



An Abridgment of Mr. Pope's Essay on Man, 1769.  
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# The History and Adventures of an Atom

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

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## INTRODUCTION

It is safe to say that no lengthy work by a major British author (if we except their juvenilia) is so little known, or has been so little studied, as Tobias Smollett's *History and Adventures of an Atom* (1769). Only a handful of living persons have read it through; and the scholarship devoted to it, aside from brief mention in books or essays and a few short notes in learned journals, consists of three articles, a single chapter or section in each of three books, a recent American dissertation, and a chapter of another.<sup>1</sup> It may not be inappropriate, then, to begin by telling the reader, as Fielding did with *Tom Jones*, what the *Atom* is like and what it is not like.

In intention the *Atom* is a savage satirical attack by a son of Pope, Swift, and Rabelais who has been "traded by malice, persecuted by faction, abandoned by false patrons, and overwhelmed by the sense of a domestic calamity,"<sup>2</sup> in which Smollett looks back over the previous fifteen years and lashes English conduct of domestic and foreign affairs, English politics and politicians, and "the whole body of the people . . . equally and universally contaminated and corrupted."<sup>3</sup> In execution, the *Atom* is an allegorical narrative of fantastic events that had taken place in Japan a thousand years previously, dictated to a London haberdasher named Nathaniel Peacock by an all-knowing atom that has resided in the bodies of the greatest figures of the state; the story is interrupted by irrelevant digressions that pour out floods of obscure erudition, couched in a relentlessly helter-skelter style; and it is sauced with imagery that makes it by far the most scatological work in English literature.<sup>4</sup> It is also (in execution) a rewriting of all those works of Tobias Smollett that had dealt with recent history and (in intention) a release of personal spleen and indignation; it is likewise a turning of his enemies' weapons against them by a man totally freed from the restraints of the historian or the pretended good manners of the polemicist, governed entirely, as he now is, by the desire to destroy through words and by the satirist's savage delight in his own powers.

These last characteristics, as we shall see, somewhat impair the *Atom's* artistic achievement and blunt its impact on its victims. If the coarseness of its imagery has repelled some readers, more have in all likelihood been daunted by the complexity of the events and the obscurity of some of the persons satirized, as is evident from the "keys" that were appended in manu-

script to early copies and in print to modern editions, together with the disconcerting fact that no two keys are perfectly in agreement.

The *Atom* nevertheless offers its rewards. One of its earliest reviewers complained of "a mixture of indelicacy which though it cannot gratify the loosest imagination, can scarce fail to disgust the coarsest," yet had to concede "great spirit and humour."<sup>5</sup> The modern reader will be less distressed by the coarseness than by the necessity, if he is to relish the satire, of becoming something of an expert on the history of the Seven Years' War and the personages involved in it. He will be rewarded by discovering anew the extraordinary vigor and fertility of Smollett's comic invention; by the robust enjoyment of knockabout satire; and by the endless variety and richness of the *Atom*'s verbal texture. Smollett wrote the *Atom* with a *saeva indignatio* at least equal to Swift's and with more than a little of his genius. Far duller works have been far more admired.

#### THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR AND ITS BACKGROUND

The modern reader, especially if American, may benefit from general information on a few political and historical facts which Smollett and his audience took for granted, but which have been changed or obliterated by the passage of time. These relate to the structure of British politics in Smollett's day, and to the principal events of the Seven Years' War.

The administrative and parliamentary structure of the British government has been greatly modified since the mid-eighteenth century. As Donald Greene has observed: "The modern student of eighteenth-century British politics would do well, if he wishes to understand what was actually going on, to think in terms of twentieth-century Washington rather than of twentieth-century Westminster."<sup>6</sup> In short, if the American president and most of the Senate held hereditary office for life, we should now have in the United States a very close approximation in structure of the government that Smollett knew;<sup>7</sup> making these offices elective was perhaps the principal innovation of the Founding Fathers when drafting the Constitution, which built upon and reformed the British system.

The British monarch, in the first place, was both technically and in fact far more powerful and independent than would be the case even in Victoria's day. He could and often did conduct foreign policy entirely on his own (as with secret treaties), or relying only on the advice of a very few trusted subordinates. All state functionaries were in theory his servants, and could be appointed and in most cases dismissed as he thought fit. The award of all

honors, peerages, bishoprics, pensions, commissions and promotions in the army and navy, and lucrative appointments or sinecures, together with all acts of Parliament, required the sovereign's consent to become valid, and could except for the last be made entirely on his own initiative. This fact—as with the young George III's ill-judged sponsorship of his favorite Lord Bute as first minister, or his grandfather's stubborn reluctance to part with his favorite Carteret or to give Lord Temple a Garter or Pitt a cabinet post<sup>8</sup>—might be disastrous to the point of bringing government activities to a halt. The king might call and preside at cabinet and privy council meetings as he chose, and he had frequent, sometimes daily, private audiences in the "Closet" with several of his most important ministers. While the pressure of circumstances or the persuasion and threats of powerful ministers could eventually bully him into abandoning a favorite project or accepting a distasteful measure or man, there was no absolute guarantee of this; everything (short of a flat contradiction of the expressed will of Parliament, which held the power of the purse) ultimately depended on the monarch's personality and his opinions.

It has long been taken for granted that George II was "a king in chains," with powers and prerogatives vastly diminished from those enjoyed by his predecessors; that the first minister most frequently in power after the mid-1740s, Thomas Pelham-Holles, duke of Newcastle, was an impotent ditherer, chiefly concerned with meddling in patronage and with petty manipulation of Parliament; and that William Pitt, universally acknowledged as the savior of the nation and thus the Winston Churchill of his day, virtually governed Britain in all respects. (Such certainly was Smollett's view, both in the *Atom* and in his other writings.) But some recent studies have powerfully argued that in fact the king and Newcastle were far better informed than Pitt on a good many important matters; that they constantly manipulated him, overtly and covertly, controlling the information that was made available to him; and that both in general policies and in specific decisions George II, together with Newcastle and Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, very effectively ruled Britain, while Pitt was the servant of the cabinet.<sup>9</sup>

But whatever the truth may be, the image of a Pitt of heroic stature surrounded by weaklings and incompetents prevailed with the general public and with Smollett as well, just as the genuinely erroneous notion of Lord Bute as the power behind the throne from his resignation in 1763 until as late as 1780 was almost universally believed.<sup>10</sup> Pitt, however, was not "prime minister," since there was no prime minister in the modern sense; and in fact the idea of such an office was generally agreed to be abhorrent, as Sir Robert

Walpole and the duke of Newcastle had often been forced to remember. That minister who in fact had the surest control over votes in the Commons and at the same time enjoyed the king's confidence or at least his cooperation was, while he retained these, the head of government; but he might lose either or both for a variety of reasons. Usually, however, the office of first lord of the treasury was associated with supreme power, since the person holding it bore the ultimate responsibility both for securing revenues, by means of taxation, and for disbursing government funds. Pitt never held this office. From 1757 through 1761 he was secretary of state for the southern department, which included the colonies, and whatever his actual powers and responsibilities might have been he gladly left fiscal matters, the management of Parliament, and the distribution of patronage to Newcastle, who was first lord of the treasury. At the time of his resignation in October 1761, Pitt aroused much resentment by a tactless remark indicating that he saw himself as "directing" the government.<sup>11</sup>

What are now stigmatized, hypocritically or not, as bribery, corruption, and patronage were in Smollett's time regarded at all levels with much greater realism. Officials routinely accepted presents to assure the performance of specific services included in their regular duties; many high officials received large salaries while paying small sums to clerks to do most of the actual work involved. Many obsolete offices, as in the royal household, involved honor and money, but (except for attendance at court) no duties whatsoever, and this continued to be mainly the case until Prince Albert's day. Substantial pensions, or titles, might be awarded after notable military or political service, or as a sop when a functionary who had become obnoxious for whatever reason was relieved of office. Such rewards, as a matter of course, were to be expected in return for the trouble and expense of pursuing a career in Parliament, and indiscriminate opposition to the administration (William Pitt being the most eminent example) was a recognized method of obtaining them—though Pitt at first, to the astonishment and delight of all, was interested purely in power.<sup>12</sup> Repeated legislative attempts to keep "placemen" out of Parliament met with little success. And anyone rewarded with high office expected also that various places and awards would be put at his disposal for friends, relatives, and adherents, the former incumbents being turned out; this occurred wholesale when a new administration came in, as in the celebrated "Massacre of the Pelhamite Innocents," when the incoming Bute administration removed the allowances of many who had been enjoying them since the beginning of Newcastle's long tenure at the treasury.<sup>13</sup> The permanent civil servant with tenure guaranteed was unknown, though a few indispensable people in effect achieved permanence.<sup>14</sup>

Rotten and pocket boroughs had not yet come to be called so. The ancient borough charters limited the franchise in an infinity of ways, ranging from virtual manhood suffrage (for persons of some landed property) to the seven electors of Old Sarum who first put Pitt in Parliament. The buying or owning of votes was taken completely for granted and was denounced only by those who were not able to practice it or who had lost an election. On a higher level, a reliable or powerful M.P. might be made a peer to continue his voting record or reverse it; bishops, who usually voted pro-administration without question, were often appointed for their political views and efforts rather than for any achievements in spiritual leadership or theological learning.

The tax structure that Smollett knew also requires explanation for the modern reader. Revenue was derived chiefly from five sources: customs duties; excise taxes on various commodities and luxuries, such as beer, imported textiles, tobacco, tea, and so on; taxes on assessed income from landed property, and on stamps and stamped paper; and such minor taxes as that on windows and the duties on pensions and offices. By far the largest revenue came from customs and from the excise taxes (£5,440,000 at the start of the Seven Years' War).<sup>15</sup> These latter were universally disliked and were kept as few and as low as circumstances permitted; new ones were introduced only with great effort and over much protest. (An attempt to create a new excise tax had threatened to cause the downfall of Walpole in the 1730s, and the controversy over a new tax on cider precipitated that of Bute in 1763.<sup>16</sup>) But the established excise taxes, since they were reflected in the prices of goods and thus were universally applied, were less obtrusive than the land tax. This ranged at various times in the century from ten to twenty percent ("four shillings in the pound"), and was thus directly felt by the nobility and the landed gentry; at the commencement of the Seven Years' War it stood at two shillings in the pound but was immediately raised to four, doubling the current revenue of £1,000,000.<sup>17</sup> But there was no tax whatever on ordinary wages and salaries, business profits, or dividends and interest; this fact contributed fundamentally to most of the enormous fortunes made during the century, to the equally enormous power and influence of the London merchants and bankers, and to the hatred they generated among the older landed families, with whose views Smollett tended to identify.

Today's reader must make a constant effort to remember that in the minds of the cultivated public during Smollett's time, the people who counted (except in the matter of voluntary charity, which as a religious duty was often surprisingly generous<sup>18</sup>) did not include the great bulk of the population. The nobility and gentry, prosperous merchants, small landowners, the

clergy, a few eminent artists and writers, doctors and lawyers, and perhaps a few small entrepreneurs of one kind or another were the British public. The lower orders, or the "meaner sort" of people—servants, laborers, tenant farmers, soldiers and sailors, clerks and craftsmen, the disenfranchised in general—went unnoticed, except when they rioted or were involved in crime. When Smollett speaks in the *Atom* of "the mob" or "the many-headed beast," he usually means the House of Commons.

Although many short-lived issues generated intense heat, the principal problems of the century for the British government were few but long-lasting. First was the threat of the Catholic Stuart pretenders to the throne, which was justly considered a serious danger until the second half of the century.<sup>19</sup> Second was the fact that the king was also the elector of Hanover. Richard Pares says of matters at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War: "The most prominent single issue was what one might call the 'German question'—that is to say, the expediency of opposing France in Germany, the choice of a German ally, the terms of the alliance, and, above all, the relation of British policy to the interests of the Elector of Hanover."<sup>20</sup> The Continental connection made isolationism simply not possible until late in the century. A third important problem was the series of commercial and political rivalries and alliances among Britain and the other nations of Europe which inevitably led, between 1700 and 1800, to four major wars: those of the Spanish Succession (1702–13) and the Austrian Succession (1740–48), the Seven Years' War, and the American Revolution (the last also involving Britain in war with France and Spain). Domestic problems relating to taxation, food supply and economic controls, and social unrest and welfare made a fourth area of broad concern in peacetime, though war might abruptly increase their significance. What may have been the most important matter of all—the fostering, retention, or loss of the American colonies—was not seen as a vital issue until late in the period with which we are concerned.<sup>21</sup>

The Seven Years' War (1756–63, if we omit the earlier skirmishes that preceded the formal declaration of hostilities) arose, in the larger sense, as an expression of British efforts to contain French territorial and commercial expansion and, in the smaller, as a result of French encroachments by land and British by sea. The history of the war may be divided into three phases: a series of military debacles for which the Newcastle administration was largely responsible, and which resulted in its downfall; Pitt's war, which included land operations on the European continent and which, though it also began disastrously, ended in a spectacular series of victories; and Bute's war, largely a continuation of Pitt's campaigns and victories but also involv-

ing war with and victories over Spain, ending with the Peace of Paris. The war's aftermath, with the fall of Bute, with the weak performance of the Grenville and Rockingham ministries and the attendant domestic and political confusion, coupled with the greatest national debt in Britain's history, led directly to the American Revolution.

The Seven Years' War (often called the "Great War for Empire," but usually thought of by Americans under the less comprehensive and less accurate rubric of the French and Indian Wars) was a conflict which pitted France, the Austrian empire, Russia, and Spain against Great Britain, Prussia, and mercenary troops of other German states. But from our point of view it was primarily a struggle for world domination between France and Britain, with Britain also bound by treaties to support Frederick the Great of Prussia (who was the nephew of George II) in his wars against France, Austria, and Russia by providing troops and a huge annual subsidy. These treaties chiefly owed their existence to the king's natural anxieties as elector of Hanover (which could either be defended by Frederick or, if he pleased, easily overrun and taken) and to the duke of Newcastle's never-surrendered project of establishing a Continental balance of power.<sup>22</sup>

The precarious truce established by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 was broken in Europe when Frederick conquered Saxony (1756) and in America when, in the summer of 1754, Major George Washington was defeated in an expedition against the French forts on the Ohio, built in contravention of the Peace.<sup>23</sup> The British were ill-prepared for war, and a series of military and naval disasters followed: General Braddock's defeat, Admiral Boscawen's abortive naval expedition against Canada, Admiral Byng's equally abortive engagement with the French fleet and the consequent loss of Minorca. The resulting crisis led in 1756 to the formation of Pitt's first, short-lived administration. In the following year the Army of Observation, a mixed German and British force led by George II's second son, the duke of Cumberland, was encircled by French forces in Germany; Cumberland agreed to disband his troops and returned to England in disgrace. An enormous fleet, intended for an amphibious assault on the French coast in the autumn, reached its target but returned to England without even putting troops ashore.

Meanwhile Pitt, returned to office in June 1757 (he had been dismissed, and for eleven weeks the king had tried in vain to form a government without him), concluded an alliance with Newcastle, continued (at least in his own eyes and those of the general public) to direct the war until his resignation in October 1761, and was regarded as the savior of the nation. The train of

disasters was now followed by a series of triumphs. On the Continent Frederick, now aided by British and German troops under Ferdinand, duke of Brunswick, was repeatedly though not always victorious over the French, Austrians, and Russians; in India British naval victories were accompanied by Robert Clive's total defeat of the French on land; British fleets conquered islands in the Caribbean held by the French and took Senegal in west Africa; and the French in Canada were finally and thoroughly defeated in a series of operations culminating in General Wolfe's capture of Quebec.

The aged George II (he was seventy-seven) died in October 1760 and was succeeded by his twenty-two-year-old grandson. The new king, dominated by his tutor, bosom friend, confidant, and father-figure, John Stuart, the earl of Bute, wished to end hostilities as soon as possible; he regarded Hanover as "that horrid electorate"<sup>24</sup> and opposed the costly subsidies to Frederick. Accordingly, tentative (but abortive) peace negotiations began; but meanwhile the French naval forces had been virtually neutralized or destroyed by British fleets. At this point, however, war broke out with Spain (Pitt had resigned in a cabinet dispute over whether Britain should strike first), and the British took Manila and Havana. Frederick, who had seen his British subsidies end and Russia withdraw from the war on the death of the empress Elizabeth, now underwent serious defeats, and a series of inconclusive campaigns under Ferdinand in Germany seemed destined to be endless. Under Bute, now effectively first minister, peace preliminaries were signed late in 1762; the Peace of Paris was ratified early in 1763; in April Bute resigned (as he had in any case wished to do as soon as peace could be established), and Britain was left to cope with the economic consequences of having successfully waged a "bloody and expensive war."<sup>25</sup>

Such, in very broad outline, are the vastly complicated events with which Smollett is chiefly concerned in the *Atom*. These may be said to run from the death of first minister Henry Pelham in 1754, and the general election of the same year, to the election of 1768 and the ominous rioting on behalf of John Wilkes. The *Atom's* chronicle covers the political ascendancy, greatness, and virtual eclipse of William Pitt, and the rise and fall of Lord Bute.

#### SMOLLETT AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

While Smollett's political opinions are made abundantly clear by himself in the narrative that follows, certain clarifications are in order. The most important of these concerns the terms Whig and Tory. On the one hand it has been firmly demonstrated by Sir Lewis Namier and his followers that party disci-

pline and party platforms as known in the nineteenth century, not to mention present-day Britain, simply did not exist in Smollett's time.<sup>26</sup> On the other, there is no question that many politicians sincerely thought of themselves as Whigs and their opponents as Tories, or the reverse.<sup>27</sup> Yet the principles designated by party names might and did change almost from year to year, even while those who used the terms might honestly believe in their consistent meaning. Thus the duke of Newcastle thought of himself throughout his long career as a Whig; yet his political behavior was chiefly consecrated to staying in power, manipulating domestic politics to ensure support for the administration, and attempting to regulate and control an archaic system of Continental alliances which was perpetually going awry. Pitt (who, though at the time he was in uneasy alliance with Newcastle and therefore with the Whigs, urged the newly enthroned George III to make Tory appointments<sup>28</sup>) was also principally concerned with gaining and keeping power, but by means of brilliantly opposing the measures of any administration in which he was not preeminent. He has been characterized politically as a perpetual Patriot, this term meaning simply "one dedicated to opposition."<sup>29</sup>

By the time Smollett wrote the *Atom* he was undoubtedly quite sincere in denouncing both parties, or more properly for him, "factions," as equally knavish and foolish. The old stereotype of Smollett as a bigoted and unreconstructed Tory has been thoroughly demolished;<sup>30</sup> it certainly will not stand up against what he says in the *Atom*.

It is surely off the mark to require that a satirist be fair and objective in his treatment of those whom he attacks. Yet with a very few exceptions Smollett remained faithful to the facts in the *Atom*; for most of the views expressed therein he could have found substantial support in various areas of British public opinion,<sup>31</sup> and history has largely vindicated him. Aside from the slaughter and impoverishment of thousands and the weakening of the French armies, the campaigns on the European continent had virtually no result for Britain or anyone else beyond the restoration of the *status quo ante* as to the boundaries and power of nations. The burdens of the war brought to England a national debt and an economic depression which led to the imposition of the taxes that, together with the permanent removal of the French threat to the American colonies, made the American Revolution possible. The widespread opposition to the lenient terms of the Peace of Paris, and the desire to annihilate France, can be seen from two hundred years' perspective (especially considering the economic and political sequels to World Wars I and II) to be the effects of shortsighted jingoism. The defeat of Braddock, and of Abercromby at Ticonderoga; the failure of Boscawen to intercept the

French fleet; the loss of Minorca and the making of Admiral Byng into a scapegoat; the disastrous expeditions of Saint Cas, Saint Malo, and Rochefort; the humiliating defeat of Cumberland's troops at Stade and his signing of the ill-considered Convention of Klosterseven: these events provoked criticism from all quarters. Where Smollett is less than fair is in his slanted accounts of the campaign for Quebec and the battle of Minden, together with some other Allied successes; in his playing down of Frederick's victories; and in his real or pretended assumption that Pitt had little or nothing to do either with selecting successful officers or with the immediate direction of military operations.<sup>32</sup>

Pitt and Frederick became national heroes who could do no wrong, though Pitt's acceptance of a pension in 1761 and a peerage in 1766 seriously undermined his popularity.<sup>33</sup> But few sincere voices could be found to defend George II or the duke of Newcastle. Most of the minor characters included by Smollett in the cast of the *Atom* were equally open to criticism. It is notable that Smollett gives a balanced portrait of Lord Bute; earlier he had intemperately defended Bute in his weekly propaganda paper, the *Briton*, and then later came to feel that Bute had callously abandoned him (which, in fact, was probably the case).<sup>34</sup>

Whatever their precise shape in a given controversy, Smollett's general views were simple and were consistently maintained. He was in principle opposed to the more recently established elements in the English political equation—the power of the City merchants and bankers, or the financial forces in general, as against the older landed interest and the aristocracy; the increasingly powerful voice of “the mob” (which for him included small tradesmen and artisans as well as the genuine rabble); the ability of a small political oligarchy to take and hold power for lengthy periods by manipulating the crown, the Parliament, and the people; and above all he opposed the “Continental connection,” which, as Richard Pares has said, was perhaps the thorniest political problem that England faced in Smollett's time.<sup>35</sup> It is true that he occasionally hedged with regard to those currently in power, out of deference to their position—or more likely out of caution, especially after Admiral Knowles won a libel suit against him in 1759;<sup>36</sup> but in general he stuck to his guns.

The principal question that Smollett's views in the *Atom* pose for a reader today arises from his devastating attack on Pitt. It is perhaps best answered by reflecting that there were, so to speak, two Pitts—the Great Commoner who galvanized the British war effort and won the “Great War for Empire,” who earned the admiration and love of the colonies by opposing the Stamp

Act in 1766, and who later as Lord Chatham the elder statesman dominated Parliament whenever he chose to appear; and the preeminently skillful politician who required supreme power before he would perform and who would do almost anything to get it, not merely cowing his opponents with his rhetoric but also adroitly and nimbly changing sides, if there was need, when his opposition was rewarded with office.<sup>37</sup> It is the latter Pitt whom the *Atom* attacks, and who has lately been painted by historians in very much the same colors as Smollett's. If one asks how Smollett could have been so stubborn or so foolish as to fly in the face of the popular consensus regarding Pitt, he may consider that not only Bute but both George II and his grandson detested Pitt heartily until he had made himself indispensable to each,<sup>38</sup> that Newcastle lived in perpetual fear of him; that Cumberland refused to take charge of the Army of Observation on the Continent until Pitt was dismissed;<sup>39</sup> and that almost every politician who allied himself with Pitt ended by breaking with him. When Pitt resigned in 1761 over the issue of war with Spain, the entire cabinet, with the exception of his brother-in-law Lord Temple, was against him.<sup>40</sup> He might have been admired and respected, but he was not loved by those who knew him.

Moreover, Smollett was far from being in favor of war in general. Throughout his writings his detestation of cruelty is apparent (even the cruel practical jokes in his novels may be seen as a deliberate choice of the vilest possible punishment for offenders). But we cannot say that he went as far as Samuel Johnson, for instance, in his abhorrence of war and bloodshed.<sup>41</sup> Smollett seems to have been convinced that France was so dangerous an enemy that it must be weakened even at great cost, and he apparently applauded Britain's acquisition of an overseas empire.<sup>42</sup> Yet he saw no gain whatever in the costly and bloody campaigns in support of Frederick the Great, conducted, as he regarded them, merely for the sake of Hanover; and indeed (though here we may suspect that he felt he was going out on a limb) he sometimes proposed in the *Briton* the amazingly sophisticated idea, far ahead of its time, that Britain might extend its possessions too far and sink like the Roman Empire under its own weight.<sup>43</sup> But since he advanced this notion in defense of the concession of certain conquered territories to France, as required by the conditions of the Peace of Paris, it may well be that he was merely grasping at straws in favor of Bute and his policies.

Historical scholarship has now weaned us away from the belief that the young George III, his mother (the dowager princess Augusta), and Lord Bute were blindly infatuated with the idea of a “Patriot King” associated with the writings and the posthumous image of Lord Bolingbroke. They were con-



siderably more eclectic in their thinking, far less ideologues, than that; and in any case it is very doubtful that Princess Augusta had much influence on her son immediately before or after he came to the throne.<sup>44</sup> Pitt himself, in fact, advised the new king to make appointments that would lead to a representation of both parties in significant numbers.<sup>45</sup> But with Smollett the case is perhaps different. In the *Briton* he may make an exaggerated case for the sanctity of the crown and the importance of the royal prerogative; in theory, however (as has now been adequately demonstrated by various studies), scarcely anyone would have disagreed with him.<sup>46</sup> The practical problem was that Lord Bute was a Scot, that he had virtually no parliamentary experience, and that he had never built up an adequate body of supporters from any level of society. But while it may be argued that in the *Briton* Smollett is far more interested in defending his fellow Scot and his policies than in any theoretical point whatever, the case is not the same in the *Atom*, where he has no one but himself to satisfy.

Smollett's views in the *Atom* on politics, foreign policy, and society are consistent with those which he maintained more cautiously in the *Complete History of England*, in its *Continuation*, and (still more cautiously) in the *Critical Review*.<sup>47</sup> In his judgment the attrition of royal prerogative since the Glorious Revolution (at least from the perspective of 1764) has gone too far; ministers should be appointed purely for virtue and ability, without regard to party affiliation; both houses of Parliament are shamefully confused, ignorant, venal, and are constantly manipulated by selfish oligarchs; persons without birth or breeding have engrossed most of the effective power in the realm, while the old aristocracy is weak and decadent; the moneyed interests have virtually obliterated the traditional power of the landed gentry; "luxury" has corrupted the fabric of society from top to bottom; and (worst of all) the "mob," comprising almost all persons below the nobility—cowardly, selfish, fickle, stupid, easily led—has been weakly allowed to assert, through sheer force of numbers, a power it ought never to have had.<sup>48</sup> On the level of specific evils, George II is the next thing to an idiot; his natural tendency to sacrifice the welfare of England to that of Hanover, which has resulted in a wasteful war and a crushing burden of debt and which should have been repressed by all lawful means, has been encouraged as an avenue to power, first by the unspeakably silly and inept Newcastle and next by the able but opportunistic and totally unprincipled Pitt, who also relies on the support of the vile "mob." Nearly all the high officials of government are knaves or fools or both. The wise (such as Lord Granville, lord president of the council) choose to do nothing.<sup>49</sup> Foreign policy is largely concerned with neglecting

important matters, wasting money on subsidies to protect Hanover, and supporting the unspeakable Frederick in his wars. Generals and admirals are chosen at random, and are nearly always incompetent; the effective few (such as Wolfe, Clive, Cumming, Hawke, Elliot) are promoted by accident or through influence, and later are often either neglected or ignored, or die in action. George III is amiable but ignorant and inexperienced, Bute is virtuous but foolishly idealistic and conceitedly oblivious to practical politics; the war is ended by bribery (the ratification of the Peace of Paris), and domestic policy has degenerated into a ridiculous tug-of-war between Whigs and Tories, both equally stupid and equally obsessed with personal vanity and vengeance, while Bute, driven out of office, vainly tries to put together a stable government from behind the scenes. Such, in essence, is the *Atom*.

As we have seen, there were many to agree at the time with Smollett's opinions concerning the political and military figures of his day. And after mid-1760 the desire to give up the German war, indeed to put an end to all hostilities, rapidly grew in strength. By 1766 most perhaps would have agreed with Smollett's opinions of Pitt and of Frederick, now that Prussia was at peace and Pitt had taken a peerage. Modern thought has repudiated as archaic such ideas as Smollett's on economics and especially on "luxury," since deficit funding (which, after all, had begun in the 1690s) and what he would have considered outrageous extravagance have come to be matters of course in our consumer society. But the basic ideas, three in number, which he enunciated in his nonfictional writings and in the *Atom* are of another order. Unpopular in his time they unquestionably were, but we may view them differently. First was the issue of Britain's commitment to the German war: was it an absolutely essential ingredient in bringing France to the peace table? Despite the saying that Pitt "had won the American war on the plains of Germany,"<sup>50</sup> the truth about this matter is still far from clear. Second, the question of whether Bute's peace was not on the whole as good as that which Pitt might have made (and even Smollett admitted that Bute's peace might have been better if less hasty and undigested<sup>51</sup>) is even less firmly agreed upon by modern historians. And finally, Smollett's most hesitantly advanced, controversial, and forward-looking idea—that Britain might have overreached itself, acquiring more possessions than it could well control—was taken very seriously in his time by a few farsighted persons, among them the duke of Bedford, by no means a naive or ignorant negotiator in the peace settlement.<sup>52</sup>

What we might call an adequate total picture of Tobias Smollett's intellectual development and of the furniture of his mind has not yet been provided



by those who have written about him. Certain points, however, have been made clear. In politics he was certainly not the hidebound "Tory" or reactionary who has sometimes been presented, and it is doubtful that the image of "Radical Dr. Smollett" will bear prolonged and detailed inspection.<sup>53</sup> But three basic characteristics of his thought are beyond dispute. He was, at least by his own definitions, an enlightened Scot, a gentleman, and a satirist. Always ready to defend his countrymen, he was not, whatever his pugnacity and irascibility, desirous of turning the clock back; he was no Jacobite. As a gentleman, the descendant of generations of landowners, small though their holdings might have been, he was perhaps unduly prone to scorn "new men," whatever their eminence or attainments, who could not trace their pretensions to gentility beyond their fathers or grandfathers.<sup>54</sup> Above all, he saw himself as a satirist in the tradition of Rabelais, Swift, Cervantes, and Pope. Though written of Samuel Johnson, the following words accurately sum up Smollett's character as well. He had "a quickness to sense incongruity and pretense, a well-developed aggressiveness, a temperamental irritability and dissatisfaction aggravated by personal suffering, an instinctive reductionist talent not unlike Swift's, and a certain violence or immoderation of character combined with a desperate attachment to the disciplines of moderation and good sense."<sup>55</sup>

Such was the man who, in 1764, had withdrawn from the political turmoil of London to the mild climate of Nice. There, during a leisure earned by the unaided efforts of his pen rather than by political patronage, he purged his spleen by beginning to compose *The History and Adventures of an Atom*.

#### SOURCES AND INFLUENCES

The *Atom* is a unique literary work, but it is so in the restricted sense that it is a unique synthesis of ingredients that were far from unique or rare—readily available, in fact, and known to many. The chief strands that form its fabric are these: the narration of the story by an omniscient being that has also been virtually omnipresent; satire handled as "secret history," purporting to reveal the hidden springs and sordid motivations really governing famous persons in happenings known to the public; the narrative placed in a remote country, made to seem verisimilar if fantastic by a wealth of specific detail regarding persons, places, and objects; allegory in which historical events are made ridiculous by reducing them into outlandish or contemptible imagery; irrelevant digressions on esoteric or absurd subjects, involving torments of obscure pedantry; and ubiquitous seatology.

Identification of the exact sources of these satiric strategies must rest upon conjecture, but Smollett left abundant traces of his working methods as he composed the *Atom*. The notes to the present volume make it clear that the *Atom* may justly be seen as a vast patchwork of quotations from, versions of, and allusions to passages in the later works of Smollett's career, running from the time when he launched the *Critical Review* in 1756 to the publication, in 1765 and 1766, respectively, of the fifth volume of his *Continuation of the Complete History of England* and of his *Travels*. Smollett had also translated *Don Quixote*; and he may well have been thinking, as he composed his satire, of Cervantes' famous simile of the back side of a fair tapestry, seemingly ugly and distorted with its knots, lumps, projecting threads and grotesque figures, but nevertheless revealing how the tapestry (in this case, Britain 1754-68) is really put together.<sup>56</sup>

Smollett's work during this period, with the single exception of his novel *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves*, was as an editor, historian, compiler, and polemicist, and his duties obliged him to read and absorb an enormous mass of heterogeneous material on every conceivable subject from patristic theology to snuff. He could not have written more than a portion of the reviews in the *Critical*, but he must at least have skimmed every page of it; and if a given review deals with history, science, medicine, or fiction we are safe in assuming that Smollett wrote it, or carefully checked it if he did not write it. Thus, by invoking Occam's razor and discarding farfetched explanations in favor of the simplest and most obvious ones, we may reliably account for the materials generating Smollett's distinctive forms of satire in the *Atom*.

The successive volumes of *Tristram Shandy* were reviewed with scant charity in the *Critical*, in at least two instances by Smollett.<sup>57</sup> But these reviews, taken together, share an interesting and seemingly obsessive theme. *Tristram Shandy* is seen as little more than an imitation of Rabelais; and the ingredients of "Rabelaisian" humor seem to be but three—lewdness, especially of the scatological variety; a pert, self-centered style, impudently but-tonholing the reader; and frequent gratuitous digressions that pile up arcane learning on ridiculous topics:

we see . . . the most evident traces of Rabelais . . . the same sort of apostrophes to the reader, breaking in upon the narrative, not infrequently with an air of petulant impertinence; the same *sales Plautini*; the *immunda* ignominiosaq; dicta; the same whimsical digressions; and the same parade of learning.<sup>58</sup>

. . . petulance, pruriency, and ostentation of learning.<sup>59</sup>

Rabelais dealt in the same kind of haberdashery [the reader will remember that the "writer" of the *Atom*, Nathaniel Peacock, is a haberdasher]. . . . He had his extravagant rhapsodies, his disquisitions on arts and sciences, theology and ethics; his Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, High Dutch, Low Dutch . . . his decent allusions to the parts that distinguish the sexes; and his cleanly comments upon intestinal exoneration.<sup>60</sup>

. . . "tes paroles sont braves." That is, not a language spoken *ab anteriori*.<sup>61</sup>

Another review, of *Yorick's Meditations*, an imitation of *Tristram Shandy*, lists its many digressions, including one on the close-stool.<sup>62</sup> The review of volumes 7 and 8 of *Tristram Shandy* takes the form of a parody "by the Reviewers of Breeches," and we may note that the *Atom* contains a digression on breeches.<sup>63</sup> Interestingly, the *Critical* later says in its review of the *Atom* that it "unites the happy extravagance of Rabelais to the splendid humour of Swift," while the *Town and Country Magazine* also finds Smollett imitating Rabelais and Swift.<sup>64</sup>

On the basis of this quantity of evidence, with its repetitive (or obsessive) opinions, it is hard to avoid surmising that Smollett as early as 1761 had been inspired with the project of giving his stunningly popular rival, the author of *Tristram Shandy*, a run for his money with a work of Rabelaisian humor, featuring digressions, kaleidoscopically polyglot style, impertinence, learning, and scatology. (It is worth pointing out here that Smollett's own hobby-horse seems to have run away with him. Rabelais is certainly scatological and so is Smollett; but Sterne's lewdness is several times as prone to dwell upon "the parts that distinguish the sexes" as it is to treat of "intestinal exoneration." "Misprision of a precursor by a strong ephebe" did not have to wait for the Romantic poets and the theories of Harold Bloom.<sup>65</sup>)

Reviews in the *Critical* likewise furnish evidence for the probable source of the atom-narrator. Louis Martz once suggested that Smollett may have been inspired by John Hawkesworth's *Adventurer* paper number 5 (1752), in which a transmigrating soul (at the time lodged in a flea) dictates its adventures in a "small shrill voice."<sup>66</sup> But Hawkesworth's flea does not narrate a secret history of Britain; his paper is a playful miniature. The *Atom* in fact relies on, and must be an amalgamation of, three traditions.

The first tradition is that of the "spy" novel in which an alien of some sort reports secretly on the absurd beliefs and customs of one's own country. Originating in the popular *L'Espion turc* of Giovanni Paolo Marana in the seventeenth century, this species of narrative had as its most noted practitioners Montesquieu in the *Lettres persanes* (1721) and Goldsmith in *The Citizen*

*of the World* (1762). The second tradition is found in the "secret history," "key-novel," or *chronique scandaleuse*, again with a seventeenth-century French origin in Bussy-Rabutin's *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules*, and made notorious by such English writers of the early eighteenth century as Delarivière Manley and Eliza Haywood. In this the allegedly sordid "true stories" behind noted events are enacted under feigned names, the persons meant being revealed in a "key," either provided by the author or laboriously assembled in manuscript by one or more readers for the enlightenment of posterity.<sup>67</sup> Of such works Smollett certainly knew at least Lesage's *Le diable boiteux* ("The Devil upon Crutches")<sup>68</sup> and the anonymous *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de Perse*, in which England is represented as Japan and Spain as China.<sup>69</sup> The third tradition is that of the tale with a nonhuman narrator who (or which) has the advantages of being rapidly bandied about by various owners and of being able to overhear secrets with impunity. Such fictions go back as far as the "golden" *Ass of the Roman Apuleius*, and the device was employed by Cervantes in the *Coloquio de dos perros*, one of the *novelas ejemplares*; among the contributors to their sudden vogue in the eighteenth century were *Le sophia* (1740), by Crébillon *filz*, and Francis Coventry's *Pompey the Little* (1751), in which the adventures happen to a lapdog.<sup>70</sup> If one wishes to follow those critics who see Smollett's work as artistically dominated throughout by the picaresque mode, he may find in the *Atom* the picaresque pushed to its utmost logical possibility: the protagonist has no characteristics whatever beyond arrogance and a good memory, while the adventures may be as rapid, numerous, and various as the author's imagination will allow, with no requirements of realism to interfere.<sup>71</sup>

All three of these narrative traditions, however, were united in a book which the *Critical* reviewed with enthusiasm, Charles Johnstone's *Chrysal* (1760, 1765).<sup>72</sup> In this tale the spirit of gold, temporarily embodied in a guinea, recounts to an emaciated alchemist at the end of his tether its recent adventures in the hands of George II, his mistress the countess of Yarmouth, Frederick the Great, Lord Chesterfield, and assorted fools, knaves, and monsters, including (in the expanded four-volume edition of 1765) Sir Francis Dashwood and his rakish cronies of the "Hell-Fire Club" at Medmenham Abbey. At the conclusion, just as *Chrysal* is about to reveal the secret of making gold, the alchemist farts, and the spirit, "with a look of ineffable disgust," disappears. The reviews in the *Critical* speak of *Chrysal*'s "good sense and merit," but hesitate to allow it a rating above the mediocre because of the distorted evil of some characters and the lack of external safeguards or guarantees against the author's maliciously mingling the false with the

true.<sup>73</sup> The modern reader who compares *Chrysal* with the *Atom* will find them astonishingly similar in skeletal structure, and indeed as to the events described. The chief differences are that Pitt, King George, and Frederick are presented in *Chrysal* as near-divinities, that Johnstone introduces wholly imaginary type-characters to illustrate private vices as juicily as possible, and that Smollett is incomparably the better writer, both in style and in the handling of scenes. The political stand taken in *Chrysal* is firmly "Whig," insofar as that very inaccurate term may be used, or better, "pro-administration," if we take the latter term to mean the Pitt-Newcastle coalition that was in power when the first version of the novel appeared.

Such is not the view of one of Smollett's two principal sources for the Oriental setting of the *Atom*, John Shebbeare's *History . . . of the Sumatrans* (1762-63, although a version was apparently published in 1760).<sup>74</sup> This work, under the transparent disguise of the detailed political history of a remote kingdom, is an all-out attack on the British government in the last years of George II; the new reign, with its benevolent minister (Lord Bute), is represented as a heaven-sent era of reformation and virtue. Shebbeare, a political hack-writer, had already been severely punished for libel, and his violent prejudice against everything Scottish (to say nothing of his personal attacks on Smollett and his works) had already aroused Smollett's ire on more than one occasion.<sup>75</sup> Despite his antagonism, a convincing case has been made for Smollett's use of Shebbeare's *Lydia* (1755) in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, and the *Atom* certainly echoes several of *Lydia's* features—digressions that interrupt the narrative, together with the depiction of the duke of Newcastle's alleged ignorance of elementary geography, his silly mannerisms, and his (also alleged) incontinence when terrified or baffled.<sup>76</sup>

*The Sumatrans* was clearly written either to order or in the hope (rewarded, as it turned out) of securing remuneration.<sup>77</sup> The *Critical* nevertheless praises it highly, demurring only with respect to its extremely rough handling of that formidable demagogue and arch-Pittite, Alderman William Beckford; Smollett, the reviewer, was willing to sink his personal animosity in favor of the political position he had espoused in 1762, when he undertook to write the *Briton* as a champion of Bute and foe to his predecessors and opponents.<sup>78</sup> In *The Sumatrans*, however, Smollett found a crude model for the *Atom*; Shebbeare's work was reviewed, we may note, just before Smollett's departure for France, where most of the *Atom* was probably written.<sup>79</sup> In spite of his uncouth prose, Shebbeare had shown how the policies and personalities of the British government could be dealt with from the point of view of an

English (or superhuman) historian writing about the intrigues of an Oriental kingdom.

But this vague though ingenious notion of an "Oriental" setting—Shebbeare evidently knew almost nothing of southeast Asia, and his account does not pretend to use "Sumatra" as anything more than a *pro forma* disguise for Britain—was given focus and point by another work with which Smollett was intimately connected and which he almost certainly reviewed for the *Critical*. Louis Martz long ago pointed out some of Smollett's detailed borrowings for the *Atom* from the account of Japan in the *Universal History*, a huge compendium ultimately in sixty volumes, which had begun to appear in 1730. For some years Smollett had done extensive editorial work on the "Modern Part" of this compilation, which, despite its bulk, he took with him in its entirety when he traveled to France in 1763.<sup>80</sup> The opening paragraphs of his review, which appeared in September 1759, seem almost to show us Smollett's plan taking shape in his mind. They are therefore worth quoting at length.

The ninth volume opens with the history of Japan, a subject . . . curious [deserving careful attention], whether we consider the genius and acquired knowledge of the people, or the nature of their situation, which is, in many respects, analogous to that of Great Britain. Japan . . . is but small in point of extent. It consists of three . . . islands, on the most eastern verge of Asia. . . .

. . . if England and Scotland were divided from each other by an arm of the sea, Japan might be aptly compared to Britain and Ireland . . . subjected to the domination of one monarch. . . . The coasts of Japan are dangerous and rocky; so are those of Great Britain. The climate of Japan is wet, stormy, and variable; so is that of Great Britain. Both countries produce great quantities of corn.<sup>81</sup> . . . There is, moreover, a resemblance in the genius and disposition of the people: the Japanese, like the English, are brave and warlike, quick in apprehension, solid in understanding, modest, patient, courteous, docile, industrious, studious, just in their dealings, and sincere in their professions. The resemblance will likewise hold in their vices, follies, and foibles. The Japanese are proud, supercilious, passionate, humourous, and addicted to suicide; split into a multitude of religious sects, and so distracted by political factions, that the nation is at last divided between two separate governments.

Perhaps the analogy is still more remarkable . . . with respect to their neighbours. The next continent to Japan is China, which, in divers respects, may be compared to France . . . . China is more populous, powerful, and extensive . . . its palaces are more grand . . . its armies are more numerous . . . . But what the

Chinese have invented, the Japanese have improved. . . . The Chinese are more *gay*, the Japanese more *substantial*. . . . The Chinese are remarkable for *dissimulation*, *complaisance*, and *effeminacy*; the Japanese are famous for their *integrity*, *plain-dealing*, and *manly vigour*. Finally, they are rivals, consequently jealous of each other.<sup>82</sup>

The enthusiastic review goes on to give a lengthy account of acupuncture and to quote several instructive anecdotes relative to the current Japanese policy of rigorously excluding foreigners.

In the preface to the *Atom* Smollett virtually confessed to his reliance on the *Universal History*,<sup>83</sup> but he did not confine himself to the details mentioned in his review of the work. The history of Japan, with its emperor no more than a cipher for the past six hundred years while the powerful *shōguns* ruled in fact, seemed to him a close parallel to what he regarded as the shameful and dangerous impotence of the British crown in his own day,<sup>84</sup> subordinated to ministers who in turn were the leaders of rival political parties (or "factions," as Smollett preferred to see them and as modern research has shown them to have been). "Taycho," an upstart who achieved supreme power and was the only ruler ever to attempt foreign conquest, who exhausted Japan's treasure by wars on the Chinese mainland, admirably fitted the view Smollett had come to hold concerning William Pitt. On a much pettier level he could find such figures as the woman emperor Syko, who could be equated with Queen Anne; a god of war called "Fatzman," who suggested the grotesquely obese duke of Cumberland, commander-in-chief of the armed forces; and many others. These characters—137 of them—he adapted with remarkable ingenuity to compile a catalogue of "Japanese" persons, places, and things, fleshing out his political narrative and enriching his satire with concrete detail, fascinating because exotic, yet tempting the reader to investigate parallels and similarities.<sup>85</sup> One is reminded of the factually detailed "biographical" dossiers which such modern writers as Joyce compiled for their personages, to furnish scaffolding, as it were, to keep their fancy under perpetual control and prevent its straying too far from the point.

Yet fancy there had to be in the *Atom*, and Smollett found a rich and exciting model for satire of current politics in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, *A Tale of a Tub*, and *A Modest Proposal*. Thus he suggests that the vengeful English after the battle of Culloden, which crushed the Jacobite rebellion of 1745–46, might have subsisted on the flesh of the Scots; satirizes Pitt in imagery borrowed from the religious demagogues or Dissenting preachers in the *Tale*; and in general reduces political to physical action in the manner of Gulliver's

experiences in Lilliput.<sup>86</sup> Even closer perhaps to the kind of satire Smollett would write, and to the objects of his satire as well, were the five "John Bull" pamphlets by his fellow Scot and fellow physician John Arbuthnot, which had appeared in 1712.<sup>87</sup> Chief medical attendant to Queen Anne and intimate friend of Pope, Swift, and Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot anticipated Smollett by satirizing the conduct of the costly War of the Spanish Succession, with its ruinous drains on England in men and money, and the generals and politicians who wanted to prolong it for their own purposes. Like the *Atom*, but unlike the works of Swift (at least his major prose satires), the John Bull pamphlets go into the greatest detail in lampooning specific persons and events; they reduce political chicanery and military or diplomatic exploits to the level of neighborhood squabbles in the most ridiculously homespun imagery; their language oscillates wildly between highflown legal or medical jargon and the coarsest slang or thieves' cant. England is John Bull, the Netherlands are Nic. Frog, Louis XIV is Lewis Baboon, the duke of Marlborough is Hocus. Throughout, one can find scenes and turns of phrase which might have offered valuable suggestions to Smollett, though possible direct borrowings seem to have been few indeed.

The style and method of the Arbuthnot pamphlets are, on the other hand, remarkably similar to those of the *Atom*, an affinity perceived by Smollett's earliest biographers in editions of his works before 1800.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, Smollett did not have to be a collector of old curiosities to know *John Bull*; in 1755 John Hawkesworth assembled a new edition of Swift's works which included Arbuthnot's pamphlets; this edition was reprinted for years in various formats.<sup>89</sup> In December 1760 the *Critical* reviewed with enthusiasm *Sister Peg*, an anonymous satirical narrative concerning the Scottish Militia Bill, which in that year had been defeated in Parliament. Generally attributed to Adam Ferguson (though possibly by David Hume), this pamphlet took over the characters of Arbuthnot, adding such figures as "Jowler" (Pitt as a loud-mouthed foxhound), Lord Chancellor Hardwicke as an old nurse, and Newcastle as "Hubble-bubble," a vapid sputterer. Further, the attitudes expressed regarding Continental connections were exactly those of Smollett in the *Atom*. The *Critical* found the author of *Sister Peg* to be "satirical, intelligent, and public-spirited," with a genius in portraiture (as shown by Jowler and Hubble-bubble), though "sometimes indecent in his expression," and concluded that had not Arbuthnot come before and thus acquired partisans, this production would have to be allowed supremacy in its particular mode of satire.<sup>90</sup> It is relevant to note that Smollett corresponded with Hume and greatly respected and admired him; if he believed *Sister Peg* to be Hume's

work, he certainly did not allow professional rivalry to cloud his estimation of his countryman and fellow historian of England.<sup>91</sup>

With all of these precursors of the *Atom* in view, demonstrably known to Smollett and examined by him, we need not marvel at his originality in conceiving the satirical devices of the *Atom*. We may rather conclude that, given the inclination to produce a political satire, he would have had to be rather obtuse not to gather up the many hints available to him. His genius was demonstrated in the particular way in which he chose to fuse and synthesize them.

It is unnecessary to seek a particular source for the *Atom's* egregious scatology. Sterne and Sterne's master Rabelais, to say nothing of Swift, were (as Smollett chose to see them) the sources he admitted, so to speak; but scatology had been an obsession with him throughout his career in letters, and would continue to be so until its end.<sup>92</sup> It is not astonishing that, given this unsavory preoccupation and the wish to attack with the utmost violence, he should have chosen scatology as a weapon, nor that he should have tossed his dung about with such frequency; rather, the remarkable fact is perhaps that although he did not toss it, like Addison's Virgil, with "an air of gracefulness,"<sup>93</sup> he allowed no scatological Anglo-Saxon monosyllable to sully his page.

The basic narrative line of the *Atom*, however fantastic its elaborations in imagery, was dictated by the political and military history of the Seven Years' War and its aftermath. For this Smollett had only to turn to his own accounts of these events in the *Continuation of the Complete History of England* (which runs from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 to the summer of 1765), and in the thirty-eight issues of the *Briton* (29 May 1762–12 February 1763). Scores of passages in the *Atom* echo arguments, figures, sentences, or phrases in the *Briton*, often verbatim; Smollett seems to have felt that these were too good to waste in an ephemeral publication. Moreover, rather than being merely sources of the raw materials of satire, these passages, to pursue the metaphor of manufacturing, were semi-fabricated; for in writing the *Briton* Smollett was conducting pro-Bute polemic in the no-holds-barred manner of the mid-eighteenth century, including a nautical allegory, an "Arabian tale," and a pseudo-Shakespearean fragment.<sup>94</sup> He spared no pains in attacking the behavior and views of Pitt, Newcastle, Pitt's brother-in-law Earl Temple, John Wilkes, and others, even though he and Wilkes had been firm friends just prior to the beginning of the pamphlet war, and though as late as December 1759 he had characterized Pitt in a letter as, barring the Continental connection which even he could not break, "the greatest man that ever lived."<sup>95</sup>

Yet in most instances, Smollett even in the *Briton* does not distort the facts of recent history; he merely, by every means he can contrive, puts the most unfavorable interpretation on some of those facts. And if we compare Smollett's handling of a given incident in the *Continuation*, the *Critical*, the *Briton*, and the *Atom*, we discover (with negligible exceptions) the same to be true. Smollett's opinions on such matters as, for example, the heartless treatment of Admiral Byng, the military disaster at Saint Cas, the British subsidies for Frederick the Great, the British ignorance of Louisiana's strategic importance, or the conduct of Frederick toward the royal family of Poland and Saxony are uniform throughout. The difference lies merely in the fact that in the *Critical* and the *Continuation* he is restrained by considerations of prudence or by his own rather exalted idea of himself as an impartial historian.<sup>96</sup> Yet even as early as 1760, in the *Continuation* (discussing the opening of Parliament in November 1759), he could allow his indignation to carry him so far as to write the following passage concerning the king and Pitt:

Very great reason, indeed, had his majesty to be satisfied with an address of such a nature from an house of commons, in which opposition lay strangled at the foot of the minister [Pitt]; in which those demagogues, who had raised themselves to reputation and renown, by declaiming against continental measures [Pitt again], were become so perfectly reconciled to the object of their former reprobation, as to cultivate it with a degree of enthusiasm, unknown to any former administration, and lay the nation under such contributions in its behalf, as no other m[inistr]y durst ever meditate. Thus disposed, it was no wonder they admired the moderation of their sovereign, in offering to treat of peace, after above a million men had perished by the war, and twice that number been reduced to misery; after whole provinces had been depopulated, whole countries subdued, and the victors themselves almost crushed by the trophies they had gained.<sup>97</sup>

At no point, for example, does Smollett excuse Pitt for his sudden reversal of principle in supporting the wars on the European continent; but when he wishes to express disapproval in the *Continuation* he will usually resort to some such locution as "persons ill-disposed towards Mr. Pitt did not scruple to maintain," and so on. One could say, in short, that the basic narrative of the *Atom* represents a rewriting of the *Continuation* in which Smollett takes a gleeful delight in the opportunity to say exactly what he thinks, with no restraint whatever.<sup>98</sup>

One further source of satiric material for the *Atom* must be noted, though it cannot be discussed in detail in any form short of a monograph. The *Atom*

represents what appears to be a unique instance in English literature of the wholesale borrowing of imagery from a particular nonliterary source, and a very sordid one at that: the hundreds of scurrilous prints (we should now call them cartoons) in which the events and personages of the day were ruthlessly denigrated. In these the fundamental satiric strategy of rendering an abstraction ridiculous by making it concrete is pursued to a length that our age does not often duplicate. In one print, for example, George II is a farting satyr to whom the queen is about to administer an enema of gold; in another, Pitt blows bubbles to delude the mob. Smollett himself is represented as a quack doctor and a mountebank's zany; and Lord Bute is shown astride a broomstick, guiding it toward a broom sprouting from between the thighs of the dowager princess of Wales.<sup>99</sup> In scores of instances, as the notes to the present edition show, it is clear that Smollett has borrowed the imagery concerning a particular target of his satire from one or more of these prints, and often indeed his satire is hard to grasp unless one refers to the print in question.

Smollett's burning interest in these prints is no mystery. The steady stream of political pamphlets and prints attacking the ministry in power had fluctuated in intensity since the two forms first became major instruments of propaganda during the early years of Walpole's long administration; the stream suddenly grew into a raging torrent with the advent of Bute as first minister. Horace Walpole wrote on 20 June 1762 to Sir Horace Mann: "The new administration begins tempestuously. My father was not more abused after twenty years than Lord Bute is in twenty days. Weekly papers swarm, and like other swarms of insects, sting."<sup>100</sup> And when Smollett took up the cudgels for Bute with the *Briton*, he himself was frequently lampooned in a way that, given his sensitive irritability regarding his own status and that of the hated Scots in general, he must have found intolerable. Turning the satirists' own weapons against them was a logical form of revenge.<sup>101</sup>

Lastly, in constructing the *Atom's* nine arias (as we might call them) or virtuoso digressions on topics of absurdly recondite erudition, Smollett had recourse chiefly to the pages of his own *Critical Review* and to the sources he had to consult during his lengthy editorial labors on the *Universal History*. In the *Critical* he could find (and in many cases surely had himself written) summaries of and quotations from books on ancient music, chemistry, alchemy, witchcraft, medicine, law, church history, and a host of other subjects both obvious and obscure. These he pillaged, often verbatim (very occasionally slipping into conflation or errors when copying), for the *Atom's* breathless catalogues of arcane facts and authorities, not one of which, apparently, is fabricated.

## COMPOSITION

In attempting to reconstruct and date the composition of the *Atom* we must resort entirely to conjecture, but clues are not lacking. The absolute *termini a quo* and *ad quem* are of course the Marriage Act and the Jewish Naturalization Bill of 1753 (the earliest contemporary events incorporated into the narrative) together with the death of Henry Pelham in March 1754, which left his elder brother the duke of Newcastle at the helm of state; and a period in the autumn of 1768, between 31 August—the date of Smollett's last preserved letter written in England, to David Hume—and about the first of November, by which time the printer John Almon must have begun setting up the book in type.<sup>102</sup> We can be considerably more precise, however, in dating Smollett's work on the manuscript.

Smollett could hardly have cherished all the attitudes and opinions that galvanize the *Atom* until about the middle of the year 1760. At that time he, like many others, was powerfully affected by Israel Mauduit's anti-war pamphlet, *Considerations on the Present German War*, which he praises and summarizes at length in the *Continuation*, saying that his own opinions are "exactly conformable" to those it presents.<sup>103</sup> We should, incidentally, bear in mind that at no point does Smollett condemn the vigorous prosecution of the war in America, Africa, or India; it is only the German campaign, which can give no profit to Britain except insofar as it exhausts France, that he execrates; and he often maintains that France can keep the European land war going on forever.<sup>104</sup> Smollett, like many others, despised the duke of Newcastle, first lord of the treasury, for a variety of reasons; and he abhorred Frederick the Great (a view shared by few at the time) as a general enemy of the human race and an agent of limitless destruction. But as late as January 1760 his new venture, the *British Magazine*, opened with a florid dedication to Pitt, to whom the *History* had also been dedicated. It is hard to believe that Smollett could have simultaneously written that dedication and entertained the sentiments that dictate the portrait of Taycho in the *Atom*. On the other hand, the *Atom* certainly contains several passages lifted from the early issues of the *British Magazine*, as well as from *Sir Launcelot Greaves*, which first appeared in the issues of its earliest eighteen months.<sup>105</sup> It is at least possible that at this time Smollett was assembling materials for a humorous or satirical work, perhaps only dimly conceived; and we have seen that in 1761 and later he was profoundly struck by the "Rabelaisian" Sterne of *Tristram Shandy*.

By 1762, however, the situation was quite different. Pitt was out (he had resigned in October 1761), Lord Bute was in, and Smollett was energetically defending his fellow-Scot and his policies in the *Briton*. Although we may

find his open letter of 3 October 1762 (printed on 7 October in *The Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*) lacking in candor when he virtually denies without denying in so many words his authorship of the *Briton*,<sup>106</sup> there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of what he says in the letter concerning his opinions on Pitt, since his statement entirely agrees with what we find in his other works. He had admired Pitt for his probity with regard to the financial prerequisites of office, virtually unique at the time among political figures,<sup>107</sup> and for his vigorous opposition to Hanoverian entanglements. He had begun to change his views when Pitt, who won cabinet office in 1756–57, warmly espoused the German war and the attendant subsidies; and now that Pitt was no longer the most powerful man in England (though Smollett prudently does not say this), he could safely point out that in the *Briton* and the *Continuation* he had done no more than thoughtfully and sorrowfully to decry Pitt's reversal of principle. By the middle of 1762 Smollett was fully equipped both with the materials and with the opinions necessary to write the *Atom*.

But had he the time or the health? Lewis Knapp has abundantly shown that Smollett was virtually an invalid throughout the year 1762; his letters complain of emaciation, catarrh, exhaustion; he spent at least part of the year at Southampton and at Bath to take the waters and was trying frantically to obtain a consular post in a warm climate; he was writing a *Briton* a week, continuing to edit the *Universal History*, at least supervising the *British Magazine* and the *Critical Review*, and no doubt working on his edition of Voltaire, begun in 1761, which would reach twenty-five volumes by 1763.<sup>108</sup> We may reasonably doubt that these exertions left him much time, whatever his inclinations, for satire. And early in 1763 the *Briton* was discontinued, no pension or consulship seemed forthcoming, and Smollett and his wife were prostrated by the sudden death in adolescence of their beloved only daughter.<sup>109</sup>

From June 1763 until early 1765, however, Smollett was isolated from England and its affairs in Boulogne and Nice (with a brief journey to Italy). The year 1764 he spent largely in a comfortable house at Nice, and during this time he evidently assembled the materials which became his *Travels* and most of volume 5 of the *Continuation* (the first four volumes had appeared in thirty-nine numbers, running through February 1762).<sup>110</sup> He had with him his own complete works as author and editor of both books and periodicals, together with the *Universal History*.<sup>111</sup> The innumerable parallels between the *Continuation* and the *Atom*, the *Atom's* use of several passages from two letters in the *Travels*, and its reflection or outright lifting of a multitude of passages from the *Critical* and the *Briton* which could hardly have been reproduced

from memory, lead to the conclusion that much of the *Atom* must have been composed at Nice as Smollett reflected with bitterness and at leisure on how he had been "traded by malice, persecuted by faction, and abandoned by false patrons [Bute]," amid "illiberal dispute and incredible infatuation."<sup>112</sup>

At this point we should consider some facts concerning the *Atom's* structure. The occurrences it covers run from shortly before the outbreak of hostilities in America in the summer of 1754 to the preparations for the dispatch of British troops to rebellious Boston in 1768, the "Wilkes and liberty" riots in the spring of 1768, and (perhaps) Bute's departure for France in August and Pitt's resignation in October; but the narrative is by no means uniform in its density of texture or thoroughness in reflecting events. In its first edition it totals 412 duodecimo pages. These may be divided as follows:

1. Preliminary matter, including the frame story and lengthy portraits of George II and the principal members of the cabinet, 1754–57. This occupies pages 1–74 of volume 1.

2. The remainder of volume 1 and the first 161 pages of volume 2 are taken up with a narrative of events from the first military skirmishes in America of 1754–56 to the resignation of Bute in 1763. These include Pitt's coming to power; Frederick's activities on the Continent; the principal campaigns and battles, naval and military, of the global war; the death of George II and the accession of his grandson; the resignations of Pitt and Newcastle; and the Peace of Paris. The texture is uniform throughout. Eight of the nine arias or digressions occur in this portion of the work (the first of these is in the preliminary matter); the narrative is thoroughly detailed and filled with embellishments of all kinds; and it closes with a balanced portrait of Bute and a summary of his achievements.

3. Domestic crises from May 1763 to the spring of 1765, which is the terminal date of the events covered in volume 5 of the *Continuation*; these occupy pages 162–67 of volume 2. The coverage is selective, to say the least: the narrative is confused and hard to follow; Bute is given a prominence he did not in fact have; and the principal personalities of the period are only glanced at.

4. The remaining pages of volume 2 (168–90) refer to happenings of the next three years. Very little is discussed except the Stamp Act and the tumults in the colonies; the narrative breaks off abruptly, seemingly at the beginning of a new episode. There is no pretense of a conclusion.

Thus we find that the *Atom* in its first published state consists of a smoothly finished narrative containing 384 pages devoted to the transactions of nearly



ten years; five pages treating the next two years, quite as laden with important matters but perfunctorily dealt with; and twenty-three pages on the subsequent three years, breaking off with no indication that a proper conclusion is possible nor yet any attempt to sum up.

One other item of internal evidence, however, is worth noting. The garrulous Atom's private revelations about the life and character of Richard III, totally at variance with Smollett's view of that monarch in the rest of his works,<sup>113</sup> occur early in volume 2, just before the taking of Quebec in 1759, and are clearly a parody of Horace Walpole's *Historic Doubts on . . . Richard III*. This work appeared early in 1768 and was severely handled by the *Critical* in its February issue.<sup>114</sup> Evidently, then, Smollett must have been adding various materials to his manuscript in 1768 as well as attempting a continuation.

Taking all of this information together, the most plausible (though of course arguable) chronology for the composition of the *Atom* must be as follows. Smollett, with abundant leisure at Nice but denied detailed or up-to-date information on current events,<sup>115</sup> worked there on the *Travels*, volume 5 of the *Continuation*, and the *Atom* up to the point of Bute's resignation and his own departure from England. Back in England in 1765, he completed and published the first two of these works and may have continued writing the *Atom*, but doubtless either did not dare or at least hesitated to publish it, especially since Pitt might at any moment return to power (and shortly thereafter did so).<sup>116</sup> As the months passed, however, Smollett's views of the nation's future and his own must have become increasingly gloomy. His health continued to deteriorate in England's damp and chilly weather, far away from the beneficial effects he had experienced by the Mediterranean; the possibility of a consulship or residency in a place with a congenial climate began to seem hopeless; and the political situation, given his opinions on the threat of mob rule, must have given rise to his greatest indignation and his worst fears. He may even, as a Scot of some fame (or notoriety), have begun to fear for his personal safety: "In 1768 . . . anti-Scots feeling had especially focused on the Wilkite cause, with some harassment of Scots in the streets by 'Wilkes and Liberty' mobs and with the trials in August of three Scots soldiers for having killed a man during the Wilkite riots and the consequent 'massacre of St. George's Fields' (10 May 1768)."<sup>117</sup> And so in the summer of 1768, perhaps having already decided to leave England forever in the autumn, he must have made final revisions and sketched out a "treatment" of the years 1765-68, but for one reason or another (perhaps having lost the direct commitment of personal indignation that he had nourished some years

before) did not see fit to conclude the work. Unwilling, however, to forsake the opportunity to fire this Parthian shot at his enemies, he had it conveyed to the hands of the bookseller John Almon (under circumstances which probably can never be clarified) and washed his own hands of it.

#### ATTRIBUTION

So far as can be determined from the documents that have been preserved, Smollett never acknowledged that he had written the *Atom* and never referred to it in his correspondence. This fact has led to a certain amount of confusion concerning its attribution to him, since scholars are often chary of proceeding in such cases without the firmest evidence, and since, perhaps because of its outrageous tone and ubiquitous scatology, the *Atom* has been given very little detailed study. Thus Lewis Knapp, the leading Smollett scholar of our time, was hesitant to pronounce unequivocally for Smollett's authorship; thus several decades ago a fabricated "Smollett letter" asserted that he had *not* written it; and thus the only extensive study of the question, at about the same time, ventured only to say that it "seems reasonably safe to conclude" that Smollett wrote the *Atom*.<sup>118</sup> But the firmest evidence is not wanting. It is both internal and external; and while we still lack an affidavit of authorship in Smollett's hand, nothing further remains to be desired to corroborate the attribution of the *Atom* to him.

The absence of an assertion by Smollett that he had written the *Atom* is not at all difficult to explain. The work is unfinished, for one thing; but the anxiety about the danger of prosecution for libel mentioned in its preface, and in the preface to *Humphry Clinker* as well, should not be read as entirely ironic or playful.<sup>119</sup> Smollett had been fined and imprisoned for libel in 1759-60; there was no reason why he might not return to England from Italy for a longer or shorter stay in the near future; though many of the most noted personages lampooned in the *Atom* had died by 1769, Pitt, Bute, and George III were either in fact or very possibly might soon again be in positions of the highest authority.<sup>120</sup> And even though George II had been dead for nearly a decade, *lèse-majesté* was a far graver offense than mere libel.<sup>121</sup> Wilkes had been condemned for seditious libel and expelled from the Commons for his treatment of George III in the *North Briton's* famous Number 45; and, what was worse, John Shebbeare had stood in the pillory in 1759 for, among other things, satirizing the long-dead George I. The principle that satire of a dead monarch was punishable had been laid down on that occasion by none

other than Smollett's nemesis in his own libel trial, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield.<sup>122</sup>

The one document we have that may perhaps bear on all these matters is a letter written to Smollett in Leghorn by his good friend Dr. John Armstrong on 28 March 1769, three days before the *Atom's* long-delayed publication.

London March 28th 1769

O, my dear Doctor, I should severely reproach myself for having so long delayed answering your Letter, which gave much pleasure and Entertainment not only to me, but to all our common Friends—if it was not that I waited for some News that might please you. I have none to send you at last; except you are as I am upon the Douglas side.<sup>123</sup> But this is treating you with stale Intelligence.

It is needless to say how much I rejoice in your Recovery—but I have all along had great Confidence in the vigorous Stamina with which Nature has blest you. I hope you may within a year or two be able to weather out if not an English winter at least an English summer. Meantime if you won't come to us, I'll come to you; and shall with the help of small Punch and your Company laugh at the Tuscan dogdays.

I enjoy with a pleasing Sympathy the agreeable Society you find amongst the professors at Pisa. All countries and all Religions are the same to men of liberal minds. [page 2] And the most contemptible, sometimes even the most dangerous of all Animals, is an ill-natured Blockhead who affects to despise his Neighbours, because he secretly envies their superiour abilities, and regards them with a jealous Eye.

The daily, industrious, indefatigable operations of the most pernicious Lyes—The most impudent audacious Quackeries that were ever practised upon a blind stupid ignorant profane populace, still continue to prosper. The London mob have long every hour of the day *damn'd their Eyesight*—and they happen to have good reason for it. I will not at once disgust and shock you with the Recital of such seditious and treasonable Insolencies as never durst before Wednesday last brow-beat a Throne—at least never with Impunity. Your Friends at Pisa envy our Constitution—I'm afraid we may in a short time be reduced to sigh after theirs. For the View at present all around us is an object of the most extreme Indignation Contempt and Horror.

Meantime the infernal Spirit of the most absurd Discord, Erynnis blind and blundering in Dotage, has not yet so universally poisoned the noble mind of the publick as to engross it entirely to the clumsy dirty black-guard amusements and Exercises. For History still makes a Shift to waddle on, tho' it grows rather a *lame Duck*; And there are still Jack-daws [page 3] [tear in text] swallow the green cheese of Tragedy, and the no less insipid curd of your *new Comedy*. So much the better—all Trades would *live* they say—

But talking of some recent publications puts me in mind of something I had almost forgot to tell you—That several people who have a particular regard and esteem for the reputed Author of the present State of all Nations are sorry to find that he has too much exposed the posteriors of our Brothers in the North; and made some undeserved Compliments to their Neighbours in the South, who already have a comfortable enough share of self-conceit; and that amongst other perfections he allows them to be the handsomest people in Europe, which they think a very disputable Opinion.

All the Friends you have mentioned are well, and desire to be kindly remembered to you. Your Health is never forgot in our Computations. I am sorry to tell you that our Society has lost one worthy member in Doctor Russel who died some Months ago of a malignant Fever. I beg you'll let me hear from you soon; and am, with my best Compliments to M<sup>rs</sup> Smollett, at the same time never forgetting Miss [blank] and Miss Currie

my dear Sir  
Your ever affectionate Friend and  
faithful humble Servant  
John Armstrong<sup>124</sup>

The cryptic and incoherent passage in the middle of this otherwise very lucid letter, followed by "talking of some recent publications" and a reference to Smollett's *Present State of All Nations* (1768–69), raises at least the possibility that Armstrong is attempting to tell Smollett something, in code as it were, about the appearance of another work which cannot be referred to directly, but which is called "your *new Comedy*." The *Atom* clearly fits the description; but we must certainly admit that this reading of the passage cannot be more than conjectural. In any case, the bleak picture painted of the state of London intellectual life, with the letters of Junius attacking the throne itself, agrees with what we know of Smollett's own views of the England he had just quitted.<sup>125</sup>

When the *Atom* appeared it was promptly reviewed in at least nine periodicals. Of these, three did not raise the question of authorship at all; five remarked that the *Atom* was "said" or "reputed" to be by Smollett; and the *Critical* (in a review which the marked copy at University College, London, assigns to Smollett himself) said, after lavishly praising the book, "we are unwilling to be more particular . . . for reasons that may be easily guessed."<sup>126</sup> The *Monthly Review*, the *London Chronicle*, and the *Whitehall Evening Post* all listed "Smollett's Adventures of an Atom" among works reviewed or published.<sup>127</sup> But most significant of all, *The Political Register* and *Critical Memoirs of the Times* clearly and directly attribute the *Atom* to Smol-

lett. Their editors were the booksellers John Almon and George Kearsly. Politically, both Almon and Kearsly were opponents or enemies of Smollett; both reviewed the *Atom* in such a way as to suggest that they were hinting at the presence of materials for a libel action; and, most importantly, both had somehow or other undertaken to publish the *Atom*, withdrawing it only when the nature of its contents became apparent to them.<sup>128</sup>

The external evidence, then, is abundant enough to establish Smollett's authorship beyond question. The internal evidence has already been studied in some detail by several scholars.<sup>129</sup> But, as the notes to the present volume indicate, this evidence consists of literally hundreds of items. Detailed commentary on these would require a book in itself, and is in any case unnecessary, since all internal evidence tends to three unmistakable points:

1. If Smollett did not write the *Atom*, its author was a person unknown who devoted himself to plagiarizing the works of Smollett with unexampled pertinacity and thoroughness.

2. The political and personal opinions of the *Atom* are perfectly conformable with those of Smollett at all points, including even such anomalies as the conduct of Lord George Sackville at Minden. Smollett was almost alone in defending Sackville; he is not even mentioned in the *Atom*, despite the fact that his behavior would have been an admirable means of strengthening Smollett's denigration of that action. Smollett's views on such minor matters as the importance of Louisiana and Pitt's alleged neglect of the "fighting Quaker" Thomas Cumming are other cases in point.<sup>130</sup>

3. Lastly, the "profile" of the *Atom*'s author must be considered. The style of the *Atom* is thick with Smollettisms: "understrapper," "brought on the carpet," "certain it is," "big with" (in the sense of "pregnant or fraught with"), "blood and treasure," "incendiary." Numerous examples of Scotticisms are found: words used in their French sense, as "assist" for "be present at" or "actually" for "at this or that time," and archaisms used in Scotland that had vanished from standard English. The author is a rarity in English writing of his time in his indignation at the prevailing English prejudice against the Scots (remarkably resembling certain recent varieties of anti-Semitism in England and America) as hungry, rapacious, clannish, dirty, uncouth, threatening competitors.<sup>131</sup> And finally, the *Atom* was written, either by a physician or by a man preoccupied with medicine and science. Not only is the imagery often medical (Hanover is an "ulcerated boil" on the rump of Great Britain), but references to bodily tissues and fluids, anatomy, diseases, remedies and treatments, all couched in medical or technical termi-

nology, occur by the dozen; seldom do more than four or five pages pass without a "sternutatory" or a "viscus."<sup>132</sup> It was not only with reference to scatology that Smollett thought himself a disciple of Rabelais.

The reader may wonder that so much evidence seemingly needs to be adduced in a matter which may now appear rather obvious, especially since many writers on Smollett have taken his authorship of the *Atom* for granted. But arguing in a circle is never defensible; and since much of the information here presented is new, while at the same time doubts on Smollett's authorship have been expressed in the recent past, it seems advisable to have the ascription of a lengthy and not unimportant work to a major author settled beyond question in the first serious scholarly edition of that work. Smollett's reputation will not suffer from the firm placement of this satire in his canon.

#### PUBLICATION AND RECEPTION

The curious circumstances surrounding the publication of the *Atom* have been deduced from bibliographical evidence by O M Brack, Jr.<sup>133</sup> Briefly, it appears that in the late autumn of 1768 the printer and bookseller John Almon printed the work in two duodecimo volumes, advertised it for sale, and distributed a certain number of copies, presumably in early December. Almon was a zealous promoter of the causes of both Pitt and John Wilkes, and he was a close friend and constant advisor of Wilkes both before and after the publication of Number 45 of the *North Briton*, which led to Wilkes's arrest and to the "Wilkes and Liberty" movement, soon to reach an almost insurrectionary force on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>134</sup> The modern reader may find it hard to believe that such a person could have printed a work so diametrically opposed to his own views and so violently attacking his two heroes, but such was the case.<sup>135</sup> We are forced to suppose that Almon must have been ignorant of the *Atom*'s contents when he offered it for sale, since it evidently was hastily withdrawn, but only after at least a few copies had been sold. The work was advertised again in February 1769, this time by George Kearsly (or Kearsley), whose views and activities corresponded with or even exceeded Almon's;<sup>136</sup> and we may again suppose initial ignorance of the *Atom*'s contents, for there is no evidence that Kearsly ever distributed it. Finally the work was advertised again by Robinson and Roberts, who had published and were publishing other works of Smollett,<sup>137</sup> and it appeared, perhaps with deliberate timing, on 1 April 1769.

We can only conjecture as to just what had happened among the book-

sellers. We have seen from their published notices that Almon and Kearsly must (at least eventually) have known the *Atom* to be Smollett's. Almon doubtless thought on receiving the manuscript that in any case he had a salable property; and on discovering that he had been ideologically "bitten," as he would have termed it, he unloaded the sheets of the *Atom*, or the bound copies, or both, on Kearsly. Kearsly in turn either discovered the nature of what he had acquired, or, if he already knew, changed his mind about the advisability of publishing it. Robinson and Roberts either decided that the *Atom* was relatively harmless or that distributing it was worth the risk.

It is unfortunately impossible to come any closer than this account can take us to the facts of the *Atom*'s publication. The two audaciously anti-administration booksellers who thought better of publishing the book after they had acquired it could have felt so only if they feared prosecution or, more probably (since both had been in very hot water without lasting ill effects), if they declined to be parties to the promotion of anti-Pitt, anti-Wilkes, pro-Bute satire. And both attacked the *Atom* in print after it was published.

Book reviews in Smollett's day, if lengthy, tended to consist of a few sentences characterizing the work, one or more quoted passages from it, often very long, and a few concluding sentences of evaluation. Such was the case with the *Atom*, which was promptly noticed in the leading London periodicals. The *London Magazine* said: "This very shrewd and very entertaining history of the present times, is attributed to the ingenious Dr. Smollett. . . . such an account . . . must give much amusement to the public."<sup>138</sup> The *London Chronicle* review appeared in two parts in successive issues, and began: "This work, which is attributed to the Author of Roderick Random, is a satirical political history of the public transactions, and of the characters and conduct of some great men in a certain kingdom, to which the author has given the name of Japan, during the late and present reigns."<sup>139</sup> The *Town and Country Magazine* found the *Atom* to be "a sarcastic production in imitation of Rabelais and Swift, meant to lash the m[inister]s, politics, and parties of a certain island; and [it] is executed with much genuine wit, and original humour."<sup>140</sup> The *Gentleman's Magazine* made no mention of the author, and found the book to be written with "great spirit and humour; but there is a mixture of indelicacy and indecency which though it cannot gratify the loosest imagination can scarce fail to disgust the coarsest."<sup>141</sup>

The *Monthly Review*, which carried on a running political and literary feud of fluctuating intensity with Smollett's *Critical*, its chief rival, was surprisingly mild (its review was by the esteemed John Hawkesworth, whose relations with Smollett were generally amicable): "There is much spirit,

humour, and satire in this piece; but there is also much nastiness and obscenity: of that kind, however, which is disgusting, and consequently not pernicious. There are also some inconsistencies. . . . There are many inaccuracies of style and expression; but it would be treating a hasty performance of this kind too severely to point them out."<sup>142</sup> Smollett's own *Critical* (in a review almost certainly written by him) was predictably enthusiastic: "This satire unites the happy extravagance of Rabelais to the splendid humour of Swift. . . . [Anyone who knows what life is like must think] the author's pencil if it has a fault, errs on the side of delicacy. More characteristically true than any picture ever drawn of a certain people . . . ridicule and reality are here blended together with inimitable art and originality." The reviewer "disapprove[s] of the severity with which a certain respectable character" (probably meaning Pitt) "is drawn," but finds the pictures of Newcastle and Hardwicke to be particularly good. The notice ends: "We are unwilling to be more particular in our account of this piece, for reasons that may be easily guessed; but we must conclude, by saying as Shakespeare does of music, that the man who does not love and relish this performance has no wit in his own composition."<sup>143</sup>

In striking contrast to this luscious praise is the notice in the *Political Register*. Almon was the editor of this journal, and if we may indulge in conjecture we can see him taking revenge for having been tricked into printing what he now reviews.

[The *Atom*] falls so short of the graceful simplicity and lively entertaining humour of his [Smollett's] other performances of the same kind, that we could not give credit to it did we not perceive a political transformation . . . which points out the author to those that are in possession of the list of ministerial writers.

The foul, abusive, degrading character of the late k--- . . . is mean, malevolent, and unpardonable; but be it remembered that the supposed author was a prisoner in the king's bench during the k---'s reign, which he will never forget; nor forgive the ministry at that period, whose characters are vilely mangled in this work, to gratify keen resentment.<sup>144</sup>

The notice of the *Atom* in George Kearsly's *Critical Memoirs of the Times*, whether or not by Kearsly himself, gave it the most thoughtful attention found in any contemporary account. The political animus of this review is obvious—alone among the criticisms it takes the trouble to complain of the *Atom*'s treatment of Wilkes, though in fact Wilkes (in comparison, say, with

Newcastle or Frederick the Great) is rather gently treated. It contains the highest proportion of comment to quotation among all of the reviews.

This performance is said to come from the pen of the celebrated author of Roderick Random. It is, however, a very gross and inelegant production, very unworthy of such a writer. Add to this that the share of merit, which might have been attributed to it on the score of its satirical and characteristic descriptions, is in a great measure evaporated by the delay of its publication: the most remarkable personages in it, being either naturally or politically dead since their portraits were drawn. Portraits indeed they should not be called, but rather villainous caricatures, not more disgraceful to the objects than the painter.

The *Atom* is supposed to give the following account of the people of the empire of Japan; under which name we presume we need not inform the reader the author means an island with which he is much better acquainted.

The review then quotes in its entirety a lengthy passage from the text, beginning on page 8, below ("The empire of Japan consists . . ."), and concluding on page 9 (. . . chaos of their absurdities"). After the quotation it continues as follows: "There are some touches in the above picture, not ill-designed, and which in general sketches may pass for the pencilling of a masterly hand. They are too strong, nevertheless, to be made use of in the delineation of the particular features of individuals. There is indeed, too much truth in the writer's observation that 'while the constitution of human nature remains unchanged, satire will be always better received than panegyric . . .'" The review next quotes fully the paragraph on satire beginning with this sentence, page 38, below. And it then goes on:

Admitting all this, however, it is beneath the character of a man of genius, to employ his talents to such an infamous purpose as that of gratifying only the malignity of mankind. Yet this seems to be the sole purpose of our malignant atom; who takes up the history of his pretended Japan, at the beginning of the last war, and closes it soon after the peace. The characters that figured, and events that happened during that interval, are here depicted and related under fictitious terms and appellations; very easily decyphered by those who are in the least acquainted with the public transactions during that period.

Of the personages and conduct of the *late* emperor or dairo of Japan and his ministers, the *Atom* has drawn the most disgusting and odious picture imaginable; we shall select a specimen or two of the work, therefore, from his description of the *present*.

There follows a complete quotation of the passage describing George III, Bute, and the latter's philosophy of government, beginning (page 96, below) with "Gio-gio was a young prince . . ." and concluding (page 97) with ". . . dragging in opposite directions." The quotation completed, the discussion continues with a complaint: "The historian's further illustration of this example is gross, vulgar and puerile; we pass it over, therefore, to come to the subsequent conduct of Yak-Strot with regard to his royal pupil." The review then repeats in full the passage treating Bute's economies in the royal household and his plans for patronage of the arts and letters: "He dismissed from the Dairo's service . . ." (page 101, below), concluding with ". . . not above four or five men of genius could be found in the whole empire of Japan" (page 102). Following this passage the author turns his attention to the *Atom's* treatment of Pitt: "The various tergiversations of our late great commoner are here ludicrously repeated, as the conduct of the orator Taycho; and the famous exploit of Number 45, by our present popular patriot, recorded in the same strain, as that of the dirtmonger Ian-ki-dtzin; whom he leaves beyond sea making ineffectual appeals to the people at home. What a field has since opened for our atom to display his adventures in! But we shall take leave of this very partial and illiberal performance with the full eulogium to Lord B---." The review concludes by quoting the *Atom's* most extended and sustained expression of praise for Bute, pages 123-24, below: "As for Yak-strot, he was every thing but a down-right martyr to the odium of the public . . . . There was very little vicious in his composition; and as to his follies, they were rather the subjects of ridicule than of resentment."<sup>145</sup>

We may conclude that the *Atom*, though its impact on the London literary world was far from sensational, received as much attention from the reviewers as might reasonably have been expected. Had Smollett cared or dared to publish it in 1765, it would surely have created a greater stir and perhaps landed him in hot water; but the fact that "the most remarkable personages in it" were "either naturally, or politically dead," together with the complexity and minute detail of its texture, could not fail to militate against its success. The book did not, however, escape the notice of so discriminating a critic as Edmund Burke. He reprinted in its entirety the digression on surnames from volume two, with a complimentary remark on its wit, in the *Annual Register*, of which he was editor at the time; and thus he obliquely testified that in his opinion one passage at least from Smollett's satire merited preservation for posterity among the notabilities of 1769.<sup>146</sup> The *Atom* was not mentioned in the Baron Grimm's influential *Correspondence*

*littéraire*, which in elegant scribal copies kept the crowned heads of Europe abreast of current developments in letters; not, so far as is known, was it noticed in other Continental reviews. Though Clara Reeve mentioned it briefly but favorably in *The Progress of Romance* (1785),<sup>147</sup> there seems to be little or no further documentation of its immediate popularity. However, a print which appeared in May and August 1769, shortly after the *Atom's* publication, would seem to indicate that the artist expected Smollett's work to be fairly familiar to his customers. This print, entitled *An Abridgment of Mr. Pope's Essay on Man*, features a pile of volumes with titles on their spines, such as "Locke," "Newton," and "Life of Alexander"; at the bottom of the pile is "Adventures of an Atom," surmounted by "An Essay on Rattles and Sceptres."<sup>148</sup>

The most notable comment on the *Atom* between its first reviews and the observations of scholars in our own day appeared in the "Life of Smollett" prefacing the six-volume collection of *Miscellaneous Works* brought out in Edinburgh in 1796-97 and reprinted in 1800. The author of this "Life," Robert Anderson, M.D., is anxious to praise Smollett wherever possible, but his account of the *Atom* at least shows that he had read it carefully:

His *Adventures of an Atom* belong to the class of compositions in fictitious history, in the form rather than the substance of the work, which consists of real characters and historical incidents, aggravated and embellished by humour and fancy, and tinged by the dark hues of political prejudice. This species of romance was first introduced into the English language by Mrs. Manley, in the "Memoirs of the New Atlantis," to stigmatize the whig administration in the reign of Queen Anne. It was afterwards improved by Swift, who blended in his political allegories, humour and satire, ridicule and reality, with inimitable art and originality, and advanced to perfection by Dr. Arbuthnot, in the "History of John Bull." The plan of this performance combines the wild extravagance of Rabelais, and the broad caricature of Mrs. Manley, with the splendid humour of Swift, and the brilliant wit and profound erudition of Dr. Arbuthnot. He takes the advantage of the Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration to endue his atom with reason and the organs of speech, which he excites in the brain of *Mr. Nathaniel Peacock*, who writes down what it dictates of the history of one period, during which it underwent some strange revolutions in the empire of *Japan* (England); and was conscious of some political anecdotes, to be divulged for the instruction of British ministers. He professes to give a plain narrative of historical incidents, "without pretending to philosophize like H—e, or dogmatize like S——tt." The characters of the chiefs who disputed the administration of Japan, are drawn in the high style of recognizable caricature. The portraits of King George II, and the Duke of Cumberland are aggravated with strokes of satire; and the leaders of

the whig party, with the exception of the Earl of Hardwick, "the wisest man, and the greatest cypher," are stigmatized as a set of sordid knaves, utterly devoid of sentiment and integrity. Even the Earl of Bute and Lord Mansfield, the favourite subjects of his panegyric, are exposed to the virulence of his satire, and the keen shafts of his ridicule. From our knowledge of Smollett's character, we expect, what we find, in this work; ideas that indicate a firm and lofty mind, and a diction ardent and energetic, correspondent to the feelings of his heart. Though it is inferior, upon the whole, to his other novels, for ingenuity and contrivance in the composition, and for observation of life, it is written, for the most,—with his usual humour, animation, and felicity of expression. His comparison of the *Council Board* to the allegorical *table of Cebes*, is well managed; and his digressions on *surnames, breeches, alchemy, magic, necromancy, and sorcery*, display that peculiar combination of profound learning and genuine humour, which forms the basis of ludicrous composition. In his representation of personal characters, he is most liable to censure. Political prejudice never appears more justly reprehensible, than when it attempts to cast a veil over distinguished merit, and loads exalted characters with obloquy. There can hardly be any contemplation more painful than to dwell on the virulent excesses of a man of genius; and yet the utility of such contemplation may be equal to the pain. The strength and the acuteness of sensation which partly constitute genius, have a great tendency to produce virulence, if the mind is not perpetually on its guard against that subtle, insinuating, and corrosive poison, hatred against all whose opinions are opposite to our own.

"In this performance," Dr. Moore justly observes, "Smollett combines the manner of Swift and Rabelais; while in many parts he equals their humour, he has not always avoided their indelicacy, and has sometimes followed the wild extravagance of the latter. Prejudice has certainly guided his pencil in drawing the portraits, or rather caricatures, interspersed through this work, some of which do the greatest injustice to the originals for whom they were intended; yet the performance, on the whole, affords new proofs of the humour, wit, learning, and powerful genius of the painter; and it may be asserted with truth, that no political allegory has been executed with equal wit and pleasantry, since the days of Arbuthnot."<sup>149</sup>

Though Anderson's commentary may seem to us somewhat too tender of Pitt and others, and somewhat too inclined to equate the *Atom* in merit with its most distinguished predecessors, it is nevertheless not distorted in its total view of the work. It was a fitting vehicle for preserving whatever limited reputation and esteem the *Atom* might enjoy among the curious during its long period of eclipse during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when most lovers and admirers of Smollett were hardly aware of its existence.

In the Robinson and Roberts edition of 1769 the two volumes of the *Atom* sold for the sum of five shillings sewed and six shillings bound,<sup>150</sup> a price which can hardly have helped the sales of so small a book. A Dublin edition appeared in the same year.<sup>151</sup> A London edition of 1778 was called the "tenth," though anyone familiar with the practices of eighteenth-century booksellers will be skeptical of this claim; there was an Edinburgh edition in 1784 and a London edition in 1786. In 1795 the work appeared as No. 50 in *Cooke's Pocket Edition of Select Novels*. It was also included, but with no critical apparatus beyond the reproduction of one or another of the several "keys," in the numerous collected editions of Smollett's works published in Edinburgh, London, Oxford, New York, and Philadelphia from 1796 through 1926. These were at least fourteen in number; but although the most notable bore the names of Sir Walter Scott, George Saintsbury, William Ernest Henley, Thomas Seccombe, and Gustavus Maynadier, these eminent men of letters had little or nothing to say about the *Atom*, and their "editions" of it were merely reprints of earlier ones.<sup>152</sup> The present edition of Smollett's satire is thus not only the first to appear since 1926, but also the first ever to provide both a carefully edited text and a full apparatus of historical annotation.

### Notes

1. These are: James R. Foster, "Smollett and the *Atom*," *PMLA* 68 (1953): 1032-46; Martz, 90-103; Arnold Whitridge, *Tobias Smollett* (Brooklyn: privately printed, 1925), 56-79; Damian Grant, *Tobias Smollett: A Study in Style* (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester University Press, 1977), 56-59, 175-77; Henry B. Prickett, "The Political Writings and Opinions of Tobias Smollett" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1952), 308-37; Wayne J. Douglass, "Smollett and the Sordid Knaves: Political Satire in *The Adventures of an Atom*" (Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1976). See also two more recent articles by the editor of the present volume: "The Authorship of the *Atom*," *Philological Quarterly* 59 (1981): 183-89; "Ut Pictura Poesis? Smollett, Satire, and the Graphic Arts," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 10, ed. Harry C. Payne (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 297-312.
2. Smollett's words at the opening of his first letter in the *Travels* (p. 2).
3. Lismahago's words in *Humphry Clinker*, as repeated in a letter from Matthew Bramble to Dr. Lewis, Tweedmouth, July 15.
4. This statement is made with full knowledge of the poems of Swift and Pope and of Sir John Harington's earlier *Metamorphosis of Ajax* (1596), and of Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* (nominated for that honor by the London

- Times Literary Supplement*, 5 May 1978, p. 493, col. 2), to say nothing of Mailer's *Ancient Evenings*.
5. *Gentleman's Magazine* 39 (April 1769): 205.
  6. Introduction to *The Politics of Samuel Johnson* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 5-6.
  7. In eighteenth-century England the twenty-six members of the bench of bishops, or lords spiritual, were appointed for life by the crown; the Scottish peerage was represented by sixteen members who were elected for the seven-year duration of a given Parliament, but might or might not be re-elected; the crown (persuaded by the incumbent ministry) might alter the political complexion of the House of Lords by creating new peers.
  8. See below, vol. 1, nn. 287, 494; and see Williams, 2:36.
  9. See J. C. D. Clark, *The Dynamics of Change: The Crisis of the 1750s and the English Party Systems* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1982); Stephen B. Baxter, "The Conduct of the Seven Years' War," in *England's Rise to Greatness, 1660-1763*, ed. S. B. Baxter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 323-48; and Richard Middleton, *The Bells of Victory: The Pitt-Newcastle Ministry and the Conduct of the Seven Years' War, 1757-1762* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
  10. See Brewer, "Misfortunes," 3-4, and below, vol. 2, nn. 399, 407, 408, 410, 412, 452, 462, 463. So acute and well informed an observer as David Hume thought that Bute was all-powerful behind the scenes as late as 1771; see Duncan Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1975), 132. In 1770 the young Thomas Chatterton wrote two lengthy verse satires, "Kew Gardens" and "The Whore of Babylon," describing what he believed to be the sinister, hidden influence of Bute and the king's mother. See Donald S. Taylor, *Thomas Chatterton's Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 210-17. The texts of the two poems may be found in Donald S. Taylor and Benjamin B. Hoover, eds., *The Complete Works of Thomas Chatterton* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 1:452-67, 512-42. On 2 March 1770 Pitt, who certainly knew the contrary, spoke in the House of Lords of "an invisible power . . . who notwithstanding he was abroad, was at this moment as potent as ever"; see Brooke, *George III*, 391.
  11. See below, vol. 2, n. 246.
  12. On this aspect of Pitt's career see Brewer, *Party*, chapter 6, "Pitt and Patriotism: A Case Study in Political Argument," and the listing of pro-Pitt and anti-Pitt pamphlets (pp. 336-60); see also the list in Marie Peters, *Pitt and Popularity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 282-91.
  13. A detailed account of the "Massacre" may be found in Namier, *England*, 468-83.
  14. An example of such a career is that of John Cleveland, secretary of the admiralty. See below, vol. 1, n. 244, and the references cited therein. Even more notable in this way was Charles Jenkinson (1727-1808), M.P. and secretary to Lord Bute,



- who became the confidant and political agent of George III and was created earl of Liverpool in 1796. See Ninetta S. Jucker, ed., *The Jenkinson Papers: 1760-1766* (London: Macmillan, 1949).
15. This figure is taken from the detailed discussion of taxation during the Seven Years' War in Stephen Dowell, *A History of Taxation and Taxes in England* (London: Longmans, Green, 1884), 2:130-43.
  16. See J. H. Plumb, *Sir Robert Walpole: The King's Minister* (London: Cresset Press, 1960), 1:233-83; and on Bute see below, vol. 2, n. 393.
  17. See Dowell, *A History of Taxation*, 2:130-43.
  18. For examples see Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982), 309-19. For more general accounts of the structure of English society at the time see J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice During the Ancien Regime* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1977). See also J. A. W. Gunn, *Beyond Liberty and Property: The Process of Self-Recognition in Eighteenth-Century Political Thought* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983).
  19. See Basil Williams, *The Whig Supremacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 157-63, 251-57; Paul S. Fritz, *The English Ministers and Jacobitism between the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975); and Eveline Cruickshanks, ed., *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1680-1759* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982).
  20. *King George III and the Politicians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 4. For an extensive treatment of Britain's Continental problems see Richard Lodge, *Great Britain and Prussia in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1972).
  21. For example, the vital office of secretary of state for the colonies was not created until January 1768 (with Lord Hillsborough filling the post). On colonial policy see Williams, *The Whig Supremacy*, 307-24. A thorough and useful survey, both of the political and economic situation in this period and of the Seven Years' War and the events that led to the American Revolution, is I. R. Christie, *Crisis of Empire: Great Britain and the American Colonies, 1754-1783* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966). For more detailed studies of the political errors and ideological attitudes that promoted the Revolution see Gipson, and see also Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Fall of the First British Empire: Origins of the War of American Independence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967); Edmund S. and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution*, rev. ed. (New York: Collier Books, 1976); John L. Bullion, *A Great and Necessary Measure: George Grenville and the Genesis of the Stamp Act* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983). The

- most extensive and detailed study of the colonies, and of British imperial and colonial policy, is Lawrence Gipson's monumental fifteen-volume work, *The British Empire before the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1936-70).
22. On the disastrous effects of Newcastle's persistent attempts see Reed Browning, "The Duke of Newcastle and the Imperial Election Plan," *Journal of British Studies* 7 (1967): 28-47.
  23. All of the events mentioned in this general account are taken up in the *Atom*; treatments of them in Smollett's other works and in standard historical sources are acknowledged in detail in the notes to the text, below.
  24. Sedgwick, 28.
  25. The phrase, "a bloody war," included by Bute in George III's first speech to the privy council on his accession, was altered at Pitt's insistence to "an expensive but just and necessary war." See Brooke, *George III*, 75, and Williams, 2:64.
  26. The classic discussion and demonstration of this thesis is Namier, *Structure*. See also John Brooke, "Namier and Namierism," *History and Theory* 3 (1964): 331-47.
  27. The significance of party ideology is examined in great detail by Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party, 1740-1760* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1982). See also Brian W. Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties, 1742-1832* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985), and *The Growth of Parliamentary Parties, 1689-1747* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1976).
  28. See Brewer, *Party*, 47.
  29. The reader is referred to the analysis of Pitt's motivations in Brewer, *Party*, 96-111; but Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, modifies this analysis and shows it to be in need of qualification.
  30. See Robin Fabel, "The Patriotic Briton: Smollett and English Politics," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1974): 100-114.
  31. For examples see the lists of pamphlets given in Brewer, *Party*, 336-60.
  32. See below, vol. 1, n. 755, and vol. 2, nn. 94, 114.
  33. See below, vol. 2, n. 259; and see Brewer, *Party*, 107-8, and Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, 205-39.
  34. The problems of who recruited Smollett for the *Briton*, what he received or expected for writing the journal, and how Bute regarded its usefulness remain unsolved; the evidence is largely conjectural. Dr. John Campbell, historian, co-editor with Smollett of the *Universal History*, one of Bute's closest advisors and a principal propagandist for his administration, may well have been the intermediary between them; see Martz, 8, and Brewer, *Party*, 222, 224-26. Prickett, "Political Writings," concludes (pp. 270-78, 309-10) that Bute, finding the *Briton* ineffective, simply ignored it. See also Peters, *Pitt and Popularity*, 241-61; and see below, vol. 2, n. 369.
  35. *King George III*, 4.
  36. In the May 1758 issue of the *Critical Review*, Smollett vituperatively reviewed a

- pamphlet in which Vice-Admiral Charles Knowles had defended his conduct during the abortive expedition of 1757 against Rochefort. Denigrating Knowles's entire career, Smollett called him "an ignorant, assuming, officious, fribbling pretender; conceited as a peacock, obstinate as a mule, and mischievous as a monkey" (*CR* 5:439). Knowles sued the printer and Smollett for libel. The former was acquitted in June 1759 after Smollett had come forward to declare himself both author and publisher of the offending words; in November 1760 Smollett was fined £100, sentenced to three months' imprisonment (which he served in the King's Bench Prison from the end of November through mid-February), and required to give security for his good behavior for seven years. See Knapp, 213-14, 218, 230-36.
37. The most spectacular instance of Pitt's changeability was his instant and complete reversal of attitude on the German war and on aid to Frederick. For a recent summary of the scholarship on this point, see Baxter, "The Conduct of the Seven Years' War," 341.
  38. See below, vol. 1, n. 435; and see Sedgwick, 57, 60: Pitt is "that snake in the grass" and "the blackest of hearts." Bute and the king may be exonerated of prejudice if we consider certain opinions of Samuel Johnson and David Hume on the "feudal gabble" of the "great actor," who is "our Cutthroat"; see Donald Greene, ed., *Samuel Johnson: Political Writings*, The Yale Edition of Johnson's Works, vol. 10 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 347-48, 367-68 and n. 9. But see also Romney Sedgwick, "Letters from William Pitt to Lord Bute, 1755-1758," in *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, ed. Richard Pares and A. J. P. Taylor (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1956), 108-66.
  39. See below, vol. 1, n. 469.
  40. See below, vol. 2, n. 246, and the references cited therein.
  41. See, for example, Johnson's savage satire, "[The Vultures]," written at the height of the Seven Years' War. Published as *Idler*, no. 22, in the *Universal Chronicle*, 9 September 1758, this satire was omitted from the collected edition of the *Idler* in 1761. See also the references cited in n. 38, above; and for a general discussion of Johnson's views see Donald J. Greene, "Samuel Johnson and the Great War for Empire," in *English Writers of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. John H. Muddendord (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 37-65.
  42. Smollett's approving views of Britain's acquisition of an overseas empire and the successful attempts to weaken the power of France are studied and summarized in Prickett, "Political Writings," 184-85, 195, 205.
  43. See *Briton*, no. 6 (3 July 1762) and no. 22 (23 October 1762).
  44. For a judicious summary of the evidence concerning these points see Sir Lewis Namier, "George III and Bute," *Avenues of History* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952), 118-21. Brooke, *George III*, 46, 49, 50, 266, argues that the widespread belief in Princess Augusta's influence over her son was pure myth. See James L.

- McKelvey, *George III and Lord Bute: The Leicester House Years* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1973). A useful discussion of Bolingbroke's theories and his posthumous influence is Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).
45. See above, n. 28.
  46. See Brewer, *Party*, 112-17, for summary and discussion of contemporary views on this point.
  47. The evidence for this statement is carefully analyzed and discussed in Prickett, "Political Writings," 318-28.
  48. For examples of these opinions in Smollett's works see Sekora, 146-53.
  49. John Carteret became Earl Granville in 1744 on the death of his mother, who was Countess Granville in her own right. On Granville's career see Basil Williams, *Carteret and Newcastle* (London: Frank Cass, 1966).
  50. The saying originated with Pitt himself, in a speech of 9 December 1762 against the Peace of Paris; see *PH*, 15:1267.
  51. See below, vol. 2, n. 351.
  52. Ronald Hyam, "Imperial Interests and the Peace of Paris (1763)," in *Reappraisals in British Imperial History*, ed. R. Hyam and G. Martin (London: Macmillan, 1975), 26.
  53. The most reliable accounts of Smollett's political views are those of Robin Fabel, "The Patriotic Briton"; Donald Greene, "Smollett the Historian: A Reappraisal," in *Tobias Smollett: Bicentennial Essays Presented to Lewis M. Knapp*, ed. G. S. Rousseau and P.-G. Boucé (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 25-56; and W. A. Speck, "Tobias Smollett and the Historian," in *Society and Literature in England, 1700-1760* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1983), 167-85.
  54. The best and most balanced summary of Smollett's views in general is that of Ian Campbell Ross, "Tobias Smollett: Gentleman by Birth, Education, and Profession," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 5 (1982): 179-90.
  55. This estimate of Johnson is from his biographer Walter Jackson Bate, as summarized by C. J. Rawson, "Jobswell: A Short View of the Johnson-Boswell Industry," *Sewanee Review* 88 (1980): 106.
  56. In reviewing *The Peregrinations of Jeremiab Grant, the West Indian*, *CR* 15 (January 1763): 18, Smollett remarks: "We cannot call it a faithful copy, . . . but submit to the reader, whether the likenesses may not be compared to the wrong side of a tapestry, on which the figures do not appear to the best advantage. . . ." See Basker, 228, 271. The image is from the prologue to part 2 of *Don Quixote*; see the translation of Samuel Putnam (New York: Viking, 1949), 1028, n. 29. We should number among those works relevant to the *Atom* large portions of the *Universal History* (discussed below), for which Smollett's editorial effort involved

- much rewriting—perhaps as much as one-third of the “Modern Part,” including the sections on the German Empire and Japan; see Martz, 8, and Martz, “Tobias Smollett and the *Universal History*,” *Modern Language Notes* 56 (1941): 1–14.
57. Philip J. Klukoff, “Two Smollett Attributions in the *Critical Review: The Reverie and Tristram Shandy*,” *Notes & Queries* 211 (1966): 465–66; Basker, 263.
  58. *CR* 11 (April 1761): 315. The Latin phrases signify “jokes of Plautus” (therefore coarse), and “unclean and shameful expressions.” The text contains an error; “ignominiosaq: dicta” should read “ignominiosaque dicta.”
  59. *CR* 13 (January 1762): 66.
  60. *CR* 13 (January 1762): 67.
  61. *CR* 13 (January 1762): 68. The quotation is from the review of volumes 5 and 6 of *Tristram Shandy*. The Latinate circumlocution for farting is echoed in the *Atom*; see below, p. 35. The word *braye* is from medieval or early Renaissance French and refers to underdrawers, or a loincloth.
  62. *CR* 10 (January 1760): 70; see Basker, 226, 259.
  63. *CR* 19 (January 1765): 66; see below, the text, pp. 33–34. The significant portions of all of these reviews of *Tristram Shandy* are reproduced in *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Alan B. Howes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 52, 62, 125–27, 138–40, 159–60, 179.
  64. These reviews are quoted below, pp. lix and lviii. The similarity in wording of the two reviews may be accounted for by the fact that *Town and Country* had been founded by the son of Archibald Hamilton, co-proprietor and printer of the *Critical Review* and the *British Magazine*; see Basker, 32, 189, 207.
  65. See Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), and Huntington Brown, *Rabelais in English Literature* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1933), 184–88.
  66. Martz, 91.
  67. For Marana’s work see Arthur Weitzmann, ed., *Letters Writ by a Turkish Spy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970). On Manley and Haywood see Paul B. Anderson, “Delarivière Manley’s Prose Fiction,” *Philological Quarterly* 13 (1934): 168–88; Robert Adams Day, *Told in Letters* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966); John J. Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Jerry C. Beasley, *Novels of the 1740s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1982).
  68. Knapp, 104–5, presents virtually conclusive evidence that Smollett had in fact translated *Le diable boiteux*; see also Martz, 91–93.
  69. Smollett’s knowledge of this last is not firmly established; and it has no real similarity with the *Atom* beyond being a key-novel and calling England Japan. See Martz, 93.
  70. See Robert Adams Day, ed., *The History of Pompey the Little* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974); and for a list of such fictions see Toby A. Olshin,

- “Form and Theme in Novels about Non-Human Characters, A Neglected Sub-Genre,” *Genre* 2 (1969): 43–56.
71. On these points see the discussion of the picaresque mode in Ronald Paulson, *Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 190–94.
  72. The reviews appeared as follows: *CR* 9 (May 1760): 419; *CR* 11 (April 1761): 336; and *CR* 20 (August 1765): 120–24. *Chrysal* has been edited, with an informative introduction, by Ernest Baker (London: Routledge, 1907).
  73. *CR* 9 (May 1760): 419.
  74. See James R. Foster, “Smollett’s Pamphleteering Foe Shebbeare,” *PMLA* 57 (1942): 1090.
  75. Foster, “Shebbeare,” 1077–86.
  76. See Foster, “Shebbeare,” 1067–69.
  77. Foster, “Shebbeare,” 1091.
  78. *CR* 15 (March 1763): 210. The review is by Smollett; it contains numerous touches characteristic of his style and opinions. *The Sumatrans* was published anonymously, but Smollett, who had reviewed Shebbeare’s polemical series of *Letters to the English People*, recognized him as the author; see Basker, 228, 269, 272.
  79. See the discussion below, pp. xlix–lii.
  80. See Martz, 96–103; see also the article by Martz, “Tobias Smollett and the *Universal History*,” and see Knapp, 248–49. The history of Japan was probably compiled by George Psalmanazar, the impostor and self-styled native of Formosa, who in later life worked for various booksellers, mostly as a historical writer. Smollett knew him well; he is mentioned in *Humphry Clinker* (Jery Melford to Sir Watkin Phillips, London, June 10). On his career see Robert A. Day, “Psalmanazar’s ‘Formosa’ and the British Reader (Including Samuel Johnson),” in *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, ed. G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, and Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
  81. American readers should perhaps be reminded that in British usage “corn” is any sort of edible grain.
  82. *CR* 8 (September 1759): 189–90.
  83. See below, the text, p. 3: “I likewise turned over to . . . the *Universal History*, and found . . . many of the names and much of the matter specified in the following sheets.”
  84. See below, vol. 1, n. 66.
  85. See, for example, FI-DE-TA-DA in the key to the present volume.
  86. The passages in question are on pp. 9, 24, and 37–38 of the text, below. Smollett almost certainly knew a minor satirical work of Swift, *An Account of the Court and Empire of Japan*, that much resembles the *Atom*. The *Critical* considered this

- work "such as would discredit the pen of an author of the lowest class"; see *CR* 19 (May 1765): 350. On Swift's *Account* see below, vol. 2, n. 171.
87. These pamphlets are available in an excellent modern edition by Alan W. Bower and Robert A. Erickson, *The History of John Bull* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).
88. See the remarks below, p. lxxii; and for a probable direct borrowing from Arbuthnot by Smollett, see below vol. 1, n. 314.
89. This edition is discussed in Bower and Erickson, *John Bull*, xxvi.
90. *CR* 10 (December 1760): 453, 452, 451. See David R. Raynor, ed., *Sister Peg: A Pamphlet Hitherto Unknown: By David Hume* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1982). Roger L. Emerson, "Recent Works on Eighteenth-Century Scottish Life and Thought," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 11 (1985): 104, challenges the attribution to Hume, pointing out that scholars generally give the pamphlet to Adam Ferguson. (Smollett was acquainted with Ferguson; see *Humphry Clinker*, Matthew Bramble to Dr. Lewis, Edinburgh, August 8.) Richard B. Sher, reviewing Raynor's work in *Philosophical Books* 24 (April 1983): 85-91, devotes his entire discussion to questioning the evidence Raynor adduces for Hume's authorship. The attribution remains unsettled at present. For additional information on Smollett's close relationships with the Edinburgh intellectuals see Richard B. Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).
91. See *Letters*, 135-36.
92. On Smollett's scatological preoccupations see Robert Adams Day, "Sex, Scatology, Smollett," in *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Paul-Gabriel Boucé (Manchester, Eng.: Manchester University Press, 1982), 225-43.
93. In an essay on the Georgics, first printed in Dryden's translation of Virgil (1697), Addison remarked that Virgil "delivers the meanest of his precepts with a kind of grandeur, he breaks the clods and tosses the dung about with an air of gracefulness"; see *The Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Addison*, ed. A. C. Guthkelch (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1914), 2:9.
94. These are in *Briton*, no. 38 (12 February 1763), no. 14 (19 August 1762), and no. 15 (4 September 1762).
95. *Letters*, 87; see also Smollett's letters to Wilkes, pp. 75-79, 82, 102, 104.
96. This idealized portrait of Smollett as historian is found in the general preface to the *Continuation*, 1:v.
97. *Continuation*, 3:286-87.
98. Prickett, "The Political Writings," 312-29, compares the opinions expressed in the *Atom* and the *Continuation* in great detail and finds them to be identical except in some points of emphasis.
99. See Prints 2327, 3913\*, 3917, 3853, 3852\*. For general accounts of these prints see Herbert M. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth* (New York:

- Oxford University Press, 1974); and Vincent Carretta, *The Snarling Muse: Verbal and Visual Satire from Pope to Churchill* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).
100. Walpole, *Correspondence*, 22:42.
101. Three articles on Smollett's use of satirical prints have recently appeared: Robert Adams Day, "Ut Pictura Poesis?"; Wayne J. Douglass, "Done After the Dutch Taste: Political Prints and Smollett's *Atom*," *Essays in Literature* 9 (1982): 170-79; Byron W. Gassman, "Smollett's *Briton* and the Art of Political Cartooning," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 14, ed. O M Brack, Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 243-58.
102. See *Letters*, 136; and see O M Brack, Jr., "The History and Adventures of an *Atom*, 1769," *PBSA* 64 (1970): 336-38.
103. *Continuation*, 4:155-73. The pamphlet was reviewed with great enthusiasm in *CR* 10 (November 1760): 403-4.
104. See, for example, *Briton*, no. 6 (3 July 1762).
105. See below, vol. 1, nn. 623, 638, 660, 710; and vol. 2, nn. 55, 137, 138, 142, 428.
106. This letter is reproduced in Knapp, 245-46. For a detailed discussion of Smollett's attitudes toward Pitt see Knapp, "Smollett and the Elder Pitt," *Modern Language Notes* 59 (1944): 250-57.
107. Throughout his early career Pitt resolutely eschewed the financial perquisites of office; the most noteworthy instance of this probity was in the matter of the funds entrusted to him as paymaster of the forces. See below, vol. 1, n. 437.
108. Data on the inception and progress of the Voltaire edition are given in Chau Le-Thanh, "Tobias Smollett and *The Works of Mr. de Voltaire*, London, 1761-1769" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1967).
109. See Knapp, 246-47. The *Briton* had ceased publication on 12 February; on Smollett's hopes for a pension or consulship see *Letters*, 110-11. Elizabeth Smollett died on 3 April.
110. See Lewis M. Knapp, "The Publication of Smollett's *Complete History* . . . and *Continuation*," *Library*, 4th ser., 16 (1935): 295-308.
111. Knapp, 248-49.
112. *Travels*, 2.
113. See below, vol. 2, n. 52.
114. *CR* 25 (February 1768): 116-26.
115. *Travels*, 233 (Letter 28, from Nice).
116. At the frantic insistence of George III, the duke of Cumberland (his uncle) was acting as intermediary with Pitt, trying to assemble a ministry that would satisfy the exigent Patriot. Only the prima-donna intransigence of Pitt's brother-in-law, Earl Temple, prevented a ministry dominated by Pitt from being formed in late June 1765. In July 1766 the desired administration finally came into being, with Pitt (now earl of Chatham) as lord privy seal. See Williams, 2:171-78; and see

- below, vol. 2, nn. 410–26. On the first Rockingham administration in general, see Paul Langford, *The First Rockingham Administration* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).
117. Eric Rothstein, "Scotophilia and *Humphry Clinker*: The Politics of Beggary, Bugs, and Buttocks," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 52 (1982): 68. In the summer of 1767 Lord Shelburne, then secretary of state for the southern department, had indicated to David Hume, who had approached him on Smollett's behalf, that he could not possibly bestow a consular appointment on a man "notorious for libelling." See Knapp, 271–72. Smollett, though safely in Bath at the time, was well aware of the danger of the Wilkite rioters in 1768; see *Letters*, 134–35.
118. See Knapp, 280–83; see also the review (by Allen T. Hazen and Lillian de la Torre) of a book by Francesco Cordasco, *Philological Quarterly* 31 (1952): 299–300; and see Foster, "Atom," 1046.
119. See below, p. 3 of the text; and see *Humphry Clinker*, the prefatory letter to "Henry Davis, Bookseller." Smollett's keen and abiding interest in the matter is evidenced by his review in 1765 of a book on the libel laws; see Basker, 228, 273.
120. On Smollett's trial and punishment for libeling Admiral Knowles see above, n. 36; and for his possible return to England, see the letter quoted above, pp. liv–lv. George II, the dukes of Cumberland and Newcastle, and Lords Hardwicke and Anson had all died by the end of 1768.
121. See Carl R. Kropf, "Libel and Satire in the Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1974): 153–68.
122. See Rudé, 35, and see below, vol. 2, nn. 377–82; see also Foster, "Smollett's Pamphleteering Foe Shebbeare," 1088, and John Almon, *Biographical, Literary, and Political Anecdotes* (London, 1797), 1:373–74.
123. The Douglas case was the most celebrated lawsuit in eighteenth-century Scotland. Archibald Douglas, duke of Douglas, had died in 1761, leaving no direct heir. His sister, Lady Jane Douglas, had married Colonel John Stewart at the age of forty-eight (presumably therefore long past the age of childbearing), but two years after her marriage reported that she had given birth to twin sons, one of whom had died. The survivor, Archibald Stewart Douglas, laid claim to the duke's estate. The claim was contested on behalf of the young duke of Hamilton, surviving head of the male branch of the Douglas family, on the grounds that the younger Archibald was suppositious. In 1767 the Scottish Court of Session ruled in favor of Hamilton, but in February 1769 the House of Lords reversed the decision.
124. The original document is in the collection of the Philadelphia Historical Society, with whose permission it is transcribed.
125. For these views, vigorously expressed, see *Letters*, 136–38. Dr. Armstrong is probably referring to the most recent letter of Junius (18 March 1769), which was addressed to the duke of Grafton (then first lord of the treasury) and concerned royal pardons, therefore indirectly reflecting on the king's probity. Grafton is bitterly criticized for securing the pardon of a convicted murderer

- while Wilkes remained unpardoned. See John Cannon, ed., *The Letters of Junius* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).
126. *CR* 27 (May 1769): 369. The marked copy of the earlier volumes of the *Critical*, with reviewers' names added in a contemporary hand, bears the shelfmark "F. H. PERS."
127. The original reviews, notices, and advertisements of the *Atom* are discussed in detail in Robert Adams Day, "The Authorship of the *Atom*."
128. See Day, "The Authorship of the *Atom*," 185–86, and Brack, "*The History and Adventures of an Atom*."
129. Notably Foster, Whitridge, and Martz, in the studies cited above, n. 1.
130. See below, vol. 1, nn. 764–76, and vol. 2, nn. 94, 205; see also Prickett, "The Political Writings," 243. Smollett's attitude toward Sackville was doubtless influenced by the fact that Sackville had been a military advisor and protégé of Bute; see McKelvey, 67–71, 103.
131. See below, vol. 2, nn. 182, 299, 300, 305, 395, 397.
132. For examples of this medical language see below, the text, pp. 15–16, 17, 45, 51, 54, 94, 127, and 128.
133. See Brack, "*The History and Adventures of an Atom*."
134. For an account of the affair see Rudé, 172–90. On the number "45" as inflammatory slogan see John Brewer, "The Number 45: A Wilkite Political Symbol," in Baxter, ed., *England's Rise to Greatness*, 349–80.
135. On the other hand, Almon did not invariably restrict his publishing activities to works whose views he espoused. In October 1768 he issued *The Present State of the Nation*, a controversial and widely discussed work by William Knox, colonial agent and advisor to Grenville, who advocated taxation and representation for the colonies and who justified slavery. On Knox and his views see Leland J. Bellot, *William Knox: The Life and Thought of an Eighteenth-Century Imperialist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977).
136. Kearsly printed Number 45 of the *North Briton* and was an ardent partisan of Wilkes. See Rudé, 23–24.
137. In addition to the *Continuation* Robinson and Roberts were currently publishing Smollett's *Present State of All Nations*, which they announced in the *Public Advertiser*, 10, 12, 13 December 1768.
138. *London Magazine* 38 (May 1769): 262.
139. *London Chronicle*, 8–11 April 1769, p. 5, col. 1.
140. *Town and Country Magazine* 1 (May 1769): 269. A favorable notice was to be expected from the *Town and Country*; see above, n. 64.
141. *Gentleman's Magazine* 39 (April 1769): 205.
142. *Monthly Review* 40 (June 1769): 454–55. For the attribution to Hawkesworth see Benjamin C. Nangle, *The Monthly Review* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 125.
143. *CR* 27 (May 1769): 362, 365, 369; and see above, n. 126.
144. *Political Register* 4 (1769): 389–90.
145. *Critical Memoirs of the Times* 1, no. 6 (10 April 1769): 505–11. The appearance of

this damaging review only ten days after the official publication date of the *Atom* might indicate either that it had been prepared in advance or that the reviewer was suspiciously eager to perform his task. The index to the bound volume lists "Dr. Smollett" as author of the *Atom*; the reviewer, if not Kearsly himself, may have been William Kenrick; see Basker, 70. (The *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, col. 1304, queries Kenrick's position as editor of *Critical Memoirs*.)

146. *Annual Register* for 1769, pt. 2, pp. 193-96. For the passage reprinted by Burke see below, the text, pp. 81-83.
147. *The Progress of Romance* (Colchester, 1785): 2:10.
148. This print is reproduced as frontispiece to the present edition from the original in the Huntington Library, with the permission of the trustees. For description and discussion of another copy see Vincent Carretta, "An Abridgment of Mr. Pope's *Essay on Man*: An Uncatalogued Print in the Library of Congress Collection," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 6 (1980), 102-5.
149. *The Miscellaneous Works of Tobias Smollett, M.D., with Memoirs of his Life and Writings*, 2d ed. (Edinburgh, 1800), 1:cxiv-xvi. The reader will note that Anderson confuses Hardwicke, whom Smollett detested, with Granville, and thinks that Smollett admired Mansfield; see below, vol. 1, nn. 213-26, 285-89, 442-45. "Dr. Moore" is Dr. John Moore, a distant cousin and close friend of Smollett, a prominent figure in Edinburgh intellectual circles, and a novelist of note. Moore had no doubts concerning Smollett's authorship of the *Atom*. The life of Smollett that prefaced various subsequent editions of the collected works is in effect a conflation of the accounts of Anderson and Moore; see Fred W. Boege, *Smollett's Reputation as a Novelist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 64-67.
150. The work was advertised at these prices in the *Whitehall Evening Post*, 13-15 April 1769.
151. Under terms of the Copyright Acts of 1709 and 1739, Irish booksellers could legally reprint and sell English books if they did not sell copies in England. See Richard C. Cole, "Smollett and the Eighteenth-Century Irish Book Trade," *PBSA* 69 (1975): 345-63.
152. The 1786 edition was a reprint in *The Novelists' Magazine*, vol. 21. Among editions containing the *Atom* were the six-volume collection by Anderson (1796); the *Works* (1797), edited by Dr. John Moore; the *Miscellaneous Works* (2d ed. of Anderson, 1800); *Miscellaneous Works*, 5 vols. (Edinburgh, 1809); a twelve-volume edition in 1824; the Bohn edition in one volume, 1843; Roscoe's edition, 1844; *Works*, ed. James P. Browne, 8 vols. (London: Bickers & Son, 1872); a six-volume edition prefaced by Sir Walter Scott's life of Smollett (New York: Routledge, 1884); *Works*, ed. George Saintsbury, 12 vols. (London and Philadelphia, 1899-1903); in the twentieth century the twelve-volume editions of Henley, Seccombe, and Maynadier; and lastly the Shakespeare Head Edition, 11 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1925-26).

## CHRONOLOGY

The entries below are limited to public events alluded to in the *Atom*, and to events in Smollett's life connected with the sources and composition of the work. For further details of Smollett's chronology consult Robert Donald Spector, *Tobias George Smollett*, rev. ed. (New York: Twayne, 1989), xiii-xvii.

<i>The Atom</i>	Smollett's Life
	1740
DEC. Frederick of Prussia invades Silesia; War of the Austrian Succession begins.	
	1741
APR. Frederick conquers and annexes Silesia.	
	1745
AUG. Prince Charles Edward Stuart lands in Scotland; rebellion of "the 'Forty-Five."	
	1746
APR. Rebellion finally crushed at battle of Culloden; duke of Cumberland's punitive measures against the Scots.	
	1748
Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle ends War of the Austrian Succession.	