these heroic Feats are laid by and utterly given over, nor ever like to come in Fashion again; and therefore all his Images of those Virtues signify no more than the Statues upon dead Men's Tombs, that will never make them live again.

This is a rare glimpse of the nostalgic idealist sleeping within the cynic, and we realize in reading it that weariness with a world grown old in the pursuit of selfish interest is a sentiment that colours a good deal of Butler's prose writing. But his attitude is more than that of the man who regrets that he can no longer believe the fairy stories of his childhood. He regrets as well that the romance writer's images of heroism and generosity are as powerless as effigies on tombs to revive the practice of the virtues they symbolise. These virtues, moreover, he attributes to ancient times, saying that the romance writer embellishes legends and old stories to make them conform to hackneyed literary fashion. This idea is developed further in a footnote to a passage in Hudibras (II, i, 371-78) giving a derisive account of St. Francis's plunging into a mound of snow to subdue the prickings of lust:

The antient Writers of the Lives of the Saints, were of the same sort of People, who first writ of Knight-Errantry, and as in the one, they rendred the brave Actions of some very great Persons ridiculous, by their prodigious Lies, and sottish way of describing them: So they have abus'd the Piety of some very devout Persons, by imposing such stories upon them, as this upon St. Francis.

(p. 111).

Butler's wit is not normally stimulated by genuine piety and bravery, and when he mentions either it is generally by way of contrast with the lamentable state of his own age or the lies foisted on the past by credulous and extravagant writers. Yet behind his keen perception of the degeneracy of modern life, and quickening it generally, lies this sense of the virtues of old saints and champions and even the hazy

outlines of a heroic age.

We need not therefore be surprised when we encounter passages like these in Butler's notebooks:

All Feates of Armes are now abridgd  
To sieges, or to b'ing besieg'd.

(Satires, p. 267).

No feates of Armes are now in mode  
But only living without Food,  
Nor weapons handled but for show,  
Disease and Famine are the Foe.

(Ibid.).

Fighting now is out of Mode,  
And Stratagem, the only Roade.

(Ibid., p. 268).

These reflexions may at first seem inconsistent in an author who qualifies the deeds of the heroes of epic and romance as 'slaughter, and knocking on the head.' But there is no contradiction in one who burlesques the romances of chivalry, as well as other heroic literary forms, and who notes, for example, how much less courageous than the old knights is the highwayman (Characters, p. 227) who depends upon surprise and only falls on when he is certain of his advantage. In the one case Butler takes as object of his destructive wit the romances and their authors, not the old heroes, whose genuine virtues have been debased to a jejune sensationalism. In the other he points out how far below the level of goodness and valour of ancient times (which can be perceived through and in spite of the inflated style and impossible episodes of the romances) his contemporaries fall.

It is only in the third canto of Part III that Butler introduces this sort of general critical comparison. After their escape from the 'antimasquerade' staged by the widow, Hudibras and Ralpho fall to dispute to justify their retreat. The particular leads to the general: from retreat as military stratagem and public thanksgiving for doubtful victories (and even defeat) they pass to modern warfare. Hudibras dilates upon the subject in terms like those of the passages in Butler's notebooks.

There's now no Fear of wounds nor maiming,  
 All dangers are reduc'd to Famine.  
 And Feats of Arms, to Plot, Design,  
 Surprize, and Stratagem, and Mine.  
 But have no need, nor use of courage,  
 Unless it be for Glory, or Forrage:  
 For if they fight, 'tis but by chance,  
 When one side vent'ring to advance,  
 And come uncivilly too near,  
 Are charg'd unmercifully i' the Rere.

(III, iii, 329-33).

Ralpho suggests that the politic procedure of modern warfare be adapted to Hudibras's campaign to reduce the widow to submission. Some of the old romance heroes were, he says, more direct with their mistresses, and actually conquered their hearts by beating their bodies, like Rinaldo, who won his bride 'By courting of her back, and side.' But:

those times and Feats are over,  
 They are not for a Modern Lover:  
 When Mistresses are too cross-grain'd,  
 By such addresses, to be gain'd:  
 And if they were, would have it out,  
 With many another kind of bout.

(III, iii, 385-390).

He is more likely to be successful by bringing a suit at Law:

Besides, Encounters at the Bar,  
Are braver now, than those in War.  
In which the Law does execution,  
With less Disorder and Confusion.

(III, iii, 409-412).

What we have here is clearly not the condemnation of modern timidity and deviousness in terms of an ideal that is given unequivocal approval.

We can hardly be expected to consider as exemplary the old gallants who

won the Amazons,  
By wanton drubbing of their bones.

(III, iii, 381-82).

No; the example of another time and another ideal, themselves more than a little ridiculous, serves to make a telling contrast in this context because of the nature of the modern vices to be ridiculed. They are, these vices, of the same general type as those attributed to modern knights by Gertrude in Eastward Ho! (1605) in the unflattering comparison she draws between them and Palmerin of England, Lancelot, Tristram, and the Knight of the Sun.<sup>13</sup> In Butler's comparison Hudibras is also involved, for, a poltroon in war and a schemer in love, he is a practitioner of his own doctrines and those of his squire.

In other parts of the poem the contrast is carried out in terms of action. When putting Hudibras and Ralpho through the motions of would-be knight errant and squire, Butler may have thought of that notable comic deflation of a false claim to knighthood, Spenser's handling of Braggadochio and Trompart in The Faerie Queene. It was in the canto immediately preceding their introduction that Butler found

the impetuous and melancholy warrior whose name he borrowed for his hero, and elsewhere in Hudibras elements of The Faerie Queene are treated to a burlesque imitation.<sup>14</sup> Spenser's comedy is much less ribald than Butler's, and his tone more hortatory, yet their methods of demonstrating the unworthiness of their characters through action are essentially the same. What most recalls Braggadochio in Hudibras's behaviour is his habit of vaunting his own prowess before an encounter, his base cowardice during it, and his wondrously resourceful justification of his conduct afterwards. Braggadochio's lying boast to Archimago (II, iii, 16-17), his fear of Belpheobe's approach (20-21), and his excuses to Trompart (45-46) parallel Hudibras's thickly embroidered account of his fight with Sidophil (III, i, 239ff.), his terror at the arrival of the masqueraders (1053ff.), and his quite demented interpretation of his humiliation as a victory cut short by Ralpho's untimely intervention (III, iii, 185ff.).<sup>15</sup> And the exposure by Artegall of Braggadochio's pretensions and his thrashing by the dreadful Talus look forward to Hudibras's cudgelling and forced confession at the hands of the masqueraders in the first canto of Part III.

Belpheobe's reproving discourse to Braggadochio (II, iii, 40-42) on the places where honour is to be found and the strenuous conditions preliminary to attaining it is a good place to begin to examine the techniques of both authors in putting false knighthood in its place:

Who seekes with painfull toile, shall honor soonest find.

In woods, in waues, in warres, she wents to dwell,  
And will be found with perill and with paine.

(II, iii, 40, 41).

Neither Braggadochio nor Hudibras ever suffers or causes real peril or real pain, though bangs and bruises, pratfalls, and verbal abuse are bestowed upon them a-plenty. In each case the author seems to be denying to ludicrous buffoons what is the prerogative only of genuine valour, as if a grave wound or real danger would indirectly confer upon them some of the worthiness of those whose exploits they unsuccessfully ape. The comic mood of Hudibras will not admit of bloodshed. The knight accidentally grazes Talgol with a bullet, but we know that it is only a token hurt. He receives his own injuries with wooden cudgel and truncheon:

For Wood with Honour b'ing engag'd,  
Is so implacably enrag'd,  
Though Iron hew and mangle sore,  
Wood wounds and bruises honour more.

(I, ii, 809-12).

The cudgels are wielded by country fellows, tradesmen and village merry-makers. Later the astrologer and his assistant attack the knight with a roasting spit and a fire-fork, which they quickly lose in the fight. Besides inflicting bruises, the tradesmen loose rich torrents of invective at both Hudibras and Ralph. Talgol the butcher draws his metaphors from his trade:

Thou Vermin wretched,  
As e're in Meazel'd Pork was hatched;  
Thou Tail of Worship, that dost grow  
On Rump of Justice, as of Cow.

(I, ii, 687-90).

Orsin urges his fellow warriors to take revenge upon the knight and squire for their insults:

Shall we (quoth he) thus basely brook  
 The vile affront, that poultry Ass  
 And feeble Scoundrel Hudibras,  
 With that more poultry Ragamuffin  
Ralpho, with vapouring and huffing  
 Have put upon us, like tame Cattel,  
 As if th' had routed us in battel?

(I, iii, 248-54).

These antagonists have not only the bluntness and strength of countrymen but also something of their common sense and scorn for posturing and bullying authority. Their victory over Hudibras is therefore that of plain thinking and homely, if often vulgar, behaviour over moral affectation. The knight's long harangues to the bear-baiters and to the merry-makers condemning their conduct as harmful to 'the Cause' provoke their replies with truncheon and eggs, which are repudiations of him personally and in his capacity as Justice of the Peace and Presbyterian.

With its eggs and cudgels, tinkers, cobblers, and scabrous invective, Hudibras parts company with The Faerie Queene, though the comparison may usefully be continued from another point of view. In the lack of skill with which he rides Guyon's horse, Braggadochio inadvertently reveals the vainness of his pretension to knighthood:

                    that all might see  
 He had not trayned bene in cheualree

(II, iii, 46).

In Hudibras and Ralpho this inability to execute the ordinary physical activities of martial endeavour is elaborated and its instances multiplied. Mounting or dismounting, giving or receiving blows,



attempting to help one another, in all this the knight and squire, but especially the knight, display a churlish clumsiness, which in itself renders them ridiculous as well as inviting bastings from their more capable foes:

This said, he jogg'd his good steed nigher,  
And steer'd him gently toward the Squier:  
Then bowing down his body stretcht  
His hand out, and at Ralpho reacht;  
When Trulla, whom he did not mind,  
Charg'd him like Lightening behind.

(I, 111, 765-70).

For these misadventures, the awkward and blundering knight is fittingly dressed in sturdy buff doublet and rugged woollen breeches stuffed with

many a piece  
Of Ammunition-Bread and Cheese,  
And fat Black-puddings, proper food  
For Warriors that delight in bloud.

(I, 1, 311-14).

Butler derives good comic effect from posture and gesture, particularly in burlesques of that tradition of defining the attitude of the speaker in heroic poetry, another technique he may have learned from Spenser, who has Braggadochio reply to Archimago's request for vengeance with

dreadfull countenance,  
As if their liues had in his hand beene gaged;  
And with stiffe force shaking his mortall launce,  
To let him weet his doughtie valiaunce,  
Thus said ...

(II, 111, 14).

Butler again reduces the technique to the appropriate level and adapts it to the character of the speaker:

At this the Knight grew high in wroth,  
 And lifting hands and eyes up both,  
 Three times he smote on stomach stout,  
 From whence at length these words broke out.

(I, 11, 737-40).

In another passage of this type combining literary burlesque and satirical wit, the knight is captured in a lively and extended image, which recapitulates his personality. He is preparing to protest his innocence after having been caught by the widow in an outright lie:

While thus the Lady talk'd, the Knight  
 Turn'd th' Outside of his eyes to white,  
(As men of Inward light are wont  
To turn their Opticks in upon't)  
 He wonder'd how she came to know,  
 What he had done and meant to do:  
 Held up his Affidavit hand,  
 As if h' had been to be arraign'd:  
 Cast t'wards the Door a Ghastly look,  
 In Dread of Sidrophel, and spoke.

(III, 1, 479-88).<sup>16</sup>

Besides comic satire and burlesque, passages like this one serve another function; they show the speaker in such a perspective that we are predisposed to receive what he says with the large measure of ribald detachment that Butler intends. It is <sup>a</sup>response, this predisposition of the reader to see what follows as particularly ridiculous, that he exploits in other ways as well. On a larger scale the introduction of each of the knight's adventures by an appropriate literary and moral disquisition serves the same purpose. And so do passages like this one, describing Hudibras's dilatory preliminaries to encountering the enemy for the first time:

This said, his Courage to enflame,  
 He call'd upon his Mistress name.  
 His Pistol next he cockt anew,  
 And out his nut-brown whiniard drew,  
 And placing Ralpho in the front,  
 Reserv'd himself to bear the brunt;  
 As expert Warriors use ...

(I, 111, 477-83).

In the battles themselves he is at his most clownish and most cowardly. The pistol, which he prefers to his sword, is a weapon unworthy of a knight errant, though with neither does he have much success. In the first encounter he is dumped from his horse, falls onto the bear, faints and pisses in his breeches, revives, and is narrowly prevented by the squire from revenging himself upon the disarmed and one-legged fiddler. In the second, he is thumped on the paunch with a stone, drops his arms, fouls his hose once more, begins a charge at the bearward but his foe stands to the attack and he decides instead to succour the squire. He is saved from a beating when the bearward accidentally fells the cobbler, is knocked from his horse by Trulla, granted quarter, overthrown again, and finally replaces the fiddler in the stocks after having been paraded through the town seated backwards on his horse. We are made to perceive this thoroughgoing poltroonery the more acutely by virtue of its existing side by side with the promptness, courage, and resolution of the bear and Trulla who, foremost among Hudibras's enemies, are unhesitatingly bold. To be sure, their prowess serves the ends of literary burlesque, for the noble diction in which it is described appeals to our sense of disproportion, But it serves as well to create an unflattering comparison with the knight.

'It is something revolting,' wrote Hazlitt of the intensity and persistence with which Butler drubs his two heroes, 'to see an author persecute his characters, the cherished offspring of his brain, in this manner, without mercy.'<sup>17</sup> Yet from what must surely rank as one of the most ignominious thrashings in English literature, Hudibras emerges as something more than a craven wretch. He is saved, curiously enough, by the completeness of the delusion that leads him through tortuously illogical self-communing to declare that

Valour in a low estate  
Is most admir'd and wonder'd at.

(I, 111, 1055-56).

There is something about such irrepressible resilience of spirit, be it ever so wrong-headed, that makes us laugh with wonder and admiration. In some of the best passages of the poem -- and this is one of them -- Hudibras rises above the kicks and blows of party satire to achieve the independence and integrity of a unique comic creation.

## V

At the beginning of Chapter 2 I quoted extracts from two unfavourable judgements on the literary form of Hudibras, which seemed to me indicative of a general sense of uneasiness and even irritation in the modern reader of Butler's poem. This attitude, which in the two instances in question took the form of a charge of inconsistency and crudeness of method, is to be found in these terms nowhere else in the history of Butler criticism. What was the reason for it? It seemed

to me that familiarity with the mock-heroic poems of Dryden and Pope created expectations in the modern reader, which Hudibras did not fulfil and which led to disappointment with it. The problem was, I felt, essentially one of literary history, and I proposed to act as Butler's advocate. By placing the plan of Hudibras fully within the literary context of its age, I hoped to arrive at a juster and truer definition of Butler's aims and achievements.

In executing this purpose it has been necessary to situate Hudibras in relation to the romances of chivalry and to the various satirical uses to which this form was adapted during the long period of its decline. We cannot in this context speak of a tradition. The works that appropriated romantic motifs for satirical purposes are neither sufficiently similar nor sufficiently numerous to warrant the use of the term. Yet in the years 1600-1660 the romances make themselves felt again and again in satirical works; and we are perhaps near the mark in speaking of them as occupying a continuous, if sometimes dormant, corner of the literary consciousness of the age to which application could be made to satisfy particular demands.

Thus considered, Hudibras appears in the character of a compendium. The ambiguous position of the romances of chivalry in comic and satirical contexts naturally produced the two tendencies of comparison and contrast according to the purpose of the satirist and the nature of the adversary. Hudibras comprises both, for Butler's thorough degradation of his two heroes makes full use of the potential of his material. There is warrant for this practice in other works too, and

even where one position is taken as the basis for the author's point of view, the other can rarely be excluded. The very nature of the romances as well as their position vis à vis literary opinion make a certain ambiguity a virtual necessity, particularly where substantial issues and detailed characterization are involved.

Beaumont and Fletcher's The Knight of the Burning Pestle (published 1613) is a case in point. The sentimentality, the sensational marvels, the exotic settings, the courteous and formal addresses of the romances are the object of parody and burlesque on almost every page. By their attachment to these fripperies, which they want to be presented in an inconsequent train of ever more extravagant scenes, the vulgarity and debasement of the tastes of the grocer and his wife are demonstrated. Yet when they try to join the action, in giving Rafe money to pay his way at the court of the King of Moldavia, for example, so that he be beholden to no one, their gross bullying manner appears the more bathetic because of the ideals of romances which they want him to emulate. Rafe himself makes his first entrance reading Palmerin of England and apprises us straight away of his preference for heroic achievement to selling groceries. We immediately recognize the silliness of his aspirations. But when this weak, slow, incorrigibly boorish apprentice tries to put his fantasies into practice, the hopeless ineptitude of his attempts makes the contrast with the old knights inevitable. It is not a mordant contrast, for the comedy is of a gentler kind than that of Hudibras. But it is striking enough, and we may guffaw when, in circumstances requiring a display of knightly

liberality, he offers to the King of Bohemia's daughter 'three pence to buy you pins at Bumbe faire.'

This, in essence, is the method of Hudibras; and in adopting it Butler was organizing his poem along well-tried lines. It is important to recognize this not because the existence of antecedents establishes the legitimacy of Hudibras, but for what it tells us of the literary taste of the age. As a public satire, one of the purposes of Hudibras must be to convince its readers of the justness of its presentation of issues. Moreover, because it presents them in literary form, the process of winning the assent of the reader must include the courting of his literary sensibilities and predispositions. That Butler succeeded in his design seems proved by the reception of his poem in the seventeenth century. It is to discover the rationale of his successful appeal to the literary experience of his contemporaries that we have undertaken the study of romance and anti-romance in the half-century preceding the publication of his poem.

In considering Hudibras from this point of view, it has been convenient to deal with Butler's use of the elements of romance in such a way as to emphasize his relation to what had been done before in the same vein. This arrangement has sometimes the regrettable consequence of separating parts of the poem that occur together or near one another, and of giving the impression that it is organized more closely according to the criterion of analysis than is the case. We can go some way towards repairing the wrong by citing a passage from Part I in which Butler's use of romance is epitomized. He is describing the knight's breeches:

Through they were lin'd with many a piece  
 Of Ammunition-Bread and Cheese,  
 And fat Black-puddings, proper food  
 For Warriors that delight in bloud.  
 For, as we said, He alwayes chose  
 To carry Vittle in his hose.  
 That often tempted Rats, and Mice,  
 The Ammunition to surprize:  
 And when he put a Hand but in  
 The one or th'other Magazine,  
 They stoutly in defence on't stood  
 And from the wounded Foe drew bloud  
 And till th' were storm'd, and beaten out  
 Ne'r left the Fortify'd Redoubt;  
 And though Knights Errant, as some think,  
 Of old did neither eat nor drink,  
 Because when thorough Deserts vast  
 And Regions desolate they past,  
 Where Belly-timber above ground  
 Or under was not to be found,  
 Unless they graz'd, there's not one word  
 Of their Provision on Record:  
 Which made some confidently write,  
 They had no stomachs, but to fight,  
 'Tis false: For Arthur wore in Hall  
 Round-Table like a Farthingal,  
 On which, with shirt pull'd out behind,  
 And eke before, his good Knights din'd.  
 Though 'twas no Table, some suppose,  
 But a huge pair of round Trunk-hose;  
 In which he carry'd as much meat  
 As he and all his Knights could eat,  
 When laying by their swords and trancheons,  
 They took their Breakfasts or their Nuncheons.

(I, i, 311-344).

Initially (ll. 311-24), Butler implies a contrast between the warlike ideal of knight errantry and Hudibras, whose ammunition is for his belly, whose appetite for blood extends only to black pudding, and whose foes are rats and mice. The old commonplace that knights errant never eat in romances despite their strenuous activity is then introduced and turned into a joke (ll. 325-34). But their ascetism



nonetheless suggests a contrast with Hudibras, who provides himself with plenty of solid vittles. Butler then (ll. 335-344) passes on to ribald interpretations of the origins of the legend of the Round Table, which turn Arthur and his knights into merry clowns. To finish, we have a description of Hudibras's sword, which

Near his undaunted heart was ty'd,  
With Basket-hilt, that would hold broth,  
And serve for fight and dinner both.

(350-52).

Butler first contrasts Hudibras to an ideal, then ridicules the ideal, then compares the knight to it. He is in his merry humour here, and everything is grist to his mill.

To say that we find none of the ironic restraint of Dryden and Pope in such a passage is only to say that Hudibras is not MacFlecknoe, The Rape of the Lock, or The Dunciad; that Hudibras and Ralpho are not hack writers or idle fops; and that the year 1663 is not 1682, 1714, or 1728. And to say that Butler does not take an unequivocal position towards the works that provide the form of his satire, is only to recognize that romances of chivalry are not classical epics. To appreciate the artistry of Hudibras, Butler must not be considered as a rude pioneer in a genre brought to maturity by later and surer hands. He worked with literary materials quite different from those of Dryden and Pope; and in fashioning them he was a firm and accomplished craftsman.

### Notes to Chapter 3.

1. In his letter Butler does not give the date of his period of acquaintance with the West Country knight in Holborn; though (within certain limits) it may be inferred from some of his other statements in the same place. The poem (Part I), he writes to Oxenden:

- (1) was written not long before y<sup>e</sup> time, when
- (2) I had first y<sup>e</sup> hon<sup>r</sup> to be Acquainted w<sup>th</sup>
- (3) you, & Hudibras whose name it beares was
- (4) a West Countrey Kn<sup>t</sup> then a Coll: in the
- (5) Parliament Army & a Com<sup>tee</sup> man, w<sup>th</sup> whome
- (6) I became Acquainted Lodging in y<sup>e</sup> same house
- (7) w<sup>th</sup> him in Holbourne I found his humor see
- (8) pleasant y<sup>t</sup> I know not how I fell into y<sup>e</sup>
- (9) way of Scribling w<sup>ch</sup> I was never Guilty
- (10) of before nor since ...

He goes on to describe his purpose as:

- (1) to give y<sup>e</sup> world a Just Acco<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Ridiculous
- (2) folly & Knavery of y<sup>e</sup> Presbyterian &
- (3) Independent Factions then in power ...

The first extract seems to indicate that Butler wrote the first part of Hudibras during or shortly after the time when he lodged with the West Country knight, for the 'then' in line 4 refers to the time of writing, and lines 8-9 describe a natural and immediate transition from experience to inspiration and composition. The 'then' in line 3 of the second extract refers to the time when Butler, his purpose formed, began to write, or to the period of writing during which his aim took shape. It can be fixed as no later than Pride's Purge (December, 1648), after which the Presbyterians can hardly be said to have been 'in power'; and would be most appropriate to the period from about the end of 1645 to the end of 1648, a time of bitter wrangling between Presbyterians and Independents.

Hardin Craig ('Hudibras, Part I, and the Politics of 1647,' in Manly Anniversary Studies, [Chicago, 1923], p. 147) suggests that the first part of Hudibras was written between 22 August 1642 and the execution of Charles I in January 1649. Dr. John Wilders (Hudibras, clvi) gives evidence that Butler was still at work on Part I between 1658 and the latter part of 1660. Dr. Wilders suggests this period as the time during which Part I was composed.

2. The letter was first printed by Ricardo Quintana in 'The Butler-Oxenden Correspondence,' MLN, XLVIII (1933), 4.; it is reprinted

in Hudibras, ed. John Wilders, pp. 450-451. I reproduce the relevant extracts in Appendix A.

3. Life of Butler in Lives of the English Poets by Samuel Johnson, LL.D., ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford, 1905), I, 215.
4. The Character of a London Diurnal in Character Writings of the Seventeenth Century, ed. Henry Morley (London, 1891), p. 309.
5. Ibid., p. 309 and 312.
6. Ibid., pp. 308-309.
7. Don Zara also describes himself as one 'in whose breast there lodges as sublime a Soul as ever yet Nature coffin'd up in a Carkas composed of a mettall more robust then that of Roderigo, or Rud-Hudrinbras' (p. 7). This may be a reference to the legendary king of Britain, Rud Hud Hudibras (son of Leil) whose reign is described by Geoffrey of Monmouth in The History of the Kings of Britain, Book 2, Chapter 9. 'Mettal' may also be a pun in reference to Spenser's Hudibras (Faerie Queene, II, ii, 17), who was 'all armed in shining brass.' The comparison of a mock-knight to 'Hudibras' six years before the publication of Butler's poem is interesting, though inconclusive.
8. All writers, though of Diffrent Fancies,  
Do make all People in Romances,  
That are distrest and discontent,  
Make Songs and sing t'an Instrument. ('Poetry' in Satires, p. 245).
9. A list of some of the parallel incidents and motifs is given in E.M. Wilson, 'Cervantes and the English Literature of the Seventeenth Century,' Bulletin Hispanique, L (1948), 46-47. Of the parallels cited by E.M. Wilson, the following might be considered evidence of Butler's borrowing from Cervantes:

#### A. Incidents

- (i) The whipping proposed to Sancho (II, 35) and to Hudibras (II, 1).
- (ii) Don Quixote's adventure with the corpse (I, 19) and Hudibras's with the skimmington (II, ii).

#### B. Other similarities

- (i) Thistles used to madden horses: D.Q. II, 61; H. I, ii, 839 ff.

- (ii) Lady's name invoked before battle: D.Q., I, 3; H. I, iii, 477-78.
  - (iii) Spurious second part: D.Q., II, 59, 61; H. II, iii, 991 ff.
  - (iv) Squire instructed to observe reactions of lady when delivering letter: D.Q., II, 10; H., Epistle to Lady, 351-52.
  - (v) Knights-errant and eating: D.Q., I, 10; H., I, i, 325 ff.
  - (vi) Scorn for ignoble foes: D.Q., I, 8; II, 11; H., II, ii, 849 ff.; III, i, 343 ff.
10. Lives of the English Poets, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 210.
  11. E.B. Knowles, 'Allusions to Don Quixote before 1660,' P., XX (1941), 573-86; E.M. Wilson, 'Cervantes and the English Literature of the Seventeenth Century.'
  12. 'Preface' to Saint Joan in Saint Joan: A Chronicle Play and The Apple Cart: A Political Extravaganza, Standard Edition (London, 1932), p. 40.
  13. See Chapter 2, section III.
  14. Compare Faerie Queene, I, viii, 1 and Hudibras, I, iii, 1-2; FQ., II, ii, 24 and H., I, iii, 677-82; FQ., II, iii, 8 and H., I, iii, 844; FQ., V, v, 20 and H., I, iii, 918-22.
  15. Sidrophel taxes Hudibras with being a 'Braggadochio Huffer' (II, iii, 1034).
  16. For other examples of this technique, see: I, ii, 681-682; II, iii, 791-796.
  17. Lectures on the English Comic Writers (III, on Cowley, Butler, Suckling, Etherege, etc.) in The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P.P. Howe after the edition of A.R. Waller and Arnold Glover (London and Toronto, 1931), VI, 65.

## CHAPTER 4

### Burlesque

No Age ever abounded more with Heroical  
Poetry then the present, and yet there was never  
any wherein fewer Heroicall Actions were performd;  
Nor any though the most Barbarous, ever so averse  
to the Practice of those examples which are dayly set  
before their eyes.

Butler, from 'Contradietions,' Characters, p. 442.

## I

'Burlesque consists in a disproportion between the style and the sentiments, or between the adventitious sentiments and the fundamental subject.'<sup>1</sup> This formulation, Dr. Johnson's, delimits our immediate concern well enough in general terms. We are concerned here, as we were in the preceding chapter, with Butler's use of literary form and literary association as means of ridiculing his two heroes. Only here the ancient classics, not the romances of chivalry, provide the standard of comparison and contrast.

With mockery of the classics, as with mockery of the romances, Hudibras must be placed within a literary context.<sup>2</sup> Charles Cotton's Scarronides, a travesty of the first (1664) and the fifth (1665) books of the Aeneid, was the most popular work of its kind in England in the late seventeenth century. Its title acknowledges a debt to Paul Scarron, whose Virgile Travesti (1648-52) was a general and sometimes a specific model for the jocular treatments of Homer, Lucian, Ovid, and

especially Virgil between 1660 and 1700. Yet English travesty, in the sense of a vulgar or obscene rendering of a classical work that follows the plan and retains the characters of the original, probably began with the Reverend James Smith's 'The Innovation of Penelope and Ulysses' (written 1640 or earlier), which was published in Wit Restor'd (1658). And though the heyday of the form dates from the appearance of Cotton's work in 1664, there are other pieces in this vein -- The Loves of Hero and Leander (1651) and parts of Richard Flecknoe's Diarium (1656) -- before the publication of Hudibras.

The substantial popularity of Scarronides (nine editions by 1700) and the lesser popularity of such works as James Scudamore's Homer à la Mode (1664) or the anonymous Ovidius Exulans (1673) have been variously explained.<sup>3</sup> No doubt the satisfaction of schoolboy grudges, reaction against extreme veneration of the classics, and the excesses of neoclassical literary modes, played their part. The malicious enjoyment of the latinless and simple crudeness and vulgarity of taste keenly gratified by contrast with the nobility of the originals, must also have contributed. Butler's observation cited at the head of this chapter, and which must have been shared by others, could also conceivably have provided a motive for the enjoyment of travesty. But whether we give greatest weight to one or another of these reasons, to explain the vogue of classical travesty, the fact of the vogue remains as an indication of literary taste in the years 1650-1700. The elements that Hudibras has in common with the travesties must have contributed to its popularity in 1663 and 1664 with those readers who

in the latter year began to devour Scarronides.

While it is not a travesty, classical or otherwise, Hudibras is full of passages in which the dignity of classical characters, allusions, commonplace sentiments, and devices of style is flippantly reduced. Is there an essential difference between the humour of these three extracts?

What the Plague did Juno mean,  
(That cross-grain'd, peevish, scolding Quean,  
That scratching, cater-wawling Puss)  
To use an honest Fellow thus?

(Scarronides).<sup>4</sup>

This said, he [Ulysses] blam'd himselfe, and chid his folly  
For being so ore-rul'd with melancholly,  
He call'd himself, Fool, Coxecombe, Ass, and Fop,  
And many a scurvy name he reckon'd up,  
But to himself, this language was too rough,  
For certainly the Man had wit enough:  
For he resolves to leave his Trojan foes,  
And go to see his Love in his best Cloaths.

(The Innovation of Penelope and Ulysses).<sup>5</sup>

his [Cerdon's] black-thumb'd ancestor  
Was Comrade in the ten years war:  
For when the restless Greeks sate down  
So many years before Troy Town,  
And were renown'd, as Homer writes,  
For well-sol'd Boots, no lesse then Fights;  
They ow'd that Glory onely to  
His Ancestor, that made them so.

(Hudibras, I, ii, 421-28).

I think not, though there are differences in tone and in the fineness of the wit. Hudibras is certainly to be situated within this tradition of vulgarization of the classics, though its position is by no means easy to determine with precision.

It is helpful to return to the matter of definition of burlesque, which Dr. Johnson said to consist in a disproportion between style and subject. We can come closer to the singularity of Hudibras by considering the fourfold division of burlesque by Richmond P. Bond in English Burlesque Poetry, 1700-1750.<sup>6</sup> This division is conceived to rationalize terminology with a view to the accurate description of the poems in question, all of them humorous treatments of an original. Bond classifies them according to two criteria: the closeness with which the burlesqued work or works are imitated and the tendency of the style to magnify or diminish. The following categories result: travesty, which imitates its original closely in a diminishing style; Hudibrastic, imitating generally and in a diminishing style; parody, a close imitation of the exalted style of a particular author or poem with the substitution of a commonplace subject; mock-heroic, magnifying a trivial subject in a noble style derived from a number of works.

We can find individual passages answering each of these descriptions in Hudibras, though as a whole it is best described by, is in fact the progenitor of, the second. The introduction of other criteria will, however, show the limitations of the definition. The range of its tone and mood places Hudibras with the mock-heroics rather than with parody or travesty, though with the travesties it clearly belongs in point of the debasing quality of its style and its irreverent attitude towards the works (romances and epics) it imitates. But where the coarsening of the Iliad or the Aeneid in the travesties



is largely (though not entirely) a game, the comic degradation in Hudibras of the imitated works, of characters, of ideas and doctrines, is fundamentally in earnest.<sup>7</sup> In the prosecution of his design to expose hypocrites to ridicule Butler avoids falling into dullness, but his purpose, as John Dennis pleaded in his favour in Miscellanies in Verse and Prose (1693), is a serious one.<sup>8</sup> Burlesque of the classics as well as burlesque of the romances are made to answer to it; they both serve to bring down to their just level the ungrounded claims to heroic prerogative of the Presbyterians and Independents.

## II

The yoking of classic al burlesque to satire is the feature of Hudibras that most clearly sets it apart from the travesties, though there are other points of difference too. The travesty generally follows its original rather closely, and because of this its humorous imitation is restricted to substitution within fairly narrow limits. The plan of Hudibras, on the contrary, calls for no such close imitation, and can therefore accommodate a wide range of burlesque passages of different length and of varying connexion with the other elements that determine the organization of the poem. It would be possible to deal reasonably with these passages according to several criteria -- length, for example, or particular ancient author, or tone. Yet since Butler's originality is one of the traditional claims of criticism whose justness we set out to test and define, it is more useful to treat his handling of classic al burlesque so as best to serve this aim.

His use of burlesque as a means of satire is, then, the point of view of our analysis, and we may begin with his technique at its simplest and most direct. By furnishing the battles in the first part with divine 'machinery' in suitable form, he succeeds in placing Hudibras in some of his most memorably ludicrous positions. The knight is about to fire his pistol at Talgol when

Pallas came in shape of Rust,  
And 'twixt the Spring and Hammer thrust  
Her Gorgon-shield, which made the Cock  
Stand stiff as if 'twere turn'd t'a stock.

(I, ii, 781-84).

But Hudibras also enjoys the favour of an attendant deity. Dumped from his horse by the angry butcher, he is saved from serious harm by

Mars, that still protects the stout,  
In Fudding-time came to his aid,  
And under him the Bear convey'd.

(I, ii, 864-66).

It is worth pausing a moment over these extracts, for they illustrate very well how intractable to accepted critical notions and vocabulary individual burlesque passages can be. The two in question are neither exactly travesty nor parody nor mock-heroic, but have something of the effects that we expect from each of the three. We may safely accept the principle that in burlesque comparisons of this sort, each of the conjoined terms is the object of the debasing laughter excited by the preposterous nature of the combination. This said, it is evident that in this case the greater part of the derisive mirth generated by the bringing together of knight and goddess falls upon Hudibras, who is

stopped in mid-career. Yet introducing Pallas 'in shape of Rust' debases her too, by representing the dreadful powers of the Gorgon's head on her shield in terms of the annoying stiffness of an untended weapon. It also makes light of the practice of divine intervention in the ancient epics; the commonplace explanation -- the rust -- for the misfiring of Hudibras's pistol is the one we accept. Mars, too, loses dignity. He is the agent of the pratfall into which impending serious danger is always metamorphosed in Hudibras, and is made to perform his saving deed 'in pudding-time.'

We may well hesitate to take our analysis further. These burlesque comparisons appeal to areas of literary sensibility not susceptible of minutely detailed examination, and beyond a certain point we run the risk of falsifying the experience even of a carefully attentive reader. Yet it seems true to say that the bathetic version of the pagan deities who frustrate or further the enterprise of the knight degrade him because of our realization that they have had to be brought down to his level. Our overall impression is therefore one of harmony between ridiculous hero and rusty machinery.

The pagan gods can be introduced at the appropriate moments in a battle, but Butler is not restricted by narrative propriety in the ordinary sense in placing his burlesque passages. Far from it: he often deliberately reaches far afield to draw in a classical allusion in despite of logic and decorum. Here Trulla and Cerdon have rescued the bear from the dogs, but in the fray he has lost a good portion of his ears and received many

bloody wounds, but all before.  
 For as Achilles dipt in Pond,  
 Was anabaptiz'd free from wound,  
 Made proof against dead-doing steel  
 All over but the Pagan heel:  
 So did our Champion's Arms defend  
 All of him but the other end.

(I, 111, 133-144).

The satiric effect of the passage depends upon the studied casualness with which the comparison between Achilles and the Anabaptists is inserted into that between Achilles and the bear. The method is essentially that of the previous extract, the association in ridicule of the two terms of a comparison, one of which (the classical motif) can be concisely burlesqued, thus debasing the other. The story of Achilles's being submerged by Thetis is reduced to the level of low comedy by the substitution of 'pond' for 'Styx,' and then applied to the Anabaptists (who are not named but merely alluded to in the verb). The result is that we are as disposed to take Anabaptism seriously as we are to believe the legend of Achilles's invulnerability. The entire comparison is rendered even more ludicrous in the final couplet, when Butler delights in the tenuousness of the connexion between the bear's ears and Achilles's heel, which provided the occasion of the classical allusion in the first place.

The success of such satirical comparisons depends in part upon the choice of the classical term and the burlesque reduction of it -- not violently or thoroughly -- so that it seems on a level with the modern term. The two are thus yoked in a relationship of mutual comic debasement. The classical motif chosen for such a purpose must,

clearly, be both well known (there is no time for exposition) and one that the reader, with a bit of urging, will readily laugh at. The appeal of such complex metaphors to a reading public ready to embrace the cruder travesties of Cotton and his followers is evident.

The compass of the passage on Achilles and the Anabaptists is relatively limited, but Butler can cast his net wider, as in the closing lines of the first canto of Part I. The knight has just finished exhorting himself and Ralpho to vigorous action against the bear-baiters.

This said, as once the Phrygian Knight,  
 So ours with rusty steel did smite  
 His Trojan horse, and just as much  
 He mended pace upon the touch;  
 But from his empty stomach gron'd  
 Just as that hollow beast did sound,  
 And angry answer'd from behind,  
 With brandish'd Tail and blast of wind,  
 So have I seen with armed heel,  
 A Wight bestride a Common-weal;  
 While still the more he kick'd and spurr'd,  
 The less the sullen Jade has stirr'd.

(I, i, 909-920).

The principal comparison is between Hudibras on horseback and the governor of the commonwealth, though it is not made straight away. We begin and end with the most farcical of comic images, a man unsuccessfully urging a stubborn horse, but by the time we reach the last four lines both horse and man have taken on new associations of exceptional silliness because of the intervening classical allusion. Hudibras is first of all the victim of leaden bathos, for after his high-sounding speech, he cannot make his horse move. He applies his (rusty) spurs, which suggest the spear with which Laocoon pierced the Trojan horse, and the resonant echo from its vaulted interior becomes

the hoarse fart released by Hudibras's mount as if in mockery of his master's aspirations. To place Cromwell or (as Zachary Grey suggests) his son Richard in the saddle of the 'Common-weal' at this point seals the mockery of leader and institution with brilliant effectiveness.<sup>9</sup>

Devices of style, even quite simple ones, can perform the same function as the debasing metaphors we have been examining. In the midst of <sup>the</sup>reproofs and threats that he addresses to the fiddler, Ralpho remembers that Hudibras is lying unconscious:

Could not the whipping-post prevail  
With all its rhet'rick, nor the Gaol,  
To keep from flaying scourge thy skin,  
And ankle free from Iron gin?  
Which now thou shalt -- but first our care  
Must see how Hudibras doth fare.

(I, ii, 965-70).

We recall:

Quos ego sed motos praestat componere fluctus.

(Aeneid, I, 135).

The implied comparison is invested with particular irony here, for it is an ignorant tailor, enemy to human learning, who is thus made to express himself in <sup>an</sup>apophysis.<sup>10</sup> The same humorous incongruity between trope and subject is to be noticed elsewhere. Zeugma, in which the disparity of the terms jars us into surprised laughter, is often used, notably in this couplet describing Sidrophel's clientele.

To him with Questions, and with Urine,  
They for discov'ry flock, or Curing.

(II, iii, 123-24).<sup>11</sup>

On a larger scale, the many epic similies promote the same indirect satire of characters and contribute to the general serious and noble posture of a style that describes such unworthy objects.<sup>12</sup> And the form of Ovid's Heroides, verse letters between hero and heroine at an especially dramatic moment of their relationship, creates a deliberate unsuitability between genre and characters in the 'Heroical Epistles' that pass between Hudibras and his lady, as well as that from the knight to the astrologer.

All of these deliberately misapplied poetic figures and genres contribute to the general comic atmosphere of the poem. Butler handles them, normally, with scrupulous husbandry, for the effects he is aiming at are most telling when produced with swiftness and concision. Yet he is sometimes expansive, imitating extended passages from the classical writers, which allow freer play for his wit. Such is his description of 'Fame' (II, i, 45 ff.) who is adapted to the rôle of 'tattling gossip' to inform the widow of Hudibras's imprisonment. The purpose of the exercise is essentially that of the other instances in which the 'machinery' of the epics intervenes in burlesque form, but its length permits secondary sallies as well. Along with her other improbable tales, Fame carries:

Diurnals writ for Regulation  
Of Lying, to enform the Nation.

(II, i, 57-58).

The appeal here is to the pleasure of recognition, and the more appropriately clever the substitution, the greater its satirical power.

We recognize in Hudibras's harangue to the bear-baiters an imitation of Lucan's apostrophe to the Roman people in the first book (ll. 8-14) of Pharsalia:

What Rage, O Citizens, what fury  
Doth you to these dire actions hurry?  
What Oestrum, what phrenetick mood  
Makes you thus lavish of your blood,  
While the proud Vies your Trophies boast,  
And unreveng'd walks \_\_\_\_\_ ghost?

(I, 11, 493-498).

All of this is perfectly unsuited to the occasion, since no blood, unless that of dogs and bear, seems likely to be spilt and the countrymen are unsympathetic to the 'Cause;' but it is consistent with the knight's delusions and his pedantry. The blank space is probably to be filled with the name of Sir William Waller, whose defeat at Roundway Down, after having besieged the Royalists in Devizes, was a severe blow to his prestige and influence as well as to the strength of Parliament's forces.<sup>13</sup> Hudibras, the 'Cause,' the defeated general, all are the objects of that peculiar satirical force dormant in such familiar passages of extravagant rhetoric as this one of Lucan's. It is a power that can be tapped and channelled by judicious substitution and careful choice of dramatic context.

The burlesque licence that permits Butler to make comparisons without real basis implies criticism of those poets who do the same thing unawares in poetry claiming to be serious. Upon this sort of writer and upon critics as well he turns the scornful humour that he can draw from classical burlesque. In planning the larger sections of Hudibras, Butler was clearly thinking of the Aeneid. The first canto



to introduce the principal characters, the second and third to describe battles, the fourth (II, 1) introducing the theme of love, the sixth (II, 111) to send the hero in search of prophecy: the scheme is easily recognized as a partial imitation of that of Virgil's first six books. Butler follows Virgil, too, in certain other details. After the strenuous battles and wearying discourse of the third canto, Hudibras suggests that he and Ralpho

stop here,  
And rest our weary'd bones awhile,  
Already tir'd with other toils

(I, 111, 1380-82).

The first canto of the second part then leaps abruptly into a new key:

But now t'observe Romantique Method,  
Let rusty Steel a while be sheathed.

(II, 1, 1-2).

Butler confesses in a footnote that in the violence of the transition he is following Virgil,

who begins the IV Book of his Æneides  
in the very same manner, At Regina gravi, &c.  
And this is enough to satisfy the curiosity of  
those who believe that Invention and Fancy  
ought to be measur'd (like Cases in Law) by  
Precedents, or else they are in the power of  
the Critique..

(Hudibras, p. 100).

He is having it both ways here; both scorning those too unlettered to recognize the evident classical antecedent for his practice (which is lightly burlesqued by the imitation) and also those who carp at every poetic procedure that has not the sanction of ancient example.

The invocation to the muse who 'with Ale, or viler Liquors,/ Didst inspire Withers, Pryn, and Vickers' is itself an ingenious satirical barb against the Puritan poetasters. The goddess who makes poets and translators of the dull and the unlearned is also a fitting source of inspiration for a burlesque poem and the ideal patroness for an author who affects the buffoon. Moreover the prayer he addresses to her seems to be answered. After the invocation Hudibras's adventures proper begin with the line:

In Western Cline there is a Town

(I, 1, 659).

It recalls that (also placed directly after the invocation to the muse) which begins the narrative of Aeneas's adventures:

Urbs antiqua fuit Tyrii temere coloni

(I, 12).

Artistic stimulation is on a level with the goddess from whom it emanates, and Butler is inspired to locate the action of his poem not in a renowned and splendid city but in a market-town in the West Country.<sup>14</sup>

In the invocation and the beginning of the narrative Butler uses the traditional organization of the epic for some gentle burlesque fun, though most of the passages we have been examining are clearly included at the prompting of his wit and not because of any requirements of his plan. The scheme of Hudibras does not impose upon him what the nature of travesty imposes, the necessity of finding an appropriate comic parallel for virtually every sentiment and action in the original.

Butler's choice of classical material to burlesque, being freer, is the more significant. We find in Hudibras no scurrilous account of what Dido and Aeneas did in the cave, nor are the winds that imperil the Trojan ships the result of Aeolus's breaking wind. The satirical metaphors in which classical burlesque figures generally comprise epic 'machinery,' extravagant legends, magical devices, well-known passages, or traditional figures of literary rhetoric: those things that the taste of Butler's age found least acceptable in the epics and which could produce laughable combinations when joined to contemporary characters, ideas, and doctrines.

In his use of classical burlesque as in his use of the romances of chivalry, Butler is satirist first and humourist only second. He proceeds with instinctive regard for the literary taste of his age, and seizes upon those elements of the epics and romances which, when joined to the objects of satire, act as powerful agents of ridicule. This is an economical practice as well and one in which lengthy, dissipating travesty is to be avoided. The matter he is dealing with is volatile; he need only set the match to the wick for the comic explosion to take place. It is to his sureness in this regard that a good part of the success of Hudibras is to be assigned. As a satirist he deals in the familiar. Astute combinations of well-known literary forms and motifs with equally well-known character-types, institutions, and situations are his stock-in-trade; just as his characteristic literary activity is their telling deployment in the interests of satire.

## III

The interests of satire are not, however, the only ones served by the classical burlesque in Hudibras. In contrast to the passages we considered in the previous section, there are others in which the burlesque is of a different order. Here, Butler is giving an account of the ancestry of Orsin the bear-ward:

And from Celestial origine  
 Deriv'd himself in a right line.  
 Not as the Ancient Hero's did,  
 Who, that their base births might be hid,  
 (Knowing they were of doubtful gender,  
 And that they came in at a window)  
 Made Jupiter himself and others  
 O' th' Gods Gallants to their own mothers,  
 To get on them a Race of Champions.

(I, ii, 209-17).

This is the tone and these are the sentiments of the travesties. We meet them again in this quatrain from Hudibras's long complaint to the widow on the power of love.

'Twas he, that brought upon his knees  
 The Hect'ring Kill-Cow Hercules;  
 Peduc'd his Leager-lions skin  
 T'a Petticoat, and made him spin.

(II, i, 351-54).

In both cases burlesque is an end in itself and not, as in the satirical metaphors, a means to an end. Such passages are infrequent in Hudibras, for the criticism of literary heroes is normally carried out with a view to satire and made to serve that purpose. Yet the sentiments of these two passages are, after all, only the direct expression of the strong anti-heroic strain in the poem. The burlesque

of the classical warriors and the heroes of romance, even when subordinated to the ridicule of a character, a doctrine, or an idea, necessarily involves unflattering judgements on the heroes themselves. Numerous heroes are so treated: knights of chivalry in general, Guy of Warwick, Achilles, Camilla, the Greek and Trojan armies, Hercules. In a passage like the following, the comic degradation clearly works both ways:

When Orsin first let flie a stone  
 At Ralpho; not so huge a one  
 As that which Diomed did maul  
Aeneas on the Bum withall:  
 Yet big enough, if rightly hurl'd,  
 T' have sent him to another world;  
 Whether above-ground, or below,  
 Which Saints twice dipt are destin'd to.

(I, iii, 491-98).

We have met this sort of comparison before. The one linking Achilles and the Anabaptists is of the same type, though here the language is coarser. But more than the language it is the evident disingenuousness with which Butler treats the classical commonplace that is at the heart of the comedy. We are assured by Homer and Virgil that no present-day man could lift stones the size of those hurled by their characters, and by pretending to accept it as sober truth Butler ridicules it in the most effective way.

The ideals of military heroism come in for some violent knocks in Hudibras, despite the implicit use of military competence as a standard of criticism in measuring the knight's behaviour. The reasons for the scorn and sceptical detachment with which Butler speaks of warlike endeavour in his poem are not far to seek:

A Hero was nothing but a fellow of a greater Stature, and strong Limbs, who was able to carry a heavier Load of Arms on his Back, and strike harder Blows, than those of a lesser Size. And therefore since the Invention of Guns came up, there can be no true Hero in great Fights, for all mens Abilities are so levelled by Gun-shot, that a Dwarf may do as heroic Feats of Arms that way as a Giant. And if he be a good Marksman, be too hard for the stoutest Hector and Achilles too.

(Characters, p. 468).

This disenchanted reflexion comprises the attitudes that lie behind the anti-heroic tendency of Hudibras. On the one hand Butler is unwilling to countenance an ideal of heroism based ultimately upon physical size and strength; on the other he can hardly approve of one deriving from skilful marksmanship, which does not even involve physical prowess and direct confrontation with the enemy. Such a penchant for taking a hard look at what is actually happening in heroic poetry will uncover absurdities enough:

For Knights are bound to feel no Blows  
From Paltry and unequal Foes,  
Who when they slash and cut to pieces,  
Do all with civillest addresses.

(III, 1, 347-50).

that noble Trade  
That Demi-gods and Heroes made,  
Slaughter, and knocking on the head;  
The Trade to which they all were bred.

(I, 11, 321-24).

The ancient Hero's were illustrious  
For b'ing benigne, and not blustrous,  
Against a vanquisht foe ...  
And did in fight but cut work out  
T'employ their Courtesies about.

(I, 111, 879-84).

We find passages like this one, too:

He rais'd himself, to shew how tall  
His Person was, above them all.  
This equal shame and envy stirr'd  
In th'enemy, that one should beard  
So many Warriors ...

(I, 111, 83-87).

But it is the bear whose exploits are being described in a more indirect criticism of heroic bearing. All this is more than just fun; or, rather, it is fun with a purpose; for it is based upon a conception of the common human reaction to literature involving moral issues:

Heroicall Poetry handle's the slightest, and most Impertinent  
Follies in the world in a formall Serious and unnaturall way:  
And Comedy and Burlesque the most Serious in a Frolique and  
Gay humor which has always been found the more apt to instruct,  
and instill those Truths with Delight into men, which they  
would not indure to heare of any other way.

(Characters, p. 278).

This is the credo of the satirist, just as the following is that of the heroic poet:

Nor is it needfull that Heroick Poesy should be levell'd to  
the reach of Common men: for if the examples it presents  
prevail upon their Chiefs, the delight of Imitation, (which  
we hope we have prov'd to be as effectuell to good as to  
evill) will rectify, by the rules which those Chiefs establish  
of their own lives, the lives of all that behold them; for  
the example of life doth as much surpasse the force of Precept  
as Life doth exceed Death.

Thus Sir William Davenant in the 'Preface' to Gondibert, eleven years before the publication of Hudibras.<sup>15</sup> The contrast between the two passages is striking, and illustrates very well one aspect of the quality of Butler's thinking that was remarked upon by W.P. Ker.<sup>16</sup> Butler anticipates the eighteenth century satirists, said Ker, in this:

he manifests that general cooling down of Renaissance enthusiasm to a soberer, more sceptical view of the possibilities of reason for the improvement of human nature. In Hudibras we can see this new spirit at work, and by considering it in relation to Gondibert, we can place Butler's criticism of the traditional subject, form, and uses of heroic poetry within the context of the theory and practice of the most considerable experiment in heroic poetry of the age.

The comparison is a natural one. Hudibras contains enough allusions to Gondibert itself as well as to Davenant's prefatory disquisition on the history and function of heroic poetry to make Butler's intentions unmistakable.. He meant the reader to recall Gondibert and to see the contrast between two different methods of dealing with what was traditionally considered matter for heroic song: love and battles. Davenant's poem is variously treated.<sup>17</sup> Certain mannered expressions are transposed to Hudibras, where they are parodied by being set in an incongruous context. Davenant thus evokes the fame of his heroine:

Recorded Rhodalind! whose high renown  
Who miss in Books, not luckily have read.

(I, i, stanza 10).

Butler borrows the sentiment for his description of Cerdon the Cobbler:

Ill has he read, that never hit  
On him in Muses deathless writ.

(I, ii, 415-16).<sup>18</sup>

In this catalogue of female warriors, Gondibert is directly burlesqued:



stout Armida, bold Thalestris,  
 And she that would have been the Mistriss  
 Of Gundibert, but he had grace,  
 And rather took a Countrey Lass.

(I, ii, 393-396).

By such passages, and particularly this last one, Butler joins the satirical wits who had begun to attack Condibert soon after its publication. The most notable skirmish in the battle was carried out in the pages of Certain Verses Written by Severall of the author's friends; to be re-printed with the Second Edition of Condibert (1653). The authors claim to be Davenant's best friends and say that they begged him not to write. He is ridiculed for presuming to improve upon Homer and Virgil, whom, we are assured, he has never read. In 'The Author Upon himself' he is made to confess that his poem is 'not worth a fart' (p. 5). They take him to task for an indiscriminate use of epithets, particularly 'abstersive.'<sup>19</sup> A summary of the poem is given in jingling triplets:

All in the Land of Lombardie  
 A wight there was of Knights degree,  
 Sir Condibert yeleap'd was he.

(p. 2).

Grave in debate and audacious in fight, he is (alas!) 'pernicious' in his ale:

And this was cause of his sad fate  
 For in a drunken-street debate  
 One Night he got a broken Pate.

(ibid.).

His skull is patched up by BIRTHA, who is also adept at curing claps;

and, discovering a mutual passion, they do not hesitate to consummate it in her garden.<sup>20</sup>

Thus the valour, the honour, and the rarified love of Gondibert are reduced to the level of a coarse jest. Why? No doubt because Davenant's talent, though not at all inconsiderable, was not on a level with his claim to have surpassed previous epic poets, a claim implicitly supported by Waller's and Cowley's commendatory poems and explicitly stated by Hobbes in his 'Answer' to the 'Preface.' No doubt also because, despite his declared purpose of bringing heroic poetry up to date by jettisoning what was no longer acceptable in it, he retains many accidental features of the ancient epics (epithets, catalogues of warriors, funeral games) that lay him open to the charge of rigidity in his adherence to tradition. The inevitable reference to the poet's nose -- he is said (p. 1) to be jealous of Ovid, whose surname was Naso -- shows that the wits did not fail to see the irony in his singing of the chaste love attachments of heroes and heroines in Gondibert while bearing on his face the emblem of more robust adventures. The same is true of his approval of personal courage, for, they say, he has never been seen in combat although knighted by the King for fighting on his side.

'Poets are of all moralists the most useful.' It is this claim of Davenant's to be the legislator of manners and morals that, more than anything else, goads the wits to attack; for they cannot accept in him the arrogance of having assumed the position of the heroic poet thus defined. This is a point that Butler takes up as well. He alludes

to those critics who object to the presence of female warriors in heroic poetry because:

They say 'tis false, without all sense,  
But of pernicious consequence  
To Government, which they suppose  
Can never be upheld in prose.

(I, 11, 397-400).

He intends to sneer at Davenant's presumption in the 'Preface' to Gondibert, where he claims for poetry (and by implication for his own poem) the role of 'collateral help' to the four main supports of government: religion, arms, policy, and law. The immense artistic egotism of such a contention could hardly go unchastised by an author who felt that

Heroique Poets magnify Feates of  
Armes, and those Virtues in others which they  
are the most averse to themselves of all men  
Living.

(Characters, p. 475).

To this observation on the relationship of the poet to his poem and to Butler's view that comedy and burlesque are more effective teachers than heroic poetry, we may add this observation on its appeal:

Among all Sports and shows that are used none are so  
Delightfull as the Military; that do but imitate and  
Counterfet Fights. And in Heroicall Poetry, that has  
nothing to do with Satyr; what is there that do's so much  
captivate the Reader, as the prodigious Feates of Armes  
of the Heroes, and the Horrid Destruction they make of  
their Enemies?

(Characters, p. 330).

So much for the instructive value of military valour in poetry. This is a problem, the artistic representation of heroism based upon martial

prowess, that Davenant had to face as well; and his handling of it shows the difficulties he encountered in trying to adapt the heroic poem to the modern sensibility.

There is no war as such in Gondibert, though the kingdom of the Lombards and the individual reputations of its great nobles are both based upon the heroic conquests of the past. Indeed it seems to be the principal function of these legendary exploits to provide a solid basis of manly achievement for characters in whom love and ambition may then significantly contend. This is clearly the purpose of the limited encounter between Gondibert's and Oswald's parties in the first book, in the course of which the former demonstrates his accomplishments as a soldier, albeit unwillingly, and only after his attempt to mollify his antagonist by reasonable discourse has failed. In all this Davenant's attempts at a compromise between tradition and the tastes of his contemporaries is evident. It is evident too in the dissuasive realism of the account of the horrible wounds of Ulfin's maimed soldiers (veterans of the wars against the Huns) and the author's own reiterated strictures against the warlike nature of man.

Yet, reluctant as he is to fight, Gondibert's position as chief suitor for the hand of Rhodalind and appointed successor to King Aribert depends upon his abilities as a warrior quite as much as upon his other qualities. This fact reduces the effectiveness of remarks like the following at the end of the first canto of the second book in which the poet reminds us that war is only murder on a grand scale:

How vain is Custom, and how guilty Pow'r?  
Slaughter is lawful made by the excess;

Earth's partial Laws, just Heav'n must needs abhor,  
Which greater crimes allow, and damn the less.

(11, 1, stanza 75).

Compare Butler's version of the same sentiment. The business of the old heroes and demigods was, he says:

Slaughter, and knocking on the head;  
The Trade to which they all were bred;  
And is, like others, glorious when  
'Tis great and large, but base if mean.  
The former rides in Triumph for it;  
The later in a two-wheel'd Chariot,  
For daring to profane a thing  
So sacred, with vile bungleing.

(I, 11, 323-30).

It is clearly better adapted to its context in Hudibras; and as a moral comment, and hardly an original one, it lends itself less well to gnomic complaint than to sarcastic wit, where such force as it has appears indirectly.

But the principal function of battle in Condibert is as a preliminary to and qualification for love, to which the warriors are solemnly dedicated and in pursuit of which they welcome fight. The honourable nature of honestly received wounds is insisted upon as is their value in tempting mistresses, who delight in these badges of proved valour and worth. Whatever other motives they may have for doing battle, in the heat of the fray the warriors' conduct is determined by how well or ill an action may conduce to success in love. The rôle of battle as the test of a soldier's fitness to be a lover creates strong divisive tensions in Condibert, for the intending lover must for the sake of fame and honour vigorously engage in an activity whose

general harmfulness is strongly condemned. This is in fact a major obstacle to the intellectual and artistic coherence that one expects of a work conceived on such a scale and with such a purpose. It is also a sharp reminder of the exceptional difficulties facing the writer in the mid-seventeenth century who wanted to retain large portions of the traditional matter of heroic poetry while making it acceptable and even appealing to changed sensibilities.

We have already seen Butler's handling of the convention of battle as a prerequisite for love and of mistresses who

scorn'd to yield,  
Until their Gallants were half kill'd.

(III, 1, 87-88).

It is also one of Hudibras's delusions to think that the widow will be disposed to entertain his suit because he has overcome the bear-baiters and the astrologer. As for the romantic love that governs behaviour in Gondibert, one need only turn the pages of the first canto of the second part of Hudibras, the first canto of the third part, or the 'Heroicall Epistles' to see the relentlessness of Butler's assault on that bastion of heroic motive. The knight's quest for the widow's heart is really an attempt to capture her fortune. The timeliness of Butler's burlesque of romantic love is evident from a consideration of its primordial importance in Gondibert.

In his 'Answer' to Davenant's 'Preface' to Gondibert Hobbes describes the literary genres as corresponding to the main divisions of human society, the court (heroic), the city (scommatic), the country

(pastoral). The heroic poem and tragedy belong to the court, satire and dramatic comedy to the city, pastoral poetry and drama to the country. It is an interesting division for our study, for while Gondibert is conceived for the intention of the noble courtiers of the mid-seventeenth century, Hudibras is clearly intended to be the city man's version of the heroic poem, a treatment of the heroic matter of love and war by the 'scommatic' sensibility. The training of that sensibility upon the age and its heroic literature provides this mordant paradox:

if any man should but imitate what these Heroical Authors write in the Practice of his life and Conversation, he would become the most Ridiculous Person in the world, but this Age is far enough from that, for though none ever abounded more with those Images (as they call them) of Moral and Heroicall Virtues, there was never any so opposite to them all in the mode and Custome of Life.

(Characters, p. 278).

It is upon the literary and moral insights of this passage -- and that they were shared by others is evident from the success of Hudibras -- that Butler's literary burlesque and the parts of his satire carried out in terms of literary form rest. A man would be ridiculous if he acted like a character from a heroic poem, though there is little danger of that in a mean and selfish age. It is a double-edged reflexion, in which Butler's idealism as well as his cynicism is in evidence. They are the twin springs of his artistic and moral position in Hudibras, the natural result of combining a clear look at heroic poetry with a clear look at the behaviour of the preceding age and the present one. In Hudibras we can see a form of that 'scommatic'

temperament which is to operate in so much of the great poetry of the succeeding age.



Notes to Chapter 4

1. 'Life of Butler' in Lives of the English Poets, ed. G.B. Hill, I, 218.
2. Accounts of the vogue of classical travesty in England in the latter half of the seventeenth century may be found in Albert H. West, L'Influence française dans la poésie burlesque en Angleterre entre 1660-1700 (Paris, 1931); S.E. Leavitt, 'Paul Scarron and English Travesty,' SP, XVI, 108-120; Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry, 2nd ed. (New York, 1963), pp. 298-305. 'Burlesque' has most recently been treated by J.D. Jump in Burlesque (London, 1972).
3. See Bush, p. 298 and James Sutherland, English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century, The Oxford History of English Literature, Vol. VI (Oxford, 1969), pp. 160-161.
4. Scarronides, or, Virgile Travestie (London, 1691), p. 2.
5. Wit Restor'd (1658) in Musarum Deliciae ... Wit Restor'd ... Wits Recreations ... (rpt. London, 1817), I, 276.
6. Harvard Studies in English, Vol. VI (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), pp. 3-5.
7. Cotton introduces a number of satirical allusions into his travesty, as in his portrait of the priest to whom Dido goes for advice on the conduct of her love (Scarronides, p. 72), and his account of the uproar of wailing set up by the Tyrians at the news of Dido's death:
 

Even like unto the dismal yowl,  
 When tristful Dogs at midnight howl;  
 Or like the Dirges that through Nose  
 Hum out to daunt their Pagan Foes,  
 When holy Round-heads go to Battle,  
 With such a yell did Carthage rattle.

(p. 146).
8. See Chapter 1, pp. 15-16.
9. Grey's suggestion is made in a footnote to I, 1, 925-26. The note may be found in his edition of 1744, as well as in any of the numerous editions based upon it.
10. For other examples of aposiopesis see II, 11, 815; III, 1, 403.

11. For other examples of the comic use of zeugma, see II, ii, 659-660; III, i, 80-82; III, i, 1319-1320.
12. For epic similes see I, i, 279 ff.; II, iii, 1115 ff.
13. Waller in fact survived until 1668; but it may well be, as is suggested in the note to I, ii, 497 in Grey's edition, that the allusion is to be understood as applying to the ghost of his reputation and the esteem in which he was held prior to the defeat.
14. The attentive reader might also have recognized an allusion to lines 13 and 14 of the first book of the Aeneid:

Karthago Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe  
ostia ...

Carthage is south-west of the mouth of the Tiber, and the market-town 'in Western Clime.'

15. In Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, ed. J.E. Spingarn (Oxford, 1908), II, 14.
16. On Modern Literature: Lectures and Addresses by W.P. Ker, ed. Terence Spencer and James Sutherland (Oxford, 1955), pp. 8-11.
17. There are allusions to Gondibert and its 'Preface' at: I, i, 510-518; I, i, 631-34; I, ii, 393-96, 397-400, 401-02, 415-16; III, i, 531-32. The version of I, ii, 99-100 in the first edition of Parts I contains a reference to Hugo, Gondibert's follower and fellow-soldier. It was removed from the revised edition of Parts I and II (1674). Butler seems to have had Gondibert in mind a good deal when he was composing Hudibras, though many of the similarities that strike the ear as one reads the two poems cannot be demonstrated to be deliberate. The following may have been recognized as allusions by those of Butler's readers who were familiar with Gondibert and the controversy of wit it aroused. But whether Butler intended them to be recognized or not, they illustrate the different uses to which the same or similar material, much of it traditional, is put in the two poems.



receives similar treatment in Hudibras's excuse to the widow for refusing to show the marks of the whipping he claims to have given himself:

You know I ought to have a care  
To keep my wounds, from taking Air;  
For wounds in those that are all Heart,  
Are dangerous in any Part.

(III, 1, 529-32).

19. Butler alludes to the criticism of Davenant's epithets in 'A Palinodie to the Honourable Edward Howard, Esq; Upon his incomparable British Princesses,' in which he ironically makes amends for the ironic encomium he had addressed to the author in a mock commendatory poem. He speaks of the power of the poet's wit, which is transmitted even to the paper on which the poem is printed:

For, when the Paper's charg'd with your rich Wit,  
'Tis for all Purposes and Uses fit,  
Has an abstersive Virtue to make clean  
Whatever Nature made in Man obscene.

(85-88, Satires, p. 119).

20. In the piece entitled 'Upon the Continuation of Gondibert' (p. 4), Davenant is accused of having derived his inspiration from 'sack and Northdown Ale,' just as Butler attributes the creative springs of Withers, Pryn, and Vickers to 'Ale, or viler Liquors' (I, 1, 639).

CHAPTER 5Wit

Il y a surtout un poème anglais que je désespérerais de vous faire connaître; il s'appelle Hudibras ... Qui croirait qu'un livre qui saisit tous les ridicules du genre humain, et qui a plus de pensées que de mots, ne peut souffrir la traduction? ... il faudrait à tous moments un commentaire, et la plaisanterie expliquée cesse d'être plaisanterie: tout commentateur de bons mots est un sot.

(Voltaire, Lettres Philosophiques).

## I

This chapter and the next form the second part of the present study, that concerned with certain elements and qualities of Hudibras traditionally intended by the terms 'wit,' 'style,' and 'literary technique.' The division under three headings of what is, strictly speaking, indivisible is done not to meet the demands of a theory but simply to order the presentation of a complex subject. The threefold division will not, indeed could not, be strictly observed, and should be considered as defining areas of emphasis rather than exclusive compartments. A similar qualification must be made with respect to the point of view. In this second part it will be rather analytical than historical, though it is historical as well, just as the first part was often analytical. Again, it is a difference not of kind but of degree.

One approaches the study of Butler's 'wit' with apprehension. The most universally praised quality of Hudibras, it is also the most elusive and, no doubt because of that, the least studied. This is

partly due to the existence in Hudibras of the property that Shaw perceived in Wilde's plays, 'the property of making his critics dull,'<sup>1</sup> The brilliance, the energy, the comic delight of Butler's poem are a challenge to the critic who would be thorough without being solemn and analytical without denaturing the subject of his analysis. Tout commentateur de bons mots est un sot. If the delicacy of the task makes one reflect upon Voltaire's warning, the extent of it is daunting as well, for to study the 'wit' of Hudibras, insofar as it has been defined by critical tradition, is to deal with more than puns, allusions, and double rhymes. The proper study of the subject will necessarily include a consideration of those fundamental qualities of Butler's imagination that are revealed in Hudibras, the soil from which the 'wit' springs.

We must logically begin by limiting the subject of our enquiry to those senses of the term that will interest us. They are two and are illustrated by the following quotations.

If inexhaustible wit could give perpetual pleasure no eye would ever leave half-read the work of Butler; for what poet has ever brought so many remote images so happily together?

(Dr. Johnson).<sup>2</sup>

There is so much Wit and Good sense to be found in him, and so much true observation on mankind, that I do not believe there is more, take Volume for Volume, in any one Author we have, the Plain-Dealer only excepted.

(John Dennis).<sup>3</sup>

In each case the meaning of 'wit' intended by the author can be deduced from the context. Dr. Johnson's observation has to do with

the art of making ingenious, surprising, and effective metaphors. Agility of mind, fecundity of imagination, justness of combination, and brilliance of execution are the mental and literary qualities he apparently means. Dennis's praise is rather for Butler the moralist than for Butler the poet. The sense of 'wit' in his extract is more general and not as easy to seize, but may roughly be defined as reasonableness and clarity of understanding. It is used more or less in the same way as it is in the section of Butler's notebooks entitled 'Wit and Folly', and we may take it to refer to those elements of Hudibras that give evidence of depth and solidity of mind, even wisdom. These are comprehensive notions and between them they describe the two faces of Butler the wit: the ingenious poet and the man of good sense. We shall deal with them in that order.

## II

In a well-known passage, Butler defines Reason as the mental faculty that orders notions according to their just disposition in Nature. The right performance of this operation results in truth, the wrong in error. Between the two lies

the Proper Sphere of wit, which though it seems to incline to falsehood, do's it only to give Intelligence to Truth ... wit by a certaine slight of the Minde, deliver's things otherwise than they are in Nature ... when it imploy's those things which it borrows of Falshood, to the Benefit and advantage of Truth, as in Allegories, Fables, and Apologues, it is of excellent use, as making a Deeper impression into the mindes of Men then if the same Truths were plainly deliver'd.

(Characters, p. 336).

This we may consider as Butler's philosophic and moral justification of an activity of mind always suspect on purely philosophic and moral grounds. The imperfection of human nature requires that the poet court falsehood, which by judicious management he can make serve to inculcate truth more effectively. This was Butler's thinking when, formally and self-consciously, he reflected upon the finality of poetry. But when his subject is the practical psychology of writing satirical verse, he confesses that:

There is nothing that provokes and Sharpens wit like Malice, and Anger si Natura negat facit Indignatio &c ... And therefore Satyrs that are only provok'd with the Madnes and Folly of the world, are found to containe more wit, and Ingenuity then all other writings whatsoever, and meet with a better Reception from the world, that is always more delighted to heare the Faults and vices though of itself well describ'd, then all the Panegyriques that ever were, which are commonly as Dull as they are false, And no man is Delighted with the Flattery of another.

(Characters, p. 530).

Whatever his purpose, anger is certainly the efficient cause of Butler's wit, anger directed at pretension and aiming to tear it down. We shall study the operation of this destructive wit from two points of view, corresponding to Dr. Johnson's and Dennis's definitions of the wit of Hudibras: Butler's use of metaphor and of dramatic argument.

In Hudibras the metaphors are, generally speaking, of two kinds: extended metaphors of action or 'mimetic' metaphors and the brief, self-contained comparison ordinarily signified by the term. Of the first type we have already said something, indirectly, in chapter 3, in our consideration of Hudibras as a mock-romance, and we shall deal



with it briefly in the next chapter when we consider the plot of Hudibras as such. There are three major 'mimetic' metaphors in the poem, three ways, that is to say, in which the action of the poem is meant to resemble the events of recent history. They are foolish quest, sterile dispute, and the repetition of purposeful endeavour frustrated by disagreement and ending in violent farce. The aptness with which they represented the master-pattern of the Puritan experiment in government would easily have been recognized by a sympathetic reader of Hudibras in the 1660's.

In creating the second kind of metaphor, the brief comparison, Butler's imagination habitually drew upon certain general areas of experience. Of these animal-life is the most important, for among the images in terms of which he presents the subject of the poem those involving animals are easily the most remarkable, and for variety as well as for number. Exotic and fabulous beasts are represented as well as cats, dogs, and common farm animals. Some of the most famous passages in the poem, the description of Sir Hudibras in the first canto of Part I and the opening lines of the second canto of Part III for example, make abundant use of animal imagery. It is probably the profusion of animal images that, if asked, most readers would consider the characteristic feature of Butler's imagery.<sup>4</sup>

Yet when we have said this, we have said very little. In itself the fact of so much animal imagery is interesting insofar as it reveals one of the instinctive tendencies of Butler's satirical wit, but the nature of the metaphors in which animals figure yields a good deal

more to further analysis.

Butler's metaphysics led him to view beasts from a perspective different from ours. For him the order of the universe was the visible manifestation of the divine wisdom that created it. The custodianship of that order was given to Nature, and she was perfectly faithful to the divine prescriptions establishing the laws of its operation, which men recognize as the working of causes, even when such faithfulness produced miscarriages of her apparent purposes. Now if Reason is the mental faculty that leads the understanding to conform to Nature, it follows that the study of Nature, which man alone of mortal creatures can pursue, 'lead's him immediatly to God, and is the greatest demonstration he hath given of himself to Nature; and the nearest visible Access to his Divine Presence Humanity is capable of' (Characters, p. 337). Reason is therefore the highest and most characteristic human activity, that which distinguishes men from the beasts, and without which they are 'much worse than Beasts, Because they want the end of their Creation, and fall short of that which give's them their Being' (Ibid., p. 339). The pre-eminent place accorded to Reason in Butler's epistemology and moral philosophy and his definition of man's dignified and responsible place in a perfectly ordered and hierarchical scheme of creation gives a general moral force to those of his metaphors in which men, to their detriment, are compared to beasts.

The direct appeal of the metaphors is usually, however, to other senses than the moral one. Here, for example, the multiplication of

separate religious groups before the outbreak of the first Civil War is compared to the generation of worms:

So ere the Storm of war broke out  
Religion spawn'd a various Rout,  
Of Petulant Capricious Sects,  
The Maggots of Corrupted Texts,  
That first Run all Religion down,  
And after every swarm its own.

(III, 11, 7-12).

And Hudibras, unconsciously condemning his own party, says that his Squire is a

Sect'ry and a Mungrel,  
Such as breed out of peccant humours,  
Of our own Church, like Wens, or Tumours:  
And like a Maggot in a Sore,  
Would that which gave it life, devour.

(II, 11, 554-558).<sup>5</sup>

But beasts and insects loathsome in themselves are found infrequently in Hudibras, and in those metaphors whose purpose is directly and immediately to degrade the subject, the beasts chosen as agents of the degradation are normally proverbially vicious, stubborn, or stupid, and especially stupid. Buzzard, calf, goose, owl, woodcock, mad dog and sick monkey, mule, pig, vulture: these are the animals that we meet again and again as we read the poem. By incorporating them, Butler is drawing upon the force of proverbial expression for, and adding the flavour of common discourse to, his assault on pomposity and pretension. Thus Hudibras can prove by logical demonstration that:

a Lord may be an Owl;  
A Calf an Alderman, a Goose a Justice,  
And Rooks Committee-men and Trustees.

(I, 1, 74-76).

In these metaphors, as in others of the same type, Butler is not concerned to disgust the reader as he is when he compares the sects to maggots. His purpose is to deny power of any kind, even the power to disgust, to the objects of his satire, to show the reader that they are, after all, only figures of fun, worthy of nothing but derisive laughter. The most brilliant example of this technique must surely be Hudibras's ironic praise of Sidrophel's equanimity:

all affronts do still give Place  
To your Impenetrable Face;  
That makes your way through all affairs,  
As Pigs through Hedges creep with theirs.

(Epistle to Sidrophel, 115-118).

No dignity will survive comparison with the face of a pig solemnly staring through a hedge. In his rôle as scourge of importance unjustly assumed, one of Butler's most useful techniques is his knack of tapping the ludicrous familiarity attaching to common animals.

Hudibras himself is presented through a number of animal images, of which the comparison of his leaping from his bed to set out in conquest of the widow's heart to an owl's preparing to pounce upon a mouse is perhaps the best known. The tables are turned on him, however, and when the widow discovers her downcast suitor in the stocks, it is again the owl that serves to create his comic image:

Inflam'd all over with disgrace,  
To be seen by her in such a place;  
Which made him hang the head, and scowl,  
And wink, and goggle like an Owl.

(II, i, 117-120).

But if we seek for Hudibras's master-image in the poem, we find that it

is not the owl but the horse. In order to repulse the knight's offer of marriage, the widow enters upon a facetious discourse in which she compares him to

a Roan-Guelding, twelve hands high,  
All spur'd and switch'd, a Look on's hoof,  
A sorrel-mane ...

(II, 1, 694-96).

The knight is concerned to turn aside this slur on his virility, which he attempts to prove as well by the luxuriance of his beard as by formal demonstration:

Next it appears, I am no Horse,  
That I can argue, and discourse,  
Have but two legs, and ne're a tayl.

(II, 1, 721-23).

This is only the application of those powers of logical argument that were attributed to him at the very beginning of the poem:

He'd undertake to prove by force  
Of Argument, a Man's no Horse.

(I, 1, 71-72).

It is fitting that the beast of the old Aristotelian topic should be the one to which Hudibras, whose powers<sup>of</sup> and taste for disputation are prodigious, should be compared, and Butler re-introduces the metaphor at several points in the poem.<sup>6</sup> Sidrophel, for example, compares the knight's relationship to the widow to that of horse and rider:

You are in Love, Sir, with a Widdow,  
Quoth he, that does not greatly heed you;  
And for three years has rid your Wit  
And Passion without drawing Bit.

(II, 111, 557-560).

Here, and in other metaphors of the same type, Hudibras is compared to the horse as stupid and put-upon.<sup>7</sup> It is an interesting comparison, for Butler is clearly drawing upon a source of humour no longer as apparent as it must have been to his contemporaries, for whom the horse seems to have had a comic aspect, which has partially disappeared.<sup>8</sup>

Besides the world of animals, Butler draws extensively for his metaphors upon commerce, the Bible, and, most important of all, upon those areas of urban life peopled with thieves, pimps, jugglers, whores, mountebanks, and perjurers. The furious zeal with which the Presbyterians wield authority as well as the doubtful character of their motives are neatly pilloried by Ralpho when he says that their projected scheme of church government

Must prove a pretty thriving trade,  
When Saints Monopolists are made.  
When pious frauds and holy shifts  
Are dispensations and gifts,  
There Godliness becomes mere ware,  
And ev'ry Synod but a Fair.

(I, iii, 1143-48).

The expression is dramatically appropriate to Ralpho, the tradesman and enemy of Presbyterianism. In the squire's mouth too we find positively demented uses of biblical imagery to support, by precedent, the most doubtful principles of behaviour. Thus the prerogative of the victor to break engagements previously taken is justified:

For words and promises that yoke  
The Conquerour, are quickly broke,  
Like Sampson's Cuffs, though by his own  
Direction and advice put on.

(I, ii, 1091-1094).

In the following passage he drags in a biblical incident to serve as a warning to preserve one's mind free of the encumbrances of artificially acquired knowledge. Learning, he says, is a

Cobweb of the Brain,  
Profane, erroneous, and vain ...  
 An Art t'incumber Gifts and wit,  
 And render both for nothing fit;  
 Makes light unactive, dull and troubled,  
 Like little David in Saul's doublet.

(I, iii, 1339-1346).

The satire in the two preceding passages is complex and managed through the interaction of the metaphor and the character to whom it is given. Besides direct attack upon the breaking of promises and pretentious learning, the fanatic Bible-torturing of the Independents comes in for some strong ridicule through Ralpho, their representative.

It is to the narrator of the poem, on the contrary, that most of the imagery drawn from the low-life of London is to be assigned:

And made them fight, like mad or drunk,  
 For Dame Religion as for Punk,  
 Whose honesty they all durst swear for,  
 Though not a man of them knew wherefore.

(I, i, 5-8).

Thus very early in the poem Butler strikes a note that is to become one of the satiric strains of the imagery, the comparison of the zealous reformers to the inhabitants of those nether classes of society where violence, deception, victimization, and cheating thrive. By and large the tone of these comparisons is one of seedy farce, sometimes bordering on the grotesque. Some knights in romances succeed in love:

By pulling plaisters off their sores;  
 As Cripples do to get an Almes,  
 Just so do they, and win their Dames.

(II, i, 20-22).

And the amorous addresses of Hudibras himself are said by the widow to be:

A pretty new way of Gallanting,  
 Between Soliciting, and Ranting,  
 Like sturdy Beggars, that intreat,  
 For Charity, at once, and threat.

(Ladies Answer, 41-44).

But where the altercations between knight and squire, or those between the knight and the astrologer, are concerned, the images are at once more riotous and more ludicrous:

'Tis strange how some mens Tempers suit  
 (Like Bawd, and Brandee) with Dispute,  
 That for their own opinions stand fast,  
 Only to have them claw'd and canvast.

(II, ii, 1-4).

A similarly degrading comparison occurs in one of Ralpho's counter-arguments. The knight has urged him to perform the whipping upon himself as an ineluctable consequence of his own arguments from both principle and precedent. The squire deftly avoids the punishment:

For in all Scruples of this Nature,  
 No man includes himself, nor turns  
 The Point upon his own Concerns.  
 As no man of his own self catches,  
 The Itch, or amorous French-aches.

(II, ii, 452-56).

Another discussion is the occasion for a rare point of agreement between the two, in which Ralpho describes their suspicious examination of each other's doctrines:



And though, like Constables, we search  
 For false Wares, one anothers Church:  
 Yet all of us hold this for true,  
No Faith is to the wicked due.

(II, II, 253-56).

Whachum's petty shifts and menial trickery in Sidrophel's service are compared to the drudgery of criminals:

And as in Prisons, mean Rogues beat  
Hemp, for the service of the Creat;  
 So Whachum beat his durty brains,  
 T'advance his Master's fame and gains.

(II, III, 369-72).

To the whores and pimps, thieves, and petty offenders, Butler joins another, more seductive type of rogue, the professional trickster. In two of the key images of the poem he evokes this sort of cunning performer to illustrate habits of mind.<sup>9</sup> The first is Hudibras's ability to settle delicate theological points he has himself invented:

He could raise Scruples dark and nice,  
 And after solve 'em in a trice:  
 As if Divinity had catch'd  
 The Itch, of purpose to be scratch'd;  
 Or, like a Mountebank, did wound  
 And stab her self with doubts profound,  
 Onely to shew with how small pain  
 The sores of faith are cur'd again.

(I, I, 161-68).

The second is a favourite theme of Butler's, the perennial human readiness to be gulled. He reflects upon it as an introduction to the encounter between Hudibras and Sidrophel:

Doubtless, The pleasure is as great,  
 Of being cheated, as to cheat.  
 As lookers-on feel most delight,  
 That least perceive a Juglers slight;  
 And still the less they understand,  
 The more th' admire his slight of hand.

(II, 111, 1-6).

Fools, who make up the majority of mankind, are at least as much to blame as knaves, who account for the rest, for the success of the one depends upon the readiness of the other to be taken in.<sup>10</sup> 'There are more Fools than Knaves in the world, Else the Knaves woud not have enough to live upon.'<sup>11</sup>

Looking back over the imagery drawn from low-life one notices that most of it serves to express aberrant conditions of mind. The metaphors created for this purpose are strikingly effective because they not only render the moral and intellectual in terms of sharply realized physical images, often suggestive of bodily motion, but also provide burlesque commentaries upon the attitudes and tendencies of mind thus made concrete. The comparisons of this type in Hudibras are a minor triumph of satirical inventiveness, and represent Butler's solution to one of the principal artistic challenges of his subject: how to present in a lively and telling way his insights into the root causes of the upheavals of the 1640's and the 1650's, which, with his philosophic and moral cast of mind, he diagnosed essentially in mental terms. Taken together, these images of lechers, criminals, and tricksters frozen in the act of pursuing their desires or trades constitute a general vision of the mental life of the times, expressive at once of its instability, cunning, and gullibility.<sup>12</sup>

## III

Butler's use of metaphor in the interests of satire is only partially illuminated by a consideration of the materials and the areas of experience from which he draws his comparisons. The hundreds of metaphors in the poem fall naturally into other divisions according to other criteria. Of these perhaps the most important is whether a given metaphor in itself intensifies or extends the satire of the poem; whether, that is to say, it reinforces the satire at a particular point, or causes it to divide or ramify by the addition of a new dimension. Consider two examples. At the end of the anti-masquerade, Ralpho, posing as one of the aggressive spirits, tries to help the sorely drubbed knight to flee from the widow's house:

But found his Forlorn Hope, his Creep,  
 Unserviceable with Kicks and Blows,  
 Receiv'd from hardned-hearted Foes:  
 He thought to drag him by the Heels,  
Like Gresham Carts, with Legs for Wheels.

(III, 1, 1560-64).

The Royal Society had been presented, in 1664, with a scheme for a cart to be propelled by legs instead of wheels; and Butler here has a brief sally at a favourite target, experimental philosophy. The allusion in no way serves to intensify the ridicule of knight and squire, which is here carried out by narrative and dramatic means. In fact the attention is automatically drawn to the new element, the experimental carts, introduced into a passage dealing with familiar material and a recurrent situation; so that the direction and scope of the satire is altered at this point.

The opposite tendency is well illustrated by a metaphor in the speech of the Presbyterian orator (III, 11). He is arguing that the Independents owe everything they claim to be to Presbyterian imagination and initiative:

And had we not begun the War,  
Th' had ne're been Sainted as they are.  
For Saints in Peace degenerate,  
And dwindle down to Reprobate:  
Their Zeal corrupts like standing Water,  
In th' Intervals of war and slaughter.

(III, 11, 641-46).

Here the term 'standing water,' which is drawn in to illustrate the paradox that 'sainthood,' as it is in fact practised, thrives only in a state of war, in itself attracts little of the reader's attention. It is a commonplace reality, and as such understood without reflexion, explanation, or analysis. The comparison does not therefore distract one's attention from the subject of the passage, the qualifications for 'sainthood,' but intensifies one's perception of its absurdity. Metaphors of this type have something of the proverbial force of common discourse. Provided the comparison be reasonably apt, they command one's ready assent to the justness of the proposition they illustrate, in the way that one tends to assent to the truth of a proverb or truism in the midst of an expository discourse.<sup>13</sup>

The two preceding metaphors were chosen to serve as extreme cases of the general tendencies described in the first paragraph of this section. But with the first, extending, type, the other examples in the poem follow the pattern with remarkable consistency. In the

midst of a passage describing a farcical situation or a ludicrously foolish state of mind, Butler will frequently channel off some of the comic force in the direction of a satirical object, whose connexion with the original subject, though often remote, can be established quickly. Here Trulla, having bested Hudibras in single combat, adds insult to injury by forcing him to wear her mantle:

o're his sturdy back.  
And as the French we conquer'd once,  
Now give us Laws for Pantaloons,  
The length of Breeches, and the gathers,  
Port-cansons, Perriwigs, and Feathers;  
Just so the proud insulting Lass  
Array'd and dighted Hudibras.

(I, iii, 922-28).

Here Sidrophel, having spied a kite through his telescope and reasoning that it is neither comet, nor star, assumes that:

It must be supernaturall,  
Unless it be that Cannon-Ball,  
That, shot in the'aire, point-blank, upright,  
Was borne to that prodigious height,  
That learn'd Philosophers maintain,  
It ne'r came backwards, down again.

(II, iii, 435-440).<sup>14</sup>

Having created a comic situation, Butler's satirical impulse seems to be to cast about for social habits, institutions, and individuals to be drawn into the fun. The broad centre of his satiric art in Hudibras -- the narrative and dramatic unmasking and degradation of a small group of characters -- is thus extended, at intervals, to include other elements in the intellectual and social life of his times.

main

Yet, insofar as it is effected through metaphors, the/force of Butler's satire is centripetal. The point is worth emphasizing, since

from a first reading of Hudibras one is likely to retain an impression of eclecticism, to be left with the feeling that the author, secure within a domain of his own definition, occupies himself mainly with shooting arrows into the crowd without the walls. That many of his most brilliant hits seem to be the result of apparently haphazard shots into the air must also be at the root of this impression. In fact the opposite is true. Attentive reading shows that metaphors of the second, intensifying, type are far in excess of the first, and that Butler's normal practice is to use these metaphors as a means of enriching the satire of the characters or of objects introduced into the narrative or the dialogues by other means. This tendency of his art accounts in part for the preponderance of familiar materials in the illustrative term of the satirical comparisons, upon which he often allows his elaborative wit to play. The widow claims that Hudibras would as soon take as object of his amorous heat:

an Hostess Dowager;  
Grown Fat, and Rursy, by Retail  
Of Pots of Beer, and Bottled Ale;  
And find her fitter for your turn,  
For fat is wondrous apt to burn.  
Who at your Flame would soon take Fire,  
Relent, and melt to your desire:  
And, like a Candle in the Socket,  
Dissolve her Graces int' your Pocket.

(III, 1, 1044-52).

The restored Rump Parliament is characterized as:

The Quacks of Government ...  
... met in Consultation,  
To Cant and Quack upon the Nation:  
Not for the sickly Patients sake,  
Nor what to give, but what to take.

To feel the Pulses of their Fees,  
 More wise than fumbling Arteries:  
 Prolong the snuff of Life in pain,  
 And from the Grave Recover ---- Gain.

(III, 11, 333-350).

In extended exercises of this sort, the resourcefulness with which the two terms are intertwined gives an argumentative force to the metaphor, for one feels that terms revealing such detailed similarities must indeed be justly compared.

The commonplace character of the terms in Butler's satirical metaphors is not an invariable rule, and he occasionally constructs one from recondite materials. In the long tirade of sarcastic grotesquerie that opens the second canto of Part III, we find the relationship between Presbyterian and Independent compared to the 'Persian Magi,' who:

Upon their Mothers, got their Sons,  
 That were incapable t'injoy,  
 That Empire any other way;  
 So Presbyter begot the other,  
 Upon the Good Old Cause his Mother.  
 That bore them like the Devils Dam,  
 Whose Son and Husband are the same.

(III, 11, 14-20).

The comparison, an effective one in itself, requires that the allusion be explained at some length, and one feels that it is more successful as a demonstration of learned wit than as a telling stroke of satire. Fifty lines later, Butler again takes up the similitude of Presbyter and 'Cause' as husband and wife:

The good old Cause ...  
 Had store of Money in her Purse,  
 When he took her for bett'r or worse.  
 But now was grown Deform'd and Poor,  
 And fit to be turn'd out of Door.

(III, 11, 103-110).

Here he returns to his habitual method and tone, reducing the Presbyterian espousal of the 'Cause' to the level of a gross domestic arrangement turned unprofitable for the greedy bridegroom.

Butler normally expends only very moderate effort on the interplay between metaphor and dramatic character, clearly aiming in most cases to sustain the rapid movement of the wit, which builds into cumulative effects either in the elaboration of single metaphors or in complex chains of related ones. Yet sometimes, as in Ralpho's biblical arguments, we are evidently meant to relish the irony of the unwitting consequences of metaphors intended by a zealous character to serve another purpose than their effective ones. The Presbyterian orator, aiming to demonstrate the value of the pertinacity of his party, claims that it will in the end overcome the obstacles facing it:

Our constancy t'our Principles  
In time, will wear out all things else,  
Like Marble Statues, rub'd to pieces,  
With Gallantry of Pilgrim's kisses.

(III, ii, 989-92).

By this surprising and peculiar image, the speaker unconsciously ridicules the narrowness and rigid simple-mindedness of his associates, which has led them to stand fast for their views, like pilgrims vainly hoping for a miracle, even when they are manifestly unsuited to a changed political situation.

Yet this sort of complex effect, it must be emphasized, is rare in Hudibras. Butler's typical satiric metaphor fulfills its purpose more directly. Neither far-fetched nor exotic, it is often



incongruous but always undeniably apt, tending to undercut the dignity and consideration of the term it defines. It is in short the natural instrument to express the main intellectual and moral conflict of the poem, that between enthusiasm, presumption, and extravagance on the one hand and sobriety, common sense, and restraint on the other. It appeals most fully and effectively to those whose mental experience is solidly grounded in the middle range of knowledge and feeling, and who are instinctively suspicious of whatever goes beyond. Examples are easily found. The function of the 'Commissioners' and 'Triers,' who could exclude scandalous parishioners from the sacrament is:

To find in lines of beard and face,  
The Physiognomy of Grace;  
And by the sound and twang of Nose,  
If all be sound within disclose,  
Free from a crack or flaw of sinning,  
As men try Pipkins by the ringing.

(I, 111, 1155-60).

Among the questions put to Hudibras at the 'antimasquerade' is:

'What's tender Conscience?' His reply:

'Tis a Botch,  
That will not bear the gentlest touch,  
But breaking out, dispatches more,  
Then th'Epidemical'st Plague-Sore.

(III, 1, 1267-1270).

The Presbyterian orator complains that the Independents, though having learned all from the elder party, still

scorn, and hate them worse,  
Than Dogs and Cats do Sowgelders.

(III, 11, 631-32).

He later compares the sectaries' distribution of lampoons to the spreading of

Dung on Barren Earth,  
To bring new Weeds of Discord forth.

(III, 11, 967-68).

Among the many metaphors that the widow uses to show her scorn for the excesses of romantic love is this one in which she likens the urgent Hudibras to a firearm, whose action is like an orgasm:

For when he's with Love-powder laden,  
And Prim'd, and Cock'd by Miss, or Madam,  
The smallest sparkle of an Eye  
Gives Fire to his Artillery;  
And off the loud Oaths go, but while  
Th' are in the very Act, recoil:

(III, 1, 661-666).

The sort of wit represented by these excerpts is basically that which we find in Butler's Characters, before which the reader with a taste for dextrous intellectual elaboration within an elastic framework stands in admiring wonder. The ingenious intertwining of familiar objects and ordinary experience, the habitual recourse to ludicrously incongruous and degrading similitudes, the marshalling of common sense in the form of apophthegms and sententiae with proverbial force, are the hallmarks of his "Characters" of 'A Zealot,' 'A Silenc'd Presbyterian,' and 'An Anabaptist.' They are also more generally characteristic of the collection as a whole, and they define the most representative strain of the metaphors in Hudibras.

## IV

In some introductory remarks to a selection of Butler's Characters, Richard Aldington thus describes the outstanding qualities of his author's mind:

What is admirable in Butler is his English yeoman's common sense, honesty, loyalty, and hatred of cant ... He is the more valuable in that he expresses the 'character' of a large and permanent section of the race, which is rarely articulate. He is neither court nor city, cavalier fine gentleman nor Bible-torturing Puritan; he is the voice of country England.<sup>15</sup>

Butler did not think of himself as representing the country as such, though the virtues of the country mind, its solidity and practicality, its instinctive aversion to theorizing and fine phrases are everywhere evident in his work, whose general character he describes in his notebooks:

My writings are not set off with the Ostentation of Prologue, Epilogue nor Preface, nor Sophisticated with Songs and Dances, nor Musique nor fine women between the Cantos; Nor have any thing to commend them but the Plaine Downrightnes of the Sense.

(Characters, p. 408).

We may feel both that he is selling himself short in point of brilliance of execution and style and that the 'Plaine Downrightnes' is sometimes offset by an indulgence in similitudes and elaboration, yet we must admit that at bottom Butler takes his stand on common sense. In Hudibras, the man of experience, clarity of mind, and practical sense is strongly felt in the poem; and the reader is likely to be gratified by it in proportion as he possesses or admires these qualities himself.

We need to mention two other characteristics of Butler's mind: his extreme hesitancy to commit himself and the tireless relish with which he chastises those who do so imprudently and unreservedly. He does not, in Hudibras, define his own position on the issues he deals with, and so the common sense of the poem must be inferred from numerous examples of castigated folly. We can find no passage that sets out the exemplary virtues whose opposite vices have been exposed to ridicule, as in Clarissa's speech in The Rape of the Lock, King David's in Absalom and Achitophel, and Harvey's in The Dispensary. True, there is the famous account of Royalist conduct in Part III, in which occurs the oft-quoted quatrain:

For Loyalty is still the same,  
Whether it win or lose the Game:  
True as a Dial to the Sun,  
Although it be not shin'd upon.

(III, ii, 173-76 ).

But the passage is limited in scope and its praise is for a particular party rather than for virtues as such.

'Un homme d'esprit,' La Rochefoucauld says in one of his maxims, 'serait souvent bien embarrassé sans la compagnie des sots.'<sup>16</sup> The principle may justly be applied to Hudibras in which Butler appears as a man of sense and wit largely through his treatment of fools, and knavish ones at that. He sometimes attacks them in metaphors, as we saw in the previous section. More often he brings them together and lets them have it out for themselves. His tendency here is that of the playwright, and his choice in the matter is the more significant

since in a poem cast in narrative form he is not bound by the playwright's technical limitations. The extent of these confrontations is considerable: all in all Hudibras contains as much dialogue and monologue (about two-thirds) in proportion to other forms of discourse as one of Shaw's more expository volumes, Man and Superman, say, or Back to Methuselah.<sup>17</sup>

We are turning to the major mode of discourse in Hudibras, therefore, when we direct our attention to its dialogues, and it is a study that will occupy parts of the next chapter as well as the rest of this one. Our interest here will be confined to a consideration of Butler's use of dialogue as a means for the satirical confrontation of foolish doctrines and opinions, as well as the examination of certain traditional areas of human self-deception. The arguments by means of which he brings about these satiric clashes are of two kinds: those in which the subject of the argument is the organizing principle and main object of attention and those in which the points of view of the disputants are more important than the subject of the dispute. The distinction cannot always be made satisfactorily, but it is certainly true that of the major confrontations in the poem, those between Hudibras and Ralpho in Part I and that between the two Parliamentarians in Part III are of the second type, and those between the knight and the lady (Parts II and III) and the knight and the astrologer (Part II) of the first.

Within each type the individual arguments conform to the pattern in varying degrees. The debate between knight and squire, begun in

the first            and concluded in the third canto of Part I, is provoked by Ralpho's comparison of Synods and bear-baiting and seems the proof of Butler's assertion that 'a zealot' is 'always troubled with small Scruples, which his Conscience catches like the Itch, and the rubbing of these is both his Pleasure and his Pain' (Characters, p. 178). The argument thus has little claim to serious attention in respect of its subject, which springs from the squire's wandering fancy apparently with no other purpose than that of chaffing his master. The Knight, as blunt as his apprehension is in other matters, does not fail to recognize and challenge the comparison, and the debate is engaged.

The interest of this first, and probably most artistically successful, of their many disagreements lies as much in the comic meeting of two incompatible ways of thinking as in the clash of party political views. 'New light' and old logic are the opponents in the dispute as well as Independent and Presbyterian, and the irony is that the former, though wildly prejudiced and unmethodical, should carry the day so easily. The truth is that the scales are set against the knight from the beginning. The argument is composed of two parts, the first (Part I), consisting of Hudibras's declarations of his suspicions and fears at sight of the bear-baiters and Ralpho's rejoinder. The knight's animadversions (it is the first time we hear him speak) apprise us swiftly of the main qualities of his mind and speech. He is a pedant and lards his conversation with Greek and Latin phrases, needless references to obscure practices, bogus scholarship, and technical terms of logic. He has the hysterical tendency to smell a

plot in the most innocent and innocuous events, and a distorted perspective which interprets everything in terms of party politics. The squire, on the other hand, is a fanatical fundamentalist, arguing that to be just all institutions and even words must have their origin in Scripture.

The jargon and catchwords of religious and political controversy, the objects of so much scorn in Hudibras, nonetheless serve Butler well in these early conversations. He is essentially concerned to emphasize the absurdity of certain ways of thinking by presenting them in an incongruous context, and the existence of shibboleths and jargon allows him to evoke whole public debates and endless polemical squabbling by the introduction of a few well-chosen terms. Dogs and bear, says Hudibras, can have no reason to engage in combat, for:

They fight for no espoused Cause,  
Frail Privilege, Fundamentall Laws;  
Nor for a thorough Reformation,  
Nor Covenant, nor Protestation.

(I, i, 755-758).

He finishes by tracing the origin of bear-baiting to the religious persecutions under the Emperor Nero, and therefore condemns it as anti-Christian.

In his reply Ralpho shows his mischievous love of piquing his master by introducing the Presbyterian scheme of government and declaring it as unlawful as bear-baiting. And when, after their imprisonment by the mob, they resume the dispute on the same question, he defends the comparison with tenacious ingenuity, arguing for a

manifest moral similarity on grounds of relentlessness, rapacity, and brutality. His momentum carries him into a diatribe against the Presbyterian thirst for dominion and the rigidity and arbitrariness with which they would exercise their desired religious authority.

All this the knight declares he will overthrow by 'right ratiocination,' which turns out to be quibbling over points of formal logic while studiously ignoring the real import of the squire's accusations. His deductions in fact bring him either to conclusions needing no proof anyway or to those whose irony he is clearly unaware of. The fact that a young bear is licked into shape by its mother disproves the comparison between him and the Synod-man, who has never been

lickt;  
Or brought to any other fashion  
Then his own will and inclination.

(I, iii, 1310-12).

When Ralpho accuses Hudibras of a perversion of learning by his blind adherence to the rules of argument, he refuses to admit the charge because it is not really connected with their original subject:

But to the former opposite,  
And contrary as black to white;  
Mere Disparata, that concerning  
Presbyterie, this, Humane Learning;  
~~Two~~ things s'averse, they never yet  
But in thy rambling fancy met.

(I, iii, 1371-76).

Their disagreement reaches no intellectual resolution. Nor, for that matter, do any of their others. Here fatigue prompts them to leave off, just as elsewhere they are interrupted by accidents. In



these later discussions, their mental peculiarities are never as carefully drawn as they are in the first encounter, and the subjects of them are of correspondingly greater importance for the satire. This is true of their thoughts on the use the Saints may make of oaths, which, being both of the 'godly,' they communicate freely to one another. Hudibras expresses himself somewhat more clearly on this question, and we learn that his addiction to logic is partly a deliberate pose:

Yet 'tis not fit, that all men knew  
Those Mysteries, and Revelations;  
And therefore Topical Evasions  
Of subtle Turns, and Shifts of sence,  
Serve best with th' Wicked for pretence.

(II, ii, 260-64).

Leaving aside his habitual terminology, as well as his prudent reserve, he joins the squire in producing a number of arguments to support the proposition that the saints may break oaths when and where they please without moral compromise. Their reasoning is, basically, that a saint, being by definition righteous, may do whatever he pleases and remain righteous still; even though the same action performed by one of the 'wicked' would be a sin.

We observe Hudibras and Ralpho in this discussion and in their subsequent one (II, iii) on the right of the saints to make use of astrologers as if they were characters in a play engaged in candid exchanges and we members of the audience. The same is true of their remarks on false reports of military victories (III, iii). It is interesting to recall that the poem originated in Butler's personal experience of the conversation of a Presbyterian and an Independent,

whom he makes serve to ridicule the conduct of their parties. He must have been inspired by the possibilities of making the two confess from their own mouths to the very charges that were so often made against them: hypocrisy, charlatanism, lying. Hudibras is made to own up to much more than this in the anti-masquerade (III, 1). This time it is fear and a cudgel, not congenial company, that loosens his tongue, and under these stimuli he admits to greed as the principal motive in prosecuting religious reform. The pleasure of the poem as a confessional piece in which the two are made to admit their own guilt must have contributed to its success.

In all of Hudibras's debates with the squire, and to a lesser extent in the speeches of the two politicians (III, 11), Butler is dealing with issues of recent political import and continuing relevance to the public life of the latter half of the seventeenth century. In the other major debates of the poem -- those opposing the knight to the widow and to the astrologer -- the issues go beyond the immediate political context of Hudibras. Neither love and marriage nor astrology and divination have much direct bearing upon the events of the 1640's and 1650's. That they receive substantial treatment in Hudibras is a good indication of how much Butler was attracted by the satire of mental delusion rather than that of political conduct. They are treated mainly insofar as they beguile the minds of those who, often under the influence of a knave, are gullible enough to accept them without critical examination. They are also, we may note, naturally accommodated within the scheme of the mock-romance: both

lady and wizard are commonplace characters in the romances of chivalry.

Addison's recommendation of Hudibras to the attention of lovers is a cynic's advice but otherwise understandable enough, for the debates on love and marriage are lengthy and comprehensive.<sup>18</sup> The occasions for them are two moments in Hudibras's quest for the widow's fortune. The first is her arrival at the place of his imprisonment to free him, and to amuse herself with the sight and his conversation. In the course of their exchanges about his release and his suit for her hand they range rather widely over the subject of romantic love, Hudibras taking the part of the eager suitor and the lady the reluctant object of his passion. Both of them are, however, largely detached from the views they express, he because we know perfectly well that his goal is her money and not her heart, she because she too is aware of his design and indeed forces him to admit it. Their battle is therefore one of wit, and our interest is directed towards the conflict of two points of view deliberately contrived for the presentation of the subject. There is little dramatic satire here unless it be in the ease with which the widow manipulates him, which is not surprising given the vulnerability of the position he has to defend.

Fundamentally, they do not disagree as to the nature of love. Hudibras simply tries to convince the widow of the power of love and of the danger of refusing to obey its promptings. In the course of his speeches he cites the grotesque behaviour of lovers, ancient and modern, under the influence of love and the straits to which those who neglect its power may be reduced, again with examples. When the lady

expresses her fear of indiscretion, he hastens to reassure her with metaphors:

Love is a fire, that burns and sparkles,  
 In Men, as nat'rally as in Char-coals,  
 Which sooty Chymists stop in holes,  
 When out of wood, they extract Coles;  
 So Lovers should their Passions choak,  
 That though they burn, they may not smoak.  
 'Tis like that sturdy Thief, that stole,  
 And drag'd Beasts backwards, into's hole:  
 So Love does lovers; and us men  
 Draws by the Tails into his Den.

(II, 1, 423-32).

He later declares the truth and faithfulness of his passion in a cascade of hackneyed phrases and similitudes, which give her the occasion for a lengthy reply criticizing the presumptuous wit of poetasters.

In all this it seems clear that a satirical medley aimed at ludicrous conduct and literary affectation in the domain of romantic love has been cast in the form of a debate between two characters with only perfunctory attention to the exploitation of dramatic means. The two methods used are direct attack on romantic convention by the widow and indirect by the knight, who, thinking to persuade his love of the genuineness of his attachment, can only reel off catalogues of grotesque love-experiences, smooth clichés, and howling bathos such as that in the lines quoted above. The same methods are used in their subsequent debate (III, 1) on marriage in which Hudibras defends the institution against the widow's sarcastic disillusionment. The arguments that he produces here, sentimental clichés and metaphysical flights, are easily countered. And when he sets out the more

substantial advantages of matrimony, there is usually a satiric dimension of which he is not fully aware:

For what secures the Civil Life  
 But pawns of Children, and a Wife?  
 That lie, like Hostages, at stake,  
 To pay for all, Men undertake.

(III, 1, 809-12).

Here again Butler's intention is clearly not just to add another arm to the knight's arsenal of mental freaks and delusions. We know that he is merely posing in order to gain control of the widow's fortune, for he has described his base intentions unequivocally to the 'elves' in the previous canto. The essential interest of the debate on marriage, like the one on love, is in the variety of satirical perspectives brought to bear on the subject itself and on attitudes towards it, and the brisk interplay between them. The clash of personality is a minor matter, for the debate is essentially intellectual, not personal, and the disputants are not 'characterized' with respect to the issues of their argument, except in the most general terms.

These debates contain very little by way of satire on the knight and his party, unless it be in the way he comes off the worst in each encounter and fails to secure his object. But even these minor chastisements are spared him in his debate with Sidrophel, in which he wins both an intellectual and <sup>a</sup>physical victory, before retreating hastily when the astrologer feigns death. There is no better illustration of Butler's essential concern with the witty criticism of intellectual positions than the rôle he assigns his hero in this

encounter. As Sidrophel's opponent in a series of arguments aimed at extracting the maximum of critical fun from a rapid general treatment of astrology, soothsaying, and conjuring, Hudibras is necessarily made to function in a context that is incidental to his main satiric rôle in the poem and that in some ways seems inconsistent with it. When, for example, to Sidrophel's citation of Trismegistus, Pythagoras and other old masters of his art, Hudibras replies

What is't to us,  
Whether't were sayd by Trismegistus:  
If it be nonsense, false, or mystick,  
Or not intelligible, or sophistick.  
'Tis not Antiquity, nor Author,  
That makes truth truth, altho time's daughter

(II, 111, 659-64),

we may wonder if this is the same knight whose slavish pedantry has provided so much entertainment in the previous cantos.

Besides his skepticism as to the opinions of ancient authors, Hudibras has in this debate a considerable awareness of the foibles of English society, particularly in matters of fashionable behaviour. In one of his rejoinders to the astrologer he touches upon religion, politics, fashionable plays, modish dress, singing, and dancing. If the knight seems an unlikely agent for such satirical observation, we must notice too that his survey of the conduct of his contemporaries is only incidentally connected with the subject of the debate. Once again we have the impression of an imperfect wedding of subject and intention with dramatic form. The learned surveys of opinions and practices of astrology and other forms of fortune-telling, through which a good

deal of the satire is conducted, are themselves not easily adapted to dramatic presentation. The vigour of the wit remains undiminished throughout the debate, but by virtue of its being presented dramatically certain expectations are aroused which are left unsatisfied. We find ourselves wishing, with Dr. Johnson, for 'a nearer approach to dramatick spriteliness.'<sup>19</sup>

This is a minor shortcoming in Hudibras, and one soon adjusts his expectations to the peculiar qualities of Butler's art. The inconsistencies of the knight's character, in which Dr. Johnson saw evidence that the author had laboured 'with a tumultuous confusion of dissimilar ideas,' are of equally minor importance once we see that one of Butler's principal aims, intellectual satire, required the knight to play not one, but several different rôles in the poem.<sup>20</sup>

The dramatic arguments in Hudibras are the vehicle for two sorts of wit. The first, more firmly grounded in the public issues of Butler's time, seeks to expose to ridicule party political views. It is managed through the confrontation of representative characters (Hudibras and Ralpho) who condemn themselves by repeating familiar arguments raised to the level of caricature or by applying, mechanically, their cherished jargon in the most inappropriate circumstances. They confess to charges commonly brought against them, either freely to one another or under the blows of the cudgel. In short they act in such a way as plentifully to satisfy the condescending animosity widely directed against them after the Restoration.

'This Age will serve to make a very pretty Farce for the Next,'

Butler noted in his commonplace book, 'if it have any witt at all to make Use of it.'<sup>21</sup> This is the point of view of the uncommitted, disenchanted, detached satirical observer, and it is the perspective from which he examines the political doctrines of the Presbyterians and Independents as well as the other two main subjects -- romantic love and divination -- treated in dramatic form. The second kind of wit in Hudibras springs from Butler's consideration of these two tempters of the mind, and being intellectual, eclectic, and rather encyclopaedic in tendency, it is not well accommodated by the dialogue form. The first type of wit is based upon the critical observation of public life and the close study of certain habits of thought and peculiarities of speech; the second is the result of the training of an astringent common sense nourished by reflexion and wide reading upon certain areas of experience. With one type as with the other, we are aware of a skeptical temperament taking an uncommon interest in the ways in which men make fools of themselves under the influence of a ruling passion.



Notes to Chapter 5

1. Shaw is speaking of An Ideal Husband, which he reviewed in 1895. Plays and Players: Essays on the Theatre, ed. A.C. Ward (London, 1952), p. 5. The citation in the epigraph is from Lettres Philosophiques, ed. Gustave Lanson, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1924), II, 134-135.
2. 'Life of Butler' in Lives of the English Poets, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 212.
3. 'Preface' to Miscellaneous in Verse and Prose (1693) in Works, I, 7.
4. The comparison of men and beasts in moral commentary, a habit of mind Butler shared with his contemporaries, is found in his prose writings as well. See, for example, Characters, 340, 356-7, 365.
5. For similar comparisons, see: III, ii, 399-400; III, ii, 1033-36.
6. See II, i, 649; III, iii, 48; Epistle to Lady, 6, 161-62; Ladies Answer, 1.
7. See II, i, 649; III, iii, 48; Ladies Answer, 1.
8. For this general sense of 'horse,' see O.E.D., Horse, sense 4.
9. The association between the juggler and the religious fraud occurs three times in Butler's 'Character' of 'A Juggler.'

He does his Feats behind a Table, like a Presbyterian  
in a Conventicle, but with much more Dexterity and  
Cleanliness, and therefore all Sorts of People are better  
pleased with him (113).

He will spit Fire, and blow Smoke out of his Mouth, with  
less Harm and Inconvenience to the Government, than a  
seditious Holder-forth ... (113).

He calls upon Presto begone, and the Babylonian's Tooth,  
to amuse and divert the Rabble from looking too narrowly  
into his Tricks; while a zealous Hypocrite, that calls  
Heaven and Earth to witness his, turns up the Eye, and  
shakes the Head at his Idolatry and Profanation (113-114).

10. The Fool's responsibility in being put upon is strongly expressed in the 'Character' of 'A Cheat':

He can do no Feats without the co-operating Assistance  
of the Chowse, whose Credulity commonly meets the  
Imposter half Way, otherwise nothing is done; for

all the Craft is not in the Catching (as the Proverb says)  
but the better half at least in being caught (120).

11. 'Sundry Thoughts,' Characters, p. 273.
12. For other satirical images from low-life, see: III, ii, 155-162; III, iii, 231-234; Ladies Answer, 163-68.
13. Cf. 'Standing pools gather filth' in W.G. Smith and Janet E. Heseltine, The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs (Oxford, 1935), p. 403.
14. For similar examples of this technique, see: I, iii, 1057-66; II, i, 45-62; II, iii, 1115-1126; III, iii, 1-16; III, iii, 141-46.
15. A Book of 'Characters', Broadway Translations (London, n.d.), p. 18.
16. Maxim 140 in Maximes, ed. Jacques Truchet (Paris, 1967), p. 37.
17. I count the three epistles as forms of monologue ('Hudibras to Sidrophel') or dialogue ('Hudibras to his Lady' and 'The Ladies Answer').
18. The Spectator, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), II, 385.
19. Lives of the English Poets, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 212.
20. Ibid., I, 210.
21. 'Sundry Thoughts' in Characters, p. 272.

CHAPTER 6Some Literary Techniques

His Butler's poem in its essence is a satire, or didactic poem. It is not virtually dramatic or narrative.

(Hazlitt, Lectures on the English Comic Writers).

## I

'The Third and Last Part' of Hudibras, published in 1678, is to be distinguished from the two preceding parts in several ways.<sup>1</sup> It is the longest of the three; Hudibras and Ralpho are absent from its middle canto; and it introduces two new satirical genres: the mock-speech, and the burlesque heroical epistle.<sup>2</sup> The link between them and the rest of the poem is provided by similarity of theme, for though the forms are new the subjects are familiar. In the 'heroical epistles' the subject is again romantic love, and the mock-speeches are the vehicle for renewing the old clash between Presbyterian and Independent. The two epistles are easily incorporated into the plan of the mock-romance, but the speeches require a substantial suspension of the action, a change of scene, the introduction of a new set of characters, and certain modifications of method.

Paradoxically, it is in the second canto of Part III, not published until seventeen years after the Restoration, that Hudibras most closely resembles the literature of political controversy of the 1640's and 1650's.<sup>3</sup> In this alone, of all the sections of the poem, Butler sets

the action in a precisely defined historical context (London, February 1660) to which the debates between the characters have a direct relation. February 1660 was a stormy time. The 'Rump' Parliament (about forty members) had been sitting since 26 December of the previous year. General Monck had arrived in London on 3 February and on the 21st was to secure the readmission of the 'secluded' members. Meanwhile, the 'Rump' ordered him to arrest a number of prominent London citizens and to reduce the resistance of the city to Parliament. This he did, though against his will, and undertook to explain his conduct to the city leaders, with whom he was dining when members of the 'Rump' were burned in effigy, and the assembly itself symbolically (in the form of rumps of meat) at numerous bonfires throughout the town.

It is in this context that the two mock-speeches are delivered. We are to imagine that on the day of the bonfires a 'cabal' of Parliamentary leaders ('The Quacks of Government') meets to decide upon a suitable course of action in view of the changed political circumstances and that two speakers, representing the Presbyterian and Independent points of view, present alternative proposals.<sup>4</sup> The situation is tailor-made for satire, and it is natural that Butler, who in the first two parts of Hudibras deals with the issues of the Civil War up to about 1649, should in the third turn his attention to the events and ideas of 1659-60, in which something of the same confusing diversity reigns.

The advantages for satire of this historical setting are numerous. Having rid themselves of the tyrannous yoke of the Protectorate, the

'Saints' enjoy the theoretical freedom to create the sort of government they have always wanted, which of course they cannot even begin to realize for lack of agreement among themselves. Butler gives us the atmosphere in which the 'cabal' takes place in a satirical litany of the various projects for bringing about the 'New Jerusalem':

Some were for setting up a King,  
 But all the rest for no such thing,  
 Unless King Jesus; others tamper'd  
 For Fleetwood, Desborough, and Lambard,  
 Some for the Ramp, and some more crafty,  
 For Agitators, and the Safety ...  
 Some for Fulfilling Prophecies,  
 And th'Extirpation of th'Excise ...  
 Others were for Abolishing  
 That Fool of Matrimony, a Ring ...  
 Some for Abolishing Black-Pudding.

(III, 11, 267-321).

Here we have all the old intrigues, the light-headed schemes, the pettiness and the bathos of the worst days of factious dispute in the 1640's.

As it is outdoors, so it is within. In pitting the Presbyterian and the Independent against one another, Butler is being faithful to one aspect of the political situation in 1660, for since the turning out of the purged Long Parliament in October 1659, the weight of Presbyterian influence had been felt and, with Monck's support, it was soon to turn the scales in favour of bringing back the King. The two traditional enemies meet again, and each speaker devotes ample energy to opening old wounds. The irony of this reversion to earlier days need hardly be underlined.

The 'cabal' provides ideal conditions for a satirical debate. The

opponents can attack one another freely and at the same time reach agreement in all those areas in which their material interest is served by deceiving and exploiting those who are not of 'the godly.' In this they display self-convicting candour enough to satisfy their bitterest enemies. The Presbyterian, for example, is made to admit that both parties foment tumults to further their selfish purposes, that 'sainthood' thrives only in a state of war, and to lament that his party has been associated in the blood-guilt of the Independents without enjoying any of their gains. He condemns his own party too, with unconscious irony, when he claims for it the credit for having taught the Independents the methods they later successfully applied:

Who taught them all their sprinkling Lessons,  
 Their Tones, and sanctify'd expressions,  
 Bestow'd their Gifts upon a Saint,  
 Like Charity, on those, that want.

(III, ii, 625-28).

He has also arguments from Scripture ready at hand, by which he shows that the cropping of Pryn's, Bastwick's, and Burton's ears interpreted in the light of Revelations proves that:

we must be the Men,  
To bring this work about agen;  
And those who laid the first Foundation  
Compleat the thorow Reformation.

(III, ii, 847-50).

A stubborn adherence to the old tenets and practices of Presbyterianism will, he holds, be crowned with success in the end.<sup>5</sup>

The reply of the Independent makes short work of this extraordinary claim by recalling some neglected facts:

Y' have been reduc'd, and by those Fools,  
 Bred up (you say) in your own Schools,  
 Who though but gifted at your Feet,  
 Have made it plain; they have more Wit.

(III, ii, 1141-44).

Their wit was capable, too, of penetrating Presbyterian pretence and jargon:

We knew too well those tricks of yours,  
 To leave it ever in your powers:  
 Or trust our Safeties, or Undoings,  
 To your Disposing, of Outgoings.

(III, ii, 1171-1174).

But their overcoming the Presbyterians has had, we learn, disastrous effects on the country, for once in power the Independents quickly prove themselves at least the equals of their former masters in the arts of intrigue. They are particularly adept at setting their opponents against one another:

Inflame them both, with false Alarms,  
 Of Plots, and Parties, taking Arms:  
 To keep the Nations wounds too wide,  
 For healing up of Side to Side.  
 Profess the passionatist Concerns,  
 For both their Interests by Turns.  
 The only way t'improve our own  
 By dealing faithfully with none.

(III, ii, 1359-66).

Such tactics will keep their enemies divided until conditions are favourable for the setting up of the kingdom of God on earth.

The basic difference that set Hudibras and Ralpho at loggerheads is carried over into this long debate. The main source of dispute in one case as in the other is the irreconcilable opposition between the

stubborn dogmatism of the Presbyterian and the 'inspired' eclecticism of the Independent. Virtually unencumbered by doctrine, the Independent has more room to manoeuvre and wins the skirmish as easily as Ralpho wins his. But whereas the arguments between the knight and the squire are also confrontations between methods of reasoning, the debate at the cabal opposes the speakers in their characters as politicians. The first, said to be a representation of the Earl of Shaftesbury, is a trimmer, willing to change principles and parties as often as is necessary for personal safety and advancement. The second is also self-interested but is distinguished chiefly by his addiction to wrangling and the furious energy and indefatigable tenacity with which he defends his opinions. Their disagreements are grounded in public issues and their jargon is that of public pronouncement. One's satirical pleasure in listening to them berate one another and in listening to Hudibras and Ralpho agree that the Saints may break oaths or use the services of a conjurer is of the same type -- the pleasure of hearing rogues say exactly what one would have expected of them.

The skillful placing of the speeches within a carefully described historical context enhances this pleasure. Butler takes up the thread of the chronicle of the 'Saints' exploits sometime after the end of the second Civil War and the execution of King Charles. From this point until the death of Cromwell he describes the energies of the conquerors as entirely given over to litigation, each one defending his personal plunder of royal or Church property, or to such destructive factionalism that the public business remains undone. After the death



of the Protector and the fall of Richard Cromwell, the wondrous confusion of parties and projects begins. The cabal meets in the midst of it all, and is seen therefore both as the culmination of the political chaos of the preceding years and as a last-ditch attempt at self-preservation in the face of growing popular revulsion at the leaders of the country.

Here is yet another aspect of the situation in February 1660 that seems to invite satirical treatment, and Butler turns it to good account by having the London mob mete out symbolic punishment to the 'Rump,' which so frightens the cabal that they flee in terror. They do, however, remain long enough to hear a fantastic interpretation of the roasting and the bonfires by the messenger who brings them the news. He explains the situation as a Jesuit plot. His reasoning is that:

none, but Jesuits, have a Mission,  
To Preach the Faith with Ammunition;  
And propagate the Church with Powder.

(III, 11, 1561-63).

He goes on to give in a substantial address the various reasons why the 'Rump' is an appropriate emblem for the parliamentary oligarchy. It is similar to the Egyptian use of the bee, which has all its power in its tail, as a royal symbol; it also expresses the quality of Parliament as the helm of the state:

the Rudder of the Rump, is  
The same thing with the Stern, and Compass,  
This shews, how perfectly, the Rump,  
And Common-wealth in Nature jump.

(III, 11, 1605-08).

Finally the Rump, since it contains the os sacrum, thought in Hebrew tradition to be indestructible and the kernel around which the resurrected body would form, perfectly represents the resilience of an assembly

That after several Rude Ejections,  
And as Prodigious Resurrections,  
With new Reversions of nine Lives  
Starts up, and like a Cat Revives.

(III, ii, 1627-30).

These outpourings are the final demented scream before the dissolution, and a notable instance of Butler's adapting perfectly to its dramatic context the witty elaboration of a single theme of which he is so fond. The reign of the 'Saints' is drawing quickly to a close, the mob is at the door, and yet the cabal is addressed on supposed Jesuit plots and the mystical signification of the term of abuse popularly applied to them. It is a dramatic metaphor of delicious irony.

The end follows quickly upon the last words of the speaker. The shouting of the mob brings the terrified members to their feet and they crowd to the door only to be caught squeezing and struggling in the narrow passage. The ludicrous image of their plight is rendered with some attention to word play:

block'd the passage fast,  
And Barriadoed it with Haunches,  
Of outward Men, and Bulks, and Paunches:  
That with their Shoulders, strove to squeeze,  
And rather save a Crippled piece  
Of all their crush'd, and broken members,  
Then have them Grillied on the Embers.

(III, ii, 1670-76).

This is also a subtle diversification of the images of swarming insects and dogs crowded snarling about a bone with which Butler introduced the canto. He brings the fleeing rumpers once more together into a jostling pack before dispersing them for good and all. The horse, too, used as a comically degrading image earlier in the canto, is re-introduced in this final passage as a metaphor for stupid fear, becoming in the last couplet:

a Tuscan running Horse,  
Whose Jocky-Rider is all Spurs.

(III, ii, 1689-90).

The care that Butler gives to the orchestration of this closing passage is a good example of the skill with which he has put the entire canto together. The change of subject, the extreme length of the canto, the unrelieved monotony of the two speeches, make the temptation to skip from the first to <sup>the</sup> third canto to see the adventures of Hudibras and Ralpho to the end, and then never to come back to the second, a real one. Yet the reader who succumbs to the temptation will have missed one of the most interesting parts of the poem, in which Butler's skill in farcical narrative and the use of satirical imagery are well displayed. He combines with these a new form, the mock-speech, and a new subject, the public life of 1658-60, to create a synthetic composition of considerable originality.

## II

Just as the mock-speeches may be considered as the extension to new circumstances of the arguments between the Presbyterian knight and

the Independent squire, so may the 'heroical epistles' at the end of Part III be considered as the continuation of the debate between Hudibras and the widow on romantic love. Generally speaking, no new theme is touched upon in these fantastic letters, for the knight and the lady have already covered the ground quite thoroughly in their previous encounters, yet a number of new elements are introduced, and one subject previously passed over receives extensive treatment.

The name 'heroical epistle' derives from Ovid's Heroides, verse letters addressed by heroines of legend to their lovers and in three cases (Acontius to Cydippe, Paris to Helen, Leander to Hero) the lover's reply.<sup>6</sup> The letters are written at a critical stage in the amorous relationship, and reveal the writers in a state of considerable moral and psychological agitation. The advantage of choosing legendary characters as authors of the epistles is that the reader will be familiar with their histories, and the immediate background to the letters can in consequence be sketched in very economically. In Hudibras, the nine cantos of the poem preceding the two epistles serve to familiarize us with the knight, the lady, and their relationship, and the letters are exchanged at a crucial point in their courtship. In the romances of chivalry, too, we remember, tender and courtly missives often pass between hero and heroine.

There is a pervasive irony about these 'heroical' communications, because the motives for their being written are base, and the sentiments they contain, except insofar as they are meant to deceive, are cynical and ungenerous. The knight, whose consultation with the astrologer

about his chances of winning the widow has been a fiasco, decides to apply to a lawyer in hopes of carrying her by legal trickery. The lawyer advises him to send her a letter so worded as to invite a reply upon which a false interpretation may be placed in court; and in the event that she avoids the trap in her response, a professional forger might be engaged to fill up the blank spaces in the paper with incriminating admissions or at any rate to counterfeit her seal and handwriting. This ignoble plan is the occasion for the knight's epistle.

In fact there is nothing in the letter likely to provoke an incriminating reply. Hudibras begins by recapitulating the history of the unperformed whipping, and later (149-160) lists the various insulting defeats he has undergone for her sake. This, with the widow's rehearsal of his being released from prison (1-26), seems to be Butler's concession to his Ovidian prototype; for, having just finished reading the poem, the circumstances of their relationship previous to the letters are still fresh in our minds. The knight presents his case in three arguments. In the first he outdoes his former jesuitry in an attempt to excuse himself for breaking his vow. In the second he argues the preponderant power of love over the binding force of oaths, thus justifying his lying and deceit in trying to win her. Finally he affirms the natural prerogative of men to govern women. He then faces about, declaring that none of his offensive remarks were intended to be applied to her, and finishes in an outpouring of tender language, in which we can recognize a general parody of the diction of love-letters.

The widow replies to these arguments one by one. She criticizes the use of poetical metaphor to describe a mistress as a subterfuge for laying hands on her money. As for the irresistible power of love, it is (she says) really a yearning for income, property, and mortgages. All this we have seen before. But in her answer to his assertion of the superiority of the male, she goes so far beyond a mere rebuttal of his views that we are justified in concluding that Butler has included Hudibras's claim merely to give occasion for the counter-argument. Her tirade of some two hundred lines is in fact the set piece of the two epistles, Butler's deft handling of a traditional theme, the dominant power of women in the affairs of the world despite appearances to the contrary. The usual commonplaces are to be found in her defence of feminine dominance, as well as some embellishments particularly suited to the context:

We rule all Churches, and their Flocks,  
Heretical, and Orthodox.  
And are the Heavenly vehicles,  
O'th' Spirit, in all conventicles.

(299-302).

At the climax of her scorn, she touches upon motifs we have met before:

While all the Favors we Afford  
Are but to Girt you with the Sword,  
To Fight our Battels, in our steads  
And have your Brains beat out o' your Heads,  
Incounter in despite of Nature,  
And fight at once, with Fire, and Water,  
With Pyrats, Rocks, and Storms, and Seas,  
Our Pride, and vanity t'appease.  
Kill one another, and cut throats,  
For our Good Graces, and best Thoughts.

(345-54).

This is a masculine, not a feminine point of view, and in giving it to the widow Butler is making her admit to sentiments appropriate to woman conceived as romantic tyrant. It is of course one of the rôles she has had to play in the poem, she who cannot love those who love her and who imposes the whipping on the knight, and she plays it mainly to make him appear the greater fool for thinking that he can trick her. Her confession is therefore seasonable at this point, recalling as it does her qualities of reluctant mistress and accomplished debater.

The epistle form is a natural choice for Butler's purpose, which is essentially the extension and development of themes treated earlier in the poem in the form of debate and argument. The letters fit easily into the plan of the poem; they provide an implicit demeaning contrast between Hudibras and (to a lesser extent) the widow and the lovers of classical legend; and as a genre they place few formal restrictions on the disposition of essentially discursive material.

### III

It is essentially the discursive and illustrative elements of Hudibras that have engaged our attention since the beginning of Chapter 4. We must now pick up the thread of Butler's narrative method, for a few elements proper to it remain to be treated before the end of this study. In a poem whose focal points are a series of satirical arguments, it is necessary that the narrative be of a kind to allow these encounters to take place without seriously disrupting the progression of the incidents. This condition is satisfied in Hudibras

because the plan of the action is both simple and flexible. The two battles occupy all of Part I, and the rest of the poem (excepting the second canto of Part III) is taken up with Hudibras's vain attempts to win the widow. Everything that happens in the poem is directly or indirectly related to the battles or the wooing.

This is as it should be in a mock-romance, and if some of the adventures of the knight and squire seem only very tenuously connected with their main affairs, this too is consistent with the plan of the romance in which so much of what happens to the characters happens while they are on the way to do something else. Among the things that simply occur as if by chance we must include the adventure with the skimmington (II, ii), which comes about because of an accidental meeting. And so, for that matter, do the two battles in Part I. That Butler can arrange the incidents in this way without any loss of coherence or danger of exasperating his readers is largely because things happen that way in romance.<sup>7</sup> We are simultaneously aware of Sir Hudibras as a knight errant who seeks wrongs to right and as a zealous Justice of the Peace intent on the suppression of supposedly sinful sport.

In Parts II and III Hudibras's actions are determined by his desire to marry the widow without fulfilling the conditions she has laid down. Her insistence that he whip himself as a preliminary to enjoying her favour is a useful device, for it creates a dilemma that leads him first to the astrologer and then to the lawyer in search of ways to avoid the punishment and yet carry off the prize. It also furnishes



the knight and squire with the subject of a debate that becomes a metaphor for all the prolonged and jesuitical arguments between Presbyterian and Independent in which self-interest finally decides the case. Besides the consultation of wizards in romances, there is the example of the leisurely discourses of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza to provide the precedent for the events of Parts II and III.

By appealing to the common experience of his readers Butler is able to dispose the various elements of the plot in a perfectly intelligible and significant manner (from the point of <sup>view of</sup> literary parody and satire) with strict economy of means. The same general principle is true for the delineation of character. Whatever their origins it is clear that we are intended to respond to the characters in the poem as species rather than individuals, and that in creating them Butler took considerable pains to make them representative of certain mental, literary, and political types. We have already treated his expression of character by means of debate, literary parody, and burlesque in previous chapters. It remains to emphasize once more the primary importance of his mental portraits, for he conceives of his characters above all as agents of ideas and therefore presents them engaged in discourse.

There is, however, one aspect of the characterization of Hudibras himself that is likely to receive less than its due attention from the modern reader, but which must certainly have been richly appreciated by Butler's contemporaries. I mean the character of the knight as country squire, Justice of the Peace, and committeeman. In the first

two categories he is to be placed within the familiar tradition of the country booby, dressed in buff and rugged woollen, who is imperiously severe in enforcing the law within his jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> He distinguishes himself from the others in a long line of clownish titled bumpkins by the learning that he misuses on all occasions, particularly to justify his interference in harmless activity, and to explain his strict adherence to Presbyterian principles. In the third he answers nicely to Cleveland's description, in 'The Character of a Country Committee-man, with the Bar-Mark of a Sequestrator of

a new blue-stockinged justice, lately made of a good  
basket-hilted yeoman, with a short-handed clerk tacked to the  
rear of him to carry the knapsack of his understanding.

When, answering Hudibras's challenge to the bear-baiters, Falgol enumerates those things that the knight might better have done than spoiling their recreation, he alludes directly to the function of sequestration:

Did no Committee sit ...  
To stitch up sale and sequestration;  
To cheat with Holiness and Zeal  
All Parties, and the Common-weal?

(I, ii, 721-26).

In his social station and public duties, no less than in his opinions, mental habits, and religious profession, Hudibras is a familiar figure, designed to appeal to attitudes that Butler knew to be present in his readers.

## IV

On the long journey through Hudibras one enjoys the company of a narrator-commentator, who fills a number of rôles and whose distinctive voice is one of the singular features of the poem. We cannot go so far as to speak of the 'personality' of this narrator, for he does not reveal himself substantially in terms of personal characteristics; though we must recognize that certain of his attitudes strongly influence the way we read Hudibras. The principal functions of the narrator are to describe the actions and introduce (usually at length) the characters. In carrying out these tasks he is sometimes straightforward and workmanlike, sometimes directly satirical. Sometimes, too, notably in Part I, he assumes an ironic pose when making his descriptions. In the course of these ironic passages he will, from time to time, indulge in an aside in his normal tones:

But here our Authors make a doubt,  
Whether he were more wise, or stout.  
Some hold the one, and some the other:  
But howsoe're they make a pother,  
The difference was so small, his Brain  
Outweigh'd his Rage but half a grain.

(I, i, 29-34).

He is also an experienced observer of recent political life, able to point up a comical parallel at the appropriate moment. Hudibras's dagger, the page to his sword, is not too proud to perform menial tasks:

'Twould make clean shoes, and in the earth  
Set Leeks and Onions, and so forth.  
It had been Prentice to a Brewer,  
Where this and more it did endure.  
But left the Trade, as many more  
Have lately done on the same score.

(I, i, 383-88).

The allusion is probably intended for Cromwell and Colonel Pride, though may be aimed more generally at the influence of tradesmen in the Independent factions of the army.

In his rôle as guide to the meaning of the poem and its connexion with external events, the narrator shows himself not only an observer of politics but also a student of life at large. Particularly at the beginning of the cantos he invites the reader to share his animadversions on the moral and philosophical import of the adventure about to be recounted. The appeal is normally to the reader's common sense as set against the species of folly illustrated by the ensuing events, but the tone of these introductory remarks varies according to the nature of the subject to be introduced:

Doubtless, The pleasure is as great,  
Of being cheated, as to cheat.  
As lookers-on feel most delight,  
That least perceive a Juglers alight.

(II, iii, 1-4).

The satirical epigram is the foundation upon which he builds in these reflexions, but he is not always as sarcastic as he is here. He can, for example, be conversational and somewhat intimate:

Is't not enough to make one strange,  
That some mens fancies should ne'r change?  
But make all People do, and say,  
The same things still the self-same way?

(II, i, 9-12).

These lines precede a catalogue of the insipid similarities of romances, which disgust the narrator and will, he seems to suggest, disgust the reader who shares his sober and restrained tastes. When the situation

demands it, he is also capable of a burlesque maxim. At the beginning of the third canto of Part I, the victorious Hudibras is about to learn a lesson:

For though Dame Fortune seem to smile  
And leer upon him for a while;  
She'll after shew him, in the nick  
Of all his Glories, a Dog-trick.

(I, 11, 5-8).

Besides the pleasure of variety, these passages provide transitions between the episodes and serve to acquaint the reader with the key in which the new matter is to be treated.

But the astute, disenchanted observer and commentator of the preceding passages elsewhere reveals a characteristic weakness. He is, we find, the helpless victim of the uncontrollable fecundity of his own wit. Here he cannot even get the knight and squire from one place to another without a few eruptions:

They rode, but Authors having not  
Determin'd whether Pace or Trot,  
(That is to say, whether Tollutation,  
As they do team't, or Succussation)  
We leave it, and go on, as now  
Suppose they did, no matter how.  
Yet some from subtle hints have got  
Mysterious light, it was a Trot.  
But let that pass: they now begun  
To sput their living Engines on.  
For as whipp'd Tops and bandy'd Balls,  
The learned hold, are Animals:  
So Horses they affirm to be  
Mere Engines, made by Geometry,  
And were invented first from Engins,  
As Indian Britans were from Penguins.  
So let them be; and, as I was saying,  
They their live Engines ply'd, not staying.

(I, 11, 45-62).

This would be a formidable display of wit in any form, for in the space of a few lines Butler manages to mock pompous vocabulary, metaphysical theories, the belief in spontaneous inspiration, and the supposed discovery of America in the twelfth century by a Welsh prince.<sup>10</sup> But it is an accomplished piece of satiric humour as well because the strokes of mockery are dramatized as the involuntary wanderings of a capricious mind, which hits on them accidentally while engaged in the ostensibly simple action of trying to get two characters from A to B. Butler is exhibiting no doubt a bit of mild self-deprecation in the preceding passage, for his own imagination has had a struggle throughout the poem with the conflicting demands of a developing plot and the tendency to satire by learned digression. This passage is a brilliant instance of his uniting the two elements successfully. He does it thanks to the artifice of the whimsical narrator.

More than any of these various rôles, however, the narrator is probably best remembered as a self-conscious burlesque poet. It is in this character that he directs our attention to the criticism of established poetic practice implicit in all burlesque poetry and defines the tone of his own criticism, which is neither indignant nor sarcastic but simply amused. The chief object of this amusement seems to be the seriousness with which poets take themselves in the practice of their calling. The number of famous lines inspired by the desire to poke fun at this seriousness is the proof of the attraction of the subject for Butler. For example, the narrator claims to observe the impartiality of the heroic poet dealing with weighty conflicts:



aware of doing so. The verse itself is the chief instrument for effecting this criticism, and Butler's intentions are made clear by the satirical undertone in the narrator's voice as he affects now a burlesque solemnity, now a forthright plainness with respect to poetical attitudes and practices.



## Notes to Chapter 6

1. 'The Third and Last Part' of Hudibras, though the title-page bears the date 1678, was in fact on sale by the autumn of 1677, as is proved by a reference to it in H.M.C. Marquis of Bath at Longleat, (II, 159), under the date 6 November 1677. The citation from Hazlitt in the epigraph is to be found in The Complete Works of William Hazlitt, ed. P.P. Howe, VI, 65.
2. The 1674 edition of Parts I and II contains 'An Heroical Epistle of Hudibras to Sidrophel.' But this first of the three epistles in Hudibras has, other than its name, no relation to its classical prototype, Ovid's Heroides.
3. The mock-speech was a common satirical form during the Civil Wars and the Interregnum, as may easily be demonstrated by a perusal of G.H. Fortescue's Catalogue of the Thomason Tracts, 1640-1661. A good example of the genre is Sir John Berkenhead's Newes from Pembroke and Montgomery (1648), in which the Earl of Pembroke is the supposed orator. The Earle of Pembrokes Speech in the House of Peeres, Upon the Debate of the Cities Petition (1648) was attributed to Butler in Posthumous Works (see Satires, p. xii) but has been more plausibly assigned to Berkenhead in P.W. Thomas, Sir John Berkenhead 1617-1679: A Royalist Career in Politics and Polemics (Oxford, 1969), 165-66.
4. The notes to Grey's edition of Hudibras (1744) suggest that the cabal was held at Whitehall and that the messenger who brought the news of the popular tumult was Sir Martyn Roell.
5. Butler has him express this view in a metaphor, which is itself an ironic commentary on his position. See Chapter 5, p. 174.
6. Butler appears to have translated 'Cydippe Her Answer to Acontius,' which appeared in Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands (London, 1680) as 'by Mr. Butler.' The translation is reprinted in Satires, pp. 128-131.
7. The example of Don Quixote would also have been in readers' minds in the seventeenth century, as it is in ours.
8. See, for example: 'A Country Gentleman' in Sir Thomas Overbury's Characters (published 1614); 'An Upstart Country Knight' in John Earle's Microcosmography (published 1628); and John Cleveland's The Character of a Country Committee-Man, with the Ear-mark of a Sequestrator (1645).

9. In Character Writings of the Seventeenth Century, ed. Henry Morley (London, 1891), p. 302.
10. For elucidation of the allusions in this passage, see Dr. John Wilders's notes on it in his edition of Hudibras.

APPENDIX AWHO WAS HUDIBRAS?

## I

When 'The First Part' of Hudibras was published late in 1662, the relish with which it was received by readers who were used to seeing public figures ridiculed in print must have been increased by a passage which hinted that the principal character of the poem had been drawn from life. Near the end of Canto I Hudibras says to Ralpho his squire:

'Tis sung, There is a valiant Mamaluke  
 In forrain Land, yclep'd \_\_\_\_\_  
 To whom we have been oft compar'd,  
 For Person, Parts, Address, and Beard;  
 Both equally reputed stout,  
 And in the same Cause both have fought. (895-900).

About three months later, in a letter to Sir George Oxenden, the president of the East India Company, Butler confirmed that he had based the character of the knight in his poem upon that of an actual person of his acquaintance, whom he does not name.<sup>1</sup> Though it was written when the first part of Hudibras was at the height of its popularity, 'ye most admired peece of Drollary y<sup>t</sup> ever came forth,' the letter in which the author makes this admission did not come to general notice until 1933.<sup>2</sup> The intervening period of more than two hundred and fifty years had seen the development of a tradition concerning the origins of Butler's hero including the research and speculation of many able editors and students of Hudibras.

At the heart of this tradition of enquiry were two questions. Was Hudibras the portrait of a real man? If so, who was the man? Lack of evidence prevented either

question from being answered with certainty, and such evidence as there was, was interpreted in different ways. Opinions were divided on the issue whether Butler had based Hudibras upon a living 'original,' and those who believed that he had, did not agree on his identity. Others, because the satire of the poem was clearly intended to have a broad application to the political and religious life of Butler's times, and because the personality of Hudibras himself was clearly made up of traits that might well have existed in many mid-seventeenth century Presbyterians, considered the whole question of little importance. And even those who, largely because of the famous passage quoted in the preceding paragraph, were favourable to the view that Sir Samuel Luke (d. 1670) had inspired the character of Hudibras, were inclined to diminish its importance for the meaning of the poem.<sup>3</sup>

The information contained in Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden was sufficient to change the nature of the problem. After its publication in 1933 there could no longer be any doubt that Hudibras had been based upon a particular person, or that the identity of this person might reveal a great deal about Butler's literary imagination and methods of composition; for the character of Hudibras, the author says in the letter, was closely copied from one of his acquaintances. He further says that Ralpho, Hudibras's squire, is a portrait of this man's clerk, and that the religious disputes between the knight and squire in the first part of the poem were composed, insofar as possible, using the very words of the two men. The letter also led to a change of opinion concerning the identity of Butler's model. He is described as a West Country knight, a fact that weakened the case for Sir Samuel Luke, a Bedfordshire man, and gave new life to a suggestion made in Zachary Grey's 1744 edition of Hudibras.<sup>4</sup> Grey had been told that Sir Henry Rosewell of Ford Abbey in

Devonshire was the man portrayed as Hudibras, and because of his West Country origins Rosewell seemed a likelier possibility than Luke; though so little could be found out about him, that a positive decision in his favour could not be made.<sup>5</sup>

I should like in this appendix to re-examine the cases of Sir Samuel Luke and Sir Henry Rosewell as possible 'originals' for Butler's Hudibras, and to propose that a third man, Sir Samuel Rolle, whose name was first mentioned in this connexion in 1731, is a stronger possibility than either of the other two.

## II

Nowhere in his known writings does Butler identify the man upon whom he based the character of Hudibras. But he does give certain information about him, most of it in his letter of 19 March 1662/3 to Sir George Oxenden, president of the East India Company. A copy of this letter is preserved in Oxenden's letter-books along with another from Sir George's cousin, Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Oxenden, which was sent with Butler's and which serves as an introduction to it.<sup>6</sup> We learn from Richard Oxenden's letter that Sir George and Butler were only casually acquainted. They had met before the poet's reputation was established, and Richard felt it necessary to remind his busy cousin who Samuel Butler was, as well as where and in what company they used to meet. Butler's letter, written at Richard Oxenden's request, was intended to explain something of the first part of Hudibras, a copy of which Sir George was to receive from his sister. Here is the portion of the letter that bears upon the identity of the 'original' Hudibras.

S<sup>r</sup>

Yo<sup>r</sup> Worthy kinsman & my hon<sup>d</sup> Freind Collonell Oxinden hath engaged me to give you this trouble, for he Intending to present you w<sup>th</sup> a Trifle of mine, a booke lately Printed here, hath beene pleas<sup>d</sup> to desire me to give you a short Acco<sup>t</sup> of it, It was written not long before y<sup>e</sup> time, when I had first y<sup>e</sup> hon<sup>r</sup> to be Acquainted w<sup>th</sup> you, & Hudibras whose name it beares was a West Countrey Kn<sup>t</sup> then a Coll: in the Parliament Army & a Com<sup>te</sup> man, w<sup>th</sup> whome I became Acquainted Lodging in y<sup>e</sup> same house w<sup>th</sup> him in Holbourne I found his humor soe pleasant y<sup>t</sup> I know not how I fell into y<sup>e</sup> way of Scribling w<sup>ch</sup> I was never Guilty of before nor since, I did my endea<sup>r</sup> to render his Character as like as I could, w<sup>ch</sup> all y<sup>t</sup> know him say is soe right y<sup>t</sup> they found him out by it at y<sup>e</sup> first vei<sup>w</sup>, For his Esq<sup>r</sup> Ralphe he was his Clerk & an Independ<sup>t</sup>, betweene whome, & y<sup>e</sup> Kn<sup>t</sup>, there fell out Such perpetuall disputes about Religion, as you will find up & downe in y<sup>e</sup> Booke for as neere as I could I sett downe theire very words, As for y<sup>e</sup> Story I had it from y<sup>e</sup> Kn<sup>t</sup>'s owne Mouth, & is so farr from being feign'd, y<sup>t</sup> it is upon Record, for there was a Svite of Lay upon it betweene y<sup>e</sup> Kn<sup>t</sup>, & y<sup>e</sup> Fidler, in w<sup>ch</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Kn<sup>t</sup> was overthrowne to his great shame, & discontent, for w<sup>ch</sup> he left y<sup>e</sup> Countrey & came up to Settle at London...

We can supplement this account with a few details to be found in two footnotes, which Butler added to the 1674 edition of Hudibras, Parts I and II. Until the discovery of Butler's correspondence with Sir George Oxenden, the importance of these notes was generally unrecognized, partly no doubt because they do not support the case of Sir Samuel Luke. But their value is apparent in the light of Butler's letter, and most of what is in them is corroborated, directly or indirectly, by it.

At the beginning of the poem Hudibras is described as:

Great on the Bench, Great in the Saddle,  
That could as well bind o're, as swaddle:  
Mighty he was at both of these,  
And styl'd of War as well as Peace. (I,1,23-26).

Butler explains the allusion in this way:

Bind over to the Sessions, as being a Justice  
of the Peace in his County, as well as Colonel  
of a Regiment of Foot, in the Parliaments Army,  
and a Committee-man.<sup>7</sup>

Later in the poem, Hudibras recounts this event in his  
military career:

Have I (quoth he) been ta'ne in fight,  
And, for so many Moons lay'n by't;  
And when all other means did fail,  
Have been exchang'd for Tubs of Ale. (II,ii,545-48).

The note is:

The Knight was kept prisoner in Exeter, and after  
several exchanges propos'd, but none accepted of,  
was at last releas'd for a Barrel of Ale, as he  
often us'd upon all occasions to declare.<sup>8</sup>

The information in these notes is of two kinds. The  
first kind can in fact be deduced from a reading of the poem  
alone, but seems to be specially emphasized by being  
repeated in a footnote. Such are the facts that Hudibras  
was a colonel, a Justice of the Peace, and a committee man.<sup>9</sup>  
The second kind concerns his activities outside the scope  
of Hudibras. We are told that he commanded a regiment of  
foot-soldiers and that he was kept prisoner in Exeter,  
details that carry the portrait of the knight beyond the  
literary purposes of a poem containing no episode of war.  
The nature of this information as well as the way it is  
presented support the conclusion that in these two foot-  
notes Butler's main purpose is to describe not Hudibras the  
literary character, but the West Country knight upon whom  
he was based.

The basic, factual information about the 'original'  
Hudibras, insofar as it can be determined from Butler's  
writings, is therefore the following: a West Country  
knight and Justice of the Peace in his native county, a

Presbyterian, a colonel of a regiment of footsoldiers in the Parliamentary army, and a member of one or more Parliamentary committees. In addition, we know: a) that he and Butler lodged together in Holborn; b) that he had an Independent clerk who inspired the character of Ralpho; c) that he was defeated in a suit of law arising from an incident very like the plot of Hudibras, The First Part; d) that he was kept prisoner in Exeter until exchanged for a barrel of ale. Though it is not extensive, this portrait is sufficiently detailed to enable us to judge the value of the claims to have served as model for Hudibras that have been made in favour of our three candidates.

### III

The information in Butler's letter and footnotes seriously weakens the traditional position of Sir Samuel Luke as the 'original' Hudibras. Luke was indeed a Presbyterian knight and a committee-man.<sup>10</sup> He was not, however, from the West Country but from Woodend in Bedfordshire. He was an officer in the Parliamentary army and he served the Earl of Essex as scout-master general, but he never held the rank of colonel. His commission was as captain of a troop of horse. Luke's career during the Civil Wars, both as army officer and as military governor of the garrison town of Newport Pagnell in Buckinghamshire, can be followed reasonably closely from contemporary records. Apart from joining the march to relieve Gloucester in August, 1643, he does not seem to have engaged in military activity in the West Country. It is therefore unlikely that he was ever kept prisoner in Exeter.

A number of Luke's writings in connexion with his military and administrative duties have survived. Both his Journal (a record of the reports made by his scouts



from 9 February 1643 to 29 March 1644) and his Letter Books (concerning nearly half the period of his governorship of Newport Pagnell, an office he held from late 1643 until 20 June 1645) have been printed.<sup>11</sup> After reading them, one can only concur with the opinions of his editors and biographers that Luke carried out the tasks of his offices with energy and efficiency. His appointments as scout-master general and as governor of a garrison town indicate the confidence his party had in his abilities. Contemporary parliamentary pamphlets and news-letters praise his skill in gathering intelligence and his bravery as a soldier.<sup>12</sup> In short, he appears from the nature of his career, from contemporary testimony, and from his own writings to have been anything but the ineffectual pedant and buffoon of Butler's poem.

A comparison of the physical appearance of Sir Samuel Luke and Hudibras is not very helpful. 'Great-spirited little Sir Samuel Luke,' as he is called in a report on the battle of Chalgrove Field, was a man of small size; and two portraits of him, one by Cornelius Jansen, one by Gerard Soest, give us impressions of his face. But there is not much to compare him to; for besides his beard and his corpulence -- and we cannot be sure that they were copied faithfully from life -- Butler gives very little physical description of Hudibras. One has the feeling that a small, clean-shaven man (Luke has neither moustache nor beard in his portraits) could never have inspired Hudibras. But in fact there is insufficient basis here for a true comparison; and although what we know of Luke's appearance does not in itself substantially damage his case, neither does it give it support.<sup>13</sup>

Certain points must still be admitted in Luke's favour. He was, like Hudibras, a firm Presbyterian, and he remained faithful to his convictions even in 1647 and 1648,

when his party had suffered a serious decline in its political fortunes. Distrusted by the Independents in the army for his opposition to unlicensed preaching, he was even arrested during Pride's Purge in 1648, though released soon afterwards without charges being brought against him. As far as we can tell from printed sources, he was the first of the three men to be proposed as the 'original' Hudibras, and his position as most likely candidate was not seriously challenged until the discovery of Butler's letter in 1933.

The tradition that Luke was the man behind the character of Hudibras must have begun very soon after the publication of Hudibras, The First Part, where it is strongly hinted that he and the knight are one and the same.<sup>14</sup> It was continued in a biography of Butler published with the edition of the poem of 1704. The anonymous biographer said that Butler had been for a time in the service of Sir Samuel Luke. He had also been informed that Butler had composed his poem during this time, and he implied a connexion between the poet's experiences in Luke's household and the treatment of the Presbyterians and Independents in Hudibras. Luke and Hudibras were first actually identified in 'An Alphabetical Key to Hudibras,' published as an appendix to volume one of Posthumous Works ... by Mr. Samuel Butler ... 1715.<sup>15</sup> In the second and third volumes of this work, published in 1715 and 1717 respectively, Butler is said to have served as clerk to Sir Samuel Luke and to have composed a 'Pastoral' upon his death.<sup>16</sup> The third volume also contains two poems said to have been written by Butler while in Luke's service, in which Sir Samuel is the burlesque hero of some degrading adventures.<sup>17</sup> The Second Volume of the Posthumous Works, (1715) includes a prose satire, 'Memoirs of the Years 1649 and 50.'<sup>18</sup> The 'Memoirs' are no more than a reprint of the pamphlet Mercurius Menippeus. The Loyal Satyrist, Or, Hudibras in Prose. Written by

an unknown Hand in the time of the late Rebellion, first published in 1682. In the reprint of 1715, one hundred and seventeen lines of doggerel verse have been added, including, after an invective against the ugliness of Sir Samuel Luke, this couplet:

Sir Samuel, whose very sight wou'd  
Entitle him Mirroir of Knighthood. (Satires, p.357).

It is easily recognized as a close imitation of Hudibras, I, i, 15-16:

A wight he was, whose very sight wou'd  
Entitle him Mirroir of Knighthood.

Much of this evidence, once thought to constitute a weighty case in Luke's favour, must now be considered of very questionable validity. The anonymous biography of 1704 does not substantiate its claim that Lutler served Sir Samuel Luke and lived in his household. In 1759 Robert Thyer argued convincingly that almost the entire Posthumous Works had been ascribed to Butler without sufficient supporting evidence.<sup>19</sup> The three pieces in this collection that were traditionally cited in support of the view that Luke was Hudibras were in all probability therefore not written by Butler, and the editors' statements must be received with the strongest reservations in a work that aims at commercial gain by passing off inferior writing under the name of an author of established reputation. The same strictures apply to the 'Key', which, because of its demonstrable errors, is even less trustworthy.<sup>20</sup> Still, these works have a certain claim to consideration by virtue of their having been published within a period of just over fifty years after the first part of the poem, thereby indicating that there was a tradition in support of Sir Samuel Luke relatively close to Butler's lifetime.

It is in the poem itself that the association of Hudibras and Luke has its origin, the author's intention

apparently being that Sir Samuel's name fill the gap in the Knight's speech at the end of Canto I. This piece of evidence, by far the strongest of all those in favour of Luke and the mainstay of the tradition that upholds him as the 'original' Hudibras, deserves a careful examination in its context.

Towards the end of the first canto, Hudibras and Ralpho are engaged in an argument on the value of Presbyterian Synods, which the squire has compared to bear-gardens because neither has a basis in Scripture. The knight challenges the comparison on the basis of faulty logic, and then breaks off, saying that it is time for action, not words. They must disperse the bear-baiting mob whose unlawfulness had first suggested the subject of their dispute. Hudibras is abashed at the uncertainty of success but he plucks up his courage by recalling in characteristically exalted language his own past victories and those of certain others.

In Northern Clime a valorous Knight  
 Did whilom kill his Bear in fight,  
 And wound a Fidler: we have both  
 Of these the objects of our wroth,  
 And equal fame and glory from  
 Th'Attempt or Victory to come.  
 'Tis sung, There is a valiant Mamaluke  
 In forrain Land, yclep'd-----  
 To whom we have been oft compar'd,  
 For Person, Parts, Address, and Beard;  
 Both equally reputed stout,  
 And in the same Cause both have fought.  
 He oft in such Attempts as these  
 Came off with glory and success. (I, i, 889-902).

We can place Luke's name in the blank space with reasonable confidence. 'Sir Samuel Luke' (if 'Samuel' is pronounced as a two-syllable word we have the perfect triple rhyme: 'Sam'l Luke - Mamaluke') satisfies the demands of rhyme and metre in one of the very few decasyllabic couplets in the poem. It has for that reason, as has often been pointed out, a special prominence. A tradition of scholar-

ship also upholds the choice of Luke's name. This couplet, one of the most famous and important in the poem, has been examined and discussed for three hundred years; and although there were men of authority, like Charles Longueville, who denied before 1933 that Luke was Hudibras, no one, as far as I know, has ever been able to replace his name with another.<sup>21</sup>

The passage from the poem is puzzling because its apparent intention is contradicted by the information in Butler's letter. To be precise, of course, Hudibras does not say that he has been modelled upon Luke, but only that he has many times been compared to him. Why, moreover, if the 'valiant Mamaluke' is meant to be Sir Samuel, does Butler say that he is 'in forrain Land'? But even taking these two points as reservations, there remains the assertion that they are alike:

To whom we have been oft compar'd,  
For Person, Parts, Address, and Beard;  
Both equally reputed stout,  
And in the same Cause both have fought. (I, i, 897-900).

What Butler meant to do here is a mystery when we consider that the information he gives in his letter about the West Country knight does not fit Sir Samuel Luke, and without further evidence it is as a mystery that the passage must be left. In itself it is a solid argument in Luke's favour, though taking the evidence as a whole his case is not a strong one.

#### IV

The first printed proposal that Sir Henry Rosewell (1590-1656) was the 'original' Hudibras seems to be that in Zachary Grey's edition of the poem (1744). Grey himself believed that Sir Samuel Luke was Butler's model but, being an industrious collector of material about Hudibras and its author, he included in his 'Preface' the following information:

It has been suggested by a reverend and learned Person ... That notwithstanding Sir Samuel Luke of Wood-End in the Parish of Cople, in Bedfordshire, has generally been reputed the Hero of this Poem ... that he was credibly inform'd by a Bencher of Grays-Inn, who had it from an Acquaintance of Mr. Butler's, that the Person intended, was Sir Henry Rosewell of Ford-Abbey in Devonshire.<sup>22</sup>

Compared to Sir Samuel Luke, Sir Henry Rosewell is an obscure figure, but certain facts that we know about him fit Butler's description of the West Country knight.<sup>23</sup> A Devonshireman, he was knighted by King James I on 19 February 1618/19 at Theobalds.<sup>24</sup> He served as a Justice of the Peace in Devonshire, was sheriff of that county in 1629 and 1630, and was appointed to Parliamentary committees six times between 1644 and 1649.<sup>25</sup> Sir Henry was involved in military affairs in the West Country, for a document dated 6 February 1638/9 mentions 'Sir Henry Rosewell's regiment of the East Division of Devon,' and he was a member of a committee appointed to raise militia at the Dean's House, Exeter on 16 August 1648. What his activities were in the intervening period is not clear, and it is therefore impossible to say whether he was colonel of a regiment of footsoldiers in the Parliamentary army.

Several events in Sir Henry's life suggest that his sympathies did not lie on the Royalist side. He was one of those who refused to pledge money in support of King Charles's journey to the North in 1639.<sup>26</sup> On 30 January 1639/40, at the issue of proceedings against him begun possibly as early as 1634, he was fined £100 and costs for refusing to attend his parish church and for having a private chapel in his home, which people other than members of his family -- sometimes as many as twenty or thirty -- had attended. Sir Henry had earlier been interested in the settlement of America, having been one of a group that received a grant from the Company of New England and another

from the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay in 1628-9. Little more than this is known of Sir Henry Rosewell, except that partly as a result of a series of Chancery suits, which continued throughout the last fifteen years of his life, his personal estate was, at the time of his death, insufficient to meet his financial obligations.

Though we do not know enough about Sir Henry Rosewell to establish a firm connexion between him and Hudibras, neither do we have any facts that contradict the assertion made to Zachary Grey by a 'reverend and learned person.' Given the meagreness of the evidence, Sir Henry Rosewell remains a shadowy figure, but his position is stronger than Sir Samuel Luke's, and whether he was Butler's West Country knight is an interesting and an open possibility.

Sir Samuel Rolle (c. 1588-1647), the third man to have been proposed as Butler's model for Hudibras, has received less attention than either Sir Samuel Luke or Sir Henry Rosewell. This relative neglect is not surprising, since his candidature lacks authoritative support; whereas that of Luke may be taken as originating in the poem itself, and that of Rosewell was first brought to public notice in Zachary Grey's famous 1744 edition of Hudibras. Isaac Disraeli, in his Curiosities of Literature, does mention Rolle as a possible 'original' Hudibras; though far from arguing in his favour, he hardly goes beyond a citation of the little-known passage in an eighteenth century periodical in which a link between him and Butler's hero seems first to have been suggested.<sup>27</sup>

Between 1 October 1730 and 18 March 1730/31 The Grubstreet Journal published a series of appreciative articles on Hudibras.<sup>28</sup> In one of these the author (who signs himself only 'M.J.'), referring to the lines 'Tis sung, There is a valiant Mamaluke/ In forrain Land, yclep'd———,'

says that 'our Author seems to have had Sir Samuel Luke in his eye, when he described Hudibras.'<sup>29</sup> This was a common idea in 1730, less than fifteen years after the same identification had been made in the Posthumous Works, and 'M.J.' repeats it as though it were an accepted truth. Two months later, however, his almost casual reference provoked a dissenting reply. In a letter, one 'W.H.' denies that Hudibras was based upon Sir Samuel Luke and names another man in his place.

In your Journal, Numb. 45. you say ... that our Author seems to have had Sir Samuel Luke in his eye, &c. Now this is to assure you, that he did not mean him. The following account is true ... There was when Butler wrote Hudibras, one Colonel Rolls, a Devonshire man, who lodged with him, and was exactly like his description of the Knight; whence it is highly probable, that it was this Gentleman, and not Sir Samuel, whose person he had in his eye.<sup>30</sup>

The 'Colonel Rolls' here mentioned is Sir Samuel Rolle of Heanton Sackville, Devonshire, and there are two good reasons for giving this suggestion serious consideration. This 'Colonel Rolls' is said to have been 'exactly like his [Butler's] description of the Knight,' and Butler says of the West Country knight in his letter to Sir George Oxenden: 'I did my endeav<sup>r</sup> to render his Character as like as I could, w<sup>ch</sup> all y<sup>t</sup> know him say is soe right y<sup>t</sup> they found him out by it at y<sup>e</sup> first vei<sup>w</sup>.' More important is the assertion that Butler and 'Colonel Rolls' had lodged together, for Butler also says that he became acquainted with the West Country knight, 'Lodging in y<sup>e</sup> same house w<sup>th</sup> him in Holbourne,' a detail that has been found nowhere else outside Butler's letter.

Born probably in 1588, Samuel Rolle was the eldest son of Robert Rolle of Heanton Sackville, Petrockstow, Devonshire.<sup>31</sup> After his father's death in 1633 he became



the head of an important West Country political family whose most eminent figure was Henry Rolle (c. 1589-1656), the lawyer, Member of Parliament, and Lord Chief Justice of the Upper Bench in the Commonwealth and Protectorate. The youngest brother, John (1598-1657) is known in a legal context as well. A London merchant, he refused to pay 'tonnage and poundage,' as a result of which his goods were seized; and it was only after long and celebrated proceedings lasting for sixteen years that he received satisfaction. Samuel Rolle matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford in 1605, though no record exists of his having taken a degree. He was admitted to the Inner Temple in 1609, and was knighted by King James I at Wimbledon on 28 June 1619.<sup>32</sup> He was a Justice of the Peace in both Devon and Cornwall; and was elected Member of Parliament for Grampound borough, Cornwall in 1625; and for Callington borough, Cornwall in 1639/40. In October of the latter year he assumed the Devon County seat that had become vacant upon the death of his brother-in-law, Thomas Wise, and retained it until his own death in 1647.

Sir Samuel's first wife was Mary, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Edmund Stradling of St. Georges, Somersetshire; she died in 1613. He remarried in 1620, this time Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Wise, K.B., who brought him a marriage portion of £2500. His third wife is said to have been 'a daughter of Carew,' presumably Richard Carew of Antony, Cornwall (d. 1643), whose son Alexander had himself married Rolle's sister Jane.<sup>33</sup>

Rolle was a man of considerable wealth. At his father's death in 1633, he came into extensive lands and commercial interests in Devon and Cornwall; and by judicious marriages and personal industry he seems to have increased the fortune that he inherited. In his will he bequeathed £1000 to each of his five younger children.

The glimpses that we have of his life in the West Country show him engaged in the activities of a landowner and man of business. Between his first election to Parliament in 1625 and his second in 1639/40 he worked for and greatly increased the prosperity of Callington, Cornwall, a market-town for the yarn trade in which he owned an interest. In 1641 he and two others were involved in litigation with one Henry Goldingham, touching the lease of lands at Cuthbert and Cranstock, Cornwall.<sup>34</sup> Financial probity was apparently a point of family honour with him, for at the funeral of his son Robert Rolle in 1660, the preacher says of Sir Samuel, himself thirteen years dead, that 'when he was about to leave the world ... [he] acknowledged it (with thankfulness to God) as an especial blessing that neither he, nor his father, nor his Grandfather (notwithstanding their many and great transactions in the world) had ever borrowed or lent upon usury.' He also says that for more than a century gaming at cards and dice have not been permitted in the Rolle family.<sup>35</sup>

Like those of his brothers, Sir Samuel's political sympathies were on the side of Parliament. He was one of a group of nine men who in 1625 first spoke in the House of Commons as members of the 'opposition'; and in 1639 he refused to pledge money in support of King Charles's journey to the North.<sup>36</sup> The following year he joined other prominent Devonshiremen in drawing up the petition against Coryton and the Stannaries. In the long Parliament, he served on several committees, among them those on the disarming of recusants and the impeaching of bishops, and was named in 1642 to the Guildhall Committee of Safety. Rolle gave not only time and energy, but also money to the service of Parliament, promising in June 1642 to maintain twelve horses at his expense, ('one of the largest offers by an individual member'), as well as contributing £1000

for the reducing of Ireland.<sup>37</sup>

He also aided the Parliamentary cause in the military sphere. Together with Sir George Chudleigh, Sir Nicholas Martyn, and Sir John Northcote, he was in 1642 one of the most active of the agents of Parliament for raising and organising levies for the militia forces in Devonshire.<sup>38</sup> Later in the same year all four were proclaimed traitors by King Charles I, but a declaration of Parliament was issued for their protection.<sup>39</sup> Rolle was a colonel and one of the commanders of a contingent of Devonshire militia, which reinforced the garrison of Barnstaple on 16 December 1642, and on 30 May 1643 he was chosen as a member of a council of war in that town. The records of Barnstaple show that £4900 was spent for the pay and quarter of six hundred and forty footsoldiers under the command of, among others, 'Col. Rolls,' between 16 December 1642 and ? September 1643.<sup>40</sup> The diary of one Colonel Robert Bennet of Hexworthy includes details of his service from July 1642 to May 1643 in Sir Samuel Rolle's regiment, and a pamphlet of 1643 refers to the 'new armies of men raised in the North part of Devonshire (by those noble Gentlemen Sir John Northcote, Sir John Bampffield, Sir Samuel Rolls...' who advanced to aid the Earl of Stamford in Plymouth.<sup>41</sup>

Rolle also assisted in the defence of the city of Exeter against the Royalist siege in 1643.<sup>42</sup> One of the articles of surrender of the city to Prince Maurice in September of that year provides that he and others shall receive a 'free and generall' pardon.<sup>43</sup> Later in the war he served as a civil commissioner accompanying Fairfax's army; and a letter signed by him and others and dated 20 October 1645 describes the taking of Tiverton Castle.<sup>44</sup>

The fighting in the West Country was apparently costly for Rolle. Parliament granted him, in June, 1645, a weekly allowance of four pounds, under the provision of an order

for supporting M.P.'s who either had lost the benefit of their estates or were unable to support themselves in the service of the House.<sup>45</sup> Two hundred and forty-six pounds, which he had paid his regiment in Devon, was reimbursed to him on 20 September 1645, since he was in need of money, being 'much endamaged by the Enemies Forces.'<sup>46</sup> According to a letter of 10 November 1645 from John Aske to William Lenthall, Sir Samuel Rolle, who had urged that the army come into Devon, was anxious that they leave, feeling that the county could not bear the burden of quartering soldiers.<sup>47</sup>

From this outline of Sir Samuel Rolle's career, it is evident that of the three candidates it is he who best fits the description of the West Country knight in Butler's letter. To summarize the case in his favour: he is the only one of the three men who was certainly a knight from the West Country, a colonel of a regiment of footsoldiers in the Parliamentary army, and a committee-man. Sir Samuel Luke, though a committee-man, was neither a colonel nor was he from the West Country. As for Sir Henry Rosewell, he was from Devonshire and a committee-man, though apparently not a colonel in the Parliamentary army. Whether one of the three men was kept prisoner in Exeter and exchanged for a barrel of ale, I do not know, but Rolle seems to be the only one who certainly took part in the fighting there, having helped to defend the city against the Royalist siege in 1643. There is furthermore the important testimony of 'W.H.' in the Grub-street Journal. His suggestion that Hudibras was modelled upon 'Colonel Rolls' has authority because he knew in 1731 that Butler and the West Country knight had lodged together, a fact that only came to general notice in 1933, when Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden was published.

I did my endeav<sup>r</sup> to render his Character as like as I could, wch all y<sup>t</sup> know him say is soe right y<sup>t</sup> they found him out by it at y<sup>e</sup> first veiw, For his Esq<sup>r</sup> Ralpho he was his Clerk & an Independ<sup>t</sup>, betweene whome, & y<sup>e</sup> Knt<sup>t</sup>, there fell out Such perpetuall disputes about Religion, as you will find up & downe in y<sup>e</sup> Booke for as neere as I could I sett downe theire very words...

Butt I Assure you my cheife designe was onely to give y<sup>e</sup> world a Just Accot<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Ridiculous folly & Knavery of y<sup>e</sup> Presbiterian & Independent Factions then in power...

These two quotations from Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden resume the difficulty of using the poem as evidence in our search, for the West Country knight who inspired Hudibras is not himself the object of personal ridicule. Butler says that those who knew this knight recognized his literary portrait immediately, but in the poem he clearly took no pains to suggest his identity to the reader who did not know him. Turning to the poem in search of verifiable details, we are to a large degree disappointed. The physical portrait of Hudibras, more properly a caricature than a portrait, is scanty. When Butler said that he remained faithful to the knight's 'Character,' he evidently meant his moral and intellectual qualities. He is principally interested in his hero's mind, as it is revealed in conversation and argument, and conversation and argument are impossible to verify at a remove of more than three hundred years.

Butler does give information about Hudibras in Part I -- it is to Part I only that his letter refers -- but taking it all together we find little that is helpful in distinguishing between our three candidates; though what there is does allow us to weigh their claims more judiciously. We must keep the reservation that, since his purpose is not

a personal attack, Butler would have had no artistic justification for faithfully reproducing incidental details of the West Country knight's profession and public activities. But since he says that he had the story of Part I 'from y<sup>e</sup> Kn<sup>ts</sup> owne Mouth,' and in view of his apparent care for exactitude in rendering speech and habits of thought, there is reason for considering other elements in Part I -- the location of the action and the activities of the hero, for example -- as accurate too.

In Part I there are only four passages that allow us to distinguish between Luke, Rosewell, and Rolle.

a. The line that begins the narrative of Hudibras's adventures is:

In Western Clime there is a Town. (I,i,659).

We can take it that 'Western Clime' hints strongly at West Country. The reference therefore supports the Devonshiremen: Rosewell and Rolle.

b. Describing Hudibras's physical appearance, Butler says that:

he bore  
A Paunch of the same bulk before:  
Which still he had a speciall care  
To keep well cramm'd with thrifty fare;  
As White-pot, Butter-milk, and Curds,  
Such as a Countrey house affords. (I,i,293-298)

'White-pot,' a kind of spiced milk pudding or custard, is a traditional Devonshire speciality. This passage therefore more appropriately applies to Rosewell and Rolle for the same reason as the preceding one.<sup>48</sup>

c. In Canto ii, Hudibras addresses a challenge to the bear-baiting mob and is answered by Talgol, who suggests that, instead of interrupting honest sport, he might otherwise have employed his time.

Did no Committee sit, where he [i.e. the Devil]  
 Might cut out Journey-work for thee;  
 And set th'a task, with subornation,  
 To stitch up sale and sequestration;  
 To cheat with Holiness and Zeal  
 All Parties, and the Common-weal? (I,ii,721-726)

Butler here refers to a type of committee set up by Parliament to administer the provisions of ordinances of 27 March and 18 August 1643. According to these ordinances, power of seizure and sale over the lands of 'delinquents,' -- that is bishops, papists, those who had raised or assisted in raising arms against Parliament, and others considered dangerous to Parliament -- was given to committees of 'sequestrators' in each county, who were to pay the money thereby received to the Treasury for military and other public purposes.<sup>49</sup> Sir Samuel Luke was appointed to such a committee for the county of Bedford in 1643, as was Sir Samuel Rolle for the county of Devon in the same year.<sup>50</sup> Rolle was also appointed in 1646 to a committee to settle questions between the trustees (those who cared for and arranged the sale of confiscated estates) and the treasurers, arising from the administration of ordinances for the sale of bishops' lands.<sup>51</sup> The allusion can therefore be applied to Luke and to Rolle, but not to Sir Henry Rosewell, who does not appear to have served on such a committee.

d. During his first encounter with the bear-baiting mob, Hudibras falls into a swoon, brought on by fear and shock. To rouse him from this state, Ralpho addresses him thus:

You are, great Sir,  
 A self-denying Conqueror. (I,ii,983-984)

The epithet has a double meaning. In the context of the action, the squire is urging his master not to deny himself the fruits of the victory (actually gained chiefly

by the bear) he has won. The words 'self-denying' also clearly allude to the 'Self-Denying Ordinance' of 3 April 1645 by which members of both houses of Parliament were excluded from holding civil or military office in the state.<sup>52</sup> Properly speaking, therefore, only a Member of Parliament could in this sense be 'self-denying'; and so either Sir Samuel Luke or Sir Samuel Rolle, who were both Members of Parliament, are more likely to have inspired this allusion than Sir Henry Rosewell, who was not.<sup>53</sup>

It is to Sir Samuel Rolle and to him only, of the three candidates, that all four of these references apply; and when we add the support given to him by the poem to the other evidence in his favour, his case appears incontestably the strongest of the three. But this is not to say that we can be sure that it is he and no one else who is the man described by Butler in his letter and rendered so memorably in Hudibras. The evidence in support of him is not in my view substantial enough to justify such a conclusion. Sir Samuel Rolle is nevertheless a strong possibility, and we may fairly place him well ahead of his two rivals.



Notes to Appendix A.

1. The letter was first published in Ricardo Quintana, 'The Butler-Oxenden Correspondence,' MLN, XLVIII (1933), 1-11. It is reprinted in Hudibras, ed. John Wilders, pp.450-51.
2. 'The First Part' of Hudibras was so described by Richard Oxenden, the cousin of Butler's correspondent, in a letter, part of which is reproduced in Hudibras, ed. John Wilders, p.450.
3. For the opinions referred to in this paragraph, see the following works: Hudibras, ed. Zachary Grey (London, 1799), I, xviii-xx; Poetical Works of Samuel Butler, ed. Robert Bell (London, 1855), I, 17; Samuel Butler and his Hudibras and Other Works, ed. Alexander Ramsay (London, 1846), p.7; Hudibras, ed. Alfred Milnes (London, 1881), I, xvi; Hudibras, ed. Rev. Treadway Russell Nash (London, 1835), I, .xxx-xxxi; The Poetical Works of Samuel Butler, ed. Reginald Brimley Johnson (London, 1893), I, xlvii.
4. Cambridge, p.iii.
5. The arguments in favour of Rosewell may be found in Ricardo Quintana, 'The Butler-Oxenden Correspondence,' qualified by the same author's letter, MLN XLVIII (1933), 486; and are summarized in Hudibras, ed. John Wilders, pp.452-454.
6. Parts of Richard Oxenden's letter are given in Quintana, 'The Butler-Oxenden Correspondence,' pp.3-4.
7. Hudibras, ed. John Wilders, p.2.
8. Ibid., p.142.
9. Evident from I,i,14; I,ii,713-720; and I,ii,721-26 respectively.
10. Biographical information about Luke can be found in The Dictionary of National Biography and in the 'Introduction' to Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, (ed. I.G. Philip), Oxfordshire Record Society, Vols.29, 31, 33 (1947, 1950, 1952-53). His appointments to Parliamentary committees are given in C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait, Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660 (London, 1911), I, 89, 110, 146, 169, 227, 543, 619, 635, 853, 937, 960, 1077, 1209, 1234; II, 1426.
11. Journal of Sir Samuel Luke, ed. Philip; The Letter Books of Sir Samuel Luke, 1644-45, ed. H.G. Tibbitt (London, 1963).

12. Contemporary praise is cited by C.H. Firth in his article on Luke in The Dictionary of National Biography.
13. Luke was a hunchback and as such the object of some cruel Royalist satire (see C.H. Firth in The Dictionary of National Biography and P.W. Thomas, Sir John Berkenhead 1617-1679: A Royalist Career in Politics and Polemics [Oxford, 1969], p.94). Butler does not attribute this physical deformity to Hudibras. See also Appendix C.
14. I,i,889-904.
15. The pages of the 'Key' are not numbered. The identification is made twice: p. [4], p. [5].
16. III, A3v-A4; II, A8 .
17. 'The Poem, Entitled Dunstable Downs; or The Inchaned Cave, and the Tale of the Cobler and the Vicar of Bray, were given to me by a Gentleman whose Father was an Intimate of Mr. Butler's at the time he was Clerk to Sir Samuel Luke. He assures me that the Facts of both were true, and that Mr. Butler, who was then very young, writ 'em whilst he was with Sir Samuel, and when he left his Service gave his Father the Copies' (A3v-A4). 'Dunstable Downs,' in which the knight and squire are named 'Hudibras' and 'Ralph,' contains many metaphors, lines, and couplets closely similar to those in Hudibras. 'The Tale of the Cobler and the Vicar of Bray,' the story of an attempt to mediate in a quarrel between a cobbler and a vicar by 'Sir Samuel,' the principal character of the poem, and his squire 'Ralph,' begins with these lines:

In Bedfordshire there dwelt a knight,  
 Sir Samuel by name,  
 Who by his feats in civil broils,  
 Obtain'd a mighty fame.

Nor was he much less wise than Stout,  
 But fit in both respects  
 To humble sturdy cavaliers,  
 And to support the sects.

Which holy vow he firmly kept;  
 And most devoutly wore  
 A grizly meteor on his face,  
 'Till they were both no more. (p.131).

The obvious imitations of Hudibras, I,i,30 and I,i, 239-250 have the effect virtually of identifying Luke and Hudibras.

18. pp.73-110. The modern reprint in Satires, ed. Lamar (pp.349-365) gives the prose text of 1682 and the verses of 1715.
19. The Genuine Remains in Verse and Prose of Mr. Samuel Butler, Author of Hudibras, ed. Robert Thyer (London, 1759), I, 326-329 nn. Mercurius Menippeus is not accepted as Butler's by Thyer but is included on the strength of internal evidence by René Lamar in Butler's Satires and Miscellaneous Poetry and Prose (Cambridge, 1928). It is discussed in Appendix C.
20. The 'Key' identifies the members of the bear-baiting mob. Butler denies in his letter that they are anything but such men 'as Commonly make up Beare-baitings.' See also Appendix B.
21. Charles was the son of William Longueville, a lawyer who is said (in 'The Author's Life', first published with the edition of Hudibras, in 1704) to have paid Butler's funeral expenses and to have owned his MSS after his death. He told the author of the article on Hudibras in the General Dictionary (1734-41, VI, 299) that Sir Samuel Luke was not 'the person ridiculed under the name of Hudibras.'
22. p.iii.
23. Unless otherwise noted, information about Sir Henry Rosewell comes from Frances B. James, 'Sir Henry Rosewell, A Devon Worthy: His Ancestry and History,' Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association, XX (1888), 113-122.
24. W.A. Shaw, The Knights of England (London, 1906), II, 171.
25. Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, I, 460, 545, 963, 1080; II, 32, 295.
26. John Rushworth, Historical Collections of Private Passages of State ... 1618-1640 (London, 1659-1680), III, 913.
27. Isaac Disraeli, Curiosities of Literature (London, 1849), II, 546.
28. The articles appear in numbers 39 (1 October 1730); 41 (15 October 1730); 45 (12 November 1730); 53 (7 January 1730/31); 63 (18 March 1730/31).
29. Number 45.
30. Number 53. This identification of Rolle and Hudibras has provoked negative reactions from historians of Devonshire. R.W. Cotton refers to the 'literary moles of the last century [who] imagined that they had discovered in him [i.e. Rolle] the original character of Sir Hudibras in Butler's immortal

satire -- on no better grounds, it seems, than that he was a Puritan Colonel and a stout gentleman, and that he had once lodged in the same house with Butler' (Barnstaple and the Northern Part of Devonshire in the Great Civil War, 1642-46, printed for the author by Unwin Brothers /Chilworth and London, 1889/, p.55 n.). J.J. Alexander qualifies as 'highly improbable' the identification of the two, saying, 'for one thing Rolle was dead more than fifteen years before the poem was published' ('Devon County Members of Parliament, Part V,' Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association, XLVIII/1916/, 324). It must be noted, however, that both criticisms were written before the publication of Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden in 1933.

31. There is a short life of Rolle in Mary Freer Keeler, The Long Parliament, 1640-41: A Biographical Study of its Members (Philadelphia, 1954), pp.327-328. Unless otherwise noted, information about Rolle comes from this work.
32. W.A. Shaw, The Knights of England, (London, 1906), II, 172.
33. C.S. Gilbert, An Historical Survey of the County of Cornwall (Plymouth and London, 1817), I, 490.
34. Fourth Report of The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Part I (London, 1874), pp.41, 48, 87, 89. Rolle, his father-in-law Sir Thomas Wise, and one Captain Reynold Mohun were summoned by close warrant before the Privy Council in 1622, but were all released when charges of 'insolences' and 'misdemeanors' brought against them by a Robert Gorge were found to be groundless (Acts of the Privy Council, 1621-23 /London, 1932/, pp.349-50, 357).
35. William Trevethick, A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Honourable Colonel Robert Rolle ... (London, 1661), b2-b2v.
36. Williams M. Mitchell, The Rise of the Revolutionary Party in the House of Commons, 1603-1629 (New York, 1957), p.105. English
37. Calendar of State Papers: Ireland, 1633-47, p.784 (23 March 1642).
38. Cotton, op.cit., pp.54-55.
39. True Newes from Devonshire and Cornwall ... Whereunto is annexed A Declaration of the Lords and Commons ... for the Protection of Sir George Chudleigh, Sir John Northcote, Sir Samuel Rolle, and Sir Nicholas Martyn, in the County of Devon, who have lately been Proclaimed Traytors by his Majesty. (London, Printed by T.F. for R.M., 1642). The Parliamentary

Order for their protection is reprinted in Thirteenth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (London, 1892), Appendix, Part I, p.77.

40. Cotton, op.cit., pp.104, 182-83, 219.
41. The relevant extracts from Colonel Bennet's Diary are given in J.J. Alexander and R.W. Hooper, The History of Great Torrington in the County of Devon (Sutton, Surrey, 1948), pp.85-86. The pamphlet is A True Relation of the Late Victory Obtained by the ... Parle of Stanford, at Plimmouth, and Modbury, the 21st of February, 1643. Printed for S.G., 1643.
42. J.J. Alexander, 'Devon County Members of Parliament, Part V,' 332.
43. Articles of Agreement ... Upon the delivery of the City of Excester, the Fifth September, 1643 (London, 1643). The fifth article provides that 'his Highnesse shall forthwith procure a free and generall pardon unto Henry Parle of Stanford, Sir George Chudleigh, Sir Iohn Bampton, Sir Iohn Northcot Baronets, Sir Samuel Roberts, and Sir Nicholas Martin, Knights ...' (p.1). 'Sir Samuel Roberts' is almost certainly a misprint for 'Sir Samuel Rolle.' W.A. Shaw (The Knights of England, 2 vols., London, 1906) lists no 'Sir Samuel Roberts' who could have been alive in 1643, and Rolle is known to have associated frequently with members of this group in the West Country.
44. Notes and Queries, Sixth Series, vol.VII (January-June, 1883), 23. 25 Dec. 1644 - 4 Dec. 1646 (1803),
45. Journal of the House of Commons, Vol.IV,<sup>7</sup> 161.
46. Ibid., p.280. It is here mentioned that Rolle had obtained a judgement against the King in the Court of Admiralty in the sum of 11,000 pounds, and that he could at that time have no relief upon this judgement out of the King's revenues.
47. Thirteenth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, Appendix, Part I, p.307.
48. See the notes to this passage by Zachary Grey, I, 40, and by John Wilders, p.329, and also F. Douce, Illustrations of Shakespeare (London, 1839), II, 591.
49. Firth and Rait, I, 106 ff., 254 ff.
50. Ibid., pp.110, 111.
51. Ibid., p.905.
52. S.R. Gardiner, ed. The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution 1625-1660, (Oxford, 1906), 287-88.  
3rd ed.

53. Sir Samuel Luke, who sat as Member for Woodend in Cople, Bedfordshire from 1641-48, was relieved of his governorship of Newport Pagnell according to the provisions of this ordinance (Journal of the House of Commons, IV, 164, 166).

APPENDIX BTHE IDENTIFICATION OF RALPHO IN THE 'KEY TO HUDIBRAS'

'An Alphabetical Key to Hudibras' was published as an appendix to Posthumous Works in Prose and Verse . . . by Mr. Samuel Butler . . . (1715), and is said in a prefatory address to the reader to be the work of Sir Roger L'Estrange. Its authority has long been held in question, for in the Posthumous Works many spurious pieces are attributed to Butler.<sup>1</sup> Its accuracy too is doubtful, since its identifications of Hudibras and the members of the bear-baiting mob are contradicted by Butler's letter to Sir George Oxenden.<sup>2</sup> Butler further says in his letter that the clerk to the West Country knight upon whom he based Hudibras served as model for Ralpho, another reason for distrusting the accuracy of the 'Key,' where he is said to have been:

Isaac Robinson, Squire to Hudibras; and a zealous Botcher in Moorfields, who, in the time of the Rebellion in Forty One, was always contriving some new Quirpo-cut of Church-Government (p.[1]).

We may question this assertion on further grounds. In The Character of a London Diurnall (1645) John Cleveland refers to the custom, common in newsbooks sympathetic to Parliament, of revealing the details of supposed plots discovered by humble intelligencers. He ridicules the practice in these terms:

Thus a zealous Botcher in Morefields, while he was contriving some Quirpo-cut of Church Government, by the helpe of his out-lying eares, and the Otacousticon of the Spirit, discovered such a plot, that Selden intends to combate Antiquity, and maintaine it was a Tailors Goose, that preserved the Capitol.<sup>3</sup>

The author of the 'Key' evidently drew upon this passage for his portrait of 'Isaac Robinson.' The fact of being based upon a fanciful creation, Cleveland's type of meddling enthusiasm, renders even less credible this already very doubtful identification of Ralpho.



Notes to Appendix B.

1. The attributions are criticized by Robert Thyer in The Genuine Remains in Verse and Prose of Mr. Samuel Butler . . . (1759), I, 326-329 n.; and by René Lamar in his edition of Butler's Satires and Miscellaneous Poetry and Prose (Cambridge, 1928), x-xviii.
2. See Appendix A, passim, and note 20.
3. The Character of a London-Diurnall, with severall select Poems by the same Author (1647), A2v-A3.

APPENDIX CTHE EVIDENCE FOR BUTLER'S AUTHORSHIP OF MERCURIUS MENIPPEUS

Of the short works attributed to Butler that have been used to support the theory that he based the character of Hudibras upon Sir Samuel Luke, the pamphlet Mercurius Menippeus is the most important. It is the only one of the three pieces printed in the collections entitled Posthumous Works in Prose and Verse . . . by Mr. Samuel Butler . . . (1715) and The Second Volume of the Posthumous Works . . . (1715), in which Luke is either identified or closely associated with Hudibras, that survives into the modern edition of Butler's minor writings.<sup>1</sup> It has twice been attributed to Butler and once to either Butler or Sir John Berkenhead. Zachary Grey cited it in 1744 to support his belief that Luke was represented in the character of Hudibras.<sup>2</sup> In the most recent edition of Hudibras an excerpt from it is used to annotate the lines in which the knight says that he has been compared to a 'valiant Mamaluke,' in order to point out certain similarities between Butler's portrait of his principal character and a caricature of Sir Samuel Luke in the pamphlet.<sup>3</sup> In any consideration of the identity of the man upon whom Hudibras was based, therefore, Mercurius Menippeus must be dealt with.

The work in question, a pamphlet of 24 quarto pages, was first published in 1682 (two years after Butler's death) with the following title: Mercurius Menippeus. The Loyal Satyrist, Or, Hudibras in Prose. Written by an unknown Hand in the time of the late Rebellion. But never till now published. It is essentially a catalogue of complaints against the misgovernment of the country by Parliament in 1649 and 1650 and was therefore probably written in the latter year or shortly after. The 'Hudibras in Prose' in the title is clearly a later addition, an attempt, one guesses, to profit from the reputation of Butler's poem, the third part

of which had gone through four editions in 1678-79. It is the more significant therefore that Mercurius Menippeus is said to be 'by an unknown Hand,' for had the publisher known Butler to be the author, he would certainly not have left this potentially profitable fact unadvertised.

In the course of the satirical invective certain political and military leaders are lampooned by name, and for personal vices as well as for incompetence and self-interest in the execution of public duties: Henry Marten, the regicide judge, for his lechery; the Earl of Pembroke for his foul language and his passion for sport; Cromwell for his physical ugliness, and Sir Samuel Luke for his hunchback:

I wonder how Sir Samuel Luke and he should clash,  
for they are both Cubs of the same ugly Litter.  
This Urchin is as ill Carved as that Goblin  
Painted. The Grandam Bear sure had blistered her  
Tongue, and so left him unlicked. He looks like  
a Snail with his House upon his back, or the Spirit  
of the Militia with a Natural Snapsack, and may  
serve both for Tinker, and Budget too. Nature  
intended him to play at Bowls, and therefore clapt  
a Bias upon him. His mother longed for Pumpions.  
He was begotten in a Cupping-glass, and engendered  
in a Tod of Hay. Some Earthquake hath disordered  
the Symmetry of the Microcosm: Sunk one Mountain,  
and put up another. One would think a Mole had  
crept into his Carcase before 'tis laid in the  
Church-yard, and rooted in it. He looks like the  
visible type of Aeneas boulstring up his Father,  
or some Beggar-Woman endorsed with her whole Litter,  
and with child behind. You may take him for Anti-  
Christopher with the Devil at his back. O that  
Knot-grass should purge the Kingdom! We must be  
ridden by a Camel, and reformed by the Sign of the  
Dolphin. You would think that he were levelled  
sufficiently: But Harvey will have him lower yet,  
and down with the Wall, though it be built with a  
Buttress.<sup>4</sup>

This comprehensive -- one might almost say exhaustive -- elaboration of Luke's physical deformity is the only part of Mercurius Menippeus that directly concerns our study. It is

an important passage because if Butler did write it in 1650 or a bit later, then we must reckon with the fact of his authorship of a squib thrown at Sir Samuel Luke a decade before the publication of Hudibras.

In itself, this cruel exercise of wit contains little that might connect Luke with Hudibras, whose shape and posture are thus portrayed by Butler:

His Back, or rather Burthen, show'd  
As if it stoop'd with its own load.  
For as Aeneas bore his Sire  
Upon his shoulders through the fire:  
Our Knight did bear no less a Pack  
Of his own Buttocks on his back:  
Which now had almost got the upper-  
Hand of his Head, for want of Crupper.  
To poize this equally, he bore  
A Paunch of the same bulk before. (I, i, 285-94).

The image left in the reader's mind by these ten lines is not remarkable for its clarity. The first couplet on its own certainly suggests a hunchback, but reading further we see that the 'Burthen' borne by the knight is his backside and that he is not deformed but only excessively fat.<sup>5</sup> 'Stoop'd' apparently signifies 'bent forward,' an effect not usually produced by weighty buttocks -- and one that is in any case later said to be neutralized by the action of his bulky paunch. The one element undeniably common to both the pamphlet and the poem, the allusion to Aeneas's carrying his father through the flames, is more exactly appropriate to the former, where it <sup>is</sup> applied to a hunchback. Its occurrence in both texts proves virtually nothing, since of all classical commonplaces it is one of the most recurrent.<sup>6</sup> There is nothing else in Mercurius Menippeus to strike even a minutely attentive reader as Butler's.

It was nonetheless ascribed to him thirty-three years later in The Second Volume of the Posthumous Works of Mr. Samuel Butler, Author of Hudibras .. (1715). Mercurius Menippeus, to which 117 lines of octosyllabic doggerel



Some merely contain identical rhymes.

'Memoirs'

3. Such was our Champion's antick  
Zeal  
For Parliament and Commonweal.

(p. 357).

4. You see this blessed  
Reformation,  
At last must end in Desolation.

(p. 361).

Hudibras

To cheat with Holiness  
and Zeal  
All Parties, and the  
Common-weal?

(I, ii, 725-26).

Call Fire and Sword and  
Desolation,  
A godly-thorough-  
Reformation.

(I, i, 199-200).

These correspondences may be explained in one of two ways. Either Butler originally wrote the versions of these lines (1 and 2 above) included in the 'Memoirs' around 1650 and later reworked them for insertion at the appropriate places in Hudibras; or the publisher of the Posthumous Works refurbished an old pamphlet to be assigned to Butler by the addition of octosyllabic verses in his manner, taking care that a few lines resemble well-known passages in Hudibras. I find the second hypothesis more convincing for two reasons. The publisher is untrustworthy, and the literary quality of the verses in the 'Memoirs' falls below that of Butler's general standard, both in Hudibras and in his minor poetry, including that which remained in manuscript until the twentieth century. The latter reason is not, I well know, based upon 'principles demonstrative and scientifick' and can carry no more weight than any other judgement of taste. But here taste is consonant with more substantial evidence, and we may reasonably conclude that the attribution to Butler of the 'Memoirs of the Years 1649 and 50' in the Posthumous Works, while it is not disproved, is unauthoritative and open to strong suspicion.

This was the conviction that led Robert Thyer, the editor of The Genuine Remains in Verse and Prose of Mr. Samuel Butler . . . (1759), to exclude the 'Memoirs' from the canon

of Butler's minor writings. 'I have made it a Rule to myself,' he wrote explaining his principle of discrimination in the matter, 'to publish nothing but what is, upon certain Authority, his.'<sup>10</sup> Thyer applied his rule with rigour, rejecting for want of independent evidence even a piece such as 'A Seasonable Speech, Made by Alderman Atkins In the Rump-Parliament' (reprinted in the Posthumous Works) in which he felt he had discovered 'much of the Humour and Manner of Butler.' He found a good deal that was not unworthy of his author in the prose compositions of the Posthumous Works, which led him to conjecture that 'Sir John Birkenhead had a principal Hand in it.'

Thyer's informed supposition may very well be the basis for the assertion on the title-page of the reprint of Mercurius Menippeus in The Somers Tracts (1812) that 'this tract was probably written either by Butler or Birkenhead.'<sup>11</sup> The editor, Walter Scott, was well acquainted with the political satire of the mid seventeenth century, and his attribution, tentative as it is, has the weight of his experience. It is not apparent that he had for it any reason other than those we have already considered. He reprints the 1682 text of Mercurius Menippeus without the verse of the Posthumous Works, which he does not mention, though he presumably knew of it. One of the reasons for his statement of Butler's possible authorship appears in a note to the passage jibing at Sir Samuel Luke's hunchback.<sup>12</sup> In the note he says that Luke has been thought to be the original of Hudibras and he cites in proof of the relationship the lines "'Tis sung, There is a valiant Mamaluke / In forrain Land, yclep'd ————,' as well as the first four stanzas of 'The Tale of the Cobler and the Vicar of Bray' from the Posthumous Works.<sup>13</sup> He gives as his authority the article on Butler in Biographia Britannica (1784).<sup>14</sup>

Turning to this massive work we find a judicious and thorough sifting of evidence concerning Butler's life and

works, but no new fact that might permit a surer decision to be made as to the authorship of Mercurius Menippeus. Moreover the author of the article is more cautious than Walter Scott in assigning 'The Tale of the Cobbler and the Vicar of Bray' to Butler:

I shall not dispute whether this ballad be Butler's or not; but shall only observe from it, that as, in Hudibras, the Knight is supposed to be drawn in the character of Sir Samuel Luke, so here Sir Samuel is evidently drawn in the character of Hudibras.<sup>15</sup>

His restrained conclusion -- and it may fairly be applied to the verses in Mercurius Menippeus as well -- is that if the ballad was written by Butler and before Hudibras, then Luke was clearly drawn upon for the character of the knight in the later poem; but that if it was written after 1663 (and by someone else), then all that is proved is that when the Posthumous Works were published, Luke was thought to be the original of Hudibras.

Mercurius Menippeus, as well as the verses in the Posthumous Works, have most recently been attributed to Butler by René Lamar in his edition of the Satires and Miscellaneous Poetry and Prose (1928). In this volume are reprinted all the prose pieces accepted as authentic by Thyer in the Genuine Remains, as well as three others: Mola Asinaria (said by Antony à Wood to be Butler's), a translation (in heroic couplets) of Ovid's 'Cydippe Her Answer to Acontius' (on the strength of its having been included in a volume of Ovid's epistles Englished for which Dryden wrote the preface and "probably obtained the translations from their respective authors") and Mercurius Menippeus. This latter is included because:

a careful comparison of the text with other productions of Butler, particularly with his hitherto unpublished MSS., has enabled me to point out similes, expressions and ideas, so distinctively peculiar to the poet that his



being the author of the pamphlet is no longer a matter of doubt.<sup>16</sup>

It is further argued that:

many out-of-the-way expressions, similes and ideas are met here that were used and developed later in Hudibras (for it might be maintained that Mercurius Menippeus was written after the famous mock-epic and is merely an imitation of it), but also because many unusual expressions, similes and ideas found in Mercurius Menippeus are met in the MSS. of Samuel Butler, which were still unpublished in 1682 and 1715.<sup>17</sup>

This claim is supported by finding for each of ten brief passages in Mercurius Menippeus one or more parallels -- of varying degrees of likeness -- in Butler's other writings. The following table lists these passages with their counterparts opposite.

#### Mercurius Menippeus

#### Other Works of Butler

1. The fittest Emblem of the Parliament House, is a Turkey-Pie, the Heads without will inform you what Birds are within.  
(p. 349).

In this Tabernacle rests the Body of their Prophet or Founder, who dying, as they affirm, hid himself in a Kind of invisible Oven, where after an hundred Years he was discovered by a Kind of Prophesying Door, not overbaked nor cold, but warm, and looking (like a Woodcock's Head stuck in the Lid of a Pye) as if he were alive.  
("An Hermetic Philosopher," Characters, p. 100).

2. Women in some Countries never love their Husbands till they be well beaten by them.  
(p. 349).

Russian wives believe th'are usd/Unkindely till th'are Drubd and bruised.  
("Poetical Thesaurus," Satires, p. 176).

3. Thus among Turks, Dizziness is a Divine Trance; Changlings and Ideots are the chiefest Saints; and 'tis the greatest sign of Revelation, to be out of ones Wits. (p. 352).

a. All his Hopes are in the Turks overrunning of Christendom, because he has heard they count Fools and Madmen Saints, and doubts not to pass muster with them for great Abilities that Way. ('A Quaker,' Characters, p. 150).

b. The Turkes accompt mad men Saints, and the Christians despise them for it and yet esteem the greatest Madneses in the world Sanctity. ('Miscellaneous Observations,' Characters, p. 295).

c. Our Turkish Proselite puts on Another Spirit, and lays by his own; And when his over-heated Brain Turns giddy, like his Brother Mussuiman, He's judg'd inspir'd, and all his Frenzies held To be prophetic, and reveal'd. ('Upon An Hypocritical Non-conformist,' Satires, p. 91).

d. And hence it is, that all your wishes, longings, desires are in the Turks overrunning of Christendome; for as both they and you account Fooles, Ideots, Madmen, Saints; you do not doubt but to pass easily for such with them, for your great abilities in those gifts. ('William Prynne's Answer,' Satires, p. 338).

e. As Lewd as Turks that Fooles for Saints adore, When they were greater Saints themselves before. (quoted by Lamar from Butler's MS, Satires, p. 500).

4. A Jew cannot be a Turk,  
till he be a Christian.  
(p. 355).

And I fear thy pretended  
Conversion to Christianity,  
is but in order to something  
else, even as the Mohametans  
(they say) will not admit a  
Jew to turn Turk, unless he  
first become a Christian.  
('John Audland's Letter to  
William Prynne,'  
Satires, p. 331).

5. But Cromwel wants neither  
Wardrobe nor Armour: His  
Face wears natural Buff, and  
his Skin may furnish him  
with a rusty Coat of Mail.  
You would think he had been  
christened in a Lime-pit, and  
tanned alive, but that his  
Countenance still continues  
Mangy. We cry out against  
Superstition, and yet wor-  
ship a piece of Wainscot,  
and idolize an unblanched  
Almond. Certainly 'tis no  
humane Visage, but the  
Emblem of a Mandrake, one  
scarce handsom enough to have  
been the Progeny of Hecuba,  
had she whelp'd him when she  
was a Bitch. His Soul too is  
as his Body; for who can  
expect a Jewel in the head of  
a Toad? Yet this Basilisk  
would King it, and a Brewer's  
Horse must be a Lion.  
(p. 356).

Compared to 'A Ballad',  
entitled by Thyer 'A Ballard,  
as 'tis conjectured, upon  
O. Cromwell!  
(Satires, pp. 109-112).

6. Sure his Holiness was the  
Pope, and Justice on  
Prin's Ears a piece of  
Auricular Confession.  
(p. 361).

Retayned Wil Prin and  
Dorislous,  
The Learned Counsel of the  
Cause,  
The one a Martyr, the other  
lesser,  
A Paultry Auricular  
Confesse[r].  
(quoted by Lamar from  
Butler's MS,  
Satires, p. 501).

7. When Wasps and Hornets usurp  
the Hive, the Royal Bee  
suffers, because without a  
Sting. (p. 364).

a. The AEgyptians in their  
Hieroglyphics decyphered a  
Prince by a Bee: now a Bee,  
you know, does carry not  
only his Militia or Defence,  
but his whole politic Inter-  
est in his Tail; for when he  
has lost his Sting he is  
presently banished that well  
order'd Government, as an  
unprofitable Member and a  
Drone. ('A Speech Made at  
the Rota,' Satires, p. 325).

b. When a Bee has lost his  
Sting,  
With which he gets his  
Harvest in,  
The only Engine, that  
Supplies  
And loads the Carriage of  
his thighs,  
The Rest from their Dominions  
drive  
Exild the Territory of the  
Hive.

(quoted by Lamar from  
Butler's MS, Satires, p.501).

c. For as the AEgyptians us'd  
by Bees,  
T'express their Antick  
Ptolomies,  
And by their Stings, the  
Swords they wore  
Held-forth Authority and  
Pow'r:  
Because these subtile Animals  
Bear all their Intrests in  
their Tails,  
And when th'are once impair'd  
in that,  
Are banish'd their well  
order'd State.  
(Hudibras, III, ii, 1587-94).

8. Who would have thought that  
Snaphaunches and  
Baskethilts were of Aposto-  
lick Institution?  
(p. 350).

And prove their Doctrine  
Orthodox  
By Apostolick Blows and  
Knocks.  
(Hudibras, I, i, 197-8).

9. Indeed their rare Gifts have one property of the Spirit, to be Invisible, and so much of Revelation, as not to be understood; like the Musick of the Spheres, which never was heard. (p.353). Her voyce the Musique of the Spheres So loud, it deafens mortal ears; As wise Philosophers have thought, And that's the cause we hear it not. (Hudibras, II, 1, 617-20).
10. I wonder how Sir Samuel Luke and he should clash . . . (passage already quoted on p.249). Hudibras, I, 1, 285 ff. (passage already quoted on p.250).

These comparisons do not include the verses of the Posthumous Works, even though Lamar printed them as Butler's. He no doubt judged them less likely to be genuine than the prose text, and did not therefore hazard to support his contention of Butler's authorship with the near-identity between some of them and the excerpts (1 and 2) from Hudibras quoted on page 251. In the parallels above, with the exception of the pairs o' 'Auricular Confession' -- 'Auricular Confesser' (6) and 'Apostolick' -- 'Apostolick' (8) there is a complete absence of significant verbal resemblance; so that the case for Butler's authorship rests upon the occurrence in Mercurius Menippeus of metaphorical expressions, bits of travel-lore, and allusions similar to others found in writings indisputably his. We are here upon uncertain ground, and we may well recall that Robert Thyer prudently refused to tread upon it. In order for an argument of this kind to be convincing, it must be practically beyond criticism.

In fact, neither the proposed likeness between the pairs nor their peculiarity to Butler stands up very well under close examination. In numbers 1, 5 and 10 the similarity is only of the most general kind.<sup>18</sup> Number 9 is a commonplace of neo-classical literature, and number 7 an ordinary piece of insect-lore, occurring in many ancient and modern texts.<sup>19</sup> Numbers 2, 3, and 4 evidently originate in travel books: number 3 has a parallel in Burton's

Anatomy of Melancholy, and the other two are likely to be found in any number of seventeenth century texts.<sup>20</sup> The phrases 'Auricular Confession' and 'Auricular Confesser' (number 6) and the word 'Apostolick' (8) may in their contexts be original to Butler, but the ideas certainly are not. Prynne's cropped ears were the most famous attribute of a man who was himself one of the most frequently satirized of Presbyterians in the 1640's and 1650's; and the contradiction between doctrine and practice ridiculed in number 8 was often charged against the Presbyterians during the Civil Wars.<sup>21</sup>

It is easier to criticize an attribution -- and generally a less useful activity -- than to make one. I hope that this reflexion has kept me from a sterile censoriousness in this appendix. The rôle of advocatus diaboli, the logical one to adopt in the circumstances, is by nature negative, and in prosecuting it one's most effective arm is a rigorous scepticism. After such an examination it appears that the case for Butler's authorship of Mercurius Menippeus rests upon shaky foundations. The only authority we have that is even remotely contemporary -- and he cannot be trusted -- is the publisher of the second volume of the Posthumous Works, to which source we also owe the verses so much like ones from Hudibras. The internal evidence amassed by Lamar hardly bears critical scrutiny. Moreover, in an age in which political pamphlets were legion, and a general satirical idiom common to many of them, it is a hard task to establish authorship on internal evidence alone. For all this, Butler's authorship is not disproved. But until such time as Mercurius Menippeus is demonstrated to be his or ascribed to another, it must, as it were, be kept in reserve. The portrait of Sir Samuel Luke contained therein cannot at this time legitimately be used to support the theory that Butler modelled Hudibras upon him.

Notes to Appendix C

1. The other two are 'Dunstable Downs' and 'The Tale of the Cobler and the Vicar of Bray'; for which see Appendix A: section III and note 17. Mercurius Menippeus is reprinted in Satires and Miscellaneous Poetry and Prose, ed. Lamar, pp.347-365. All citations are to this reprint.
2. Hudibras, ed. Zachary Grey, 'Preface,' p. iii. Grey refers to the version published in the second volume of the Posthumous Works, to which doggerel verse was added, under the title 'Memoirs of the Years 1649 and 50.'
3. Hudibras, ed. Wilders, p.341.
4. Satires, ed. Lamar, p.357.
5. Nowhere else in the poem is Hudibras said to be a hunchback.
6. Joshua Poole (The English Parnassus: Or a Help to English Poesie, 1677 [original edition, 1657], p.224) includes the couplet 'Who on his shoulders with triumphant joy / Bore his old Father from the flames of Troy' as part of the 'ample treasury of phrases, and elegant expressions,' which form the third section of his manual.
7. See Appendix A, note 20.
8. The claim that The Assembly-man (1663) was 'written by Mr. Samuel Butler, and Sir John Birkenhead, in the Year 1647' seems only a flimsy excuse for including in the Posthumous Works a piece already printed under Berkenhead's name in 1681 and 1682. The prefatory address is signed 'J.B.' The Earle of Pembroke's Speech In the House of Peeres, Upon Debate of the Citie's Petition for a Personall Treaty, to be had with His Majesty in London (1648) and The Last Will and Testament of the Earl of Pembroke (1650) had already been reprinted for Samuel Briscoe, the publisher of the second volume of the Posthumous Works, in The Poetical Works of the Honourable Sir Charles Sedley Baronet, and His Speeches in Parliament . . . With a New Miscellany of Poems by several of the most Eminent Hands. And a Compleat Collection of all the Remarkable Speeches in both Houses of Parliament . . . from the year 1641, to the Happy Union of Great Britain . . . (1707). They were again reprinted for the same publisher in the 1722 edition of The Works of the Honourable Sir Charles Sedley, Bart in Prose and Verse (i.e. seven years after their ascription to Butler), where the attribution to Sedley is made, even though The Speech was first published when Sir Charles was ten years old and The Last Will and Testament when he was twelve. A manuscript note in the original broadside of The Last Will and Testament ascribes it to Butler (see The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley,

8. [cont.] ed. V. de Sola Pinto [London, 1928] I, xx and xxiii and II, 235). Both The Earle of Pembroke's Speech and The Last Will and Testament have more plausibly been attributed to Sir John Berkenhead in P.W. Thomas, Sir John Berkenhead 1617-1679: A Royalist Career in Politics and Polemics (Oxford, 1969), pp. 165-66 and 175. Of the Two Speeches Made in the House of Peers, On Munday the 19 of December . . . The one by the Earl of Pembroke, the other by the Lord Brooke (1642) only the first is attributed to Butler in the Posthumous Works. It too had already been reprinted for Briscoe in the 1707 edition of Sedley's Poetical Works . . . And a Compleat Collection of all the Remarkable Speeches . . . See Satires, ed. Lamar, pp.xi-xiv.
9. See the previous note and The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley, ed. V. de Sola Pinto, I, xix ff. and II, 235 ff.
10. The Genuine Remains, I, 327 n. The two brief citations following are from the same long explanatory note, extending from p. 326 to p. 329 of Volume I.
11. A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts . . . Selected from . . . Public as Well as Private Libraries; Particularly that of the Late Lord Somers. The Second Edition, Revised, Augmented, and Arranged, by Walter Scott, Esq. (London, 1812), VII, 66. The reprint occupies pp. 66-78.
12. Ibid., pp. 71-72.
13. For "The Tale of the Cobler and the Vicar of Bray" see Appendix A, note 17.
14. Biographia Britannica: or, The Lives of the Most Eminent Persons who Have Flourished in Great-Britain and Ireland, from the earliest ages, to the Present Times . . . The Second Edition . . . by Andrew Kippis (London, 1784), III, 86-93.
15. Ibid., p. 86.
16. p. xvii.
17. p. 500.
18. For a similar comic and satirical use of 'wood-cock pie' see the excerpt from A Letter from Mercurius Civicus to Mercurius Rusticus cited by P.W. Thomas, Sir John Berkenhead (Oxford, 1969), p. 113, where A Letter is attributed to Berkenhead.
19. For the 'Music of the Spheres' see, for example, Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, V, i, 60-65; and Milton, On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, 125 ff.



19. [cont.] In his note to Hudibras, II, i, 618-20 Grey gives classical sources for the idea, not a part of the passage from Mercurius Menippeus, that the music is too loud for human ears. For bees that have lost their stings, see the notes to Hudibras, III, ii, 1587-94 by Zachary Grey and John Wilders.
20. For the reverence in which fools are held by the Turks see Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, Part II, Sect. III, Mem. VIII (London, 1923), II, 238. For the idea (no.4) that a Jew had first to turn Christian before being allowed to embrace Islam, see Francis Osborn, Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks (1656), p. 79: "no Jew can turne Turke till he hath been Christened." Cited by S.C. Chew, The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance (1937; rpt. New York, 1965), p. 377.
21. For the violence and brutality of Presbyterians see Zachary Grey's note to Hudibras, I, i, 199-200.

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