

ABSTRACT

Title: EARLY MODERN SATIRE AND THE
BISHOPS' ORDER OF 1599: MANUSCRIPT,
PRINT AND STAGE

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English

The 1599 Bishops' Order prohibiting the publication of satire confirms satire's vigor in provoking re-evaluations of beliefs and values. The popularity of satire prior to and following the ban suggests that it served a social purpose. I argue that satire utilized classical models to transgress the limits of Christian exemplarity thus signaling a shift to an analytical approach to investigating and evaluating social/moral performance.

EARLY MODERN SATIRE AND THE BISHOPS' ORDER OF 1599:
MANUSCRIPT, PRINT AND STAGE

By

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Chapter 1: Satire and the 1599 Bishops' Order

The June 1st, 1599 entry in the Stationers' Register records an Order issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and the Bishop of London, Richard Bancroft, calling in specific titles to be destroyed and placing restrictions on certain types of works. The Order marked various collections of satires and epigrams, as well as the books of Harvey and Nashe, to be seized and prohibited future publication. In addition, the Bishops reasserted control over the printing of histories and plays. The Order reads as follows:

Satyres tearmed HALLES Satyres viz Virgidemiarum or his toothless or biting Satyres

PIGMALION with certain other Satyres

The scourge of villanye

The Shadowe of truthe in Epigrams and Satyres

Snarling Satyres

Caltha Poetarum

DAVYES Epigrams, with MARLOWES Elegyes

The book against woemen viz, of marriage and wyvinge

The XV ioyes of marriage

That noe Satyres or Epigrams be printed hereafter

That noe Englishe historyes be printed excepte that they bee allowed by some of her maiesties privie Counsell

That noe playes be printed excepte they bee allowed by such as have aucthorytie

That all NASSHES bookes and Doctor HARVYES bookes be taken wheresoeuer they maye be found and that none of their bookes be euer printed hereafter

That thoughe any booke of the nature of theise heretofore expressed shalbe broughte vnto yow vnder the hands of the Lord Archebissshop of CANTERBURYE or the Lord Biship of LONDON yet the said booke shall not be printed vntil the master or wardens have acquainted the said Lord Archbishop, or the Lord Bishop with the same to knowe whether it be their hand or no (Arber 677-78)

The June 4th follow-up entry details the course of action taken by the Stationers. It tells us that the June 1st Order was published at the hall and was specifically made known to fourteen men whom Arber argues were, “unprivileged [...] and were the printers from whose presses the works condemned might be expected to come” (678). Seven titles are recorded as having been collected and burnt. Two titles, Hall’s *Virgidemiarum* and Cutwode’s *Caltha Poetarum*, are noted as having been stayed. Suggesting that the Bishops’ proscriptions would continue to be rigorously enforced, Willoughby’s *Avisa* is named as next to be called in. The entry reads as follows (including some of Arber’s notes):

Sic examinatur

Die veneris Primo Junii

XLj Regine

The Commaundementes aforesaid were Delyuered att Croydon by my Lordes grace of CANTERBURY and the Bishop of LONDON vnder their handes to master Newberry master Binge and master Ponsonby wardens, And the said master and wardens Did there subscribe two Coppies thereof, one remayninge with my Lords grace of CANTERBURY and the other with the Bishop of LONDON

Die Lune iiij Junii Anno Predicto

The foresaid Commaundementes were published at Stacyoners hall to the Company and especyally to the prynters. *viz*, [Arber’s note: “Here

follows a list of fourteen men who were unprivileged at this date, and were the printers from whose presses the works now condemned might be expected to come.”]

Theis bookes presently therevppon were burnte in the hall viz
PYGMALION

The scourge of vilany

The shadowe of truthe

Snarling Satires

DAVIES *Epigrams*

Marriage and wyvinge

15 Joyes of marriage

Theis staid

Caltha Poetarum

HALLS *Satires*

WILLOBIES *Adviso* to be Called in (678)

One cannot help but immediately notice the breadth of the Order. The Bishops’ attend to a variety of texts, some identified specifically and some generically. They ban some texts, reassert their licensing authority over others and, in the June 4th entry, reassess their initial condemnations by both limiting and expanding their reach. For an act of censorship so sweeping to have not yet merited a significant and focused assessment is surprising but at the same time understandable. The 1599 Order’s varied foci invite compartmentalized investigation. The Order is considered within the contexts of histories of Elizabethan press censorship, for example, studies of

Renaissance drama, and even author specific examinations.¹ Unfortunately, the significance of the Order has been compartmentalized as a result. In this study I hope to open the Bishops' Order up to a more thorough study. To do so, the Order must be evaluated in its literary and historical contexts, thus my study draws theoretical inspiration from formalist and historical approaches. By investigating Elizabethan satire with an appreciation for the inexorable link between formal literary elements and historical praxis, I demonstrate that the Bishops were very much concerned with the influence classical literature, particularly Roman literature, had upon society. In other words, the Bishops' Order is best understood as a reflection of ecclesiastical anxiety over the complex negotiation of cultural identity bound up in the production and reception of texts.

Because of the sheer number of texts and types touched on by the Bishops, however, we must limit our attention without jeopardizing our conception of the Order as a whole. In this respect, I find that satire provides a foundation on which to ground my study. Verse collections of satire receive pride of place, being identified first in both the June 1st and June 4th entries; it merits the harshest treatment, a ban, excluding only a few specifically named satires from prohibition; and, the critical tone of satire is common to the texts considered by the Bishops even if not generically identified as or typically associated with satire. My study has the added responsibility, then, of reconsidering satire as a genre. Given that satire has been

¹ See, for example, Cyndia Clegg, *Press Censorship in Elizabethan England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); OJ Campbell, *Comicall Satyres and Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida* (Los Angeles: Adcraft Press, 1938); Richard McCabe, *Joseph Hall: A Study in Satire and Meditation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

commonly neglected by contemporary scholarship, my study proves perhaps more difficult but certainly more valuable. By exploring the production and reception of satire in this unique historical moment we might better appreciate the ways in which it is woven into the fabric of a society, offering insight into our own coded interactions. Thus, a discussion of how we as scholars understand satire is as important to an evaluation of the 1599 Bishops' Order as is the way in which it was understood in early modern England.

A review of the scholarship pertaining to satire reveals a dearth of materials. Despite a brief period in the 1950s and 60s, satire has received relatively little scholarly attention. One difficulty has been that satire lacks a stable generic definition. Indeed the notion of whether satire is in fact a genre at all is highlighted by Ronald Paulson, who wonders if "satire is anything more than a tone attached to certain forms and subject matters" (4). In an attempt to establish a generic definition, scholarship has tended to focus on formal elements and rhetorical strategies that are (arguably) common to satire throughout literary history. Alvin Kernan focuses on persona and plot, for example, and the New Critical scholarship of the 60s in general follows his lead. These surveys of satire, however, have not resulted in commonly agreed upon generic markers that, in Mary Claire Randolph's words, are "able to withstand critical assault from all quarters" ("Thomas Drant" 417). The most that scholars (and even authors) seem to agree upon is that satire is concerned with inappropriate behavior. As vague as this definition is, it is at least a foundation on which we might build.

While Fredric Bogel, in his 2001 study *The Difference Satire Makes: Rhetoric and Reading from Jonson to Byron*, recognizes the failures of formalist inquiries, he posits that an “intenser formalism” needs to be found to adequately speak to satire as a genre (9), although precisely what he means by “intenser” Bogel does not fully explain. Bogel’s idea of formalist solution to a formalist problem does have its merits, however. Heather Dubrow and Alastair Fowler’s studies of genre suggest that formalist approaches to genre must maintain an awareness of the mutability of formal elements contingent on and negotiated within a particular historical moment. As Fowler so aptly observes, “genres change continually” (45) and are differentiated through their relationship to other genres—past and present.² Viewed in this light, the importance Elizabethan satirists placed on establishing satire’s formal, generic elements are demonstrative of their understanding of the relational nature of satire. They were aware that Roman satire adhered to a set of formal precepts that simply could not be fully reproduced by them; their location in history prevented them from fully appreciating these formal elements even as it encouraged the imitation of satire as a genre. This is made explicitly clear by John Marston, Joseph Hall, John Weever, and Edward Guilpin’s remarks on the formal elements of satire, indeed the entire period’s satiric production is marked by explicit and implicit discussions of satire’s generic characteristics.³ Such a discussion must have an educational agenda. If we accept that a genre is only recognized as such through commonly agreed upon formal markers, then what we are witnessing in this study is in fact the emergence of satire

² See especially Fowler, chapter 3.

³ See following chapters for a study of the Elizabethan discussion of satire’s generic characteristics.

as a recognizable “English” genre. As authors and audiences came into contact with Roman satire in the original Latin and in translations, as they began to imitate these classical examples and innovate upon them, satire became a stable and identifiable genre even if only for a brief moment. Its methods, markers, purpose and, most importantly, status are ascribed to a form of poetry and, as I will show, drama as well. Then, for reasons this study aims to explain, its status as a genre erodes. What is left is a satiric tone ringing out through English literary history.

I posit satire is an identifiable genre, but I argue that it is recognized as such locally. In other words, satire is reliant on the intersection of literature and history to construct and authorize its formal strategies. Thus, to define satire generically is to recognize that definition’s dependence on a historical moment within a specific culture.⁴ This is not to dismiss the importance of satire’s formal elements but rather to appropriately contextualize those elements. To this end, Thomas Greene’s *The Light in Troy* stands as an important influence. In his seminal study of *imitatio* in early modern literature, Greene provides an excellent starting point for my study, one that allows the formal and the historical to cooperate. Greene demonstrates the important place that *imitatio* held in Renaissance literary production, arguing “[It] acts out a passage of history that is a retrospective version or construct, with all the vulnerability of a construct. It has no grounds other than the ‘modern’ universe of meanings it is helping to actualize and the past universe it points to allusively and simplifies. It seeks no suprahistorical order; it accepts the temporal, the contingent,

⁴ For this conception of the intersection of genre and history I am indebted to Stephen Greenblatt, “The Forms of Power and the Power of Forms in the Renaissance” *Genre* 15 (Spring-Summer 1982) : 1-2.

and the specific as a given” (19). Satire’s popularity in late Elizabethan England is bound up in Greene’s conception of *imitatio*. Satire emerges in “English” literature as it traverses history, moving from origin to originality.⁵

By examining satire in its various manifestations and in the contexts of manuscript, print, and stage through which it was transmitted, this study aims to clarify the function of satire in the late sixteenth-century. I argue that satire served a social purpose derived from its roots in republican Rome. By focusing its attention on the particular exigencies of everyday experiences, Roman satire implicitly provides an ethical model by which a civilized society is evaluated. In other words, Roman satire assesses examples of immoral behavior without obvious mediation of religious moral authority. Indeed, its roots in republican literature privilege the individual as an authorized arbiter of moral behavior. Because of its secular origins and focus, Roman satire’s imitation in early modern England infringes upon the privileged position of the ecclesiastical community as authorized arbiters of moral behavior. What this imitation facilitates, in effect, is a separation of church and state.

The church, concerned with the spiritual health of Christendom, strives to attend to its people by thematically and metaphorically interpreting and representing everyday existence through the strategies of moral exempla literature. Exempla literature takes unique historical experiences and reproduces them in a biblical context.⁶ This ultimately leads to the continual reproduction of Christian ideology

⁵ See also David Quint, *Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) for his work on the movement from classical imitation to originality in Renaissance literature.

⁶ For a discussion of the relationship between exempla and the ecclesiastical community, see Edwin D. Craun, *Lies, Slander, and Obscenity in Medieval English*

often at the expense of a practical set of models that aid the individual in navigating an increasingly secularized world. In the secular realm, Christian ideology is often at odds with the practical health and well-being of a society—politically, economically, socially. The works included in the 1599 Bishops’ Order—Roman influenced satire, epigram, drama and history—gain popularity in Elizabethan England at a time when the Reformation has complicated the regulation of human behavior. As the English Church loses its monopoly on moral authority, moral exempla literature becomes inadequate as a means of evaluating and teaching social behavior. English satire develops under these conditions in ways that supplement and/or supersede moral exempla literature to model alternative approaches to social/moral performance. The 1599 Order shows that the Bishops saw these works as encroaching on their moral authority. Consequently, the Order is best appreciated as a response to a larger literary movement—the rise in importance of the classics as appreciated in their secular contexts and republican roots. These classical texts—Horace’s *Sermones*, Martial’s *Epigrams*, Tacitus’ *Histories* and the like—provide models through which English society moves from a theocratic monarchy toward a republican government, models that, as David Norbrook has demonstrated, were of vital importance as a precursor to and throughout the English Civil War.⁷

Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Siegfried Wenzel, *Preachers, Poets, and the Early English Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Ullrich Langer, *Divine and Poetic Freedom in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Alan J. Fletcher, *Preaching, Politics and Poetry in Late-Medieval* (Portland: Four Courts Press, 1998); Joseph Mosher, *The Exemplum in the Early Religious and Didactic Literature of England* (New York: AMS Press, 1966).

⁷ See especially Norbrook’s *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Indeed, the Bishops' Order confirms satire's vigor in provoking re-evaluations of beliefs and values. By donning the persona of the satirist, the individual claims the *libertas* to explore morality independent of the regulation and control of established religious institutions and to focus on a pragmatic, secular ethics. Satire provides the individual with a vehicle to explore morality from a social perspective and, as a result, establishes the individual as an important arbiter of moral behavior largely at the expense of religious authority. In short, English satire emerged as a vehicle for moral exploration within the competing pressures of Roman influenced satire and Christian moral exempla literature. I posit that the other works included in the Order—epigram, drama, and history—faced similar pressures as they worked to assimilate the classics while shaking off the restraints of moral exempla literature and develop lines of inquiry secular in their outlook and concerns.

In order to better understand why the ban on satire was issued by the ecclesiastical, rather than secular, authorities and why it ultimately failed, we must examine the motives behind the Bishops' proscriptions. Because neither of the entries explicitly documents the motives behind the Order and the range of genres included in the entries deemed offensive by the Bishops complicates a consideration of their motives, it is not surprising that a variety of theories have been proposed. The most widely accepted posits that the Order is concerned with obscenity and indecency. John Peter's *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature* is representative of this position. Pointing to the "ecclesiastical position of its authors," Peter contends that a concern for public morals motivated the ban (150). Detailing some rather unsavory passages in works included in the Order, he concludes that, "it

was very largely with obscenity that they were concerned there can surely be no doubt whatever” (150). Recent criticism has tended to confirm this idea. For example, Bruce Smith’s and Lynda Boose’s respective examinations of homosexual and pornographic imagery found in satire support their belief that the Bishops were motivated by a concern for public morals. Peter suggests that the failure of the Bishops’ Order to control the production of satire is a result of the rejection of Roman influenced satire in favor of the more palatable literature of complaint. Peter is, I believe, on the right track. His distinction between complaint—religiously authorized moral inquiry—and satire—personal and secular in its moral concerns—is useful for the purposes of this study. Unfortunately, his focus on the offensive content of specific satires overshadows an appreciation of the Order as a whole. To be sure, it would be difficult to imagine why an order motivated by a concern for public morals would include history and drama in its proscriptions. While satire and epigram are frequently (and even expected to be) obscene, obscenity is not characteristic of the histories and drama produced in Elizabethan England. What is more, the obscenity motive fails to explain what would appear to be a significant change in attitude on the part of the Bishops.

Most of the works listed had received prior ecclesiastical approval. Cyndia Clegg notes that, “*Pygmalion* was reviewed and approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury’s secretary, Abraham Hartwell, *Scourge of Villanie*, by Samuel Harsnett... [O]f the seven named satires censored, all but two had previously received ecclesiastical approval... Nashe’s *Lenten Stuff* had received the Archbishop’s own imprint in January 1599” (200). Given this prior approval it

seems unlikely that obscenity was the principal reason for censoring these texts. Still, a concern for public morals cannot be wholly ruled out as a motive. Taken individually, these works may not represent a significant enough threat to warrant censorship, but as a whole, they represent a new literary movement. Like jazz in the 1920s or rock-n-roll in the 1950s, these works might have been recognized as dangerous only when their relationship to and status in a movement was appreciated.

There are, of course, other theories. Richard McCabe's work with Hall's satires prompted him to see in the 1599 Order a concern with libel and slander against the state ("Elizabethan Satire"192). McCabe remarks that at the time the Order was issued Whitgift was a member of the Privy Council and Bancroft a member of the High Commission, two bodies interested more in the maintenance of state power than the moral character of its people. McCabe points to Whitgift's involvement in the censorship measures of 1586 and Bancroft's work uncovering the Marprelate press in 1588 as confirmation that the 1599 Order is a similar attempt to censor libelous and seditious texts.

Annabel Patterson takes a related position. Patterson's analysis of histories produced during this period, particularly Hayward's *The first part of the life and raigne of King Henrie IIIII*, leads her to conclude that the Order was concerned with preserving state power. Patterson works from her notion of "functional ambiguity" (8), arguing that literature employing language that was purposefully vague could safely engage in social, political and religious critiques. Texts identified by the Bishops in the 1599 Order, she argues, did not comply with the conventions of this functional ambiguity. In short, Patterson argues that the Bishops were acting as the

eyes and ears of a government identifying explicit incidents of seditious language in contemporary texts (47). As attractive as McCabe and Patterson's theories might be, however, neither accounts for prior ecclesiastical authorization, nor do they account for the failure of the ban to control the production of satire. And the ban was a failure. The June 4th entry excluded Hall and Cutwode's satires from destruction, for instance, and satires continued to be produced and published in the years following. In fact, the only case I have found of the ban's enforcement after June 4th is that of Samuel Rowland's *The Letting of Humours Blood in the Head Vaine*; the printer was fined and the books destroyed. But, after minor revisions and a new title, Rowland's satires were reprinted without incident in 1603 and 1608 (Peter 151). Further, even while the Bishops were busy with the presses, Roman influenced satire remained popular in manuscript and migrated to the stage.

Was it, then, that the texts listed in the 1599 Order were considered subversive only when viewed in the context of a larger literary movement?

Or perhaps, as Cyndia Clegg has argued, a specific historical event precipitated the Bishops' change of heart. This would provide a motive as well as account for the texts' prior approval. Clegg suggests that the Order "was motivated less by prevailing attitudes than by particular interest in deflecting criticism of the government during the crisis of 1599—the Earl of Essex's ill-fated war effort in Ireland" (202). In summary, Clegg contends that the close friendship between Essex and Whitgift prompted the Bishop to issue the ban to protect his friend from public, often vicious attacks.

Clegg's argument is compelling; however her analysis illustrates a fundamental difficulty that scholars have encountered when speculating about the Bishops' motives. Critics have a tendency to focus on specific content. However, centering attention on obscenity, libel, sedition or Essex unnecessarily limits the scope of the Order. Even critics like Peter and Patterson, who at least consider formal elements in their discussions of the ban, ultimately fall back on content as the overriding motivation behind the Order. I argue that no one theory that is content driven can sufficiently explain the presence of such a wide range of texts. What is more, there are other equally plausible theories yet unexplored by contemporary scholarship. Satire, epigram, history, and drama were among the most popular secular books in print in the 1590s; and what is popular is profitable. Taking into account the fashionable publications included in the Order in conjunction with the list of unlicensed printers, it may at least in part be considered an attempt to exert control over unlicensed printing in and around London. Indeed, the Order may have been instigated by the Stationers themselves, to protect their interests, rather than by the Bishops.⁸

While the above theories do have merits, as I have said, the primary failure to document the Bishops' motives lies in focusing attention on the matter rather than the manner. Examining the works included in the Bishops' Order for a particular type of offensive content—obscenity, libel, and/or sedition—inevitably results in finding such content. Given the tumultuous social climate of the turn of the seventeenth-century, works overlooked by the Order—lyric poetry, for example—contain

⁸ See Clegg's discussion of the Stationers' Company interest regarding unlicensed printing, 24-26.

potentially offensive material. The most important clue provided by the Bishops as to their motive is found in the line, “That thoughe any booke of the *nature* [my italics] of these heretofore expressed shalbe broughte vnto yow vnder the hands of the Lord Archebisshop of CANTERBURYE or the Lord Biship of LONDON.” The Bishops’ were concerned with the “nature” of certain works. It is my sense that the Bishops were engaged in a generalized attack on the popular, secular literature of the period. The satires, epigrams, histories, and drama of the 1590s were significantly influenced by the humanist movement and its investment in the classics. This investment resulted in the increased availability of the classics, both in the Latin and Greek as well as in translations. It is important to note that these texts—Horace’s satires, Martial’s epigrams, Tacitus’ histories and the like—might well have been considered threatening by the ecclesiastical authorities. Roman texts dramatically altered the type, content and even the reception of literature in the 1590s, as attested by the variety of theories proposed to explain the Order. Roman literature, with its taste for obscenity and libel, as well as its roots in a republican and anti-authoritarian tradition, provided Elizabethan authors and audiences new models with which to examine and interpret their condition. I believe that these new models, satire in particular, threatened the Bishops in their roles as authorized arbiters of moral behavior. The 1599 Order, then, while certainly political and moral in its rationale, should also be considered an attack on classically influenced popular, secular literature.

I would like to clarify that because the Order deals with such a wide range of texts, it would be impossible to imagine that one event, like Essex’s failure in

Ireland, or one type of offensive material, like obscenity, alone would have prompted Whitgift and Bancroft to make such sweeping proclamations. Still, it is difficult to dismiss outright any of the motivations I have examined above. By examining specific issues that the Bishops had with satire as a genre, I hope to further an appreciation of the Order as a unique historical instance in which the Bishops were concerned less with subject matter than with the methods by which texts are produced and received. Satire provided authors and audiences a way to examine moral behavior that privileged the individual over religious institutions. Satire was itself afforded such a privilege by its roots in Roman republicanism and anti-authoritarianism. In short, the classics provided alternate literary models that threatened institutionally accepted models; satire was a threat to the literature of moral exempla.

Of course the Bishops were themselves well-versed in the classics and could hardly have remained untouched by their influence. Still, there are obvious indications that the ecclesiastical community saw Roman influenced genres like satire as threatening. Thomas Drant's translation of Horace's *Sermones* provides a prime example of this attitude. Described by the *DNB* as a "poet and divine," Drant was a well known figure in the English literary community. He wrote extensively during his years at Cambridge. His reputation as a poet during this period is apparent from Spenser's reference to him in *Three Proper, and Wittie, Familiar Letters* wherein he is praised for his ability as a poet. More importantly, Drant was also a member of an informal translation project centered at the Inns of Court and Universities (Conley 33).

In *The First Translators of the Classics*, Carey Conley observes that the beginning of Elizabeth's reign coincided with an increased interest in making available classic Latin texts in English. Conley identifies the Inns of Court as the informal locus of this movement. Not surprisingly, the Inns men suited their translations to their politics. Books on warfare and texts concerning sedition were common selections. These translations were almost exclusively dedicated to members of the Privy Council, leading nobles, or other influential personages (56). However, this movement was not wholly secular in its concerns.

Thomas Drant's literary pursuits attempt to blend humanist and ecclesiastical perspectives on translating the classics. His 1566 collection *A Medicinable Moral* contains the lamentations of Jeremiah as well as Horace's satires. As suggested by his title, Drant is motivated by a desire to cure immoral behavior. The linking together of Jeremiah and Horace, "that the plaintive prophet Jeremiah should weep at sin; the pleasant poet Horace should laugh at sin" (7), reveals that Drant is working within and adapting Horace in particular and satire in general, to the tradition of Christian moral exempla literature. Although he was clearly engaged in Christianizing Horace, Drant was criticized by his colleagues who said that he "mighte be better occupied than in thus translating" (7). He defended himself, arguing:

He that woulde come to the upmost top of an highe hill, not beinge able directly to go foreward for that steepnes thereof, if he step a foot or twayne, or more out of the way, it is not out of the waye for that is a more conueyable waye to the top of the hill: to come to be able utterers

of the gospell, whiche is the top, and tip of our climbing, we must learne out of men to speake according to the man, (which is a bystep from the path of diuinitie,) yet very, and most necessarye for that we lyue with men, speake with men, and preache to men. Thus therefore for me to step asyde by melling with humanitye, is not to treade out of my way, or lose my way, but to fynde my way more appropriate reddie before me. (8-9)

Drant's defense employs humanist imagery—the circling of a hill in search of truth is found in Petrarch's *Ascent of Mount Ventoux* and later resurfaces in Donne's *Satyre III*,⁹ among numerous other references to climbing in humanist influenced literature—on behalf of his ecclesiastic ends. He recognizes that the literature of moral exempla is inadequate to “speake according to the man,” and that an alternative should be found “to come to be able utterers of the gospell.” Although his language betrays the clergy's obligatory distaste for secular matters, he believes that translating Horace, “melling with humanitye,” is the best way for the ecclesiastical community to retain moral authority—an authority that relied heavily on moral exempla.

Throughout the Middle Ages, moral exempla serve as important tool for the dissemination and elucidation of Church doctrine. Indeed, a passage in the *Alphabetum narrationum* goes so far as to credit moral exempla with the speedy conversion of England:

⁹ See chapter 2 for a discussion of Donne's third Satire.

Saynt Bede tellis in ‘Gestis Anglorum’ how, when Englonde was oute of the belefe, the pope sent in-to it to precehe a bisshop that was a passyng sutell clerk, and a well letterd; and he vsid so mekull solteltie and strange saying in his sermons, that his prechyng owder litle profettid or noght. And than per was sent a noder that was les connyng of literatur than he was, and he vsid talis and gude exsample in his sermon; and he with-in a while conuertyd nere-hand all Englonde. (217)

While this account is an exaggeration to be sure, it reveals the importance religious authorities placed on exempla as an instrument of faith.

The above passage also provides insight into the characteristic features of moral exempla literature. Directed toward an uneducated audience, it is described as “les connyng,” consisting of simple tales. Moral exempla often appear in sermons and these tales center on biblical stories, lives of the saints, cautionary tales and issues of doctrinal significance. Great collections of exempla were gathered together during the Middle Ages to aid preachers in their conversion of Europe. Moral exempla promote a moral core—in this case, Christianity—and provide a model without the obvious mediation of theory or language. These moral stories rely on the authority of Church and encourage a clique of experts to serve and interpret these stories for the laity. What is more, exemplum serves to reinforce ecclesiastical authority. In his study *Narrative, Authority, and Power*, Larry Scanlon argues that exemplum was “one of the Church’s chief vehicles” of maintaining authority over the laity (10).

As a genre, moral exempla might be understood as a “short narrative used to illustrate or confirm a general statement” (Mosher 1). In other words, it promotes an example by which a “truth” is validated by asserting the likeness between the short narrative and a biblical analog. Shylock should “forgive” Antonio’s debt because God “forgives” Adam. The juxtaposition of the two stories brings them together as illustrations that “the quality of mercy is not strained” (4.1.179). Similarly Hamlet tells Polonius to treat the actors better than they deserve because if each man was treated according to his desert no one would escape whipping. Because all men deserve death in the Fall, each man should be treated above his deserts. These examples are often biblical, historical, or based on contemporary events. Whatever their basis, Christian moral exempla literature furnish “concrete illustrations of the result of obeying or disobeying some religious or moral law” (Mosher 8). Thus, exempla serve to educate the laity in moral behavior. In addition to its well-accepted didactic function, Larry Scanlon sees another motive behind the reliance on exemplum. He argues,

The exemplum illustrates a moral because what it recounts is the enactment of that moral. The moral does not simply gloss the narrative. It establishes a form of authority, enjoining its audience to heed its lesson, and to govern their actions accordingly. It is more than an abstract principle. It would be better described as a moral law: a value which the exemplarist assumes already binds the community together, or which he or she is strenuously arguing should bind it together. (33)

In Scanlon's view, then, exemplum works as the "enactment of cultural authority [...] to give the ideological representation of authority a specific historical source" (34). Thus, moral exempla literature is not solely didactic; it also functions simultaneously as the reinforcement of moral authority that positions the ecclesiastical community as authorized arbiters of social/moral behavior.

In his study of the relationship between literature and the pulpit, G.R. Owst confirms that the religious authorities "had for long been making the short moralized story a particular province of their own" (16). Citing the Gospel of Matthew as their mandate, "[Christ] taught them many things in parables" (4.2), Owst notes that medieval religious authorities saw the literature of moral exempla as vital to the dissemination of doctrine. The clerical community was protective of exempla literature, and the reasons are not surprising. Exempla are also the territory of the poet. If we appreciate the preacher and the poet as competing for an audience, as Owst suggests, it is only natural that preachers, with the weight of the Church behind him, would not only win but would lay claim to exempla as their exclusive territory (11-16).

With the advent of humanism in the Renaissance, the territory of exempla once again came under dispute. With the importance placed on the classics, humanists turned to ancient examples to model virtuous behavior. In *Writing from History*, Timothy Hampton has suggested a crisis in exemplarity in Renaissance literature. Hampton observes that the clergy benefited from an established typological hermeneutics that aided in interpreting and contextualizing exempla for the laity (29). As a result, "Both the present and past take their place as moments in

the great master narrative of Christian salvation history, which stretches from time's beginning to its end" (13). The humanists, however, were not bound by the same typological hermeneutic. Hampton explains:

Without a typological hermeneutic, every heroic act in the narrative of the exemplary life poses a problem of interpretation, a question of yes or no which the reader must answer in judging the actions of the past. The moral heterogeneity of ancient history catches humanism in a kind of double bind. On the one hand humanism's defense of letters rests on a recognition of the authority of antiquity, and the exemplar appears in the Renaissance poem or treatise as the mark of an entire historical discourse that sanctions the idea of history as repetition; on the other hand, that very mark, by virtue of its alterity, of the semantic residue which it drags forward from the pagan past, resists easy integration into a Christian or humanist system of values. (29)

Viewed in this way, the Bishops concern over satire can be linked to their desire to retain exempla as their province because of their recognition that the imitation of satire "drags forward the pagan past" without the obvious mediation of Christianity. Simply put, the ecclesiastical community could not afford to allow satire to exist if it hoped to retain control over the moralizing of the period.

In order to control satire, it had to be explicitly identified; but because satire was in its generic infancy during the late sixteenth-century, identifying its presence is difficult. Interestingly, this study is confronted with definitional difficulties similar to those faced by the Bishops. Identifying a work as a satire is particularly vexing

because during the late sixteenth-century widely varying opinions of what is and is not satire were held; consider the confusion even regarding the origins of the term. *Satyre* (as the term was commonly spelled in the period) was the subject of considerable etymological confusion. Thomas Drant's translation of Horace exemplifies this confusion. In his verse preface to the satires, Drant points to four origins. First, he suggests the term derives from the Arabic word for glaive, a knife-like instrument (15-16). Second, he associates *satyre* with *satyr*, a woodland creature found in pagan mythology, characterized by rough and uncultivated speech and unbridled sensuality. Third, he points to the god Saturn, whom he describes as waspish (13-14). Finally, he links *satyre* with the Latin *satura*, meaning "full" (19-20).

In *The Cankered Muse*, Alvin Kernan notes that the term *satyre* was frequently associated with *satyr* and *satura*. However, the satirist as satyr figure became less common in the 1590s in part because of increased interest in classical Roman satires; hence this etymology seems misleading when evaluating Roman influenced satire. Still, pictures of satyrs appeared on the title pages of satiric works and references to the satyr's rough characteristics were customary (Kernan 91). While the satyr etymology fell from favor, discussion of the term's Latin origins continued. For example, John Weever subscribes to the derivation *sat ire*, meaning "full of anger" (Guy 154). In his 1605 *De Satirica Graecorum Posi et Romanorum Satira Libri Duo*, Isaac Casaubon argued in favor of the etymology *lanx satura*, meaning "full plate" or "hotchpotch"; this etymology is generally accepted by current scholarship (*OED*).

While a review of the various Elizabethan etymologies helps our understanding of the conception of satire, it does not provide adequate markers for identifying a work as such. In fact, Casaubon's etymology appears so to broaden the notion of satire that almost any text could be imagined to have satiric content. And as we have seen, the Bishops' Order does not provide markers for satire. All we are told is, "[...] any booke of the *nature* [my italics] of these heretofore expressed shalbe broughte vnto yow vnder the hands of the Lord Archebissshop of CANTERBURYE or the Lord Biship of LONDON" (Arber 677). The failure of the Bishops' Order may in part stem from the impossibility of generic definition. For the purposes of this study, then, I will define a work as satire if it meets either of the following criteria: 1) if the work is titled as "satire" or registered as "satire" in the Stationers' Register. 2) If the work clearly engages Roman satire, in particular the satires of Horace, Persius, and/or Juvenal—Jonson's staging of Horace in *Poetaster*, for example, or Donne's imitation of Horace's infamous "bore" satire. These criteria will allow me to examine the broad range of satire found in poetry, prose and drama while limiting my discussion so as to avoid the enormous accumulation of material that a comprehensive examination of Renaissance satire would otherwise demand. By defining satire in terms of its imitation of the classics and examining it across different media, this study will constitute a coherent satiric corpus and elucidate the social history to which it answers.

The State of Early English Satire

In order better to recognize the impact of Roman influence, we must consider the state of English satire prior to the Elizabethan period. Few if any of these early

works fit my criteria for identification; nevertheless, many have what might be considered a satiric spirit. Raymond MacDonald Alden provides a good overview of this satiric spirit in his *Rise of Formal Satire in England*:

Medieval satire was of a thoroughly informal kind. It arose, not from a classical tradition, but from contemporary life. It usually took the form either of invective or burlesque. It was the comment or remonstrance of the witty scholar or indignant Christian, in the face of the inconsistencies, oppressions, and small knaveries that he saw about him. From the first it was particularly severe upon the avarice and luxury of those who professed to be models of righteousness. The various orders of ecclesiastics aimed at one another's weaknesses; the traveling scholars at the regular clergy; the unlettered against the foibles of scholastics and latinists; the townspeople at the stupidity of the rustics. Various classes and professions came to be recognized as types for satirical attack. (4)

In other words, the spirit of satire was often co-opted by the literature of moral exempla to attack vice or folly. These attacks would be directed at a type or group rather than a specific individual and the satirist was primarily an ambiguous moralist hidden behind a disguise and bolstered by the ideology and authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Puttenham's observations of early English satire support this viewpoint.

In his first book, Puttenham traces the development of the poet and poetic forms through antiquity. Not surprisingly, his observations provide insight into the

impact Roman satire had on Elizabethan literature. Puttenham posits that *satyre* developed as a response to corruption; he suggests that in Greek classical antiquity “there was a greater store of lewde lourdaines than of wise and lerned gouenours.” Subscribing to the *satyr* etymology, Puttenham presents a rather imaginative accounting of satire’s pagan origins:

The first and most bitter invective against vice and vicious men, was the Satyre: which to the intent their bitterness should breed none ill will, either to the Poets, or to the recitours [...] and besides to make their admonitions and reproofs seem grauer and of more efficacie, they made wise as if the gods of the woods, whom they called *Satyres* or *Syluanes*, should appeare and recite those verses of rebuke, whereas indeed they were but disguised persons vnder the shape of *Satyres*.

There are several points of interest to this study touched upon by Puttenham in his account. Satire is characterized as aggressive, “most bitter inuectiue.” Its purpose is to attack “vice and vicious men.” This indicates that satire is capable of generalized moralizing as well as specific attacks on individuals. Although the attacks were bitter, the poet and performers were nonetheless immune from rebuke. These early satires were performed in the disguise of a satyr figure in order “to make their admonitions and reproofs seem grauer and of more efficacie.” This brings up a concept of vital importance to satire—satiric liberty.

The poet/satirist operates within a precarious tradition of *libertas*, or freedom of speech. In the case of Roman satire, satiric liberty has its origins in the republic and its embodiment in Lucilius, the commonly accepted father of the genre. This

libertas allowed satirists like Horace, Persius and Juvenal the freedom to speak without disguise. Indeed, the full force of their satires is best appreciated when imagining the poet as satirist. Puttenham's description of the *satyr* disguise recalls a different tradition of satiric liberty, one associated with Greek Old Comedy. Because an attack could not be attributed to an individual author or performer, it received protection through anonymity. Early English satire operates in a similar fashion, employing disguise techniques to achieve satiric liberty. Chaucer, in his satiric treatment of the three estates, utilizes an inventive disguise in the *Canterbury Tales*, for example.

As an estates satire touching on a remarkable variety of types, *The Canterbury Tales* might provoke the ire of any number of groups. Hence, Chaucer works to protect himself from possible censure by creating a narrator removed from the author. What is more, Chaucer's narrator is designed to establish journalistic credibility. The narrator tells us he is under a moral obligation to accurately record the pilgrims' tales:

But first I pray yow, of youre curteisye,
That ye n' arette it nat my vileynye,
Thogh that I pleyedly speke in this mateere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
For this ye knowen al so wel as I,
Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce as ny as evere he kan

Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche and large,
Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewē,
Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, althogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak hymself ful brode in hooly writ,
And wel ye woot no vileynye is it.
Eek plato seith, whoso that kan hym rede,
The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree
Heere in this tale, as that they sholde stonde. (725-745)

Here Chaucer establishes his satiric *libertas*. He suggests that Christ, the ultimate model, spoke the truth in plain speech. Because it was the truth, no “vileynye” could be found in it. The narrator insists that he is accurate, relating the pilgrims’ tales word for word. Thus he shifts any “vileynye” found in the tales to the individual pilgrims and thereby transfers responsibility to them. Thus, both the veil of the narrator and the insistence on accuracy protects Chaucer from rebuke.

Despite this protective measure, Chaucer remains concerned with offending his reader throughout the *Canterbury Tales*. In the prologue to the Miller’s tale the narrator once again insists on the truth and accuracy of his record. He reiterates:

What sholde I moore seyn, but this millere
He nolde his wordes for no man forbere,
But tolde his cherles tale in his manere.
M' athynketh that I shal reherce it heere.
And therefore every gentil wight I preye,
For goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of yvel entente, but for I moot reherce
Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
Or elles falsen som of my mateere.
And therefore, whoso list it nat yheere,
Turne over the leef and chese another tale (3167-3177)

Knowing that the bawdy tale might be deemed offensive (especially to those without a sense of humor, he notes), the narrator provides an opportunity for the audience to move on to another. To those choosing to read the Miller's tale, the narrator exhorts that they "nat maken ernest of game," (3186) or take the joke too seriously.

Interestingly, the Reeve does take the Miller seriously, and his tale is an angry, satiric response to the Miller's tale. Tellingly, while Puttenham looked at satire as bitter invective, Chaucer understood its power to provoke laughter as much as anger.

Perhaps this is why Puttenham neglects to mention Chaucer as a satirist even as he named him "the most renowned [English poet] of them all." Rather, Puttenham identifies Langland, the author of *Piers Plowman*, as one of only two examples of English satire. He describes Langland as seeming "to haue eben a malcontent of that time," and one who "bent him self wholly to taxe the disorders of that age, and

specifically the pride of the Romane Clergy, of whose fall he seemeth to be a very true prophet, his verse is but loose metre, and his terms hard and obscure, so as in them is little pleasure to be taken.” Unlike Chaucer, Langland sometimes aims his satire at easily identifiable individuals—John of Gaunt in the belling of the cat sequence, Alice Perriers and the King in the description of Munera’s gown.

Interestingly, Langland may have had the cover of his own obscurity to protect him from reproach. Almost nothing is known of his birth, career, literary circle or death. Still, Langland takes pains to develop his *libertas* within the text. *Piers Plowman* is presented as a dream sequence. The narrator tells us he has wandered the world in search of “wonders to here,” and wearied from his travels he stops to rest on the banks of a river. In his slumber he is transported to “a wildernese, wuste I never where” and in this land he encounters allegorical personifications who offer various opinions on labor, politics, social hierarchies as well as the correct path to Christian salvation. Because the work is presented as a series of allegorical dreams, Langland is able to deflect criticism and protect his satiric liberty. It is just a *dream*, after all, and need not be taken seriously or literally.

Puttenham praises Skelton as a “sharpe Satyryst,” but criticizes him for “more rayling and scoffery then became a poet lawreat” and for giving too much attention to “scuruillities & other ridiculous matters.” Again, Puttenham seems reluctant to allow a *lanx satura* conception of satire, demonstrating a preference for those satires that concentrate their attacks on vice and corruption. For Puttenham, satire is linked to Christian moral exempla. But as the 1599 Bishops’ Order suggests, satire works counter to exempla’s didactic function.

The Influence of Roman Satire

To its detriment, contemporary scholarship has endorsed Puttenham's account of satire, regularly neglecting satire's resistance to Christian moral exempla as the principle method of representing and interpreting the human condition. Mary Claire Randolph is representative; Randolph, in "The Structural Design of Formal Verse Satire," divides satire into two main parts. Part A attacks vice and Part B adopts or promotes an opposing virtue (370-2). Surely this is to overlook satire's penchant toward obscenity and libel and of course the satirist's tendency to participate and even revel in the same immoral behavior he rails against. Reading Elizabethan satire with an eye for Roman influence allows for a more accurate understanding of satire as it was produced in the late sixteenth century as well as for the ways it was received.

The best way to examine the impact of Roman satire is to compare Latin sources with Elizabethan verse translations. Thomas Drant produced a translation of Horace's *Sermones* popular enough to go through two editions. Drant was a well regarded poet. Further, Drant was well respected in the ecclesiastical community. Drant was pursuing his B.D. at Cambridge when he published his translation, and later went on to a readership at St. Paul's where he worked under the future Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Grindal. Given Drant's poetic and ecclesiastic credentials, he is an excellent candidate for evaluation. Before beginning a comparison of Drant and Horace, however, we should briefly consider the father of Roman satire, Gaius Lucilius.

As evidenced by Quintilian's claim, *satura quidem tota nostra est*, Roman satire is highly nationalistic. Writing at the end of the first century C.E., Quintilian asserts that satire is a thoroughly Roman invention. Worthy of the esteem afforded to Greek comedy, tragedy and epic, satire was considered by the Romans among their finest literary achievements.¹⁰ It is, without a doubt, recognized as a genre to be held up alongside the established Greek genres of epic, lyric, and elegy. As a distinctly Roman genre, it embodied the Roman ideal of *libertas*.¹¹ This freedom of speech was nothing short of an entitlement in republican Rome and it is no coincidence that satire's origins belong to that period. Writing in the second century B.C.E., Gaius Lucilius, the descendent of a wealthy aristocratic family, enjoyed this privilege. His work regularizing satire into hexameter verse marked, if not its invention, then the beginnings of what is recognized as Roman satire.¹²

Because he is considered the father of the genre, Lucilius' aristocratic privilege and its relationship to the development of satire are significant. As noted by W. Jeffery Tatum in the *DLB*, "[...] one discerns the significance of the discrepancy in status between Lucilius and his literary predecessors in Rome, who were foreigners or men of humble status who established themselves solely on the basis of what they wrote. For Lucilius, poetic composition is a choice, an assertion of the freedom and the leisure that is the particular poetry of the aristocrat." Ruurd Nauta, in his study *Poetry for Patrons*, agrees with this assessment of Roman literary history. He notes

¹⁰ For a discussion of satire as an exclusively Roman genre, see Coffey, chapter 1.

¹¹ For a discussion of the importance of the Roman ideal of *libertas*, see Freudenburg, *The Walking Muse: Horace on the Theory of Satire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992) 44-51.

¹² See Coffey 35-63 for an account of Lucilius' life and satires.

that the patronage system typically divided authors among two class lines—those who required patronage to survive and those whose wealth afforded them the opportunity to produce literature at their leisure. Nauta calls attention to the hierarchical nature of the patronage system and in doing so calls attention to the distinctions among literatures produced among various classes.¹³

The essential feature, then, distinguishing Lucilius from his literary predecessors is the presence of his satiric persona. As noted by Michael Coffey, “Literary conventions do not obtrude in the works of Lucilius. Writing as Lucilius the man and citizen he presented in an informal manner without obliqueness his immediate personal experiences and opinions on behaviour and politics” (45). Subsequent satirists struggle to step from his shadow, to develop a satiric voice beyond the bounds of a single personality. There could only be one Lucilius, but there could be other voices. Horace, Persius and Juvenal worked to develop theirs.

Kirk Freudenburg, in his study *Satires of Rome*, focuses on the ways in which Horace, Persius and Juvenal worked to distinguish themselves from the father of satire and establish their satiric voices. In doing so Freudenburg provides important insight into the nature of satire as a genre. Freudenburg observes that the Latin term for genre, *genus*, also refers to social class, noting, “The words are the same in Latin not as a matter of chance, but because the concepts entail one another so inextricably that to say one is also to say, and mean, the other” (48). Bearing in mind Horace’s status as the son of a slave and former rebel, Freudenburg comments that Horace’s decision to “rank as a satirist in his *Sermones* would have seemed far-fetched and

¹³ See especially chapter 1.

foolhardy [...]” (49). Simply put, Horace was out of his league. Yet Horace and other Roman satirists did write satire in spite of deficiencies in their status as a way of reclaiming the republican ideal of *libertas*. I quote Freudenburg at length:

[...] *libertas* “free speech” is equivalent to and only ever as good as one’s *libertas* “freedom.” Here again, the same word covers for the Romans what are for us two distinct (though intersecting) semantic territories, and there is no *Oxford English Dictionary* at hand to tell them to keep “freedom” in column 1 at a clear distance from “free speech” in column 7. They knew no such handy hierarchy. Put differently, “freedom” for the elite Roman male (the only one who ever really had it in full) is not something he merely “possesses,” it is something he “does.” It exists in performance, that is, in day-to-day events, situations, and rituals that generally were thought to mark a man as “free.” Public invective, as an exercise in “freedom” / “free speech,” ranks among the most important of these status-generating / status-demonstrating rituals. Not only does it define its target as a deviant, but, more importantly, it identifies the speaker as someone with the requisite *auctoritas* to criticize and degrade another free, noble citizen. He is himself a free, self-standing subject, with full access to the ritual that defines him as such, and full freedom to use the aggressive voice that it gives him against one of his peers. (49)

Viewed in this way, we might better appreciate satire as it was practiced in the late 1590s as a threat to moral exempla. Exempla are the property of the ecclesiastical authorities. They are a way in which morality is taught and moral authority is

established. Allowing the individual to explore morality—to call out deviant behavior, to question moral norms, to propose alternative moralities—transfers moral authority from religious institutions to the individual. A ban on satire serves to protect their preferred genre and their moral authority. Of course the ban did not extend to the classics. The *English Short Title Catalogue* indicates that the Latin satires of Horace, Persius and Juvenal appeared in 1585 and 1592 editions. In addition, Drant’s translation of Horace was popular enough to merit two editions. Although their works were available both in Latin and in translation, no Roman satirists were included in the 1599 Order. Of course, the Bishops might have been less concerned with the educated elite that could read Latin than with the middling literate who read English, and Drant was one of their own. What is more, in 1600 John Weever published translations of Horace, Persius, and Juvenal’s first satires without incident. I find these inconsistencies interesting and argue that it stems from the reclamation efforts of the ecclesiastical community. Roman satire had been re-contextualized to fit into the schema of moral exempla. A study of Drant’s translation of Horace’s *Sermones* makes this notion clear. The 1599 Order, then, suggests that authors had moved beyond the Christianizing of Roman satire and in doing so individualized and secularized moral exploration and examination.

Horace is the principal character in his satires and his persona, like Lucilius’, is the principle unifying factor. While it is often dangerous to conflate the author with the voice of the satirist, Horace’s ethos is of vital importance to his audience’s reception of his satires. For example, much of the charm and humor found in S 1.9 stems from picturing “Horace” encountering the bore. Further, Horace was forced to

defend his satiric liberty because of who he was—the son of a slave and a former rebel.¹⁴ Much of satire’s effectiveness, then, depends on the audience’s familiarity and even friendship with the author. The satirist is always a contemporary, someone you might encounter at a dinner party, a “real” person. It is this familiarity that aids the satirist in establishing his liberty and thereby his authority. But because of his status Horace had to work harder to establish his satiric license.

Indeed, because of his background, Horace’s decision to write *satura* like Lucilius was confrontational. Not only did Horace have the gall to invoke the satiric liberty of Lucilius, he had the audacity to criticize the quality of Lucilius’ verse:

Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae
atque alii, quorum comoedia prisca virorum est,
siquis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur,
quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui
famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.
hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus,
mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque, facetus,
emunctae naris, durus componere versus.
nam fuit hoc vitiosus: in hora saepe ducentos,
ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno;
cum flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles;
garrulus atque piger scribendi ferre laborem,
scribendi recte: nam ut multum, nil moror. (1.4.1-13)

¹⁴ See Coffey chapter 5 for an accounting of autobiography in Horace’s satires.

Look at the poets Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes, and also the others who make up Old Comedy. If ever there was a man deserving to be exposed as corrupt and a thief, as an adulterer or as an assassin, or otherwise infamous, they had full liberty to brand him as such. Lucilius derives from them, following their lead, changing only their rhythm and meter. He was witty with a sharp nose, but he composed rough verse. This is his vice: As proof of his genius he would frequently dictate two hundred lines in an hour standing on one foot. He was a muddy river with much you might wish to remove. Babbling and lazy, he disliked the labor of writing, of writing properly. I, on the other hand, do not care the least for quantity.¹⁵

This disparagement of the father of satire did not go unnoticed. In S 1.10, Horace defends his criticism of Lucilius:

Nempe inconposito dixi pede currere versus
Lucili. quis tam Lucili fautor inepte est,
ut non hoc fateatur? at idem, quod sale multo
urbem defricuit, charta laudatur eadem.
nec tamen hoc tribuens dederim quoque cetera; nam sic
et Laberi mimos ut pulchra poemata mirer.
ergo non satis est risu diducere rictum
auditoris; et est quaedam tamen hic quoque virtus.
est brevitatem opus, ut currat sententia neu se
impediat verbis lassas onerantibus auris,

¹⁵ All translations from Latin satirists, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

et sermone opus est modo tristi, saepe iocosus,
defendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poetae,
interdum urbani, parentis viribus atque
extenuantis eas consulto. ridiculum acri
fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.
illi, scripta quibus comoedia prisca viris est,
hoc stabant, hoc sunt imitandi; (1.10.1-17)

Yes, I said Lucilius' verses galloped lamely by the foot. Which of Lucilius' foolish patrons will not admit this? But at the same time he is praised for rubbing salt onto the city with his sharp wit. I may grant him this but not the rest, otherwise I must be amazed at Laberius' mimes for their poetic beauty. Therefore it is not enough to lead your listener to open his mouth with laughter, although there is value in this. The work needs to be concise so as to ensure the thought proceeds without impediment and the words become wearisome to the ear. Satires should be sometimes distressing, sometimes jesting; now suiting the style of an orator or poet, now suiting the style of the urbane wit that carefully metes out his resources. Humor often cuts through knots that seriousness cannot. In this those who wrote Old Comedy should be followed.

In this discussion of Lucilius, Horace establishes his *libertas* by distinguishing his voice from that of his predecessor. Interestingly, Horace chooses literary criticism as the vehicle to defend his satiric liberty. In S 1.4, Horace traces the development of

satire from Greek Old Comedy. By doing so, he places Lucilius in a larger satiric tradition. Horace traces this tradition back to Old Comedy and grants the satirist license to publicly expose *malus* if the satirist was *bonus*, a “good” poet. Horace reasons that Lucilius’ *libertas* was not simply based on his wealth and privilege; it also derived from his authority as a poet. In his criticism of Lucilius in S 1.4 and 1.10, Horace further suggests that quality is vitally important to satiric license. Horace develops this idea further in his conversation with the lawyer Trebatius.

In S 2.1, Horace informs us that he received two types of criticism in his first outing:

Sunt quibus in satira videar nimis acer et ultra
legem tendere opus; sine nervis altera quidquid
conposui pars esse putat similisque meorum
mille die versus deduci posse. (2.1.1-4)

There are some to whom it appears I am too sharp in my satires and stretch the boundaries of the work; others believe my verses lack muscle and that a thousand lines like mine could be drawn off every day.

Accused of being too sharp in his satire as well as being an inferior poet, he feigns fear of prosecution as a result of these crimes and consults his lawyer. The lawyer, Trebatius, advises Horace that he “should rest,” and give up writing satires (5). If he must write, Trebatius suggests turning attention to the triumphs of Caesar (10-11). But Horace tells his lawyer he is unable to comply. He claims that he cannot write epic verse: *neque enim quivis horrentia pilis / agmina nec fracta pereuntis cuspidae Gallos / aut labentis equo describat volnera Parthi* “Not everyone can depict battle

lines shuddering with spears, Gauls dying with their lances splintered, or the wounded Parthian falling from his horse” (13-15). This tongue-in-cheek self-deprecation is characteristic of Horace. His description of the epic battlefield is, as the classicist Kirk Freudenberg observes, “quite remarkable for someone claiming to be incapable of that sort of writing” (82). Horace flexes his pen for us in this “epic vignette” to remind us that he *is* a good poet and as such has the license to choose the cankered muse (82).

For further justification, Horace again turns to Lucilius: “he is the man I follow.” Interestingly, his assessment of Lucilius’ life work provides insight into the function of satire:

ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
credebat libris neque, si male cesserat, usquam
decurrens alio neque, si bene; quo fit ut omnis
votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
vita senis. (2.1.30-34)

He [Lucilius] turned to his book like a trusted friend, confiding his secrets whether in bad times or good; as a result the old man’s life lay bare as if painted on a votive tablet.

Horace adheres to the idea that satire is a personal expression of the individual’s beliefs and values. More importantly, satire legitimated those beliefs and values. As Freudenberg notes, Lucilius “spoke who he was” (48). In Horace’s case, he spoke who he was and claimed for himself the authority to confront his superiors—especially their vices and follies.

But Trebatius remains unconvinced, suggesting one of Horace's powerful friends may forsake him in his hour of need (60-62). Again, Horace turns to Lucilius for his defense. Despite being inferior to Lucilius in status, Horace reminds us of his own important circle of friends—a circle including Virgil, Maecenas and even Augustus, the emperor himself (75-79). This reminds us of the similar protection that Lucilius enjoyed due to his friendship with Scipio. While he appears to acquiesce, Trebatius warns Horace remain on guard. If a person composes foul / *mala* verses against another, he counsels, a court case may ensue (79-81). Horace's closing remarks again reveal his belief that the quality of his verse is his best protection:

'esto, si quis mala; sed bona siquis

iudice condiderit laudatus Caesare? (83-84)

Yes, if the verses be foul; but what if someone composes fine verses

lauded by Caesar?

Trebatius can only respond: *solventur risu tabulae, tu missus abibis* "They will be forced to laugh at the writing on the tablets and send you off" (86). Thus Horace steps from the shadow of Lucilius. He has distinguished his voice from his predecessor and writes with authority and without fear of his own full life.

While Thomas Drant may not have fully appreciated the *libertas* found in Horace's satires, at the very least he recognizes that its presence presented a problem for his project. Because Drant is concerned with adapting the Roman genre into the parameters of moral exempla, he struggles against Horace's *libertas*. Drant's

representation of Horace as a Christian moralizer is, however, understandable given the radically different function the poet played in Elizabethan literature.

In his *Defence of Poesy*, Philip Sidney claims that the poet surpasses both the philosopher and historian as a moral instructor. Sidney's attack on what he regarded as an inappropriate mingling of tragedy and comedy, what he contemptuously referred to as "mongrel tragic-comedy," is based on the belief that this hybrid genre promoted a confused moral message and was therefore worthless. Similarly, satire was attacked as a genre ill-suited for moral instruction. As previously discussed, Drant tells us that his translation of Horace met with resistance, that he "mighte be better occupied than in thus translating." In defense of his project, Drant argues that a cleric should consider "melling with humanity" effectively to preach the gospel (8). The verb "melling," meaning "meddling" (OED), carries with it a tone of distaste. While admitting that he will have to mix among the satiric slime of obscenity and libel, he insists that to do so is only a "bystep from the path of divinitie" (9). His project, then, ironically filters out the *libertas* from Horace's satires. He further clarifies his intent to reform the Roman genre in his verse preface to the translation:

To teach the worldlyngs wyt, whose witched braines are dull
The worste wyll pardie hearken to the best.

If that the Poet be not learnde in deede,
Muche maye he chatte, but fewe wyll marke his reede.

Lusill, (I wene) was parent of this nyppyng ryme:
Next hudlyng Horace, braue in Satyres grace.
Thy prayed Pamphlet (Persie) well detected cryme
Syr Iuuenall deserues the latter place.

The Satyrist loues Truthe, none more then he.

An vtter foe to fraude in eache degree. (21-30)

Drant points to Lucilius, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal as “learned in dede,” or example, and thereby focuses attention on the moral message that underlay their satires, a “Truthe” compatible with Christianity; in other words, he defines satire as exemplum. Drant filters or simply omits any material incompatible with Christian morality or that which challenges ecclesiastical authority. In short, he mixes with humanity so his audience does not have to. Indeed, as a member of the ecclesiastical community, he believes it is his obligation to do so.

Drant’s translation of S 1.2 is an excellent example of filtering Horace. As Niall Rudd notes in his translation, the second satire is highly sexual. So much so, in fact, that “None of the English commentators [historically] print more than the first twenty-eight lines” (44). However, the first twenty-eight lines provide too much moral material for Drant to consider wholly expunging the satire.

In the beginning of the satire, Horace develops the idea of what commonly has come to be referred to as the “golden mean,” or *aurea mediocritas*. The problem with men, as Horace sees it, is that they are motivated by a desire to be praised as virtuous. The man who scours the market for exotic food does so because he does

not want to be thought of as petty (9-10). But Horace notes that this generous man runs into criticism as well, praised by some, damned by others (11). Thus, by avoiding one fault, fools turn to the other extreme (24). Yet Horace is not presenting the notion of *aurea mediocritas* as a strict moral guideline as Aristotle did in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Rather, Horace is best understood as casual in his temperance. Still, up to this point Drant has a message to work with that is compatible with Christian morality and one that is subservient to its authority. The difficulty arises when Horace turns his attention to sex.

Horace's frank consideration of male sexual desire in this poem is quite incompatible with Christianity's conception of sex and sexuality. While he does criticize abhorrent sexual behavior—the whoremonger (30), the adulterer (48-49)—his solution to relieving sexual frustration is thoroughly Roman in its sensibilities:

tument tibi cum inguina, num, si
ancilla aut verna est praesto puer, impetus in quem
continuo fiat. malis tentigine rumpi?
non ego; namque parabilem amo venerem facilemque. (116-119)

When your loins are swollen and a servant girl or boy is near at hand
and you might make an immediate attack, would you rather burst in
lust? Not I. I want sex easily procurable.

We can clearly see Drant's problem with Horace's "moral" message and the "authority" that it is sanctioned by. His solution is to change the subject. Drant tells us as much in his preface to the second satire:

THE POET STIL BLAMETH ficklenes and vnstedfastnes as of those,
whiche laborynge to sayle fro the yrcksom poole of auarice, do
willyngly contende to make shipwracke by the infortunate waues of
prodigalitye: he speaketh againste fashions: they are thoughte to be
noorses of pryde, and follye.

Drant's vivid imagery, the fool is described as "shipwracke by the infortunate waues of prodigalitye," darkens the mood of his island audience. This grim outlook is far removed from the burlesque we find in Horace's S 1.2. Drant contends that Horace "speaketh against fashions" in this satire. As the open discussion of sex and sexuality is a custom of the Romans and characteristic of their literary tradition, Drant is not lying. But Drant takes this opportunity to concentrate on the clothing "fashions" of his Elizabethan readers.

Drant begins his translation relatively faithful to the spirit of the text. He does, however, take the liberty to expand on the flaws of the men identified by Horace. The usurer, Fufidius, receives the harshest treatment, meriting some sixty lines of verse compared to Horace's ten. Still, the message is similar:

But here, if sum precysly aske,
what doth this processe meane?
It is to shew, that whilst sum men
take care to kepe them cleane,
From blame, & blotte of one grosse sinne,
incontiente they are caughte,

Intangled with the contrarye:

lyke dullerdes neuer taughte. (121-128)

At this point, however, Drant begins to separate himself from the Latin text. He takes advantage of Horace's amusing description of the style in which Maltinus suggestively wears his toga to launch into an assault on the extravagances of popular fashions. The scene shifts from the streets of Rome to the streets of London. The "mustacho bearded," and "stones and pearls [...] and emeralds" Drant writes of do not appear anywhere in Horace and obviously target Drant's contemporaries.

Drant's conclusion to the satire further demonstrates his desire to reform Horace and make his satires compatible with Christian morality and thus reinforce its authority:

Noe outwarde thinge doth better vs,

no not our noble kynde:

Not pearles, or golde: but pearlesse giftes

be prayسد in Godlye mynde.

All els is toyes, and all is vayne,

and all when they haue tryde,

Will once confesse these things to be,

but nutriments of pryde. (177-184)

The moral is that "pryde" corrupts, endangering the Christian soul. The good Christian with his mind on salvation would do better to center his attention on God's "pearlesse giftes" than on earthly matters. This conclusion stands in sharp contrast to Horace's final remarks in which he amusingly recounts being caught in the act of

adultery. Drant's Horace is wholly unlike the Roman poet we know. His project is obviously that of reclamation and reform. He is reclaiming satire for the literature of moral exempla as well as Christianizing the pagan Horace.

Drant's decision to omit "Iter Brundisium" and replace it with a satire of his own composition is further evidence of his intent to reclaim and reform Roman satire for his ecclesiastical ends. In a recent article, Neel Mukherjee discusses Drant's motives for composing an original replacement. Mukherjee suggests that "Iter Brundisium" simply did not fit Drant's conception of satire, a result of the misinterpretation of the term "sermones." Latin for "conversations," Mukherjee argues, "[Drant] misses the chatty, multivocal, gossipy, occasionally bitchy tone of the Sermones and tries to substitute for it a rigidly moral discourse [...]" (8). In Drant's replacement, the satirist's voice is authoritarian—the voice of the preacher at the pulpit.

Horace's S 1.5 is an anecdotal travel story and an imitation of a similar narrative found in Lucilius. Interestingly, we once again find Horace pitting himself against his precursor. Kirk Freudenberg argues that, "the comparison inviting travel narrative of S 1.5 Horace shows us some of the things he can do in satire that Lucilius never could; namely write clean, slimmed down verse" (52). Further, he notes, "Horace invites comparison with Lucilius not only to show that he can do things that Lucilius could not. He does it to show that he can do things that Lucilius so famously did" (52). Freudenberg points out that Horace's light hearted account of this trip is unusual given the grim circumstances prompting the journey. He writes, "The delegation Horace tells of traveling with was sent from Rome to Brindis to

negotiate a peace between Antony and Octavian. If that delegation should fail, Rome would tumble headlong into civil war” (53). Yet Horace tells us nothing of the machinations of these powerful men. He reminisces about the petty details of the trip—the route taken, the road conditions, the mosquitoes. And, despite the importance of the success of the delegation, he does not even mention the favorable outcome, ending the satire unexpectedly with the line: *Brundisium longae finis chartaeque viaeque est* “Brindisi is the end of this long journey.” Freudenberg suggests that this abrupt ending at the end of the page serves as a commentary by Horace on the limits of his satire. He writes:

For the shock of hitting that one-page limit [here, Freudenberg is contrasting the length of Horace’s travel narrative—a relatively short piece that fits on a single manuscript page—to Lucilius’ which occupies an entire book], a limit never regarded as meaningful by Lucilius, has a probing, diagnostic quality to it. That is, it has a way of testing limits of a different kind, the limits drawn *in us* to mark off the generic confines of “satire,” and thus to separate what counts as “the real thing,” from what does not. Which is it in Horace’s case? How do the defining limits of his *sermones* match up with the boundary-lines drawn in us by cherished memories of Lucilius, the genre’s inventor? Do we regard Horace’s newly drawn *fines*, his limits, as highly personalized *refinements* of the genre? Or are they *confines*, barricades thrown up to keep the poet (and thus his audience from going where we know that he, as a satirist, should? (58)

In short, despite its anecdotal nature, Horace is undertaking some important work in this satire. His *libertas*, his satiric license, is not without limitations. More importantly, Horace shows us that he recognizes these limits. These limits are drawn to the forefront of the audience's minds because the fullness of satire, its *satira*, is both present and absent. We have a detailed description of the journey but we are without fundamental details and answers to important questions. How do the delegations react to one another? What are the political machinations behind the scenes of the peace treaty? Indeed, we are not even informed that a tentative peace was agreed upon by the participants. We are only told, "Brundisium longae finis chartaeque uiaeque est."

This poem poses a problem for Drant. As a simple travel tale, there is no *satyre*. There is no mention of virtue or vice, and the closest we come to a moral is found when Horace calls himself a fool for "staying awake till midnight waiting for a girl who broke her promise" (81-82). S 1.5 simply does not fall into Drant's conception of satire. As a result, he composed a replacement:

Frende Horace thoughe you maye me vse
as to translate your verse,
Yet your exployte I do refues,
at this tyme to rehearse.
Not euey tricke, nor euey toye,
that floweth from your braine,
Are incident into my pen,
nor worthie of my paine. (1-8)

Not surprisingly, by avoiding one problem, Drant runs into more. Indeed, he faces the same problems as any satirist: developing his satiric persona and defending his satiric license.

Whether in ancient Rome or Elizabethan England, composing satires is a dangerous business. Drant was aware of these dangers. Still, he appreciated the importance of satire within the classical literary tradition. As a cleric, Drant may have been interested in reforming satire. As a poet, however, he was also interested in developing an *English* satire to be esteemed along with that of the classics. This replacement, then, is best contextualized as a model for other English satirists.

After his initial dismissal of S 1.5, Drant begins a listing of various edifying subjects—meteorology, astrology, theology, etc. He claims that those holy “doctors” and “schoolmen” who attack satire are in fact attacking the study of humanity, a study that he notes is just as valuable as the sciences: “Those cacklinge pyes, that vse to prate, / so much againste humanytye, / Are commonly the lewdest dawes, / and skillesse in diuinitie” (45-48). Revealing his humanist’s leanings, Drant claims that satire has an important function in society. While he admits “To reade sole scripture, is I graunte / a thinge of lesser paynes” (65-66), he contends, “The wyse can reade humanitye / and beautifye their witte” (77-78). In sum, Drant describes satire as a valuable tool for examining the human condition. For Drant, this examination should have one goal in mind, namely to lead a good Christian life. Thus, the *libertas* of the satirist is one conferred by God: “it [satire] never was forbod, / So it be for the weale of man / and the glory of our God” (62-64). Horace’s liberty is dependent on the quality of his verse—an idea he humorously expounds on in his conversation with his

lawyer in the Satire 2.1—while Drant’s is dependent on promoting a Christian moral message. Symbolically donning the poet’s attire, “Thy lawrell green betake to me, / thy gowne of scarlet reade” (89-90), Drant solidifies this notion in his poet’s prayer:

Feigne me to haue a Poets arte,
a natyue Poets brayne:
A veray Poete, sauynge that
I vse not for to fayne.
Dames of Pernas, of Helicon,
whence Pegas horse dyd flye:
(If yours it be) graunt this to me,
in processe not to lye.
Nay, thou O truthe, bothe God and man,
of whome I stande in awe:
Rule ore my wordes, that I ne passe
the compasse of thy lawe. (93-104)

After defending his satiric license and developing his poet laureate persona, Drant asks, “What shoulde I wryte gaynst wickedness?” (105). The question signals a typical satiric attitude—as Juvenal says, *dificile est saturam non scribere* (1.1.1)—suggesting Drant was well versed in the Roman tradition. And in the repetition of this question we hear signs of exasperation (125). There is so much vice that the satirist has little hope of reforming humanity. But in his accounting of abuses and abusers, Drant come across one that appears to him worst of all and in dire need of attention: “The Popishe dawes, whom all men knows. / To be styll blacke of hue: /

Doo sweare them selues best protestants, / and byrdes thats onely true” (145-148). Drant asks again, “What shoulde I write?” (149). He will write of the Catholic danger.

The central dialogue of the poem relates a meeting between the Catholics Pertinax and Commodus. Significantly, the names Commodus and Pertinax are shared by Roman emperors. Neel Mukherjee remarks, “Pertinax succeeded Commodus to the throne, a dark indication that the covert activities of the papist ‘mole’ are going to give place to open papistry” (13). Pertinax has returned from exile in Louvain and seeks to join his friend Commodus in an effort to undermine the English church. Commodus, lingering behind during the Catholic exodus, is an infiltrator. Feigning conversion, he claims to profess the true faith while he gains the trust of the Protestant community, “Then I was dubde as true precise, /and faithfull by and by, /And noe was compted hoate enough, /save he and I” (317-320). Although he admits that he has spoken publicly against the Pope, he assures Pertinax that he is no heretic (239-241). His subversion is subtle. He pits factions against one another, playing on hostilities within the English church. Outlining his methods, he states, “I whyperde to an fro a pace, /and played my part so free: /That quarrels, stept vp faste and faste, /A noble game to see” (321-24). Significantly, the names Commodus and Pertinax are shared by Roman emperors. Neel Mukherjee remarks, “Pertinax succeeded Commodus to the throne, a dark indication that the covert activities of the papist ‘mole’ are going to give place to open papistry” (13).

While straightforward in its attacks, there are several features of Drant’s satire of interest to our study. First, we should take note of the topic itself, the Catholic

problem. It was well known that Catholic sympathizers engaged in activity designed to subvert the authority of the Elizabethan church and government (Guy 298-301). Thus, Drant's satire has a contemporary social relevance. For Drant, satire is rooted in the moment. His use of dialogue as the vehicle for his attacks is also significant. Drant understands that satire is dramatic. Drant's adoption of the poet laureate persona is also of interest. While Drant's tone can be likened to that of a preacher at the pulpit, he is also a poet working to develop a tradition of English satire equal to that of his classical predecessors. In his estimation, English satire could distinguish itself from the classics by its function as vehicle for Christian moralizing. And as an instrument of moral instruction in the tradition of moral exempla literature, the satirist achieves his *libertas* by promoting a Christian moral message and reproducing its authority for his audience.

Yet in defending his satiric liberty as reliant on Christian moral authority, Drant neglects the fullness of satire. He is narrow-minded and singular of religious purpose to the detriment of fullness. Ironically, Drant's replacement poem falls victim to the same limits as did Horace in S. 1.5. Just as Horace's satiric liberty to represent the events that transpired on the journey to Brundisium was limited by his class and status as the son of a slave and a former rebel, so too is Drant's satiric liberty limited by his reliance on the hermeneutics of moral exempla and his status in the English church. Drant could make no choice but to villainize these Catholic recusants. They are not people with human needs and wants, but rather,

a payre of hellyshe impes
of cankred Sathans race:

For you are enemies vnto God,
And his in euery place. (503-6)

Ultimately, Drant's reclamation of Horace proves distasteful to the satirists of the 1590s. Drant takes himself out of his satires. Indeed, he does not even have the courage to confront Commodus and Pertinax. Drant's persona is not a man who one might meet on the street or at a dinner party like Horace and the other Roman satirists. Rather than satirizing from the perspective and authority of an individual, Drant always stands on the side of and relies on the authority of the English Church to maintain the clerical monopoly on moral authority. Interestingly, as the 1599 Order testifies, satire becomes as much of a concern for the English Church as the threat posed by Church's various adversaries. While the Bishops may not have been adequately able to articulate their concerns with satire as a genre like they did with Papacy or Puritanism, they at the very least understood it as a threat.

Conclusion

The 1599 Bishops' Order may be best appreciated as an attack on the satirist's *libertas*. Elizabethan satire evolved under Roman influence as a new form that struggled to find its place in society even as it tested the limits of the poet's liberty and his right to explore the world around him and evaluate morality on his own terms. What Drant omits from Horace, other English satirists embrace. What Drant misses in Horace's playful nature, others imitated. What is more, the whole corpus of satire was at the English satirist's disposal, from the brooding Persius to the indignant Juvenal. The remainder of this study is an examination of the development of English satire in manuscript, print and the stage through which I highlight the efficacy

of satire in exploring morality in a way that is distinct from and resistant to moral exempla.

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Chapter 2: Manuscript Satire

At first it may seem unusual for a study of an instance of print censorship to begin with an examination of manuscript circulation. However, to understand the 1599 Order as an attack on popular, secular literature of the period, we must bear in mind that, in Arthur Marotti's words, "for most sixteenth-century poetry the book was an alien environment" (*Coterie Poet* 3). As such, my study of the development of satire in the 1590s would be remiss if it did not discuss satire's circulation in the manuscript system. Satire as it was produced for and distributed in manuscript worked in important ways to aid in the establishment of satire as a recognizable English genre. Although the 1599 Order's reach did not extend to manuscript circulation, satire was, as I will demonstrate, affected by the Bishops' proscriptions. Their condemnation resonated throughout not only print, but manuscript and theatrical culture as well. In this chapter I focus on Donne's formal verse satires. Originally intended for a small coterie audience, Donne's satires were widely disseminated in the manuscript system.¹⁶ If we understand a genre not only in terms of its formal elements but also as the realm of a poet of a certain "status," then Donne's elite audience and his position within that audience is vital for an appreciation of the establishment of satire's generic characteristics, the satirist's *libertas*, and satire's function in society.

¹⁶ See Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986) for a discussion of Donne's coterie verse and its circulation in manuscript. See also Peter Beal, *Index of Literary Manuscripts* (New York: Wilson, 1980) 246.

Before beginning a discussion of the development of satire as a genre in Elizabethan England we should come to a better understanding of what a genre is, or more appropriately, how and why a literary work is identified as a genre. When considering poetry, we might judge the sonnet as a genre. There are certain conventions that a poem must adhere to in order to be identified as a sonnet including meter and rhyme scheme. In addition, sonnets carry with them expectations regarding subject matter and even how that subject matter is treated; the sonnet brings with it a certain tone or style, in other words. And these expectations are powerful. Heather Dubrow, in her aptly titled study *Genre*, makes an analogy between genres and social institutions. She points out that generic expectations, like an established church or legislative body, are pervasive forces that cannot be ignored (3). They might be challenged or overthrown, but “because so many members of the culture do accept them, any attempt to ignore them acquires intensity and resonance and begins to seem a judgment on the institutions or a rebellion against it [...]” (3). But we must bear in mind that satire was not a definitively established genre in Elizabethan England. Its formal characteristics were not entrenched, its tone or style was not commonly agreed upon, nor was its function in society decisively understood. To the detriment of critical evaluation of both satire and the 1599 Order, the amorphous quality of satire’s generic characteristics during this period has all too often been overlooked and misunderstood. William Jones’ recent dissertation on the 1599 Order stands as a good example.

Jones suggests that the Bishops were motivated to ban satire because of stylistic concerns. He argues that Donne, Hall and Marston and others adopted a

Juvenalian style of satire that offended the Bishops sensibilities because of its threat to Elizabethan rules of decorum. Jones notes that Juvenal's style relies heavily on invective and vituperation in its attacks and as such runs counter to what he posits as the culturally accepted soft style of satire found in Horace. However, the distinction between styles of Roman satirists is not as strong in the Elizabethan period as Jones contends. This notion of a Horatian or Juvenalian style and the difference between them has been widely recognized. However, identification and critical discussion of a Horatian or Juvenalian style has its genesis in Dryden and Pope rather than Elizabethan England.¹⁷ While there is some merit in distinguishing between the tone or style of individual satirists, Renaissance authors were smart enough to realize that satire is a personalized expression reflecting the experiences of and social pressures on the satirist. In other words, it is not imitation of a particular Roman satirist or style that the Bishops were concerned with, but rather innovation. As Donne, Hall, Marston and others explored satire as a way to examine and interpret the human condition, imitating the style of any given Roman satirist is less important than developing a tone or style that might be called their own. More importantly, Elizabethan satirists recognized the *libertas* enjoyed by their Roman predecessors to criticize individuals—their vices and follies—in the hopes of curing society of its ills. Thus we should understand satire as concerned with the maintenance of a healthy civil society. I find the notion of health very important in this context. Humors, a physiological/psychological approach to evaluating morality, are a central

¹⁷ See John Dryden, "A Discourse on the Original Progress of Satire 1693" *Of Dramatic Posey and Other Critical Essays*, ed. George Watson (London: J.M. Dent, 1962): 71-155; Alexander Pope, *Imitations of Horace* (1733).

concept in Elizabethan satire. Marston devotes an entire satire to a discussion of humors and returns to them frequently throughout his work. Jonson develops comical satire around humors. What disturbed the Bishops, then, is not the imitation of Juvenal's style, but rather the function of satire—indeed, the function of Roman influenced literature—in society. Style simply does not account for the variety of methods—like an examination of humors as a cause of immoral behavior—that early modern satirists employed to analyze and evaluate the well-being of a civil society. As would be expected in a genre that was somewhat unfamiliar and relatively undefined, the function of satire began to take shape within manuscript culture because it was the elite who had the education to read Roman satire in the original; it was the elite who had access to the machinations of government; it was the elite who had the most at stake in maintaining the social order. John Donne, in his five formal satires, serves as an important example of the establishment of satire as a genre and the establishment of its function in society precisely because he was addressing the affairs and interests of this elite audience.

Donne and the Bishops' Order

In an undated letter to his friend Henry Wotton, John Donne expresses anxiety regarding the circulation of his poetry. In particular, Donne is concerned that his satires persist in popularity and continue to be reproduced in manuscript collections, remarking, “To my satyrs there belongs some feare [...]”¹⁸ Of what was Donne

¹⁸ Quoted in Evelyn Simpson, *A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924) 316. The letter appears in the Burley MS, folio 309, beginning on 308v. Although the letter contains no date, scholars agree that it was written after the turn of the century by which time Donne had completed the fifth of

fearful? Perhaps he was worried that the content of his satires would provoke the ire of the authorities. A brief examination of his five satires reveals potentially sensitive topics, including what appears to be an endorsement of religious pluralism in *Satyre III*, an assault on the Elizabethan Court in *Satyre IV*, and an attack on the Star Chamber in *Satyre V*. Still, Donne's satires are mild in comparison to those of his contemporaries. In *Virgidemiarum* for example, Joseph Hall satirizes what he perceived to be idolatry within the English Church, a controversial topic that almost resulted in the printer pulling the poem from the edition. John Marston, in his *Scourge of Villanie* sketches a satiric scene with a level of obscenity that would make a Roman blush. Further, these two men published their satires.¹⁹ Donne's satires remained cloistered in the manuscript system until after his death.

Although we have no concrete proof as to when this letter was written, nor precisely what worried Donne about his satires, I argue a possible and likely explanation of Donne's anxiety is that the letter was written shortly after the 1599 Bishops' Order, and it was during this period of literary unrest that Donne grew uneasy. Peter Beal notes that Donne was the single most represented poet in manuscript collections through the seventeenth-century (246). Thus, what were originally intended as occasional pieces to be shared among a small circle of friends reached a level of transmission that might be considered publication.²⁰ Donne was aware that the popularity of his satires identified him as a satirist, and being a satirist

his five satires. For a discussion of the dating of this letter, see John Hayward, *John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, Complete Poetry and Selected Prose* (1930) 440.

¹⁹ See chapter 3 for a discussion of Hall and Marston's satires.

²⁰ For a discussion of manuscript poetry as "published" work, see Harold Love, *Scribal Publication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

was a precarious occupation when the Stationers' Company was busy burning books and the country's two leading religious authorities banned the printing of satire.

Without a doubt, at the beginning of the seventeenth-century the position of satire was less than secure. The excitement of engaging with a new genre, with exploring religious, political and social ideas through satire, quickly turned into anxiety for Elizabethan satirists—including manuscript satirists like Donne. Indeed, his satires might be perceived as subversive by virtue of their very existence, not to mention their influence. The fact that his satires circulated beyond his control contributed to Donne's apprehension, especially in the face of the Bishops' prohibition.

Donne's anxiety suggests that the Bishops perceived satire as encroaching on their positions as authorized arbiters of moral behavior. However, the Order fails because as soon as print satire is controlled, satire takes refuge on the stage and in manuscript circulation. The persistence of satire in the face of ecclesiastical suppression demonstrates that it fulfilled a necessary social function. In effect, the satirists are moving the moralists aside—where the Church moralized, the satirists analyzed.

The Conditions of Manuscript Circulation

Manuscript culture was pervasive in Elizabethan England and the primary method of circulation for “gentleman authors” like Donne was the scribal medium (Love and Marotti 69). It was a particularly intimate and privileged medium. Poetry, often in the authors own hand, would be passed out among a small group of friends who would then in turn have it copied out, edited, and/or amended. This intimacy

“encouraged a fusing of three roles—author, producer and reader [...]” (59). This resulted in a rather competitive atmosphere. As Love and Marotti note,

In some collections we can observe correction and revision spurring the desire to create fresh works in the same genre. The sense of belonging to a privileged community would inspire the individual to take an active part in its debates. Compilers composed their own alterations, supplements and responses to the texts they received. Competitive versifying was encouraged by the manuscript medium, especially when commonplace-book anthologies issued from a group effort, as they sometimes did in the universities, aristocratic households or the court. Academic exercises in translation and imitation, together with composition in response to the setting of a theme, carried over from the grammar school to the university, courtly and Inns of Court social worlds, producing competitive versifying of various sorts, including the writing of ‘answer poems’ and of rival poems on a particular topic. (59)

Love and Marotti’s description suggests that manuscript culture fostered the necessary conditions for establishing satire as a genre. It was an elite environment. The participants were well-educated, well-connected and ambitious. The production of satire in manuscript culture served to educate the elite as to the form and function of satire by their participation in its production.

The manuscript culture of the Inns of Court within which Donne worked is particularly well-disposed to satire. Manuscript is typically the medium of choice for

the all-male environments such as the Universities and Inns of Court, and satire, with its tendency toward obscenity and libel, is well suited to this setting. Arthur Marotti observes the appeal of this type of verse in his influential study *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric*, “Since much witty obscene verse was satiric or libelous or both, it was better suited to the environment of manuscript transmission than to print. In the moral climate of the sixteenth-century, where poets were forced to justify *any* secular verse, obscene texts had a patently transgressive character” (76). Manuscript poetry is also highly topical; satire, characteristically concerned with current events, suited the Inns men’s desire for contemporary political criticism. Further, the manuscript system was primarily the domain of the gentry, as evidenced by the men who participated in it, and satire is well suited to that domain as well. The satires of Horace, Persius and Juvenal—the classical models influencing most Renaissance satire—target a ruling class audience and speak to its interests.²¹

Donne was not the first to compose satire in English. However, he was among the finest to seriously engage with the themes and structures of satire in such a way as to appeal to the concerns of his peers and thereby situate satire as a recognizable English form. The popularity of his satires brought the genre to a new level of consideration as a literary type capable of representing and interpreting the human condition in ways that moral exempla literature could not. In other words, Donne worked to develop satire that spoke to the concerns of young, well educated gentlemen navigating their way through the complexities of life in Elizabethan London—complexities that could not be accommodated by Christian moral exempla.

²¹ See Ellen Oliensis, *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Donne and the Literary Environment of the Inns of Court

In 1592 Donne was admitted to Lincoln's Inn, one of four law schools situated at the heart of London.²² The Inns were cauldrons boiling over with wealthy, intelligent, literary-minded young men. While the principle function of the Inns served to instruct these young men in the practice of law, a relatively small percentage advanced to the bar. Rather than exclusively a law school, the Inns served as a finishing school where young gentry learned enough law to manage their family estates while establishing political, economic and social connections.²³

Across the river from the Inns were the public playhouses. Nearer to the Inns was the Blackfriar's, an exclusive indoor playhouse. Bookstalls were a common sight in the neighborhoods surrounding the Inns. In some cases book sellers displayed their wares within the precincts of the Inns (Finkelpearl 26). The close proximity of playhouses and bookstalls is not surprising; literary pursuits were a fashionable activity among Inns men. However, these pursuits were not strictly fashion. The Inns produced a number of significant men of letters. Further, as a locus of literary activity, the culture of the Inns fostered many influential literary movements. Among these movements is the rise in popularity of satire in the 1590s. Some of the most notable satirists of this period were Inns men, John Marston, Thomas Lodge, and Edward Guilpin, among them—and it is not surprising that Donne began to compose satires shortly after he was admitted to Lincoln's Inn. Given the importance of

²² For an accounting of Donne's stay at the Inns of Court, see R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

²³ For a good discussion of the Inns of Court and its environments, see Philip Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

literature and fashion (or literature as fashion), it is safe to say that a majority of Inns men had read satire in some form and perhaps even authored pieces. In short, satire quickly embedded itself into the literary culture of the Inns.

The Inns men of a generation prior developed and supported several important literary movements that contributed to the interest in satire in the 1590s. Three in particular—translating the classics, the fashion of composing melancholy love poetry, and the tradition of advising magistrates through literature—worked to set the stage for satire’s upsurge. As I discussed in the previous chapter, from 1558 to 1572 the Inns were the location of an informal literary project concerned with translating the classics. Carey Conley, in his study of *The First Translators of the Classics*, identifies a group of young men with a common interest in making available classic Latin texts in English. Conley notes that most of these translators were either Inns men or had close connections with the Inns. Jasper Heywood, an Inns man himself, prefaces his translation of Seneca’s *Thyestes* with a good description of the communal spirit of this movement. Heywood describes the various literary activities of Inns men as well as the major factors contributing to an interest in this translation project: young men with a common interest in the classics, respect for the work of their peers, and the disapproval of university scholars opposed to translation.²⁴

This movement was not simply an opportunity for “a yong mas witt to prove” (Heywood l.2), however, and Conley rightly argues that politics motivated the choice of many of the translators. Again, as noted previously, Conley observes that books on warfare as well as books discouraging sedition were common targets of

²⁴ For a transcription and discussion of Heywood’s poem, see Conley, 22-25.

translators, indicating that these men considered this project a form of political commentary or criticism.²⁵ Further, Conley notes that the translations were almost exclusively dedicated to, “a member of the Queen’s Privy Council, to some member of his family, or to some other leading noble, all of whom with rare exceptions were prominent supporters of the Protestant cause and the new government” (56). Indeed, the nobility’s support of the translation project indicates that it served their purposes. Conley maintains that,

With the sudden success of the renaissance in Edward’s reign, far-seeing members of the nation presently recognized in translations of the classics instruments for setting up the new order. To remove the danger to the reformation and the revolution, due to the presence of sympathizers with old institutions, the new nobility, created by the Tudors, sought to introduce the rationalistic spirit of ancient literature as the most direct means of transforming national ideals. Only through an intelligent public opinion, created to displace abject reverence for authority and immemorial custom, could ecclesiastical schisms which had arisen in the sixteenth century be justified, and the stabilization of the new government and a vigorous national growth be assured. (56)

Thus, this literary movement fostered a renewed interest in the classics and in doing so politicized classical literature.

While the volume of translations produced by Inns men and others reduced by a third over the decades ending the sixteenth-century, the importance of the classics,

²⁵ See Conley chapter 3.

including satire, was solidified (Conley 19). It is doubtful that Donne could have been ignorant of this translation project. It is more likely that this project served to peak his interest in satire and other classical genres. Thus, the work of those who came before him served as a foundation as well as a departure point for Donne's satires.

As might be expected, this translation project influenced the poetry of its generation. Translations of Ovid and Petrarch resulted in the popular fashion among Inns men of composing melancholy love poetry (Finkelppearl 70). The popularity of "love wounded" poetry gave way in the 1590s. Styles changed and the melancholy love poetry produced by the Inns men grew into a source of ridicule. Helgerson proposes that the rise of satire in the 1590s exemplifies the desire of these men to distinguish themselves from those poets who preceded them, "The historical dynamic that opposes generation to generation and the literary system that sets genre against genre sufficiently explain their choice [of satire]" (106). Although I am sympathetic to the contours of Helgerson's argument, I cannot agree that Donne and his generation perceived epic, romance, or pastoral as used up. Spenser and Sidney were writing pastoral and Petrarchan poetry during this period and Marvell wrote pastoral in the 1650's. Indeed, their work was sophisticated and wryly distanced from earlier imitations. Even criticizing and mocking these forms from within, as Shakespeare does in sonnet 130, show that these genres are not exhausted.²⁶ Still, it is clear that satire's popularity can in part be attributed to a desire on the part of Donne and his

²⁶ See Joel Fineman, *Shakespeare's Perjured Eye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) for a good discussion of Shakespeare's innovative use of classical forms, especially chapter 1.

generation to differentiate themselves from their literary predecessors by working to establish a new genre they could call their own.

Another factor that contributed to satire's growth was the Inns self-imposed responsibility of advising magistrates. The collection *A Myrroure for Magistrates* (1559) is an excellent example. This collection was organized by another influential Inns man, William Baldwin, and dedicated to "the nobilitye / and all others in office" (63). The collection, as the title suggests, served as "[...] a loking glass, [wherein] you shall see (if any vice be in you) howe the like hath bene punished in others heretofore, whereby admonished, I trust it will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendment. This is the chiefest ende, whye it is set furth" (65-66). Various prominent men are the focus of this collection, such as Richard II, Henry VI, Edward II, Cardinal Wolsey and the Duke of Buckingham. Each man is coupled with a vice, or set of vices, on which his downfall is predicated and in accordance with the great narrative of Christian salvation history. The collection encourages virtuous, Christian behavior as the means by which successful rule is achieved, thereby benefiting the country and its peoples. Thus, *A Myrroure for Magistrates* subscribes to the tradition of moral exempla literature as it serves its political purposes. Satire develops as an alternative to traditional literature of counsel. In particular, satire serves as a location to discuss contemporary issues within contemporary settings from a secular perspective.

A further example of this self-imposed responsibility to produce literature of counsel can be found in the 1562 Revels production of *Gorboduc*. Repeated in front of Elizabeth at Whitehall a few weeks after the Christmas Revels, the play deals with

the problems facing a kingdom that lacks a definite successor. Despite its sensitive subject matter, Elizabeth received the production favorably, thus solidifying the function of the Inns as an informal source of counsel. Donne's election as Master of Revels in 1593 is a testament to his literary talents as well as his political abilities. While little is known of the 1593 Revels, it is safe to say that its festivities included elements of political criticism. As Master of Revels, then, Donne found himself squarely situated within the Inns tradition of political counsel. As such, his interest in satire is influenced by the Inns tradition of counsel literature. This interest manifests itself through Donne's choice of subject matter, such as his discussion of corruption within the Elizabethan Court and the Star Chamber, as well as in his decision to direct his satires toward those in positions of power. Satire, as it was known in its Roman contexts, is well suited to the counsel of those in power. For example, Jonson's *Poetaster* solidifies the idea of satirist as counselor, wherein Horace stands next to Augustus and advises the emperor on what punishments to mete out at the play's end.²⁷ Donne works inside this conception of satirist as counselor.

The literary environment of the Inns—the fashionability of literature, reliance on manuscript transmission, and the various literary movements fostered by the Inns—set the stage for satire's surge in popularity. Representing a novel way of communicating within a close knit community, satire develops as a genre that spoke to the concerns of the young London gentlemen. Donne aided in developing satire within this literary environment by adopting classical models and re-working them to suit the tastes of this audience.

²⁷ See chapter 4 for a discussion of Jonson's development of comical satire.

Donne's Manuscript Satires

Before beginning a discussion of individual satires, something needs to be said regarding the group as a whole. Donne's five satires were composed over a period of roughly five years, from 1593 to 1598.²⁸ All five operate within the classical tradition and are informed by the models of the Roman satirists Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. Like those of his predecessors, Donne's satires are quasi-dramatic and revolve around the actions of a narrator/satirist. In addition to his satiric voice, Donne adopts subject matter similar to his classical counterparts. The first and fourth Satires are obvious imitations of Horace's famous "Bore" satire (1.9), for example. Each satire is directed toward an audience of young gentlemen, chiefly those associated with the Inns of Court. All five circulated in manuscript and did not appear in print until 1633, two years after Donne's death.

Despite the frequency with which the satires occur in manuscript collections in the seventeenth-century, obtaining copies of all of the satires appears to have been somewhat difficult even for those in Donne's coterie. Ben Jonson attests to this difficulty in a poem (composed sometime after 1607) accompanying a gift-copy of the satires, a copy specially requested by the Countess of Bedford:

Lucy, you brightness of our sphere, who are

Life of the muses' day, their morning star!

²⁸ The commonly accepted dating for Donne's satires are those of W. Milgate found in his book *John Donne: The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). I employ his dates for the satires. For a discussion of dating problems among the Satires, see John T. Shawcross, "All Attest His Writs Canonical: The Texts, Meaning, and Evaluation of Donne's Satires," *Just So Much Honor*, ed. Peter Amadeus Fiore (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1972) 250-252, suggesting a 1597-98 date for the sequence.

If works, not the authors, their own grace should look,
Whose poems would not wish to be in your book?
But these, desired by you, the maker's ends
Crown with their own. Rare poems ask rare friends.
Yet satires, since the most of mankind be
Their unavoided subject, fewest see:
For none e'er took that pleasure in sin's sense
But when they heard it taxed, took more offence.
They, then, that living where the matter is bred
Dare for these poems yet both ask and read,
And like them, too, must needfully, though few,
Be of the best; and 'mongst those, best are you.
Lucy, you brightness of our sphere, who are
The muses' evening—as their morning star. (1-16)

Jonson applies the adjective “rare” to the satires to describe their quality, ascribe value, as well as indicate their limited availability. Further, through an allusion to Horace, Jonson proposes a reason behind satire's rarity in aristocratic circles. Lines 7-10 echo Horace *Satires* 1.4, “There are people who abhor this type of writing, but most men merit a reprimand.” Simply put, those that are corrupt detest satire and there are few aristocrats that are not corrupt (the Countess excepted, of course). Importantly, the use of this allusion suggests that Jonson saw Donne's satires as operating to expose corruption. More importantly, Jonson's allusion begins Lady Bedford's, and now our own, thoughts regarding satire. Satire is heavily reliant on

inter-textuality because each satirist traditionally works to establish his unique style in contrast to prior satirists. Horace had Lucilius. Persius had Lucilius and Horace. Juvenal had Lucilius, Horace and Persius... and so on. Jonson's allusion places Donne's work within this inter-textual tradition. Thus, Jonson encourages Lady Bedford, and now us, to read Donne's satires with an eye for allusion and inter-textuality as well as how Donne distinguishes himself as a satirist.

Perhaps as a result of Jonson's presentation to Lady Bedford, one of the most common (mis)conceptions surrounding Donne's satires is that the group constitutes a "book." Milgate, for example, suggests the possibility that this presentation copy had been revised by Donne himself (lix, 116). If this is indeed the case, the idea that the five satires were designed as a book becomes an appealing theory. Even if Donne did not revise the poems, however, the fact that by 1607 the five satires were viewed as a "book" is intriguing. Still, we must maintain awareness that the satires were originally circulated as separates. By bearing in mind these competing conceptions regarding Donne's satires, we might better evaluate the history of their reception and thereby better appreciate the shifting ideas regarding satire in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

A significant portion of contemporary scholarship treats the satires as a unified whole. As a result, many critics expect to find a single satiric voice among the satires through which they typically trace the moral development of the speaker. Emory Elliot, in "The Narrative and Allusive Unity of Donne's *Satires*," typifies this approach. Arguing that Donne worked to revise the satires as late as 1607 and intended them to be read as a "book," Elliott contends, "Donne had ample

opportunity to provide the *Satyres* with elements of formal unity and with a narrative structure” (105). Elliott proceeds to argue, “Taken together with the clearly religious and central ‘Satyre III,’ the five poems present a probing examination of the ideal of Christian charity as the fundamental principle for a life of social action and reform. Donne presents his young *persona* as the central character who attempts to find a satisfactory role for himself as an educated Christian in a corrupt world” (106). M. Thomas Hester, in the only book-length study of the satires, also adheres to a book model. Following Andreasen and Elliott, Hester argues that the satires “offer a unified, sequential examination of the problems of Christian satire, a creative shaping (or re-shaping) of the generic, conventional, intellectual, and biographical materials available to Donne in the 1590s” (4). Hester proceeds with his examination of the satires by attempting to find an evolution of Christian thought experienced by Donne’s *persona*. There are several difficulties with approaching these satires as a “book,” however.

First and foremost, the satires do not appear to have been composed with the intention of producing a “book.”²⁹ Rather, they stand as occasional pieces written by Donne during various periods of his life and shared with his coterie as he moved from the Inns and into the service of Thomas Egerton. Of course the voice of the satirist in each of these poems can easily be associated with the voice of Donne, just as we commonly associate the voice of Horace’s satirist with the voice of Horace himself. Part of their allure, I am sure, is that the friends among whom the satires circulated

²⁹ Arthur Marotti, in *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986) also rejects a book model in favor of approaching the satires as individual pieces written in a specific historical context.

might identify the Donne as the voice of the satirist. Elements of Donne's personal life can certainly be seen as a source for inspiration within the satires, for example. Nevertheless, each piece stands as a self-contained unit and should be appreciated as such rather than as a satiric narrative of the historical Donne's evolution. Not every member of Donne's audience had access to the whole body of his satires. Some manuscript collections attribute satires to Donne that were not of his composition, and not all of the manuscripts place the satires in the order commonly agreed upon by contemporary editors.³⁰

Of course, we should appreciate that these five satires were subsequently arranged as a book, and I argue that such an arrangement is significant. Even if Elliott, Hester and others are incorrect about Donne revising and firmly establishing the order of the satires around 1607, we cannot deny that subsequent readers, editors and critics have treated them as such. Take, for instance, Thomas Freeman's 1614 epigram on Donne:

The *Storm* describ'd, hath set thy name afloate,
Thy *Calme*, a gale of famous winde hath got:
Thy *Satyres* short, to soone we them o'relooke,
I pre thee *Persius* write a bigger booke.

This epigram demonstrates an early desire to contextualize Donne as a satirist in the Roman model—as opposed to the equally plausible and more probable context of a young man who experimented with a new form and produced a few notable pieces. But the desire to fashion Donne as an English “Persius,” speaks not only about the

³⁰ See Peter Beal, *Index of Literary Manuscripts* (New York: Wilson, 1980) for information regarding the appearance of Donne's satires in manuscript.

generic expectations of satire in early modern England, but of our expectations of satire as well. The fact that these occasional pieces were and are still being cast as a book and that Donne's contemporaries as well as our contemporary critics—like James Baumlin—identify Donne specifically as an English Persius is astute.³¹ Persius wrote a short book at a young age, a prologue and six satires. Donne wrote five at a young age. Persius' family and their political leanings stood in opposition to Nero (Coffey 101). However, after Persius' death, Cornutus, an advisor to Nero, edited and published his satires (Coffey 113). Like Persius, Donne's Catholic heritage situated him in opposition to the state sanctioned Church. Still, Donne's satires were highly regarded, widely circulated in manuscript and were eventually published after his death. I argue that the connection between Donne and Persius is best understood in the context of satirist as an outsider. Both Donne and Persius' satires might be best understood as striving to make sense of their position as exceptional outsiders, men recognized for their ability even as they struggle to have that ability recognized in a hostile society.

My approach to Donne's satires, then, is to read them in the context in which they were produced and received—both as individual works and as a book. These works were composed by a talented young poet working with satire—its structure, themes and tradition—and sharing that work with his peers. Donne's satires certainly were not composed in isolation, and it is at times necessary to look beyond the individual poems and consider the group as a whole. But more importantly, we must consider his satires alongside other satires, those of the classical tradition as well as

³¹ See James Baumlin, *John Donne and the Rhetorics of Renaissance Discourse* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991) 122-131.

those of the period in which he wrote. My reading allows for this flexibility.

Through my reading I hope to demonstrate the ways in which satire operates within the manuscript system and in doing so to demonstrate the social force behind satire's rise in popularity.

Satyre I

Donne's first Satire was composed in 1593, a year after his admission to Lincoln's Inn, and the setting clearly identifies Inns men as the intended audience.³² Donne begins with the satirist/scholar reading in his "standing wooden chest" (2),³³ a description of a study such as those reserved for students. The satirist's library contains books of theology, philosophy, politics, history and poetry—the full complement of texts necessary for a well-rounded education—and without a doubt an accounting of the type of books in Donne's own library. The satirist asks the "motley humourist" (1), why he should abandon the "constant company" (11) of his library and instead "follow headlong wild uncertaine thee" (12). The characterization of the humorist as inconstant in opposition to the "constant company" of books suggests a moral message underlying the satire. In other words, at first glance *Satyre I* has the trappings of moral exempla.

Offering a formula by which satire operates as a form of moral instruction, Mary Claire Randolph divides satire into two parts. Part A attacks a particular vice. Part B endorses an opposing virtue. The first Satire operates in accordance with this model, at least superficially. The humorist is the embodiment of inconstancy and his

³² Milgate (116-117) notes that a date of 1593 appears alongside a manuscript copy of the satires and further notes that a number of contemporary references that date the satire to this year.

³³ All quotations from Donne's five Satires taken from Milgate.

erratic behavior is satirized in a series of encounters on the streets of London. Despite a promise to remain faithful to the satirist, he ultimately abandons his companion for a prostitute. Predictably, the humorist's inconstancy results in his comeuppance:

Many were there, he could command no more;
He quarrell'd, fought, bled; and turn'd out the dore
Directly came to mee hanging the head,
And constantly a while must keepe his bed. (109-112)

The word play in the final line linking the humorist's convalescence with constancy meets the second part of Randolph's model and therefore appears to situate *Satyre I* within the parameters of moral exempla. However, this satire does not fit as neatly into Randolph's schema as it first appears.

Satyre I is an obvious imitation of Horace's encounter with the bore. However, where Horace attempts to escape from his antagonist, Donne's satiric persona desires the company of the humorist. Hester suggests that the scholar accompanies the humorist in order to reform him (17), however this reading overlooks that the satirist and the humorist are engaged in a mutual seduction. The humorist solicits the company of the satirist; why else would he be standing in the doorway of the study? We cannot hear his cajoling; the conversation remains one-sided. However, we can imagine, given the satirist's response, that his proposition is attractive; else why would the satirist impose a marriage contract on their relationship? "For better or worse take mee, or leave mee: / To take, and leave mee is adultery" (25-6). The humorist accepts this arrangement "like a contrite penitent, /

Charitably warned of thy sinnes” (49-50), and with a “Come, let’s goe” (52) they are off into the streets, a happy couple.

As is the case in some marriages, this one turns adulterous. The humorist, at first observant of his vows, allows himself to be “hem’d in” by the satirist. Yet the humorist’s natural inclination as a social lecher begins to manifest itself early on: he smiles, grins, smacks and shrugs (74). These are the actions of a man who is covertly attempting, although poorly, to call attention to himself. Despite the humorist’s wandering eye, the satirist tries to keep his friend’s attention through use of wit. But this wit has too much bite. While the satirist wittily points out the foibles of the people they encounter, his jealousy seeps through; he degrades others so that he might be held in higher esteem by comparison: “‘T may be you smell him not, truly I do.” (90) and “‘he dothe seem to be / Perfect French, and Italian.’ I reply’d / ‘So is the Poxe” (102-4). The humor is lost on this humorist, however, and the satirist sounds more like a nag who in the nagging drives away the one he wishes to keep. Unlike Horace’s “Bore” satire, which concludes when the bore takes leave, *Satyre I* includes the return of the errant humorist. The satirist, perhaps hoping that this repentance might be the last, readmits the humorist into the relationship, but not without a smug witticism referring to the humorist’s emotionally and physically taxing evening: “And constantly a while must keepe his bed.” (112).

In *Satyre I*, the mood is playful. Indeed, the satire as a whole is best considered an example of satiric display and play rather than a moral lesson surrounding the virtue of constancy. The audience is expected to be aware of the similarity to Horace’s “Bore” satire, taking pleasure in the allusion while appreciating

the differences. Moreover, like that of the “Bore” satire, the satirist’s relationship with the bore / humorist provides no immediate threat to his moral well being. Further, there is no sense in this poem that the humorist’s actions are unforgivable offences. What is more, the satirist’s own inconstancy—he did leave his studies after all—remains unpunished. Thus, the moral trappings of the first Satire serve simply as setup for the closing witticism. In other words, Donne is unconcerned with presenting a clear moral message and instead develops the first Satire as a vehicle to display his knowledge of classical satire as well as his abilities to construct an original work that speaks to the concerns of his audience. Indeed, his audience does not expect satire to serve as a guide for moral behavior but rather as a reflection of the realities of their shared experiences as young men living in the hustle and bustle of London. If anything, *Satyre I* demonstrates that Donne is one of them, a member of their crowd who is willing to go out and play.

Despite its playful mood, the first Satire does serve a serious purpose. Traditionally, satire works to critique contemporary modes of instruction and this often takes the form of literary criticism. As I discussed in the first chapter, Persius attacked the literature of Nero’s myth-making machine and its stranglehold on constructing reality. And, as I will discuss in the next chapter, Joseph Hall criticized the defects of Elizabethan literature. While the first Satire does not engage in specific literary criticism like that of Persius or Hall, the satirist’s rejection of the “constant company” of his books stands as a comment on the inefficiency of literature as a tool of instruction. The satirist describes his library as a “prison,” isolating him from the outside world. This isolation, as a result, prevents him from confirming the

authenticity of these texts. Further, this isolation prevents him from applying knowledge garnered from the texts. In short, *Satyre I* analyzes the distinction between reality and texts. The individual cannot avoid reality by burying his head in books of theology, history, or even poetry. Rather, the individual must experience reality by leaving his library behind and confronting the world with all of its unpleasantness, corruption and vice. Donne makes the importance of engaging with the outside world clear even from the beginning of the poem in which he characterizes his library as both prison and coffin, and thus his desire to take to the streets becomes all the more understandable.

Edward Guilpin's 1598 imitation of Donne's first Satire advances this idea further. Indeed, the moral backdrop of constancy is completely omitted by Guilpin and what is left is a juxtaposition of reality and texts. Guilpin begins,

Let me alone I prethee in thys Cell,
Entice me not into the Citties hell;
Tempt me not forth this *Eden* of content,
To tast of that which I shall soone repent. (5.1-4)

The opening lines echo Donne's. The satirist, an Inns man, is approached by a friend to leave his studies and take to the streets. The satirist, however, equates the outside world with "hell," and suggests that there is no need for him to abandon his idyllic library. Like Donne's satirist, Guilpin's satirist is ultimately convinced that leaving "Eden" behind will benefit him in some measure. But what is the benefit?

Guilpin offers an answer to this question in the closing lines:

Enough of these then, and enough of all,

I may thank you for this time spent; but call
Henceforth I'le keep my studie, and eschew,
The scandal of my thoughts, my follies view:
Now let vs home, I'me sure tis supper time,
The horne hath blowne, haue done my merry rime. (5.152-157)

The experience with the reality of the streets, then, provides an opportunity for the satirist to confront, “The scandal of my thoughts, my follies view,” and thus come to terms with his own nature. Thus, these two satires present the notion that books of theology, history, politics and literature, despite claims of authority, do not encompass or represent the whole of human experience. They are valuable in some respects to be sure, but in effect, the instruction that they provide does not aid the individual in navigating the streets.

Satyre II

While *Satyre I* is playful, *Satyre II* is provocative. The satirist begins with an astonishing statement: “Sir; though (I thanke God for it) I do hate / Perfectly all this towne” (1-2). We soon find that this hate is not perfect; it quickly turns to pity when confronted with a more “excellently best” (3) object of disdain in Coscus. Richard Newton maintains that, as a lawyer, Coscus epitomizes the universal decay of society and that he is the cause of that decay (433). As a lawyer, Coscus finds himself in a position to manipulate the law for his own gain. He abuses the power of his profession to harm others even as he abuses the power of the poet’s Muse. In effect, he sinisterly hijacks the power of poetry into his legal maneuverings. He is misusing

words, miscasting magic. Not merely swindling, but swindling with the assistance of the “scarce” (44) knowledge he has gained through composing verse is Coscus’ sin:

When sicke with Poetrie, ’and possest with muse
Thou wast, and mad, I’d hop’d; but men which chuse
Law practice for mere gaine, bold soule, repute
Worse then imbrothel’d strumpets prostitute. (61-64)

Interestingly, Coscus and the satirist share a history. Andreasen suggests that this relationship was one of mentor to student (62). The vehemence with which the satirist attacks reveals a friendship betrayed far beyond the infidelity of the humorist in *Satyre I*. The use of the phrase “bold soule” to describe Coscus suggests that the satirist recognized the potential Coscus had as a poet. It is the abandonment of the poet’s Muse and abuse of its power, for “mere gain,” that the satirist cannot stomach. Thus, after evaluating the situation, Donne opts for a much more aggressive attack than the playful first Satire.

While the above reading aligns itself with a moral approach to Donne’s satires, I wonder what Donne’s audience, interested by Donne’s discussion of the culture of the Inns, would have made of *Satyre II*. Ronald Corthell notes:

At the time of Donne’s residence at Lincoln’s Inn, the Inns were experiencing, along with an increase in membership, some dissension concerning their function in English society. In particular there was an increase in social tensions between the legal professionals and their students and the “gentlemen” of the Inns [...]. (157)

Corthell points to Jonson's observation of the tension between the two groups in his prologue to *Every Man Out of His Humour*, for example (Corthell 157). I believe that Donne's audience read *Satyre II* as an analysis of this "social tension." Coccus, then, should not simply be considered a good poet gone bad, but, what is worse, a gentlemen gone professional. In other words, Donne's second Satire projects contempt for professionalization. The fact that Coccus is a successful lawyer may add to the satirist's frustration. Thus, the second Satire is not simply an attack on a decaying society as Newton, Andreasen and other critics maintain, rather it identifies Donne as a member of that group of Inns men whose social status breeds contempt for the professional—especially those professionals who, like Coccus, show contempt for the muse.³⁴

More importantly, the attack on Coccus as a poor poet facilitates the continuation of Donne's attack on the literature of the period—an attack begun in the first Satire. Marotti observes that Donne is concerned with "hack playwrights and plagiarists" and "those who wrote complimentary verse to beg for money" (*Coterie Poet* 41). We also see a rejection of the Ovidian/Petrarchan love poetry written by the Inns men of a generation prior. Donne mocks those who "would move love by rimes" (*Coterie Poet* 17). The discussion of contemporary literature and its failings aids in the establishment of satire as a genre. By attacking various forms of poetry as insufficient to speak to the needs of his audience, Donne implicitly privileges satire

³⁴ Richard Newton, "Donne the Satirist," *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 16 (1974) 427-45; N.J.C. Andreasen, "Theme and Structure in Donne's Satires" *SEL* 3 (1963) 65.

as a genre capable of aiding the individual in navigating an increasingly secular society.

Most importantly for this study, Donne works to develop the character of Cocus. Rather than a type representing a vice, like greed, found in moral exempla, Cocus' make-up is considerably more complicated. He is both praised and despised by the satirist, admired for his literary abilities and loathed for abusing, even abandoning that ability. Donne writes,

[...] he throwes

Like nets, or lime twigs, wheresoere he goes,

His title'of Barrister, on every wench,

And wooes in the language of the Pleas, and Bench. (45-48)

Rather than "sick with Poetrie, and possest with muse" (61), Cocus' concern is for "mere gaine" (63). What is worse, his ambitions as a lawyer have tainted the way he interacts with the world around him. Pursuing a woman through the language of law, for example, is inappropriate, "words, words, which would teare / The tender labyrinth of a soft maidens ear" (57-58). What Donne hates about London is embodied in the complex character of Cocus—potential lost to narrow minded ambition. Yet we should bear in mind that Donne is himself famous for wooing in the language of law, science, medicine and theology. And the satirist's treatment suggests that Donne saw something of himself, the author of "the Flea" and "The Cannonization," in Cocus. In this respect, we see Donne's sympathies. It is this sympathy that makes Donne's satires effective. The humorist is be driven by his

passions and Coscus is be driven by greedy ambition. In them Donne cannot help but see himself.

Satyre III

Among Donne's satires, the third has received most of the critical attention. This is not surprising. Titled "of Religion" in one manuscript and "Uppon Religion" in another, *Satyre III* provides insight into Donne's religious thought during the late 1590s—a period in which he wavered between convert and recusant (Milgate 160). Much important work has been done to situate Donne's treatment of religion in the third Satire within the religious politics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and a brief accounting of this treatment seems in order.

Critics who have examined Donne's *Satyre III* generally fall into two schools of thought. The first school, what I will refer to as the conversionist position, may be represented by Thomas V. Moore. He writes, "Any attempt to reach a fuller understanding of John Donne's *Satyre III* must also be an attempt to understand Donne's religious beliefs at the time he wrote the poem" (42). Moore calls for an outright equation of the historical Donne and Donne the satirist. Such an equation is an error that typifies the conversionist approach. By equating Donne with the speaker of the satires, these critics shift their concentration from Donne's use of language and form toward the personal religious convictions informing the poem's content.³⁵ This

³⁵ For more in depth discussions of Donne's religious convictions, see R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); Herbert Grierson, *The Poems of John Donne* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929); Clay Hunt, *Donne's Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); W. Milgate, *John Donne: The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); William Mueller, *John Donne, Preacher* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962) and J.B. Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit* (London: Hutchinson, 1957).

shift, however, is an understandably enticing one. *Satyre III* has been dated to the period when Donne renounced his Catholic heritage and affirmed his loyalty to the Queen and the Protestant faith. Recognizing the importance of Donne's decision, conversionist critics insist that it must have influenced his poetry and look to the third Satire to explore a variety of scenarios relating to Donne's reticence or readiness to convert.

The most commonly cited dates for the composition of *Satyre III* are Milgate's 1594-5 and Bald's 1596 dating (Milgate 140 Bald 72). An interesting aspect of both of these dates lies in the critics' interpretations of historical allusions and/or apparent elements of Catholic or Protestant theology that they claim are present in the poem as support for their assertions. Milgate cites "references to 'fires of Spain'" as evidence Donne was writing from a position of "anticipatory excitement that led [him] to join the Cadiz and Island expeditions in 1596-7" (139-40). He determines that Donne could not have been a "convinced Roman Catholic" because "he must have definitely renounced membership in the Roman Church by the time of his entering the employ of Egerton (probably late in 1597); and indeed by going on the Cadiz expedition in 1596, he was already committed to the service of the Protestant Queen against her Roman Catholic enemies" (Milgate 139). This, of course, precludes the possibility of Donne taking on an Appellant posture, asserting his loyalty to the throne but internally holding true to the Roman Church – a position not uncommon in the 1600's.³⁶

³⁶ Historically, the term "Appellant" did not come into use until after James I introduced his Oath legislation in May of 1606 to root out recusants in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot.

Bald, on the other hand, points to Donne's, ... immersion in controversial divinity [that] resulted in a period of unsettlement during which neither Catholicism nor Protestantism could wholly satisfy him. His natural inclination toward skepticism was for a time reinforced by a mood of cynicism in which he flaunted his sense of insecurity. The third Satire, probably written about 1596, marks the beginning of his emergence from this attitude but he found no immediate solution of his problems, and for a time he sought distraction in activity of other kinds (72).

Bald's analysis leaves open the possibility that *Satyre III* reveals Donne reevaluating his decision to convert. He finally suggests, however, that the satire represents a poetical reassurance of the appropriateness of Donne's conversion – a conversion solidified by dating the poem to the period of activity just prior to the Cadiz and Island expeditions. Both Bald and Milgate suggest that joining Essex confirmed Donne's decision to defend the Protestant Queen from her Romanist enemies. However, one could just as easily assume that Donne's military service was simply an example of an ambitious young man seeing an opportunity to advance his career.

Other conversionist critics such as Herbert Grierson, Clay Hunt, William Muelher and J.B. Leishman evaluate the third satire almost wholly in terms of Donne's renunciation of his Catholic heritage.³⁷ John Carey is another excellent example. Carey argues that Donne is an apostate who never forgave himself for his

³⁷ Herbert Grierson, *The Poems of John Donne* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929); Clay Hunt, *Donne's Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); William Mueller, *John Donne, Preacher* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); J.B. Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit* (London: Hutchinson, 1957).

apostacy. Carey reads the third Satire, with its belief in a single “true” religion, as the after effects of his renunciation of his faith.³⁸ While Carey and these others come to varying conclusions, each focuses more on the mindset of the historical Donne than on Donne the satirist. Thomas V. Moore attempts to rectify this situation when he states that “*Satyre III* is not about one man’s uncertainty as to which church to join. Instead, it is a general plea for all men to reexamine their religious views” (42). Unfortunately, Moore overlooks the political ramifications such a plea brings with it and, in doing so, misses the overarching secular stance on religion the satire subtly makes. How a *satirist* engages the problem of true religion with regard to authority and interpretation appears to be a more pertinent question than how Donne dealt with his own process of conversion (a study that, I admit, is intriguing but one that could be better accomplished through an examination of his letters, prose works and sermons). An issue I plan to raise in my examination is whether seventeenth-century religious topics can be satirized without an understanding and indeed an appreciation for all positions. Is not a satire without the necessary understanding, appreciation and tolerance mere railing – simply a vicious attack on an adversary’s position made more palatable by wit? This question is at the heart of my discussion because it requires consideration of Donne’s vision of satire’s function in society. Although there is no shortage of vicious satires among his classical antecedents as well as his contemporaries, Donne rejects this type of overly aggressive attacks in his third Satire. Although Donne does not shy away from strong statements, his use of satiric

³⁸ John Carey, *John Donne: Life, Mind, Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

verse is not intended to injure (as would the porcupine's quills), but rather to highlight immoral behavior and offer options for the reader to correct this behavior.

The second school of thought common among critics of the third Satire I will term the sequentialist position modeled on the belief that the five satires constituted a book first advanced by N.J.C. Andreasen. He argues that the five satires are unified because they "are all concerned with presenting an idealistic defense of spiritual values against the creeping encroachment of sixteenth-century materialism" (59). However, it is not clear, from Andreasen's analysis of the third Satire, what specific spiritual values Donne is expounding. One would assume, under Andreasen's thesis, that, after having railed against the worn maladies of materialistic society found in the framing satires, Donne would outline some specific course of action to rectify this situation. Andreasen only offers vague notions:

At the top of the cragged and steep hill where truth stands, all is peaceful, calm and good; religion, divine power, and virtue – all the immutable values – reside there. But if men abandon this height for the tyrannous rage of secular desires and injustices, they are buffeted and tossed and torn, perishing in the sea of iniquity. This underlying attitude toward secular works and spiritual matters, common to all five satires, ultimately works to give them a unity greater even than their carefully conceived dramatic structure creates. (71)

But how do "high virtues" work to help the individual decide between the Roman Catholic idea of free will and the Protestant doctrine of predestination? How do "high virtues" help the individual understand the ways by which saving grace is

conferred on mortals by God – whether by good works, the sacraments or reading scripture? Andreasen may have correctly identified secular abuses present in Donne’s five satires, “to excel in fashion, to scramble for place, to gratify physical desires” (70), but he does not identify how the search for true religion detailed in the third Satire avoids these abuses.

Richard Newton attempts to correct the apparent vagueness of virtue set forth by Andreasen. Newton sees the five satires as unified by the theme of constancy:

On the one hand we have the character of the satirist – anarchic, destructive, iconoclastic – a character which is to the poet a burden like original sin that is at the same time a necessary condition of life. On the other hand we have a necessary search for ‘constancy’ and security, the search for a safe and unafflicted vision of the truth. The truth discoverable by the satiric character, however, is truth only of uncertainty. (440)

Unfortunately, Newton misapplies the term constancy in his discussion of the third Satire. If we are to understand constancy as the virtue of fidelity and loyalty, then this virtue appears to be at odds with Donne’s exhortations. *Satyre III* is unsympathetic to blind loyalty, as demonstrated by the satirist’s mockery of the Anglican Graius’ blind loyalty to the statecloth. While I admit constancy is the virtue being discussed in Donne’s first satire, prudence – the rational process of determining the means necessary for attaining salvation – is clearly being discussed in the third. Newton’s article makes headway in evaluating the role of satire and satirist in seventeenth-century society, but ultimately misses the mark by first assuming that the

satires were intended to be read as in order and then imposing a linear and totalizing progression of thought throughout the satires, thereby forcing him to assume the virtue of constancy is present throughout. As Heather Dubrow asserts:

... the argument that Donne's persona has a carefully articulated psychological development seems strained and unconvincing; the changes in persona do not form a consistent pattern, and they stem from Donne's complex and often contradictory responses to his genre and his subject matter, not his desire to show that his speaker is maturing ("No Man is an Island" 81).

Recognizing the failures of both approaches, Richard Strier has approached the third Satire through a combination of conversionist and sequentialist positions. Strier attempts to revitalize the historical John Donne by emphasizing Empson's insistence on Donne's "theological and intellectual radicalism" (285). In doing so, Strier contextualizes the satires as an account of Donne's religious biography, rejecting "claims that the *Satires* are fundamentally Roman Catholic in point of view and sensibility" (285). He writes that *Satyre II* and *IV* inform the third through their "independence from *any* established religious positions" (Strier 286).

If by "independence from *any* established religious position" Strier means to say that *Satyre III* does not endorse either a Catholic or Protestant concept of salvation, I would agree. However, if Strier is imposing religious pluralism on the historical Donne, I would argue that such an imposition does a disservice to Donne's satiric voice. The third Satire does not endorse a Catholic or Protestant point of view precisely because to do so would place Donne in a position of religious authority.

Because Donne devalues the blind acceptance of authority with regard to choosing true religion, he cannot endorse a religion – to do so would constitute an abuse of his authority as a satirist. In effect, the satirist would become what he is satirizing.

Certainly Donne's family history situates him firmly at the epicenter of the religious conflict between the Protestant and Catholic populations. Donne, a man whom some of his contemporaries may have considered a papist, undoubtedly would have taken issue with the treatment of the native Roman Catholic population. However, the best means of addressing these injustices, it appears, is by redirecting attention. For Donne, satire is a method of inquiry, a device by which issues surrounding religion, politics, and society might be effectively explored. Rather than factionalizing the debate, Donne focuses on the individual's relationship to his faith. What Donne makes clear in his treatment "of Religion" is that the individual must embrace his religion and actualize his faith rather than concern himself with temporal power.

Appropriately, the final lines of the third Satire are concerned with the conflict between power and salvation. I briefly examined these lines in a recent article, arguing that they serve as a warning against the destructive potential of temporal power, and I would like to revisit this examination.³⁹ Here are the final eight lines of the third Satire:

As streames are, Power is; those blest flowers that dwell
At the rough streames calme head, thrive and prove well,
But having left their roots, and themselves given

³⁹ Bryan Herek, "John Donne's Satyre III," *The Explicator* 60.4 (2002) : 193-196.

To the streames tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
Through mills, and rockes, and woods, ‘and at last, almost
Consum’d in going, in the sea are lost:

So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust

Power from God claym’d then God himselfe to trust. (103-110)

These lines suggest that we are naturally inclined toward power. This power is tyrannous, or irresistible, severe and potentially cruel. The selfish desire for power results in the individual uprooting himself, as Donne writes, leaving the “appointed field” (32).

Donne satirizes greed and selfish acquisitiveness in this poem. The fetishizing of religion by Mirreus, Crants, Graius, Phrygius and Graccus (43-69), all of whom would have been labeled “dawes” by Drant, illustrates that selfish motives, rather than the desire for salvation, repeatedly propel the choice of religion. However, self-centered, self-indulgent, and self-seeking motives are not limited to the sphere of religion. Greed is a vice linked to power, no matter which spheres it operates in. Donne writes, “As streams are, Power is.” That is, power takes the form of water flowing in a stream in these final lines, or more precisely a multiplicity of “streames”—the glacial runoff of Donne hill. “Streames,” then, refer to the conduits that serve as the waterways and rivers that connect Europe. These streams provide the life blood of the centers of Europe. The final lines of the third Satire situate power in streams populated with “mills, and rockes, and woods.” Deciphering these symbols is the key to deciphering Donne’s final warning.

Donne's use of the term "mills" in this sequence is particularly intriguing. Mark Jenner notes that in 1582 Peter Morris erected a mill on the London Bridge to raise water and pipe it into the city's network (256). A remarkably strong current ran beneath the bridge and Morris used the current to drive his engine. Mills driven by this current were also used to grind grain. It is not difficult to imagine Donne surveying these mills while shopping among the bookstalls found on the bridge, pondering London's commercial growth and recognizing that these opportunities for commercial growth are often also opportunities for corruption.

The term "rockes" is an unmistakable reference to organized religion. Christ pronounces in Matthew 16, "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rocke I will build my Church."⁴⁰ Roman Catholic theologians interpreted these words as legitimating their claim as the one true church. Of course, Protestants differed. In 1597, around the time Donne was composing this satire, Alexander Top published in London *Saint Peters rocke, under which title is deciphered the faith of Peter, the foundation of the church, Christs sacrificehood, and the comfort of the holy spirit*. Top's objective was to refute the claim that Christ intended the foundation of the church to be secured to a line of popes succeeding from Peter. Donne's use of the term "rockes" is noteworthy in this regard. The plural form appears to confer legitimacy on the various Christian sects of Europe. Nevertheless, the suggestion that there are a variety of legitimate Christian sects does not interfere with his exhortation to, "Keep the truth which thou' hast found" (89).

⁴⁰ Quoted in the *Geneva Bible* (1587).

In *Satyre III*, Donne is concerned with the way we attain truth—“doubt wisely; in a strange way / To stand inquiring right, is not to stray” (77-78)—rather than with ascribing truth to any one faith. Here Donne clearly takes issue with a monolithic and authoritarian view of religion. By encouraging spiritual skepticism that calls into question the validity of any Christian dogma, Donne attempts to avoid identifying his religious allegiance and potentially weakening his position as a satirist.

The term “woods” refers to the political sphere, a sphere that Drant was well acquainted with during his service as domestic chaplain to the Bishop of London, later Archbishop, Edmund Grindal. Tree imagery is frequently associated with the ruling class. With its references to Phillip’s Oak and the copse of trees named for Barbara Gammage, Ben Jonson’s “To Penhurst,” for example, equates the trees and the Sidneys as products of the Kentish soil. Interestingly, “To Penhurst” is published in an edition titled *The Forrest* and Jonson named another edition *Underwood*, titles that reflect the status of his subject matter. Donne employs similar imagery in *Satyre III* to emphasize the privileged position of the nobility as conferred by God.

However, Donne’s proposition that kings do not possess “blanck-charters to kill whom they hate” (91) does not diminish the legitimacy of these rulers. Despite the fact that political power flows from God, it is susceptible to corruption and thus potentially destructive. As Donne writes, “Foole and wretch, wilt thou let thy Soule be ty’d / To man’s laws, by which they shall not be try’d / At the last day” (93-95).

Further consideration of the London Bridge provides additional insight to the interpretation of the third Satire’s final warning, specifically the image of flowers, “given / To the streames tyranous rage.” The London Bridge Museum reports:

The foundations of the bridge were formed by driving piles into the mud and erecting within them stone piers which were protected by vast timber starlings. This created a raging torrent between the starlings at high and low tide, and going through them at times was perilous indeed.

It was known as the “Shooting Bridge” and the watermen needed to be expert to safely navigate the tidal waters. Donne, perhaps inspired by the Shooting Bridge, reflects the perils encountered by the individual navigating through religious, political, and commercial power in the final warning of his satire: “So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust / Power from God claym’d, then God himself to trust.” These lines make clear the conflict between the search for salvation and the pursuit of power. Corroded by sins of selfishness, the individual is consumed by the desire for temporal power. Without demonstrating the proper concern for salvation, the individual is swept away by the abuse of virtue and ultimately perishes in a sea of iniquity. Donne’s final warning of power’s corruptive potential is not limited to the sphere of religion, just as religious truth is not bound to a single church. Indeed, his warning of the dangerous attraction to and destructive potential of power in its temporal manifestations—religious, political and commercial—is a fitting one for his audience, the young men of the Inns of Court in the process of learning to pilot the conduits of power. Thus, Donne’s third Satire stands not as a discussion “of Religion,” but a commentary on secular power and authority.

Further, the third Satire stands in opposition to the simple structures, ideas and morals found in exempla literature. Indeed, Donne’s description of the “Hill of

Truth” is testament to his belief that salvation must be actively pursued. In other words, faith requires intellectual effort:

[...] On a huge hill,
Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will
Reach her, about must, and about must go;
And what the hill’s suddenness resists, win so;
Yet strive so, that before age, death’s twilight,
Thy soul rest, for non can work in that night. (79-84)

Of course, the ascent of a hill is common in religious imagery. After all, Moses scaled the mountain to commune with God. However, the suggestion that the hill must be slowly circled—a practical method since the angle of ascent is effectively decreased when one circles—stands in sharp contrast to the straightforward approach to faith expounded on and presented in moral exempla.

Satyre IV

In the fourth Satire we are once again presented with a version of Horace’s “Bore” satire. And, like Horace, the satirist blames himself for being accosted by the bore, who, this time, is portrayed as an antagonistic courtier. The satirist begins his visit to court:

I had no suit there, nor new suite to shew
Yet went to Court; but as Glaze which did goe
To’a Masse in jest, catch’d, was faint to disburse
The hundred markes, which is the Statutes curse
Before he scapt, So’it ples’d my destinie

(Guilty' of my sin in going) to thinke me
As prone to'all ill, and of good as forget-
full, as proud as lustful and as much in debt,
As vaine, as witlesse, and as false as they
Which dwell at Court, for once going that way.
Therefore I suffer'd this [...] (7-17)

From this account, it would seem that the satirist had no good reason for going to Court. We are to believe that he goes as a lark, a jest. He likens his actions to Glaze attending a mass for sport only to be apprehended and forced to pay a fine. But this is a strange comparison. Why would someone attend a Catholic mass, an activity that was prohibited by law, on a whim? When Donne's satirist gets around to admitting his reasons for going to Court he does so in a round about way. He clearly believes he has the skills necessary to gain favor at court and through this favor obtain a comfortable living.

The antagonist of the satire is an experienced courtier, although he comes off like a braggart for unabashedly touting his abilities: his knowledge of languages, of fashion, of literature. He sizes up the satirist during their encounter, probing for weaknesses that might be exploited. Each defensive barb that is thrown at him by the satirist is deftly avoided. Andreasen claims that "the young fop is too obtuse and self centered to understand," but this is not the case (71-72). The courtier demonstrates his own sharp wit:

... who'hath sold his land, and now doth beg
A licence, old iron bootes, shoes, and egge-

shels to transport; Shortly boyes shall not play
At span-counter, or blow-point, but they pay
Toll to some Courtier; 'And wiser than us all
He knows what Ladie is not painted. (103-8)

Newton rightly observes that while the antagonist is “introduced as telling ‘many’ a lie,’ he quickly adverts to the familiar topics of satire, and his voice merges with Donne’s” (438). Thus, the courtier is not as dense as Andreasen might have us believe (71-72). Rather, he is a courtier of wit and a satirist in his own right

The difference between these two “satirists” is one of positioning. The “bore” satirizes from within and the “would-be courtier” satirizes from the outside looking in. Perhaps this is what frightens the speaker: that he has the potential to become as callous, as conniving as his antagonist; that his destiny is to live a hollow courtly life.

Having successfully shaken off his antagonist, the satirist, now safely at home, has a dream wherein the drama of the court unfolds before him. The state of affairs he witnesses is one wholly motivated by appearances. Men buy speeches and women paint their faces. The satirist notes that “me seems they doe as well / At stage, as court” (184-5). This witticism marks the satirist as a man capable of looking behind these masks, these props and scripts and into the misery at its root. Glorius is the embodiment of this misery as much as he is the cause of it. He does not care on whom he spits, whom he slanders, whom he harms. The end justifies the means and the end is to command like law (228). However, the satirist has nothing to fear. He is neatly tucked away in his chamber as the vision slips away. Thus, Donne’s satirist can be likened to a receptacle collecting the trash of the world. The question

becomes, then, in what manner is this trash disposed? One can imagine the possible consequences to the satirist of forcing the world to come to terms with its own refuse. In this manner, the airing of dirty laundry may prove more dangerous than an encounter with Glorius. Thus, the satirist calls attention to the filth man produces, in effect demonstrating to his contemporaries the pigs they have become.

Donne confirms the position as a satirist in this poem as a figure of authority—more importantly, a figure of religious authority. Interestingly, the closing lines of this satire link the satirist with the preacher:

[...] Preachers which are
Seas of Wit and Arts, you can, then dare,
Drowne the sinnes of this place, for, for mee
Which am but a scarce brooke, it enough shall bee
To wash the staines away; Though I yet
With *Macchabeees* modestie, the knowne merit
Of my worke lessen: yet some wise man shall,
I hope, esteeme my writs Canonical. (237-244)

Donne, while at the same time admitting the power of religious authority to expose and cure corruption, establishes the satirist as an equally legitimate vehicle of reform. What is more, Donne hopes that the “wise man” might canonize his writings. The suggestion being that that the satirist conforms too ecclesiastical ideals. In short, Donne equates the authority of the satirist with ecclesiastical authority. The Bishops’ Order of 1599 represents a reaction against such an equation and its proscription against satire serves to reassert ecclesiastical influence on the literature of the 1590s.

Satyre V

In the fifth Satire, the satirist takes on a public issue which, as Milgate points out, Sir Thomas Egerton identified as pressing in “his attempts to restrict fees charged by the Clerk of the Star Chamber” (165). These fees, it would appear, were transformed into bribery and extortion. The most provocative aspect of this satire is that it calls upon the head of state, Queen Elizabeth.

The satirist introduces the seriousness of the situation with a warning against laughter, both his and his reader’s:

Thou shalt not laugh in this leefe, Muse, nor they
Whom any pittie warmes; He which did lay
Rules to make Courtiers, (hee being understood
May make good Courtiers, but who Courtiers good?)
Frees from the sting of jests all who’ in extreme
Are wrech’d or wicked: of these two a theme
Charity and libertie give me. (1-6)

Although the poet warns himself against laughter, the wit shines through the parenthetical. The officers of court may produce quality courtiers according to their own corrupt standards, but, the satirist asks, who will set a higher standard for these men to adhere to and enforce these standards as well?

The parenthetical is a particularly interesting couplet because it alludes to Horace *Satires* 2.1. In Horace’s consultation with Trebatius, the lawyer counsels against writing libelous verse. As Raman Selden notes, “Horace playfully and wittily dissolves the potentially serious implications of Trebatius’ warning with a pun which

confuses the legal terminology with the aesthetic: ‘To be sure, in the case of ill verse, but what if a man compose good verse and Caesar approve? If he has barked at someone who deserves abuse himself quite blameless?’” (17). In both of these satires, the term “good” carries a double meaning. Horace’s use is both legal and aesthetic. Donne’s use is both political and moral. The similarity between the two is further strengthened by the fact that both of these poets appeal to the highest secular authority. Horace looks to Caesar, and Donne looks to Elizabeth. When Donne’s satirist asks, “Greatest and Fairest Empresse, Know you this?” (28), he is calling for Elizabeth’s attention so that she might correct the perfidious behavior of her officers and subjects. She is, after all, the fountain from which secular power flows and thus may make such reform her royal prerogative. With respect to Elizabeth’s knowledge of this corruption, Newton suggests that:

Elizabeth does not know, indeed she cannot know, her officers’ corruption and her subject’s perversity. First, she is England, and if the land is corrupt then she herself is an unwitting and indeed a natural agent of destruction, like the innocent Thames. And second, from the point of view Donne is establishing... the land is not really corrupt and what appears destructive is merely natural. (442)

But the Queen must be aware, and Newton’s contention of that she is ignorant is unsatisfying. By calling upon the sovereign Donne implores her to correct these abuses while dangerously suggesting her culpability. The satire ends with the following lines:

O wretch that they fortunes should moralize

Esops fables, and make tales, prophesies.

Thou'art the swimming dog whom shadows cosened,

And div'st, neare drowning, for what vanished. (88-91)

For Donne, the satirist must acknowledge the eternal presence of evil in this world.

By admitting that evil may never be vanquished, he warns that men like him will always appear and will always be called by the cankered muse to expose corruption.

Just as the satirist cannot escape corrupt people, corrupt people cannot escape the satirist.

In sum, Donne's final message in *Satyre V* is that satire, as a tool for analyzing social and moral performance, is superior to moral exempla. The "wretch" who moralizes with the aid of exemplars like Aesop's fables attempts, inappropriately and with dangerous consequences, to hold on to a methodology that lacks relevance in late sixteenth-century England—a methodology that, as Donne writes, has "vanished."

Manuscript Satire after the Bishop's Order

While Donne's five formal satires were composed before the 1599 Bishop's Order, his popularity and reputation as a manuscript satirist reached its height in the early seventeenth-century, thus contributing to the concern he expressed in his letter to Wotton, writing, "To my satyres there belongs some feare [...]." In spite of his misgivings, Donne's stature as a manuscript satirist grew. It is not surprising, then, that young gentlemen of letters experimenting with satire looked to him for inspiration and approval. One such young gentleman was Edward Herbert.

The older brother of the devotional poet George Herbert, Edward was introduced to Donne through his mother, Magdalen Herbert, a woman known for her generosity and honored by Donne in a verse letter attached to his Holy Sonnets sent to her in 1607. Edward Herbert developed a friendship with Donne, exchanging letters until Donne's death in 1631. In 1608, Herbert sent Donne a satire, "The State-progress of Ill," for his approval. This satire is an analysis of power and authority, exploring the relationship between government and individual freedom.

What is most interesting about Herbert's satire is that he looks to government, rather than religious authority, to serve as the primary defense against vice and immorality. Indeed, Herbert goes so far as to criticize ecclesiastical authority for contributing to the progress of evil in the world:

Mean while, sugred Divines, next place to this,
Tells us, Humility and Patience is
The way to Heaven, and that we must there
Look for our Kingdom, that the great'st rule here
Is for to rule our selves; and that they might
Say this the better, they to no place have right
B'inheritance, while whom Ambition swayes,
Their office is to turn it other wayes. (98-105)

Thus, Herbert is representative of the critical stance adopted by satirists toward religious authority. It is precisely this type of criticism that the Bishops found threatening. Herbert's satire, and others like it, also stands as testament to the fact

that the proscription did little to stem the tide of this type of criticism in manuscript satire.

Rather than focusing attention on religion's function in providing models for social/moral performance, Herbert's satire examines the development of human government as a type of medication meant to remedy the existence of ill or evil in the world, suggesting that,

[...] I do see
Some Ill requir'd, that one poison might free
The other; so States, to their Greatness, find
No faults requir'd but their own, and bind
The rest [...] (9-13)

In short, Herbert asserts that governments are a necessary evil—a poison that counteracts another, potentially more deadly, toxin.

Donne's 1610 response to Herbert is intriguing. Rather than simply a reply to Herbert's analysis of human government, Donne's verse letter, "To Sir Edward Herbert, at Julyers," is a defense of satire. In this work, Donne plays on Herbert's idea of poison as purgative presented in Herbert's piece to argue for a medicinal model for satire.

Donne introduces the idea that "[...] Soules [...] by our first touch take in / The poysonous tincture of Originall sinne" (ll. 19-20). He then observes that:

To us, as to his chickins, he dost cast
Hemlocke, and wee as men, his hemlocke taste;
We do infuse to what he meant for meat,

Corrosiveness, or intense cold or heat. (23-26)

It is important to note that hemlock, although known to kill men, was thought to nourish birds.⁴¹ Thus, what is “meant for meat” for one type of animal might harm another. He continues, writing,

For, God no such specifique poison hath
As kills we know not how; his fiercest wrath
Hath no antipathy, but may be good
At least for physicke, if not for our food.
Thus man, that might be his pleasure, is his rod,
And is his devil, that might be his God. (27-32)

Donne asserts that God’s creation is “good,” not naturally hostile to man. Thus, hemlock, although poisonous, might be used for medicinal purposes. Donne then links this notion to satire, noting,

Since then our businesse is, to rectifie
Nature, to what she was, wee are led awry
By them, who man to us in little show; (33-35)

Donne uses the second person plural pronoun “our” to link Herbert and himself together as satirists. The “businesse” of satire put forward by Donne is to repair the damage done by those “who man to us in little show.” Scholars have interpreted these lines to mean that Donne was, in the words of Frank Kerins, “[...] to create an ideal image which can move man toward his own purification. The true role of the satiric poet is finally one of inspiration—showing man as both of the world and above

⁴¹ See Milgate 240 for a discussion of the use of hemlock in these lines.

it. It is not his fallen state which condemns man but his failure to perceive his own transcendent nature” (36-37)⁴² In other words, Donne is engaging in literary criticism in these lines.

Moral exempla’s domination of literature, with its simplistic characterization of man, does not allow for an accurate portrayal of the complexities of human experience; as Donne exhorts, “for Man into himselfe can draw / All” (37-38). Satire, as it was practiced by both Donne and Herbert, strives to explore this complexity. Of course, satire acts differently on different audiences, just as medication might be “Poysonous, purgative, or cordiall” (42) depending on the condition of the man for whom it is prescribed. Still, Donne’s verse letter acknowledges the importance of satire in evaluating and teaching social/moral behavior, as his closing compliment to Herbert demonstrates,

As brave as true, is that profession than
Which you doe use to make; that you know man.
This makes it credible; you have dwelt upon
All worthy bookes, and are now such a one.
Actions are authors, and of those in you
Your friends find every day a mart of new. (45-50)

For Donne, satire is not monolithic. Satire is not a sermon. It is not a tool for religious or political propaganda. Rather, satire is a method of inquiry, an apparatus for exploring the human condition. In order effectively to explore the human condition the satirist must necessarily take issue with authority. Authority, whether in

⁴² Frank Kerins, “The ‘Busnesse’ of Satire: Donne and the Reformation of a Satirist,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 26.1 (1981) : 35-61.

books, law, religion, the Court or the Star Chamber, acts to regulate human behavior and organize the world in a way that is often at odds with virtue and piety. Men write books, make the law, establish religions and rule nations. But men are fallible. Certainly one may attempt to ground earthly authority on the highest of all authorities, God. Yet, as Donne writes in *Satyre III*, “So perish souls, which more choose men’s unjust / Power from God claimed, than God himself to trust.” In other words, individuals who subscribe to earthly authority (even those who make claims to divine authority) always subscribe to a flawed or imperfect authority. Satire, in turn, reminds us that the institutions we rely on for our very existence are imperfect and disposed to corruption. It forces us to laugh at our frailty and in doing so recognize the frailty of our leaders.

If we examine the satires as individual pieces, we might see them as unique instances where Donne situates himself among his peers; in effect, he attempts to reconcile his status as an outsider in each of these works. The first Satire shows Donne as a scholar but also as a willing participant in the extracurricular activities of the wealthy urban youth. In the second, Donne shows agreement with his elite peers’ distaste for the ambitions of the professional lawyer. The third Satire, “of Religion,” resolves Donne’s condition as a recusant by examining the tension between the idea that there is a “right” way through which salvation might be achieved and the notion that the way is uncertain. In effect, he argues that it is better to be in fearful quest of the right way than in unearned certainty and complaisance. The fourth Satire pits Donne against a courtier. Given that Donne worked towards preparing himself to be a courtier, we should read this satire as a reflection of his anxiety regarding his

abilities as well as the political difficulties he faces due to his background in achieving his professional goals. The final satire, addressed to his employer, Egerton (ll. 31-32), reflects his desire to aid the Lord Keeper in reforming the Star Chamber. Thus, Donne explicitly advocates satire's function in exposing contemporary abuses and in doing so aid in the maintenance of a healthy civil society.

If we read these satires as a group, however, and view Donne as an English Persius, we see various lines of development. We see the evolution of a man from scholarship to service, for example, or even as an evolution Donne's moral thought from his youthful, hedonistic pleasures through his conversion. But more importantly, by viewing Donne's satires as a book we see the evolution of satire in early modern England. Donne's contemporaries saw in these five satires an opportunity to adopt a Roman form and adapt it to their needs. Early modern England needed a Persius to help legitimate satire as a method of analyzing and interpreting the human condition in an increasingly secular world. Donne fit that bill. Whether he intentionally set out to write a book modeled on Persius is a question that we cannot answer with certainty. What is certain, however, is that Donne was anxious about his status as a satirist. Given the controversy surrounding satire and given that his satires circulated beyond his control, this anxiety becomes all the more understandable.

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Chapter 3: Print Satire

The June 1st, 1599 Bishops' Order gives pride of place to Joseph Hall and John Marston, listing Hall's *Virgidemiarum* and Marston's *Pygmalion* and *The Scourge of Villanie* first among the offensive books to be called in and destroyed. That the Bishops identified Hall and Marston's satires first among their peers is not unexpected; they were the most infamous satirists of the age. What is curious about their pairing is that Hall and Marston, at least on the surface, appear about as different as two satirists could be. Hall was a member of the clergy writing from Cambridge and his satires reflect a preacher's temperament. Describing his satires as "sacred Sermons" (4.1.80), Hall's work is didactic and infused with images of the rural landscape that surrounded him. Marston, on the other hand, was a student at the Inns of Court. His satires are filled with descriptions of the bustling London cityscape and his style is marked by an overwhelming sense of futility and despair regarding man's moral condition. The two do share one important feature, however. Both write in the vein of Roman satirists.

If we are to appreciate the Bishops' Order as a response to Roman influenced literature, we must appreciate that the particulars—contemporary figures or events—satirized by Hall, Marston and other poets included in the Order are secondary. Certainly Hall might be considered seditious or heretical because of his satiric treatment of idolatry in the mass, especially when considered in light of the

Marprelate controversy.⁴³ And of course, Marston might well be considered libelous and even obscene. However, whether writing from Cambridge or from the Inns of Court, whether writing “Tooth-lesse” or scourging satires, the Bishops saw these satirists as dangerous because they encroached on ecclesiastical authority and not because of the volatility of the social, political and religious issues that they satirized. Of course, the satirists of the 1590s recognized a variety of problems that threatened the health of civil society and detailed those threats in the hopes of healing the body politic. We must recognize, however, that in order to cure, an appropriate treatment must be found.

In this chapter I examine the satires of Hall and Marston. I focus on Hall and Marston because they are excellent representatives of satire produced for print in the 1590s. Indeed, Hall and Marston are particularly prescient examples of the range of Elizabethan verse satire. Their styles encapsulate the laughter of Horace, the gloominess of Persius and the vitriol of Juvenal. Their subjects range from the rural landscape to the London cityscape. Most importantly, Hall and Marston were the most well known print satirists of their age as evidenced by their works being identified first among those condemned by the Bishops. I examine Hall and Marston as representatives of a larger Elizabethan satiric project, a project that might be best described as a poetical experiment in treating the body politic. Both find that contemporary poetry has failed to realize its potential for moral inquiry and instruction. They turn to satire in an attempt to reclaim poetry as a vehicle for moral

⁴³ For a good introduction to the Marprelate controversy, see Edward Arber, *An Introductory Sketch to the Martin Marprelate Controversy 1588-1590* (1880) and William Pierce, *An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts* (London, 1908).

exploration and instruction. By calling attention to immorality and the nature of the abuse, Hall and Marston position themselves as exemplary poets. In this respect, we may approach their satiric projects as socio-literary endeavors, works that refocus attention on the complex relationship between the poet and society. It is essential to evaluate the satire of the 1590s in terms of the interrelation of its literary and social concerns.

Indeed, it is due to the intersection of literature and history that led satire to flourish in late Elizabethan England. The increased availability of Roman satire in both Latin and in translation made available models from which Elizabethan satirist drew inspiration. The fashionability of literature indicates a reading public hungry for innovative new material. Further, attitudes toward morality were shifting. In particular, Galenic humoral theory prompted a re-examination of the causes of immoral behavior. In addition, anxieties regarding the growth of a market economy work to re-contextualize morality. In other words, the vice of greed not only threatens the health of a man's soul, but the health of society. By examining satire in the context of the Bishops' Order we might better appreciate the rise in popularity of satire in Elizabethan England as reflecting the ecclesiastical community's concern regarding these shifts in moral perspective.

One of the primary failings of critics who have examined the motivations behind the 1599 Bishops' Order is their focus on satire's treatment of particular events and/or individuals. Cyndia Clegg's assertion that the Order is a measured response to attacks on Essex and his ill-fated expedition to Ireland stands as a prime example. Examining satire in strictly as it applies to a specific individual or political

conflict does not speak to broader social concerns. Those critics who do attend to satire's generic characteristics as a motivating factor behind the Bishops' proscriptions tend to concentrate on aberrant features. John Peter, for instance, argues that the satire of the 1590s tended toward obscenity and that the Bishops' censorship measures were prompted by anxiety regarding immorality and indecency. To fully appreciate the motivations behind the Bishops' Order, however, we must consider the emergence of satire as part of the advancement of an English literary tradition that might be held in esteem alongside the classics. By examining Hall and Marston's satires in the context of this larger socio-literary project, a project that is testified to by the various types of literature included in the 1599 Order, I demonstrate that the Bishops were motivated by their dissatisfaction with the direction in which this project was heading. Specifically, the Bishops perceived satire developing in ways that supplement and/or supersede the literature of moral exempla and thus threatened a primary method of ecclesiastical control over the regulation of human behavior. In other words, the satirist became a rival moralist who embraced the *libertas* to pursue alternative approaches to model moral performance. Hall and Marston stand as two prescient examples of Elizabethan authors working to legitimate the secular poet as an authorized arbiter of moral behavior in civil society.

In this chapter I first investigate moral discourse in its Roman and Medieval contexts. I show that Roman moral discourse served to support traditional Roman values and thus re-enforce a secular, nationalistic identity. Medieval moral discourse, on the other hand, worked to educate the laity as to Christian beliefs and practices and as such re-enforce a Christian identity. I then turn to a discussion of Hall and

Marston in order to demonstrate their rejection of traditional Christian moral discourse as insufficient to speak to the moral needs of man navigating an increasingly secular society. Hall embraces Roman satire as a means to evaluate and reform civil society. Specifically, Hall looks to satire as a vehicle to comment on particular contemporary social, political and religious abuses. By exposing these abuses without the veil of allegory, Hall encourages an open discussion of the health of civil society. He rejects moral exempla literature as fictions presented as fact, and as such, suggests that this traditional moral discourse is unable to facilitate a truthful and therefore useful discussion of the state of contemporary affairs. Marston, on the other hand, is concerned with an exploration of the cause of man's immorality. Specifically, Marston focuses on providing a better understanding of immorality as resulting from man's dual nature. Marston argues that moral discourses, including Christian moral exempla literature, have failed to provide an adequate understanding of man's duality, of the intersection of body and soul, of passion and reason. He posits that, in order for man to enact moral reform, man must learn to know himself. In particular, Marston looks to humoral theory as the best alternative to understanding the root cause of immorality. Through my examination of Hall and Marston's satires, I demonstrate that satire in the 1590s threatened ecclesiastical moral authority by highlighting the insufficiencies of moral exempla literature, a primary means by which the Church educates and regulates society. I thus demonstrate that satire provides the individual the freedom to explore alternative and increasingly secular approaches to modeling moral behavior. In effect, satire promoted secular poetry as a legitimate location for moral discourse and the secular poet as a legitimate moral

authority. I conclude this chapter with a brief examination of print satire published after the 1599 ban to demonstrate that authors and audiences found enough value in satire to merit risking its continued production.

Morality in Its Roman and Medieval Contexts

To better understand satire's function in the 1590s as an alternative vehicle for moral exploration, we must look to the function of morality in Roman literature. In "A Post-script to the Reader" attached to his *Virgidemiarum*, Hall notes that the lack "of more late and familiar presidents" (54-56) constrains him to imitate Roman satirists. He thus acknowledges the novelty of satire as an English genre and also reminds his audience that an understanding of the function of Roman satire as it worked in its ancient contexts is crucial to developing satire in English. Marston also acknowledges his debt to Roman satirists while emphasizing the difficulty confronted by his Elizabethan audience in appreciating the function of satire in Roman society ("To those that seeme iudiciall perusers" 18-23). While Marston is certainly correct to recognize the obscurity of his ancient models, he is also correct to assert that obscurity is not a generic characteristic of Roman satire but rather a result of the difficulties inherent in linguistic and historical distance from these Roman models. He makes this point particularly clear when he looks back at the history of English literature, stating, "*Chaucer* is harde euen to our vnderstandings : who knows the reason ? hovve much more those old Satyres which expresse themselues in termes, that breathed not long euen in their daies" (24-26). Further, the reader must also be aware that the "priuate customs of [the] time" (20) or the peculiarities of a historical moment, shape satire and thus render it difficult for an Elizabethan audience to

comprehend. Just as Hall and Marston's encourage their audience to look back and examine the environment that informs Roman satire, we, too, must look back.

Particularly, we must attend to the function of morality in Roman literature.

Roman literature is best understood as advancing the interests of the cultural elite. In particular, it served to mediate conflicts over values and authority. It is important to note that Roman literature relied heavily on discussions of morality to advance its ends. In her study, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Catharine Edwards details the significance this moral discourse held in Roman literature. Edwards observes that what would be today considered political or economic issues were for the Romans moral issues and tied to the failure of individuals to control their behavior (4). Edwards argues that, "Roman moral norms can be seen as constituting a 'cultural arbitrary' [...] which were not deduced from any universal principle but which were, to a certain degree, internalized by members of the society which used them" (4). Viewed in this way, moral discourse worked to define Roman identity by re-enforcing cultural values. These values, as Edwards observes, were not tied to religious belief but rather grounded in secular systems. Edwards reminds us that Roman status was inexorably tied to wealth. A certain net-worth was required for a Roman to be considered a member of the elite.⁴⁴ Moralizing is in part a method of controlling the spending of the elite and thus ensuring the financial solvency not only of the individual but of the empire as a whole (12). Thus, Roman satire, by attacking

⁴⁴ See also Janet Huskinson, *Experiencing Rome: Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire*. (New York: Routledge, 2000) for further discussion of elite culture and identity in the Roman empire.

immorality, works to control behavior while demarcating and defining what it means to be a member of Roman society.

In *Lies, Slander and Obscenity in Medieval English Literature*, Edwin Craun outlines the function moral discourse played in Medieval English society. Craun posits that literary moral discourse “was used to create a large and loose ‘textual community,’ a social group in which a small literate core instructs the whole in authoritative texts in order to establish systematic, text based ways of constructing a moral self, of regulating human conduct” (3). In particular, these literate authorities—predominantly members of the clergy—employed this moral discourse as a teaching tool to educate the laity as to the universal principles underlying Christian belief. The primary differences between Roman and Christian moral literature, then, are the systems of belief that they support and are supported by. For the late republican and early imperial Roman, this system was secular. For example, noting that effeminacy is often associated with political and social weakness, Catharine Edwards points to Cicero’s attacks on Julius Caesar’s *mollitia*, translated as “effeminacy” and often associated with homosexuality, as questioning Caesar’s authority (63-65). For the Medieval Christian, this system was religious. A good illustration of Medieval Christian moral discourse is Robert Mannyng’s *Handlyng Synne*.

Written in the early fourteenth century, Robert Mannyng’s *Handlyng Synne* is a translation of *Manuel des Péchiez*, William of Wadington’s confessional guidebook. Mannyng’s collection moves through a series of sermons, illustrated with exempla, on the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, and various points of shrift. The

work is intended to educate the laity on types of sins and the obligations of the confessor.⁴⁵

While Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* is a confessional guidebook, it has also been identified as satiric.⁴⁶ This identification is understandable. In his illustration of the First Commandment, Mannyng presents an original tale, "The Witch and Her Cow-Sucking Bag." Mannyng tells the story of a witch's enchanted bag that enables her to milk her neighbors' cows. Although he does not believe in magic, a bishop attempts to re-create her spell but fails—the moral being that words spoken without belief are worthless. The irony of a bishop trying his hand at black magic would not have been lost on Mannyng's audience and thus the bishop is in part a satirical portrait of ecclesiastical authority. Mannyng also takes up the mantle of Piers in his treatment of greed, one of the seven deadly sins. The figure of Piers is of course commonly associated with satire. Puttenham identifies Langland's *Piers Ploughman* as an early English satire, for example, based upon Piers' status as a malcontent (74). Mannyng's employment of Piers in this story, as well as including other mocking portraits—such as a miserly Cambridge cleric who poisons himself by eating gold—strongly suggests he is satirizing the ecclesiastical community.

Despite these satiric elements, however, Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* is not a satire in the Roman sense. The primary purpose of Mannyng's work is to educate the laity to proper confessional procedures. Thus it is grounded on universal Christian

⁴⁵ The background information contained in this paragraph derives from Kathleen Gaines McCarty, "Robert Mannyng," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 146: Old and Middle English Literature* (The Gale Group, 1994) : 274-278.

⁴⁶ See, for example, Rose Graham, *The Victoria History of the County of Lincoln* (London, 1906) 184; D. W. Robertson, "The Cultural Tradition of *Handlyng Synne*" *Speculum* 22 (1947) 164.

principles and serves to re-enforce those principles as it re-enforces the authority of the ecclesiastical community. In effect, the difference between Roman satire and Christian moral exempla literature like *Handling Synne* is the foundation on which immorality is attacked. The Romans saw morality in secular terms and bound up in Roman cultural identity. For Mannyng and the ecclesiastical community, morality was defined by Christian systems of belief. The satirists of the 1590s imitate Roman models and thereby shift the emphasis from Christian to secular systems. Elizabethan satirists, then, work to illustrate an English cultural identity and thereby interpret and judge human behavior not solely in terms of Christian morality (of course, the Christian faith is an element of their identity) but also in terms of a “cultural arbitrary” that is dependent upon the “private customs” of Elizabethan society. The 1599 Bishops’ Order stands as a reflection of ecclesiastical anxiety precisely because the Bishops recognized that Roman influenced literature shifts the benchmarks of morality from the religious system to the secular. In other words, Elizabethan satirists exercised the *libertas* to investigate morality without limiting themselves to Christian theology. An investigation of Joseph Hall and John Marston’s satires demonstrates that satirists of the 1590s employed a variety of standards and methods with which to investigate immorality in Elizabethan society.

The Quarrel Between Joseph Hall and John Marston

Joseph Hall was born in 1574 to John Hall, a minor civil official in Leicestershire, and Winifred Bambridge. Recognizing their son Joseph’s intellectual abilities, they intended him for the clergy. With the help of his uncle, Hall entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge where he graduated B.A. in 1592/3. He was elected

Fellow in 1595 and proceeded M.A. in 1596. He published the first part of his *Virgidemiarum*, what he described as his “Tooth-lesse Satyrs,” in 1597 and the second part, his “byting Satyres,” in 1598. Hall would later abandon the cankered muse and concentrate on his ecclesiastical career, steadily advancing in esteem and rank under James I and eventually rising to the position of Bishop of Norwich in 1641.

John Marston was born in Oxfordshire in 1576. His father, John, was a wealthy landowner and later a successful lawyer in London and Reader at the Middle Temple. His mother, Mary Guarsi, was the daughter of an Italian physician. Marston was educated at Oxford, proceeding B.A. in 1593/4. Secured admission to the Inns of Court by his father, Marston entered the Middle Temple in 1595. Marston resided in his father’s chambers at the Inns even after abandoning a legal career for the literary profession. It was during this time that he published two books of satire. The first, *The Metamorphosis of Pigmaliions Image and Certaine Satyres*, was published in the spring of 1598. The second, *The Scourge of Villanie*, was published in the fall of the same year. Marston as well abandoned verse satire, but he turned his attention to the theater. Marston worked as a professional playwright until 1609, when he entered the ministry and was ordained Deacon.

Although both Hall and Marston ended their lives in service to the Church, as young men they served the cankered muse. Because of their differing conceptions regarding satire and its function in society, Hall and Marston engaged in a literary feud. Given the differences in their literary ambitions and their audience, that they held conflicting ideas of satire is not surprising. Hall, writing from Cambridge,

geared his satires toward an academic audience. Indeed, he devoted an entire book to “Academicall” concerns. Marston, writing from the Inns of Court, tailored his satires for an urban audience, evidenced by frequent images of the London cityscape and its inhabitants that drive his satires. That Hall and Marston differed in their career ambitions also contributed to their mutual animosity. Hall was a cleric first and a poet second. In other words, he considered himself an amateur poet. Hall confirmed this amateur status later in life when he lamented the fact that he had to write books to buy books (Davenport xix). Marston, on the other hand, had his eyes set on a professional literary career. He abandoned his legal studies in favor of work as a professional dramatist. In short, Hall and Marston were two very different satirists simply by virtue of their ambition as poets. In part, then, we should appreciate their literary feud as resulting from these differences.

Disagreements among poets were prominent in the 1590s.⁴⁷ One of the most famous is the Harvey-Nashe quarrel.⁴⁸ While this quarrel encompasses social, political and even religious differences between these two men, it is important to note that the primary source of contention between Harvey and Nashe is differing opinions regarding the role of the poet in society. It is also important to remember that the 1599 Order includes a provision banning the works of Harvey and Nashe. For the purposes of this study, detailing the Harvey-Nashe controversy is impractical. What

⁴⁷ For a discussion of literary quarrels common among students at the Universities and Inns of Court, see Philip Finkelpearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969) 89-91.

⁴⁸ For an overview of the Harvey-Nashe quarrel, see Jonathan V. Crewe, *Unredeemed Rhetoric: Thomas Nashe and the Scandal of Authorship* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982) and G. R. Hibbard, *Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1962).

is significant is that their disagreement stands as an example of the broader Elizabethan project of defining the status of the poet and his function in society. In this respect, we might better appreciate the differences between Hall and Marston as poets. By attending to their differences, we will also find points of agreement. Indeed, despite their differences, Hall and Marston both work to develop satire as a method by which immorality is evaluated and reformed.

The quarrel between the two satirists begins in Marston's attack on Hall in the *Certaine Satyres. The Metamorphosis of Pigmaliions Image and Certiane Satyres*, published in 1598, contains an erotic retooling of Ovid as well as Roman inspired satires. It is prescient that Marston's first published work combines the erotic and satiric. One of Marston's defining characteristics is his preoccupation with deviant sexuality, a preoccupation that winds through his work both as a satirist and a dramatist. But there is something unsettling about Marston's obsession with sex. Arnold Davenport notes that his works are, "characterized by uncalled-for sexual horrors and by frequent passages of flat, blunt indecency without a spark of good humour or a glint of delighted naughtiness" (23). Interestingly, Hall observed Marston's prurient interests and satirized them in an epigram he had pasted into copies of *Pigmaliions Image* that came to Cambridge:

I aske'd Phisitions what they counsel was
For a mad dogge, or for a mankind Asse?
They told me though there were confections store,
Of Poppy-seede, and soueraine Hellebore,
The dog was best cured by cutting & kinsing,

The Asse must be kindly whipped for winking.

Now then S.K. I little passe

Whether thou be a mad dog, or mankind Asse. (*Scourge* 10.50-57)

In this epigram, Hall compares Marston to a mad dog—a sexually rabid animal—and an ass—a man characterized by his clumsiness and stupidity. These analogies suggest that Hall found Marston's *Pigmaliions Image and Certaine Satyres* tastelessly sexual and aesthetically lacking. Positing that Marston is afflicted with some sort of disease, Hall approaches physicians for potential cures. While these physicians possess a variety of pharmaceutical remedies, they observe that the proper therapy for a "mad dogge" is castration and docking; they offer that whipping will cure a "mankind Asse." Hall's closing couplet, "Now then S.K. I little passe / Whether thou be a mad dog, or mankind Asse," indicates that he has administered both treatments by way of this epigram.

Whether or not Marston deserved Hall's reproach is debatable. He does devote an entire satire in his *Pigmaliions Image* to criticizing the author of *Virgidemiarum* ("Reactio"). However, Marston does not appear overly malicious in his handling of Hall. Marston's primary complaint stems from Hall's attack on poetry. Hall devotes an entire book to "Poeticall" abuses, for example, and the abuse of the poet's muse is a frequent theme throughout his six books. Marston contends that Hall's attacks on poetry are unfair and that Hall should be more tolerant of his fellow poets, "Lets not maligne our kin" (169). Rather, Marston suggests that Hall should "laugh and sport with me / At strangers follies with a merry glee" (167-8). Still, one can see why Hall would be disgruntled with Marston's sentiments in the

“Reactio.” For Hall, satire is a vehicle for a serious analysis of the health of civil society, “Goe daring Muse on with thy thanklesse taske, / And do the vgly face of vice vnmaske” (“Prologue” 19-20). Further, Marston’s contends that poetry was the provenience of fiction, “For tell me Crittick, is not Fiction / The soule of Poesies inuention?” (“Reactio” 87-88). In this respect, Marston agrees with Sidney’s tactic of displacement, that “right poets” dislodge the subject from historicity so that it might be evaluated from a distance.⁴⁹ For Hall, this is unacceptable, “Truth be thy speed, and Truth thy Patron be” (“Defiance of Enuie” 24). Although he does acknowledge that fictionalizing is more palatable, he contends that disguising the subject makes men less likely to seek out the meat of the matter, “that men rather choose carelessly to lease the sweete of the kernell, than to vrge their teeth with the breaking of the shell wherein it is wrapped” (“Post-script” 80-2). While these differences may at first seem substantial, Hall and Marston are not wholly at cross-purposes. While their conception of satire may differ, each strives to evaluate the moral health of Elizabethan England. I would like to now turn my attention to an extended examination of Hall’s *Virgidemiarum* and Marston’s *The Scourge of Villanie*. By further examining their conception of satire and their employment of it, we might better appreciate the Bishops’ objections to satire.

⁴⁹ See Phillip Sidney, *An apology for poetry, or, The defence of poesy*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

Joseph Hall's *Virgidemiarum*

Satire and Satirist

I would like to begin by looking at Hall's "A Post-script to the Reader," a brief prose apology attached to his "byting Satyres." Hall's post-script illuminates his conception of satire as well as detailing their reception; thus it provides excellent markers from which to ground our consideration of *Virgidemiarum* in the larger context of the development of satire in late Elizabethan England. Of course, we must be wary of placing too much stock in Hall's comments. When theorizing about satire, satirists are notorious for failing to account for their own practice.⁵⁰ Still, Hall's post-script offers a barometer by which we might gauge satire's impact on the literary and social environment of the period.

Hall begins his post-script by noting that, "It is not for eury one to relish a true and natural Satyre," suggesting that the appreciation of satire is dependent on the disposition of the reader. Those who are "vnskilfull" and "affected with onely a shallow and easie matter" do not possess the ability to adequately investigate the "inbred bitternes and tartnes of particulers" inherent to satire. Those with an "ouer Musicall eare" react negatively to satire's "harsh" style, preferring instead "smoth" verse. In identifying these two types of readers, Hall defines satire's generic characteristics while at the same time suggesting that these characteristics stand in contrast to conventional poetic expectations, expectations that are bound up in the literary production of the period. Hall treats the failures of contemporary literature

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the tendency of the satirist to preach contrary to his practice, see chapter 1 of Dustin Griffin's *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1994).

extensively in his first book of “Tooth-lesse Satyrs.” I examine these satires in more depth below, so to generalize that Hall saw contemporary poetry as affected and inadequate to speak to the human condition is sufficient for the moment. Hall’s comments on his audience’s deficiencies makes clear that he took upon himself the onus to educate his readers on methods of reading and interpreting satire. In short, Hall’s satiric project attends to its novelty as an English genre.

Hall continues his defense of satire in light of its novel status by expanding on objections to *Virgidemiarum* both regarding satire’s “matter” and “manner.” With respect to the “matter,” Hall admits “none can be more open to danger” than a genre predominantly concerned with vice. Because “faults loath nothing more than the light, and men love nothing more than their faults,” Hall recognizes the volatile potential of satire. It is not only satire’s concern with vice that disposes it to recrimination, however, but also its concern with “the nature of the faults” in combination with the “fault of the persons” that opens the satirist up to “enuie.” It is fitting, then, that Hall begins his *Virgidemiarum* with a discussion of envy.

Titled “His Defiance to Enuie,” the poem stands as both a warning to his detractors and a rationale for writing satires. In fact, Hall’s linking of envy to satire started a trend among those who followed in his footsteps. Marston deals with envy in *The Scourge of Villanie* and Jonson’s stage satirist in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Macilente, is afflicted with envy, a vice that drives him to rail against his social superiors. Based on these and other examples, Alvin Kernan argues envy motivates the satirist. This presents a problem, however, because the satirist opens himself to accusations that jealousy motivates him rather than an honest desire to

reform immoral behavior (10). McCabe, in his study of Hall, disagrees, suggesting that there is no “problem” in understanding the role of envy in Hall’s satires (37). He argues that, rather than being motivated by envy, Hall preemptively defies the envy of others who would detract from his satires (37-38). Despite their differing conception of the relationship between envy and satire, I contend that Kernan and McCabe’s views are not as incompatible as they might first seem.

To defy or reject envy carries with it several levels of meaning. I argue Hall intentionally works with multiple meanings to give the reader a fuller sense of his project. On one level, Hall is a malcontent whose satires spring from a desire “To chide the world, that did my thoughts offend” (“Defiance” 114). And, because he is a malcontent, Hall’s satires are greeted with hostility by those whose abuses he calls attention to, “That Enuy should accost my Muse and mee, / For this so rude, and recklesse poesie” (29-30). Indeed, Hall may even be accused of attacking those of a superior standing because he envies their status, “So wont big Oakes feare winding Yuy-weed” (13) or simply because he wants to cause mischief “Witnesse ye Muses how I wilfull song / These heddy rymes withouten second care / And wish’t them worse, my guilty thoughts emong” (73-75).

That Hall is working within multiple meanings of envy is further clarified when we consider that “His Defiance to Enuie” recalls Spenser’s poetry and in particular *The Shepheardes Calendar*. In the introductory poem “To His Booke,” Spenser notes that his pastorals may be met with envy. Spenser’s discussion of envy in this poem reflects his motivation to equal classical pastoral, like Virgil’s eclogues.

It also demonstrates his fear that his pastoral might be recognized as attacking established Elizabethan hierarchies.⁵¹

Hall makes clear his debt to Spenser by employing pastoral imagery in his introductory poem. But Hall moves beyond Spenser's pastorals:

Would we but breath within a wax-bound quill,
Pans seuenfold Pipe, some plaintive Pastoral :
To teach each hollow groue, and shrubby hill,
Ech murmuring brooke, ech solitary vale
To sound our loue, and to our song accord,
Wearying Eccho with one changelesse word. (79-84)

Hall scorns "plaintive Pastoral" as a genre that unnecessarily veils a discussion of immorality behind allegory.⁵² If immorality is to be evaluated and reformed, it can only be accomplished by speaking the truth. Hall continues:

Or whether list me sing so personate,
My striuing selfe to conquer with my verse :
Speake ye attentive swaynes that heard me late,
Needs me giue grasse vnto the Conquerers.
At Colins feete I throw my yielding reed :
But let the rest win homage by their deed. (103-108)

⁵¹ For good discussions of Spenser's pastorals and their treatment of Elizabethan hierarchies, see Robert Lane, *Shepherds Devises* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993) and Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Renaissance Pastoral and Its English Developments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁵² For a discussion of Hall's interest in Spenser, see also Ejner Jensen, "Hall and Marston: The Role of the Satirist" *Satire Newsletter* 4 (1967) : 72-83; S. M. Salyer, "Hall's Satires and the Harvey-Nashe Controversy" *Studies in Philology* 25 (1928) : 150-165.

Richard Helgerson, in his *Elizabethan Prodigals*, identifies three types of Elizabethan poets: the amateur, the professional, and the laureate. While the vast majority of Elizabethan poets fall into the amateur or professional category, Helgerson observes that Spenser achieved laureate status. Spenser differentiated himself from the amateur and professional by establishing a “deliberately serious poetic [...] grounded on a serious, centered self” (209).⁵³ When Hall speaks of “My striuing selfe to conquer with my verse,” he is reflecting his anxiety regarding his status within the Elizabethan literary system. Ronald J. Corthell discusses Hall’s uneasiness regarding his literary ambitions extensively in his article “Beginning as a Satirist”

Corthell notes that Hall and other Elizabethan satirists walk a thin line between amateur and laureate. Indeed, he suggests that their adoption of a “Satyr” persona reflects “a particularly extreme example of the sort of ‘prodigal’ behavior which typifies the poetic identity of the amateur” (48). But Corthell notes a competing belief among these satirists, that their work “claimed a seriousness and moral authority that we normally associate with laureate writers.” (48). Corthell demonstrates that the tension between these two conceptions of the status of the poet in society is reflected throughout Hall’s satires. Recognizing this tension, Corthell argues that Hall’s satires bridge the gap between poetry and morality (60). In effect, a poet does not have to aspire to laureate status in order to employ literature for a significant social purpose. Thus, for Hall, satire is practiced by the individual / amateur as a legitimate means of exploring the moral condition of society.

⁵³ See also Helgerson’s *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

It is this freedom or *libertas* to explore morality that Hall claims from his Roman predecessors, a fact he makes clear in his “Defiance.” He denies the satyr / satyre etymology, “The ruder Satyre should goe rag’d and bare: / And show his rougher and his hairy hide: / Tho mine be smooth, and deckt in carelesse pride” (76-78), and instead approaches satire, “Ecce nouam Satyram : Satyrum sine cornibus,” in a fresh way, without the horns (“De suis Satyris” 5). He thus announces that he is working from Roman models and out of a desire to emulate Roman satire.

Hall’s distinction between the “Tooth-lesse” satires of his first three books and his “biting” satires of his last three, however, has been a source of controversy. By adapting Roman satire to English sensibilities, Hall opens himself up to conflict regarding generic conventions. For example, Milton, in his disputations with Hall during the Prelatic controversy, attacks Hall’s distinction between “Tooth-lesse” and “biting” satires. Milton addresses Hall in his *Animadversions*, stating, “You Love toothlesse Satyrs; let me informe you, a toothlesse satyr is a improper as a toothed sleekstone, and as bullish” (670). Contemporary criticism has tended to agree with Milton’s assessment. Annabel Patterson, for example, suggests that Hall “failed to separate, even in intention, the two main streams of satire, the comic and Horatian from the tragic and Juvenalian” (104).⁵⁴ I disagree with this assessment. Hall is less making a distinction between the styles of Roman satirists than he is distinguishing between the evaluative and reformatory satire he practices. Hall’s toothless satires are primarily evaluative. In other words, they evaluate the state of contemporary affairs by identifying abuses or immoral conditions within social structures. Hall’s biting

⁵⁴ See also Arnold Stein, “Joseph Hall’s Imitation of Juvenal” *Modern Language Review* 43 (July 1948) : 315-322.

satires, on the other hand, are reformatory in nature. Having evaluated the health of English society, Hall turns in his last three books to a form of satire that openly assails immorality in the hopes of curing society of its ills. His biting satires, then, operate according to the conception that,

The *Satyre* should be like the *Porcupine*,
That shoots sharpe quills out in each angry line,
And wounds the blushing cheek, and firely eye,
Of him that heares, and readeth guiltily. (5.3.1-4)

While reforming an individual's immoral behavior may benefit that individual spiritually, more importantly it benefits society at large. As such, Hall presents his satirist as a sort of investigative reporter who hopes to reform society of its ills by exposing contemporary abuses. We see Hall developing this satiric persona in the prologue to his toothless satire.

In the prologue to Book 1, Hall writes:
I First aduventure, with fool-hardie might
To tread the steps of perilous despight :
I first aduventure : follow me who list,
And be the second English Satyryst. (1-4)

In one sense, Hall is not claiming to be first to write satires in English. Chaucer and Skelton preceded him, a fact he acknowledges in 4.4 and 6.1. Lodge preceded Hall as well, including satires in *A Fig for Momus* in 1595, and of course Donne was writing his manuscript satires beginning in the early 1590s. McCabe rightly observes, however, that "no one before [Hall] had published a book of short, separate satires so

closely modeled upon the works of Horace, Persius, and Juvenal” (31). As such Hall is correct to assert his originality in this respect.

Hall begins to define satire, both evaluative and reformatory, in his prologue to the first book by pairing envy with truth:

Enuie waits on my backe, Truth on my side :

Enuie will be my Page, and Truth my Guide.

Enuie the margent holds, and Truth the line :

Truth doth approue, but Envy doth repine. (5-8)

Coupling envy with truth, Hall clarifies for us that his interest is in an accurate representation of the world and its ills. His detractors may spy upon him with hostile intent, but the truth of what he speaks provides protection. As his page, envy, or his desire to equal his Roman predecessors, is his servant. His concern is with the truth and truth guides his pen rather than strict imitation of Roman satirists. The margins of his text may be filled with annotations made by those who read his satires, but he hopes these annotations are secondary to an appreciation of the accurate representation of the world contained in his poetry. Those who appreciate that his project is concerned with truth will approve of his satires; those who are threatened by his railing and suggest his poetry is lacking or that they attack simply for the sake of the attack will be dissatisfied.

Thus we see Hall begin his *Virgidemiarum* by defining satire and developing his satiric persona. Satire is concerned with the truth. In other words, Hall embraces satire as a genre that allows the poet the *libertas* to openly engage with contemporary

issues without resorting to the veil of allegory. Indeed, Hall explicitly states his concern is with the truth:

Enuie waits on my back, Truth on my side :

Enuie will be my Page, and Truth my Guide.

Enuie the margent holds, and Truth the line :

Truth doth approue, but Enuie doth repine. (1.1.5-8)

To aid his accounting of social reality, Hall distinguishes between two types of satire, toothless and biting, one evaluative and one reformative. As such, we can see two faces to Hall's satiric persona. The satirist is judge as well as punisher. In this sense Hall's choice of titles is appropriate. *Virgidemiarum* translates as "harvest of rods" and is a reference to the rods held by Roman lectors (McCabe 30). These lectors stood by the magistrate during criminal proceedings and also were responsible for arresting and punishing. In other words, it is a symbol of secular authority. I turn now to a discussion of Hall's evaluative satires.

Evaluating Morality

Hall's first book is concerned with contemporary poetry and offers a critique of its failings. Such a critique of poetry is a common one in Roman satire and thus provides Hall a precedent from which to work. In his first Satire, Persius, for example, attacks various literary forms including epic, tragedy, and elegy among others. Niall Rudd aptly summarizes the poem: "Romans do not want poetry to have any bearing on real life. Fashionable verse is false and affected, written without a proper apprenticeship to the craft and designed solely to win applause. This decadence in literary taste is directly related to the general decline in morals" (208).

Further, Persius' account of the failings of contemporary poetry serves also as an attack on systems of authority. Nero had a great interest in verse, composing some himself as well as patronizing poets (Rudd 28-29). Kirk Freudenburg observes that Nero's control over poetry amounted to an "imperial myth-making machine" wherein literature constructed and affirmed the Emperor's authority (127). Examining Hall's critique of contemporary literature with Persius in mind, then, we can better understand these "Poeticall" satires as concerned with the way literature informs and constructs both morality and authority. This idea is made particularly clear in Satire 1.3, Hall's attack on drama.

Hall observes that contemporary drama stages "crowned kings that Fortune hath low brought" (1.3.10). However, inside these tragedies lies danger, especially if "bloody Tyrants rage, should chance appall / The dead stroke audience [...]" (1.3.32-33). Indeed, Hall suggests that these dangers result from the "Poets in high Parliament, / [who] Sit watching eury word, and gesturement, / Like curious Censors of some doughtie geare, / Whsipering their verdit in their fellows eare" (1.3.45-48). Hall tells us that if a play does not meet the approval of these authorities, then "Wo to the word whose margent in their scrole / Is noted with a blacke condemning cole" (1.3.49-50). If, however, the play meets with the authorities' approval, "Poets in high Parliament" (1.3.45), then the poet is lauded with "Iuy boughs, and bands of Bayes" (1.3.52). As a result, literature is produced to please those in positions of power and make a handsome profit in the process.

Hall laments the fact that literature is produced for profit, "Shame that the Muses should be bought and sold" (1.3.57), because to do so reduces the poet to the

level of a mere entertainer. Hall firmly believes in the instructional value of poetry. But Hall notes that contemporary literature has abandoned its didactic function in favor of monetary pursuit. Understood in this light, Hall's critique of contemporary literature is in fact a critique of its inability to effectively engage in moral instruction; its didactic function has been lost to poetry written for profit.

Book 2 shifts from literary to "Academicall" concerns. He investigates the failings of the universities (2.2), the legal system (2.3), medicine (2.4), priests (2.5), teachers (2.6) and astrology (2.7). In each of the satires Hall calls attention to the failures of the arts and sciences to enact moral reform. The universities educate, but the educated cannot find suitable employment. Lawyers care more for profits than the law. Doctors kill more patients than they cure. The Church is concerned more with simony than sin. Teachers are poorly paid and treated more as servants than scholars. Astrologers are charlatans. While all are common laments, by pointing out these failings Hall points out the inability of "Academicall" systems and institutions to adequately educate society in proper moral behavior.

Moving on to the "Morall" satires of Book 3, we see Hall evaluating the inability of traditional moral discourses to provide adequate moral instruction. Hall begins his evaluation by imitating a typical story of the Golden Age of man and man's fall from grace. This imitation alludes to a variety of creation myths including Seneca's *Hippolytus*, Virgil's *Georgics*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as well as Spenser's

the Shepheardes Calendar.⁵⁵ Hall includes allusions to numerous Golden Age myths to call into question the value of these myths.

Hall describes a period of simplicity in which, “None did for better care, for better looke” (3.1.25). Hall notes that this simple life afforded men simple luxury:

Vnder each banke men laide their lims along,
Not wishing any ease, not fearing any wrong :
Clad with their owne, as they were made of olde,
Not fearing shame, not feeling any cold. (3.1.30-33)

Society is corrupted, however, when men begin to cultivate food and mine for metal (3.1.34-41). Hall tells us:

But when by *Ceres* huswifrie and paine,
Men learn'd to bury the reuiuing graine :
And father Ianus taught the new found vine,
Rise on the *Elme*, with many a friendly twine :
And base desire bad men to deluen low,
For needlesse metals : then gan mischief grow,
Then farewell fairest age, the worlds best daies,
Thriuing in ill, as it in age decaies.
Then crept in *pride*, and peeuish Couetise :
And men grew greedy, dicordous and nice.
Now man, that earst *Haile-fellow* was with beast,
Woze on to weene himselfe a God at least. (3.1.34-45)

⁵⁵ See Davenport 184-184 for a detailed listing of Hall’s references to Golden Age myths in this satire.

On the surface, Hall's description of the decline of the Golden Age is quite compatible with Christian orthodoxy. In the biblical account, before the fall, Adam and Eve lived peacefully and with plenty in the Garden of Eden. After eating from the tree of knowledge the two are cast out and cursed to toil in the earth for sustenance. Similarly, in Hall's version, men lived in harmony with nature before the fall. It is when men learn through the gifts of the Gods to take advantage of the earth's bounty that they are corrupted. The importance of this description of the Golden Age as it recalls various creation myths upon which religious morality is grounded is Hall's subtle suggestion that these myths are counterintuitive and counterproductive. In this satire Hall calls into question whether man would truly be better off subsisting on a diet of "thriftie Leekes, / Or manly Garlicke" (3.1.58-9), and without knowledge of agriculture or the arts of metallurgy. In effect, Hall's satire on myths of the Golden Age sets up the remainder of the satires in the third book. By questioning the value of traditional moral, Hall re-enforces the idea that man's immoral condition is in part a result of the insufficiencies in literary moral discourse. Hall's biting satires, then, stand as a model for reforming moral discourse.

Reforming Immorality

As I discuss in the first chapter, critics have proposed that the Bishops' Order was motivated by a concern with sedition. It is clear from an examination of Hall's last three books that the subjects he treated were controversial. Enclosure, the practice of fencing in public lands for private use, is satirized (4.1, 5.1).⁵⁶ Remnants

⁵⁶ See McCabe 53-72 for an excellent discussion of Hall's treatment of enclosure. For essays on enclosure in Elizabethan literature, see *Enclosure acts: Sexuality*,

of Roman Catholic idolatry in the Anglican mass are also satirized (4.7). I agree that the subjects treated by Hall and other Elizabethan satirists are divisive. However, I argue that the sensitivity of the subject matter alone did not merit the Bishops' harsh response. Rather, the Bishops were concerned with satirists' assertion of moral authority. Therefore Hall's attacks on contemporary abuses serve to tacitly suggest the ineffectiveness of the Church in regulating moral behavior. By demonstrating widespread immorality (whatever the specific offenses might be), the satirist implicitly indicts those whose responsibility it is to edify, arbitrate and adjudicate moral behavior. Satire, in effect, subverts established ecclesiastical moral authority by setting itself up as an independent and notably secular arbiter of civil behavior. An examination of Satire 4.7, Hall's satire on idolatry in the mass, helps clarify this idea.

Hall begins by asking "Who say's these Romish Pageants bene too hy / To be the scorne of sportful poesie" (4.7.1-2), and suggests that everyone knows that Rome, "the seven hills" (4.7.4), is the home of satirists. He notes that he has previously satirized corrupt lawyers, bad actors, corrupt landlords, bad poets and more (4.7.5-8); why should his attention not turn to Rome, the traditional subject of satire? He asserts that Juvenal, if he returned as a ghost, would "stampe and stare / That *Caesars* throne is turn'd to *Peters* chair" (4.7.11-12). Taking a page from Juvenal's tenth Satire—in which Democritus, the Laughing Philosopher, encounters various ridiculous Roman, Hall begins listing the rather unsavory characteristics of the Roman Catholic community. There are the good-for-nothing priest who stands

Property, and Culture in Early Modern England, eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

above his congregation while they wait to kiss his feet (4.7.13-16), the Pope as Anti-Christ (4.7.21-24), newly ordained nuns whipped into obedience (4.7.25-26), tithe collectors (4.7.27-28), clerics who act like pimps (4.7.29-31), etc.

The most provocative aspect of this satire is Hall's portrayal of the Roman Mass. Hall recounts an alcoholic priest waiting for his morning fix (4.7.57-58) and the low-born of the congregation cursing those in the "*Chancles*" (4.7.60) for receiving wine while they are left to stuff their faces with morsels of bread (4.7.61-63). Arnold Davenport remarks that the printer had second thoughts before inserting the satire because, "The attack on the Roman Mass may very well have looked dangerously like a reflection on the Anglican rite as well" (228). Hall was educated at Emmanuel College, "the Puritan stronghold of a predominantly Puritan university" (McCabe 30) and, given the controversy surrounding the Marprelate press, it is likely that the Bishops' would react strongly to Hall's treatment of idolatry. But Hall makes a more significant accusation against ecclesiastical authority. Following his description of the Roman Mass, he again invokes Juvenal:

Would he not laugh to death, when he should heare
The shamelesse Legends of *S. Christopher*,
S. George, the sleepers, or *S. Peters* well,
Or of his daughter good *S. Petronell*. (4.7.63-66)

The legend of Saint Christopher, for example, tells of the saint carrying a child across a turbulent stream. However, the child's weight nearly crushes the saint. After reaching the bank, the child reveals himself as Christ, explaining that he was so heavy because he bore the weight of the world. A quaint story to be sure, but a story

nonetheless. As Davenport observes, Hall's distaste for exempla such as these extended beyond his days as a satirist. They are mentioned in *A Serious Dissuasive* as "shamelesse" legends presented as fact (230).

By attacking these exempla, Hall points out that Christian moral authority is established by fictions presented as fact. If Hall could be accused of criticizing the Anglican Mass in this satire, he could equally be accused of criticizing Anglican authorized exempla. Indeed, the closing lines of the poem suggest that Hall was more concerned with the way in which literature informs authority than in the remnants of Roman Catholic idolatry in the Anglican service. Referencing Juvenal once again, Hall asks what the Roman satirist would do when confronted with these literary abuses, "Should hee cry out on *Codro's* tedious Toomes, / When his new rage would aske no narrower rooms?" (4.7.73-74). Codro, or Cordus, wrote a lengthy epic poem titled *Theseid* that Juvenal condemned as boring in his first Satire. In effect, Hall's final lines ask why Juvenal's ghost would waste his time satirizing ancient Roman poetry when confronted with abuses in contemporary Christian moral discourse. Clearly the Bishops would be concerned with such an obvious attack.

John Marston's The Scourge of Villanie

Marston was heavily influenced by Hall's satires as well as Hall's criticism. Indeed, the *Scourge of Villanie* is in many ways a response to Hall's *Virgidemiarum* and stands as a means by which Marston defends and distinguishes himself from his rival. Marston makes evident his intention to engage Hall by imitating Hall's structure. He divides the *Scourge of Villanie* into three books, as Hall did in both installments of *Virgidemiarum*. As we have seen, he includes a prose discussion of

his satiric style similar to Hall's "Post-script." He also includes a prefatory poem "To *Detraction*," "Enuies abhorred childe" (3), similar to Hall's "Defiance of Enuie."

While Marston borrows many of the features of Hall's project, he does so to make clear the difference between his competitor and himself. Despite the hostility between the two, this difference is subtle. Hall's satires concern themselves with exposing the "Truth" regarding widespread economic, political and religious abuses. To use a contemporary analogy, the satirist of *Virgidemiarum* operates as an investigative reporter, a sort of poet / journalist.⁵⁷ Marston's satires also concern themselves with attacking vice. However, Marston is less concerned with exposing large scale social abuses than he is concerned with examining the general causes of immorality at the level of the individual. By examining various approaches to modeling moral behavior, Marston recognizes the difficulty man confronts in identifying the cause of immorality and therefore the difficulty of implementing a cure.

As my examination will demonstrate, Marston locates these difficulties in the complicated relationship between the body and soul. Of course, the observation that vice results from a conflict between passion and reason is not an uncommon one. Indeed, Marston admits as much as he explores an assortment of moral approaches from the classical satirists to humoral theory. It is through his exploration that Marston forces his audience to appreciate that, in spite of its long history, moral philosophy has not provided adequate methods by which corrupt man might reform.

⁵⁷ For a discussion of the relationship of satire in the development of modern journalism, see Stewart Justman, *The Springs of Liberty: The Satiric Tradition and Freedom of Speech* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999).

An examination of his conception of satire and satirist, the structure of his book and an explication of some of his most important observations makes clear why Marston's satires threaten the Bishops. By piling examples of vice upon examples, Marston calls attention to the failings of ecclesiastical authority to provide moral education and methods by which man might reform his immoral behavior. Marston thereby suggests that alternative methods, such as humoral theory, should be explored.

Satire and Satirist

Marston attaches two prose discussions of satire to the *Scourge of Villanie*. In these discussions Marston outlines his conception of satire, attending to both formal and functional elements. With respect to the form, Marston takes issue with the belief that satires should "affect too much obscuritie" ("To those that seeme iudiciall perusers" 1), because it "profit no sence" (2). Murky references and difficult vocabulary unnecessarily complicate the reception of satire. Marston agrees that his Roman predecessors are difficult to understand and thus might be thought to be intentionally obscure. However, as I have noted above, Marston argues that it is linguistic and historical distance that results in this obscurity. Marston rejects intentionally obscuring his moral message. He insists on the clarity of his poems. It is not his intention to veil the message of his satires behind murky references, "I will not delude your sight with mists" (32-3). Rather, his goal is "plainness" (33). Still, Marston admits that satires are rough in substance and style (31). The subject of satire is harsh and unpleasant, an apt description of a genre that takes vice as its subject. Marston makes clear that the subject of satire is immorality in his prose post-script, "To him that hath perused me."

Unlike Hall, however, who employs satire as a method of exposing specific contemporary abuses, Marston argues that satire functions as a method by which the general nature of vice might be explored (“To him that hath perused me” 8-9). Marston explicitly states that the examples of vice he treats in his satires do not refer to particular individuals (10-14). Still, Marston admits that a man might identify himself in these examples, “If any one (forced with his owne guilt) will turne it home and say *Tis I*, I cannot hinder him” (22-24). Indeed, Marston believes that the primary function of satire is to educate man so that he might “learne to know himselfe” (28). As such, it is fitting that Marston’s satires concern themselves with exploring the relationship between the mind and the body. To facilitate this exploration, Marston develops a satirist that stands as exemplary both in spirit and body.

Marston signs his prose preface with the pseudonym, “W. Kinsayder.” That Marston employs a pseudonym is significant. Pseudonyms serve as a protective feature, preventing the author from being identified and thereby shielding him from attack.⁵⁸ Marston’s choice of names is also significant. The name Kinsayder derives from the verb “kensing,” or the practice of docking the tail of a dog. This practice originated during the Roman Empire, when worms in a dog’s tail were thought to

⁵⁸ For a general discussion of the employment of literary pseudonyms, see *The Faces of Anonymity: Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publication from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Robert Griffin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), especially the introduction and chapter 1. For a further discussion of Marston’s satiric persona, see Lloyd Davis, “Political Acts,” *Guise and Disguise* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 79–89.

cause rabies.⁵⁹ Viewed in this light, we see Marston's satirist as a figure who returns rabidly corrupt men to moral health. But docking has other purposes as well. The tail of a fighting dog is docked to make it less available as a target and the tail of a hunting dog is docked so as to avoid being tangled in bushes and other undergrowth. In this respect, we should also view Marston's satirist as helping to prepare men to avoid corruption, making it less likely that vice might grab them by the tail. Marston signs off in his prose post-script with the name "Theriomastix," or "Beast-Scourge." Marston's satirist, then, identifies himself as a whip driving a beast of burden, implying that the satirist forces men to undertake the labor of moral exploration and thereby "learne to know himselfe." That Marston chooses terminology associated with the care of animals signals the status of his satirist. While his readers are animals and slaves to their appetites, Marston's satirist is a man who is in control of his passions. As such, the satirist is indignant. Indeed, and presents himself as a superior man, a moral authority whose exhortations should be heeded. Marston makes clear his superior status in his dedicatory poem, "To Detraction."

Like Hall's "Defiance of Enuie," "To Detraction" includes a prefatory poem that works to preemptively meet objections his satires might receive. While Hall focuses on envy, Marston focuses on "Enuies abhorred childe, Detraction" ("To Detraction" 3). As my above discussion demonstrates, Hall's treatment of envy explores accusations that his satires are motivated by the enmity resulting from the advantage enjoyed by those of higher status. Hall's attacks on enclosure, for

⁵⁹ Information on the practice of docking dogs provided in this paragraph derives from the World Small Animal Veterinary Association website <<http://www.wsava.org/Taildock.htm>>.

example, clearly open him up to such allegations. But Hall also embraces envy. It is his desire to emulate his Roman predecessors that drives his satires. Similarly, Marston appreciates that his satires will be attacked. Particularly, Marston is concerned that his satires might be accused of disparaging his fellow man simply for the sake of disparagement. In other words, Marston is concerned that his satires will not be appreciated as a serious attempt to reform immorality. And, as Hall embraces envy, Marston also embraces detraction. He willingly submits his satires to “*Critickes rage*” (11). In other words, Marston considers attacks on his satires as a badge of honor because these attacks are proof of his satires’ effectiveness.

Marston’s satirist boldly exposes his satires to criticism with an angry defiance in the prologue.⁶⁰ He thus announces the rancorous and confrontational style that permeates his satiric project:

I heare expose, to thy all-taynting breath
The issue of my braine, snarle, raile, barke, bite,
Know that my spirit scornes *Detractions* spight. (3-5)

And the satirist presents himself as having every reason to be defiant. He is superior to his audience both in mind and in body. He asserts that “Genius,” his “sacred parentage,” guides his pen (7-12). What is more, he stresses the purity of his body. He is “not huft vp with fatte fume / Of slimie Ale, nor *Bacchus* heating grape” (13-14). As Alvin Kernan observes, “If the attack on vice is to be effective, the character

⁶⁰ For a more detailed discussion of anger in Marston’s satires and dramatic works, see Kenneth J. E. Graham, “The Mysterious Plainness of Anger: The Search for Justice in Satire and Revenge Tragedy,” *The Performance of Conviction: Plainness and Rhetoric in the Early English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994): 125–67.

who delivers it must appear the moral opposite of the world he condemns [...]” (22). And Marston, in this prefatory poem, establishes his satirist as the moral opposite of corrupt man. Indeed, the closing lines of the poem emphasize that his moral superiority immunizes him from reproach:

A partiall praise shall neuer eleuate
My settled censure, of mine owne esteeme.
A cankered verdit of malignant Hate
Shall nere prouoke me, worse my selfe to deeme.
Spight of despight, and rancors villanie,
I am my selfe, so is my poesie. (19-24)

Marston’s satirist is an exemplary poet and an angry poet. He presents his satires with the confidence of a man who believes himself fully equipped to scourge the world of villainy. To do so, Marston surveys moral philosophy, focusing on various approaches to explain the root causes of immorality. Through this examination Marston highlights the ineffectiveness of these approaches and thereby argues that alternative methodologies should be explored. As my discussion of the structure of his book will demonstrate, ultimately Marston endorses humoral theory as providing man the best opportunity to evaluate and reform his moral condition. By identifying humorous imbalances, the individual might work to correct these imbalances and thereby strengthen his moral fortitude.

Structure of the *Scourge of Villanie*

The structure of the *Scourge of Villanie* makes clear that Marston is engaged with an examination of a range of moral philosophies. In other words, Marston

explores various moral approaches—their attitudes toward immorality, its causes and its cure. The first book looks at Roman satire. The second treats scholastic and cynic philosophy. His third examines contemporary poetical approaches to modeling moral performance. Misunderstanding the purpose behind these various foci has lent itself to the incorrect assertion that Marston’s satires are plagued with an inconsistent moral voice. And at first glance Marston does appear inconsistent. One moment the satirist is a surgeon curing men of their immorality by letting them of their “infectious blood” (5.16-17), the next he claims that men are incurable and immorality is an inherent condition of man’s corporal nature:

Our aduerse body, being earthly, cold,
Heauie, dull, mortall, would not long inforld
A stranger inmate, that was backward still
To all his dungie, brutish, sensuall will:
Now here-vpon our Intellectuall,
Compact of fire all celestially,
Invisible, immortall, and diuine,
Grewe straight to scorne his land-lords muddy slime.
And therefore is closely slunke away
(Leauing his smoakie house of mortall clay)
[...]
His parts diuine, sacred, spirituall
Attending on him, leauing the sensuall
Base hangers on, lusing home in the slime. (8.185-191, 197-199)

This inconsistency has in the past been explained, unfortunately, by a psychological assessment of Marston as a man. T.S. Eliot finds him “obviously lacking in personal conviction” (223). John Peter argues that he is “insincere” and “possibly pathological” (176). Fortunately, contemporary critics have attempted to attend to Marston’s moral inconsistency through an examination of the language and form of his satires. Kenneth Graham and Elizabeth Yearling suggest that Marston’s satires demonstrate his belief that the language of poetry is incapable of accessing and communicating moral truths, for example. Graham and Yearling are correct in their recognition of Marston’s laments regarding the limits of literary language to engage with morality. Where Graham and Yearling’s studies fall short, however, is in their failure to recognize Marston’s work in developing a poetical discourse that is capable of accessing and communicating moral truths.

It is understandable that Marston’s apparently incongruous position with regard to man’s ability to reform his immoral behavior is distressing. He so often expounds on man’s brutish nature that futility and despair permeate his satiric project. Steven Shelburne, in his attempt to re-claim Marston as a moral reformer, suggests that Marston’s satires develop a “standard of satiric decorum [...] that emphasizes the satirist’s candor and governing *sapientia* in opposition to eloquent hypocrisy and excessive *libertas*” (199). Shelburne argues that Marston employs the myths of Proteus and Prometheus to “provide complementary ways of accounting for the essential human duality” of body and soul (200). Shelburne’s examination of these myths in Marston’s satires is compelling. He is correct to assert that Marston is positing an “essential human duality.” But the myths of Proteus and Prometheus are

only one element of Marston's exploration of this duality. A brief examination of the three books of the *Scourge of Villanie* demonstrates that Marston is investigating a variety of methods to explain the nature of man's duality. Through this investigation Marston highlights the insufficiencies in these systems and argues that alternate methods must be explored. Marston, in his concluding satire, endorse humoral theory as providing the best method by which the individual might evaluate his moral condition and enact moral reform.

The Limits of Roman Satire

Marston attaches Latin mottoes derived from Roman satires to each poem of his first book. Satires one and two quote Juvenal, the third cites Horace and the fourth references Persius. The Latin motto attached to Marston's first satire, "Fronti nulla fides," "no reliance can be placed upon appearances," derives from Juvenal's second satire in which he attacks men for their effeminacy and neglect of traditional Roman values. Marston follows Juvenal's motto and satirizes men who present an outward appearance of virtue but are "muddy inside" (1.57). Clearly Marston respects his Roman predecessors. However, he recognizes that classical satire does not adequately address the moral needs of his audience. When Marston, in the second satire, quotes Juvenal's famous line, "Difficile est Satyram no scribere," he does so to point out that his audience lives in an age that has eradicated some vices only to have them replaced by others. Consider Marston's discussion of slavery:

Once Albion liu'd in such a cruell age

That men did hold by seruile villenage.

Poore brats were slaues, of bond-men that were borne,

And marded, sold, but that rude law is torne,
And disanuld, as too too inhumane,
That Lords ore pesants should such seruice straine.
But now, (sad change!) the kennell sinck of slaues,
Pesant great Lords, and seruile seruice craues. (2.50-57)

Men were once bought and sold into slavery against their will. Now, “that rude law is torne” and men are no longer slaves in the traditional sense. But Marston argues that the tables have been turned. The low-born have accumulated enough wealth to “Pesant great Lords” compelling them into “seruile service” to their social inferiors.

In his first book, then, Marston makes clear that Roman satire stands as an inspiration and is valuable as a model. But Marston appreciates that his Roman predecessors do not speak to the needs of his audience. Satire deals with contemporary abuses. It is specific to a time and place, the here and now. As such, immorality specific to Elizabethan society cannot be found in obscure Latin verse. In book two, Marston turns to an analysis of various moral philosophies as a potential remedy of man’s moral ills.

The Limits of Moral Philosophy

We see Marston’s intention to take on moral philosophy signaled in the mottoes attached to the satires of Book Two. The Latin motto attached to his fifth Satire, “Totum in toto,” is part of the scholastic formula “totum in tot et totum in qualibet parte,” “that it is whole in the whole and whole in every part.” In his seventh Satire, Marston explores the cynic school of thought. Titled “A Cynicke Satyre,” the poem takes the form of a dialogue between the Cynic philosopher Diogenes—who

famously searched Athens for an honest man in broad daylight with a lighted lamp—and Linceus, one of the ancient founders of Britain. This satire provides a good example of Marston’s investigation of the failings of moral philosophy.

Diogenes begins by exclaiming, “A man, a man, a kingdome for a man” (7.1), humorously paraphrasing Shakespeare’s well-known line “A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!” (*Richard III* 5.4.7). Linceus responds:

Why how now currish mad *Athenian*?

Thou Cynick dogge, see’st not the streets do swarme

With troupes of men? [...] (7.2-4)

But Diogenes replies that he sees not men but animals:

[...] No, no, for *Circes* charme

Hath turn'd them all to swine: I neuer shall

Thinke those same *Samian* sawes authenticall,

But rather I dare sweare, the soules of swine

Doe liue in men, for that same radiant shine,

That lustre wherewith natures *Nature* decked

Our intellectuall part, that glosse is soyled

With stayning spots of vile impietie,

And muddy durt of sensualitie,

These are no men, but *Apparitions*,

Ignes fatui, *Glowormes*, *Fictions*,

Meteors, *Ratts of Nilus*, *Fantasies*,

Colosses, *Pictures*, *Shades*, *Resemblances*. (7.4-16)

For Marston, it is a man's soul that distinguishes him from the animals. However, men have lost their divinity, a result of their "sensualitie." Reference to man's base sexuality is a frequent theme in Marston's satires and important to an appreciation of his satirist's disgust. As Davenport notes, lust is one of the seven deadly sins. But whereas Dante treats it as the least deadly, Marston holds it as a primary contributor to man's loss of divinity (22). The cynic philosopher makes this notion clear by pointing to an example, "yon gallant in the sumptuous clothes" (7.18). While giving the outward appearance of a healthy man, the gallant is a syphilitic whose "lewd visciuousnes" corrupts him completely. He is nothing more than "an incarnate deuill, / That struts in vice, and glorieth in euill" (7.26-27).

Linceus is not satisfied and points to a courtier whom he believes is "A compleat soule, of all perfection" (7.29). But again the cynic is unconvinced. This courtier is "effeminate" (7.34) and is "nought but clothes, & scenting sweet perfume" (7.41). Indeed, his clothes mask the fact that he has no soul (7.44).

Linceus then points to another type of man, this time a judge. Linceus is more insistent in this case. The man is a model of civic virtue. He is intelligent, wealthy and, most importantly, happy. But the cynic is unimpressed, responding, "Canst thou not *Linceus* cast thy searching eye / And spy his immynent Catastrophe?" (7.56-57). Underneath his clothes he is a fat "sponge," a drunk whose taste for liquor clouds his judgment.

Next Linceus points out a soldier, and again the philosopher observes that this man, too, has no soul. The soldier is

[.] nought but huge blasphemeing othes,

Swart snowt, big lookes, misshapen Swizers clothes,
Weake meager lust hath now consumed quite,
And wasted cleane away his martail spright,
Infeebing ryot, all vices confluence,
Hath eaten out that sacred influence
Which made him man. (7.116-122)

Again, man's appetites corrupt the soul and, Marston makes clear, man is a slave to his appetites.

Not only men are corrupt, however, but women as well. Linceus, exasperated at the cynic's treatment of men, spots a woman approaching in a carriage. He calls her an "Angell, faire refined" (7.163), but the cynic will have none of it, stating, "Her maske so hinders mee / I cannot see her beauties deitie" (7.164-165). Women are as corrupt as men. Their vanity corrupts them just as surely as lust or gluttony corrupts men.

Having attacked a variety of examples of "good" men and demonstrated that each one is lacking, the cynic cannot help but conclude that there is no hope for reforming immoral behavior:

Sure I nere thinke those axioms to be true,
That soules of men, from that great soule ensue,
And of his essence doe participate
As't were by pypes, when so degenerate,
So aduerse is our natures motion,
To his immaculate condition:

That such foule filth, from such faire puritie,
Such sensuall acts from such a Deitie,
Can nere proceed. But if that dreame were so,
Then sure the slime that from our soules doe flow,
Haue stopt those pipes by which it was conuai'd,
And now no humane creatures, once disrai'd
Of that fayre iem.
Beasts *sence*, plants *growth*, like being as a stone,
But out alas, our *Cognisance* is gone. (7.188-202)

The notion that the cynic bears out in this satire, then, is that men's appetites are wholly corruptive and wholly uncontrollable. Men live by their appetites. They eat and drink. They have sex. They are perpetually driven by their hunger. By focusing on men's appetites, the cynic cannot help but conclude man is disposed to evil—the conduit to divinity has been clogged by the “slime” of their sensuality. As a result, men have fallen beyond redemption. What remains in man's makeup is little more than plant, animal and mineral.

It is important to understand, however, that Marston is not endorsing this cynical view of morality. Marston firmly believes that man is capable of improving his moral condition. His goal, after all, is to help man to “learne to know himself” and thereby encourages him to reform. While a cure for immorality may not be found in scholastic or cynic philosophy, they are not without value. The cynic, for example, is correct to observe that man is corrupted by his appetites. Indeed, it is an observation that Marston makes throughout his satires. It is a desire for a better

understanding of man's duality that drives his satires, and as such a study of moral philosophy is valuable. Without an understanding of the nature of man's duality, morality is nothing but an accident:

[...] Sure Grace is infus'd

By diune favour, not by actions vs'd.

Which is as permanent as heavens blisse

To them that haue it, the no habite is. (4.117-120)

Marston turns in his third book to a discussion of humoral theory in the belief that it offers the best explanation of man's nature and thereby provides a way for man to cleanse himself and wash away the slime of vice.

An Alternative Approach

Medieval physiology posited that disease resulted from an imbalance of men's humors—four fluids that worked to stabilize bodily processes. Interest in humors continued throughout the Elizabethan period and ultimately shifted from a basis of man's physiology to include an accounting of his psychological well-being.

Katherine Maus has demonstrated the urgent preoccupation in Elizabethan England with inwardness and with “the discrepancy between ‘inward disposition’ and ‘outward appearance’” (13) of which humoral theory was of primary importance.

Certainly we have seen Marston's preoccupation with this discrepancy. Similarly, Michael Schoenfeldt points to humoral theory as facilitating a “scrutiny of the self” (1). As his final satire demonstrates, Marston stands in strong support of humoral theory providing the best way for man to come to an understanding of himself and thereby control his behavior. Titled “Humours,” in this satire Marston outlines his

belief that the individual must identify his humor, must learn to know himself, to enact moral reform.

Marston begins his humor satire by casting off his scourging persona, “Sleep grim reproofe” (11.1). He adopts a persona who laughs, rather than rails, at vice, “O I am great with mirth, some midwifery, / Or I shall breake my sides at vanitie” (11.11-12). The object of his satiric laughter is a variety of humorously imbalanced young men who are obsessed with the body and sensual endeavors. Robrus, “the spruce skipping Curio” (11.15) is a courtier enchanted by dance. He whirls, kicks and is always in search of an opportunity to display his talents (11.16-36). Luscus is enamored by popular drama. Quoting from “Iuliat and Romio” (11.39) and blathering about the theater, “Say, who acts best? Drusus, or Roscio?” (11.40), Marston laments that Luscus has “made a common-place book out of plaies” (11.43). Martius cares only for fencing (11.52-73). Tuscus collects epigrams and speaks only in jests (11.74). Luxurio is a lecher (11.137-155) and Piso is a slave to fashion dressing in “Taffata cloaks” and “Spanish leather” (11.156-161). Marston makes clear, however, that these men should not be taken to represent specific individuals, “Your wits are quicke in application” (11.203). Rather, they serve as laughing reminders of types of men and their humors.

This satire is not simply an anatomy of vice, however, nor is this satire a mere railing intended to “retail and broke anothers wit” (11.76). Marston’s purpose is to demonstrate the danger of immersing oneself in base sensuality and to offer a method by which humors might be purged. Marston divides the man in two: the soul, “That part not subiect to mortalitie” (11.208) is enslaved to the body, which produces the

humors (11.206). The implication is that the soul must be nourished (through the word of God and righteous living) until it is strong enough to stand up to the body. The gallants are attacked because they let the poor soul starve while feeding the humor producing sensual body. However, Marston recognizes that the soul “so feeble is” (11.235), that the possibility of moral reform is bleak, bleak but not impossible. Marston points his audience to the concept of “Syndersis” (11.236) in the final lines of his poem. Syndersis, or man’s rational ability, still operates even without the light of divine revelation (OED). In this respect, we see something of Donne in Marston. In his third Satire, Donne observes that “blind philosophers,” employed their rational ability to discern moral truth (3.12). If we accept that Marston’s satiric project is designed to help man to learn to know himself, then his final satire is an excellent example of the way this might be accomplished. Marston’s audience is exhorted to identify their humors and, once they are identified, begin the process of rational reform. Thus Marston encourages a physiological / psychological accounting of human behavior, of understanding the self, and of explaining immorality. In this respect we can see Marston’s satires endorsing a humoral approach to understanding morality.

Maus and Schoenfeldt’s studies demonstrate that humoral theory is compatible with Christian theology. However, humoral theory does undermine the strategies of moral exempla literature. Moral exempla ask the individual to imitate the behavior of exemplary models. Humoral theory, on the other hand, encourages an introspective approach to morality. While moral exempla encourages reform from the outside in, humoral theory encourages reform from the inside out. Through his

endorsement of humoral theory, Marston exhorts his audience to undertake an investigation of the self rather than simply imitate exemplary models. Thus we can appreciate Marston's satires as threatening ecclesiastical approaches to fashioning moral man.

Print Satire After the Order

Despite the Bishops' proscriptions, satire continued to be produced for the presses. In fact, the only example I have come across of the ban being applied after the June 4th follow-up order is that of Samuel Rowland's *The Letting of Humours Blood in the Head-Vaine*—the printer was fined and the books recalled (Peter 151). However, after minor revisions and a new title, the book was re-printed without incident. More importantly for our study, several pamphlets appeared in 1601, John Weever's *The Whipping of the Satyre* and Edward Guilpin's *The Whipper of the Satyre his Pennance in a White Sheete* among them.⁶¹ By continuing to debate satire's merits, these authors demonstrate that interest in the genre could not be stifled by the Bishops. Indeed, a brief examination of these works suggests that the debate over the value of satire continued with vigor even after the ban.

Weever's *The Whipping of Satyre* ostensibly employs satire to attack its merits, "To take vp *Satyre*, and take downe his pride" (150), an irony that surely is not lost on the audience. Weever complains that the satirist, in attacking immorality, soils himself in the process, "Then know, thou filthy sweepe-chimney of sin, / The

⁶¹ See Sandra Clark's introduction in *The Elizabethan Pamphleteers: Popular Moralistic Pamphlets 1580-1640* (London: Athlone Press, 1983) for a good discussion of pamphlet printing in Elizabethan England. For a brief overview of satiric pamphlets produced after the 1599 ban, see Arnold Davenport, "The Quarrel of the Satirists," *Modern Language Review*, 37 (April 1942) : 123-130.

soyle thereof defiles thy soule within” (179-180). He further notes that satire tends to emphasize the inability of man to reform his behavior:

Well, yet you shew a noble confidence,
That with the force of your perswasion,
Durst vndertake so notable pretence,
As driue the diuell from possession:
Yet thus you proue as all men witness can,
No notable, but a not able man. (223-228)

What is most striking about Weeever’s attacks, however, is his discussion of the role a satirist plays in society. He suggests that the satirist inappropriately usurps moral authority that is reserved for the Church and State:

Our noble Princesse (Lord preserue her Grace)
Made godly lawes to guide this Common-weale,
And hath appointed Officers in place,
By those her Lawes with each offence to deale:
Well looke the rowles, no office ouerskippe,
And see if you can finde the Satyrshippe.

If not, dare you vsurpe an office then,
Without the licence of her Maiestie,
To punish all her Subiects with the pen,
Against the Law of all Ciuilitie?

I haue him vp, t'is pettie treason all,

And therefore feare to breake his necke this fall. (577-588)

Weever's objections highlight the motivations behind the Bishops' ban. In effect, the satirist assumes a moral authority that threatens the authority of the Queen, the head of State. As I will discuss in the following chapter, Ben Jonson was quite interested in the relationship of the satirist and sovereign and argued that the satirist should play an important function as advisor to the sovereign. Weever's objections, while attacking satire, opened up to debate the role of the satirist in society.

While Weever attacks satire, Guilpin defends its efficacy. Guilpin takes offense at the attacks on satire as a genre that encourages sinful behavior:

Reuil'st thou him that telleth man of sinne,

Seeming to foster such as sinfull be:

Better it were thy Pen at rest had bin,

Then to vphold such publique villanie:

Should not the worlde be told of sinne; and why?

Yes maugre *Art* or *Wit*: I say you lye. (55-60)

He argues that the satirist acts as a father for his child. The father encourages correct behavior "[...] by perswasions kindly to amende, / And gentle speeches, wordes with fauour milde" (63-64). However, if gentle encouragement proves ineffective, it is the father's responsibility to bring out the whip (65-66). Guilpin also comments on the relationship between satire and sermon, highlighting the Bishops' concern:

Those sacred Pastors take exceeding paine

To winne the wicked to a blessed life,

Commaunding man from wickednesse refraine,
But still dissention sets vs all at strife:
They may command as God commandeth then
But we will do our willes: Why? we are men.

But let the Heauens frowne, the Welkin thunder,
Perhaps wee feare a little, and minde our God:
Threats may preuaile, & signes may mak vs wonder
Yet feare we not, vntill we feele the rod.
Is this our life? then whip each other well,
Better be whipt on Earth, then scourg'd in Hell. (103-114)

Guilpin admits that the Church plays a significant role in teaching morality.

However, Guilpin observes that instruction alone is not sufficient to reform sinful men. The satirist moves beyond simple moral instruction and attacks, whipping men with the intention of enacting reform. In effect, the satirist functions as an enforcer.

As the presence of these two pamphlets indicates, satire continued to be produced in print even as its merits were being debated. But satire also migrated to the stage during this period. The following chapter examines this migration and focuses particularly on the debate regarding function of satire in society.

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Chapter 4: Stage Satire

Roman satire may be best understood as a form of social critique, a means by which society and culture is evaluated through an exploration of the particular exigencies of everyday existence. Adhering to a set of ethical principles bound up in republican ideals, Roman satirists approach morality from a secular perspective; they assess their culture without the obvious mediation of religious moral authority. These republican ideals, in particular the ideal of *libertas*, serve to authorize the satirist as an arbiter of moral behavior.

As my study of verse satire demonstrates, Elizabethan satirists look to Roman satire for inspiration and incorporate its formal and functional elements in an attempt to seize *libertas* and evaluate the moral fortitude of civil society from a secular perspective. However, they are aware that the strict imitation of Roman models does not speak to the needs of their audience. Roman satirists' accounting of the "private customs" of their times did not translate into a useful assessment of life in Elizabethan England (Marston "to those that seeme iudiciall perusers" 20). We see, then, Elizabethan verse satirists adapting Roman satire to its English needs.

Any study of satire's generic development in early modern England would be remiss to neglect its development on the stage. In this chapter I explore the ways in which playwrights worked to establish their *libertas* and cultivate satire for the stage. My study takes as its central premise that satire is a genre with identifiable formal and functional markers. However, these markers are always in a state of flux and thus contingent on and negotiated within a particular historical moment and expressive

medium. Therefore, my remarks on staged satire will focus, once again, on the particular historical moment of the 1599 Bishops' Order.

By exploring stage satire produced in the years following the Bishops' Order and in the context of the ban, I clarify satire's function as encouraging a secular approach to evaluating morality. In particular, I examine the ways in which Ben Jonson and John Marston develop satire as a dramatic form that models moral performance and promotes a secular ethics. Drawing inspiration from verse satire, these playwrights work to move beyond abstract moral exempla to develop more immediate examples, examples grounded in the empirical realities of shared experience and thus contextually, rather than universally, exemplary. Staging the spectacle of everyday existence, they seize the *libertas* to dramatize contemporary society, even going so far as to claim the right to personate identifiable individuals.

The death of Elizabeth in 1603 is another important moment for my study. As a new monarch ascends the throne, the material conditions of society shift. Thus, satirists necessarily adapt their approach in ways that respond to these changing conditions.⁶² In addition, limiting my study to the drama produced in the years immediately following the order allows me to focus on the development of the character of the satirist.⁶³ Embracing the *libertas* of both Roman and Elizabethan

⁶² For a discussion of satire on the Jacobean stage see Albert Tricomi, *Anticourt Drama in England 1603-1642* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989) especially chapter 1; William Kupersmith, *Roman Satirists of the Seventeenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy: A study of Satiric Plays by Jonson, Marston and Middleton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).

⁶³ For a discussion of Jonson's satire beyond the scope of the Poetmachia see J.A. Bryant, *The Compassionate Satirist* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972). For

verse satirists, the stage satirist is akin to the licensed or allowed fool and exempt from the protocols of polite discourse. Like the fool the satirist is positioned to speak truth to power and provide an avenue of dissent.⁶⁴

My focus on the dramatic satire produced after the 1599 Order leads me to an investigation of the plays of Jonson and Marston. Indeed, these authors developed a tempestuous rivalry during this period in what is now known as the War of the Theaters. Jonson and Marston are only two of the participants in this literary feud. Thomas Dekker is a contributor, as is Shakespeare. However, including a detailed discussion of Dekker and Shakespeare would make this admittedly brief examination unwieldy. Moreover, James Bednarz's recent study of the War of the Theaters suggests that such a detailed discussion of Dekker and Shakespeare is, for the purposes of this study, unnecessary. Bednarz notes that Shakespeare, for the most part allies himself with Marston and that Dekker serves a mediating role. Thus, an examination of the dramatic satire of Jonson and Marston sufficiently speaks to Shakespeare and Dekker's concerns.

I begin my analysis of stage satire by examining the conditions of printing and staging plays in Elizabethan England. I then turn to a study of the plays of Jonson and Marston. As these playwrights respond to each other, they further define their

Martson, see Anthony Caputi, *John Marston, Satirist* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).

⁶⁴ For a discussion of the fool in the English folk tradition see Robert Weinmann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater*: (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). Weinmann aptly summarizes the fool's folk roots, noting, "It is the dramatic figure of the mimic fool, or *stupidus*, that preserved some of the peculiar elements and functions of the oldest miming art, for it is in the contradiction and in the unity of fantasy and realism, myth and knowledge, social criticism and utopian prophecy, that the fool's roots are most firmly planted" (11)

deployment of satire as a means by which the moral health of civil society is evaluated and reformed. In particular, I focus on the development of the satirist in modeling a secular approach to evaluating moral performance.

The Bishops' Order and the Conditions Surrounding Dramatic Publication

The 1599 Bishops' Order includes a provision regarding the printing of dramatic works stipulating, "That noe play be printed excepte they be allowed by such as have auchthorytie" (Arber 677). From this declaration there is little indication that the Bishops were responding specifically to satirical elements within drama. Indeed, it is more likely that they were concerned with unlicensed printing of plays rather than satiric content. From 1598 to 1600, there was a rash of illicit publication of plays (Dutton 95). During this time the Lord Chamberlain, George Carey, was too ill to attend to his duties—among which was copyright of plays.⁶⁵ The Master of the Revels, George Tilney, concerned himself with the oversight of stage productions and was not an official licensing agent of plays for the press (Clare 47-48). It was only after the ascension of James I and the installment of George Buc that the Master of the Revels was given licensing privileges (Clare 119-123). 1599 also saw an injunction requiring pamphlets, plays and ballads to be licensed by three commissioners for religion before going to press (Clegg 37). In short, it appears that the inclusion of play texts in the June 1st Order served to strengthen control over unauthorized printing by reinforcing ecclesiastical licensing authority. Richard Dutton observes that piracy was a concern for the acting companies as well. He notes

⁶⁵ For a further discussion of the role of the Lord Chamberlain in the oversight of dramatic publication, see E. K Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 71-105, I; 183-191, III.

that in 1600 the Lord Admiral's and Lord Chamberlain's Men took steps to protect their property by putting the Stationers' company on notice and by purchasing exclusive rights from playwrights (Dutton 95). Nevertheless, scholars regularly try to link the ban on satire to the emergence of satire on the stage in late Elizabethan England.

The most often cited proponent of a link between the Bishops' ban and the emergence of satire on the stage is O.J. Campbell. Campbell argues that the appearance of satires on the stage immediately following the order served as "substitutes for these banned [printed] satires" (vii). Campbell's assertion is understandable given that the first reference to satire as a dramatic genre comes to us from an entry in the Stationers' Register pertaining to Jonson's *Everyman Out of His Humour*, a play performed at the Globe in the autumn of 1599 and printed in April 1600:

8 prilis

William holme. Entered for his copie vunder the hands of master Harsnet, and mater wyndet warden, A Comicall Satyre of euery man out of his humour vj. (Arber159)⁶⁶

However, Campbell's argument that comical satire served as a substitute for verse satire is based on two faulty premises. First, Campbell accepts at face value that the 1599 Order effectively halted the printing of verse satire and, second, that satirists would have preferred to continue producing in print rather than for the theater. As we

⁶⁶ For a discussion of Jonson's oversight of *EMO* for the press see Joseph Lowenstien, *Ben Jonson and Possessive Authorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 142-45.

have seen, satire continued to be printed in spite of the ban. There seems to have been little need for verse satirists to abandon print for an alternative medium.

Whether satirists preferred the page to the stage is less clear cut.

Print reaches a geographically diffuse audience united by literacy. Theater is essentially urban and accommodates the illiterate as well as the literate. Roman satire is primarily geared toward an educated, urban audience; the English page and stage are both equipped to accommodate Roman influenced satire. The question of preference must then be evaluated on an individual basis. For Joseph Hall, a member of the clergy writing from Cambridge, print was the ideal medium to disseminate his satires beyond the University community. Within the University community, drama was an appealing option. Indeed, Hall may have had a hand in the *Parnassus* plays.⁶⁷ For Jonson, satire served to boost his finances and his reputation via the stage and the page. Jonson's development of comical satire capitalized on the popularity of verse satire; what is popular is usually profitable (Riggs 57-62). Further, Jonson's decision to oversee a print edition of *Every Man Out of His Humour* worked to enhance his reputation as a poet as well as serving as an additional source of income (Riggs 63-68). If anything, the stage and printing history of Jonson's *EMO* confirms that the stage and page could work together. Still, Campbell is on the right track. There is a link between the 1599 Order and the migration of satire to the stage.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Frank Huntley, "Joseph Hall, John Marston and the *Returne from Parnassus*," *Illustrious Evidence: Approaches to English Literature of the Early Seventeenth Century*. ed. Earl Miner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) 3-22.

In the preceding chapters I examined satire's resistance to the Bishops' ban in manuscript and print. I argue that satire's emergence on the stage is best appreciated as part of this resistance. Furthermore, the migration from the page to stage continued the development of an "English" satire. In its Roman contexts, classical satire was often remote and inaccessible. By transforming satire into a dramatic genre, playwrights continued the process, begun by verse satirists, of establishing a satiric form and spirit that reached out to a broader audience than could be accommodated by the page alone. Before beginning my discussion of stage satire, however, I want briefly to explore the conditions of printing and staging plays in Elizabethan England. An understanding of the conditions under which plays were published and performed will enable a better appreciation of the relationship between the Bishops' Order and the appearance of stage satire.

Both secular and religious authorities were involved in the oversight of Elizabethan drama.⁶⁸ The Lord Chamberlain oversaw the licensing of plays for the stage and for the presses. As an *ex officio* member of the Privy Council, the Lord Chamberlain's influence was considerable.⁶⁹ With respect to publication, the Chamberlain was actively involved and had the power to grant a license. However, his illness prevented him from attending to these duties. Until George Carey's death

⁶⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the history of dramatic censorship see Janet Clare, *Art Made Tongue-Tied by Authority* (Manchester, University of Manchester Press, 1990); Richard Dutton, *Licensing, Censorship and Authorship in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave, 2000).

⁶⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the role of the Chamberlain as a licensing agent see E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), volume 4, chapter 23.

in 1603, after which the Master of the Revels assumed licensing authority, the primary secular authority responsible for the oversight of drama was ineffectual.

During the Chamberlain's illness, it is not surprising that the ecclesiastical authorities worked to reassert control over dramatic publication. While ecclesiastical authorities did not historically license acting companies or oversee stage productions, they were consulted in matters concerning dramatic production.⁷⁰ They also traditionally enjoy a general oversight of the presses. From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, it was at the very least expected that books should be presented to ecclesiastical authority before printing (Clegg 36-40).

The 1599 Bishops' Order serves to reign in the presses by reminding printers, "That noe play be printed excepte they be allowed by such as have auchthorytie" (Arber 677). That authority was made clear to extend to the religious community earlier in 1599 when an injunction required pamphlets, plays and ballads to be licensed by "three Ecclesiastical Commissioners" before going to press (Clegg 37). What is surprising regarding the licensing of play texts following the 1599 Order is that religious authorities approved for printing plays identified as satire, a genre expressly outlawed by the Bishops. Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour* is a prime example. Printed in April, 1600, the play was presented to Samuel Harsnett for authorization.⁷¹

⁷⁰ See, for example, Dutton's discussion of the 1589 Privy Council instruction that the Master of the Revels consult with the Archbishop of Canterbury regarding the staging of plays in London, pages 4-5.

⁷¹ For further discussion of Harsnett's role in licensing texts for the press see Clare, 83 and Dutton, 177-87.

Given Harsnett's license, one must ask why a member of the ecclesiastical community would approve a work for the press that was deliberately identified as satire? One possibility may be that the Bishops—or at least Harsnett—did not think of plays as satires. Jonson's comical satires did not appear until after the Order and as such the ecclesiastical authorities may not have made the link between the Roman inspired verse satires included in the Order and Jonson's Aristophanic comical satire.

The most likely explanation for the willingness of the ecclesiastical authorities to approve the printing of *EMO* is its performance for Elizabeth during the Christmas revels of 1599-1600 (Riggs 61). This performance is especially significant because Jonson incorporates the Queen's presence into the action of the play. His satirist, Macilente, infected with envy, is himself cured of his humor at the end of the play through the presence of Elizabeth:

Why, here's a change! Now is my soul at peace.

I am as empty of all envy now

As they of merit to be envied at. (Quarto Variant Ending 1-3)

Jonson did run into some trouble regarding the conclusion of his play. In the earlier productions, a boy actor walked across the stage dressed as Elizabeth. After the performance for Elizabeth, Jonson was forced to write an alternate ending omitting the Queen's transformative presence (Riggs 60). However, the performance for the Queen suggests the approval of the secular authorities. It would seem likely that the ecclesiastical authorities licensed *EMO* at least in part based on Tilney's sanction of a performance for the Queen.

Jonson's oversight of *EMO* for the presses provides insight into the limitations of the Bishops' Order. In order to better appreciate satire's development on the stage as a defense of its value in the face the Bishops' Order, however, I want to briefly discuss the conditions of staging plays in Elizabethan England. In particular, a discussion of these conditions allows for a greater understanding of the Poetmachia as a dialogue among playwrights as to the form and function of stage satire.

There are several points of interest regarding the conditions of staging plays in Elizabethan England. By 1599 there were only three adult theater companies in London, The Lord Admiral's, Lord Chamberlain's and Worcester's Men.⁷² At the close of the sixteenth century, however, two children's companies returned to the London stage—Paul's Boys and Children of the Queen's Revels.⁷³ The return of these children's companies was a significant factor in the development of stage satire. Indeed, this feud shows authors openly and fiercely disagreeing over the nature and function of satire in society.⁷⁴

Poetmachia

From 1599 to 1601, Jonson, Marston, Shakespeare, and Dekker produced a series of plays that worked to cultivate satire on the stage. These authors developed a

⁷² For a discussion of history of these companies see Chambers, vol. II, 134-191, 220-40, 192-219 respectively.

⁷³ For a discussion of the history of these children's companies see Chambers, vol II, 8-60

⁷⁴ In his chapter, "Did a 'War of the Theaters' Occur," David Bergeron contends that the hostility of the Poetmachia has been overestimated. He argues that evidence suggests that Jonson, Marston and Dekker collaborated during this period. However, Bergeron does not take into account the significance of Jonson's rejection of Plautine comedy in favor of an Aristophanic model. He also underestimates the vitriol with which the dramatists personally attacked one another on the stage. *Practicing Renaissance Scholarship* (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 2000).

stormy rivalry, what Dekker would come to identify in his preface to *Satiriomastix* as a “Poetmachia.” The vitriol of this feud may be best understood as stemming from the poets’ lampooning of each other on the stage. In *Everyman Out of His Humour* (1599), Jonson stages Marston as the ostentatious Clove. In *Cynthia’s Revels* (1600) Marston is represented as the irascible Hedon, and in *Poetaster* Marston is staged as Crispinus. Marston fashions three characters in three plays intended to personate Jonson: Chrisoganus in *Histriomastix* (1600), Brabant Senior in *Jack Drum’s Entertainment* (1600), and Lampatho Doria in *What You Will* (1601). Shakespeare contributes a portrait of Jonson, represented on stage as Ajax, in *Troilus and Cressida* (1601).⁷⁵ Thomas Dekker contributes a caricature of Jonson as the poet Horace in *Satiriomastix* (1601), performed at the Globe and Paul’s, in what is the final salvo in the Poetmachia.

Nineteenth-century critics approached this feud almost solely in terms of the representation of competing dramatists in a scornful and mocking manner on the stage.⁷⁶ Reconsidering the Poetmachia, earlier twentieth-century critics like Robert Sharpe and Alfred Harbage evaluate this feud in terms of economic pressures. In his *The Real War of the Theaters*, Sharpe evaluates it resulting from competition among theater companies. Harbage, in his *Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions*, sees the Poetmachia as a conflict between the public and private theaters. Contemporary

⁷⁵ For a discussion of Shakespeare and Dekker’s personation of Jonson see James Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poet’s War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) chapter 1.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Josiah Penniman, *The War of the Theaters* (Philadelphia, 1897) and Roscoe Addison Small, *The Stage Quarrel Between Ben Jonson and the So-Called Poetasters* (Breslau, 1899).

critics have approached this feud in terms of substantial aesthetic differences between rival poets. Indeed, Joseph Loewenstien has called it among “the most brightly focused negations of generic canons in English cultural history” (“Personal Material” 112n8). As I have mentioned above, James Bednarz argues that the feud is best contextualized in terms of Jonson’s rejection of popular Plautine comedy in favor of an Aristophanic model. With Bednarz’s compelling study in mind, I would like to focus attention specifically on the differences between Jonson and Marston and their competing conceptions regarding the function of satire and the satirist in society. In particular, I examine Jonson’s comical satires and Marston’s dissatisfaction with Jonson’s satiric project. Indeed, the *Poetmachia* provides us with an important exchange among authors that illuminates the evolution of stage satire as it encourages a secular approach to modeling moral performance.

Every Man Out of His Humour

To better contextualize Jonson’s stage satire—and Marston’s as well—we may briefly recall the characteristics of the literature of moral exempla, its purpose, and its limits. As I have tried to establish in this study, the literature of moral exempla works through abstraction and allegory to impute a moral message. *Mankind* is a prime example. The play is populated with characters representing various abstract ideas—Mankind, Myscheff, Mercy—who exhibit no psychological development. Mankind is just that, mankind; Myscheff, mischief. Tempted to sin by the likes of Newgyse and Now-a-days, Mankind—and in turn the audience—learns that life is a series of tests by which God assesses an individual’s moral condition and thus his soul’s fitness to enter the kingdom of heaven. Thus, moral exempla literature

is best understood as an instructional tool, a means of educating the laity as to the universal principles underlying Christian belief. Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* is another good example of the didactic function of moral exempla literature. Mannyng's confessional guidebook, illustrated with exempla of the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, and various points of shrift, is designed to instruct the laity on types of sins and the obligations of the confessor.

Jonson recognizes significant limits to the literature of moral exempla, however. Morality plays like *Mankind* purport to speak to the tenor of the times yet consistently fail to do so. As Jonathan Haynes observes, "In the play *Mankind* the names Newgyse and Now-a-days suggest the complaint theme of the badness of modern times, but it is very hard to find any historical content in the play's handling of it" (16). While drawing inspiration from these morality plays, Jonson also recognizes their deficiencies, deficiencies that prevent "any further reformulation of the social problem, or the development of new tactics to deal with it" (20).⁷⁷ Following Haynes, I examine the development of stage satire as a response to the deficiencies of moral exempla literature, as a re-conceptualization of the way in which drama works to comment on the private customs of the times. Through my exploration of Jonson and Marston's feud, I demonstrate the ways in which stage satire supplements and/or supersedes the literature of moral exempla and thereby works to evaluate and enact moral reform.

⁷⁷ For a discussion of the influence of the English morality play throughout Jonson's comedies see Alan Dessen, *Jonson's Moral Comedies* (Northwestern University Press, 1971)

Jonson's comical satire is best appreciated as an amalgam of several literary traditions. With one eye on the English morality play's complaint tradition, Jonson looks to the recent popularity of humor comedy, for example, and draws from Aristophanes and Greek Old Comedy. Jonson also incorporates into comical satire distinguishing characteristics of Elizabethan verse satire (Campbell 2). In particular, Jonson is strongly influenced by the verse satirist's persona and works to bring him to the stage. To better contextualize Jonson's comical satires, we can examine the intersection of these traditions.

Galenic physiology asserted that four humors existed in the body—blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile. An imbalance among these humors resulted in disease. By the 1590s, humoral theory was commonly employed to explain an individual's psychological make-up. Katharine Maus, in her study of the influence humoral theory had on the Elizabethan theater, observes, “the whole interior of the body—heart, liver, womb, bowels, kidneys, gall, blood, lymph—quite often involves itself in the production of the mental interior, of the individual's private experience” (195). Gail Kern Paster points to the important function humoral theory had in evaluating the health of society. She argues that humors were used explain “not only an individual's characteristic responses to circumstances but also those of whole peoples” (14). Following Maus and Paster, we should appreciate humoral theory as a way of speaking to the moral health of the individual and society.⁷⁸

Humor comedy appeared on the stage in 1597 with George Chapman's *Humorous Days Mirth*. Chapman's play was both popular and profitable. As Riggs

⁷⁸ See also Michael Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

notes, “Jonson doubtless hoped to capitalize on the phenomenal popularity of this play” and in 1598 finished *Everyman in His Humour*, the predecessor to *Every Man Out* (38). While adopting Chapman’s comedy of humors, Jonson’s *Every Man in His Humour* is more rigorous in its treatment and he works to provide an “anatomy of human folly” in *EMI* (Riggs 38). But we must remember that it is the folly of contemporary society that Jonson worked to represent. Hugh Craig’s study of Jonson’s revision of *EMI* for inclusion in the 1616 folio demonstrates Jonson’s concern with accurately portraying the tenor of the times. Indeed, Craig argues that Jonson altered the language of the play in 1616 to reflect shifts in dialect.

In one respect, Jonson’s employment of humoral theory is a way of organizing his characters and explaining their relationship to vice. In addition, humoral theory facilitates Jonson’s movement toward an empirical approach to representing and critiquing social performance.⁷⁹ Jonson continues to develop his empirical approach in *Every Man Out of His Humor*. But *EMO* is not, strictly speaking, a sequel to *EMI*.⁸⁰ Rather than expanding on his anatomy of vice, Jonson’s concern is with curing these imbalances.

Building on *EMI*, Jonson looked to Greek drama for inspiration in developing comical satire. In the Induction, Cordatus, who we learn has seen the play previously, describes the action as “strange and of a particular kind by itself, / somewhat like *Vetus Comedia*” (Induction 227-8) and further notes that the plot does not hold true to

⁷⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between humoral theory and Jonson’s realism see Jonathan Haynes, *The Social Relations of Jonson’s Theater* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁸⁰ Anne Barton, in *Ben Jonson, Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), argues that *EMO* represents a significant shift in Jonson’s style by “dissenting from popular tradition” and thus should not be considered a sequel to *EMI* (x).

the traditional rules of comedy. Cordatus defends this “strange” new type of play by asserting that the “same *licentia* or free power to illustrate and / heighten our invention” (Induction 262-3) should be enjoyed by contemporary authors as was enjoyed by those practitioners of Greek Old Comedy “who have utterly / excluded the chorus, altered the property of the persons, / their names, and natures, and augmented it with all / liberty, according to the elegancy and disposition of those / times wherein they wrote” (Induction 257-261).

It is not surprising that Jonson looked to Greek drama as a model. As a humanist scholar, Jonson worked diligently to acquaint himself with the classics.⁸¹ Indeed, throughout his comical satires we see expressions of Jonson’s humanist ideals. Jonson’s familiarity with Horace may well have pointed him towards *vetus comoedia*. In his *Sermones*, Horace suggests that Roman satire’s roots lay in Greek Old Comedy, what Jonson refers to as *vetus comoedia*. In 1.4, Horace writes:

Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae,
atque alii, quorum comoedia prisca virorum est,
si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur,
quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui
famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.

Look at the poets Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes, and the other men who make up Old Comedy. Whenever someone deserved to be

⁸¹ For a discussion of Jonson’s humanism see Michael McCauley, *Jonsonian Discriminations: the humanist poet and the praise of true nobility* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

exposed for being a thief or a lech or a murderer or for being notorious in any other way, they would speak up and identify him. (S. 1.4.1-5)

Elizabethan literary critics, J.C. Scaliger for example, also linked satire to *vetus comoedia*.⁸²

Through the incorporation of *vetus comoedia*, then, Jonson establishes his *libertas* to innovate by noting that same freedom to innovate was enjoyed by his classical predecessors. Further, employing Aristophanes as a model encouraged audiences to draw out references to contemporary individuals and their immoral behavior. One is reminded of the apocryphal story of Socrates standing up during a performance of *Clouds* and acknowledging Aristophanes' satiric portrait of the philosopher. Working within the tradition of *vetus comoedia*, Jonson thus encourages his audience to draw out references to contemporary individuals. In effect, Jonson signals that contemporary society is his moral exempla. But what is more, Jonson encourages his audience to see in themselves the follies of the characters on the stage. It is in this respect that Jonson's ridicule serves an important purpose. Jonson purges these characters of their humors by methodically ridiculing and humiliating them in front of the audience. Indeed, it is this public humiliation that makes Jonson's comical satire effective." Thus, stage satire differs from verse satire in an important respect. Print is private; the stage is public.

Jonson further signals the innovative nature of his work by beginning *EMO* in an unusual fashion. Typically, there were three "soundings" or musical introductions that signaled the start of the performance (Gurr 121). Jonson breaks from tradition

⁸² See Julius Caesar Scaliger, "Poetice," *Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics* Trans. Frederick M. Padelford (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1905).

and begins his play at the second sounding with Apser, the author and lead actor, entering “GreX” with Cordatus and Mitis (Induction). The stage direction “GreX,” Latin for invited guests, suggests that Cordatus and Mitis are meant to represent the audience. In other words, Jonson breaks the frame distancing the spectators from the players. Indeed, Cordatus and Mitis may have sat among the audience (Ostovich 39). It is important to note that throughout the play the GreX comments on the action and, as Campbell observes, that this running commentary is a distinctive feature of Jonson’s comical satires (57-58). By reducing the distance between the players and the audience, Jonson encourages an active participation in the action of the play. In other words, the audience is encouraged not only to bear witness to the exposure of immorality but to join in with ridicule.

Aware that this spectacle of ridicule may result in bedlam, Jonson “works to establish a controlling moral perspective in *EMO*” (Bednarz 68). Jonson establishes this control in large part through his stage satirist, Macilente. The plot, varied and meandering, revolves around Macilente exposing follies and, through public ridicule and humiliation, “undergo a cathartic purge” of their humors (Bednarz 63). Witnessing the cathartic purge of the characters on the stage, Jonson encourages “spectators to undergo a cathartic purge of their own corresponding humors” (67-68).

Macilente, however, is not without his own flaws, and at the end of the play envy—the vice commonly associated with the satirist—is driven from him by the stage presence of an impersonated Queen Elizabeth. Confronted by the Queen’s glory, Macilente recognizes his flaws and celebrates the Queen’s facility to inspire reform: “Neuer till now did object greet mine eyes / With any light content: but in

here graces / All my malicious powers have lost their stings” (5.4.6-8).⁸³ The relationship between satirist and sovereign is an important one in Jonson’s comical satire. In order to enact moral reform, Jonson realizes that the satirist must have more than the authority of a literary tradition to do so. To better appreciate the nature of the relationship between satirist and sovereign, however, we must first examine the relationship between satirist and society.

Cynthia’s Revels

Performed by the Children of the Chapel Royal at the Blackfriar’s in 1600, Jonson continues his development of comical satire by incorporating another model—the court masque. These masques combined a pastoral setting, incorporated myth and / or fable, and frequently engaged in ethical and / or political debate.⁸⁴ *Cynthia’s Revels* includes a masque through which Jonson explores the relationship between the individual and theatrical performance. As Joseph Loewenstein observes, Jonson’s inclusion of a masque is a “critique of theatricality” (93). Indeed, Jonson focuses his satire on those who are more concerned with appearance than moral fortitude.

⁸³ For further discussion of the performance for Elizabeth see J. A. Bryant, *The Compassionate Satirist* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1972) 23-31. Bryant argues that “Macilente’s grateful words here at the end constitute an acknowledgement that his restoration to sanity has come in the only way really consistent with Ben Jonson’s ethic—that is a free gift of goodness bestowed vicariously by a sovereign who is himself (or herself) manifestly good and divinely sanctioned” (28).

⁸⁴ For further discussion of the Elizabethan court masque see Enid Welsford, *The Court Masque* (New York: Russell & Russel, 1962); David Lindley (ed.), *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). For a discussion of Jonson’s later career writing court masques see Robert Adams, *Ben Jonson’s Plays and Masques* (New York: Norton, 1970).

The play begins, like *EMO*, by closing the distance between author, actor and audience. Three boys enter at the second sounding and launch into an argument over which one has the right to speak the prologue. One boy goes so far as to threaten to quit the play if he is not allowed to speak it (Induction 1-41). Agreeing to draw lots for the privilege, one of the losers is unsatisfied and takes his revenge by “tell[ing] all the argument of his play aforehand, and so stale his invention to the auditorie before it come forth” (Induction 35-7). The boy reveals the plot in full, despite his comrades’ attempts to remove him from the stage. By disclosing the plot, Jonson asks his audience to look beyond the farcical nature of the romantic action and instead focus on the satiric plot—the exposure and reform of immorality.

Cynthia’s Revels’ romantic plot revolves around four gallants and four ladies, all of questionable virtue. Among the men are Hendon, “the voluptuous,” Anaides, “the impudent,” Amorphus, “the deformed” traveler, and Asotus, “the prodigall.” Among the women are Philautia, the emodiement of “selfe-Loue,” Gelaia, “the daughter of folly,” Phantaste, “a light wittinesse” or a dullard, and Argurion, the personification of “manie [money]” (Induction 57-73). Throughout the play the follies of each are amplified by the Cupid’s scheming and ultimately exposed by the satirist Criticus through a masque in which these eight anatomies of vice participate. The fact that Jonson’s attacks on these courtiers and courtesans are detailed and vicious is all the more provocative given that his audience was comprised of the very same sort. *Cynthia’s Revels* was performed at the Blackfriar’s, an exclusive theater

frequented by the affluent members of the gentry and nobility.⁸⁵ Thus, we see Jonson altering his cast of characters based on the demographic of his audience. Rather than incorporating a broad spectrum representing the various strata of society as he had in *EMI* and *EMO*, Jonson narrows his focus and incorporates characters representing the elite members of courtly culture. While these characters might at first seem to be simply stock types associated with a particular vice—lust, prodigality, vanity, et al—we must bear in mind that Jonson’s development of comical satire ascribes these vices to contemporary individuals, members of elite Elizabethan society. In effect, Jonson is offering a critique of Elizabethan courtly culture as false and affected. Further, Jonson continues to work within a humoral physiological / psychological approach to character development.

Mercury encourages Criticus to write the court mask with the express purpose of purging the humors of the courtiers and courtesans:

And good men, like the sea, should still maintaine
Their noble taste, in midst of all fresh humours,
That slow about them, to corrupt their streames,
Bearing no season, much lesse salt of goodnesse.
It is our purpose, Crites, to correct,
And punish, with our laughter, this nights sport
Which our court-*Dors* so heartily intend :
And by that worthy scorne, to make them know

⁸⁵ For a discussion of social composition of the carious theaters in Elizabethan England see Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 69-84.

How farre beneath the dignitie of man

Their serious, and most practis'd actions are. (5.1.13-22)

Mercury's speech outlines Jonson's satiric agenda. Comical satire serves to punish with scornful laughter and ridicule those who are corrupted and thereby to bring about reform through a cathartic purging of their humorous imbalances. It is significant that Mercury turns to the scholar/poet/satirist Criticus to expose immorality. Indeed, by examining Criticus' function in the play we might better understand Jonson's conception of the role of the satirist and the function of satire in society.

O.J. Campbell argues that Crites' primary responsibility is to expose vice (86-7). I agree with this assessment. Campbell goes on to argue, however, "that the only truly effective moral censor is an inward monitor, that [Crites] is essentially the embodiment of man's own common sense—a power capable in its own right of pronouncing follies to be the manifestations of vice" (89). I disagree with Campbell on this point. Throughout his comical satires Jonson reinforces the importance of the satirist in society by making him an indispensable agent for the exposure of vice. In effect, Jonson makes the case that he, as an author of stage satire, serves that function.

Of course, Jonson believes that the individual is capable of reform once his vice is exposed. Jonson makes this idea clear in an early speech given by Criticus to Amorphus and Asotus:

And if we can but banish our owne sense,

We act our mimicke trickes with that free license,

That lust, that pleasure, that securitie,

As if we practiz'd in a paste-boord case,

And no one saw the motion, but the motion. (1.5.60-64)

The use of the pronoun “we” indicates that Jonson is aware he is a member of the same society he satirizes. Jonson suggests that the individual has the authority, the freedom, the “license” to reform. The final line, “And no one saw the motion, but the motion” reiterates the privacy afforded the individual in modifying behavior. In other words, no one witnesses the process of reform but the soul itself. Despite the interiority of the process of reform, the satirist is necessary not only to expose immorality in the public sphere. As a result of Criticus’ masque, the young lovers are confronted with their vices and are transformed in the presence of the divine Cynthia.

In *Cynthia’s Revels*, then, the satirist exposes the immoral individual, presenting the transgressor as a negative example worthy of derision. Further, the satirist exposes to the sovereign the follies of her people and thus brings to her attention the condition of her state. Thus, the satirist, the individual and the sovereign work together in reforming society. The satirist must have the liberty, licensed by authority, to identify the flaws of individuals.⁸⁶ The individual must enact change. The sovereign must have the mercy to receive them into her arms, her court, her kingdom, once they reform.

⁸⁶ For a discussion of the relationship between Jonson, state censorship practices and poetic authority see Richard Burt, *Licensed by Authority* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). Burt argues that “censorship includes a set of paradoxical and often contradictory strategies for the administration of aesthetics and for the regulation of literary criticism” (xiii)

Poetaster

In his translation of Horace, Thomas Drant responds to objections that he “mighte be better occupied than in thus translating.” Drant defends his work, arguing that “melling with humanity” is necessary in order “to come to be able utterers of the gospell” (7-9). While Drant exhibits a typical ecclesiastical distaste for secular matters, he is aware that Horace’s satires contain vital insight into the nature of immorality. Indeed, his linking of Horace with the prophet Jeremiah, “that the plaintive prophet Jeremiah should weep at sin; the pleasant poet Horace should laugh at sin” (7), strongly suggests his appreciation for Horace as a moral authority. Jonson, too, recognizes Horace as a moral authority. Jonson further recognizes that Horace functions as a secular moralist whose moral convictions were grounded in republican ideals.⁸⁷ Jonson adopts the persona of Horace in the final installment of his satiric trilogy in an attempt to establish himself as an authorized secular moralist, one whose moral convictions share Horace’s republican ideals.⁸⁸

Poetaster, or the Arraignment was performed in 1601 by the Children of the Chapel at the Blackfriar’s and represents Jonson’s final contribution to the Poetmachie. The action of the play revolves around two intersecting plots. In the romantic plot, Ovid, tainted by his lusty romanticism, is banished for his corruptive influence on Caesar’s daughter. Jonson adapts four of Horace’s satires (1.4, 1.9, 1.10, 2.1) for the stage in his satiric plot. At the close of the play, Jonson/Horace arraigns

⁸⁷ For a discussion of Jonson’s republican ideals see Katharine Maus, *Ben Jonson and the Roman Frame of Mind* (Princeton: Princeton, NJ: 1984); Julie Sanders, *Ben Jonson’s Theatrical Republics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998).

⁸⁸ For a more detailed discussion of Jonson’s republican ideals see Julie Sanders, *Ben Jonson’s Theatrical Republics* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998).

Marston/Crispinus and Dekker/Demetrius. Convicted of being poetasters, Horace purges them of their humors. In order to purge these men of their humors, Jonson recognizes that his satirist must be authorized. Jonson authorizes his satirist through the sanction of the sovereign. Jonson develops his conception of the relationship between the satirist and sovereign, in a conversation between Caesar and his coterie in Act 5.

Scene 3 begins with the entrance of Caesar, Maecenas, Cornelius Gallus, Tibullus and Horace. Caesar addresses his coterie, praising the achievements of

Worthy Cornelivs Gallvs, and Tibvllvs:

You both are gentlemen, <and> you, Cornelivs,

A souldier of renowne; and the first *prouost*,

That euer let our *Roman* eagles flie

On swarthy *Egypt*, quarried with her spoiles. (5.1.6-10)

But it is not solely for their accomplishments in battle that merit Caesar's praise, it is also their virtue. He states, "You both haue vertues, shining through your shapes" (5.1.13). Indeed, the poets have confirmed their virtue, "Sweet *poesies* sacred garlands crowne your gentrie" (5.1.17). In other words, poetry confirms virtue.

Employing Caesar as his mouthpiece, Jonson moves on to further explicate the value of poetry, especially as it relates to the development of a national identity:

Shee can so mould *Rome*, and her monuments,

Within the liquid marble of her lines,

That they shall stand fresh, and miraculous,

Euen, when they mixe with innouating dust;

In her sweet streames shall our braue *Roman* spirits
Chace, and swim after death, with their choise deeds
Shining on their white shoulders; and therein
Shall *Tyber*, and our famous riuers fall
With such attraction, that th'ambitious line
Of the round world shall to her center shrinke,
To heare their musicke: And, for these high parts,
Caesar shall reuerence the *Pierian* artes. (5.1.21-32)

Poetry moulds the nation. The “liquid marble of her lines” are as vital to the construction of the state as are the marble monuments that announce its grandeur. Like the monuments of Rome, the poetry of a nation lives on long after the people who inhabited it have departed from the world, “In her sweet streames shall our braue *Roman* spirits / Chace, and swim after death, with their choise deeds / Shining on their white shoulders.” Those poets with ambition, with aspirations of molding a great state, will “to her center shrinke, / to heare their musicke.” It is for these reasons that Caesar reveres poetry. Jonson thus argues that his comical satires are valuable for their contribution to the development of English culture and indeed, the development of the English nation.

Still, Caesar is aware that some may question the motives of those who choose the poet’s muse. In particular, Caesar points to Horace’s poverty as a possible motive for writing satires, “Horace, what saist thou, that art poorest, / And likeliest to enuy, or to detract?” (77-78). Horace defends his acerbic verse by making a distinction between outward appearance and inward virtue,

As if the filth of pouertie sunke as deepe
Into a knowing spirit, as the bane
Of riches doth, into an ignorant soule.
No, Caesar, they be path-lesse, moorish minds,
That being once made rotten with the dung
Of damned riches, euer after sinke
Beneath the steps of any villanie.
But knowledge is the *nectar*, that keepes sweet
A perfect soule, euen in this graue of sinne;
And for my soule, it is as free, as Caesars:
For, what I know is due, I'le giue to all.

“He that detracts, or enuies vertuous merit,

“Is still the couetous, and the ignorant spirit. (81-93)

Here Jonson is in part defending himself against Marston's satiric portraits of the poor bricklayer. Bednarz observes that Jonson's poverty was a frequent source for ridicule within the *Poetmachia* (216-217). Jonson's defense also serves to clarify the function of comical satire. To effectively assess immorality, the satirist must be virtuous *and* knowledgeable. Indeed, knowledge is the “*nectar*, that keepes sweet / A perfect soule” (88-89). Having adapted Aristophanic comedy to the English stage, Jonson has demonstrated his dedication to humanist scholarship. By setting *Poetaster* in ancient Rome, Jonson again signals his dedication to humanist ideals (Bednarz 206).

Caesar approves of Horace's honesty and thanks him for his “free, and holsome sharpnesse” (94). Indeed, it is Horace's honesty that Caesar finds valuable,

“A flattered prince soone turnes the prince of fooles” (95). Out of a desire for good and honest council, Caesar authorizes Horace’s satires. Indeed, it is with Caesar’s authority that Horace purges Crispinus and Demetrius at the conclusion of the play.

In this exchange, then, we see Jonson’s firm belief in the value of his comical satires. Jonson consistently makes claims for originality, but he contends that his work “shall stand fresh” (23-24) even “when they mixe with innovating dust.” Through the incorporation of humor comedy, Jonson provides an accounting of immorality that accords itself with contemporary physiological/psychological approaches to understanding morality. Adapting Greek Old Comedy and infusing it with the persona of the satirist, Jonson seizes the *libertas* to identify cotemporary individuals and expose their vices. Through this public ridicule, Jonson works to purge men of their immoral behavior. Recognizing the volatility of his project, Jonson seeks further license by linking together the satirist and sovereign. By establishing himself as a good and honest poet, Jonson hopes his comical satires will be appreciated by the sovereign as a valuable method of evaluating the moral health of civil society and thereby win him protection from accusations of libel. As a genre concerned with the evaluation and reform of secular society, Jonson’s comical satires work to reinforce his conception of the poet as secular a moral authority.

Histriomastix

In *Histriomastix*, *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, and *What You Will*, Marston demonstrates he is troubled by the moral decay of society in the face of the vicissitude of fortune. Recognizing that that society is in a state of constant flux, Marston appreciates those conditions that foster immoral behavior incessantly shift

and are contingent upon both social history and personal experience. In short, Marston appreciates the limits of satire in the face of the progression of history. What satire can do, however, is provide a mirror for man. In other words, satire reflects man's situation within the context of society and history. Marston's verse satire's holds up contemporary society as its exempla. By doing so, Marston believes, satire encourages man to learn to know himself.

In my investigation of Marston's drama I attend to his conception of the function of satire and satirist in society by highlighting his portrayal of Jonson on the stage. Through these portraits, Marston demonstrates that the satirist is unable to circulate through a fallen culture and emerge unscathed. I begin with an examination of *Histriomastix*. In this play, Marston satirizes Jonson by representing him on the stage as the humanist scholar Chrisogonus. Placing Jonson/Chrisogonus at the mercy of a world in flux, Marston demonstrates that the satirist is not immune to the humors of the times.

Histriomastix is a difficult play to evaluate. A significant problem is the question of authorship. Observing that the play exhibits characteristics antithetical to Marston's theatrical style, Roslyn Knutson has recently argued that Marston is not the author of *Histriomastix*. Knutson's argument is convincing. However, I do believe it is possible to at the very least evaluate the play as influenced by Marston's satires and his conception of satire as a vehicle for moral reform. For the purposes of this study, I will refer to the author of *Histriomastix* as "Marston," while maintaining awareness that the authorship question has yet to be completely settled.

In addition to the authorship question are difficulties concerning when and where the play was staged. The play text available to us was not published until 1610 and it is difficult to say if this edition represents a version intended for an Inns of Court Revels performance or a version performed by the Children of Paul's in 1599.⁸⁹ By my count, there are over twenty primary characters, not including various personifications—such as Peace, Plenty, et al—as well as stewards, pages, jewelers, tailors, officers, etc.⁹⁰ Given that there was an average of between ten and twenty actors in a company at any given time, the staging of *Histriomastix* as it stands verges on impractical. A more practical explanation is that the print edition is an amalgamation of a Revels performance, where the number of participants could be much greater, and one revised for the public stage.⁹¹ Since print editions of plays often included extra material—*EMO* advertises itself as “Containing more than hath been Publickely Spoken or Acted” (title page)—it is not surprising that we find

⁸⁹ Philip Finkelpearl argues that the play was first performed at the 1598-99 Inns of Court revels, “John Martson’s *Histriomastix* as an Inns of Court Play,” *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 29 (1966) 223-234. In “Representing Jonson: *Histriomastix* and the Origin of the Poets’ War,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 54.1 (1991) 1-30, James Bednarz argues that the play was first performed by Paul’s Boys in the late fall of 1599 following on the heels of Jonson’s *EMO*.

⁹⁰ Finkelpearl estimates that a company would have to have at 25 players to stage the play (230) “John Martson’s *Histriomastix* as an Inns of Court Play,” *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 29 (1966) 223-234. Tom Cain, in his edition of, observes that the Blackfriar’s company was composed of at least 20 members and thus argues that they could have staged the play (40), *Poetaster* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

⁹¹ See W. Reavley Gair, “John Marston: a theatrical perspective,” *The Drama of John Marston* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 27-44, argues the Middle Temple Hall would have accommodated the staging requirements of the play and further suggests that the references to festivities incorporated into the play suggest may suggest a Revels performance.

ourselves with what is more akin to a director's cut DVD than a first run movie (to use a current analogy).

Despite the difficulty with the text, I believe that the personation of Jonson in the character of Chrisogonus signals Marston's desire to begin a dialogue regarding the nature of staged satire. Marston (and indeed, the Elizabethan satirist in general) was no stranger to such dialogues, having initiated one with his previous rival, Joseph Hall.⁹² Marston's purpose was not only to engage Jonson (or even to egg him on), but also to engage audiences and ask them to consider the function of satire in society.

Histrionomastix is best characterized as an estates play.⁹³ The play presents members of various social classes and their responses to a cyclical plot mimicking social history. The play moves from a state of Peace to Plenty to Pride to Envy to War to Poverty and ultimately concludes by returning to a state of Peace and the return of the goddess Astrea (Queen Elizabeth) and with her a golden age. This idea of a cyclical history is hardly unique Marston. Virtually the same idea is found in a poem transcribed by Puttenham in his *Arte of English Posie*:

Peace makes plentie, plentie makes pride,
Pride breeds quarrell, and quarrell brings warre:
Warre brings spoile, and spoile pouertie,
Pouertie pacience, and pacience peace:
So peace brings warre, and warre brings peace. (174)

⁹² See chapter 3 for a discussion of the satiric exchanger between Marston and Hall.

⁹³ For a brief discussion of estates drama and its relationship to moral instruction see Alan Dessen, "The 'Estates' Morality Play," *Studies in Philology* 62 (1965) 121-136.

The cyclical nature of this plot is disturbing, however, and it generates an overwhelming sense of futility. This sense of futility, as my study of his verse satire suggests, is characteristic of Marston's satires.

The central figure of the play is the scholar Chrisoganus, a man who believes himself to possess the intellect to recognize and comment on the breakdown of society. However, Chrisoganus is ultimately unaware that he is himself at the mercy of the vicissitudes of fate.

O I could curse

This idiot world! This ill nurs'd age of *Peace*,

That foster all saue vertue; comforts all

Sauing industrious art, the soules bright gemme,

That crussbeth downe the sprowting stemmes of Art,

Blasts forward wits with frosty cold contempt,

Crowning dull clodds of earth with honours,

Wreath guilding the rotten face of barbarisme

With the vnworthy shine of Eminence.

O! I could wish my selfe consum'd in aire,

When I behold these huge fat lumpes of flesh,

These big-bulkt painted postes, that sencelesse

Stand, to haue their backes pasted with dignity,

Quite choaking vp all passage to respect:

These huge *Colossi* that rowle vp and downe,

And fill vp all the seate of man with froth

Of outward semblance, whilst pale *Artizans*
Pine in the shades of gloomy *Academes*,
Faint in pursuite of vertue, and quite tierd
For want of liberall food: for liberall Art
Giue vp the goale to sluggish *Ignorance*.
O whether doth my passion carry mee?
Poore foole, leaue prating, enuy not their shine,
Who still will flourish, though great *Fate* repine. (3)

The irony of Chrisogonus' laments could not have been lost on the audience. Unaware he is living in an age of Envy, the scholar believes the state of Peace is responsible for moral and cultural decline. It is Peace that has fostered a society that "crussheth downe the sprouting stemmes of Art." Peace has allowed "forward wits," those with knowledge and skill, to be treated with contempt. If Chrisogonus were to simply substitute "*Envy*" for "*Peace*" in this diatribe, he would have accurately described the humor of the times. Unaware he is himself sick with envy, however, the scholar lashes out at those of "Eminence." He believes those of higher rank do not deserve to be treated as such and bewails a culture that crowns "dull clodds of earth with honours," that "Wreath guilding the rotten face of barbarisme." So disdainful of the world, he wishes himself dead rather than forced to "behold these huge fat lumpes of flesh, / These big-bulkt painted postes." It is lack of proper nourishment, he contends, "want of liberall food: for liberall Art," that has given way to "sluggish *Ignorance*." But the final lines betray that the scholar's pride has blinded him to the progress of history. He believes he will still flourish in spite of the enmity

of Fate. Still, Chrisoganus is in the end helpless to swim against the river of social history. Indeed, as she takes the stage, Envy tells us that no one will escape her humor,

Fat Ignorance, and rammish Barbarisme,
Shall spit and driuell in sweete Learnings face,
Whilst he halfe staru'd in Enuie of their power,
Shall eate his marrow, and him-selfe deuoure. (2)

Commenting on these lines, Bednarz aptly observes, “Envy does not allow even Chrisognaus to escape her control over human destiny, and instead of affirming his resistance to the passions of the moment, she catalogues his fate among her social effects” (90). It is Chrisoganus’ faith in “liberall food: for liberall Art,” as a means by which society might be cured of its “barbarisme” that makes Marston’s critique of Jonson’s satiric project effective. Marston’s critique of Jonson’s comical satire is best exemplified in the meta-theatrical sub-plot linking Chrisoganus with the poetaster Post-hast and his company of players.

Post-hast and his troop of players are introduced as a drunken group concerned more with avoiding work than founding a quality theater company:

INCLE

This *Peace* breeds such Plenty, trades serue no turnes

BELCH

The more fooles wee to follow them.

POST-HAST

Lett's make vp a company of Players,

For we can all sing and say,

And so (with practise) soone may learne to play. (1)

Post-hast is more concerned with drinking than producing art or even making a profit.

Thus, Post-hast's dedication to his craft is plainly called into question. When asked by his men for an update on his progress with company's debut, he responds, "O sirs, my wit's grown no lesse plentiful then the time. / Ther's two sheets done in follio, wll cost two shillings in rime" (2).

When performing for the noble Mavortius at a feast held in honor of his foreign guests, the Italian Lord Landulpho takes no pains to hide his disgust at the artlessness of Post-hast's attempts:

Most vgly lines and base-browne-paper-stuffe'

Thus to abuse our heauenly poesie,

That sacred off-spring from the braine of Ioue,

Thus to be mangled with prophane absurds,

Strangled and chok't with lawlesse bastards words (2)

This disastrous performance forces Post-hast's company to look to another dramatist for material. They approach Chrisoganus and solicit his services as a playwright.

Chrisoganus' services do no come cheap, however. He requires a payment of ten pounds for each script. When the company rejects his price, Chrisoganus rails:

VVrite on, crie on, yawle to the common sort

Of thicke skin'd auditours: such rotten stuffs,

More fit to fill the paunch of Esquiline,

Then feed the hearings of iudiciall eares,

Yee shades tryumphe, while foggy Ignorance
 Clouds bright *Apollos* beauty: Time will cleere,
 The misty dullnesse of Spectators Eeys,
 Then wofull hisses to your fopperies,
 O age when euery Scriueners boy shall dippe?
 Prophaning quills into Thessaliaes Spring,
 When euery artist prentice that hath read
 The pleasant pantry of conceipts, shall dare,
 [200] To write as confident as *Hercules*.
 When euery Ballad-monger boldly writes:
 And windy forth of bottle-ale doth fill
 Their purest organ of inuention:
 Yet all applauded and puft vp with pryde,
 Swell in conceit, and load the Stage with stufte,
 Rakt from the rotten imbers of stall iests:
 Which basest lines best please the vulgar sence
 Make truest rapture lose preheminance. (3 Pride)

Through Chrisoganus' invectives we hear the echoes of Jonson's disdain for poetasters. Indeed, Chrisoganus' refusal to surrender the play unless he receives payment serves to highlight that Jonson's egotism prevents him from recognizing his own flaws, his own humors. The placement of the confrontation between Chrisoganus and Post-hast's company—as Plenty gives way to Pride—further strengthens the notion that Jonson is as much a slave to the humors of the age as the

poetasters he rails against. Standing aloof and refusing to recognize the extent to which the humors of the age affect him, Jonson is unable to connect with his audience. Marston demonstrates that Jonson, despite his pretense of diligent scholarship, has neglected one of the most important characteristics of Roman verse satire—that the satirist is a member of the society he satirizes. Indeed, as my discussion of Donne’s satires demonstrates, the satirist is at his most effective when he presents himself as a colleague and even an active participant in the immoral behavior he rails against.

Marston concludes his play with the return of Astrea and with her the return of the Golden Age. As the Queen takes the throne, Peace declares,

Vertue triumph, now shee doth sway the stemme,
Who giues to *Vertue*, honours Diadem.
All sing *Pæans* to her sacred worth,
Which none but Angels tongues can warble forth:
Yet sing, for though we cannot light the Sunne,
Yet vtmost might hath kinde acceptance wonne. (6)

Thus, the cycle begins again. Art will once again flourish. Citing these lines, Bednarz correctly observes that the presence of Astrea on stage at the end of the play, “makes the poet-scholar wholly subject to and dependent on an external source of power. At best, the satirist can only hope to be bathed in the influence of the ‘Sunne’ he ‘cannot light’” (“Representing” 17-18). A satirist is, in the end, a man. As a man he is subject to the humors of the age. Still, Marston demonstrates that satire is at least capable of reflecting the humors of the times in this play. By holding a mirror

up to society, satire works to demonstrate the pressures of social history on the individual.

Jack Drum's Entertainment

Jack Drum's Entertainment is less a serious treatment of social ills than a play that celebrates the romantic tradition of the marriage festival (Geckle 59). Indeed, Marston signals his employment of the English folk tradition by his title (Geckle 51). While Marston is trying his hand at festive romance in this play, his treatment of Jonson in the character of Brabant Signior does reveal a source of contention between their conceptions of stage satire. In effect, what Marston sets up in this play is an experiment with Jonsonian comical satire. Through biographical allegory, Marston exposes Jonson to public ridicule for his immoral behavior. If Jonson responds to the parody (which he does in *Poetaster*), Marston proves comical satire's ineffectiveness at imposing moral reform, and/or that Jonson is not as skilled a poet as he claims to be.

Brabant Signior fancies himself an intellectual and, like Jonson, is overly critical of popular literature. Indeed, when asked his opinion of popular poets, he responds in a typical Jonsonian fashion, "Good faith, troth is, they are all Apes & gulls, / Vile imitating spirits, dry heathy Turffes" (4.2). Mimicking the intrigues employed by Jonson's satirist in *Every Man Out*, Marston demonstrates the potential for catastrophe in engaging in such machinations.

Devising a plan to expose the lecherous John fo de King, Brabant Signior introduces the Frenchman to his wife under the pretense that she is a whore:

I wil strait frame the strongest eternall Iest

That e're was builded by Inuention:

My wife lies verie priuate in the Towne,

I'lle bring the French man to her presently,

As to a loose lasciuious Curtezan:

Nor he, nor you, nor she, shall know the rest,

But it shall be immortall for a Iest. (4.2)

Believing that his wife will reject the advances, Brabant Signor takes great delight in the prospect of exposing the immorality of the lustful Frenchman:

I to gull the Foole, haue brought him to my wife, as to a loose lasciuious Curtezan, she being a meer straunger to the Iest, and there some three houres ago left him: but I am sure shee hath so cudgeld him with quicke sharpe Iests, and so batterd him with a volley of her wit, as indeed she is exceeding wittie, and admirable chaste, that in my conscience heele neuer dare to court women more. Would to God he were returnd. (5.1)

But all does not go according to plan; Brabant Signor's wife submits to the Frenchman. After confronting him with proof of his wife's infidelity, Ned Planet forces Brabant Signor to wear the horns of a cuckold:

Come heer's thy Cap of Maintenance, the Coronet

Of Cuckolds. Nay you shall weare it, or weare

My Rapier in your gutts by heauen. (5.1)

The cuckolding of Brabant Signor references an incident in which a husband arranged to have Jonson cuckold him (Bednarz 143). Pointing to Drummond's connection of

the incident with Marston's representation of Jonson on the stage, Bednarz argues that this biographical allegory demonstrates an attack on the quality of Jonson's poetry, "Although Jonson aspired to be crowned with bays, wearing horns was the closest he would come. No matter what claims he made for *Every Man Out* [...] that play was, for Marston, only a series of practical jokes for which the author deserved to be ostracized" (144). What is more, Bednarz observes that the cuckolding of Brabant Signor disqualifies Jonson from "exercising satiric authority" (143). By demonstrating Jonson's transgressive sexuality in this portrait, Marston effectively calls into question Jonson's claims to moral superiority and thereby his claims to be an effective moral reformer. Jonson presents his satirist as an ideal man, and above the corruptive influence of society. Marston, however, through his mouthpiece Ned planet, reinforces the notion that all men are fallible:

Thinke God infused all perfection
Into thy soule alone, and made the rest
For thee to laugh at? Now you Censurer
Be the ridiculous subiect of our mirth.
Why Foole, the power of Creation
Is still Omnipotent, and there's no man that breathes
So valiant, learned, wittie, or so wise,
But it can equall him out of the same mould. (5)

Thus, Marston finds Jonson's satirist disingenuous and his satire cruel rather than reformative. For Marston, the satirist is a member of society and should not

distance himself from his community with claims of superiority and aggressive ridicule.

In his *Certain Satyres*, Marston took similar issue with Hall's detached and unapproachable satiric persona, "Eate not thy dam, but laugh and sport with me / At stangers follies with a merry glee" (4.166-7). Marston's desire to "sport" with Hall speaks to his desire to build a community of satirists. But Marston also makes clear that all men are equally inspired by the cankered muse, asking, "Who cannot raile?" (4.155). While Marston's persona is angry and aloof in his verse satires, he recognizes that this persona is a mask that can be put on or taken off. Marston does in fact take his angry mask off in the final satire of his *Scourge of Villanie*, "Sleep grim Reproofe, my icond Muse doth sing / In other keyes, to nimbler fingering" (11.1-2). Thus, Marston's experience as a verse satirist leads him to condemn Jonson's aloof moralizing. Marston sharpens his criticism of Jonson's satirist in this regard in *What You Will*.

What You Will

Part scholar, part poet, part moralist, for Jonson, being a satirist is an occupation. The satirist acts as an extension of the sovereign, licensed by authority to expose immoral behavior and purge men of their humors. As we have seen, Marston views the satirist not as an occupation but as a mask. In effect, each individual is capable of playing the satirist, either consciously or unconsciously. Indeed, the individual has the liberty and license, in Marston's conception, to satirize. He demonstrates this license to satirize in *What You Will* by tracing the development of Lampatho Doria from scholar to satirist to suitor.

While Marston argues for originality, stating that the play is not “Commedy, Tragedy, Pastorall, Morall, Nocturnall or Historie” (Induction), the play’s disguise plot is far from innovative and in fact borrows from Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* as well as *Comedy of Errors* (Finkelpearl *John Marston* 162-3, Bednarz 175-177). The play is also indebted to Sforza d’Oddi’s *I Morti Vivi*, a romantic comedy that reunites two “lost” lovers (Caputi 160). While the plot is commonplace, the Induction offers an explanation as to Marston’s rationale for working within a familiar dramatic formula.

“Before the Musicke sounds for the Acte” Atticus, Doricus and Phylomuse appear on stage and they sit and talk quietly amongst themselves. The “Tier-man” enters “with lights” and the actors speak up. They begin to point out members of the audience and ridicule their habits. After humorously insulting the spectators, they turn to their ridicule author and the play. As Anthony Caputi rightly argues, Phylomuse’s speech on the author is “unmistakenly a retaliation on Marston’s part to attacks suffered” (158). Following this retaliation, Phylomuse “then develops at some length the idea that the artist must be emancipated from opinion” (Caputi 158). It is Doricus’ interruption to Phylomuse’s speech that, as Caputi observes, represents Marston’s position with respect to his art.

Dorcus wonders, “what tite braine: / Wrung in this custome to mainetaine Contempt / Gainst common Censure” (Induction). He continues,

Musike and Poetry were first approu'd

By common scence; and that which pleased most,

Held most allowed passe: not rules of Art

Were shapt to pleasure, not pleasure to your rules,
Thinke you if that his sceanes tooke stampe in mint
Of three or foure deem'd most iuditious,
It must inforce the world to currant them (Induction)

In other words, for Marston, “dramatic invention must be grounded in the expectations of the ordinary theatergoer, however inferior he may be as a critic. Artistic freedom [...] can go too far” (Caputi 158-9). In this respect, Marston rejects Jonson’s innovative new genre and instead opts to work within established theatrical traditions to draw out innovative and original ideas (Bednarz *Shakespeare* 165-171, ch 7). This explains his familiar use of medieval estates satire as the foundation of *Histriomastix* as well *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*. Marston works within well-established dramatic structures as a method of expressing his abilities as a dramatist as well as a method of incorporating satire into existing dramatic traditions. Due to Marston’s inexperience playwright, this may have been a matter of convenience as much as artistic choice. Still, the decision to incorporate satire within familiar dramatic traditions demonstrates Marston’s awareness that an understanding of social and psychological factors are imperative to contextualizing the causes of man’s immorality. To affect his satiric purpose—that man might learn to know himself—Marston incorporates into his play a man who once again is oblivious to the social and psychological forces that impact his disposition: Lampatho Doria.

There has been some disagreement as to whether or not Lampatho is a personation of Jonson. Philip Finkelpearl argues that Lampatho is not an unflattering portrait of Marston’s rival but rather a stage representation of the author himself.

Pointing out that Lampatho is called by Marston's literary pseudonym "Don Kynsader" (*Middle Temple* 21), and further noting that the character is described as attractive and youthful, Finkelpearl concludes that the scholar is not a parody. James Bednarz, however, argues that Lampatho Doria is a satiric portrait, noting that the name "combines two words associates with Criticus, Jonson's stage satirist in *Cynthia's Revels*" (165). I agree with Bednarz that Marston is lampooning Jonson in the character of Lampatho. By personating Jonson as the insensible Lampatho, Marston once again critiques Jonson's comical satire. But I am also sympathetic to Finkelpearl's observations. Indeed, Lampatho's movement from scholar to satirist to suitor provides his audience a prescient example of their own social and psychological progression. Thus, Marston invites his audience to see in themselves Lampatho, to recognize their own movement through history.

Lampatho is a scholar frustrated with the difficulty of moving from the academy to the court, a predicament that the Inns men in the audience could certainly appreciate. Indeed, Donne expresses similar frustrations in his second and fourth Satires. Despite the pleasure he took in his studies, Lampatho admits that the knowledge he gained was ultimately unsatisfying:

I was a scholler: seauen vse-full springs
Did I defloure in quotations
Of crossd oppinions bout the soule of man
The more I learnt the more I learnt to doubt
Knowledge and wit faithes foes, turne fayth about (2)

As he took leave of his studies for a vacation on the continent, Lampatho notes that these doubts led to a peculiar state of mind:

when I crept abroad,
Finding my numnesse in this nimble age,
I fell a railing, but now soft and slow,
I know, I know naught, but I naught do know,
What shall I doe, what plot, what course persew? (2)

In other words, Lampatho became a satirist. Finding no answers in his studies, Lampatho began to doubt all and rail at the world. However, Lampatho abandons his invectives as satire gives way to sexual desire as the heiress Meletza takes a fancy to the young man.

Assessing Lampatho's transition from satirist to suitor at the end of the play, Quadratus humorously notes,

God made thee a good foole, and happy and ignorant, and amarous,
and riche and fraile, and a Satyrist, and an *Essayest*, and sleepy, and
proud, and indeed a foole and then thou shalt bee sure of all these. (4)

What Lampatho should be aware of is who he is—human. In this sense, Marston tempers the authoritarian voice of Jonson's satirist and instead focuses on what makes a satirist such a remarkable critic of human behavior, his own humanity. Marston presents Lampatho as a man whose humors overwhelm him. Indeed, it is Lampatho's envy that spurs him to rail at the world. But as his humors change, so does his rhetoric. As envy turns to lust, Lampatho turns from satirist to suitor. Marston thus

demonstrates that being “a Satyrist” is only one among many elements of the individual’s psychology.

As I have shown, Marston’s quarrel with Jonson stems from his conception regarding the formal and functional elements of satire. Marston sees Jonson’s rejection of Plautine and folk tradition as unnecessarily restrictive. These dramatic forms were not only popular, they were valuable as well. For Marston, their value lies in the range of experiences that these forms encapsulate. Jonson’s comical satires move through a static society, evaluate behavior, and purge immorality. What Jonson’s comical satires neglect, however, is the range of experiences and, to some extent, the social forces that affect this behavior. By working within popular tradition—the estates drama of *Histriomastix*, the marriage festival of *Jack Drum’s Entertainment*, and the Plautine comedy of *What You Will*—Marston demonstrates the value of these forms in representing a range of human experiences.

With respect to Jonson’s conception of satire as a vehicle that purges men of their humors, Marston takes issues with the idea that satire is in fact capable of reforming immorality. Indeed, his experiment with Jonson’s satiric formula in *Jack Drum’s Entertainment* demonstrates comical satire’s failure to reform even its creator. Jonson’s satirist is also problematic for Marston. By staging the folly of Jonson’s affectation of moral superiority and incorruptibility, Marston demonstrates that Jonson’s comical satires are inadequate to speak to the social and psychological pressures that shape society and the individual. For Marston, being a satirist is not an occupation, but a mask, and therefore an element of the individual’s personality.

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Concluding Remarks

In 1599, the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and the Bishop of London, Richard Bancroft, issued an order to the Stationers' Company to call in and burn various collections of satires. They further imposed a ban on satire, prohibiting its future publication. A variety of theories have been proposed to account for the Bishops' proscription.

Noting that a number of satires included in the order were of a gross sexual nature, John Peter suggests that the Bishops were motivated by a concern for public morals. Richard McCabe, observing that these satires often attacked identifiable individuals, argues that the Bishops were concerned with the libelous nature of these works. Annabel Patterson contends that Elizabethan satirists violate the rules of "functional ambiguity" and are excessively candid in their criticism of the Elizabethan state (47). Patterson therefore concludes that the Bishops' Order is best understood as an instance of governmental suppression of potentially seditious literature. Arguing that Elizabethan censorship practices are *ad hoc* in their application, Cyndia Clegg attempts to find a specific incident that prompted the Bishops' proscriptions. Pointing to Essex's ill-fated trip to Ireland and his tenuous relationship with the Queen, Clegg contends that the Order is best appreciated as a protective measure on behalf of Essex by his "friend and ardent supporter," Archbishop Whitgift (207).

While these approaches to explaining the 1599 Order are valuable, they do not adequately attend to a significant source of concern on the part of the Bishops. As I attempted to demonstrate, the Bishops' ban should also be evaluated in terms satire's

transgression of the limits of Christian exemplarity. In other words, we should consider the way in which satire works to supplement and/or supersede traditional Christian moral exempla literature as a motivation for the Bishops' ban.

Moral exempla serve as an important tool for the dissemination and elucidation of Church doctrine. Indeed, the literature of moral exempla was a vital tool for educating the laity as to the principles and practices of their faith. Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* is a good example. Mannyng's collection moves through a series of stories, illustrated with exempla, on the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, and various points of shrift. The work provides sermons through which the laity might be informed as to the types of sins and the obligations of the confessor. Moral exempla literature, then, encourages a clique of experts to serve and interpret these stories for the laity. Thus we might appreciate the literature of moral exempla as working to reinforce ecclesiastical authority.

Moral exempla literature makes use of a variety of strategies to enact its didactic function. Biblical stories, lives of the saints and abstract allegory are employed to impute a moral message. Elizabethan satirists recognize the limits of these strategies, however. While moral exempla literature claims to speak to the tenor of the times, it consistently falls short. Purporting to object to the corruption of contemporary society, there is little "historical content" in these stories that support these complaints (Haynes 16). In addition, thematically and metaphorically interpreting and representing everyday experience ultimately leads to the continual reproduction of Christian ideology at the expense of a practical set of models to aid the individual in navigating an increasingly secularized world. Elizabethan satirists

turn to Roman satire as a model in an attempt to develop literary form that represents and attends to the social, economic and political pressures that act upon the individual within a particular historical moment.

A variety of factors intersect at the close of the sixteenth century to facilitate the rise in popularity in the 1590s. Elizabeth's ambitious education agenda and the influence of humanism, for example, led to a learned group of young men with an increased interest in the classics. Indeed, an informal translation project centered at the Universities and the Inns of Court made available Latin texts in English. The fashionability of literature resulted in authors working to distinguish themselves from the generation prior. Melancholy love poetry inspired by Ovid and Petrarch gave way to satire and epigram. Galenic humoral theory prompted a re-examination of the causes of immoral behavior. Anxieties regarding the growth of a market economy promoted a re-contextualization of morality. Indeed, these factors dramatically altered the type, content and even the reception of literature in the 1590s.

Roman satire, with its taste for obscenity and libel, as well as its roots in a republican and anti-authoritarian tradition, is particularly well disposed to critiquing contemporary society without the obvious mediation of religious moral authority. What would today be considered political or economic issues were for the Romans moral issues. In other words, Roman moral discourse endeavors to define Roman identity by re-enforcing cultural values. Roman satire, by attacking immorality, works to control behavior while demarcating and defining what it means to be a member of Roman society. Roman satirists, drawing on the republican ideal of *libertas*, seize the freedom to represent and comment of their culture. Elizabethan

satirists recognize this freedom and, by adopting the strategies of Roman satire, seize the *libertas* to explicitly represent and evaluate society.

There were, however, significant differences among satirists as to the formal and functional markers that identified and authorized a work as satire. These differences may best exemplified in the general confusion regarding the etymology of the term. Thomas Drant, for example, points to four origins. He suggests that the term derives from the Arabic word for glaive, a knife-like cutting instrument. He associates satire with the *satyr*, a mythological creature characterized by rough and uncultivated speech. He links satire with the god Saturn, whom he describes as waspish. He also connects satire with the Latin word *satura*, meaning fullness. Taking this confusion into account, we should appreciate Elizabethan satirists as embracing one or more of these characteristics to signal to the reader the work as a satire. What these Elizabethan satirists could at least agree on, however, is the importance of the satiric persona in signaling a work as satire.

The persona of the satirist has its origins in the founder of Roman satire, Lucilius. Michael Coffey observes, “Writing as Lucilius the man and citizen he presented in an informal manner without obliqueness his immediate personal experiences and opinions on behaviour and politics” (45). Subsequent Roman satirists struggle to step from his shadow, and in doing so develop a satiric voice beyond the bounds of a single personality. While there could only be one “Lucilius,” there could be other satiric personas. Horace, Persius and Juvenal worked to develop theirs. In turn, Elizabethan satirists work to develop theirs.

Reflecting back on the various strategies Elizabethan satirists employed to develop their satiric persona, whether as a character interacting with society or an aloof moralizer who stands above his fallen culture, and in the context of the medium through which they disseminate their satires, we might better appreciate the ways in which satire works to supplement and/or supersede the literature of moral exempla. By providing an alternative approach to evaluating and representing the human experience, these satirists question the efficacy of Christian exempla literature to speak to the needs of the individual in navigating an increasing secular society. In doing so, they work to usurp moral authority from the ecclesiastical community and transfer that authority to the satirist.

Critics have approached Donne's manuscript satires from a variety of perspectives. Arthur Marrotti, for example, considers them as occasional pieces intended for a small coterie audience. Donne's satires have also been approached as a book, a unified whole that, in Thomas Hester's words, "offer a unified, sequential examination of the problems of Christian satire, a creative shaping (or re-shaping) of the generic, conventional, intellectual, and biographical materials available to Donne in the 1590s" (4). As I have argued, both approaches are legitimate.

In one respect, Donne's satires should be considered as a form a play and display. Writing for a group of peers with an interest in the classics, an interest in experimenting with new literary forms, and an interest in engaging in a communal dialogue regarding their place in society, Donne shares his satires in order to demonstrate his abilities as a poet and also to represent himself through his poetry. For example, in his first Satire, Donne plays with Roman satire by updating Horace's

encounter with the bore (1.9). By re-contextualizing Horace's satires to reflect the material conditions of his Inns of Court audience, young men torn between the drudgery of their studies and the excitement of the hustle and bustle of the streets of London, Donne displays himself as part of this community and sharing in their concerns.

As Donne's satires circulate through manuscript culture, they begin to be thought of as a book akin to those of Horace, Persius and Juvenal. In other words, Donne's satires begin to be appreciated as speaking to larger concerns as a satiric narrative is imposed upon them, a narrative in which Donne speaks the truth to power. Consider Donne's third Satire. By highlighting the social and political pressures attendant on the choice of religion, Donne explicates the conflict between the personal search for salvation and the imposition of religious ideology by temporal authorities. In effect, Donne's third Satire testifies to the ability of satire to provide a more careful consideration of the complexities and contradictions between the active pursuit of salvation and the corruptive influence of earthly power and authority than could be accommodated by the literature of moral exempla.

Hall and Marston's verse satires also demonstrate the limits of moral exempla to adequately evaluate the source of corruption. In his "Tooth-lesse" satires, Hall questions the value of moral exempla in evaluating and reforming the ills of society. He rejects moral exempla literature as fictions presented as fact, and as such, unable to facilitate a truthful and therefore useful discussion of the state of contemporary affairs.

Marston, on the other hand, is concerned with an exploration of immorality on the personal level. Focusing his attention on man's dual nature, Marston argues that traditional moral discourses fall short in providing an adequate accounting of the conflicts between the body and soul, between passion and reason. Marston looks to humoral theory as a way by which man might better learn to know himself and thereby enact moral reform at the personal level. While humoral theory is not incompatible with Christian ideology, it does represent a significant shift away from the abstract and allegorical formation of the workings of sin found in moral exempla literature. By focusing attention inward, Marston encourages the development of a set of ethics grounded on man's physiology/psychology, his empirical reality.

Jonson also recognizes the limits of moral exempla. Drawing inspiration from a variety of literary forms and traditions—humor comedy, the drama of Aristophanes, and Roman satire—he develops comical satire as a way to overcome these limitations. Like his fellow Elizabethan satirists, Jonson appreciates satire as a genre that affords the poet a vehicle to evaluate the moral health of contemporary society. In particular, Jonson sees the stage as an ideal location to expose corruption and, through public ridicule and humiliation, enact reform by purging men of their immoral humors.

Unlike his fellow satirists, however, Jonson works to establish moral authority by linking the satirist with the sovereign. In part, this is a protective measure. Understanding the volatility of the spectacle of ridicule and humiliation his comical satires foster, Jonson defends his dramaturgy by insisting on satire's function as a

form of counsel. In effect, the linking of satirist to sovereign authorizes his comical satire and reinforces his conception of the poet as secular a moral authority.

As I have argued, Marston looks upon Jonson's comical satires with considerable skepticism. Marston's skepticism, in part, stems from Jonson's rejection of the Plautine tradition in favor of an Aristophanic model. Marston considers this rejection unnecessarily restrictive. In other words, he recognizes that Jonson's comical satires do not accommodate the range of life experiences and, to some extent, the social pressures that affect the individual as he navigates through an increasingly complex and secular world. In addition, Marston takes issue with Jonson's aloof and morally superior stage satirist. For Marston, being a satirist was not an occupation. Rather being a "satirist" is a mask that the individual might wear, consciously or unconsciously. By presenting himself as an incorruptible moralizer, Marston believes, Jonson neglects the most an feature of what makes the satirist such an effect critic of human behavior—his humanity.

Identifying satire as a threat to their moral authority, the Bishops implemented a ban on satire as an attempt to reassert control over literary production and thereby maintain their position as authorized arbiters of moral behavior. The ban ultimately fails, however, in large part due to satire's flexibility as a genre. Indeed, the emergence of satire as a dramatic genre following the 1599 Order is a testament to this flexibility. Thus, satirists resist ecclesiastical suppression as they defend its value in mediums beyond the reach of the Bishops. Further, satire's persistence in print testifies to its value as a vehicle to speak, in Marston's words, to the "priuate customs of [the] time" ("To those that seeme iudiciall perusers" 20). Thus, we must

appreciate the Bishop's Order not simply as a reaction against obscenity, libel or sedition, but also as a form of literary criticism and therefore an objection to satire's generic development in early modern England.

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