

Satire in the works of Swift with  
special reference to The Battle of  
the Books (BA Part1 Eng hons  
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Satire is a literary device which is intended to reveal human follies. The satirist intends to make complete overhauling of the social structure using ironical expressions, witty remarks and conceits. Satires are of different kinds which include irony, Sarcasm, Lampoon and caricature. 18<sup>th</sup> century provided a fertile ground for the development of satire in England. Almost all the major writers of this period took keen interest in the composition of satirical works. Prominent among those being John Dryden, Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift.

Swift was a great scholarly genius .But his talent was not recognized by English society. His .His first book Gulliver’s Travels is a political satire in which he has laughed at the social structure through the successive voyages of Gulliver .During his voyage to Lilliput or the country of the dwarfs he misconceived himself to be the most powerful person. On the next voyage to the brobdingnag he was reduced to the status of a dwarf himself and was forced to read the

writings on the wall His voyage to hunhumland is even more significant where human beings are treated as horses and the later serving as their masters. It is suggested that Swift worked with the stroke of the hammer in order to make his voice heard which is evident in his pamphlet entitled The Modest Proposal. In his satirical work A Tale of A Tub Swift has made a sharp comment on the growing infighting among various religious sects .

The full flowering of Swift's satirical insight is successfully reflected in his monumental work The Battle of the Books. Actually. The stage for the battle is set in two shelves of the King's library of England between the ancient and the modern books. In this Satire Swift has tried to ensure the superiority of ancient books over the modern books. It is an attempt to give a fitting reply to the contemporary English writers. But in reality they have nothing original to contribute. They have not added anything substantial to the coffer of literature and have largely borrowed the ideas from the ancient writers to whom they do not owe their allegiance. Swift has made a mark difference between the two forces whereas the ancients are led by scholars of great repute like Plato, Aristotle, Horace and Moliere the moderns are led by very ordinary scholars whose weapons are not sharp enough to pierce into the body of their opponents. In order to ensure the superiority of the ancients over the modern writers Swift has taken recourse to the analogy of the spider and the bee which forms the vital part of the books. The ancients have been treated as the bee who produces honey and wax for the welfare of the suffering humanity whereas the spider on the other hand produces venom though produces out of its own effort but doesn't serve any purpose.