

POPE'S INDIGNATION

by

DAVID BICKNELL SAVAGE

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Department of

English

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver 8, Canada

Date

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## ABSTRACT

Satire is the usual expression, in literature, of indignation. Being uncommonly well read, Pope was very familiar with the traditional literary expressions of indignation. There were two main branches to the literary tradition of indignation, the classical, which was the more important in Pope's case, and the Judaic-Christian. In the classical branch, the most noteworthy influences on Pope were Juvenal and Horace. In the Judaic-Christian branch, the Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah were influential. From both branches, Pope inherited, and in many cases improved upon, the traditional methods of satire, such as monologue, parody, paradox, burlesque, topical references, and irony. Even while using the traditional methods, Pope was able to place his individual stamp upon his works.

Besides the literary tradition to which he related, a second source of Pope's indignation was his personality as shaped by his experience. The main sources of indignation in Pope's life are discussed in this thesis, and examination shows that his letters accurately point to these sources of indignation. The same main causes of his indignation are also revealed in his literary works.

Two conclusions are reached: that for Pope indignation

was one of the well-springs of literary creation, and that Pope's expressions of indignation were sometimes transmuted into art.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper will discuss two things, Pope's indignation and the way his indignation is expressed in his works. Because indignation is not unique with Pope but is common to all men, it must be defined in general terms. And because the satire that expresses indignation in literature is also not unique with Pope but has, on the contrary, a long history, Pope's satire must be set in this historical context.

Before discussing these matters, however, I should perhaps first defend my choice of subject. As there are so many other aspects of Pope's career, I could well be asked why I seized on his indignation as important. My answer is that all writing is motivated, and often the motivation is an important clue to the writing. The motivation can be a desire to see one's work in print, a desire to earn money, a desire to express one's views publicly, to name only three, and often, of course, there is more than a single motivation to writing. Very often, too, the motive or motives are not easily found. But in the case of satire, I submit that the motive is clear. The motive for satire is, I believe, indignation at what is wrong, leading to a desire to correct wrong, whether that wrong is public or personal. Satire, at its best, is a social corrective; at its worst, it is a personal attack. At its best

and at its worst, it is motivated by indignation, righteous indignation in the former case, vengeful indignation on the personal level in the latter. Pope wrote both kinds of satire. Let me say at once, however, that Pope did not invent indignation, any more than he invented satire. But he did express his indignation in a singular way, while at the same time availing himself fully of the long tradition of literary indignation. There is, of course, a lot more to satire than indignation and I gladly acknowledge that to look only at indignation is to survey a limited field. But I do feel that an examination of indignation does provide one interpretation of satire, for I believe that without indignation there would be no satire.

Moreover, both indignation and the satire it inspires relate to the real world of fallible human beings, rather than to, say, an imaginary world or the world of inanimate nature. Now Pope was very much a writer who concerned himself with the real world. As Robert Kilburn Root puts it, he was "a man of the world, and from the world came the substance of much of his verse."<sup>1</sup> It is because Pope and his works are so firmly rooted in the real world that I feel it is valid to study his indignation, for here is an emotion firmly, sometimes all too firmly, planted in the imperfect human world. Also, indignation is an emotion leading sometimes to revealing insights. Austin Warren states, "As there is a type of insight which springs

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Kilburn Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope (Gloucester, Mass., 1962), p. 2.

from love and devotion, so there is another which is the issue of malice. Part of the truth about us is known only to our enemies."<sup>2</sup>

The third reason why I feel Pope's indignation is significant relates to Pope's times. The eighteenth century was, as countless critics have mentioned, an age of duality, with progress and enlightenment on the one hand, cruelty and corruption and excess on the other. Because of this duality, those on the side of progress and enlightenment had much to be indignant about. And perhaps the most indignant people were the neo-classicists, Pope prominently among them, who drew their standards from Augustan Rome, and by these standards judged harshly the shortcomings of eighteenth-century taste and morals. Time and again, we find Pope's indignation re-inforced by this comparison with Augustan Rome. Indeed, the contrast between Augustus's Rome and George III's London was enough to bring out in other writers, too, some vintage indignation, and some vintage literary expressions of that indignation which we can compare with Pope's. Today, we do not have such high quality indignation. Indeed, the American syndicated columnist, Russell Baker, lamenting the feeble manner with which we express indignation today, states, "What we need is a new generation that can express its indignation with style, imagination and courage."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Austin Warren, Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist (Gloucester, Mass., 1963), p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Russell Baker, "We Suffer from Lack of Indignant Protesters," The Province, June 9, 1966, p. 4.



Pope had all three. Baker adds, "What we need is a generation that will make the indignant gesture fit the provocation."<sup>4</sup> When Pope slipped an emetic in Curll's drink, he was, I think, fitting the provocation.

Pope continued throughout his life to fit the indignant gesture to the provocation. In fact, as time went on Pope, in his literary works, grew more, not less, indignant, so that in studying his indignation and the expressions of it we are not studying a manifestation of his early career, but a feature of his whole adult life. It must be emphasized that Pope took the classical view of life. As Austin Warren says, "Pope asserts the classical view of art; it bears relation to life: it is 'a criticism of life'."<sup>5</sup> Had Pope taken the romantic view, say, or the indifferent view so common today, he might have been a lot less indignant.

Lastly, I feel that indignation is a legitimate aspect of Pope's career because it is not a simple matter. Had it proved a simple matter, capable of neat and orderly classification, I would have felt on dangerous ground, for surely one thing we have learned about Pope is that he and his works are complex and defy simple explanations. To give just one example of the complexity of Pope's indignation, let me say that in some passages of his works we can never be sure if he is expressing personal indignation disguised as righteous

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<sup>4</sup>Baker, The Province, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Warren, Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist, p. 45.

indignation, or righteous indignation that has, over a period of time, developed from what started as personal indignation. Does his changing of victims from one edition of the Dunciad to another mean he is advancing from personal grudges to general causes, or merely switching grudges? Root, wisely I think, simply states that "there is room for difference of opinion."<sup>6</sup>

There can be little difference of opinion, I think, over the frequency with which indignation is dissipated by being expressed in words. In The Red and the Black, Stendhal has a passage in which M. de Rênal angrily lectures his wife. At the end of this passage are the words, "Madame de Rênal let him speak, and he spoke at length; he passed his anger, as they say in those parts."<sup>7</sup> Just as M. de Rênal "passed his anger" by lecturing his wife, Pope "passed his anger" by writing. The difficulty for us in Pope's case, however, is that he did not "pass his anger" in hasty words of the moment, but in carefully chosen and coolly revised words which sometimes did not appear until years after the anger of the moment which inspired them. Stendhal makes it easy for us to see that M. de Rênal was angry. It is much less easy, at times, to recognize Pope's anger, and to know if it were anger at a personal affront or at a public ill. But both M. de Rênal in fiction and Mr. Pope in real life passed their anger by

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<sup>6</sup>Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope, p. 138.

<sup>7</sup>Stendhal, The Red and the Black, trans. C.K. Scott Moncrieff (New York, 1953), p. 167.

expressing it in words.

To sum up, I feel that because Pope was an indignant man, writing at a time when his contemporaries, too, were indignant, there is some merit in studying his indignation and his written expressions of that indignation.

But what is indignation? We find that the Greeks, as usual, give us a starting point for analysing our emotions and behaviour. Aristotle stated in Athens, about 330 B.C., that "Men are prone to indignation, first if they happen to deserve or possess the greatest advantages, for it is not just that those who do not resemble them should be deemed worthy of the same advantages; secondly, if they happen to be virtuous and worthy, for they both judge correctly and hate what is unjust."<sup>8</sup> This definition is meaningful in considering Pope for, as a classicist, he felt able to "judge correctly" the state of English letters. Both Pope and Swift firmly believed in their power to "judge correctly," and "hate what is unjust" in society and, by extension, what is indecorous in art. Pope showed this, for example, in An Essay on Criticism, 1711. In this poem, he was concerned with standards of criticism and of taste for he, like Swift, was the product and champion of an élite culture, and his indignation was thus directed at what threatened that culture, at times with considerable feeling.

This feeling is understandable, for indignation is

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<sup>8</sup>Aristotle, Rhetoric, I.ix, trans. John Henry Freese (London, 1959), p. 237.

largely a matter of such feelings as anger, contempt, and disdain. A dictionary definition (O.E.D.) gives the first meaning of "indignation" as "the action of counting or treating (a person or thing) as unworthy of regard or notice; disdain, contempt; contemptuous behaviour or treatment." It gives the second meaning as "anger at what is regarded as unworthy or wrongful; wrath excited by a sense of wrong to oneself or, especially, to others, or by meanness, injustice, wickedness or misconduct; righteous or dignified anger; the wrath of a superior." Indignation on the personal level comes under the first meaning, and the more lofty "anger at what is unworthy or wrongful," especially when others are wronged, comes under the second meaning. It will be seen that Pope had a full measure of indignation in each of these two categories. The latter, lofty category is closer to the Latin word, indignus, meaning "unworthy," from which the word "indignation" stems. The word, "indignation," rooted in the classics, was used and accepted in England long before Pope's time. For example, Hobbes' Leviathan, 1651, gives this definition, "Anger for great hurt done to another, when we conceive the same to be done by Injury [is called] Indignation" (I.vi.26).

Many modern psychologists define indignation as being close to resentment. One of them, Mehran K. Thomson, states, "Resentment and indignation are milder forms of jealousy. They represent reactions towards a person or agency which threatens harm to the self or the self-regarding sentiments. The threat

must be removed before equilibrium is restored."<sup>9</sup> It is interesting that Thomson describes indignation as a "milder" form of jealousy. "Milder" is an adjective one can seldom apply to Pope's expressions of indignation.

According to Alexander Bain, a nineteenth-century Professor of Logic in the University of Aberdeen and one of the last representatives of the Scottish school of moral philosophy, "When resentment comes to the aid of the moral feelings, as revenge for criminality and wrong, it is termed 'righteous indignation.' A positive and undeniable pleasure attends the retributive vengeance that overtakes wrong-doers and the tyrants and oppressors of mankind."<sup>10</sup> Regarding the "undeniable pleasure" which Professor Bain associates with effective indignation, one should note that indignation appears to have two sides. On one side is the pleasure, which Professor Bain and other authorities have noted. On the other side is the pain. Swift is an example of a man who suffered pain through his indignation, perhaps because his view of mankind was so low that he viewed his righteous indignation as wasted rather than effective. Ricardo Quintana says of Swift, "With relentless indignation Swift pursued the shams and impostures which dupe man; pitilessly he turned them inside out, displayed their false interiors which belie their

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<sup>9</sup>Mehran K. Thomson, The Springs of Human Action (New York, 1927), p. 222.

<sup>10</sup>Alexander Bain, Mental and Moral Science (London, 1884), p. 226.

superficial fairness."<sup>11</sup> But indignation affects the person being indignant as relentlessly as it pursues those who are the target of the indignation. Swift's life is a demonstration of the pain and anguish which not only cause but so often accompany the emotion of indignation. The words of Swift's epitaph, "Ubi saeva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit," assert that the price of indignation is paid in the lacerated heart of the indignant. Pope's heart was often lacerated.

Indignation, as the O.E.D. definition pointed out, is at times a form of anger. Edward Gibbon mentions anger when he analyses those two very natural propensities, "the love of pleasure and the love of action." The former, he says, "is productive of the greatest part of the happiness of private life. The love of action is a principle of a much stronger and more doubtful nature. It often leads to anger, to ambition, and to revenge; but when it is guided by the sense of propriety and benevolence, it becomes the parent of every virtue. . . ."<sup>12</sup> We shall see that Pope had his full share of both "revenge" and "benevolence." Gibbon's mention of "the love of action" is important, for when we consider Pope's health it is easy to imagine him shrinking from action, and from such active emotions as indignation, yet this was not the case.

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<sup>11</sup>Ricardo Quintana, The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift (London, 1953), p. 65.

<sup>12</sup>Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (New York, 1958), I, 413.

It is important, I think, always to distinguish between indignation and the writing it sometimes inspires. We must remember that indignation is an emotion, and that there are at least three factors involved in it. First, there is the cause of the indignation, the person or thing causing your disdain or anger. This is important, and the causes of Pope's indignation will be treated in Chapter II. Then there is the indignation itself, an emotion. Third, there is the recovery from indignation, meaning the way in which the indignation is dissipated by being expressed, as in writing, for example. This aspect is, of course, very important, and the way Pope expressed his indignation is discussed at length in Chapter II. Sometimes, as in many of his letters, the expression of his indignation in words was of little lasting value. At other times he was able to fashion an enduring literary correlative of his indignation.

The above description of the three factors involved in indignation is crucial to a discussion of Pope's complex indignation. When an ordinary man is indignant he is apt to be noisy and repetitive, anything but controlled and eloquent. But when a satirist of Pope's stature is indignant, his expression of that indignation is often so skilled, so revised, so artful, that it appears considerably removed from the original emotion of indignation. Much of the difficulty in studying such polished expressions of indignation disappears, however, if one constantly remembers that the passage under

examination is not indignation, but an expression of it. People talk loosely of "an indignant passage," as if the words themselves were capable of emotion. The words may certainly stem from indignation in the writer, and cause indignation in the reader, but they are certainly not, themselves, capable of indignation. Admittedly, much good satire is so well constructed that it seems far removed from so untidy an emotion as indignation, yet indignation is the inspiration of satire. Juvenal puts it very simply when he says, "facit indignatio uersum."<sup>13</sup> Pope makes a similar statement in Epilogue to the Satires, Dialogue II, ll. 197-198: "Ask you what Provocation I have had?/The strong Antipathy of Good to Bad."<sup>14</sup> I think we can safely say that people who are never indignant are never satirists. I think, too, that if we acknowledge satire is ordinary indignation altered through art and discipline and time, then we can properly claim it as an expression of indignation. This view does not agree with that of E.M. Forster, who says, "Indignation in literature never quite comes off either in Juvenal or Swift or Joyce; there is something in words that is alien to its simplicity."<sup>15</sup> I feel that Forster

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<sup>13</sup> Juvenal, Satires, ed. A.E. Housman (Cambridge, 1956), "Satire I," l. 79, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Pope, The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope, IV, ed. John Butt (London, 1961), p. 324. All citations of Pope's poetry will be from the Twickenham Edition volumes, general ed. John Butt, 6 vols. (1939-61). See Bibliography for the listing of editions.

<sup>15</sup> E.M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), pp. 179-180.



is confusing the simple emotion, indignation, with the expression of it in literature, which, as we shall see with Pope, can be anything but simple. I feel Forster would be on incontestable ground had he said something like, "The expression of indignation in literature is seldom as simple as the original emotion of indignation which inspired it." Much of the confusion arises because critics speak of "indignation in literature" when they really mean "the expression of indignation in literature." In anything but a thesis on indignation, this is a harmless ellipsis. Perhaps "literary indignation" is an acceptable term for the expressions of indignation in literature.

Much literary indignation is, of course, satire. To me, satire is the writing which first makes the unworthy or the foolish plainly recognizable by stripping off their disguises and pretensions, and then attacks them with the rapier of humor. Satire is humorous invective, and jeering become judgment. Root says that "malicious glee of recognition is of the very essence of great satire."<sup>16</sup> This same recognition is also an essence of humour. Root adds, "satire is the artistic refinement of a primitive instinct, still very much alive in most of us, the instinct to laugh at that we hate. It is the literary expression of a laughter which implies rebuke. . . . It is essential that both these elements be present. If there is no implication of rebuke, we have merely good-natured

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<sup>16</sup>Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope, pp. 188-189.

raillery and humour. . . . If on the other hand, the element of ridicule is lacking, the rebuke becomes mere accusation and invective. Between these two extremes--the outer confines of the comic and the frontiers of sheer invective--lies the region of satire."<sup>17</sup> There are times, as when he is satirizing Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, when Pope steps over the frontier into sheer invective.

Satire, in Pope's day, benefitted from three things. First was the fact that the eighteenth-century public accepted without question the moral and didactic purpose of poetry, something we do not accept today. This meant, of course, that satire, which at its best is both moral and didactic, found ready acceptance. Edward Young (1683-1765) indicates the high opinion in which satire was held in 1725-28, on the eve of the appearance of the Dunciad:

Ethics, Heathen and Christian, and the Scriptures themselves, are, in a great measure, a Satire on the weakness and iniquity of men: and some part of that Satire is in verse too: nay, in the first Ages, Philosophy and Poetry were the same thing: wisdom wore no other dress: so that, I hope, these satires will be the more easily pardoned that misfortune by the severe. If they like not the fashion, let them take them by the weight; for some weight they have, or the author has failed in his aim. Nay, Historians themselves should be considered as Satirists, and Satirists most severe; since such are most human actions, that to relate is to expose them.<sup>18</sup>

Dryden, who had taken a similar view, quoted Hensius's definition, that "satire is a kind of poetry, without a series of

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<sup>17</sup>Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope, p. 189.

<sup>18</sup>Edward Young, Preface to Love of Fame; or, The Universal Passion, in Johnson's English Poets, LX (London, 1790), pp. 71-72.

actions, invented for the purging of our minds; in which human vices, ignorance, and errors, and all things besides, which are produced from them in every man, are severely reprimanded.

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Secondly, the satire of Pope's day benefitted from having so many practitioners. Pope himself and Swift were perhaps the best of them, but there were a host of others. I have already referred to the unfavorable comparisons made between the England of that time and Augustan Rome. To make these comparisons, men had to have moral principles. Many did have these moral principles and, in addition, had the fierce indignation that inspired them to express their moral condemnations in satire. As a result, Pope's satire did not thrive alone; it flourished together with, and in competition with, some of the best that has been written in our language.

Thirdly, the satire of Pope's day benefitted from the fact that the educated man of those times was thoroughly steeped in the classics and was well schooled in rhetoric. Where today few people read the Greek poet, Aristophanes, for example, in Pope's day many educated men, including of course Pope himself, were familiar with his work. Aristophanes, c. 444-380 B.C., was able in his comedies to unite the satiric spirit with poetry. This satiric spirit originated in invective and jeering, which were part of a magic curse, a curse

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<sup>19</sup>John Dryden, A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire (Ker), II, p. 100.

from which derived the custom of insulting the enemy before battle, as Goliath insults David in the Old Testament.<sup>20</sup> By Aristophanes's time satire had been refined into an art form. Pope, of course, was familiar with Aristophanes, and with his expressions of indignation, for example these lines from The Acharnians, which show that Aristophanes, like Pope, found much to be indignant about:

What heaps of things have bitten me to the heart!  
A small few pleased me, very few, just four;  
But those that vexed were sand-dune hundredfold.<sup>21</sup>

Athenian Old Comedy, of which Aristophanes is the only surviving representative, gave to the Romans a literary legacy. This legacy spurred the Romans, like the Athenians, towards improving society and correcting its abuses by attacking in words the foolish and wicked. The Roman satirists also inherited many devices used by the Greek street-preachers, usually Cynics and Sceptics, to gain attention. In their improvised sermons, called "diatribes," these street preachers used paradox, anecdote, character sketches, fables, dialogues against imaginary opponents, topical references, parodies of serious poetry, obscene jokes, and slang phrases.<sup>22</sup> Many centuries later, Pope, too, made excellent use of these inherited devices, in

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<sup>20</sup>Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art (Princeton, 1960), p. 16.

<sup>21</sup>Aristophanes, The Acharnians, trans. B.B. Rogers (London, 1931), p. 14.

<sup>22</sup>Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition (Oxford, 1959), p. 304.

fact the above list of the street preachers' tricks is a catalogue, although an incomplete one, of Pope's literary stratagems. To give only one example, we find at the heart of the Dunciad the paradox that "as dullness spreads out and out, it narrows down and down, until at the end of the poem it is both everything and nothing at once."<sup>23</sup>

A generation after Aristophanes, another Greek, Aristotle, 384-322 B.C., stated in the opening chapter of his Rhetoric that language is the distinctive attribute of man and is his greatest weapon in the service of truth and justice: "It is absurd to hold that a man ought to be ashamed of being unable to defend himself with his limbs, but not of being unable to defend himself with speech and reason, when the use of rational speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs."<sup>24</sup> This statement has particular meaning for Pope who, as a dwarf, had no weapon other than his pen. Pope, of course, was familiar with Aristotle. He was thoroughly schooled in the classics and had read everything of value in English poetry before him.<sup>25</sup> Aristotle held that rhetoric "may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion,"<sup>26</sup> and outlined

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<sup>23</sup>Alvin B. Kernan, "The Dunciad and the Plot of Satire," Essential Articles for the Study of Alexander Pope, ed. Maynard Mack (Hamden, Conn., 1964), p. 736.

<sup>24</sup>Aristotle, The Works of Aristotle, trans. W.D. Ross (Oxford, 1959), XI, 1355.

<sup>25</sup>Ian Jack, Pope (London, 1962), p. 9.

<sup>26</sup>The Works of Aristotle, Ross, XI, 1355.

a fourfold use of the art of rhetoric, for it is said to be corrective, instructive, suggestive, and defensive. In his Rhetoric, Aristotle devotes a chapter (II, 9) to indignation, which he describes as "pain caused by the sight of undeserved good fortune."<sup>27</sup> Thus Greek rhetorical theory and practice, with such pointers, contributed much to the development of satire, and to the legacy of satire which the eighteenth-century man inherited.

This legacy of satire will not be dealt with in detail here, because it will be referred to in Chapter II, when we discuss Pope's expressions of indignation and relate many of them back to previous examples of literary indignation, notably those of Horace, 65-68 B.C., and Juvenal, A.D. c. 54-c. 138. Pope was in the habit of imitating those whom he admired, and in those days literary imitations, far from being frowned on, were an accepted commonplace.

However, not only Horace, Juvenal, and the other great classical figures influenced Pope. Another influence, although a lesser one, was the great field of Judaic-Christian learning and letters. It will be dealt with now, for the reason that it relates more to Pope's literary indignation in general than it does to any specific work. This is not to deny that the Bible is of prime importance in the development of literary forms. Indeed, Richard G. Moulton devotes a book to showing how literary forms such as lyric poetry, epic, and

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<sup>27</sup>The Works of Aristotle, Ross, XI, 1387.

rhetoric are found in the Bible.<sup>28</sup> Nonetheless, I feel that the importance of the Bible to Pope's work lies in the tones it sets rather than in any particular literary techniques. Hatred is one of the tones we find in the Old Testament, which has many passages urging hate as well as love. In Psalms, for example, David says, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?/I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies" (CXXXIX, 21-22). And Amos says, "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate. . . ." (V, 15). The tone of "judgment" is, I think, found in both the Bible and in Pope. Moulton says, of Old Testament "judgment": "That evil and good are inherently antagonistic, that evil is doomed to fail in the struggle with good,--this is the thought underlying the world 'judgment' in Old Testament poetry. . . ."<sup>29</sup>

The Old Testament recognition of the righteousness of hatred is, I think, important, for surely satire is founded on hatred of evil as well as on love of good. Perhaps it is a combination of these two emotions, hatred of evil and love of good, which produces righteous indignation. The "wrath and indignation" of the Old Testament prophets, or of Jesus, say, in the New Testament, are expressed in lofty tones of righteousness and authority. Jeremiah, for example, lived in a

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<sup>28</sup>Richard G. Moulton, The Literary Study of the Bible (London, 1899).

<sup>29</sup>Moulton, The Literary Study of the Bible, p. 338.

corrupt period containing much that deserved his indignation. Pope, also living in a corrupt age, often uses the lofty tones one finds in The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, and this lofty tone was a source of particular annoyance to Pope's enemies. The New Testament, too, records much indignation of the same type. The indignation of Christ in cleansing the temple is recorded in St. John:

And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting;

And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.  
(II.13-16)

This, of course, is righteous indignation spoken by a prophet. From the point of view of history, Pope's indignation, too, was often righteous; from his own point of view, it was always righteous. In the above quotation from St. John the word "scourge" is noteworthy. Pope uses similar imagery at times, for example, in Epilogue to the Satires, Dialogue I, he has the "Friend" say, "Why so? if Satire know its Time and Place,/ You still may lash the Greatest--in Disgrace" (ll. 87-88). Another example is in Dialogue II of the same poem, when the "Friend" says, "Yet none but you by Name the Guilty lash;/Ev'n Guthry saves half Newgate by a dash" (ll. 10-11). It almost seems as if Pope, in his role of satirist, regarded himself as having a duty to "lash" the ungodly. For example, again



in Dialogue II of the Epilogue to the Satires, Pope says,

Yes, I am proud; I must be proud to see  
Men not afraid of God, afraid of me:  
Safe from the Bar, the Pulpit, and the Throne,  
Yet touch'd and sham'd by Ridicule alone.  
O sacred Weapon! left for Truth's defence,  
Sole dread of Folly, Vice, and Insolence!  
(ll. 208-213)

This brings up the question, which a thesis on Pope's indignation is compelled to answer, of just how the indignant Pope viewed himself. Did he think he was an avenging angel, an agent of God, filled with righteous wrath? Or did he merely feel that, although gifted with the "sacred Weapon" referred to in the passage just quoted, he was no angel but a fallible human being? This question, like most questions about Pope, does not have a simple answer. Perhaps one should first mention the oft-recorded intermingling in the eighteenth century of classical reason and Christian faith. Maresca says that the relation of classical culture and Christianity has "always been tangled in a hopeless ambiguity," and, because of this, the dividing line between pagan and Christian culture narrowed "to an almost invisible seam in the cloak of Renaissance culture: in many Renaissance texts it is difficult to distinguish the pagan from the Christian, the light of reason from the illumination of faith."<sup>30</sup> It is also difficult to distinguish between Pope the man of classical reason, and Pope the prophet of Christian virtues. And, when we acknowledge, as we have to, that at times Pope's indignation is so personal

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<sup>30</sup>Maresca, Pope's Horatian Poems, p. 22.

and vindictive that it shows neither reason nor virtue, then answering the question of what role Pope saw himself in is even more difficult. My own answer is that perhaps Pope never viewed himself as an angel, but certainly he viewed himself as a competent judge, and sometimes even a prophet, an avenging one. This role of prophet is one which many of the fathers of the Christian church had adopted in earlier times.

Complicating matters is the question of Pope's ethos. As mentioned earlier, Pope was familiar with Aristotle, so was well versed in Aristotle's theories of rhetoric. Aristotle described the three means of persuasion as logos, the appeal to reason; pathos, the appeal to the passions; and ethos, the influence of the speaker's character. Pope was very aware of his ethos, and how by championing classical reason and Christian virtue his ethos was built up. But I wonder if Pope, wise in the ways of men, did not sometimes include personal and malicious remarks in his works, not because of personal indignation but merely to make his ethos more acceptable. After all, no one tolerates a man who is always right and always good, so perhaps Pope included some of these personal jibes just to make his ethos that of the thoroughly good man who was nonetheless human enough to bear personal resentments. Complicating matters still further is the fact that Pope was so fortunate in his choice of friends. As Warren points out, "There is surely a good deal to be said for the literary as

well as social judgement of a man whose friends are the classics of eighteenth century literature and whose enemies are forgotten."<sup>31</sup> Precisely because of this, however, it is difficult, in some of Pope's literary indignation, to tell whether he is justly punishing evil, or personally attacking an enemy. Pope's indignation is like many other facets of his career: it inspires many speculations and but few conclusions.

One conclusion we may draw, however, is that Pope realized the value of the literary tradition he inherited. He had what T.S. Eliot calls "the historical sense." Eliot says, "This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity."<sup>32</sup> Few would deny that Pope was "acutely conscious of his place in time." And regarding Pope's great debt to the classic poets, we should remember these further words of Eliot: "We dwell with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors, especially his immediate predecessors: we endeavor to find something that can be isolated in order to be enjoyed. Whereas if we approach a poet without this prejudice we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead

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<sup>31</sup>Warren, Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist, p. 184.

<sup>32</sup>T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," T.S. Eliot, Selected Prose, ed. John Hayward (London, 1963), p. 23.

poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously."<sup>33</sup> This is particularly true of Pope, who not only copied the Romans more directly than most, but at the same time developed his own individual style more. Really, then, Pope had the best of both literary worlds, the past and the present. Not only does Pope's work have Pope's stamp but his ancestors do indeed "assert their immortality most vigorously" in it.

To summarize, one might say that indignation was for Pope a well-spring of literary creation, and two sources seem to have been involved. The first was the literary tradition to which the poet related. The classical and the Judaic-Christian branches of this tradition have just been examined briefly. The second source of Pope's indignation was his personality as shaped by his experience. This is of course a very broad subject, and only the important facets can be indicated in this thesis. Chapter II, then, will discuss very briefly some of the sources of indignation in Pope's life, and how his indignation was expressed in his works.

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<sup>33</sup>T.S. Eliot, Selected Prose, p. 22.

## II. INDIGNATION IN POPE'S LIFE, AND EXPRESSIONS OF INDIGNATION IN HIS WORKS

The indignation in Pope's life, which provided the impetus for many of his activities and much of his poetry, can best be traced through a study of his letters.<sup>1</sup> These documents in the most telling way the affronts, animosities, and injuries from which he suffered. The expressions of indignation in his letters are perhaps closer to the emotion of indignation which inspired them than are any of his other writings. This is because, in his letters, Pope was often more the private person expressing his private feelings, and less the polished writer. One caveat has to be entered, of course. Pope was well aware that some of his letters would be read by other eyes than those of the recipient, and we must understand that he doctored them accordingly, being the artist in correspondence as well as in verse. This, therefore, is a factor to be considered in studying his indignation.

Perhaps the clearest statement Pope made about this indignation and the satires which resulted from it was in a letter to Dr. Arbuthnot. The dying Arbuthnot wrote to Pope, 17 July 1734, "I make it my Last Request, that you continue that noble Disdain and Abhorrence of Vice, which you seem

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<sup>1</sup>The edition used here, cited as Corr., is The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, ed. George Sherburn, 5 vols. (London, 1956).

naturally endu'd with, but with a due regard to your own Safety; and study more to reform than chastise, tho' the one often cannot be effected without the other" (Corr., III, 417).

Pope replied, 20 July 1734:

What you recommend to me with the solemnity of a Last Request, shall have its due weight with me. . . . That disdain and indignation against Vice, is (I thank God) the only disdain and indignation I have: It is sincere, and it will be a lasting one. But sure it is as impossible to have a just abhorrence of Vice, without hating the Vicious, as to bear true love for Virtue, without loving the Good. To reform and not to chastise, I am afraid is impossible, and that the best Precepts, as well as the best Laws, would prove of small use, if there were no Examples to inforce them. To attack Vices in the abstract, without touching Persons, may be safe fighting indeed, but it is fighting with Shadows. General propositions are obscure, misty, and uncertain, compar'd with plain, full and home examples: Precepts only apply to our Reason, which in most men is but weak: Examples are pictures, and strike the Senses, nay raise the Passions, and call in those (the strongest and most general of all motives) to the aid of reformation. Every vicious man makes the case his own; and that is the only way by which such men can be affected, much less deterr'd. So that to chastise is to reform. The only sign by which I found my writings ever did any good, or had any weight, has been that they rais'd the anger of bad men. And my greatest comfort, and encouragement to proceed, has been to see, that those who have no shame, and no fear, or anything else, have appear'd touch'd by my Satires.

(Corr., III, 419)

Thirteen days later, on August 2, 1734, Pope wrote another letter to Arbuthnot, in which he said:

I would indeed [manifest my disdain and abhorrence of vice in my writings] with more restrictions, and less personally; it is more agreeable to my nature, which those who know it not are greatly mistaken in. But general satire in times of general vice has no force and is not punishment: people have ceased to be ashamed of it when so many are joined with them; and it is only by hunting one or two from the herd that any examples can be made. If a man writ all his life against the collective body of the banditti, or against lawyers, would it do the least good, or lessen the body? But if some are hung up, or pilloried, it may prevent others. And in my low station, with no other power than this, I hope to deter, if not to reform.

(Corr., III, 423)

In these letters, Pope certainly shows that he inherited the tradition that satire has a moral function, and that he practised that function.

We must remember that, in his letters, Pope expresses two orders of indignation. When he writes about the causes of indignation in his life, such as his ill health, he is often writing simple expressions of indignation similar to those an ordinary man might write in a private letter. But at other times he revises his letters so carefully that the expressions of indignation are literary indignation. The revisions show he was aware that his letters were a part of his literary creation. Even though we are sometimes not sure if the expressions of indignation in them are of the moment or revised, Pope's letters do accurately point to the causes of indignation in his life.

Pope's letters show that he was often indignant about the limitations and inconveniences imposed on him by his poor physique and continuous ailments. He was only four feet, six inches tall, and very frail. In one of his earliest letters extant, to William Wycherley 23 June 1705, he says, "'Tis certain, the greatest magnifying Glasses in the World are a Man's own Eyes, when they look upon his own Person; yet even in those, I cannot fancy my self so extremely like Alexander the Great, as you wou'd persuade me (Corr., I, 9). During his infatuation with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, he wrote to her in Constantinople, October 1716, saying, "I tremble for you the

more because (whether you'll believe it or not) I am capable myself of following one I lov'd, not only to Constantinople, but to those parts of India, where they tell us the Women like best the Ugliest fellows, as the most admirable products of nature, and look upon Deformities as the Signatures of Divine Favour" (Corr., I, 364).

Pope occasionally mentions his health in his poetry. It is not with self-pity, however, but with candor and brevity that he states, in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, "The Muse but serv'd to ease some Friend, not Wife,/To help me thro' this long Disease, my life" (ll. 131-132). But despite his poor physique and his ailments, Pope had spurts of great energy, and it would be wrong to picture him as always leading the life of an invalid. When his health allowed, he was very active. For example, in September 1717, when he was twenty-nine, he ended a day of travelling by making a long evening ride from Stonor to Oxford. In a letter to Teresa and Martha Blount he tells of the ride with obvious delight, and mentions that about a mile before he reached Oxford the bells tolled and "the Clocks of every College answered one another; & told me, some in a deeper, some in a softer voice, that it was eleven a clock" (Corr., I, 430). It is important to remember Pope's energy in considering his indignation, for indignation demands energy, and the effective expression of indignation often demands a great deal of energy. One reason for this is the energy of the forces which indignant satirists like Pope oppose. Indeed, Alvin B. Kernan's book, The Plot of Satire, has a



section entitled "The Energies of Dullness," and Kernan states, "It would appear that to understand satire and make sense of its incredible variety of forms and techniques, we must concentrate on its central fact, the energy of dullness."<sup>2</sup> Sometimes Pope's energy failed him in the battle with this energetic opponent, dullness, and he tired of the fighting and became depressed. When this happened he was apt to take refuge in his villa and grotto at Twickenham, or in the company of friends. He was a mixture, at some times loving the trappings of civilization, and relishing its battles, at others enjoying his garden alone and eyeing the folly of the world from a distance.

There was nothing distant, however, about Pope's sense of family honor, which was strong and immediate and on occasion impelled him to much indignation. He had a great love and respect for his father and mother, and as a result was vulnerable to any slurs on his family, and reacted to such slurs with great indignation. It is not surprising, therefore, that the strongest and most sustained indignation shown in any of his correspondence is to be found in the letters over the Pope family monument. These letters relate how Lady Kneller attempted to remove the monument to Pope's father in Twickenham Church to make way for one to her late husband, Sir Godfrey Kneller. In the end, Lord Strafford supported Pope, and Lady Kneller's plan was thwarted. Pope's difficulties began when

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<sup>2</sup>Alvin B. Kernan, The Plot of Satire (New Haven, 1965), p. 4.

Sir Godfrey was on his deathbed and asked Pope to take down the Pope family monument, which was a simple wall tablet over the Earl of Strafford's pew in Twickenham Church, in order to make room for a monument to Sir Godfrey. The promise Pope made in reply to this difficult request was to "do all for him that I could with decency."<sup>3</sup> Lady Kneller set in motion an action, through the Doctors' Commons, to have the Pope tablet pulled down and replaced by a large tablet bearing the names of Sir Godfrey and herself, with both their figures. When Lady Kneller started legal action, Pope wrote an indignant letter, which Sherburn dates as June 1725, to the Earl of Strafford:

My Lord,--Your Lordship will be surprized at my impudence in troubling you in your repose & elegant retirement at Boughton: You may think I could do so only at Twitnam. And much less could you expect Disturbance from any but a Living bad Neighbour. Yet such my Lord is now your Case, that you are to be molested at once by a Living, & a Dead one. To explain this riddle, you may find it very inconvenient, on a Sunday (your usual day of Rest here) not only to be prest in upon, in an Evening by me, but Shoulder'd in a morning at Church by Sir Godfrey Kneller, & his huge Lady into the bargain. A Monition (I think they call it) from the Doctors Commons was published here last Sunday, where in That Pious widow desires their Leave to pull down the Tablet I set up at the head of your Lordships Pew, to fix there a large one to Sir G. & herself, with both their Figures. If your Lordship should really chance to take no great pleasure in beholding My Name full before your eyes, (which I should not wonder at,) Yet at least, (Dangerous as that Name is, & dreadful to all true Protestant ears,) It cannot Incommode you so much, as a vast three-hundred-pound-Pyle, projecting out upon you, overshadowing my Lady Strafford with the Immense Draperies & Stone Petticoats of Lady Kneller, & perhaps crushing to pieces your Lordships Posterity! . . .

(Corr., II, 300)

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<sup>3</sup>Edith Sitwell, Alexander Pope (London, 1930), p. 226.

The above extract gives ample evidence that Pope, when indignant, had both energy and formidable eloquence. Although Pope was very angry over Lady Kneller's proposal, he was able in this letter to achieve a playful tone. His characterizing of Lady Kneller as a "huge Lady" and of her projected monument as "a vast three-hundred-pound-Pyle" show, as the Dunciad a few years later was to show, that Pope was able to express his indignation in the best and most effective way possible. Indeed, the diction and imagery in this letter give important clues to how Pope was able to work his indignation into poetry. The vitality and the variety of the diction, and its balance, are rough models of the finished product we find in the poems. This is especially true of what we find in the Dunciad, for that is an indignant poem, and this is an indignant letter. Pope's use of strong, lively words in the letter, such as "surprized," "impudence," "Dangerous," "dreadful," is noteworthy. There is balance, too, between "elegant retirement" and "Disturbance"; between "Living bad Neighbour" and "a Dead one"; between "pull down" and "set up." And he uses hyperbolic imagery with telling effect: Lord Strafford is going to be "Shoulder'd" by the monument to Sir Godfrey and his "huge" lady, who is a "Pious" widow; Pope's name is "Dangerous" and "dreadful to true Protestant ears"; the proposed monument is "a vast three-hundred-pound-Pyle," "projecting," "overshadowing," and "perhaps crushing to pieces" his Lordship's Posterity. This makes for very lively reading, just as the hyperbolic imagery in the Dunciad, more polished though it doubtless is,

makes for lively reading. For example, among the many hyperboles in the Dunciad, Variorum is the following couplet, "She sees a Mob of Metaphors advance/Pleas'd with the Madness of the mazy dance" (Book I, ll. 65-66). Pope's anger at Lady Kneller prompted the above letter, and others, just as his anger at various people prompted much of the Dunciad, yet in both the poem and the letter he was able to achieve telling phrases and delightful hyperbole. It seems that Pope's anger and Pope's art had a lifelong series of wrestling matches, and his art, in these and many other instances, won. Because his letters were so much less finished than his poems, the above example is, I feel, important in showing a partial, but not complete, working of his indignation from anger into art.

Pope's indignation over his family honor in the letters is reflected in his poetry. An example is his spirited defence of his parents in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot:

Let the Two Curls of Town and Court, abuse  
His Father, Mother, Body, Soul, and Muse.  
Yet why? that Father held it for a rule  
It was a Sin to call our Neighbour Fool,  
That harmless Mother thought no Wife a Whore,-  
Hear this! and spare his Family, James More!  
Unspotted Names! and memorable long,  
If there be force in Virtue, or in Song.  
(ll. 380-387)

There is feeling as well as art in this expression of indignation, one in which Pope the son has an equal voice with Pope the poet.

Pope was less vulnerable to attacks on his Roman Catholicism than he was to attacks on his family honor, because he was not a strict Roman Catholic, and would be

considered by some as not a Roman Catholic at all. Nonetheless, Pope's enemies at Button's coffee-house delighted in reminding the public that Pope was a Papist. It was particularly galling to Pope that his nephew, Henry Rackett, who spent nine or ten years training to be a lawyer, was then unable to practice. A technicality in the oath of allegiance for those called to the bar prevented any Roman Catholic from qualifying.

Pope's dislike of religious bigotry is apparent in both his letters and his poetry. In his criticism of his own church, he was very like the Dutch critic and scholar Erasmus, 1466-1536, whose Colloquia, published from 1516 to 1536, contained powerful satires against the ignorance and grossness of the Roman Catholic clergy. Like Erasmus, Pope never left the Roman Catholic church despite his trenchant criticisms of it. Pope was indignant at the way Erasmus had been treated for daring to criticize extremism and fanaticism even when he found them in some aspects of his own church. In An Essay on Criticism, ll. 693-696, Pope refers to Erasmus's stand against tyranny and superstition in the church:

At length Erasmus, that great, injur'd Name,  
(The Glory of the Priesthood, and the Shame!)  
Stemm'd the wild Torrent of a barb'rous Age,  
And drove those Holy Vandals off the Stage.

In a 1711 letter to John Caryll he refers to the above lines from An Essay on Criticism, saying that

. . . 'tis observable when a set of people are piqued at any truth which they think to their own disadvantage, their method of revenge on the truth-speaker is to attack his reputation a by-way, and not to object to the place they are really galled by. What these there-

fore in their own opinion are really angered at is that a man whom their tribe oppressed and persecuted (Erasmus by name) should be vindicated after a whole age of obloquy, by one of their own people who is free and bold enough to utter a generous truth in behalf of the dead, whom no man sure will flatter, and few do justice to.

(Corr., I, 127)

He mentions the matter again in a 1712 letter to Caryll:

I have another storm, too, rising from the bigot, the most violent of animals, on the score of not having altered some true lines in the second edition of the Essay on Criticism. Yet . . . I dare stand to posterity in the character of an unbigoted Roman Catholic and impartial critic. I dare trust to future times, and lie down contented under the impotence of my present censurers, which, like other impotence, would naturally vex and tease one more the less it can do. As to my writings, I pray God they may never have other enemies than those they have met with--which are, first priests; second, women, who are the fools of priests; and thirdly, beaus and fops, who are the fools of women.

You see I write in some heat. . . .

(Corr., I, 151)

Although Pope, by his own admission, wrote in some heat, it is important to note that he was still able to write lucidly and effectively. We find such words as "bigot," "violent," and "animals" on the one side, and "unbigoted," "impartial," "future times," and "God" arrayed on Pope's side. We see, too, how specific he is when he speaks of the three categories, "priests," "women," and "beaus and fops." In the above passage we again find that unusual combination of the angry man and the controlled writer.

But, even when controlled, Pope as a letter writer was far from achieving the urbanity of Horace Walpole, considered by many the great letter writer of the eighteenth century. He was much closer to the indignation Swift showed in, for example,

the Letters of M.B., Drapier. The righteous indignation of Swift is strongly expressed in this typical passage from "The Drapier's First Letter":

Thirdly, much less are we obliged to take those vile halfpence of that same Wood, by which you must lose almost eleven pence in every shilling.

Therefore, my friends, stand to it one and all: refuse this filthy trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His Majesty in his patent obliges no one to take these halfpence: our gracious prince hath no such ill advisers about him; or if he had, yet you see the laws have not left it in the king's power to force us to take any coin but what is lawful, of right standard, gold and silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear.<sup>4</sup>

Political bigotry was another thing which made Pope indignant. In a letter to John Caryll 25 July 1714, Pope says, "You can hardly guess what a task you undertake when you profess yourself my friend: there are some Tories who will take you for a Whig, some Whigs who will take you for a Tory, some Protestants who will esteem you a rank Papist, and some Papists who will account you a Heretick. I find, by dear experience, we live in an age where it is criminal to be moderate: and where no man can be allowed to be just to all men" (Corr., I, 238). Pope's poetry often echoed his letters, and so we find the sentiment expressed above in prose refined into poetry in this passage from The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace,

My Head and Heart thus flowing thro' my Quill,  
Verse-man or Prose-man, term me which you will,  
Papist or Protestant, or both between,  
Like good Erasmus in an honest Mean,  
In Moderation placing all my Glory,  
While Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory.  
(ll. 63-68)

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<sup>4</sup>Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings, ed. Louis A. Landa (Boston, 1960), p. 430.

At his best Pope did practice "Moderation" and so it is no surprise that a number of his letters and poems express indignation at the immoderation of political bigotry. Another example is this passage from a 1717 letter to Parnell: "The present violent bent to politics and earnest animosities of parties, which grow within one another so fast, that one would think even every single heart was breeding a worm to destroy itself,--these have left no room for any thought but those of mischief to one another" (Corr., I, 416).

When political bigotry affected his friends, Pope was indignant. The fate of his Tory friends of the Scriblerus Club, such as Swift and Bolingbroke, affected him deeply. The treatment of Gay is recorded in this couplet from the Dunciad, Variorum, "While Wren with sorrow to the grave descends,/Gay dies unpension'd with a hundred Friends" (Book III, ll. 325-326). Pope's letters show he was deeply affected by Gay's death. In a 1731 letter to Martha Blount he says, of Gay's passing, "The world after all is a little pitiful thing: not performing any promise it makes to us, for the future, and every day taking away and annulling the joys of the past " (Corr., III, 336).

Not only did Pope show indignation in his letters, but the letters themselves caused him much indignation. An example of this is seen in his complaint, in a letter to the Earl of Orrery 10 May 1736, that "I am tempted to say a great deal more to your Lordship, but so severe a fate, & such an Exposure of my private Thoughts as has befallen me in the



publication of my freest Letters, has given me a check that will last for life" (Corr., IV, 16). In 1726, Edmund Curll had published Pope's letters to Henry Cromwell. Curll had purchased them from Cromwell's rejected mistress, Elizabeth Thomas. Pope was so annoyed that he asked his friends to return all letters written by him which had not yet been destroyed.

By a complicated intrigue, Pope was able to publish his correspondence with Dean Swift. Sherburn believes that, as soon as one volume of Pope's letters was published in 1735, he began suggesting to Swift that their letters be published. In 1736, Curll published New Letters of Mr. Alexander Pope, containing a letter from Pope to Swift, and one from Bolingbroke to Swift. In his preface, Curll said that these and other letters had been sent to him from Ireland. With this proof that if his letters remained in Ireland they might be published by undesirables, Pope urged Swift to return them. Pope got the letters from Swift in 1737. Pope wanted to create the impression that publication of the letters was initiated in Ireland, so he had an edition of the letters printed secretly, and sent one copy by a circuitous route to Swift in Ireland. Swift made some revisions and initiated their publication. Pope pretended to protest, and then made sure that his London edition of the correspondence, The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope in Prose, Vol. II, appeared just before the Dublin edition, in 1741. This protected Pope's copyright from all but the infamous Curll, who reprinted The Works, Vol. II, in a pirated edition. Although rightly

indignant about Curll's original misuse of his letters, Pope nonetheless showed considerable "artistry" in arranging his correspondence for publication. A similar artistry can be seen in his poetry in which he is able to express indignation with such force and skill and control. Once again, we find Pope a strange mixture of indignant man and disciplined artist.

The indignant man in Pope was always roused by unfairness. Regarding unfair censure, he wrote to Caryll, 19 November 1712: "I am so far from esteeming it any misfortune to be impotently slandered, that I congratulate you upon having your share in that, which all great men, and all good men that ever lived have had their part of, envy and calumny! To be uncensured and to be obscure, is the same thing" (Corr., I, 154). Pope, one of the most censured men of his times, had no need to fear obscurity on that score. Pope considered it unfair that William Warburton was not given a Doctorate of Divinity from Oxford. He writes to the Earl of Orrery, 13 January 1742: "You are not to be told now, that the Vice Chancellor Dr. Leigh & several Heads of Houses send & offerd Mr. Warburton the degree of a Dr. of Divinity, when he had no such Expectation, after which it was monstrously refused by the unaccountable Dissent of 2 or 3" (Corr., IV, 436-437). Indignation is a fleeting emotion for most people, but not for Pope. Thus, a few weeks later, on 9 February, he writes to Orrery again concerning the same subject: "My Lord,--I dare say your Humanity & Generous Spirit is offended, as well as

mine, at such a Demonstration of the Malignity of Dulness, which is never so rancorous as under the Robe of Learning, One would think the Clergy were sworn to hate each other, instead of to love each other. But we have done our best, & must acquiesce under such Heads as God is pleas'd to put over us, that the Weak ones of this world may confound the Strong" (Corr., IV, 440). In a footnote to this passage, Sherburn says, "Possibly, after all, learned Dunces were Pope's extremest aversion" (Corr., IV, 440, n. 2). More than three months later, in a letter of 21 May, Pope asks Warburton to "call me by any Title you will, but a Doctor at Oxford" (Corr., IV, 456). This pattern of indignation appearing again after a passage of time will be found to hold true in the Dunciad for certain of Pope's victims, who appear in all editions of the Dunciad, from 1728 to 1743.

Unworthiness in high places excited expressions of indignation from Pope, in both his letters and his poetry. Writing to the Earl of Marchmont in 1743, Pope shows the scorn he felt for second-rate noblemen, in this passage about the death of the Earl of Wilmington, an unsuccessful First Lord of the Treasury:

And what more foreign from you than a worthless man of Quality? whose death has filled me with Philosophy & Contempt of Riches. Three hundred thousand pound the sum total of his life! without one worthy Deed, public or private! he had just enough sense to see the bad measures we were engag'd in, without the heart to feel for his Country or spirit to oppose what he condemn'd; as long as a Title, or a Riband, or a little lucrative employment, could be got, by his tame submission, & Concurrence. He love'd no body, for (they say) he has

not left a Legacy, not ev'n to his flatterers: he had no ambition, with a vast deal of Pride, and no Dignity, with great Stateliness. His Titles only must be his Epitaph; & there can be nothing on his monument remarkable, except his nose, which I hope the Statuary will do justice to.

(Corr., IV, 458-459)

This is a powerful condemnation, relieved at the end by a touch of humor. Indeed, the humor is all the more effective for being surprising. One should also note that Pope was able to criticize unworthy nobility because he was himself no nobleman's lackey, but jealously guarded his independence. This independence from those in even the highest places had, I think, an important bearing on his indignation. The dependent may feel indignation, but they certainly cannot afford to express it openly, as Pope so often did.

On 30 November 1733, Pope wrote, but did not send, "A Letter to a Noble Lord," addressed to Lord Hervey. In it he said:

My Lord--Your Lordship's Epistle has been published some days, but I had not the pleasure and pain of seeing it till yesterday: pain to think your Lordship should attack me at all: pleasure, to find that you can attack me so weakly. As I want not the humility, to think myself in every way but one your inferior, it seems but reasonable that I should take the only method either of self-defence or retaliation that is left me against a person of your quality and power. And as by your choice of this weapon, your pen, you generously (and modestly too, no doubt) meant to put yourself upon a level with me, I will as soon believe that your Lordship would give a Wound to a man unarmed, as that you would deny me the use of it in my own defence. . . .

When I consider the great difference betwixt the rank your Lordship holds in the world, and the rank which your writings are like to hold in the learned world, I presume that distinction of style is but necessary, which you will see observed through this letter. When I speak of you, my Lord, it will be with all the deference due

to the inequality which Fortune has made between you and myself: but when I speak of your writings, my Lord, I must, I can, do nothing but trifle. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Lord Hervey had, with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, written a coarse pamphlet, A Pop upon Pope. . ., and some insulting "Verses Addressed to the Imitator of Horace." Pope refrained from publishing his "A Letter to a Noble Lord" in reply, at the request of Horace Walpole's uncle, who had done Pope a favor.<sup>6</sup> In this letter, Pope reveals an indignation whose eloquence approaches art. In his poems, the eloquence of his indignation does in fact become art. Pope's letter is also important in that it deals with Lord Hervey, a subject for indignation in so much of Pope's life, letters and poetry.

Pope's letter to Lord Hervey is not typical of his correspondence, however, for it shows considerable care in preparation, and most of Pope's letters were things of the moment, written quickly, although he often revised them later. They are very different from his more formal works, like the poems and translations, which sometimes took years to complete. In the main, the letters reveal Pope the man rather than Pope the craftsman. But nonetheless Pope put great value upon his letters, many of which were published in his lifetime. He was guilty of editing his letters for publication by means of deletions, additions, corrections of text and alteration of dates. At times he even changed the name of the person to whom he had written the letter.

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<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Sitwell, Alexander Pope, pp. 294-295.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 173-174.

However, none of Pope's changes essentially altered the quality of his letters. John Butt says of these changes, "But none of this is very serious. Where the originals of these letters survive, or independent transcripts of them, a comparison reveals that what he omitted were trivialities and occasional profanities, but that his principle revisions were purely stylistic."<sup>7</sup> It may be said, therefore, that the indignation expressed in Pope's letters is fresh and immediate and what he felt at the time.

An expression of fresh and immediate indignation is contained in the letter to Swift of 14 December 1725. In the following passage from that letter, Pope shows that his ire against unworthy noblemen was at times forgotten in the intensity of his anger against lesser mortals:

Not that I have much Anger against the Great, my Spleen is at the little rogues of it: It would vex one more to be knockt o' the Head by a Pisspot, than by a Thunderbolt. As to great Oppressors (as you say) they are like Kites or Eagles, one expects mischief from them: But to be Squirted to death (as poor Wycherley said to me on his deathbed) by Pothecaries Prentices, by the understrappers of Under Secretaries, who were no Secretaries--this would provoke as dull a dog as Ph----s [Philips] himself!

(Corr., II, 349-350)

Letters such as this one belong in the great tradition of literary indignation. Many men before him had expressed indignation memorably in letters. For example, Jerome, c. 346-420, says this in his Letter VII: "As for my country, it is enslaved to barbarism, and men's family God is their belly. People live

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<sup>7</sup> John Butt, "Pope Seen Through His Letters," Eighteenth Century English Literature, ed. James L. Clifford (New York, 1959), p. 63.

only for the day, and the richer you are the more saintly you are held to be."<sup>8</sup> Pope, in a letter to John Caryl, 29 March 1718, makes a similar observation: "Charity not only begins now a days, but ends at home. Ask Esquire Blount else. And the four cardinal virtues being abrogated as Popish, the four princely ones succeed, cunning, rapine, time-serving and luxury." (Corr., I, 472). Jerome's indignation had an important similarity to Pope's, in that it was not purely personal. On the contrary, in the passage from Jerome just quoted, we find the Saint expressing indignation about social conditions, rather than about personal enemies. Pope's feuds with his personal enemies are well known, and used up much of his indignation, but he always had indignation to spare for the broader issues.

What, in summary, do the letters reveal about Pope's indignation? They reveal primarily, I think, that Pope expressed his indignation with his pen, for there are at least ninety passages in the letters that clearly reveal indignation. They reveal, too, that Pope probably had more indignation than most men, and expressed it, usually hastily, sometimes eloquently, and occasionally downright angrily. They reveal that his indignation was aroused by injustice, bigotry, misfortune, and by other things which rouse the indignation of ordinary men to this day. They also reveal that he had high moral principles. And they reveal, very clearly, that the sources of indignation in

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<sup>8</sup>Jerome, Select Letters, trans. F.A. Wright (London, 1933), p. 25.

his life are expressed in his letters. But both his letters and his circumstances are, in one sense, only way points on his great journey, a journey into poetry which was to transmute his indignation into lasting satire, climaxed by the Dunciad.

As poet and satirist, Pope was above all a professional. This professionalism has important bearing on his indignation. First, because he set for himself such very high professional standards, his expressions of indignation are at times refined almost beyond recognition. And second, it is possible to view the highly professional quality of his work as being partly inspired by indignation. After all, what better way was there to confound the enemies he was so indignant at, than by producing poetry of marvellous skill, particularly as many of those enemies were themselves poets?

As poet, Pope was also very much the heir of his literary past. Warren says, "The humanistic conception of culture, which Pope most decidedly held, is that it constitutes a continuum: each generation does not begin all over again; it carries on the thoughts and art of the past generations."<sup>9</sup> Thus Pope was both classical student and man of Christian faith. As classical critic, he could draw upon the great wealth of literary indignation written before his time. As man of Christian faith, he had much, in his time, to be indignant about. We have already noted, in Chapter I, how the comparison between his times and the great times of Augustan Rome spurred his indignation, and the indignation of many of his

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<sup>9</sup>Warren, Alexander Pope as Critic and Humanist, pp. 1-2.



contemporaries. Indeed, although Pope was so much the heir of his literary past, he was also very much a part of the literary scene of his day, and very much aware of what his contemporaries were writing. I think therefore, that in studying the expressions of indignation in Pope's poetry it is necessary, where appropriate, to relate these passages both to their classical past and to the work of his contemporaries.

Pope's writing career can, broadly speaking, be considered in three sections. The initial section started with the appearance of his first published work, his Pastorals, in the sixth part of Jacob Tonson's Miscellanies. This was in May, 1709, the month when Pope turned twenty-one. This portion of his career continued with An Essay on Criticism in 1711, The Rape of the Lock, 1712, and Windsor-Forest, 1713. It ended in 1717, when he was twenty-nine, with publication of his Works. In this early part of his career, Pope was more inclined to express his indignation in his letters than in his poems.

There is no indignation expressed in the Pastorals, which celebrate the beauty and simplicity of nature in an idealized view of ancient shepherd life. But Pope was highly indignant at the reception of the Pastorals. Both Pope's and Ambrose Philips' pastorals were published in the sixth part of Tonson's Miscellanies. Three years later, the Guardian gave five long reviews praising Philips' pastorals and completely ignoring Pope's. Pope's vanity and his sense of the poetic were both offended. This prompted an example of his literary indignation, when he wrote a sixth review of Philips' pastorals and sent it

anonymously to the Guardian, where it appeared in No. 40, April 27, 1713. The review, while on the surface praising Philips' pastorals, in fact showed how bad Philips' work was in comparison with Pope's. For example, Pope chose particularly bad samples of Philips' poetry and pretended to praise them:

O woful day! O day of Woe, quoth he,  
And woful I, who live the day to see!

The simplicity of Diction, the melancholy flowing of the Numbers, the solemnity of the Sound, and the easie turn of the Words, in this Dirge (to make use of our Author's Expression) are extreamly elegant.

In another of his Pastorals, a Shepherd utters a Dirge not much inferior to the former, in the following lines.

Ah me the while! ah me! the luckless day,  
Ah luckless Lad! the rather might I say;  
Ah silly I! more silly than my Sheep,  
Which on the flowry Plains I once did keep.

How he still charms the ear with these artful Repetitions of the Epithets; and how significant is the last verse! I defy the most common Reader to repeat them, without feeling some motions of compassion.<sup>10</sup>

This is devastating wit hiding behind seeming sincerity and artlessness, and it certainly shows how Pope refined and polished his expressions of indignation. Pope's Guardian review is reprinted as Appendix V of the Dunciad, Variorum, 1729, and of the Dunciad, In Four Books, 1743. Pope attacked Philips again in 1741, when The Memoirs of Martin Scriblerus were published. The Memoirs contained a section, "The Art of Sinking in Poetry," in which Pope called Philips the greatest master of "Inanity, or Nothingness." The dates of the above attacks on Philips, namely 1713, 1729, 1741, and 1743, demon-

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<sup>10</sup>Twickenham Edition, V, 227.

strate the lasting power of Pope's indignation, and this feature was noted earlier in connection with his letters. Another important characteristic of Pope's indignation, and one manifested in the Philips affair, was its unexpectedness. Philips is said to have exclaimed: "I wonder why the little crooked bastard should attack me, who never offended him in either word of deed."<sup>11</sup> But Philips did offend Pope in the quality of his poetry, and this accounts for much of Pope's indignation against him. Just how much of the indignation was caused by outraged good taste and how much by wounded vanity it is impossible to say. But this problem appears in much of Pope's literary indignation, and often one cannot tell where principles end and personalities begin.

This is true of An Essay on Criticism, 1711. From one point of view, we might say that this poem was a principled expression of Pope's indignation against the critics and their failure to perform their function honestly and well. From another, we might say it was inspired by indignation against William Wycherley. Pope and Wycherley had fallen out over the former's corrections of the latter's manuscripts, and some believe that in An Essay on Criticism Pope, almost an unknown, was defending himself and true wit against the most famous wit surviving from the court of Charles II. F.R. Leavis feels that line 292, "One glaring Chaos and wild Heap of Wit" is an apt

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<sup>11</sup>Sherburn, Early Career, p. 160.

description of Wycherley's Miscellany Poems of 1704.<sup>12</sup>

Although there is little agreement about the exact role Pope's indignation played in his writing An Essay on Criticism, all can agree, however, that the poem inspired much indignation in John Dennis, to whom Pope refers slightly in the poem (ll. 584-587). On 20 June 1711, one month after the Essay appeared, Dennis published a pamphlet, Reflections, Critical, and Satyrical, upon a late Rhapsody call'd an Essay upon Criticism. In the pamphlet, Dennis claimed he had been attacked in his person rather than in his writings. One paragraph from it follows:

I remember a little gentleman whom Mr. Walsh used to take into his company, as a double foil to his person and capacity. Enquire between Sunninghill and Oakingham for a young, short, squab gentleman, the very bow of the god of Love, and tell me whether he be a proper author to make personal reflections? He may extol the ancients but he has reason to thank the gods that he was born a modern; for had he been born of Grecian parents, and his father subsequently had by law the absolute disposal of him, his life had been no longer than that of one of his poems, the life of half a day. Let the person of a gentleman of his parts be ever so contemptible, his inward man is ten times more ridiculous; it being impossible that his outward form, though it be that of a downright monkey, should differ so much from human shape as his unthinking immaterial part does from human understanding!<sup>13</sup>

I think the above paragraph is an excellent reminder to us that Pope was not alone in expressing his indignation, but that in his time indignant outbursts were commonplace, and

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<sup>12</sup>F.R. Leavis, "Pope." Essential Articles for the Study of Alexander Pope, ed. Maynard Mack (Hamden, Conn., 1964), p. 182.

<sup>13</sup>Quoted in Sitwell, Alexander Pope (London, 1930), p. 74.

often contained far more rancour than most of his writings. Edith Sitwell, who calls Dennis "the unspeakable Dennis," places great emphasis upon the hurt the above passage must have done to Pope, who was only twenty-three and already more or less in love with Martha Blount.<sup>14</sup> Two things are sure: Pope certainly roused Dennis's indignation, and Dennis certainly roused Sitwell's.

Windsor-Forest, 1713, is another important work in the early section of Pope's literary career. In Windsor-Forest, his was an early voice against the slave trade: "O stretch thy Reign, fair Peace! from Shore to Shore,/Till Conquest cease, and Slav'ry be no more" (ll. 407-408). It was in Windsor-Forest, too, that he spoke out against the hunter, as in these couplets on pheasant shooting:

See! from the Brake the whirring Pheasant springs,  
And mounts exulting on triumphant Wings;  
Short is his Joy! he feels the fiery Wound,  
Flutters in Blood, and panting beats the Ground.  
(ll. 111-114)

The power, precision, and pictorial quality of Pope's descriptions are apparent in even this early work.

One of the great triumphs of this early part of his career was his mock heroic poem The Rape of the Lock, 1712. This was not written in indignation but was, on the contrary, an attempt to help heal the quarrel resulting from the theft of a lock of Miss Arabella Fermor's hair by Lord Petrie. The enlarged version of this poem, published in 1714, when Pope

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<sup>14</sup>Sitwell, Alexander Pope, p. 75.

reached his twenty-sixth birthday, may be considered as ending this early period of his literary career.

The second period was that occupied by editing and translating. For the reading public, it began in 1715 with the publication of Pope's translation of the first four books of the Iliad. This was the first volume in a series of six, the last two appearing in 1720. In 1725, Pope's six-volume edition of Shakespeare appeared, together with the first three volumes of his five-volume translation of the Odyssey. The last two volumes of his Odyssey appeared in 1726, when he was 38, ending this section of his career.

It was a section which had, I think, important bearing on his indignation and on his literary expressions of that indignation. Pope expended what was, even for him, a great deal of indignation against his collaborators in the Odyssey translation, Elijah Fenton and William Broome, in a quarrel over just what part they had played in the collaboration. During the quarrel, Pope listed Broome among "the parrots who repeat another's words in such a hoarse, odd voice, as to make them seem their own."<sup>15</sup> Broome showed some powerful indignation on his own account, in a letter to Fenton, 26 August 1726:

Pray in the name of goodness what does he mean in the postscript to the Odyssey by affirming some parts of the tenth and fifteenth books are not by his hand? I declare I saw them daily as he translated daily when I was at Twickenham. The secret is, some parts of those books are a little heavy, and he is resolved as he robbed us of seven of our books to do us a greater injury by repaying us in base coin. His dulness is

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<sup>15</sup>Sitwell, Alexander Pope, p. 237.

bright enough to be our glory. He is king of Parnassus, and claims what is good in our translation by prerogative royal. The mines of gold and silver belong to the monarch, as privileges of his supremacy, but coarser metals are left for the use of the owner of the soil. But in the meantime where is his veracity? One time or other the truth shall be publicly known. Till then I give him leave to shine like a candle in the dark, which is lighted up to its own diminution, and shines only to go out in a stink.

(Corr., II, 390)

This angry letter of Broome's serves as a useful reminder that Pope was not indignant all by himself, but that indignation, like the measles, it is apt to come from someone else, and in turn to be passed on to others. However, indignation, like measles, does come to an end, and it is evidence of Pope's better qualities that time healed the wounds caused by the Odyssey translation. Four years later, when Fenton died, Pope wrote to Broome, 29 August 1730, saying, "I shall with pleasure take upon me to draw this Amiable, quiet, deserving, unpretending Christian & Philosophical character, in his Epitaph" (Corr., III, 128). The Odyssey difficulties demonstrate that eighteenth-century literature was seldom created in calm isolation. It was a rough game, and many of the contestants appear in the Dunciad.

A similar wave of indignation washed round the Iliad. Pope's translation of Books I-IV of the Iliad was published 6 June 1715, and two days later Thomas Tickell's translation of Iliad I appeared. This was a situation well calculated to raise wrath and indignation. Addison, who had preferred Philips' pastorals to Pope's, preferred Tickell's Homer. Addison could have persuaded Tickell to withhold the translation but did not

do so, even though all Pope's financial hopes were fixed on the translation.<sup>16</sup> Pope's indignation against Addison is clear in his letter of 15 July 1715 to James Cragg. In this letter, he writes these words of Addison: "We have, it seems a great Turk in Poetry, who can never bear a Brother on the throne; and has his Mutes too, a sett of Noddors, Winkers, and Whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other offsprings of wit in their birth" (I, 306). This letter was the basis for his satire on the character of Addison, printed first in the St. James Journal of 15 December 1722, and becoming, twenty years after the letter was written, a part of the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot. Addison did not return indignation for Pope's indignation, however. He was shown Pope's satire soon after it was written in 1716, and his reply was, shortly after that, to praise Pope's Iliad very generously in the Freeholder of 7 May.

Indignation also surrounded Pope's edition of Shakespeare, published in six volumes in March 1725. A year later appeared Lewis Theobald's Shakespeare Restored: or, A Specimen of the Many Errors, as well Committed as Unamended by Mr. Pope in his Late Edition of the Poet. This action by Theobald inspired Pope's strong indignation, and resulted in Theobald being installed as King of the Dunces in the Dunciad, 1728. One of Pope's slaps at Theobald is his verse, "On Shakespeare Restored," in the Dunciad Epigrams:

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<sup>16</sup>Sitwell, Alexander Pope, p. 118.



Tis generous, Tibald! in thee and thy brothers,  
 To help us thus to read the works of others:  
 Never for this can just returns be shown;  
 For who will help us e'er to read thy own?

All in all, Pope's years as editor and translator gave him frequent cause for indignation.

But his period of translating and editing also had important bearing on his literary indignation, as distinct from his indignation. I feel that his translating Homer gave him a deep insight into early classical literature and into the way in which Homer had his characters express indignation. To give just one example, near the beginning of Book XXII of the Odyssey, Odysseus, about to cast off his disguise, turns on Penelope's suitors, slays one of them, and is reviled by the other suitors:

"Stranger, thou shootest at men to thy hurt. Never again shalt thou enter other lists, now is utter doom assured thee. Yea, for now hast thou slain the man that was far the best of all the noble youths in Ithaca; wherefore vultures shall devour thee here."

So each one spake, for indeed they thought that Odysseus had not slain him wilfully; but they knew not in their folly that on their own heads, each and all of them, the bands of death had been made fast. Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on them, and spake:

"Ye dogs, ye said in your hearts that I should never come home from the land of the Trojans, in that ye wasted my house and lay with the maidservants by force, and traitorously wooed my wife while I was yet alive, and ye had no fear of the gods, that hold the wide heaven, nor of the indignation of men hereafter. But now the bands of death have been made fast upon you one and all."<sup>17</sup>

The last paragraph above may be compared with Pope's verse translation of the equivalent passage in Homer:

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<sup>17</sup>Homer, The Odyssey, trans. S.H. Butcher and A. Lang (New York, 1909), p. 308.

Dogs, ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more  
Ulyses vengeful from the Trojan shore;  
 While to your lust and spoil a guardless prey,  
 Our house, our wealth, our helpless handmaids lay:  
 Not so content, with bolder frenzy fir'd,  
 Ev'n to our bed presumptuous you aspir'd:  
 Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,  
 Or shame of men, or dread of Gods above;  
 Heedless alike of infamy or praise,  
 Or Fame's eternal voice in future days:  
 The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,  
 Impending Fate is yours, and instant doom.<sup>18</sup>

The above sample of Pope's literary indignation shows, I think, how well he learned from Homer, and from the Old Testament too, the value of being clear, direct and specific, and of using strong verbs.

An equally important influence on Pope's literary indignation was, I believe, the time the poet spent preparing his edition of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's works are filled with examples of the rules of classical rhetoric. Sister Miriam Joseph tells us that in Shakespeare's day the arts of language on which composition was based were three: grammar, rhetoric, and logic. She outlines Aristotle's views on such techniques as metaphor, simile, synecdoche, periphrasis, anthithesis, and epistrophe, then shows how Shakespeare used these techniques and extended them. She sums up by saying that "it becomes evident, first, that Shakespeare's development of his subject matter and his mode of expression in his plays and poems are characteristic of his time; secondly that he utilized every resource of thought and language known to his time; thirdly,

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<sup>18</sup> Alexander Pope, The Odyssey of Homer, ed. Maynard Mack (London, 1967), ll. 41-52, pp. 288-289.

that his genius, outrunning precept even while conforming to it, transcends that of his contemporaries and belongs to all time."<sup>19</sup> I feel that if we substituted the word "Pope's" for the word "Shakespeare's" in the above statement, we would have an excellent summary of how Pope took his literary heritage and, like Shakespeare, enlarged and extended it. Editing Shakespeare must have been, for Pope, a wonderful lesson in the arts of rhetoric, in particular those relating to persuading the emotions of the reader. In his preface to his edition of Shakespeare, Pope emphasizes Shakespeare's skill in this field:

The power over our passions was never possessed in a more eminent degree, or displayed in so different instances. Yet all along, there is seen no labour, no pains to raise them; no preparation to guide our guess to the effect, or be perceived to lead toward it. But the heart swells, and the tears burst out, just at the proper places. We are surprised the moment we weep; and yet upon reflection find the passion so just, that we should be surprised if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment.<sup>20</sup>

I think this passage is revealing, for in it Pope speaks, not of the writer's passions, but of the reader's. We may be sure that Pope's own heart swelled, and the tears burst out, many times in indignation, but because he was able so skilfully, through his words, to transfer that indignation to our hearts, we become more concerned with the effects of his literary

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<sup>19</sup>Sister Miriam Joseph, Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language (New York, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>20</sup>Alexander Pope, Preface to The Works of Shakespeare, In Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose, p. 494.

indignation than with its cause, more concerned with what he is able to do to our emotions than with what was originally done to his.

After the years of editing and translating, Pope entered the last and perhaps the greatest period of his career. Its beginning was marked by the appearance on May 18, 1728, three days before Pope's fortieth birthday, of the Dunciad, in three books and with Theobald as its hero. It continued with the Dunciad, Variorum in 1729; the first Moral Essays in 1731; the first Imitations of Horace, and An Essay on Man in 1733; An Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot in 1735; the New Dunciad, that is Book IV, in 1742; and in 1743, a year before Pope's death at fifty-six, the Dunciad in four books, with Cibber replacing Theobald on the throne. Pope's important satires, and thus his greatest literary indignation, belong in this final period of his career.

The Epistles to Several Persons present a problem in Pope's literary indignation. F.W. Bateson, who edited the Epistles for the Twickenham Edition, mentions this problem in the first paragraph of his preface:

The problem is not simply "Who is Pope getting at here?" It is rather "How far in fact does the purely personal satire go?" Often the immediate intention seems to be an impersonal ethical generalization, to which a dash of contemporary insult has only been added to make it more piquant. On the other hand, there are, of course, the passages of brilliant invective, in which the abstract moral framework does not provide much more than a polite pretence of objectivity.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>F.W. Bateson, Twickenham Edition, III, ii, v.

Another way of stating this problem would be, "Was the indignation which generated this literary expression of it righteous indignation over a public ill, or personal indignation over some private grudge?" We cannot be sure of the answer.

One thing we can be sure of, however, is that in the Epistles Pope was following the style of Horace. As Bateson points out, the very word "Epistle" links each poem with the Horatian epistles, long a traditional vehicle for social correction.<sup>22</sup> Also, Pope uses, as the epigraph to the "death-bed" edition of his Epistles, the prescription given by Horace for writing good epistles (Sat. I.x. 9-14). In this prescription, the words "Est brevitae opus" have particular meaning for Pope, whose brevity and conciseness would surely satisfy even Horace.

To Burlington, 1731, the first epistle to appear, expresses the indignation of Pope, the neo-classicist, against the vulgar use of wealth without taste. Lord Timon epitomizes this tastelessness, and Pope devotes seventy of the poem's one hundred and eighty-four lines to the character of Timon and the senseless luxury of Timon's villa. He says, of Timon and his mansion,

Who but must laugh, the Master when he sees,  
A puny insect, shiv'ring at a breeze!  
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!  
The whole, a labour'd quarry above ground.  
(ll. 107-110)

The paradox of "huge heaps of littleness," and of "Quarry above

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<sup>22</sup>Bateson, Twickenham Edition, p. xxxviii.

ground" is of course in the satiric tradition. But no tradition could give Pope his incredible power to compress so much meaning in so few words, with no loss of clarity, in fact with often a heightening of clarity. When Pope has "the Master" becoming a "puny insect" he is using what Alvin B. Kernan considers one of the three rhetorical figures on which satire depends. The three are the confusing, the magnifying, and, as in this case, the diminishing. Kernan mentions how Pope's friend Swift uses the expansion and contraction formula in Gulliver's Travels; Gulliver, in Book I, is very large in comparison with the Lilliputians, and in Book II very small in contrast to the Brobdingnagians.<sup>23</sup> Thus we see Pope using a formula which was both traditional and contemporary, but adding to it two things: the power of his own indignation against such abuses of taste as the poem describes, and the power of his own particular genius to translate his feelings into literary indignation of the highest order.

I think that the end of the Epistle to Burlington sheds interesting light on Pope's literary indignation. The fourteen lines of this final section follow:

You too proceed! make falling Arts your care,  
Erect new wonders, and the old repair,  
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,  
And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:  
Till Kings call forth the Idea's of your mind,  
Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd,

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<sup>23</sup>Alvin B. Kernan, The Plot of Satire (New Haven, 1965), pp. 35, 120.

Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,  
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;  
 Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,  
 The Mole projected break the roaring Main;  
 Back to his bounds their subject Sea command,  
 And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land;  
 These Honours, Peace to happy Britain brings,  
 These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings.  
 (ll. 191-204)

In my view this section demonstrates that Pope, in his literary indignation, is not merely negative and busy at tearing down, but can also be positive and constructive. Various critics have pointed out that hope is a necessary element of satire, and that one does not write satire if one feels things are beyond salvation. I think that hope is also a part of indignation. Resignation and defeat hardly seem to fit the emotion of indignation, but rebellion and a desire for change and improvement do. Moreover, I think the ending of the poem indicates the importance of comparison in both the emotion of indignation and its literary expression. It was stated in Chapter I that much of Pope's indignation was caused by comparing his England unfavorably with Augustan Rome. Here, though, we have a different comparison, one between actual conditions in England, and what Pope hoped for. An example of this is l. 198, above: "Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend." Bateson points out this poem appeared at a time when some of the churches newly built by act of Queen Anne were ready to fall down because they had been built on boggy land.<sup>24</sup> Some of Pope's indignation was undoubtedly worked into this poem,

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<sup>24</sup>Bateson, Twickenham Edition, III-ii, 155, N.

but much more of his indignation stemmed from it. This of course was because many thought that "Timon's villa" referred to the Duke of Chandos' estate, Cannons. The Duke accepted Pope's word that he had not had Cannons in mind. But despite this Pope remained indignant at the society gossips who had spread the falsehood that "Timon's villa" referred to Cannons, and he dealt with such gossips when he spoke, in the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, of "That Fop whose pride affects a Patron's name,/Yet absent, wounds an Author's honest fame" (ll. 291-292). This couplet is an example of how indignation was often for Pope the direct inspiration of poetry.

The Epistle to Bathurst appeared in 1732, the year after To Burlington. This is not a significant poem in the canon of Pope's literary indignation for, as Bateson points out, he is here "simply Bolingbroke's mouthpiece." Bateson says that "Pope's indignation with the wicked capitalists of the City of London is obviously second-hand and worked up, as it were, for the occasion."<sup>25</sup> Perhaps the importance of the poem, for our purposes, is simply to remind us that Pope's best literary indignation was not "second-hand and worked up" but reflected the strong, sometimes righteous, sometimes very personal, indignation that inspired it. The poem also reminds us that Pope was not alone in his expressions of indignation against the misuse of wealth. In ll. 17-20, Pope, discussing two classes of men, the wasteful and the hoarders, makes passing

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<sup>25</sup>Bateson, Twickenham Edition, III-ii, xxxiv.



reference to Francis Chartres, a celebrated rake:

Both fairly owning, Riches in effect  
 No grace of Heav'n or token of th' Elect;  
 Giv'n to the Fool, the Mad, the Vain, the Evil,  
 To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil.

This fairly restrained reference should be compared with Dr. Arbuthnot's epitaph on the same Chartres, part of which follows:

HERE continueth to rot  
 The Body of FRANCIS CHARTRES,  
 Who with an INFLEXIBLE CONSTANCY,  
 And INIMITABLE UNIFORMITY OF Life,  
                   PERSISTED,  
 In spite of AGE AND INFIRMITIES,  
 In the Practice of EVERY HUMAN VICE;  
 Excepting PRODIGALITY AND HYPOCRISY:  
 His insatiable AVARICE exempted him from the first,  
 His matchless IMPUDENCE from the second. . . .

Oh Indignant Reader!  
 Think not his Life useless to Mankind!  
PROVIDENCE conniv'd at his execrable Designs,  
                   To give to After-ages  
                   A conspicuous PROOF and EXAMPLE,  
 Of how small Estimation is EXORBITANT WEALTH  
                   In the Sight of GOD,  
 By his bestowing it on the most UNWORTHY of  
                   ALL MORTALS.<sup>26</sup>

In To Cobham, 1733, Pope discusses the theory of the ruling passion, and I think a case might be made for claiming that Pope's ruling passion was indignation. He shows some of this indignation in his scathing reference to "Scoto," his suitable name for the former Secretary of State for Scotland, James Johnston, who had wangled a large and unethical "pension" from the annual tythes in the rents of nonjuring Scottish

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<sup>26</sup> Bateson, Twickenham Edition, III-ii, 86.

bishops.<sup>27</sup> Pope says of "Scoto":

Ask men's Opinions: Scoto now shall tell  
How Trade increases, and the World goes well;  
Strike off his Pension, by the setting sun,  
And Britain, if not Europe, is undone.

(ll. 158-161)

Pope devotes thirty lines of the poem to "Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,/Whose ruling Passion was the Lust of Praise" (ll. 180-181). There is debate whether Pope was indignant because of the Duke of Wharton's political activities on behalf of Spain, or because Lady Mary Wortley Montagu had become a friend of the Duke and Pope was jealous of the friendship.<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that Pope refers to James Johnston as "Scoto" but to Wharton by his real name, showing that the poet was by then about midway between disguising all personal references, as he formerly had, and plainly naming all names, as he did later. It should also be noted that some believe the miserly "Euclio" in the poem is Sir Godfrey Kneller, whose monument caused Pope so much trouble. If this is the case it is another instance of the lasting quality of Pope's indignation, for the poem appeared ten long years after Sir Godfrey's death. And if it is indeed an expression of indignation against Sir Godfrey, it is a splendid example of how Pope's art was so often in firm control of his indignation:

"I give and I devise, (old Euclio said,  
And sigh'd) "My lands and tenements to Ned."  
Your money, Sir? "My money, Sir, what all?"

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<sup>27</sup>Twickenham Edition, III-ii, 29, n.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 30, n.

"Why,--if I must--(then wept) I give it Paul."  
 The Manor, Sir?--"The Manor! hold," he cry'd,  
 "Not that,--I cannot part with that"--and dy'd.  
 (ll. 256-261)

It would be difficult to find in the English language another set of three heroic couplets which, within the firm confines of this verse form, show such wit, conciseness, and well-characterized, natural-sounding dialogue. To cite just one instance of the skill employed in the above passage, Pope repeats the word "I" in the first line, writing, not the familiar "I give and devise," but "I give and I devise." This repetition of the word "I" is a telling and economical characterization of the self-centred "Euclio."

The Epistle to a Lady, 1734, contains a memorable expression of Pope's personal indignation against Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. She is the "Sappho" of these lines:

As Sappho's diamond with her dirty smock,  
 Or Sappho at her toilet's greazy task,  
 With Sappho fragrant at an ev'ning Mask:  
 So morning Insects that in muck begun,  
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow in the setting-sun.  
 (ll. 24-28)

With two adjectives, "dirty" and "greazy," two nouns, "insects" and "muck," and two verbs, "buzz" and "fly-blow," Pope demonstrates how indignation, worked into poetry, can become a concise and unforgettable portrait. He also demonstrates what he mentioned in his letter to Dr. Arbuthnot, quoted earlier, that "Examples are pictures, and strike the Senses, nay raise the Passions. . . ." By attacking Lady Mary so frequently, he demonstrates, too, that there is pleasure as well as pain

in indignation. The "dirty smock" in the above lines refers to Lady Mary's well-known slovenliness. With Lady Mary in his poems, as with Lady Kneller in his letters, Pope shows his indignation can be both vindictive and lasting.

It is certainly vindictive in his portrait, also in To a Lady, of Atossa, whom many feel was the Duchess of Marlborough, but whom Bateson identifies as the Duchess of Buckinghamshire (Twickenham Edition, III-ii, 160). Bateson feels that Pope had a grudge against the Duchess of Buckinghamshire and that this is personal satire (Twickenham Edition, III-ii, 165). The portrait contains these lines:

Full sixty years the World has been her Trade,  
The wisest Fool much Time has ever made.  
From loveless youth to unrespected age,  
No passion gratified except her Rage.  
So much the Fury still out-ran the Wit,  
The Pleasure miss'd her, and the Scandal hit.  
Who breaks with her, provokes Revenge from Hell,  
But he's a bolder man who dares be well:  
Her ev'ry turn with Violence pursu'd,  
No more a storm her Hate than Gratitude.  
(ll. 123-132)

Pope's use of the classical trick of paradox is shown here, in "wisest Fool," "loveless youth" and "unrespected age."

In summary, the importance of the Epistles to Pope's literary indignation is, I think, that they show the progress of his satires from a foundation in literary imagination to a foundation in legal fact. As Bateson says, "It was by stooping to Truth, i.e. the kind of evidence that would be accepted in a court of law, that he was able to moralize his song."<sup>29</sup> This of course, shows an increasing control over

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<sup>29</sup>Bateson, Twickenham Edition, III-ii, xlii.

his indignation, for indignation is an untidy emotion as far removed as possible from the precision of the law. I think this change in Pope's approach affected the indignation of others, by making them more indignant. After all, the truth, especially the unpleasant truth, makes us more indignant than anything else, so Pope, by telling facts in a memorable way, was bound to rouse indignation in others, thereby, perhaps, dissipating his own indignation against them.

The Imitations of Horace, begun in 1733, show, by their title alone, Pope's great debt to the Roman poet. Horace, 65-8 B.C., turned away from Lucilian school of notoriously abrasive satirical poets, and made his satires witty and jovial rather than violent, writing with the urbanity and moderation of a civilized man of the world. It was perfectly natural for Pope to imitate Horace's relaxed and conversational manner, for many writers before him, notably Boileau, had imitated Horace's satires and epistles. But John Butt, editor-general of the Twickenham series, is right to suggest that Pope was no mere imitator of Horace: "Pope can follow Horace closely, and yet at the same time he can accommodate Horace's satire to his own time and make Horace fight his battles for him."<sup>30</sup> Pope owned at least four different editions of Horace, those of Bentley, Cunningham, Heinsius, and Desprez.<sup>31</sup> The all-pervading

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<sup>30</sup> John Butt, intro., Twickenham Edition, IV, xxx.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas E. Maresca, Pope's Horatian Poems (Columbus, Ohio, 1966), p. 17.

influence of Horace, speaking from a golden age to a soiled one, is to be considered, I think, a prime factor in Pope's literary indignation. Comparisons are odious, and the comparison between Pope's England and Augustan Rome was odious enough to inspire the poet's lasting indignation. Thomas E. Maresca in his book, Pope's Horatian Poems, emphasizes the eighteenth century's reverence for Horace, saying "Pope's moral dicta in the Imitations were already half-sanctified by the mere fact of their existence in the Horatian original."<sup>32</sup> He also stresses the English Augustans' belief that poetry had a moral use and that satire, in particular, was an effective agent for moral reform.<sup>33</sup>

The first, and one of the most important of Pope's imitations of Horace was The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace, 1733. Pope's advertisement for his poem speaks of indignation against vice, as distinct from mere libel:

The Occasion of publishing these Imitations was the Clamour raised on some of my Epistles. An answer from Horace was both more full, and of more Dignity, than any I cou'd have made in my own person; and the Example of much greater Freedom in so eminent a Divine as Dr. Donne, seem'd a proof with what Indignation and Contempt a Christian may treat Vice or Folly, in ever so low, or ever so high, a Station. Both these Authors were acceptable to the Princes and Ministers under whom they lived: The Satires of Dr. Donne I versify'd at the Desire of the Earl of Oxford while he was Lord Treasurer, and of the Duke of Shrewsbury who had been Secretary of State; neither of whom look'd upon a Satire on Vicious Courts as any reflection on those

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<sup>32</sup>Maresca, Pope's Horatian Poems, p. 21.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

they serv'd in. And indeed there is not in the world a greater Error, than that which Fools are so apt to fall into, and Knaves with good reason to encourage, the mistaking a Satyr for a Libeller; whereas to a true Satyr nothing is so odious as a Libeller, for the same reason as to a man truly Virtuous nothing is so hateful as a Hypocrite.

(Twickenham Edition, IV, 3)

In the poem itself, Pope shows, I think, that only the independent can afford to be indignant when they please and against whom they please. Pope's independence is apparent in the line, "Un-plac'd, un-pension'd, no Man's Heir, or Slave" in the following passage:

Could pension'd Boileau lash in honest Strain  
 Flatt'ers and Bigots ev'n in Louis' reign?  
 Could Laureate Dryden Pimp and Fry'r engage,  
 Yet neither Charles nor James be in a Rage?  
 And I not strip the Gilding off a Knave,  
 Unplac'd un-pension'd, no Man's Heir, or Slave?  
 I will, or perish in the gen'rous Cause.  
 Hear this, and tremble! you, who 'escape the Laws.  
 Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave  
 Shall walk the World, in credit, to his grave.  
 TO VIRTUE ONLY AND HER FRIENDS, A FRIEND,  
 The World may murmur, or commend.

(ll. 105-121)

This is a brave and highly moral position for Pope to take, and the passage rings with righteous indignation. It shows how strange a mixture Pope was, and in consequence how mixed his indignation was, that in the very same poem he can descend from righteous indignation to personal indignation and insult Lady Mary Wortley Montagu as Sappho in the couplet "From furious Sappho scarce a milder Fate, / P-x'd by her Love, or libell'd by her Hate" (ll. 83-84). Lady Mary's efforts to get that couplet suppressed pleased Pope so much that she appears as Sappho in several more of his poems. At the other end of the scale, we

find in The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace a reference to King George II which was inspired, not by any personal grudge, but by honest anger at George's lack of interest in literature and at his weak rule:

F. Then all your Muse's softer Art display,  
Let Carolina smooth the tuneful Lay,  
Lull with Amelia's liquid Name the Nine,  
And sweetly flow through all the Royal Line.  
P. Alas! few Verses touch their nicer Ear;  
They scarce can bear their Laureate twice a Year:  
And justly CAESAR scorns the Poet's Lays,  
It is to History he trusts for Praise.

(ll. 29-36)

In the above passage the "F." refers to Pope's lawyer friend, William Fortescue, who serves in the poem as the traditional adversarius. Maresca notes how the poem falls into the familiar category of the satirist's apologia, and follows the traditional rhetorical divisions of narratio, the statement of the case, and partitio, its divisions, followed by confirmatio and refutatio.<sup>34</sup> The structure of the poem is one more indication of how firmly Pope's poetry, and in consequence his literary indignation, was rooted in the works of the past. And when, in the section of the poems quoted earlier, he refers to "pension'd Boileau" and "Laureate Dryden" he names two men of letters who had great influence on him. Like Pope, Nicolas Boileau, 1636-1711, wrote satires in the style of Horace and Juvenal. Pope showed his admiration for Boileau by writing, in 1741, a twelve-line poem, "Verbatim from Boileau," which is an excellent and close translation of the last twelve lines

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<sup>34</sup>Maresca, Pope's Horatian Poems, pp. 37, 39, 67.



of Boileau's Epître II, about Dame Justice swallowing a disputed oyster and giving each of the two claimants an empty half-shell. Louis I. Bredvold stresses the influence of Boileau on the Tory satirists of the eighteenth century, particularly through Boileau's general dictum, "Rien n'est beau que le vrai."<sup>35</sup> Pope is following that dictum in this poem. Dryden, 1631-1700, was of course Pope's immediate ancestor in the long tradition of satire and, like Pope, he venerated the correctness of form and balance of the classical writers. But his veneration, like Pope's, stopped short of viewing the classical forms as rigid and absolute. Both Dryden and Pope felt that the great classical writers had not invented rules, but rather had discovered the laws of nature, so that to follow these laws was to follow nature. Pope's debt to Dryden can hardly be questioned, as Dryden fashioned the heroic couplet into a beautiful weapon of satire for Pope's study and use. Furthermore, Dryden's Mac Flecknoe, 1682, directly inspired the Dunciad. In Mac Flecknoe there appears this appraisal of Thomas Shadwell, who succeeded Dryden as Poet Laureate:

Sh---- alone my perfect image bears,  
Mature in dulness from his tender years:  
Sh---- alone of all my sons is he  
Who stands confirm'd in full stupidity.  
The rest to some faint meaning make pretense,  
But Sh---- never deviates into sense.

This passage is one more reminder that Pope was not alone in making his indignation known in a direct and pungent way.

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<sup>35</sup>Bredvold, "The Gloom of the Tory Satirists," Eighteenth Century English Literature, p. 18.

Samuel Johnson, in The Life of Pope, makes what is often considered the best comparison of Dryden and Pope, saying "The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation, and those of Pope by minute attention."<sup>36</sup> I feel that Pope's "minute attention" was due in part to his hobby of painting and his great interest in the painter's art. Often in his poetry he seems to have a painter's keen eye for distinctive detail.

Pope's next imitation of Horace was The Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace Paraphrased, 1734. It deals at length with the excesses of gluttony and avarice, and praises moderation. It is noteworthy for Pope's portrait of miserly Edward Wortley Montagu and his wife, Lady Mary, as Avidien and his wife:

Avidien or his Wife (no matter which,  
For him you'll call a dog, and her a bitch)  
Sell their presented Partridges, and Fruits,  
And humbly live on rabbits and on roots:  
One half-pint bottle serves them both to dine,  
And is at once their vinegar and wine.  
But on some lucky day (as when they found  
A lost Bank-bill, or heard their Son was drown'd)  
At such a feast old vinegar to spare,  
Is what two souls so gen'rous cannot bear;  
Oyl, tho' it stink, they drop by drop impart,  
But sowse the Cabbage with a bounteous heart.  
(ll. 49-60)

Pope's indignation against Lady Mary must have been extraordinarily strong that he returned again and again to attacking her. But his indignation was never so strong that he could not wait long enough to shape it into a devastating weapon of words. It is almost as if there were two Popes, the

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<sup>36</sup> John Dryden, Mac Flecknoe, in Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose, ll. 15-20, p. 60.

one hurt and bitter and brimming with angry indignation, the other cool and detached and controlled, waiting for the right time, the right place, the exactly right words to express the first one's indignation. I think the only word for a man possessed of such indignation is "formidable." The poem contains what is for me perhaps Pope's best example of indignation expressed tellingly in a single couplet: "Oh Impudence of wealth! with all thy store,/How dar'st thou let one worthy man be poor?" (ll. 117-118). In the next four lines, Pope gets after the Duchess of Marlborough, who lent money to the government:

Shall half the new-built Churches round thee fall?  
Build Bridges, or repair White-hall:  
Or to thy Country let that heap be lent,  
As M--o's was, but not at five per Cent.  
(ll. 119-122)

The Second Epistle of the Second Book of Horace, 1737, is important, I think, for revealing the subtlety of Pope's indignation. In Chapter I, I stated that his indignation was not a simple matter and this poem, to me, bears out that statement. In this poem, he aims at harmony as well as at the relief of his original emotions of indignation. It is a harmony to be accomplished after exposure of faults and their correction. Surely, then, this is no simple indignation but one with more lasting and important goals.

As an indication of how the indignation Pope showed in his life and letters is reflected in his poetry, one should mention that ll. 284-285 refer to the curbs upon the inheritance rights of Roman Catholics: "Yes, Sir, how small soever

by my heap,/A part I will enjoy, as well as keep. . . ."

In The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace, often called To Augustus, 1737, Pope expresses his indignation against George II with telling irony and great danger to himself. In dedicating a poem on contemporary taste in poetry and drama to a monarch who was not interested in either, Pope was imitating Horace's sincere tribute to Augustus most insincerely. And he was certainly on dangerous ground when he said to George II, "Your Country, chief, in Arms abroad defend" (l. 3), when the "Arms" were those of the King's mistress, Madame Walmoden in Hanover (Twickenham Edition, IV, xxxvi-xxxviii). In this poem, as in the Dunciad, Pope surveys conditions in England as a whole. As in the Dunciad, he looks at the literary scene, and condemns it. An example of this condemnation are these lines, in which he lashes the popular worship of old writers, regardless of merit:

I lose my patience, and I own it too,  
When works are censur'd, not as bad, but new;  
While if our Elders break all Reason's laws,  
These fools demand not Pardon, but Applause.  
(ll. 115-118)

The Epilogue to the Satires, 1738, shows Pope's concern with political and social conditions in England and the final passage rings with his indignation:

Lo! at the Wheels of her [Vice's] Triumphal Car,  
Old England's Genius, rough with many a Scar,  
Dragg'd in the Dust! his Arms hang idly round,  
His Flag inverted trails along the ground!  
Our Youth, all liv'ry'd o'er with foreign Gold,  
Before her dance; behind her crawl the Old!  
See thronging Millions to the Pagod run,  
And offer Country, Parent, Wife, or Son!

Hear her black Trumpet thro' the Land proclaim,  
 That "Not to be corrupted is the Shame,"  
 In Soldier, Churchman, Patriot, Man in Pow'r,  
 'Tis Av'rice all, Ambition is no more!  
 See, all our Nobles begging to be Slaves!  
 See, all our Fools aspiring to be Knaves!  
 The Wit of Cheats, the Courage of a Whore,  
 Are what ten thousand envy and adore.  
 All, all look up with reverential Awe,  
 On Crimes that scape, or triumph o'er the Law:  
 While Truth, Worth, Wisdom, daily they decry--  
 "Nothing is Sacred now but Villany."

Yet may this Verse (if such a Verse remain)  
 Show there was one who held it in Disdain.

FINIS

(ll. 151-172)

Chapter I mentioned Aristotle's description of indignation as "pain caused by the sight of undeserved good fortune." The above lines certainly fit that description of indignation. They also show the "disdain" noted as one definition of "indignation." In these lines, Pope is, I think, much closer to uncompromising Juvenal than to urbane Horace. Juvenal, A.D. c. 54-c. 138, developed rhetorical satire to its greatest excellence, using it for powerful attacks on the follies and brutalities of his times. Juvenal reduced the colloquialism of Horace's satires and used rhythms resembling those of epic. But Juvenal deflated where epic inflated, and his new satire was thus anti-epic. Richard E. Braun asks, "How can satire equal epic? By depicting the rise, and the present Heroic Age, of Vice, to which universal reverse-evolution has at last attained."\* This, of course, is what Pope is doing in the passage just quoted, and which he does when he depicts the rise of Dullness in the Dunciad.

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\*Richard E. Braun, Intro. to Juvenal, Satires, trans. Jerome Mazaro (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1965), p. 12.

It would be difficult, indeed, to over-emphasize Pope's debt to Juvenal. Like Juvenal, Pope suffered from various injustices. Like Juvenal, he was indignant at these injustices. But, like Juvenal, he was able to go beyond personal indignation over personal hurts to matters of taste and principle, and to be eloquently indignant at social injustices and general evils which did not necessarily touch him personally. Undoubtedly Pope relished in Juvenal the conversion of strong feeling into lasting poetry. Juvenal used all the tricks of rhetoric, such as invective, irony, sarcasm, monologue, parody, and narrative. We find Pope using these same techniques. Many of the specific objects of Juvenal's indignation survive as objects of Pope's indignation. For example, in the first two lines of Satire I Juvenal criticizes bad epics: "Semper ego auditor tantum? numquamne reponam/uexatus totiens rauci Theseide Cordi?"<sup>37</sup> Pope echoes this type of criticism in the first two lines of the Dunciad, when he speaks scathingly of "The Smithfield Muses." The Bartholemew Fair was held at Smithfield, and Pope was making the point that entertainment suitable to the fair-going rabble had become the taste of the Court and Town. Referring to Pompeius, the informer, Juvenal says, in Satire IV, ll. 112-113, "Then bloodier Pompey, practiced to betray,/And quietly whisper noble lives away." In its naming of names and its anger at wickedness in high places, this couplet compares with Pope's comment on Lord Hervey in the Epistle to Arbuthnot, ll. 356-357: "The Whisper that to

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<sup>37</sup>Juvenal, Satires, ed. A.E. Housman (Cambridge, 1951), p. 1.

Greatness still too near,/Perhaps, yet vibrates on his SOVEREIGN'S Ear--". Furthermore, the form of the Epistle to Arbuthnot is in the classical dialogue style reminiscent of Juvenal. While many other classical poets influenced Pope, when it comes to righteous indignation he speaks out in the tradition of Juvenal.

The Epistle to Arbuthnot, 1735, is an excellent statement of Pope's principles, and serves as a useful introduction to a discussion of the Dunciad. Just as Pope's prose letters to Dr. Arbuthnot, cited in Chapter I, are crucial documents for our purpose here, so is his poem to the doctor. Pope mentions the poem in a letter to Caryll, 31 December 1734, saying that "in a week or so, you'll have a thing, which is mine, and I hope not unworthy an honest man, in his own just vindication from slanders of all sorts, and slanderers of what rank or quality whatsoever. 'Tis the last thing relating to my self, I will ever trouble the public with" (Corr., III, 447). In the "Advertisement" to the poem, which was published 2 January 1735, Pope makes it clear that the whole project is an indignant reply to printed attacks made on him by Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu:

THIS Paper is a Sort of Bill of Complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several Occasions offer'd. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleas'd some Persons of Rank and Fortune (the Authors of Verses to the Imitators of Horace, and of an Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court,) to attack in a very extraordinary manner, not only my Writings (of which being publick the Publick judge) but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof to those who know me not, a truer Information may be requisite. Being divided between

the Necessity to say something of Myself, and my own Laziness to undertake so awkward a Task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this Epistle. If I have any thing pleasing, it will be That by which I am most desirous to please, the Truth and the Sentiment: and if any thing offensive, it will be only to those I am least sorry to offend, the Vicious or the Ungenerous.

(Twickenham Edition, IV, 95)

In Chapter I it was stated that for Pope indignation was one of the well-springs of literary creation. This "advertisement" and the poem itself are strong evidence in support of that statement.

In the poem, Pope devotes thirty lines to Lord Hervey as Sporus, and this section is a climax of both the poem and Pope's indignation. Because indignation thrives when two people are discussing a hated third person, the traditional dialogue form of the poem is well suited to this passage of invective. But there is much more than invective in the Sporus portrait. Earlier critics tended to view the portrait as merely a cry of rage, but later critics have pointed out how the construction of the poem demanded something like the Sporus portrait at that point. They have pointed out, too, how the portrait has a much wider application than merely to Hervey, with a Miltonic brand of universality being gained in such couplets as "Or at the Ear of Eve, familiar Toad,/Half Froth, half Venom, spits himself abroad" (ll. 319-320). To me, the Sporus portrait is an outstanding example of the great distance between Pope's original indignation and his final expression of it. It is a distance so great that at times one feels the connection between the final result and the original indignation is a slim one.



But fortunately, in this same poem, Pope himself gives us a means of relating the two. Pope says of himself "That not in Fancy's Maze he wander'd long,/But Stoop'd to Truth, and moraliz'd his song" (ll. 340-341). As Butt points out in his footnote to this passage, Pope "stoops" to Truth as a hawk or falcon "stoops" to its prey in a swift dive from on high. If, then, we imagine Pope as mounting up on the hurried wings of indignation, but then waiting, sometimes for a long time, before "stooping" to his prey with speed, skill and control, we are perhaps better able to relate the original, flurried impetus of indignation to its final, precise expression.

In the Sporus portrait, Pope shows the same preference for powerful verbs which many Old Testament writers display. Pope's use of such strong verbs as "breaks" (l. 309), "flap" (l. 309), "stinks and stings" (l. 310) is reminiscent, I think, of Jeremiah, as in Jeremiah I.10: "See, I have this day set these over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Elsewhere in the Epistle to Arbuthnot, Pope uses four such verbs in a single line: "How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe?" (l. 191). In the Sporus portrait, Pope expresses indignation by drawing images from nature, as when he calls Sporus "white curd of Ass's milk" (l. 306), "a Butterfly" (l. 308), "this Bug with gilded wings" (l. 309), "familiar Toad" (l. 319), and "a Reptile" (l. 331). Jeremiah expresses indignation in similar fashion, as in Jeremiah XII.9: "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird. . . ." This

referred to the fact that the Jews, by intermarriage with the heathen, had become motley in appearance.

When we compare the controlled ferocity of the Sporus portrait with the sly damnation of the Atticus portrait earlier in the same poem, we realize with what skill Pope chose the weapons of his literary indignation. He uses a naked broadsword in the first case, a hidden stiletto in the second, which follows:

Peace to all such! but were there One whose fires  
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires,  
Blest with each Talent and each Art to please,  
And born to write, converse, and live with ease:  
Shou'd such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,  
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
And hate for Arts that caus'd himself to rise:  
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;  
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;  
Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,  
A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend,  
Dreading ev'n fools, by Flatterers besieg'd,  
And so obliging that he ne'er oblig'd;  
Like Cato, give his little Senate laws,  
And sit attentive to his own applause;  
While Wits and Templers ev'ry sentence raise,  
And wonder with a foolish face of praise.  
Who but must laugh if such a man there be?  
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he!

(ll. 193-214)

The above passage contains alliteration, paradox, topical references, strong verbs, climax, epigram, surprise, invective, irony and sarcasm. It is almost a catalogue of all that Pope inherited from the great literary tradition of indignation which was discussed in Chapter I. In his analysis of this passage, Robert Kilburn Root mentions the cause of Pope's indignation against Addison, saying "Pope thought that Addison was jealous

of his literary success and had deliberately set himself to undermine it, that he had in particular urged on his understrapper, Tickell, to get out a rival Homer."<sup>38</sup> Root then describes in what way Pope solved the problem of how to make the universally admired Addison ridiculous: "With apparent candour, Pope has granted all the virtues which made Addison beloved; but he has so devised his portrait that all these virtues shall take corruption from the stamp of one defect."<sup>39</sup> No fewer than twelve lines of the Atticus portrait are in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, which is proof, I think, that Pope's indignation was at times translated into lasting words.

In the Epistle to Arbuthnot Pope expresses not merely his personal indignation against Lord Hervey, Addison, and others, but also righteous indignation on behalf of others. Pope, by his own efforts, was financially independent, so it was to help other writers, not himself, that he penned the acid portrait of Bufo, the literary patron who gave no worthwhile patronage. The portrait ends with the couplet, "But still the Great have kindness in reserve,/He helped to bury whom he help'd to starve" (ll. 247-248). Pope was a loyal friend, and was highly indignant at the poor treatment such friends as Swift and Gay received from patrons of the Bufo type. The cutting sarcasm and smooth conciseness of this couplet show how skilfully Pope could convey honest anger on behalf of dear friends into a

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<sup>38</sup>Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope, p. 202.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

general statement on behalf of all poorly treated writers. The choice of the word Bufo, which is very close to "Buffoon," is an example of Pope's skill at choosing names of tremendous allusive power which serve, not merely to identify individuals, but to characterize whole species. And it would be difficult to think of a word in the English language with more unpleasant connotations than Sporus, which brings to mind such words as "spore," "pore," "porous," and "pus."

In the Epistle to Arbuthnot, Pope strikes a blow at Lewis Theobald, whose rival edition of Shakespeare caused him so much indignation, in the couplet, "Yet ne'er one sprig of Laurel grac'd these ribalds,/From slashing Bentley down to pidling Tibalds" (ll. 163-164). Theobald was a careful and scholarly editor, while Pope was more an enthusiastic amateur illustrating the poetical beauties of Shakespeare. As such an amateur, he was of course vulnerable. But, like so many of his quarrels, Pope's quarrel with Theobald was principled, as well as personal. Pope believed in his view of editing, and in the Epistle to Arbuthnot distinguishes between the Theobalds with their "pains, reading, study" and the Popes with their "spirit, taste, and sense."<sup>40</sup> This refers to the couplet, "Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,/And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense," (ll. 159-160). Pope's quarrel with Theobald, part principled and part personal as it was, inspired much of the indignation in both the Epistle to Arbuthnot and the Dunciad.

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<sup>40</sup>James R. Sutherland, "The Dull Duty of an Editor," Essential Articles, pp. 630-632.

In both poems, Pope expresses two kinds of indignation, the ideal one of the immortal satirist, the real one of the imperfect and very mortal human being.

Both the view that the Dunciad is a light-hearted burlesque written in high good humour, and the view that it is a spiteful and bitter expression of Pope's hatred for his enemies, bear on the indignation in the poem.<sup>41</sup> The former view by inference makes light of the indignation, and the latter by inference emphasizes it. As a result, one cannot proceed to analyse the indignation in the poem without first declaring one's own viewpoint in relation to these two extreme positions. My own view, then, is that there is a small amount of indignation in Dunciad A, and a considerable amount of indignation in Notes A. I feel that many critics have over-emphasized the indignation in the poem, and that many have dismissed too lightly the indignation in the notes. However, I feel that the important thing is not the indignation to be found in the Dunciad, but what Pope did with the indignation which inspired the poem. This opinion assumes that indignation did indeed inspire the poem.

James Sutherland says, of the Dunciad's origins, "But if Pope was silent, he was not unmoved by the malice of his

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<sup>41</sup>In the following section, "the Dunciad" refers to the whole work in general; "Dunciad A" refers to the Dunciad, Variorum of 1729, and "Dunciad B" to The Dunciad in Four Books, 1743. The notes to these two editions are referred to as "Notes A" and "Notes B," respectively.

enemies. . . . By 1725 he was certainly contemplating an effective and final retort to those 'fools and scoundrels' who had been annoying him for so many years. 'This poem,' he wrote of the Dunciad on March 23, 1728, 'will rid me of these insects'" (pp. x-xi).<sup>42</sup> Sutherland feels that the most exasperating circumstance among all those that prompted Pope to write the Dunciad was the appearance in 1726 of Theobald's Shakespeare Restored, only a year after Pope's six-volume edition of Shakespeare. By refraining from malice and sticking to impartial and justifiable comments about Shakespearian texts, which called attention to Pope's blunders, Theobald was levying an "intellectual blackmail on Pope" (p. xii). In the weapons of scholarship, Theobald was better armed, so it was with the weapons of poetry that Pope hoped to win. Although Theobald occupies only a small space in the poem, Pope ridicules him in Notes A, with recognizable parodies of Theobald's own notes in Shakespeare Restored (p. xii). But Theobald's connection with the theatre also contributed to his selection by Pope as King of the Dunces in the Dunciad of 1728. Pope disapproved of Theobald's play, Double Falsehood: or, The Distrest Lovers, and disapproved, too, of Theobald's aid to pantomines and farces, which Pope abhorred. Thus, once again, we find Pope being indignant on grounds of both personal grievance and

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<sup>42</sup>In this section, all quotations from James Sutherland, from the Notes to the Dunciad, Variorum, and from the Notes to The Dunciad, in Four Books, are from The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope, Vol. V (London, third edition, revised, 1963) and are identified in the text by page numbers.

matters of taste or principle. In a number of passages, the Dunciad shows Pope's concern over the theatre, which he wanted saved for the good writers, and freed from second-rate scribblers interested only in commercial success.<sup>43</sup>

All of Pope's righteous indignation against the scribblers who were debasing public taste, and against a wrong standard of values, is summed up in the first two lines of Book I of Dunciad A, "Books and the Man I sing, the first who brings/The Smithfield Muses to the Ear of Kings." Pope makes his indignation clear in his note to these lines: "Smithfield is the place where Bartholomew Fair was kept, whose Shews, Machines, and Dramatical Entertainments, formerly agreeable only to the Taste of the Rabble, were, by the Hero of this Poem and others of equal Genius, brought to the Theatres of Covent-Garden, Lincolns-inn-Fields, and the Hay-Market, to be the reigning Pleasures of the Court and Town" (p. 60).

Of the fifty-five people mentioned in Book I of Dunciad A, all but seventeen are contemporaries of Pope. This is an indication of how well Pope had learned the lesson taught him by the ancient satirists, that the best satire is always topical and specific. Book I also shows how Pope made use of the power of paradox, evident in so much ancient satire. In the first part of Dunciad A, Book I, for example, we find "fair idiot," l. 11; "Saturnian age of Lead," l. 26; and "imperial seat of

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<sup>43</sup>Malcolm Goldstein, Pope and the Augustan Stage (Stanford, Cal., 1958), pp. 82-92.

Fools," l. 36. Noteworthy, too, is Pope's Juvenalian power of compression. Multum in parvo describes a great many of Pope's couplets, for example ll. 55-56 of Book I: "'Till genial Jacob, or a warm Third-day/Call forth each mass, a poem or a play." This smooth-running couplet conveys two meanings in the one word, "warm." Sutherland points out that one meaning is an extension of OED's sense 8, "well to do, rich, affluent," and that Pope is also "thinking of a warmth sufficient for incubation" (footnote to l. 55, pp. 66-67). Geoffrey Tillotson mentions that in his poems Pope is usually doing several things at once--writing what he wants to say on his theme, concerning himself with the mechanics of his verse, writing often in imitation of some poet or poetic form, and controlling his poem into shapeliness. Tillotson continues, "Since all these activities are usually found working together in a poem of Pope's this is the best answer for anyone who considers a simple cause like ill-nature to have accounted for his satiric poetry. Pope had his hatreds as his contemporaries had theirs for him. But his sense of the strenuous requirements of his verse promoted the personal grudge into a larger emotional context, the disinfecting context of hard work, and finally of great poetry."<sup>44</sup> I feel that "promoting the personal grudge" is an excellent four-word description of how and why the Dunciad was written.

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<sup>44</sup>Geoffrey Tillotson, "Pope's Sense of Beauty," Discussions of Alexander Pope, ed. Rufus A. Blanshard (Boston, 1960), p. 78.



The personal grudge is perhaps evident in line 104 when Pope refers to John Dennis in these words, "And all the Mighty Mad in Dennis rage." Pope's quarrel with Dennis was mentioned earlier. But the personal grudge is promoted to poetry of grace and wit in his lines on Theobald. Theobald makes a sacrifice of books to the goddess, Dullness, and addresses her, only to discover he is to succeed Settle as King of Dunces. Theobald says to Dullness:

Here studious I unlucky moderns save,  
Nor sleeps one error in its father's grave,  
Old puns restore, lost blunders nicely seek,  
And crucify poor Shakespear once a week.  
For thee I dim these eyes, and stuff this head,  
With all such reading as was never read;  
For thee supplying, in the worst of days,  
Notes to dull books, and prologues to dull plays;  
For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,  
And write about it, Goddess, and about it;  
So spins the silkworm small its slender store,  
And labours, 'till it clouds itself all o'er.  
(ll. 161-172)

As mentioned earlier, many critics feel Theobald was a better scholar than Pope, but when Pope was able to present his case in such poetry, who could win against him? The only factor in favor of Pope's victims was that he gave them immortality along with his indignation.<sup>45</sup>

Book II of Dunciad A provides an interesting example of Pope's occasional expressions of personal indignation which remain unredeemed by any lasting poetic value. This is the couplet, ll. 127-128 of Book II, "(Whence hapless Monsieur much complains at Paris/Of wrongs from Duchesses and Lady

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<sup>45</sup>Sitwell, Alexander Pope, p. 175.

Mary's)". This refers to the alleged theft by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu of some money M. Rémond gave her to invest. The 1735 folio and quarto editions, but no others, bore the following note by Pope: "This passage was thought to allude to a famous Lady who cheated a French wit of 5000 pounds in the South-Sea year. But the Author meant it in general of all bragging Travellers, and of all Whores and Cheats under the name of Ladies" (p. 112). This shows that the indignation Pope bore in his life and letters against Lady Mary is repeated in the Dunciad. In fact, Pope's indignant reactions to certain key personalities and situations run through his life, his letters, and his poetry like the themes of a fugue.

Two lines later, in l. 130 of Book II, "Cook shall be Prior, and Concanen, Swift," Pope is expressing indignation on behalf of his friend, Swift. Concanen had without authority published several of Swift's poems in Miscellaneous Poems, Original and Translated, by Several Hands, 1724. It is apparent, then that Pope could show indignation for others as well as for himself, and this is a trait in his poetry which was noted earlier in his letters.

Another exception to the general gaiety of the poem, and one which falls into the same category as the lines about Lady Mary, is this reference to Curll

"And oh! (he cry'd) what street, what lane, but knows  
Our purgings, pumpings, blanketings, and blows?  
In ev'ry loom our labours shall be seen,  
And the fresh vomit run for ever green!"

(Book I, ll. 145-149)

The "blanketings" refer to the fact that the boys of Westminster School had tossed Curll in a blanket for publishing without authority a funeral oration made by John Barber, Captain of the School, in praise of Dr. South. Another line, l. 148 of Book II, "And the fresh vomit run for ever green!" refers to the results of the emetic Pope had given Curll, and it might be held that here Pope's indignation shows through his poetry, and he is more vindictive than poetic.

In the following passage of Book III, he refers to his difficulty with Broome over the Odyssey translation:

While naked mourns the Dormitory wall,  
And Jones' and Boyle's united labours fall,  
While Wren with sorrow to the grave descends,  
Gay dies un-pension'd with a hundred Friends,  
Hibernian Politicks, O Swift, thy doom,  
And Pope's, translating three whole years with Broome.  
(ll. 323-328)

This reference to Broome, like the references to Curll, reflects the concern his letters show on this subject, but without the hurt and bitterness the letters reveal.

After this very brief examination of the indignation in Dunciad A, two statements can be made. The first is that on several important points Dunciad A shows the same indignation Pope showed in his life and letters. The second is that, with a few exceptions concerning Lady Mary and Curll, the indignation is handled with such verve and brilliance that it is refined and transmuted into art. Looking at Dunciad A as a whole, it is possible to assert that the strongest indignation is a general one at the sorry state of English letters, as witness, for

example, Book III, l. 346, "Art after Art goes out, and all is Night." The classical tone of the poem serves to distance and impersonalize Pope's indignation in most cases. In summary, the general impression left by Dunciad A is that, apart from a few lines whose bitterness is greatly outweighed by the tone of the rest, the poem is fast-paced, urbane, and entertaining.

A different conclusion is reached after studying the "Notes Variorum" which accompanied Dunciad A. Sutherland says of these notes that "the whole ponderous apparatus is intended to burlesque the labours of learned scholars and textual critics" (p. xii). In the first two notes, the one on the title, the other on the first line, this intention is wittily accomplished, and these pauses for pedantry are very amusing in contrast with the sweep and gusto of the poem. But at other times in the notes Pope's indignation is not transmuted, and his hurt feelings are plainly exposed and unpleasant to witness. His treatment of Curll is an example. His note to l. 38 of Book I, "Of Curll's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post," is this: "Two Booksellers, of whom see Book 2. The former was fined by the Court of King's-Bench for publishing obscene books; the latter usually adorn'd his shop with Titles in red letters" (p. 64). He chastises Curll again in a note to l. 48, Book I, "Who hunger, and who thirst, for scribbling sake," in which he says, "'This is an infamous Burlesque on a Text in Scripture, which shews the Author's delight in Prophaneness,' (said Curll upon this place.) But 'tis very familiar with Shakespeare to allude to

Passages of Scripture. . . ." (p. 65). Pope returns to Curll at the opening of Book II, the first four lines of which are:

High on a gorgeous seat, that far outshone  
Henley's gilt Tub, or Fleckno's Irish Throne,  
Or that, where on her Curlls the Public pours  
All-bounteous, fragrant grains, and golden show'rs. . . .

Pope's note to this states, "Edm. Curl stood in the Pillory at Charing-Cross, in March, 1727-8. N.B. Mr. Curl loudly complain'd of this Note as an Untruth, protesting 'that he stood in the Pillory not in March but in February. . . ." (p. 97). Book II, l. 54, which refers to "dauntless Curl," has a note in which there is a second, if oblique, reference to Curll's being pilloried, ". . . he was taken notice of by the State, the Church, and the Law, and received particular marks of distinction from each" (p. 104). Curll had been reprimanded by the House of Lords, prosecuted for a libel on the Rev. William Clark, fined and pilloried. Pope refers three times in Book II to Curll's being in pillory, and cannot resist referring to it still again in a note in Book III (p. 153). Pope certainly seems to be gloating over Curll's misfortune, and this is not pleasant, even though Curll was so infamous a person and so deserving of censure. Curll's character excuses, but does not elevate, Pope's gloating.

Pope writes two notes about Dennis in Book I, both of them referring to l. 104, "And all the Mighty Mad in Dennis rage." These two notes (pp. 72-75) form the longest reference in the Notes A, some 1,600 words, or the equivalent of 200 lines of the poetry. In these footnotes, Pope quotes Dennis's words

in Reflections on the Essay on Criticism, in which Dennis calls Pope "as stupid and as venomous as a hunchbacked Toad," thus letting Dennis be damned by his own words. But Pope adds so much comment of his own that all he does, I feel, is prove that he is still very resentful of Dennis's attack. He writes another footnote on Dennis in Book II (pp. 115-116), in which he quotes Dennis, in Character of Mr. Pope, as saying that Pope's deformity is "visible, present, lasting, unalterable, and peculiar to himself. . . ." But here again Pope adds his own comments and parades his hurt feelings. This note in Book II is some 700 words long. The total number of words spent on Dennis is thus some 2,300 words. This is longer than all the poetry in Book I, which is about 2,100 words. It is not pretty to see Pope's hurt and indignation displayed in the notes, and the false third person in which they are written lends an air of insincerity. When one thinks of 2,300 words of his notes on Dennis, it is hard to justify the latter. Pope, in the poem, often appears to be smiling. He is not smiling in the notes.

Pope conveys an unhappy feeling that he is trying to have it both ways, being the urbane poet in the poem, and the vindictive special pleader in the notes. For example, in his note to Book I, l. 106, "But chief, in Tibbald's monster-breeding breast," Pope says, of Theobald: "He was Author of many forgotten Plays, Poems, and other pieces, and of several anonymous Letters in praise of them in Mist's Journal" (p. 75). Sutherland says, "There is no other authority for this charge. In

view of Theobald's character it is highly unlikely that he puffed his own work" (p. 75). Pope's attack in the Dunciad note thus appears to be an unfair one, and it bolsters the suspicion that Pope was indignant because Theobald had showed himself a better scholar. Regarding Book I, l. 164, "And crucify poor Shakespear once a week," Pope's note to this line says of Theobald, "For some time, once a week or fortnight, he printed in Mist's Journal a single remark or poor conjecture on some word or pointing of Shakespear, either in his own name, or in letters to himself as from others without name" (p. 83). Sutherland points out that only two letters in Theobald's name on the subject of Shakespeare had appeared in Mist's Journal before the publication of Dunciad A (p. 83). It seems that, in Notes A, Pope's indignation was stronger than his honesty.

One of the most indignant notes is that to Book II, l. 256, "Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long." This refers to Sir Richard Blackmore, a very prolific author who wrote for Curll. Pope says in the note: "This gentleman in his first works abused the character of Mr. Dryden, and in his last of Mr. Pope, accusing him in very high and sober terms of prophane-ness and immorality (Essay on polite writing, Vol. 2, p. 270.) on a meer report from Edm. Curl, that he was author of a Travestie on the first Psalm" (p. 132). In his Essays upon Several Subjects, II, 270, Blackmore did not mention Pope by name, but expressed his disgust at the parody. In the same footnote on Blackmore, Pope quotes Dennis' words on the alleged burlesquing of the psalm: "'It is apparent to me that Psalm was

burlesqu'd by a Popish rhymester. Let rhyming persons who have been brought up Protestants be otherwise what they will, let them be Rakes, let 'em be Scoundrels, let 'em be Atheists, yet education has made an invincible impression on them in behalf of the sacred writings. But a Popish rhymester has been brought up with a contempt for those sacred writings. Now show me another Popish rhymester but he'" (p. 132). Pope says indignantly in the note, "It has been suggested in the Character of Mr. P. that he had Obligations to Sir R.B. He never had any, and never saw him but twice in his Life" (p. 132). Pope in his life and letters shows his indignation at religious bigotry, and here he is showing it again, with strong justification.

Perhaps one of the most self-incriminating footnotes is that to Book III, l. 328, "And Pope's, translating three whole years with Broome." This line has already been referred to in connection with Dunciad A, but it is in the note to this line that Pope reveals his real indignation against Broome, and his deviousness too. The note says, "He concludes his Irony with a stroke upon himself: For whoever imagines this a sarcasm on the other ingenious person is greatly mistaken. The opinion our author had of him was sufficiently shown, by his joining him in the undertaking of the Odyssey: in which Mr. Broome having ingaged without any previous agreement, discharged his part so much to Mr. Pope's satisfaction, that he gratified him with the full sum of Five hundred pounds, and a present of all those books for which his own interest could procure him Subscribers, to the value of One hundred more. The author only seems to



lament, that he was imploy'd in Translation at all" (p. 191). Sutherland's comment is, "Pope's note is disingenuous; he did, in fact, intend the reference to Broome as a sarcasm, for the two men had quarrelled" (p. 191). Sutherland adds that in 1735 Pope and Broome were reconciled, with the result that Pope struck out the reference to Broome in the 1736 edition of the Dunciad. This striking out would scarcely have been necessary if the note had been a kind one. Pope was a strange mixture of lasting and complicated indignation, and occasional forgiveness.

In summary, Notes A reveal much more of Pope's indignation, sometimes unfairly and unpleasantly expressed, than does Dunciad A. The notes also clearly reflect, on all important points, the causes of indignation found in Pope's life and expressed in his letters. It is the same fugue, but at times the footnotes have a harsh sound in comparison with the music of the poem. Some of the notes read like letters written in anger, letters which should be torn up rather than posted. The indignation in Pope's notes becomes apparent, I think, when these notes are contrasted with the footnotes of, say, Jonathan Swift in A Tale of a Tub, 1710. Swift is light-hearted, and relaxed enough to score against the "author" of the Tale as a persona, and satirize the "author" as a type, as for instance in footnote 8 to the Introduction to A Tale of a Tub: "Here is pretended a defect in the manuscript, and this is very frequent with our author, either when he thinks he cannot say anything worth reading, or when he has no mind to enter on the subject, or when it is a

matter of little moment, or perhaps to amuse his reader (where-  
of he is frequently very fond) or lastly, with some satirical  
intention."<sup>46</sup> In the same light-hearted vein is Samuel Johnson's  
essay on "A Very Small Critic" in The Idler No. 60, 9 June 1759,  
in which he reports "Dick Minim" as saying learnedly, "But the  
greatest excellence is in the third line, which is cracked in  
the middle, to express a crack, and then shivers into mono-  
syllables."<sup>47</sup> To me, it is unfortunate Pope did not stick to  
such a light-hearted vein in his notes to Dunciad A.

Dunciad A had various other items attached to it, as well  
as the footnotes. There is, for example, an "Index," in which  
Pope faithfully records the page numbers where we may find  
Curll "purged and vomited," "Tost in a Blanket and whipped,"  
and "Pillory'd" (p. 240). Perhaps the most effective of the  
seven appendices is "Appendix II," in which is listed, without  
comment, notes, or other editorial indications of indignation,  
two bibliographies. The first is "A List of Books, Papers and  
Verses, in which our Author was abused, printed before the  
Publication of the DUNCIAD: With the true Names of the Authors"  
(pp. 207-210). There are thirty-five items on the list. Simply  
citing this list alone would, I think, have been Pope's most  
effective way of expressing indignation in the notes and

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<sup>46</sup>Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels and Other Writings,  
ed. Louis A. Landa (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 275.

<sup>47</sup>Samuel Johnson, "A Very Small Critic," The Idler No. 60,  
in Eighteenth Century Poetry and Prose, ed. Louis I. Bredvold,  
Alan D. McKillop and Lois Whitney (New York, 1956), p. 693.

appendices to Dunciad A. The list certainly shows that Pope had much to be indignant about, and it lends weight to belief that indignation inspired the Dunciad. The second list is entitled, "After the DUNCIAD, 1728" (pp. 210-212), and lists twenty-seven items. This list shows the extent of the attacks upon Pope following publication of the original Dunciad, attacks which prompted him to reply with the notes and all the other trimmings to Dunciad A.

The background of Dunciad B and Notes B is a very different one. Foremost to be considered is the passage of time. The New Dunciad, that is Book IV, was published in 1742, fourteen years after the original Dunciad. Dunciad B, containing the fourth book, and with Cibber enthroned in place of Theobald, appeared in 1743, so that there were fourteen years between it and Dunciad A, which has just been examined. It is important to see if Pope's indignation mellowed in those fourteen years.

In Dunciad B, Theobald gets only two lines in the poem and an occasional reference in the notes, which is in itself indication that fourteen years mellowed even Pope's indignation. Cibber incurred Pope's anger, and replaced Theobald as King of the Dunces, because in 1742 he published his pamphlet, A Letter from Mr. Cibber, to Mr. Pope, in which he presented some laughable and discreditable incidents from Pope's youth.

Looking for indignation in Dunciad B, the reader discovers the same righteous indignation at the state of English letters as Pope expressed in Dunciad A. An example occurs in Book I, ll. 307-308 of Dunciad B, "Let Bawdry, Bilingsgate, my daughters

dear,/Support his front, and Oaths bring up the rear." A further example is Pope's criticism of Cibber's dramatic writing, which he disliked mainly for its lack of originality. In Dunciad B he mentions eight of Cibber's plays by name or by allusion, and also mentions Cibber's translation of an Italian opera, as well as his adaptations of Shakespeare.<sup>48</sup> In fact, both Dunciad A and Dunciad B show Pope's concern over the theatre, which he wanted saved for the good writers, and freed from second-rate scribblers interested only in commercial success.<sup>49</sup>

As regards Pope's indignation against individuals, the reader finds that in Dunciad B Curll's "fresh vomit" is still running "for ever green," Book II, l. 156, and his "rapid waters in their passage" are still "burning," (l. 184). Pope's indignation at Lady Mary Wortley Montagu remains intact in his couplet about the "hapless Monsieur," Book II, ll. 135-136, but Welsted replaces Oldmixon in ll. 209-210 of the same book, "Unlucky Welsted! thy unfeeling master,/The more thou ticklest, gripes his fist the faster." Pope's long-lasting indignation against Broome is absent from Dunciad B. The line of Dunciad A, "And Pope's, translating three whole years with Broome," becomes, Book III, l. 332 of B, "And Pope's, ten years to comment and translate." But Lord Hervey, even though recently dead, gets his share of Pope's indignation in Dunciad B. Hervey died

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<sup>48</sup>Malcolm Goldstein, Pope and the Augustan Stage (Stanford, Cal., 1958), p. 91.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 82-92.

5 August 1743, and Pope had time to insert, in the passage in Book I regarding dead dullards, l. 298: "With fool of Quality compleats the quire." In summary, apart from the forgiveness of Broome, the indignation, both general and personal, is much the same as that in Dunciad A.

It is a very different story when Notes B are compared with Notes A. There are approximately 450 fewer lines of notes to Book I alone in Dunciad B. At the same time there are seventy more lines of poetry in Book I of Dunciad B than in Book I of Dunciad A. Thus did fourteen years decrease Pope's willingness to express indignation in bitter notes and increase his poetry: gone are the multiple references to Curll's being pilloried, gone are the tirades against Dennis, gone too are the long burlesques of Theobald's scholarship, and the castigating of Blackmore over the "Travestie on the first Psalm." Missing also is the devious footnote about Broome, so that Pope's forgiveness of him is complete. The Guardian No. 40 article against Philips' pastorals is reprinted, as in Dunciad A, but "A Letter to the Publisher" and "Testimonies of Authors," both attached to Dunciad A, are out. In summary, Notes B and the other items form a much more concise and much less indignant body of writing.

Regarding the poetry in Dunciad B, Pope's indignation against the state of letters in England is expressed with equal, or even greater, felicity. For example, in Dunciad A, his introductory remarks about the literary world occupy six lines of Book I:

Hence springs each weekly Muse, the living boast  
 Of Curl's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post,  
 Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lay,  
 Hence the soft sing-song on Cecilia's day,  
 Sepulchral lyes our holy walls to grace,  
 And New-year Odes, and all the Grubstreet race.  
 (ll. 37-42)

This section, in Dunciad B, becomes eight lines of Book I, and they are, perhaps, a little more specific:

Hence Bards, like Proteus long in vain ty'd down,  
 Escape in Monsters, and amaze the town.  
 Hence Miscellanies spring, the weekly boast  
 Of Curl's chaste press, and Lintot's rubric post:  
 Hence hymning Tyburn's elegiac lines,  
 Hence Journals, Medleys, Merc'ries, Magazines:  
 Sepulchral Lyes, our holy walls to grace,  
 And New-Year Odes, and all the Grub-street race.  
 (ll. 37-44)

A beautiful example of witty invective in a brief character sketch is his description of Cibber in Book I:

Next, o'er his Books his eyes began to roll,  
 In pleasing memory of all he stole,  
 How here he sipp'd, how there he plunder'd snug  
 And suck'd all o'er, like an industrious Bug.  
 (ll. 127-130)

It remains to examine the indignation in Book IV and its notes. Book IV is the essence of Pope's indignation and the climax of his poetry. In Book IV, Pope is indicting, not just the state of literature, but society in general. This indictment is in the tradition of Juvenal, who attacked the follies of his times with such gusto. It is in the vein, too, of Pope's friend Swift, who deplored humanity's endless errors.

Although Pope's view is broader in Book IV, he is still at times personal. The book includes a reference to Lord Hervey, who was an epileptic and had a noticeably white face as a result

of this affliction. Pope says, "Narcissus, praised with all a Parson's pow'r,/Look'd a white lilly sunk beneath a show'r" (ll. 103-104). The "Parson" refers to Dr. Conyers Middleton, whose *Life of Cicero* had a fourteen-page dedication to Hervey (p. 351). Pope also shows some personal indignation on behalf of a friend in this passage of Book IV:

[But (happy for him as the times went then)  
Appear'd Apollo's May'r and Aldermen,  
On whom three hundred gold-capt youths await,  
To lug the ponderous volume off in state.]  
(ll. 115-118)

The "him" referred to in the first line above is Sir Thomas Hanmer, who sold copies of his edition of Shakespeare to the heads of various Oxford houses, and these heads in turn sold them to the students. "Apollo's May'r and Aldermen" refers to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University and the heads of the various colleges. The "gold-capt youths" are the gentlemen commoners to whom the books were sold. Sutherland believes that Pope is here continuing the quarrel he had with Oxford because the university would not give Warburton a Doctor's degree. Both Pope and Warburton had been approached unofficially, but, as mentioned earlier, Warburton's enemies voted down a degree for him. Pope told Warburton, "I will be doctored with you or not at all," and refused the offered degree (p. 353). Pope's indignation for Warburton on this score has already been recorded in connection with the letters. Later in Book IV, Pope takes a slap at academic pedantry. The recipients of degrees kneeled before the Vice-Chancellor, and this is alluded to in "Next all draw near on bended knees,/The Queen confers her

Titles and Degrees" (ll. 565-566). He returns to the attack again in: "The last, not least in honour or applause,/Isis and Cam made Doctors of her Laws," (ll. 577-578). Pope was not only indignant on Warburton's behalf, but was supporting his friend Swift against Bentley.

But these personal grudges are seldom revealed in Book IV, whose broadness of view is reflected in the comparative lack of surnames. Book IV names fewer of Pope's contemporaries than does any other book of either Dunciad A or Dunciad B. It is more prophetic than vengeful, more visionary than indignant in the personal sense. Rather than parading Pope's personal hurts, Book IV accomplishes the final transmutation of his indignation, with ideals and principles replacing personalities. In Book IV, Pope holds a mirror to his beloved world of letters, and to England, and shows them, with shining clarity, the image of their faults.

What are the targets of Pope's indignation in Book IV? He aims a cuff at mathematicians, in "Mad Mathesis alone was unconfin'd,/Too mad for mere material chains to bind" (ll. 31-32). In a passage beginning with l. 45 he castigates Italianate opera, which Addison and Steele had attacked, and defends Handel. The first four lines of this passage deserve examination:

When lo! a Harlot form soft sliding by,  
With mincing step, small voice, and languid eye;  
Foreign her air, her robe's discordant pride  
In patch-work flutt'ring, and her head aside.  
(ll. 45-48)



The adjectives Pope uses in these lines are revealing: "Harlot," "mincing," "small," "languid," "Foreign," and "discordant." They are quite enough to sink his target in a sea of scorn, especially with the two damning verbs, "sliding" and "flutt'ring." Despite these strong adjectives and verbs, the lines describing opera move lightly and trippingly, so that Pope is able to condemn opera as light-weight in two ways at once, with both the form and the content of his lines. Surely to point to such skill is to show indignation transmuted into art. The same remark is applicable to ll. 76-101, in which Pope describes the three classes in the assembly round Dullness. In the couplet, "Patrons who sneak from living worth to dead,/With-hold the pension, and set up the head" (ll. 95-96), Pope is criticizing the patrons who feel safe only when setting up statuary to dead writers, rather than in helping living ones. His choice of the word "sneak" is in the Old Testament tradition of the strong, specific verb. In another couplet, "And (last and worst) with all the cant of wit,/Without the soul, the Muse's Hypocrit" (ll. 99-100), Pope is criticizing the hypocrite who thinks poetry is written only to amuse. He switches from the arts to politics, and refers to the Court Party and the Opposition when he says, "Courtiers and Patriots on two ranks divide" (l. 107). And he expresses as follows his disgust at obscure writers who tack their names on to editions of works by famous men of letters: "When Dulness, smiling--Thus revive the Wits!/But murder first, and mince them all to bits" (ll. 119-120). As one reads such lines, one realizes that Pope cared about English

literature; the transmuted indignation is an assertion of civilized standards:

Let standard-Authors, thus, like trophies born,  
Appear more glorious as more hack'd and torn,  
And you, my Critics! in the chequer'd shade,  
Admire new light thro' holes yourselves have made.  
(ll. 123-126)

Pope was opposed to physical cruelty in education, and he speaks out against caning in a brief section on Dr. Busby of Westminster School:

When lo! a Spectre rose, whose index-hand  
Held forth the Virtue of the dreadful wand;  
His beaver'd brow a birchen garland wears,  
Dropping with Infant's blood, and Mother's tears.  
(ll. 139-142)

From ll. 149 on, there are some 200 lines on various other aspects of contemporary education. Typical of this important section are the four lines:

When Reason doubtful, like the Samian letter,  
Points him two ways, the narrower is the better.  
Plac'd in the door of Learning, youth to guide,  
We never suffer it to stand too wide.  
(ll. 151-154)

Here Pope shows the marvelous brevity with which he can handle abstract subjects. It is typical of Pope that he uses the homely simile of a door to make clear his views on abstract qualities like reason and learning. In ll. 175-188 of the section on education, Pope discusses how arbitrary government spoils learning. By ll. 187-188 the discussion has moved upwards to the kingship and, aiming at George II, Pope says, "May you, may Cam, and Isis preach it long!/'The RIGHT DIVINE of Kings to govern wrong.'" In l. 196 he refers to the 1703 meet-

ing of the heads of Oxford to censure Locke's Essay on Human Understanding, when he mentions "Each fierce Logician, still expelling Locke." He returns to one of his favorite targets, pedantry, in:

This true, on Words is still our whde debate,  
Disputes of Me or Te, of aut or at,  
To sound or sink in cano, O or A,  
Or give up Cicero to C or K.

(ll. 219-222)

This passage is in the classical tradition of satire which is topical and conversational. Pope writes this so well we scarcely stop to admire the smoothness with which he discusses a pedantic matter in two languages, yet still makes it sound easy and natural. The poet who took the broad view and surveyed "alps on Alps" in the Essay on Criticism is at work when he laments the critics who cannot comprehend the whole: "The critic Eye, that microscope of Wit,/Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit" (ll. 233-234). Here again the clarity of his examination of the abstract is apparent. He takes a concept like Wit and makes his view clear with such plain things as microscope, hairs, and pores. There is a similar nicety of balance between abstract and concrete when he berates the pedants again:

Ah, think not, Mistress! more true Dulness lies  
In Folly's Cap, than Wisdom's grave disguise.  
Like buoys, that never sink into the flood,  
On learning's surface we but lie and nod.

(ll. 239-242)

For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,  
And write about it, Goddess, and about it:  
So spins the silk-worm small its slender store,  
And labours till it clouds itself all o'er.

(ll. 251-254)

Drawing a parallel with an insect gives the simplicity of a Biblical parable to the lines, and there is an Old Testament scorn to the adjectives "small" and "slender," and an Old Testament exactness to the verb "clouds." On the subject of education, Pope demolishes the young fops who go on the Grand Tour: "But wherefore waste I words? I see advance/Whore, Pupil, and lac'd Governor from France" (ll. 271-272). While castigating such touring students, however, Pope is still able to appreciate the beauties of Europe that are wasted on them, as well as comment on foreign tyranny:

To Isles of fragrance, lilly-silver'd vales,  
Diffusing languor in the panting gales;  
To lands of singing, or of dancing slaves,  
Love-whisp'ring woods, and lute-resounding waves.  
(ll. 303-306)

When does an indignant man speak of "Isles of fragrance," "lilly-silver'd vale," "Love-whisp'ring woods," or "lute-resounding waves"? Only, I think, when time and talent and enormous discipline have transmuted that indignation into something much finer. Along with the beauty, there is often Chaucerian irony, too, as in the word "Christian" in this couplet on the Grand Tour fop: "Led by my hand, he saunter'd Europe round,/And gather'd ev'ry Vice on Christian ground" (ll. 311-312). Just as earlier in Book IV he ridiculed those who praise safe, dead writers, so in l. 367, "To headless Phoebe his fair bride postpone," he is ridiculing the collectors of mutilated pieces of sculpture. And the virtuosi, the collectors of weeds, shells, nests, toads, fungi, flowers, butterflies,

humming-birds, cockle-shells and moss, get their just assessment in ll. 397-452. A section follows (ll. 453-482) in which Pope criticizes those philosophers who only mislead people until they "reason downward, till we doubt of God" (l. 472). A key summary of Pope's indignation against the educational system, and its results, lies in these lines:

First slave to Words, then vassal to a Name,  
Then dupe to Party; child and man the same:  
Bounded by Nature, narrow'd still by Art,  
A trifling head, and a contracted heart.  
(ll. 501-504)

In the first two lines above, "slave to Words," "vassal to a Name," and "dupe to Party," are another instance, among many, of Pope's use of things in three's. In his note to the lines just quoted, Pope emphasizes the importance of the passage when he calls these lines "A Recapitulation of the whole Course of Modern Education describ'd in this book, which confines Youth to the study of Words only in the Schools, subjects them to the authority of Systems in the Universities, and deludes them with the names of Party-distinctions in the world" (p. 391). Pope's underlining of three elements again emphasizes his choice of subjects in three's throughout Book IV.

Book IV reaches another level as "the greater mysteries begin" (l. 517). But the seeming ascent is really a descent, as the things Pope is protesting against are projected to their awful conclusion. Chapter I discussed Pope's classical knowledge, and this knowledge is never far away throughout the Dunciad; for example:

The vulgar herd turns off to roll with Hogs,  
 To run with Horses, or to hunt with Dogs;  
 But, sad example! never to escape  
 Their infamy, still keep the human shape.  
 (ll. 525-528)

In the note to these lines, Warburton says (p. 394), "The Effects of the Magus's Cup are just contrary to that of Circe. Hers took away the shape, and left the human mind: This takes away the mind, and leaves the human shape." This is a truly Juvenalian reversal. Pope criticizes both the men who work their way into the peerage, and their sons: "How quick Ambition hastes to ridicule!/The Sire is made a Peer, the Son a Fool" (ll. 547-548). The follies of the nobility are treated again in "With Staff and Pumps the Marquis leads the Race" (l. 586). This refers to the affectation of noblemen at this time in dressing as coachmen. Here again we see Pope realizing, just as the Ancients realized, that satire is topical. In l. 598, Pope moves up from the nobility to the kingship, "Teach Kings to fiddle, and make Senates dance." In ll. 629-630 we have noble lines on ignoble Chaos: "She comes! she comes! the sable Throne behold/Of Night Primaeval, and of Chaos old!" And Book IV ends with

Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restor'd;  
 Light dies before thy uncreating word:  
 Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;  
 And Universal Darkness buries All.  
 (ll. 653-656)

These lines, telling of Uncreation, have the same simplicity and grandeur as the lines of Genesis telling of Creation. With these lines, Pope's symphony of indignation reaches its

majestic and logical conclusion.

Looking at the above outline of the indignation in Book IV, one's first reaction is, perhaps, to feel that Pope had many things to be indignant at, and that his indignation is dissipated in too many directions. But further study reveals something much more important, namely that there is a carefully devised order and pattern to it all. Pope begins Book IV by showing some of the manifestations of Dullness in England. The manifestations he first shows are among the nobility, for after all in Pope's time it was they who were meant to be the patrons and guiding spirits of literature. Secondly, he shows the manifestations of Dullness in education and, thirdly, in government. Thus the pattern of "three's" is apparent in the arrangement, as well as in the execution, of Book IV. The magic of the number three can be traced to earliest times; it is apparent, for example, in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Christianity. Pope has logic on his side when he starts Book IV with the manifestations of the ailment, rather than the ailment itself. After all, an indignant man is much more apt to say, "That idiot just gave me a black eye!" than "That man is suffering from what I diagnose as ill temper."

After giving some manifestations of sickness in the three groups mentioned, Pope then gives three reasons for these unhappy manifestations. The three reasons are, first, that education is failing in its job; secondly, that arbitrary government spoils education; and, thirdly, that arbitrary kingship does the same. Then he turns to more manifestations: the

Grand Tour, the frivolities of the virtuosi, the errors of the false philosophies.

At l. 517, "With that, a WIZARD OLD his Cup extends," the poem, as already noted, moves to a new level, and Pope emphasizes this in his note to that line (p. 393): "Here beginneth the celebration of the greater Mysteries of the Goddess. . . ." In this section, Pope looks into the future. It is logical that he should. He has given some manifestations of the sickness, described its causes, given some more manifestations, and now is looking into the future to the projected conclusion of it all. But how often is indignation concerned with the future? Indignation is a present emotion about a past wrong. I feel, therefore, that Pope's projection of his indignation into the future is a sure sign that it is not simple indignation, but indignation refined and transmuted into art. I feel, too, that the careful ordering and patterning of the many aspects of his indignation are further signs that the indignation has been subjected to the discipline of his art. Another indication is his ability to shade his indignation, from the humorous to the deadly serious. I think that Book IV, with its emphasis less on personal matters and more on general conditions in England, shows the moral force in Pope's indignation. As Root puts it, "Great satire has behind it the driving force of moral conviction, a burning hatred of evil, 'the strong antipathy of good to bad'."<sup>50</sup> However, such is

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<sup>50</sup>Root, The Poetical Career of Alexander Pope, p. 192.



the complex nature of Pope's indignation that even the driving force of moral conviction did not, in Book IV, prevent him from seeing a certain enchantment in the world of dunces which he created. H.H. Erskine-Hill says that Pope is "clearly fascinated by the surrealistic strangeness of it all."<sup>51</sup> It is a rare kind of indignation which can create, appreciate, and destroy. It is even more remarkable when we consider that, basically, Pope had the heart for indignation, but not the stomach for it. I think that Sherburn points towards this estimate when he says that Pope "never understood men well, and believed that in any direct encounter genius could conquer dullness--that he could silence the bad poets, pedants, and journalists of his day."<sup>52</sup> This belief, and his moral convictions, gave him the heart for indignation, but when it came to stomach-ing the indignation of others against him, his feelings were often badly hurt. Sutherland says, "Undoubtedly Pope was too sensitive to the attacks made upon him; neither his physique nor his temperament was suited for the rough and tumble of public life in which he had become involved."<sup>53</sup> Book IV remains, I think, not only the best expression of Pope's indignation, but the one which most resists bold statements and simple conclusions.

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<sup>51</sup>H.H. Erskine-Hill "The 'New World' of Pope's Dunciad," Essential Articles, p. 746.

<sup>52</sup>Sherburn, Early Career, p. 303.

<sup>53</sup>Twickenham Edition, V, xliii.

The notes to Book IV show the disciplining apparent in the poetry. They reflect the shift, in Book IV, to indignation over general rather than personal matters. An example is the footnote to l. 36, "Watch'd both by Envy's and by Flatt'ry's eye," which states: "One of the misfortunes falling on Authors, from the Act for subjecting Plays to the power of a Licenser, being the false representations to which they were expos'd, from such as either gratify'd their Envy to Merit, or made their Court to Greatness, by perverting general Reflections against Vice into Libels on particular Persons" (pp. 343-344). Another example of indignation over conditions rather than people is Pope's note to l. 45, "When lo! a Harlot form soft sliding by," in which he criticizes Italianate Opera, saying, "The Attitude given to this Phantom represents the nature and genius of the Italian Opera; its affected airs, its effeminate sounds, and the practice of patching up these Operas with favourite Songs, incoherently put together" (p. 345). Furthermore, Pope, in some of his Book IV notes, is able to achieve the humor Swift, for example, gave to many of his notes burlesquing scholarship. Instead of the hurt feelings of earlier notes, we find, for example, the humor of Pope's note to "Whore, Pupil, and lac'd Governor from France" (l. 272): "Some Critics have objected to the order here, being of opinion that the Governor should have the precedence before the Whore, if not before the Pupil. But were he so placed, it might be thought to insinuate that the Governor led the Pupil to the Whore: and were the Pupil placed first, he might be supposed to lead

the Governor to her. But our impartial Poet, as he is drawing their Picture, represents them in the order in which they are generally seen; namely the Pupil between the Whore and the Governor; but placeth the Whore first, as she usually governs both the other" (p. 370).

How effective is Pope's indignation in the Dunciad? When, at times, he fails to overcome his hurt feelings, the indignation is, I believe, not very effective. I cited earlier the couplet in which he vents his personal grudge against Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: "(Whence hapless Monsieur much complains at Paris/Of wrongs from Duchesses and Lady Mary's)" (Book II, Dunciad A, ll. 127-128). Few will deny that this is, for Pope, a poor couplet. But in much of the Dunciad Pope takes episodes in his life associated with hurt and bitterness and failure and, with great discipline, refines them, rearranges them, revises them, and finally from them produces great satire.

With unrefined and obvious indignation at one end of the scale, and indignation transmuted into art at the other, it is impossible to make a single simple statement about how effectively Pope expressed his indignation in the poem. But regardless of how he expressed it, indignation was, I believe, the goad that made him write the Dunciad, and the best evidence of that is the Dunciad itself.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Just as it would be wrong to over-emphasize the role of indignation in the Dunciad, even though that is Pope's finest expression of it, so it would be wrong also to over-emphasize its role in Pope's life, letters, and other works. Yet an examination of Pope's indignation, which is what comprises this thesis, is in itself an over-emphasis of the one factor, indignation. To restore balance, it is necessary to consider some other factors.

The first of these is other people's indignation. To-day, we are simply not used to the public warfare among writers that existed in Pope's day, and that is why we find it difficult to see Pope's activities as part of a general warfare rather than an individual skirmish.

Secondly, we must recall that Pope, quite apart from expressing indignation, was at times trying to soothe it in others. This is true of The Rape of the Lock. Soothing poetry, wise poetry, gentle poetry, philosophical poetry--all these kinds in the canon of his works testify that Pope showed many qualities besides indignation.

One of these qualities was kindness. He helped his friends on innumerable occasions, and did his favors graciously and generously. After looking at nothing but his indignation, it is well to remember that Pope's friends were extremely important to

him. Pope's kindness extended to animals as well as to humans. In an article in the Guardian, 21 May 1713, he wrote against cruelty to animals, insisting that men show responsibility in their treatment of animals, especially as "the very condition of nature renders these creatures incapable of receiving any recompense in another life for their ill-treatment in this." Many writers have touched on the duality of the eighteenth century, its cruelty hand in hand with humanitarianism. After looking so closely at Pope's indignation, it is only fair to record that, in the contradictory eighteenth century, Pope was almost always on the side of humanitarianism.

Pope had a sense of human values as well as a sense of indignation. Indeed, it was Pope's recognition of human values that so often fired his indignation. He also had a sense of beauty, as his poetry eloquently proves.

Pope's indignation reflected the man himself. Pope was complex, so his expressions of his indignation were complex. But indignation was an essential part of him, so much so that it is fair, I think, to claim that without indignation Pope would not be Pope. Just as sand in an oyster produces a pearl, so indignation in Pope produced poetry.

Two conclusions are reached. At the end of Chapter I it was stated as an opinion that for Pope indignation was one of the well-springs of literary creation. This is now stated as a conclusion. In Chapter III it was stated as an opinion that Pope's expressions of indignation were sometimes transmuted into art. This also is now stated as a conclusion.

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