WRIT 1506

Stroupe

**The Targets of Satire**

I describe **not men, but manners**; not an individual, but a species. Perhaps it will be answered, Are not the characters then taken from life? To which I answer in the affirmative; nay, I believe I might aver that I have writ little more than I have seen. The lawyer is not only alive, but hath been so these four thousand years; and I hope God will indulge his life as many yet to come. He hath not indeed confined himself to one profession, one religion, or one country; but when the first mean selfish creature appeared on the human stage, who made self the centre of the whole creation, would give himself no pain, incur no danger, advance no money, to assist or preserve his fellow-creatures; then was our lawyer born; and, whilst such a person as I have described exists on earth, so long shall he remain upon it.

⎯ Henry Fielding, Chapter 1, *Joseph Andrews* (1742)

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History is therefore the **experience of Necessity**.... Conceived in his sense, **History is what hurts, it is what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to individual as well as collective praxis**, which its "ruses" turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention. But this History can be apprehended only through its effects, and never directly as some reified force. This is indeed the ultimate sense in which History…needs no particular theoretical justification: we may be sure that its alienating necessities will not forget us, however much we might prefer to ignore them. (102)

⎯ Jameson, Fredric, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act*. (1981)