DONNE'S SATIRES-A CRITICAL STUDY

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, Jadavpur University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in English

Department of English
Jadavpur University
2016

Certified that the Thesis entitled

“DONNE’S SATIRES-A CRITICAL STUDY”

Submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the supervision of Professor Amlan Das Gupta and that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere / elsewhere.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Through the long years of writing this dissertation, I have been fortunate to receive the good wishes and inspiration of many. Most, inevitably, must remain unacknowledged in words, but I hope not in spirit. Some debts - old and new – however, need to be formally acknowledged.

I would like to begin by expressing my deepest heartfelt gratitude to my teachers Professor Arun Kumar Dasgupta and the late Professor Jyotibhushan Bhattacharya for instilling in me a love for John Donne's poetry.

I am grateful to the management of Techno India for making it possible for me to write this dissertation and to my colleagues and students for their support. I am indebted to the staff of the National Library, Kolkata, for the kindness that I have received from them. The Department of English, Jadavpur University, has been an inspiring and welcoming place to work in.

My warmest thanks to my husband, Rabideb Mukhopadhyay, and my daughter, Medha, who have always spurred me on, and given me the strength to pursue my dream of completing this work.

My supervisor Professor Amlan Das Gupta has been there at every step throughout the writing of this dissertation. My debt to him knows no bounds and cannot be expressed in words. Without him this journey would not have been possible.

My father, whom I lost very early, wished that I study literature. My elder sister, Smt. Sadhana Chatterjee, took up the responsibility of introducing me to the world of poetry from early childhood days, for which I thank her sincerely. However, it was my mother who constantly urged me to take up the task of writing this dissertation. I regret that she did not live to see that I completed the work.

I dedicate this dissertation to her.

… the unexamined life is not worth living

Plato

Doubt wisely …

John Donne

CONTENTS

NOTE ON EDITIONS AND TEXTS

- The text of the "Satyres" cited in this study is that given in W. Milgate, ed. *John Donne: The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters,* Oxford: OUP, 1967. Other citations of the poems are from A.J. Smith, ed. *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971, rpt. 1977. Editions of other primary texts are identified in the notes.

- Citations of Donne's prose are from G. R. Potter, and E. Simpson, (eds.) *The Sermons of John Donne*. 10 vols., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953-62.

- References to the Holy Bible are ordinarily from the English Standard Version (ESV); in some cases the Authorized Version (1611) has been used.

- All direct references to secondary material have been identified in the notes.

CHAPTER I

The Tradition of Satire

The present study seeks to establish John Donne's pioneering role in establishing the form of the verse satire as an important poetic instrument in Renaissance England. Donne and his contemporary Joseph Hall are widely credited with having inaugurated the tradition of the verse satire in England, and it has not been possible to establish claims of priority between the two. Ejner Jensen writes:

> This decade witnessed the circulation in manuscript of John Donne's satires and the publication of works by, among others, Joseph Hall, John Marston, Thomas Lodge, Everard Guilpin, William Rankins, and the author of Micro-Cynicon, or Six Snarling Satyres (1599), who is probably someone other than Thomas Middleton, to whom they are often attributed. This remarkable outbreak of satiric writing came to a close at the decade's end when in 1599 the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and the Bishop of London, Richard Bancroft, ''issued to the master and wardens of the Stationers' Company [the guild responsible for licensing and printing books] a ban prohibiting the further publication of certain works, and providing for the destruction of such copies as already existed". [1]

Donne's "Satyres" are thought to have been composed in the last decade of the 16th century. They stand thus as the first major body of poetry written by the poet. Unusually dense in its range of social reference and incisive in its chronicling of men and manners, the "Satyres" are by any standard of judgement a phenomenal achievement, particularly so if we think of the comparative youth of the writer. It

remains true however that the "Satyres" may well rank as the least studied of Donne's major works. Though individually studied and occasionally also considered in the light of the satiric tradition, monographs on the "Satyres" are relatively few. Honourable mention needs to be made here of M. Thomas Hester's *Kinde Pitty and Brave Scorn: John Donne's Satyres* (Duke University Press, Durham, N. C., 1982), which offers a comprehensive study of the five "Satyres". There is also the monumental contribution of Wesley Milgate, whose edition of, and notes to the "Satyres", are essential to any serious student. The present study has made the fullest use of this valuable resource. In addition to the published literature on the "Satyres", I have been fortunate to be able to consult some unpublished dissertations (noted in the bibliography and annotations) which contain valuable studies of Elizabethan satire generally. It is also to be noted that, in general, however, the literature on the "Satyres" has tended to focus quite exclusively on the great "Satyre III", to the detriment of the other poems in the group.

The current study attempts to reassess Donne's accomplishment in the "Satyres" focusing primarily on two fundamentally interlinked themes. One is Donne's appropriation of the classical form of the verse satire; the other the way it becomes an instrument for a searching examination of the contemporary social scene. It is a basic claim of this study that Donne's "Satyres" cannot be understood apart from the religious context of Elizabethan England: or more generally, the long history of religious dissent and division that marks European history from the early 16th century. "Satyre III" is famously entitled "Of Religion" in one of the manuscripts, and could be used to support our claim. However it is our intention to argue that all the five "Satyres" are deeply implicated in the religious ethos of the time. It would be necessary for us therefore also to give some idea of the use of satire in religious

poetry of the Christian Middle Ages. Religious issues figure largely in the "Satyres" as Hester establishes, but it is important for us to see it also as being part of a larger evaluation of individuals and institutions, of the way in which social and religious issues impact personal ambitions and desires. The use of the form of the satire enables the poet to establish a point of vantage from which to conduct this examination. Written at a critically formative point in Donne's life, a period in which he apparently takes a number of life-changing decisions, the "Satyres" are, as a whole, fundamentally important to the understanding of Donne's life and works.

The present chapter attempts to create a background for Donne's pioneering efforts with the verse satire in the English Renaissance. Among the issues that we need to engage with are firstly the nature of Roman verse satire, the specific official antecedent of Renaissance verse satire. It is specifically the formal and technical achievement of masters like Horace and Juvenal that artists like Donne sought to emulate. The Romans, as we shall see, thought of the satire as being a Roman innovation, and we shall start this section by assessing this claim. However, the "satiric" has a much older presence in literature: in a famous passage in the *Poetics*, Aristotle speaks of the originary poetic impulse as flowing in different streams: poets who were by nature serious and dignified (*semnoteroi*) composed "hymns and encomia" and the less serious (*eutelesteroi*) composed "invectives". [2] We need to look therefore at the "satiric" as it manifests itself in other literary genres as well. We shall, in this connection, look for instance at the Aristophanic comedy and forms of classical prose satire.

Roman Satire: "tota nostra est"

We start therefore with a brief look at the Roman verse satire. Quintilian, in a much

debated statement in the *Institutes of Oratory*, claimed that satire was wholly a Roman invention. [3] Commentators have often been sceptical of this claim. They have pointed to the well established tradition of satire in Greek comedy, to Platonic dialogues, to the works of Cynics and Sceptics. It might be useful for us therefore to start by examining this claim. Quintilian, after all, is an acute and sensitive student of Greek literature and culture, and reveals a deep concern for the range and depth of Greek models. What Quintilian appears to be saying is that "satire-at least-is wholly ours" or satire- if nothing else-is wholly ours" (*satura quidem tota nostra est*)[4] ; perhaps an attempt to reclaim at least something from the overpowering influence of the Greeks. It may be an attempt to salvage Roman pride, or even a bit of formal parochialism. Nevertheless probably there is a point that is being made which goes beyond prejudice.

What one might legitimately claim is that the distinctive form of the verse satire practised by Horace and Juvenal in classical Rome, and by Ennius and Lucilius before them, is a Roman innovation. As there is always an extended and a restricted way of using generic labels, the claim that satire was developed in Rome need not preclude the fact that the Old Comedy of Aristophanes, Eupolis and Cratinus - to whom Horace actually attributed the inspiration for the work of his predecessor Lucilius - was clearly a satiric form. In a brilliant series of essays written in the early 20th century, G.L Hendrickson[5] convincingly demonstrated that Quintilian was not referring to any "comprehensive meaning" or "general spirit" of satire, but to a very definite and bounded literary form.

A century before Quintilian, Horace appears to have viewed the question of satire in a strikingly different light. Writing for a society far more conscious and concerned

about the cultural supremacy of the Greeks, he seems to be supporting the idea that whatever the Romans did had been better done by the Greeks. In the famous Fourth Satire of Book I, he begins by pointing out that his famous predecessor Lucilius actually derived the matter of his satire from the great comic poets:

> Take the poets Cratínus, Eúpolis, and Aristophanes,
> and the other men who go to make up the Old Comedy.
> Whenever a person deserved to be publicly exposed for being
> a crook and a thief, a lecher or a cut-throat, or for being notorious
> in any other way, they would speak right out and brand him.
> Lucilius derives entirely from them (1.4, lines 1-5).

In his eyes Lucilius's achievement was merely a metrical one: "he followed their lead/ changing only their rhythms and metres". (5-6).

For Horace, the transition from dramatic structure to free standing verse satire was not the principal issue as it appears to have been to Quintilian. It is of course true that Horace's opinion must be seen in the context of the poetic persona that he adopts. It may well be that there is an amount of excess in the claim that is made. Modern scholarship on the fragmentary remains of Lucilius's satire holds that his actual reliance on Aristophanes was quite limited. Horace in Satire 1.4 is also concerned with establishing his difference from contemporary poets like Crispinus and Fannius. Whatever Horace may say about Lucilius, at this point his concern about his eminent predecessor is evident in the fact that he returns so often to a discussion of his poetry. In Satire 2.1, Horace returns to the problem he faces as a satirist. Written in the style of a conversation, Horace begins by pointing out that while some of his readers consider him to be too savage in his satires, others accuse him of lacking nerve. Here

Lucilius appears in a more positive light and the writer sees himself as a follower of the older poet.

> Mine is enclosing words in metre,
> as Lucilius did – a better man than either of us.
> He in the past would confide his secrets to his books, which he trusted
> like friends; and whether things went well or badly he'd always
> turn to them; in consequence, the whole of the old man's life
> is laid before us, as if it were painted on a votive tablet. (28-34).

There can be few comparable defenses of the satirist's art. Horace in this poem sees the satirist as essentially a man of peace but when wounded or insulted he uses his gift of language to satirize his enemies. As all creatures when stirred to anger use the weapons they possess to retaliate, the satirical poet uses poetry as the instrument of his counter attack on those who offend him. This appears not as a choice but as an absolute need: "whatever the complexion of my life, I'll continue to write" (60).

Horace turns to the example of Lucilius both for consolation and justification. Aware of the social and legal dangers that beset the life of a satirist in Roman society, he sees in Lucilius a reassuring example. Lucilius, he reminds his interlocutor, wrote satire and yet was a friend of the greatest in Rome including Scipio: Horace himself, he modestly claims, is not without powerful friends. But the dangers of losing popular esteem and the support of his peers lead him at the end of the poem to distinguish between two kinds of satire. Those written just to malign and to create trouble, fall under the purview of penal redress. But what if he has barked at someone who deserves abuse, and is himself blameless? His interlocutor reassuringly says that in the case of lawsuit, the charge will be dismissed with a laugh (84-86).

Quintilian's claim for the *romanitas* of satire has generated considerable critical argument, but the sense of his statement is not difficult to grasp. Kirk Freudenburg justly points out that Quintilian himself is here taking a clearly polemical stand against those who would push back the origins of the form to Greek times. There are also those who try to inflate Lucilius's claim to greatness. Quintilian does not dispute Lucilius's greatness but he needs to set it in proper perspective. [6] Freudenburg convincingly argues that Lucilius acts as Quintilian's weapon against the cultural hegemony of Roman philhellenism that dominated second century literary life and manners. Lucilius, in this view becomes a spokesman for a tough-minded, free-speaking Roman consciousness, not in the least intimidated by the formidable achievements of the epic poets like Ennius. The justification of the mode of utterance is more important than the content.

> Criticizing them (Ennius and Pacuvius) is not the point of Lucilian satire. It is a necessary means towards a different end: the performance of the poet's free-speaking, rugged and entirely Roman self. That performance speaks "the satirist" into existence (his first appearance as such), marking him as "his own" creation in a vast sea of translations and imitations. And it structures criticism of satire for centuries to come, figuring it as a question of Roman self-possession, "ours" versus "them". [7]

Greek Satire

The Greeks did not have a term for satire as such. Aristotle, as we have seen, spoke of "invectives" as being one of the earliest manifestations of the poetic impulse in human beings. It is well worth looking at the passage in some detail. Aristotle writes:

> Poetry, arising from their improvisations, split up according to the authors' divergent characters: the more dignified represented noble actions and those of noble men, the less serious those of low-class people; the one group produced at first invectives, the others songs praising gods and men. We cannot name any author of a poem of the former kind before Homer's time, though there were probably many of them, but from Homer on we do find such poems - his own *Margites*, for instance, and others of the kind. These introduced the metre that suited them, still called 'iambic' (from *iambizein*, 'to lampoon'), because it was the metre of their lampoons on each other. So some of the ancients produced heroic [i.e., hexameter] verse and the others iambics.[8]

Little is known about the *Margites*, a satiric poem attributed to Homer, but Aristotle makes another important point when he draws an analogy between the poem and the form of comedy:

> Homer also first adumbrated the form of comedy by dramatizing the ridiculous instead of producing invectives; his *Margites* bears the same relation to comedy as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* do to tragedy.[9]

This passage, which is both richly suggestive and frustratingly uncommunicative, has occasioned a great deal of discussion. Of relevance to us is the relationship between invective and comedy: this may be called a fundamental aesthetic determination. Ralph Rosen makes the point that in making this determination Aristotle was working back from the "relatively tame" New Comedy of his time, which was, by all accounts, not significantly satiric, to the works of writers like Archilochus, Hipponax and Aristophanes, which contained much more than mere invective. Rosen observes:

> Why…would Aristotle posit something as specific as a *psogos* at the base of the one branch of poetry that eventually developed into a non-invective form of comedy? His discussion is vague and rushed … but he seems to be struggling to make several critical methodological and substantive points at once.[10]

He concludes:

> Put in more concrete terms, Aristotle regarded "the comic," conceived of as a broad, unspecified poetic category and contrasted to tragedy, as a verbal mimesis derived ultimately from an essentially invective impulse of personal attack and mockery.[11]

And ultimately even though the comedy in its later developments may have lost its predominantly invective character, the connection with the laughable or the ridiculous rendered it inferior to tragedy and epic.

Of the large corpus of comic plays that we know were written before the end of the 5th century, only those by Aristophanes survive in any state of completeness. Of the eleven surviving Aristophanic plays, nine were composed before the turn of the century and the remaining two early in the 4th century. We shall not attempt to survey the plays in any detail, but wish merely to point out that the plays contain many adverse references to contemporaries - both those living and the recently departed - which clearly indicate the proximity of the form of the *psogos*. However, there can be no doubt at all that Aristophanes's comedies are also "satiric" in a far more general, even philosophical, sense. The Aristophanic plot establishes the welfare of the community, the *polis*, as the supreme good. It surveys social and cultural institutions, political systems and the whole of society in a satiric spirit. The end of the comedy suggests a specific set of changes that must be seen as being fundamentally ethical in character.[12]

The social focus of Aristophanes's plays - possibly a unique feature of the Old Comedy - must have made it, as Horace's comments on Lucilius's indebtedness to them suggest, important to Roman satirists. For Aristophanes, the end of the comic plot lies not in the achievement of personal ends for the protagonist, as we find in the New Comedy, but in the good of the *polis*. The fulfilment of comic desire is in the reformation of the community as a whole. Here again Aristotle's observations are of critical importance, as he establishes that the modality through which comedy achieves its end is laughter:

> Comedy is, as I said, a *mimesis* of people worse than are found in the world -'worse' in the particular sense of 'uglier', as the ridiculous is a species of ugliness; for what we find funny is a blunder that does no serious damage or an ugliness that does not imply pain, the funny face, for instance, being one that is ugly and distorted, but not with pain. [13]

Greek Diatribe

The form of the diatribe is often mentioned in the context of Roman satire, but as is well known, its origins are philosophical rather than literary. The diatribe was a form of informal philosophical lecture attributed principally to the Cynics, but apparently used by the Stoics as well: its influence is also thought to live into the Pauline letters. The diatribe apparently used a colloquial and intimate form of address, and exhibited a variety of features such as the fictionalized situations and personifications, fragments from other works, *exempla*, exhortation and invective.[14] Authors of this form were the legendary Bion of Borysthenes (fl. 245 BCE), Teles of Megara (mid 3rd century) and even - in an augmented form - by the better known Menippus of Gadara (early 3rd century). Unfortunately, only the slightest of fragments of both Bion and Menippus survive in addition to a few samples (perhaps in a compressed

form) of Teles. Nevertheless the impact of the diatribe form spread far and wide in the classical world, and is often cited in the context of the development of classical prose narrative, notably the *Satyricon* of Petronius and *The Golden Ass* of Apuleius. Latin satirists appear to have used the diatribe - particularly that of Bion - extensively. Lucilius's debt to Bion has been discussed extensively by Fiske. [15] Significantly, Horace refers to his own satires as "Bionei sermones",[16] conversations in the style of Bion. The influence of the diatribe on Horace too has been an important theme for later critics. The evidence is well surveyed by Sharland, who concludes that though Horace may have borrowed elements from the earlier form, it was not as if Horace was imitating Bion: rather the "diatribe' in Horace is connected to a wider tradition".[17]

Early Developments: Lucilius

One might start by distinguishing between the earliest examples of *saturae* and the verse satire. The earliest *saturae* were probably dramatic in character, "rustic farces", which were presented as the principal dramatic items. Later, with the introduction of more sophisticated dramatic forms, they were presented after the main performances. They may have derived their names from their miscellaneous character, both in terms of themes and that of characters presented. No example has survived, and all we know of them is from references in other Roman writers. Different from these were the *saturae* known to have been written by the early poets Ennius (Quintus Ennius, c. 239 – c. 169 BCE) and Pacuvius (Marcus Pacuvius, c.220–c.130 BCE). They were also miscellaneous both in subject matter and metrical forms, but were composed "for reading, not acting". Some of the names of Ennius's *saturae* are known, but little is

known of Pacuvius's efforts, and undoubtedly in both their cases their reputation as epic poets was far more important.[18]

The earliest Roman satirist whose works still survive, even though in fragments, is Gaius Lucilius (c.160 - c.103 BCE). He is said to have been of equestrian though not aristocratic lineage, and was held in high regard by his contemporaries. He is reputed to have written thirty books of satires, each consisting of many individual poems. He was very well known throughout the Roman period, and he is discussed by both Cicero and Horace. Persius, Juvenal and Horace attest to the respect with which he was regarded in the first century of the Common Era. Only about 1100 scattered lines survive, but even these meagre fragments have been scrutinised by scholars to extract a wealth of information about his works and his times. [19]

Ennius and Pacuvius may have attempted to write satiric compositions before Lucilius, but from what we can gather their works turned for inspiration to Greek models, using comic situations, low diction, fables, autobiography and lively dialogues. It was Lucilius, however, who attached to the genre its most pronounced and consistent features, namely invective of named persons and social criticism. The inspiration may well have come from the Old Comedy of the Greeks, as Horace observed. However within this framework there are evidences of a different set of cultural ideals, whose presence amounts to a thorough-going Romanization of the form: laying the basis perhaps for Quintilian's claim of Roman ownership of the form.

It was Lucilius who put the form to extensive social and political use. A strong advocate of Rome's aggressive military and economic policies, particularly with regard to the subjugation of Greece, Lucilius is often regarded as an anti-Hellenist, much in the mould of Marcus Porcius Cato, called the Censor, whose animosity to the

prevailing philhellenism of Roman society is much discussed.[20] To put it in the form of a simple paradox, while the Romans established comprehensive political control over erstwhile Greek centres of political power, a significant proportion of the cultural elite adopted Greek habits and manners, a phenomenon that amounted to a thoroughgoing translation of Greek cultural capital into the fabric of Roman life. As Freudenberg observes, Lucilius's "extra-legal verbal violence" draws, on the dying and utterly Roman, institutions to produce a voice sceptical of the law, capable of judging for itself and full of regret for the loss of native values and old Roman ways.[21]

Lucilius thus becomes a major site for the formation of the ideal of *romanitas*. He is sceptical of the earlier epic poets like Ennius and Pacuvius as they are guilty of having overvalued Greek models. For the three major Roman satirists, Horace, Persius and Juvenal, it is Lucilius who is the pioneer of the form. It is this form that constitutes Rome's distinctive contribution to the repertoire of classical poetic genres, and constitutes its distinctive achievement, as Quintilian's valorizing comment would suggest. Daniel Hooley draws attention to a comment by the grammarian Diomedes: "Previously however *satura* was the name of a composition in verse consisting of miscellaneous poems such as Pacuvius and Ennius write".[22] Lucilius's contribution thus appears to be far more than a matter of style and versification. It is the clarification and refinement of the idea of a Roman identity, of a form of poetry that is distinctively about Rome. "It is Lucilius", writes Hooley, "whose gathering of diverse elements and qualities is focused most deeply and aggressively on recording a certain kind of *Romanitas* in a moment of national identity crisis". [23]

Lucilius's satires have not survived in full and the impression that critics form is on the basis of the very extensive quotations and fragments preserved by later writers. Cicero frequently cites him, as does the compendious Aulus Gelius. A major source of these fragments are grammatical treatises, such as the *De compendiosa doctrina* of the grammarian and scholar Nonius Marcellus, a dictionary or encyclopedia in 20 books composed in the 4th or 5th century AD. The quotations are extensive enough to give a fair idea of his style and versification. However, they may give only an inadequate impression of the content and range of his works. It has also been noted that Nonius may have been particularly interested in passages with particular stylistic or grammatical peculiarities.[24] Some 1100 lines in all exist from the thirty books of satires attributed to Lucilius, traditionally numbered, through some clerical error, 26-30 for the earliest books and 1-21 for the later ones. We know for instance that Lucilius's early poetry was composed in a variety of metres including the iambic and the trochaic, but later he adopted the hexameter for the purpose of satire, establishing thus the norm for later practitioners.

From the existing fragments, it is amply clear that Lucilius constantly foregrounds the Roman character of his works. He makes fun of Rome's epic poets alleging that they are too subservient to Hellenistic models. However, simply criticizing them is not Lucilius's purpose: it is a means to endorse the poet's free speaking, rugged and utterly Roman self. In its formal design and content Lucilius's writings stand in sharp opposition to the philhellenism of his predecessors, and this also illuminates more generally the relationship of satire with the inherited "alien wisdom" of Greek philosophy. Aspects of Greek philosophical thought are present in Roman satire, and are often are used to lend weight and depth to the ethical and political arguments of the satirist. They are also frequently used for purposes of parody and ridicule. It is

also worth mentioning that from Lucilius onwards there is also the undoubted influence of other Greek precedents, especially the diatribe, as well as iambic poetry and the Greek Old Comedy. Lucilius thus appears not to have been as thoroughgoing an opponent of all things Greek that some of the comments may suggest in isolation. G.C. Fiske in his monumental study of Lucilius and Horace pointed out that both poets regularly paraphrase Bion of Borysthenes and other writers of the Greek diatribe. More generally, we learn how deeply Lucilius is influenced by the New Learning of Hellenistic Greece. [25]

One concludes tentatively then that Lucilius's anger is directed less at the Greeks themselves than to the Roman enthusiasm for Greek things. We end this section with a general assessment of Lucilius's poetic personality by F.H Warmington, the Loeb editor of Lucilius's poetry:

> We see a man well acquainted with country-life, very fond of animals, particularly of horses and riding, who lived also in a big city and watched its society and politics. He seems to have been independent all his life, fond perhaps of leisure, at any rate disliking any kind of official position. Not perhaps enjoying the best of health, he was a happy and perhaps a generous man. As he said, he would not take the whole world and for it barter away his own self… [26]

Horace

This section does not offer a general discussion of Horace's poetic achievement, as it lies outside the scope of this study, and is also singularly difficult to summarize the many- sided genius of the great Latin poet. We shall begin with the briefest of summaries of his life and works. Quintus Horatius Flaccus or Horace as he is popularly referred to (65 - 8 BCE) was born in Venusia in southern Italy. His father, a

freed slave, who owned some property and also worked as a tax collector, gave him a good education, first in Rome and then in Athens. After the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, Horace fought under Brutus in the Battle of Philippi. After the war, in spite of the amnesty for all who had opposed Octavian, he found that his father's estate had been confiscated. Although Horace later claimed (see *Epistles* 2.2.51–2) to have been impoverized by this calamity, he nevertheless evidently had resources to buy himself an official appointment (*sinecure*) which allowed him to live comfortably and turn his attention to poetry. Horace quickly became friends with Virgil, and a member of a literary circle that included Virgil and Lucius Varius Rufus. Through them he became close to Maecenas, the principal advisor of Augustus, who became his patron and conferred an estate in the Sabine Hills on him. He died in Rome at the age of 57 leaving his estate to the Emperor Augustus. The surviving works of Horace include two books of satires, a book of epodes, four books of odes, three books of letters or epistles, and a hymn.

There is little doubt that we should regard Horace as the creator of the form of the Roman satire as we know it. Even if Lucilius was the first major Roman practitioner of the form, it took Horace to give the satire a distinct shape and subject matter: above all, his satires show a critical self-consciousness about their own form and style. That he should have done so at such an early age is testimony to his poetic genius. Horace alternates between calling his satires *satirae* and *sermones* ("conversations"), on account perhaps of the prose-like informality of the poems, as also indicating the kind of speech that may be tolerated among friends. The general addressee is Maecenas, as is specifically the inaugural poem (1.1), though the material included in the two books of Satires was composed over a long period of time, some even before his acquaintance with him. For instance, 1.7 appears to have been composed before the

battle of Philippi; 1.2 and 1.4 are also early compositions[27]. At the same time, the conversation includes other poets and men of letters, and constitutes a "wider intertextual dialogue" with a community of informed listeners.

The First Book of the Satires, published sometime around 36/35 BCE, was Horace's first major poetic effort. Here is also a poet seeking to arrive, a feature that might strike a chord with the subject of this study, John Donne. The Second Book was published shortly after the battle of Actium (31 BCE), the decisive engagement that established Octavian's control over the Roman possessions and the Mediterranean. The First Book contains 10 satires, the Second, 8. They differ greatly in tone, and professed subject-matter, drawing perhaps on the originary meaning of *satura*: but they also reveal a deep underlying unity in terms of the new role imagined for the satirist. "Horatian satire," writes Hooley, "is a conscious invention, rather than another instantiation of an evolving genre. Horace is not ‘writing satires’ in his two books, but inventing and constructing a new literary enterprise" [28]

As we have said, the satires differ greatly not merely in subject matter, but also in intention. The multiplicity of intentions is something that the later development of the satire strongly incorporates. Classical scholars often divide the satires of Horace into different groups. The first three (or four) satires in Book 1 are often referred to as the "diatribe" or moralizing satires, as are Satires 2.2, 2.3 and 2.7. An important class (including the second set of 1.4-1.6) is sometimes referred to as the autobiographical satires.[29] Warmington sees the influence of Lucilius in most of the Satires of the First Book:[30] while it is clear that the Lucilian satires were vitally important for Horace, it may be right to point out here that the similarities of subject matter may be offset by the real differences in style and spirit.[31] The first satire of Book I, addressed to

Maecenas, sets the tone for the entire series. It is on a well established theme of the diatribe, that of human discontent with his lot. Even if God were to grant man his wishes, says Horace, he would not change but constantly fret and compare his position to those of others. Man is never content with his riches and position and constantly strives to amass riches and hoard them to see a better day, but that good day never arrives. His futile search for a good life prevents him from enjoying his life as it is, and thus he spends his life in misery instead. "However fast he runs there is always somebody richer just in front" (113) and that leaves him discontented. Horace cites the example of the ant who is more sensible and "lives on what he has amassed". Man's unsatiated greed drives him restless and restrains him from the enjoyment of life. Horace writes, "So it is that we can rarely find a man who says he has lived a happy life and who, when his time is up, contentedly leaves the world like a guest who has had his fill." (117-19). Horace's Satire 1.1 harps on the advice that instead of enjoying life as it is, every man must learn to control his greed. He also advises man to choose a middle path and never to be a miser: not to be a rake or a wastrel but to understand that a happy life is all about "proportion", the ability to strike the right balance between less and more. "In short" he says, "there are definite limits; if you step beyond them on this side or that you can't be right" (106-7).

Satires 1.2 and 1.3 continue in the style of the diatribe. Satire 2 is based on the idea that in avoiding one kind of moral fault fools fall into other kinds, but the examples that are given are all of a sensual nature. They purport to discuss the peccadilloes of a number of named characters beginning with a departed singer called Tigellius, who is also named at the beginning of Satire 3. The tone of Satire 2 is raunchy and intentionally coarse. It begins with an introduction that contrasts two character types, that of the spendthrift and the miser, one wasting his patrimony and estates on the

pursuit of physical pleasures and the other lending money at exorbitant interest to wealthy sprigs. This leads to an extended meditation on the best sexual arrangement for Roman citizen of Horace's class. Hooley observes: "The extremes in this Aristotelian construction of sexual choice – prostitutes or matrons – bring with them difficulties of all sorts, embarrassment, expense, peril, delusion. The preferred mean (available freedwomen, whose unproblematic status tends to slip away in Horace's self-ironizing treatment) is said, ostensibly, to offer carefree satisfaction". [32] The Lucilian character of the poem has been noted, but critics have also speculated whether the poem is not at the bottom an ironical one, a critique of the morals of the age.

Satire 3 once again is about proportion, like Satire 1, but of a different kind. Since all men are prone to do wrong Horace wants the punishments at least to be fair. He pleads for a sense of proportion and rationality in exacting penalties on the basis of the degree of wrongdoing much against the doctrinaire Stoics who believed that all sins are equally punishable. Thus man's lack of tolerance in social relations emerges as the subject of Horace's third satire where typically men are portrayed as being critical of the sins of others and oblivious to their own. Horace thinks that this is irrational and unfair and harmful in binding society together. Man, he says, is "a bundle of inconsistencies" (9) and "the most contradictory creature that ever lived" (20). Man's "brazen egotism" restrains him from looking at his own fault, and he always finds a cover to excuse his own shortcomings. Man is sharp and insensitive when he scrutinizes the deficiencies of others. Horace advises one to behave like a father to a son if he finds a defect in a friend. Just as a father's love is all-encompassing, Horace feels that being less critical and sparing a kind word for an erring friend joins and cements friendship: "a kindly/ friend will weigh, as is fair, my

virtues against my failings" (68-69). In accordance with that principle, Horace suggests, we should weigh friends in the same scale: for life, he says is a battlefield, "envy is sharp and slanders/fly thick and fast" (60-1). Anger and other failures are rooted in man and he must rise above these to see the world with much more common sense and tolerance. In order to lead a happier life man needs to forgive and be forgiven: a fair scale of penalties helps us to do so.

The three "diatribe satires" in some way define the tone and scope of the Horatian satire. Individual satires in the two books, of course strike out new paths: the form we are reminded is a capacious one, offering scope for differing kinds of expressive needs. 1.5 is the account of journey; 1.6 is mainly autobiographical, an encomium of his patron Maecenas, but also establishing the speaker's own contentment with a life that is unencumbered either by high birth, or by wealth and position. The nobility of Maecenas is best demonstrated in the courtesy he extends to someone like Horace who is born

> For me the great thing is that I won
> the regard of a discriminating man like you, not by having
> a highly distinguished father but by decency of heart and character.
> (62-4)

Yet Horace also seems to say that since ability is not restricted to those of high birth, the high positions of political life should be open to all, not to just those who now occupy them on account of family and connections. 1.7 is a witty description of a tussle of words between two litigants. The next (1.8) is set in an old burial ground, now being converted into a pleasure park by Maecenas. The speaker is the rustic god

Priapus himself, and the tone is irreverent and mocking. The poem has been classed as being similar to the Priapea, a collection of verses to the god of fecundity.

We shall look more closely at the remaining three satires of Book 1, namely 4, 9 and 10. As 4 and 10 share a similar theme, it would be convenient to deal with them together. The Ninth Satire of Book 1 is important for us, as it is one that figures importantly in Donne's imagination. Both "Satyre I" and "Satyre IV" use the idea of the harassing companion, a figure we encounter first in Horace's poem. Horace's account is fairly simple. As he walks down the Sacred Way, he is suddenly accosted by a man whom he knows "only by name". The person has a familiar manner and presses himself upon the poet. He describes himself as a man of letters, and cannot be shaken off. He in fact recognizes the poet's desire to be left alone but will not let it be so:

> ‘You’re desperately keen to be off;
> I’ve noticed that. But it’s no use; I’ll stick with you.
> Wherever you’re going I’ll dog your steps!’ (14-16)

The poet tries to retain his civility, claiming that he is visiting an ailing friend a long way off, and there is no need for his companion to go out of his way. But this is naturally of no avail, and the companion relentlessly bombards him with self-praise. He is poet, dancer and singer rolled into one.

What the importunate companion thrusts upon the unwilling poet is the fear of death by boredom. There is a serio-comic remembrance of a childhood prophecy for the poet that forecast not death by deadly disease, but

> whene'er it be, a chatterbox shall wear him out;
> let him avoid all gasbags on reaching man's estate. (33-34)

When they come near the law-courts the companion asks the poet to help him with a case, but when he refuses, decides to abandon the case and stick with the poet. Perhaps the real reason for the over-friendliness becomes apparent now. The companion enquires closely about his friendship with Maecenas and suggests that the poet should recommend him for favours. The poet indignantly retorts that his relationship with Maecenas is beyond such petty self-interest. The companion is not abashed and vows to keep up his attempt to come near Maecenas:

> I shan't be found wanting.
> I'll bribe his servants; and if today they shut me out,
> I'll persevere, bide my time, meet him in the street,
> escort him home. "Not without unremitting toil
> are mortal prizes won." (56-60)

Fortunately for the poet, the companion has to beat a hasty retreat when suddenly his adversary in a lawsuit appears on the scene. The action of the satire takes place on a street and this is something that Donne uses to good effect in both "Satyre I" and "Satyre IV".

Satires 4 and 10 of the First Book are both concerned with the nature of satire, and the first of the two poems has sometimes been seen to continue the diatribe pattern. However, Satire 4 is not a "theory" of satire as much as it is a justification of the poet's own practice. In doing so Horace expresses his opinion about earlier writers: not only his Roman predecessors, but the great Greek poets as well. The derivation of the Roman satire from the Greek Old Comedy is made clear here. The Greek poets

Cratinus, Eupolis and Aristophanes used their license as comic poets to identify and criticize offenders against social norms. Lucilius he says followed them entirely, but he was not careful enough in writing and he wrote too much. He again mentions the minor writers Crispinus and Fannius, to make the point that unlike them he neither seeks publicity nor does he write much. He is neither given to slandering friends or repeating gossip. If he uses individuals to point general truths, it is the way he was taught:

> Yet if I'm a little outspoken or perhaps
> too fond of a joke, I hope you'll grant me that privilege.
> My good father gave me the habit; to warn me off
> he used to point out various vices by citing examples. (103-106)

He also offers the remarkable suggestion that satire - at least in the way that he understands it - is not really poetry at all. It is really a kind of metrical prose, resembling the style of the New Comedy. Horace's observations are a kind of personal diversion, compiled for his own benefit.

Satire 1.10 slightly revises the dismissive view of Lucilius contained in Satire 1.4. The poet appears slightly defensive, claiming that even his admirers admit that he had a laboured style, and reminds his readers that he had praised his predecessor's satiric wit. This poem is particularly important in defining two of Horace's principal satiric concerns: the need to balance humour and severity, and the need to achieve stylistic excellence and formal restraint. He still holds that Lucilius lacked self-discipline. So while there is a certain kind of merit in fluency, in order to make one's productions attractive:

> You need terseness, to let the thought run freely on
> without becoming entangled in a mass of words that will hang
> heavy on the ear. You need a style which is sometimes severe,
> sometimes gay, now suiting the role of an orator or poet
> now that of a clever talker who keeps his strength in reserve
> and carefully rations it out. Humour is often stronger
> and more effective than sharpness in cutting knotty issues. (9-15)

Horace says that the particular respect in which the writers of the Old Comedy should be followed is precisely in their comic genius. Some people laud Lucilius for having combined Greek and Latin but that is evidently not something praiseworthy in itself. In fact the poet confesses that he had himself once tried to write something in Greek and been warned in a dream that it was as silly "as carrying a load of wood to a forest". The Greeks had written enough great poetry to need adding to.

The other point about Lucilius that seems relevant to understanding Horace's own poetic ambitions is the discussion of stylistic excellence. It is important to find out where one's talent really lies. Pollio excelled in tragedy, Virgil in the pastoral. Horace modestly claims that other poets of his time were better than him in other genres and only the satire was open to him. It is also necessary to be able to know what to retain and what to reject. All poets, even Lucilius, have found fault with their predecessors. This is not just a question of being over-critical: it is in the nature of things to look at the past with a critical eye. Horace seems to be outlining here a theory of poetic evolution. So even when he praises Lucilius for having a fine and civilized wit and having been better than his own predecessors,

> still, if fate had postponed his birth till our own day,
> he would file his work drastically down and prune whatever
> rambled beyond the proper limit, and in shaping his verses

> he would often scratch his head and nibble his nails to the quick (68-71)

The idea of sophistication of taste is related in the poem to that of proper reception and taste. The poet has no wish to receive the acclaim of the ignorant multitude. He desires the praise of a cultivated and literate elite constituted by his own peers and associates: Augustus, Maecenas and Virgil. The idea of satire to emerge is unquestionably that of a cultured activity, protected from ignorant and envious eyes. The idea of a saving remnant, at least in the cultural sphere, is clearly articulated, though one should also be aware that the poem also expresses a desire for incorporation into a group which is both culturally and politically pre-eminent. It is interesting to note that the poem is no longer concerned with Lucilius, and it is the reception of Horace's own satires that occupies the poem.

The Second Book of the Satires was written probably between 35 and 30 BCE and published in 30 or 29. By this time Horace had progressed considerably in his poetic career. He was writing the Epodes (30 BCE) and some of the early odes (the first three books were published in 24 BCE). The political climate was also significantly different. The Battle of Actium was over and Octavian was established in power in Rome. In style and structure the Second Book is different from its predecessor. Hooley comments extensively on its manner of organization:

> If Book 1 was linear in general exposition – its groupings indicated by proximity within the book and their thematic relatedness – Book 2 is dialectical in structure, two halves of four poems each breaking up into corresponding pairs of thematically related satires … The structural balance, even apart from the substance of the satires, bespeaks closure; the tight ordering precludes accretion. And, as we will see, the final poem ends with a dying fall. [33]

The first satire of the collection however appears to have been written later than some of the others. It is relevant to our brief survey, as here too the question of the limits and function of satire is being discussed. Lucilius also makes a return, but perhaps to serve a different purpose from either 1.4 or 1.10. In this poem Horace is speaking to an eminent lawyer and the subject that he wishes to discuss is the limits of satire. According to some, the poet declares, he is too caustic and pointed in his satiric efforts. Others criticize him for being too commonplace. Trebatius offers him the safest of options: stop writing satire altogether, become a eulogist of the authorities and enjoy the rewards of servility. Horace protests, saying that he is constitutionally unable not to write. Frankly he has neither the ability nor the taste for such verse. In any case the poetry of praise may not be as safe as it seems, as Caesar is unpredictable and known to lash out like a horse. The poet knowingly alludes to many who have turned to the art of flattery.

Writing poetry, and satiric poetry at that, is something that comes naturally to Horace. Like Lucilius - strikingly described as "a better man than either of us" (29) - he would commit his thoughts to his books and turn to them in hours of need. The ancient poet's life is thus perfectly encapsulated in his books. Being of military stock, Horace is a natural fighter, but one who has never harmed anyone apart from when provoked. So in a noble passage, the poet claims that whether fortune smiles on him or frowns, whether he remains in Rome or is forced into exile, he will have to go on writing. Trebatius warns him that this is a dangerous course of action, for a powerful man may cause his death. Horace strongly defends the art of the satirist, again drawing upon the example of Lucilius, describing the time when he pulled

> the glossy skin
> in which people were parading before the world and concealing

> their ugliness, was Laelius offended by his wit or the man who rightly
> took on the name of the African city which he overthrew?
> Or did they feel any pain when Metellus was wounded and Lupus
> was smothered in a shower of abusive verse? And yet Lucilius
> indicted the foremost citizens and the whole populace, tribe
> by tribe, showing indulgence only to Worth and her friends. (64-70)

Horace also declares himself quite able to defend himself from the attacks of envy and malice. Trebatius warns him at the end of not offending legal prescriptions, for libels are actionable. The poem ends on a comic note, with Horace audaciously asking what would happen if Caesar himself were to approve of a supposedly libellous verse. The answer is that the charge would then be laughed out of court. Hooley points to the fact that the poet in fact creates a dramatic situation that in fact may not exist at all.[34] On the one hand is the evident fact that Horace steered clear of aggressive satire: on the other there is concealed premise that Horace's powerful friends, including Caesar, are in fact the kind of people who will appreciate his verses. Nevertheless, the poem also causes us to reflect upon the accommodation that satire seeks with state power.

In the remaining satires of the Second Book, we hear the voice of Horace less and less. The exception is Satire 2.6 which is a meditation on self-sufficiency and contentment. There are the views and opinions of a number of other speakers, imaginary and real. In 2.2, it is the peasant Ofellus who speaks about the virtues of a simple life; in 2.3, a friend Damasippus lectures him on the evils of laziness. Food plays a large part in the Second Book. In 2.4 we have a lecture on fine dining while 2.8 is a description of a failed feast at which a number of distinguished guests are present, including Maecenas and other literary figures. Nasidenius has prepared a meal that is ostentatious and vulgar in its excess. However the host's obsession with

rare and expensive items is set to naught by the collapse of the awning on the diners, leading to confusion all around. The Fifth Satire of the book is placed in the underworld, with Ulysses asking the sage Tiresias about how to improve his fortunes in the world, and the seer giving him tips on legacy hunting. This satire uses the themes of parody and burlesque to a considerable extent. The remaining satire, 2.7, is a daring speech made by a slave Davus taking advantage of the licence for free speech enjoyed by slaves during the festival of the Saturnalia. The subject appropriately is freedom, but apart from the outward freedom that the slave desires, there is also the question of inward freedom which comes from the control of vices and passions. We shall conclude this discussion of Horace with a brief look at the famous discussion of rural contentment in 2.6. It contrasts the troubles and disturbances of life in the city with the peace and contentment enjoyed by the poet in his Sabine farm. The farm is a present from his patron Maecenas. If here Horace presents the views of a modest country landowner, it is also made clear that he is no inheritor of family wealth, but the beneficiary of a gracious friend. Modest and restrained pleasures are enjoyed by the poet, and the fellow feeling even between masters and slaves is something to be admired.

> Ah, those evenings and dinners. What heaven! My friends and I
> have our meal at my own fireside. Then, after making an offering,
> hand the rest to the cheeky servants. Every guest
> drinks from whatever glass he likes, big or small.
> We have no silly regulations. One goes for the strong stuff
> like a hero, another mellows more happily on a milder blend.
> And so the conversation begins – not about other folks'
> town and country houses, nor the merits of Grace's dancing;
> we discuss things which affect us more nearly and one ought to know
> about:

> what is the key to happiness, money or moral character?
> In making friends are our motives idealistic or selfish?
> What is the nature of goodness, and what is its highest form? (65-76)

Where most of the other satires of the book use variants of the dialogue form, the seventh satire is the poet's own meditation on the country and the city. But here also we find the concluding parable of the country mouse and the town mouse which is attributed to a neighbour Cervius.

The Second Book, as Hooley perceptively observes, marks a significant change in the style and conception of Horatian satire. The themes and treatment are more philosophical in nature. The use of other speaking voices creates a greater indirectness in the satiric persona. Hooley argues that this marks the integration of the satirist into the post republican political scenario:

> Horace's second book, where, intriguingly, the word *satura* is first introduced as generic descriptor by Horace, begins to point out explicitly that the satirist is always implicated in his world, never writes from an island of unassailable moral integrity … If satire loses its edge in the bad new world of post-Republican Rome, it does so not simply because Horace is no Lucilius. Rather it is that however courageous and principled satire is or can be – and it can certainly be more courageous than Horace's – it is never entirely innocent. The new ''law'' of satire, post-Sat. 2.1, asserts that satire is never a law unto itself …[and] is always dragged into and dirtied by the laws made and unmade in the unclean world it lives in. [35]

Persius and Juvenal

We shall conclude our examination of Roman verse satire with a brief consideration of the contribution of Persius and Juvenal. Persius (Aulus Persius Flaccus) wrote

roughly half a century after Horace, the active period of his brief life being the disastrous reign of Nero. Juvenal (Decimus Iunius Iuvenalis) was a survivor of the tyranny of Domitian (51-96), though his precise dates are not known. Both were writing at times when satire may have been politically contentious. The two writers differ considerably in character. Persius was withdrawn and allusive, his poems often being accused of obscurity. Juvenal's poems are replete with a sense of social outrage, and they anatomize a corrupt and decadent society. Of course in terms of the relevance of the different styles of the Roman satirists to the development of European satire, we shall have to think of the kind of models for emulation that they offer. The satires of Horace, Persius and Juvenal exercised an important influence upon posterity, but the nature of this influence may have been determined more by the manner in which they were read at different times. Persius for instance was praised in the Renaissance for his moral sanctity, to the extent of being regarded as being proto-Christian in character.

Persius's dates are approximately 34-62 BCE, belonging to a time when the condition of Rome was unstable and tense. Less than three years after his death there was a major purge ordered by the emperor Nero in which eminent intellectuals of his time perished, including the philosopher Seneca and the epic poet Lucan. Given the unsparing quality of Persius's satires, there is every likelihood that he too would have been executed. [36] Six satires of Persius survive as well as a small prefatory poem. The Prologue sets the tone for the poems that follow. It disclaims poetic inspiration, any co-option in the fraternity of poets; the poet has not been inducted into the profession through ritual and ceremony. He is at best a "semi-clansman". He ends the poem by saying that it is the promise of monetary rewards that makes even the unpoetic write poetry. The first of the six satires reinforces this theme. The poet expects to have only

a few readers because current tastes in poetry are debased, and are determined by frivolity and fashion. Many of the forms of poetry traditionally held in esteem are subjected to ridicule. They include epic, tragedy, epyllia and elegy. There is even a mocking reference to the beginning of Virgil's *Aeneid* (96), a poem that has become canonical by this time. Rudd comments that even though one cannot be sure that the satire is an attack specifically on Nero and the poets he patronized, the reference to the "recitations and improvisations of wealthy Romans around the dinner-table" is very clear. His own literary preferences are also made clear. He admires the fifth century Greek comic poets because of their social commitment (123-4).

Rudd comments that Persius was the "most doctrinaire" of Roman satirists in his unswerving devotion to Stoic philosophy. Satire 2 speaks of the injustice that human beings do to the gods, supplicating them for the unworthiest of gifts. In public their prayers sound pious and laudable, but privately they seek the death of their relatives and unlimited wealth. A number of character types are sharply etched: the old woman praying that a baby will come to be married in a wealthy family; the man who indulges in greed and loose living, but prays for good health (41-43); and the man who spends all his resources in expensive rituals to secure wealth (44-51). Since we are devoted to gold, we think the gods are so too and we make golden images of them. The lesson that the poet teaches is moderation and piety, trying to align one's own desires with the will of the gods. The best tribute to the gods is "a soul in which human and divine commands are blended, a mind which is pure within, a heart steeped in fine old honour." (72-74). Satire 3 and 5 also preach Stoic ideas. Satire 3 begins with a lecture on sloth, and goes on to discuss the avoidance of sensual pleasures altogether. Satire 5 remembers the Stoic Cornutus who taught Persius that the only true freedom was ethical freedom, and that all other notions of freedom are

delusory. Satire 4 is also interesting, drawing upon the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Alcibiades*. There is an implicit political allegory here. The brilliant general Alcibiades aspires to rule the state, but his personal life is unprincipled. Alcibiades considers the Highest Good to be sensual indulgence. Socrates advises him to examine his own heart. The sixth satire lauds the principle of balance and moderation in life. The advice is to be neither a miser nor a spendthrift.

Discussions of Persius have particularly noted the influence of Lucilius and Horace on his satires, and to the fact that he alludes to lines and phrases in the work of his predecessors. However, it should be noted that Persius conveys a far greater sense of moral earnestness and ethical purpose. The unswerving commitment to Stoic philosophy is also a particular feature of his poems. The popularity of Persius among medieval Christian commentators may owe much to this, but it may be that his particularly harsh and obscure style was attractive to Donne who sought to emulate him in his "Satyres". Some modern scholars also read the direct influence of Persius's Satire 3 on Donne's "Satyre I". This opinion was first expressed by Thomas Freeman in 1614 who addressed Donne as Persius ("I prethee Persius write a bigger booke"), and is reaffirmed by Leishman and Arnold Stein. [37] While it is clear that Donne may have found the terseness of style and the moral harshness of Persius features for emulation, it appears that the influence is more of a general nature and it would be an exaggeration to see Persius's Satire 3 as the principal thematic "model" for "Satyre I". As we shall argue at the end of this section, the Roman satirists taken together bequeath to the Renaissance a large body of themes and ideas which are foundational for the growth of the Elizabethan verse satire. We note that these ideas are in fact shared with differing degrees of emphasis among the Roman satirists too. [38]

Even less is known about the life of Juvenal. What little we do know is taken from the poems themselves. There are a number of Lives published centuries later, but they do little than to summarize information drawn from the poems themselves. He was born, scholars surmise, sometime around 55 AD. He died after 130 AD, possibly after Hadrian's death in 138. He was active through the reigns of the emperors Domitian, Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian, though his relationship with political authority may have changed over the years. Some scholars have said that he was exiled for an unwise barb directed at a favourite of the Emperor, who might possibly be Domitian. The extant works of Juvenal comprise sixteen satires making up five books. All studies of their dating are tentative and speculative. We have no way of linking them to current political changes, apart from where there are direct references in the text itself. A major debate exists among scholars about the tone and spirit of the poems as well. How are we to link the bitterness and anger of the poems to the speaker? Victoria Rimell writes:

> do we recognize in Juvenal the fervent conservative moralist, or the prejudiced, hamfisted hack constantly sending himself up, and is it always simply either/or? Can anyone slash their way through the fogs of deception to tell genuine from faked, as Juvenal asks in satire 10.2–4? Much has been written on Juvenalian anger, and on the shifting emotional tone of the satires: *indignatio* seems to wane after book 1, yet to what extent is this a ruse? [39]

More simply the question to ask would be whether the speakers of the poems are a series of personae, enacting particular roles assigned to them, or are we to attribute the anger and hurt in the poems to Juvenal himself? We also note that the tone of the sixteen satires shift, with the first two books (Satires 1-6) being more savagely vituperative than the subsequent poems, which are comparatively more reflective and

expressive of irony rather than anger. Our concern however in this brief section is more with the main themes of the satires and in pointing out how they passed into the arsenal of later satirists. Whatever modern studies of Juvenal's tone might reveal, for both medieval and Renaissance writers, his diatribes against luxury, gluttony, avarice, corruption and women made him a favourite source of citation and reference. [40] What may have particularly appealed to Renaissance satirists was the sheer scale of Juvenal's satiric vision: the copiousness of its description, the extent of its geographical spread, the passionate excess of its emotional effects. Rimell writes that Juvenal is the poet of superlatives, and that "he sets out to look bigger, denser, ruder, slyer, angrier, fleshier, more sophisticated and bilious, to the power of ten, than all the other satirists before him put together." [41]

The First Satire begins with the claim that in the present state of affairs it is impossible not to write satire. Paper is wasted on meaningless verses. The speaker is particularly harsh on epic and mythological poetry. Both established poets and beginners spout poems that have nothing to do with the tragedy of the times. The poet announces his subject as being the entire range of human activities:

> All human endeavours, men's prayers, fears, angers, pleasures,
> joys and pursuits, make up the mixed mash of my book (85-86)

We note also that the reference to the "mixed mash" (Latin *farrago*) brings into play the root meaning of *satura,* emphasizing the variety of its content, and perhaps a contrast could be drawn here with the relative modesty of Persius's satiric project. Juvenal's satires strongly foreground the experience of living in Rome, the capital of the massive Flavian empire. It was under Trajan that the empire reached its greatest expanse. But the representation of the Roman way of life in the satires is savagely

critical. Satire 1 sets the tone. It is the "monstrous city" (21) that he anatomizes. Never, he claims, has there been such a spread of vice. All around him he sees the effects of human defects: greed, venality, sexual vice, sycophancy and much more. He invokes Lucilius, but claims that whereas the older poet openly criticized living people, the speaker will only concern himself with the dead.

The remaining satires of the first book highlight various aspects of the decline that the poet sees all around him. There is a notion thus of a more heroic and honourable past, when Romans were imbued with moral value and they lived justly and well. However, the feeling that we have is not of gradual decline but of clear and present disaster. Satire 2 mocks at the hypocrisy of aristocrats and philosophers in the matter of sexual morals. There is a particularly strong charge of perverted effeminacy brought against those who profess Stoic lifestyles. The poem begins with a striking geographical image of the poet wishing to escape far beyond the country of the Sarmatians to the polar regions in order to fly away from vice in Rome (1-2). In the final section of the poem the poet claims that the spirits of the ancient Romans in the underworld would feel contaminated when the shades of such corrupt individuals enter into the next world (149-170). The Third Satire, well known to posterity as the inspiration behind Samuel Johnson's satire "London", is concerned with describing how intolerable Roman life has become. It contains a piercing description of its physical dangers, its corruption, its social inequalities, its hollow rituals. It is a grasping and mercenary world here, with the poor and honest being crushed and the rich being fawned on and worshipped. The poet writes:

> … In Rome we must toe the line of fashion, spending
> beyond our means, and often on borrowed credit.
> It’s a universal failing: here we all live in pretentious

> poverty. To cut a long story short, there's a price-tag
> on everything in Rome. (180-184)

No man of self-respect can live here now. The poem begins with a description of the eager departure of a friend named Umbricius from Rome to the rustic delights of Cumae. The larger part of the poem is his description of the many troubles of living in Rome. At the end, Umbricius cheerfully starts on his journey bidding the poet a rather ironic farewell:

> So goodbye, don't forget me – and whenever
> you get back home to Aquinum for a break from the City,
> invite me over from Cumae, to share your fields and coverts:
> I'll make the trip – in boots – to those chilly uplands,
> and hear your Satires – if they think me worthy of that honour.
> (318-322)

Mock-heroic is used to brilliant effect in satire 4 which tells of the crisis of state caused by a fish that is gifted to the emperor by a fisherman. The poem begins by recounting the extravagance of a local grandee who buys a single fish for 6000 sesterces. The poet is reminded of an occasion when the emperor received a gift of a fish which was so large that there was no vessel large enough to cook it in, nor could it be cut into pieces. The cabinet of state deliberated on this crisis. After many suggestions were made and discussed, it was resolved to make a monstrous pot large enough to cook the fish and from then onwards potters were ranked among the emperor's retinue. The poem lashes out at the fawning ways of the courtiers and the luxurious life-style of the rich, particularly that of the court. The fifth satire which closes the First Book is on the decline in the quality and nature of patronage. Previously one had kind and honourable patrons, who treated their clients generously,

lavished presents on them and thought that good reputation came from dealing well with less fortunate friends than from titles and offices (107ff). What the poet rues here is the way in which the patron-client relationship has been debased, with clients having to put up with insults and humiliations. The patron Virro reclines on a couch, and the hapless guests are subjected to every kind of indignity at the hands of both the patron and his attendants. Each guest is given food that is different, and inferior, from that served to the patron; the cutlery is different, the quality of wine is different. In a word the food that you get is in direct proportion to your wealth and to your standing in society. Those who put up with such patrons and curry their favour deserve such treatment says the poet waspishly at the end.

The Sixth Satire occupies the whole of Book 2 and is the longest and in terms of fame - or notoriety - the most famous of them all. It often goes by the title "Against Women" and has been read as a sourcebook for a wide range of Roman misogynistic beliefs. It nominally takes the form of advice to an interlocutor named Postumus not to marry, though there appear to be other figures active in the poem as well. It does so by giving a long list of the failings of women, including sexual impropriety, quarrelsomeness, love of show and wasteful habits, and even homicidal tendencies. Some modern critics have questioned the view that the satire is purely an expression of Roman gynophobia, and held that it is more importantly a satire on collapsing social standards in general and decline in attitudes to marriage in Roman society.[42] Here too the piling of example on example creates a sense of monstrous excess and hyperbole.

Scholars have marked a change in the tone of the remaining books of Satires. Probably it is more accurate to say that there are a number of shifts, not one. Book 3,

comprising Satires 7, 8 and 9, are more general in tone. Even though there is an expression of hope for a renewal of patronage under a new emperor, the poem largely deals with the decay of patronage in contemporary times. Poets are badly off, but so also are others from the cultural sphere. Historians, rhetoricians and teachers of grammar struggle to survive as no one truly appreciates the value of their contribution to society. A Virgil or s Cicero would have a difficult time nowadays, says the speaker. Here too there is nostalgia for a more cultured past: "Today the age of the private patron's over: where will you find the successors to Maecenas and his like? Then genius got its reward" (94-96). Satire 8 is another general discussion of the relation of high birth to virtue. It is in the form of a letter of advice to a rising young politician, and strongly makes the case that virtuous behaviour has little to do with aristocratic birth. Satire 9 takes the form of a dialogue between a disgruntled male prostitute and the poet on the subject of unforthcoming patrons.

Samuel Johnson immortalized the 10th Satire (the first of Book 4) in his much quoted poem "The Vanity of Human Wishes". But Johnson's noble, if melancholy, recreation of the poem does not fully suggest its intense negativity. Hooley writes aptly "the satire is for all that not a philosophical meditation. Rather, wrongheaded human desires simply provide the occasion for a nicely structured and altogether fascinating series of negative exempla".[43] Sejanus, Cicero, Demosthenes, Hannibal, Alexander, Xerxes, Priam, Marius and Pompey are just a few of the figures who appear in this despairing redaction of history and are expressed through a series of pointed examples. The main themes of Satire 11 are moderation and avoidance of excess and the poem takes the form of a contrast between the ruinous gluttony of modern Romans and the asceticism practiced in ancient times. The theme of feasting is reminiscent of Satire 5, but the focus is more on the speaker's own humble but honest

meal in contrast to the opulence of the houses of the rich, clearly a line of ethical demarcation. Satire 12 is concerned with the theme of friendship. A wealthy friend named Catullus has been delivered from shipwreck, and the poet offers a sacrifice, not out of greed for reward or favour, but purely out of disinterested friendship. There is biting satire of the Roman practice of legacy hunting at the end of this satire.

The Fifth Book is Juvenal's last, and remains incomplete with the last poem (Satire 16) breaking off halfway. Scholars surmise that the last poems were written near the time of the poet's death, perhaps in the early 130s. Satire 13 takes the form of a poem of consolation, addressing a friend named Crispinus who has been recently defrauded of a large sum of money. Hooley comments that like the poems on feasting and on safe return in Book 4, there is a generic twist here too, as the consolation poem does not really console, but depicts life as generally disappointing. History and myth are again pillaged for examples of figures who have suffered terrible fates. There is however at the end the suggestion that evil-doers, too, inevitably come to their destruction. The next poem (Satire 14) is nominally a reflection on the vices that the young pick up from their elders. It actually ends up on the single vice, that of avarice that is not imitated from parents, but has to be taught as it runs counter to nature. "Most faults the young pick up instinctively: one only, avarice, has to be taught them, against their natural instincts" (107-8). There is shadow of the early anger and excess in Satire 15, a poem which deals with the sensational account of cannibalism in a village in Egypt (now a Roman province). But the actual - if unspoken -theme appears to be to anatomize the love of violence in Imperial Rome, replete as it were, with its daily diet of slaughter and bloodshed in the gladiatorial arena. The poem abounds in irony. "Now things are different: the whole world has its Graeco-Roman culture" (109-110). The section on compassion powerfully sets the moral theme of the poem.

The last of Juvenal's satires is the fragmentary Satire 16, of which only 60 lines survive and expresses the resentment of the civilian population against the militia.

Horace, Persius and Juvenal shape both the content and style of early modern verse satire. This most rudimentary survey of the salient features of the Roman verse satire may help us to understand the choice of themes and features of style and presentation in later times. The subsequent section may help us to understand the way in which the concerns of the Roman satirists are reformulated in a Christian culture.

Medieval Satire

In this section we shall attempt to construct a more proximate background for understanding Donne's "Satyres". In attempting to do so we shall look briefly at the use of the satire in the middle ages and its reception in the European Renaissance. As our task is not to write a history of the satire but to illuminate Donne's achievements as a pioneer of the early English satire, we shall attempt only to give a broad idea of salient developments. More immediately relevant to our task is the understanding of the religious background of the “Satyres”, and thus we shall try in the next chapter to understand the religious controversies of the time, particularly those relating to the position of Catholics in Elizabethan England. As a beneficiary of the humanist pedagogical revolution, Donne had access to the classical literature of satire: equally, his understanding of the classics had always to be accommodated to a Christian framework of thought. The present section seeks to clarify some of the issues that arise out of this effort.

It is generally believed that there was a decline in the readership of classical literature in Europe after the breakup of the Roman Empire. The period is much debated, but it is clear that this happened both in the western and eastern empires sometime between

the second and eighth centuries. However scholarly understanding of this period differs widely. As for some it is merely a period of decline and change, the interstice between the classical period and the Middle Ages, for others it is a period that merits an independent status. Peter Brown in his extensive writings on the period has helped us to discern a period of Late Antiquity. He writes of the need

> … for scholars, students and the educated public in general to treat the period between around 250 and 800 as [a] distinctive and quite decisive period of history that stands on its own. ... It was not a period of irrevocable Decline and Fall; nor was it merely a violent and hurried prelude to better things. It cannot be treated as a corpse to be dragged quickly off-stage so that the next great act of the drama of the Middle Ages should begin...Not only did late antiquity last for over half a millennium; much of what was created in that period still runs in our veins. It is, for instance, from late antiquity that we have inherited the codifications of Roman law that are the root of the judicial systems of so many states in Europe and the Americas... The basic structures and dogmatic formulations of the Christian church, both in Latin Catholicism and in the many forms of eastern Christianity, came from this time, as did the first, triumphant expression of the Muslim faith. [44]

Brown puts religious change at the centre of the historical process and sees the changes in religious attitude as important as those happening in public life. What we call the medieval tradition of satire has to do with both the ideas of change and continuity. While in a general sense medieval satire relates to the "mode" of satiric writing than the specific form of satire, nevertheless, as Laura Kendrick has shown, the consciousness of the form of satire did not entirely die out either.[45] John Peter in a seminal contribution to the subject pointed out that the satiric legacy of "sanative castigation" had to adjust to the Christian principle of suffering and restraint.[46] With

the declining influence of classical poetry we find the growing prominence of Old Testament prophecy as the model for Christian "reprobative writing". At the same time, he was careful to point out that the "vast medieval literature of reproof ... commonly included under satire", is more accurately categorised as “complaint”.[47] Peter sees the only author in medieval England to properly deserve the title of satirist to be Chaucer. But here we should note that Chaucer did not attempt the formal verse satire at all. Yet to deny writers like Chaucer and Langland a distinguished place in the canon of European satire would be meaningless. K. W. Gransden in the introduction to his collection of Tudor verse satires uses the term "homiletic satire" to distinguish the kind of tradition which draws upon homily and sermon for its satiric content.[48] This is more or less similar to Peter's class of "complaint" literature.

At the outset it needs to be emphasised that whether we think of the satire in its infrequent formal appearances in medieval literature (as documented by Kendrick) or the vast body of literature that in varying degrees we may call "satiric", there is by and large a new mediation that shapes the character of satire both in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance: that of Christianity. Whereas the Christian context allowed on the one hand unlimited space for the examination of human vice and sinfulness in all its aspects, it also necessarily had to be adjusted to the promise of salvation. This is as relevant for an understanding of medieval satire as it is of a poet like John Donne. As the scope of examination could span the whole of society - as is exemplified by the mode of "estates satire", it is unquestionably true that the single greatest object of satiric scrutiny is the church itself. This might be as localized as specific practices or directed at monastic orders or other ecclesiastical personnel. At the same time, given that the medieval satire is founded upon a set of Christian values, the occasion of satire is very often, directly or indirectly, the difference between the ideal and the

observed, between what the Christian life needs to be and what we find, in and outside the church and clerical orders.

We should also note that the notion of satire itself is quite fluid. That the classical Latin satirists were known, at least by reputation, is beyond question. Nevertheless, the forms of survival were mediated by the exemplificatory needs of rhetoric and grammar and this often militated against knowledge of the spirit of formal verse satire. One prevailing notion of satire seems to have been of its mixed nature, but the nature of this variety may not always have been clear. Mark Kauntze notes that for medieval scholars the term satire meant a mixture of prose and verse. As early as Isidore of Seville we find the view that "to write satires (satura) is to compose richly varied poems, as those of Horace, Juvenal, and Persius". Kauntze also points out that some medieval commentators held that the satire was characterized by polymetry, that is the use of different metres in the same poem.[49]

Laura Kendrick in her survey of medieval satire writes that medieval commentators on classical satire stress the "corrective intention" behind the treatment of human vice. Fundamentally charitable, satire exemplified one's concern with one's neighbour more than mere abuse or castigation. She cites John of Garland's distinction between invective which is motivated by "bad intentions" and reproof or satire (*reprehensio sive satira*) which narrates bad deeds to correct them. She argues that the emphasis on variety led to a broadening of the scope of satire.

> The classical satirical medley of themes was turned by medieval satirists into a more deliberately comprehensive criticism covering the vices of the different estates of society in hierarchical order. In the fullest versions, everyone was served, whether cleric or layman, high or low. Medieval poets developed this new, totalizing kind of satire of

> the vices of society out of their particular understanding of definitions of classical satire.[50]

We might also wish to note that the largely urban character of classical satire is largely absent in its medieval counterparts. As Kendrick notes, the nature of medieval society was primarily "feudal and agrarian" though rapidly in the grips of commercialization. One of the most important and widespread satiric themes is what has come to be called the satire of ecclesiastical venality. John Yunck has argued that Latin satire on this theme written in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, "expressed the fear of conservative clergymen in the face of a developing commercial economy based on money payments rather than traditional loyalties and duties".[51] The church needed to generate revenues to fund its ambitious political programmes, and thus what were customarily seen as gratuities were now being taxed. The perception of venality is expressed in the criticism of the ecclesiastical class for turning spiritual goods into occasions for financial rapacity.

As Kendrick shows, it is not always possible to identify the social position of the writers of medieval satire, whether in Latin or in the emerging vernaculars. Some, it is clear, were ecclesiastical persons themselves, and given the control of the church over education, this could hardly otherwise. But we need to remember that pious self-reflection accounts for relatively little of the surviving satiric literature of the Middle Ages. In many cases the writings reflect inner divisions within the clerical estate, such as that between the secular clergy (who did not belong to any specific institution) and members of the monastic orders.[52] It would also be relevant to mention here the importance of anti-fraternal satire, an example of which we might find in Chaucer's "The Friar's Tale". But we also find lay participation in ecclesiastical satire. R.F.

Green also points to the interesting existence of legal satire in the late Middle Ages.[53] It might be said therefore that much medieval writing in verse expresses dissatisfaction with the state of things as they are, whether in the multiform structure of the ecclesiastical establishment or in secular institutions like the legal system and the court. One should mark here that one of the principal sources of the verse satire - or even one might describe it as a parallel form - must be the prose sermon, which, as has been firmly established, comprehensively maps the forms of satire and complaint. As G. R Owst pointed out in a long and important section of his magisterial *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England*, the great satirical writers of the time, Langland, Chaucer and Gower, all use the sermon as a source of their satirical verse.[54]

It is in Langland and Chaucer that we encounter the full range of possibilities of the use of the satiric mode in medieval literature, and it is probably right to point out that neither use, as far as we can see, the formal verse satire as a stylistic model. The particular form of the "estates satire" is often associated with both writers. Though as Ruth Mohl pointed out *Piers Plowman* is not strictly estates satire, the content of this particular form is powerfully present in Langland's work. [55] The estates satire has proved to be more useful in dealing with Chaucer as Jill Mann's pioneering study shows. Mann refers to Mohl's identification of the form as having the following broad characteristics: an attempt to provide a complete enumeration of the “estates” or social and occupational classes; the divine origin of the division and the need for contentment with one's appointed station so as to avoid social unrest; the failure of these classes to perform their appointed duties, thus leading to the weakening of society in general; finally, suggestions for reform and amelioration of the condition of the classes. While all the characteristics were not to be found in all the examples of estates literature, and could be found in works not strictly belonging in the class,

nevertheless these were for Mohl the leading characteristics of the form. Mann thus adopts a more adaptive approach:

> My working definition of estates satire is therefore less rigid; it comprises any literary treatments of social classes which allow or encourage a generalised application. Thus the works I shall discuss in relation to Chaucer range in scope from brief poems dealing with one class only, to encyclopedic attempts to span all sections of society. In form they include not only works which satisfy the more rigid definition of estates literature - which deal with a fairly large number of social classes in sequence, and expound their duties or criticise their failings in a relatively direct way - but also works in such literary forms as debate, narrative, or drama, in which estates satire can play a more or less dominant role.[56]

Mann's analysis of the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* makes the important assertion that the apparently random sequence of "portraits" of the pilgrims appears on analysis to show a careful ordering of material. The various figures comprise three classes corresponding to the three "estates" or classes of medieval society. The claim is not radical in itself and satire based on division into estates is not uncommon in the Middle Ages and the early modern period. The best known single work is probably the unequivocally titled Middle Scots play "Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis" written by Sir David Lyndsay and performed around 1554. Jill Mann's influential analysis of Chaucer establishes the presence both of figures who stand as "estate ideals" and those in whom various kinds of shortcomings from these kinds of ideals is noted. For instance there is the idealized figure of the poor Parson, who assiduously performs duties towards his flock: on the other hand there are the clearly satirical portraits of venal and corrupt ecclesiastics like the Pardoner and the Summoner.

Similarly there is the Parson's brother, the Ploughman representing the peasantry and non-aristocratic secular group.

> A trewe swynkere and a good was he,
> Lyvynge in pees and parfit charitee. (531-2)

Contrasted to him are the "low-life" tellers of bawdy tales like the Cook and the Miller. For the secular class in general we have the figures of the Clerk and the Knight as offering contrasting models of duty and ethicality. One notes in passing the point that the very constitution of the estates may differ. Lyndsay has the classes of Spiritualitie, Temporalitie and Merchant, which are different from Chaucer's.[57] Yet what we realize by looking at these examples is that the form of the estates satire affords a way of anatomizing society as a whole by looking at it in terms of its constituent groups. It would be also inadequate to think of *The Canterbury Tales* as being wholly or even principally a satire. Yet it may be a measure of Chaucer's genius that the work is so essential to the understanding of the development of satire in the Middle Ages. With Langland, he provides the most complex examples of the way in which literature reflects upon social deficiencies and personal shortcomings. Kendrick points to the fact that Chaucer and to some extent Langland use individualized portraits, "the classical technique of satirizing representative individuals", rather than abstract representations of the class as a whole as we find in most other estates satire. [58] She also points to the fact that Chaucer uses irony as a major satiric instrument. Many of the characters receive extravagant but clearly ironic praise, which complicates our assessment of them. At points, the technique of "internal focalization", the self-representation of the pilgrims from their own point of view inhibits clear moral criticism. In Chaucer, one is certainly likely to think that the

satiric is only one of the frames from which the complex subject matter of the *Tales* is viewed.

Early Modern Satire

The resurgence of classical literary models is obviously the most important transformative points to note about early modern satire. The works of Horace, Persius, Juvenal and Martial were much studied by Renaissance humanists. Even the fragments of Lucilius became available after the edition of Franciscus Dousa appeared from Leiden in 1597.[59] The volume of literature that claims the attention of the historian of satire in the early modern period is immense. Not only is the sheer volume forbidding to even the most schematic of studies, the forms which it assumes are also innumerable. Thus a survey would have to take account of both prose and verse, both neo-Latin and vernacular. Such a task is far beyond the ambit of this study and we shall therefore confine ourselves to some of the more salient English examples before the time of Donne.

Some very general observations however might be helpful at this point. As we have seen earlier, even the exemplars of Roman satire were not unknown to medieval poets, and so it cannot be claimed that classical verse satire was "reborn" with humanist poets. One point however might be that where in the past classical literature afforded content and examples more than formal examples for emulation, at least some Renaissance poets engaged with the form of Latin hexameter, and the specific literary devices of the Roman satire. An early example might be that of Francesco Filelfo, leading humanist scholar of the early 15th century, who composed a large number of formal satires around the middle of his illustrious career. R. P. Oliver in his study of Filelfo's satires (1949) points to the very equivocal reception of his works by

later historians of literature, principally on the grounds of his alleged obscenity and scurrility of expression.[60] More interestingly he points to the problems that Filelfo had with the language and metrical form, which he was encountering almost unmediated after the lapse of centuries. The problem is akin to that which one finds in Petrarch's attempt to write the neo-Latin epic. Nevertheless, much of the earlier emphases of the "homiletic satire" or "complaint literature" continues into Renaissance satire, and even when we try to focus exclusively on the verse contribution, we are likely to be impressed more by the immense variety and intermixture of styles and themes. Even where classical examples are foregrounded or mentioned directly the actual experience is likely to be far more diverse. Skelton's satire on Wolsey (discussed briefly later) alludes to Juvenal, but strongly integrates anti-courtly and anti-ecclesiastical satiric motifs. In fact even "translation" of the classical satires may reveal tellingly how the practice of revaluing and representing the past may be different from ours. Thomas Drant's translation of Horace's Satire 2.1 begins as follows:

> Horace: Some think my satyre's too too tart
> to keep no constant law,
> And some have thought it loosely penned,
> whatso of mine they saw;
> And ween a thousand suchlike rhymes
> one might within a day
> Write and despatch. [61]

It is not only the use of the rhymed "fourteener" that creates the sense of difference but also the altered discursive style. Later in the poem he speaks of his inability to write about the great matters of war and strife, but contemporary allusions seamlessly insert themselves into the verse:

> Alas, God knows, full fain would I:
> my courage will not give
> Me so to do. Not every man
> the warlike troops so gay
> To Moorish pikes and broaching spears,
> the Frenchmen slain in fray,
> The puissant Percy plucked from horse,
> praiseworthy can display. [62]

The Renaissance however certainly saw a new theoretical revaluation of satire. Discussing the different forms of poetry in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham describes satire as essentially a moral form, valuable in the maintenance of social and political harmony. He empowers satirists with the licence to castigate and reprove social corruption bitterly. For Puttenham, the satirists's rebuke of "most offensive" public and private vice makes up the deficit left by the lack of "good civility and wholesome doctrines". The satirist is a kind of Poet, who "intended to taxe the common abuses and vice of the people in rough and bitter speaches, and their invectives were called Satyres, and them selves Satyriques"; and he goes on to name "Lucilius, Juvenall, and Persius among the Latines" as writers of such works.[63] He later provides a fuller account of ''Satyre,'' which he terms "the first and most bitter invective against vice and vicious men." Gransden points out interestingly how satire found an easy accommodation with pastoral in the Renaissance:

> Satyres soon passed into the general *decor* of renaissance pastoral; they came to represent disapproval of courtly values, and are often depicted as gloomy and unkempt, symbols of disenchantment with society. When Spenser's Timias, in *The Faerie Queene*, iv, vii, is disappointed in love, he retires into the woods and virtually becomes a 'satyre'. In his poem *The Discontented Satyre* Lodge creates a personification of

> critical discontent; and William Rankins, in the eight-line 'induction' to his *Seven Satyres* (1599), shows how 'satyres' could personify satirical poems and embody a critical attitude to society in pastoral terms.[64]

The connection between pastoral and satire also helps us to understand the confusion among Renaissance writers about the word “satire”. They usually spelt it “satyre”, and connected it by a false etymology with the Greek “satyros”, meaning a satyr. These grotesque creatures, half man, half beast, originated as the chorus of the ancient Greek burlesque drama, and for this reason called the satyr play. The more careful scholars soon cleared up this error. Isaac Casaubon's *De Satyrica Graecorum Poesi et Romanorum Satira* (1605) is notable in this regard.[65]

There are a large number of Italian humanist poets who wrote in what is described a "satirical" style, and whose names are sometimes invoked in the history of satire. They would include writers as diverse as the early Domenico di Giovanni (1404 - 1447) known as "il Burchiello", related to the word in Italian for "mixed":

> This locution literally means “pell-mell” in that it refers to the way a certain kind of boat (“burchiello”) is usually loaded with everyday goods like food, tools, and sundry items.[66]

The word might in fact reflect on the connection with "satura" implicit in the term satire itself. Here also we encounter the critical opinion that il Burchiello's style - referred to as *alla burchia* - is marked for their unrestrained expression and sexual content. Similarly Francesco Berni, writing more than half a century later, is seen as a major proponent of the burlesque style. It should be noted that the quest for the satiric in early modern poetry when not closely focused on the form of the verse satire is apt to draw us in different directions.

The style of Luigi Alamanni (1495-1556) is described by Patricia Thomson as "grave and lofty". His poems have a Juvenalian pessimism, but he is also capable of a Horatian gentleness. Alamanni allows us to shift our attention to England, as one of his satires was imitated by Thomas Wyatt, in what must be seen as one of the early Tudor examples of verse satire.[67] The relationship between Alamanni and Wyatt is studied by Donald Guss in his article "Wyatt, Alamanni and Literary Imitation".[68] Interestingly, Guss identifies Alamanni as an "intermediary" humanist writer, standing between the early generation of humanist poets who were still employing romance forms when they wrote in the vernacular (like Sannazaro) and the writers of the second half of the sixteenth century, who had abandoned imitation and were mainly seeking to derive general critical rules from the classics. As a writer of the intermediary phase, says Guss, Alamanni followed Latin and Greek models and attempted to write in a wide range of classical forms. In fact, Guss attributes Alamanni's wide-ranging influence to his practice of literary imitation.[69] As an early Tudor humanist himself, Wyatt tried his hand at the satire in one of his most famous poems, "Myne owne John Poynz". This is almost a literal translation of Alamanni's Satire 10, itself probably inspired by Juvenal's Third Satire. But Wyatt's tone is more reflective and reasoned than what the term "Juvenalian" would suggest in the Renaissance. He tells Poyntz that the reason why he does not go to court is because he has none of the qualities required for prospering there. He can neither dissimulate nor flatter, neither practice cruelty nor turn a blind eye to wrongdoing:

> With each example of his incapacity for the court life, Wyatt's speaker exposes another of its evils, until by the end of the poem the reader feels with him a deep sense of relief at escaping from a world in which duplicity and abject flattery are keys to survival. Wyatt's other satires

> are equally indebted to Horace and, like the first, exhibit the steady moral earnestness permitted to those who take the long view.[70]

Jensen justly points out that satire cannot always afford the "long view", given that it is often motivated by a sense of immediacy and urgency. Wyatt and his senior contemporary John Skelton offer the finest examples of early Tudor satire. To briefly consider one of Skelton's best known contributions to the anti-courtly train of satire, "Why Come Ye Not to Court" (1522), an attack on Cardinal Wolsey, we find that the tone here is far more pressing and indignant. Skelton employs no mask or satiric guise here. Wolsey is the epitome of the worldly prelate, a target for both anti-ecclesiastical and anti-courtly sentiments. Skelton strikes angrily at Wolsey's material ambitions, his intellectual limitations and his uncertain birth. He adopts Juvenal's justification of satire: one writes because it is difficult not to do so. Jensen comments that such a response "nearly defines the kind of satire we call in the later tradition 'Juvenalian'. It is the explanation of one whose rage at the world has reached the point of exploding; who can see nothing around him but excess, corruption, and endless venality; and who must give public voice to his anger."[71] Skelton disdains any sort of artifice, identifying with the rich and oppressed against the rich and powerful.

Satire - in practice and in theory - was important in the English Renaissance long before the emergence of formal verse satire in the 1590s. It was as we have tried to argue a mode of utterance rather than a form. It could manifest itself in prose or verse, ally itself with other modes like the pastoral, and work its way into moral and philosophical discussion. Even verse satire could manifest itself in various shapes, metrical as well as formal. Jensen draws attention for instance to the prevalence of the satiric epigram, for which the authority of the Roman poet Martial is sometimes

claimed. This remained in vogue well into the 18th century. It could take mild or severe expressions, from generalised reflection to acerbic vituperation. Nevertheless as Jensen, following Alvin Kernan's well known study of Renaissance satire, observes, there is undeniably a valuation of matter over manner. Satirists value purpose over purely aesthetic concerts in their pursuit of the tasks of exposing social and personal shortcomings and chastising them. In Kernan's view, as Jensen points out, the key marker of satire in the early modern period is the kind of self-description that one sees in Hall:

> The Satyre should be like the Porcupine
> That shoots sharpe quills out in each angry line,
> And wounds the blushing cheeke, and fiery eye,
> Of him that hears and readeth guiltily. (*Virgidemiarum* 3.1–4)[72]

Yet, in spite of the wide acceptance of Kernan's view, this does not take into account "the range of achievements of poets from Skelton and Sir Thomas Wyatt to John Donne, Marston, and Andrew Marvell; nor does it provide a comprehensive view of the literary pleasures these works provide to readers in our time".[73] We shall attempt to elucidate this viewpoint through our examination of Donne's "Satyres".

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1 Ejner J. Jensen, "Verse Satire in the English Renaissance", in *A Companion to Satire: Ancient to Modern*, edited by Ruben Quintero, Oxford, Blackwell, 2007, p. 108.

2 Amlan Das Gupta, *Poetics*, New Delhi: Pearson, notes, p. 55.

3 Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, X,1,93, "Satura quidem tota nostra est", "satire, on the other hand, is all our own",

4 On this see Kirk Freudenburg, "Introduction: Roman satire", T*he Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005, p.2

5 See in particular, G. L. Hendrickson, "Satura-The Genesis of a Literary Form", *Classical Philology*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Apr., 1911), pp. 129-143 and "Satura Tota Nostra Est" *Classical Philology*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Jan., 1927), pp. 46-60.

[6] Freudenburg, "Introduction: Roman satire", p. 5

[7] Freudenburg, "Introduction: Roman satire", pp. 5-6

[8] D.A. Russell and M. Winterbottom, eds. *Ancient Literary Criticism*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1975, p. 94.

[9] *Ancient Literary Criticism*, p. 95.

[10] Ralph Rosen, *Making Mockery: The Poetics of Ancient Satire*, Oxford University Press: New York, 2007, p.38.

[11] Rosen, *Making Mockery*, p. 39.

[12] On Aristophanes, see for instance Cedric H. Whitman, *Aristophanes and the Comic Hero*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press , 1964.

[13] *Ancient Literary Criticism*, p. 95.

[14] See Suzanne Sharland, *Horace in Dialogue: Bakhtinian Readings in the Satires*, New York: Peter Lang, 2009, p. 10ff.

[15] G. C. Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*, University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1920.

[16] Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*, p. 219.

[17] Sharland, *Horace in Dialogue*, p.18

[18] For a detailed discussion, see Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica* trans. H. R. Fairclough, Loeb's Classics, London: William Heinemann, 1926, p. xiv-xv.

[19] For information regarding the early satirists, I have depended upon Daniel Hooley, *Roman Satire*, Blackwell: Oxford, 2007, chapter 1 ("Beginnings")

[20] See for instance, Elizabeth Rawson, review of *Cato the Censor* by A. E. Astin, The Journal of Roman Studies, Vol. 70 (1980), pp. 197-199.

[21] Freudenburg, "Introduction: Roman satire", p. 5

[22] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 20.

[23] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 20.

[24] On this see Diana C. White, "A New Edition of Lucilius", *Classical Philology*, Vol. 68, No. 1 (Jan., 1973), pp. 36-44

[25] See Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*. Ch 2.

[26] *Remains of Old Latin, vol.III: Lucilius, The Twelve Tables*, edited with Latin text and English translation by E. H. Warmington, Loeb's Classics, London: William Heinemann, 1926, p. xx.

[27] Fairclough, introduction to Loeb *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, p. 89.

[28] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 28.

[29] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 31.

[30] Warmington, introduction to Loeb *Lucilius,* p. 20.

[31] All citations of Horace and Persius are from Niall Rudd, *The Satires of Horace and Persius* first published 1973, revised edition, with Horace's *Epistles*, 1979, Penguin: London. Line numbers from this edition have been indicated in the citation.

[32] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 38.

[33] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 68.

[34] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 64ff.

[35] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p. 77-78.

[36] See Niall Rudd, ed. *The Satires of Horace and Persius*, Introduction (e-book, pages unnumbered)

[37] Y. S. Eddy and D.P. Jaeckle. Donne's "Satyre I": The Influence of Persius's "Satire III", Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 111 and n. 2.

[38] All citations of Juvenal are from *Juvenal, The Sixteen Satires* translated and edited by Peter Green, London: Penguin, 1998.

[39] V. Rimell, "The poor man's feast: Juvenal" in Freudenburg, *Companion to Roman Satire*, p.82.

[40] On this, see,EM Sanford, *Renaissance Commentaries on Juvenal*, Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, Vol. 79, 1948, pp. 48 ff.

[41] Rimell, "The poor man's feast: Juvenal" p. 81.

[42] S.H.Braund, "Juvenal - Misogynist or Misogamist?", Journal of Roman *Studies*, V. 82, 1992, p. 71.

[43] Hooley, *Roman Satire*. p.124.

[44] Peter Brown, Introduction, G.W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, Oleg Grabar, *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Postclassical World*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999, pp. ix–x.

[45] Laura Kendrick, "Medieval Satire", in *A Companion to Satire: Ancient to Modern*, edited by Ruben Quintero, Oxford, Blackwell, 2007, p. 52-3.

[46] John Peter, *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956, p. 3.

[47] Peter, *Complaint and Satire,* p. 3.

[48] K.W. Gransden, *Tudor Verse Satire*, London: The University Press, 1970.

[49] M. Kauntze, *Authority and Imitation: A Study of the Cosmographia of Bernard Silvestris*, Leyden: Brill, 2014, p. 57accessed on Google Books:URL: https://books.google.co.in/books?id=JI2fAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA203&lpg=PA203&dq, accessed 9.3.2015, Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies* V.xvi, 118-119, is cited in Kauntze, loc. cit.

[50] Laura Kendrick, "Medieval Satire", p. 54.

[51] J.A. Yunck, *The Lineage of Lady Meed: The Development of Medieval Venality Satire*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 1963, cit Kendrick, "Medieval Satire". p. 56.

[52] Kendrick, "Medieval Satire". p. 61 ff.

[53] R F Green, "Medieval literature and law", in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, edited by David Wallace, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 413

[54] G.R.Owst, *Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933, pp. 210-470.

[55] Ruth Mohl, *The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Satire*, New York, 1933 pp. 102-4; cited in *A Companion to Piers Plowman*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988, p.138.

[56] J. Mann, Jill *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire: The Literature of Social Classes and the General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979. p. 2.

[57] Mann, *Estates Satire*, Chapter 1. On Lyndsay, see Sarah Carpenter, "Towards a Reformed Theatre: David Lyndsay and Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis", *The Yearbook of English Studies*, Vol. 43, 2013, pp. 203-222.

[58] Kendrick, "Medieval Satire". p. 66.

[59] See Introduction, *Remains of Old Latin, vol.III: Lucilius, The Twelve Tables*, edited with Latin text and English translation by E. H. Warmington, Loeb's Classics, London: William Heinemann, 1926, p. xxiv.

[60] R. P. Oliver, *The Satires of Filelfo*, Italica, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Mar., 1949), pp. 23-46.

[61] K.W. Gransden, *Tudor Verse Satire*, p. 53.

[62] K.W. Gransden, *Tudor Verse Satire*, p. 54.

[63] George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. G.D.Willcock and A.Walker, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936, p. 26.

[64] K.W. Gransden, *Tudor Verse Satire*, p. 19.

[65] K.W. Gransden, *Tudor Verse Satire*, p. 19 and n. 29.

[66] *Encyclopedia of Italian Studies*, edited by Gaetana Marrone, Paolo Puppa, New York: Routledge, 2007; s.v. il Burchiello, p. 330

[67] Patricia Thomson, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and His Background*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964, p.249.

[68] Donald Guss, "Wyatt , Alamanni and Literary Imitation" URL: http://ejbe.libraries.rutgers.edu/index.php/jrul/article/viewFile/1416/2859, n.d. accessed 20.3.2015.

[69] Guss, "Wyatt , Alamanni and Literary Imitation", p. 6.

[70] Ejner J. Jensen, "Verse Satire in the English Renaissance", in Quintero, *Companion to Satire*, p. 107.

[71] Jensen, "Verse Satire in the English Renaissance", in Quintero, *Companion to Satire*, p. 107.

[72] Cited by Jensen, "Verse Satire in the English Renaissance", in Quintero, *Companion to Satire*, p. 103.

[73] Jensen, "Verse Satire in the English Renaissance", in Quintero, *Companion to Satire*, p. 102.

CHAPTER II

Protestant England and Catholic Survival:

The Political and Religious Background

In this chapter we shall attempt to provide a brief account of the religious background of Donne's "Satyres". The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section gives an account of the religious politics of the Tudor era; the second looks at the condition of Catholics in Elizabethan England. The third section briefly surveys Donne's early life with a view towards establishing the religious climate of his early poetry.

The Tudor Church

The late medieval church in England was a powerful institution serviced by a specialized personnel. It was itself divided into many groups. It was the richest single institution in the country being the owner of a quarter of the total territory of the land in England. Much of this was owned by the different religious orders. There was a large body of individuals, male and female, who had dedicated themselves to the service of God, and had taken vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Some of the monastic foundations that they belonged to were very wealthy. They derived their income from the land much in the manner of the landed secular classes. This number was augmented by other religious groups such as the friars (whose orders may have owned relatively little land since theirs was an itinerant calling) and by the many men in "holy orders". These included parish priests who looked after the spiritual welfare of the communities in their charge as well as other orders and groups of clergymen.

The church was ubiquitous in its presence. Wherever one might look, one was almost certain to find traces of the deep absorption of religion into the practices of everyday life. Yet it may be right to think of the Catholic Church in late medieval England as in effect a group of relatively localized institutions, each with its own head. Although all the units were basically united by their formal allegiance to the Holy See at Rome, there was difference in form and structure in these religious institutions. No central or common head was necessary to rule the Church, and the different parts had evolved distinct means of governance. In the parish, for instance, the parish priest often operated as the local religious head and performed all the ceremonies and rituals of the Church.

Collectively of course, the church exercised authority over the population at large. The ideological underpinning of this authority was provided by papal decree. Paul Johnson cites the famous pronouncement of Pope Boniface. In his decree *Unam Sanctam* issued in 1300, he declares that Christianity provides for "two swords", two systems of government, the spiritual and the temporal:

> Both are in the power of the church, the spiritual sword and the material. But the latter is to be used for the church, the former by her; the former by the priest, the latter by kings and captains but at the will and by the permission of the priest. The one sword, therefore, should be under the other, and temporal authority subject to spiritual. ... If, therefore, the earthly power err, it shall be judged by the spiritual power. ... But if the spiritual power err, it can only be judged by God, not by man. ... For this authority, though given to a man and exercised by a man, is not human, but rather divine. ... Furthermore, we declare, state, define and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff. [1]

In practice this translated into taxes levied annually from all households for the support of the church. Church attendance was made obligatory, and offenders could be ordered to appear before church courts. Such courts had jurisdiction over much that appears to be civil rather than ecclesiastical in character; such as the proving of wills, over contracts, oaths and obligations.

As such they dealt with disputes relating to marriage and legitimacy, adjudicating in cases in which breach of contract was alleged. Moral infringements - particularly various forms of sexual impropriety - and slander were also their province and this was the area in which most individuals came into touch with the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts. If such pervasive control over human lives - what Johnson describes as "total", (one into which the individual is born, and also one that determines the status of the afterlife) is accepted as being natural and unquestionable, towards the late middle ages it appears to falter and reveal fissures. We have seen for instance, how in the Middle Ages the major brunt of satire was borne by the church and its constituents. Such resentment is not difficult to understand, particularly when one considers the immense wealth of the church and the worldly lapses that its members were seen to be party to. Yet as Johnson points out, the gradual attrition of the idea of a total Christian society came from the problem of understanding the slender points of difference that were emerging from the general consensus, and these at least partly arose from the idea of society itself:

> There were flaws in the theory of society, reflected in its imagery. If society was a body, what made up its directing head? Was it Christ, who thus personally directed both arms, one - the secular rulers - wielding the temporal sword, the other - the Church - handling the spiritual one? But if Christ directed, who was his earthly vicar?

> There was no real agreement on this issue. The popes had been claiming to be vicars of St Peter since very early times. Later, they tended to raise this claim, and call themselves vicars of Christ. But kings, too, and *a fortiori* emperors, claimed a divine vicariate derived from their coronation; sometimes it was of God the Father, sometimes of Christ; when it was the former, the Christ-vicariate, being in some way inferior, was relegated to the Church. Now none of this should have mattered in the slightest. Since the vicarial direction, in all cases, was coming from the same source - Heaven - and since, presumably, there was no disagreement between the Father and the Son and St Peter, it should have made no difference who was vicar of whom. The direction would be the same, and all would obey. Alas, experience showed that this did not always happen.[2]

During the sixteenth century England, in common with some other parts of Europe, declared its independence of the Roman pontiff. Doreen Rosman describes the process:

> The English church was brought increasingly under state control and the king assumed its earthly headship. Monasteries, chantries and religious guilds were dissolved, and much of the wealth of the church was confiscated by the government. This included not only land owned by religious orders, but also objects from parish churches: bells, communion-ware made from precious metals, and richly decorated vestments worn by priests when celebrating Mass. The number of saints' days was drastically reduced; pilgrimages to shrines were forbidden and the veneration of relics condemned; statues and wall-paintings were defaced and roods were pulled down. Prayers and Masses for the dead, along with the use of palms and ashes, were banned, and Latin services were replaced by a vernacular liturgy. These changes constituted the English Reformation, part of a wider European movement.[3]

After the Tudor monarch Henry VIII ascended the throne in 1509, his objective soon became one of gaining supremacy not only" over the state but also over the Church. He conceived the notion of "absolute' sovereignty so that the King or the political head could have the last say in matters regarding both the Church and the state. The co-existence of religious and political power in the hands of the King thus endowed him with absolute or supreme authority.[4] The English Reformation, from the very moment of its birth, became associated with the concept of nationality and the awareness that both the Church and the nation were under one government, and that they would work together under the unified power of the King, to look after the health of the Commonwealth. Religious subjugation to civil administration was necessary to maintain law and order.[5] The confusion, disorder and indiscipline that had been left among the people by the religious strife in the fifteenth century could only be wiped out by surrendering the religious authority to the civil head. The Old and the New Testaments, it was asserted by the proponents of the religious dispensation, had sanctioned the predominance of the political authority over the Church. The King had the power to punish the evildoer and install peace and harmony to serve God's purpose on earth. Kingship was therefore regarded as an ordinance of God. But the medieval age had seen the Pope using total authority in apportioning matters of parish and local jurisdiction. Though they accepted the King as the national head, it was the Pope whose spiritual powers had drawn the awe and reverence of the people. From the outset of the 16th century, the idea of dual allegiance became increasingly difficult to sustain. At a time when England's sovereignty and security were thought to be threatened by the French, the Scots and the Spaniards, there were rumours that the papists entertained foreign spies within their parish gate and rebellion was sensed all around. [6] Under such circumstances it became necessary to subjugate the Church and

to confiscate all its powers. The Tudors needed a doctrine that would impose a religious duty of obedience to the established authority at the national level. A spread of mass awareness regarding the corruption of the medieval Church practices became indispensable so that the people would realise the misuse of power by the priests and rise in protest against them. In consequence they would surrender the powers of the Church to the Prince.

In the reign of Henry VIII, the English people for the first time understood the meaning and significance of a parliamentary form of government.[7] However, by taking charge of the church, Henry did not make it a Protestant one. Indeed as Rosman observes, the confessional labels of "Catholic" and "Protestant" are probably not helpful guides to opinion certainly till the 1530s, for many people held what successors might see as an amalgam of views.

> Some of Henry's counsellors, such as Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and Edmund Bonner, future Bishop of London, continued to uphold Catholic doctrine while supporting royal supremacy. Some people hoped for the introduction of a vernacular Bible, sometimes seen as a Protestant innovation, but held to the traditional Catholic belief in transubstantiation. Among the innovative young clergymen who surrounded Anne Boleyn were men who were to become leading Protestants and others who never renounced their fundamental Catholicism.[8]

Henry is sometimes described as the proponent of a kind of Anglo-Catholicism, and not until the brief reign of Edward VI did Protestant ideas receive royal support. By the time that Mary ascended the throne, Reformed ideas had started taking root in England. In her zealous attempt to revert to the old religion, she could not stamp out its support in England, even though a number of influential Reformed clergymen had

fled to the continent to escape reprisal. One can safely say that till the middle of the 16th century, England continued to undergo a kind of confessional uncertainty. Even at the local level there was relatively little change in the lived practices of religious life.

Yet if Henry was averse to accepting the teachings of continental Reformers, Rosman also points out that by asserting his authority over the church in England, Henry made some measures of further reform inevitable.

> The onus for dealing with ecclesiastical shortcomings now rested with him, and those who had long demanded reform were eager for action. The king had considerable sympathy with those who sought to purge the church of abuses. While acknowledging that images could usefully serve as "books" for the unlearned, royal injunctions criticized the "offering of money, candles, or tapers to images or relics, or kissing or licking the same". This was seen as tantamount to idolatry, the worship of man-made artefacts, condemned in the Bible. Orders were issued for the removal of images to which offerings were made. Sharing his predecessors' vexation at the church's excessive share of the nation's wealth, Henry authorized a survey of ecclesiastical revenues, the *Valor Ecclesiasticus,* to pave the way for a redistribution of national assets. The substantial property of religious orders, abolished between 1536 and 1540, was appropriated to the crown.[9]

When Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses on the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg in 1517 to mark his protest against established Catholic practices, he did not talk directly about political obligation.[10] His doctrines had nothing to do with the doctrine of the divine right of kings. It was not until later in the sixteenth century that it was believed that the King was God's chief magistrate, the lawmaker who was answerable only to God.[11] The King, it was agreed, should have no superiors or co-

rulers on earth. Though the ultimate kind of obligation of any kind must be to God, it was believed by both the Churches that obedience to the King was part of a religious duty of every individual living in England. A controversy arose regarding the source of power of the Pope and the Prince. The Jesuit priests believed that the Pope derived authority directly and exclusively from God and was answerable to no one on earth.[12] Since medieval times, the Catholic Churches had been used to this dogma. But the Protestants claimed that the Scripture did not support this. Nowhere in the Scripture was the Pope bestowed with divine authority. Instead it was the King who was the chosen messenger of God on earth. In the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul says:

> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. (ESV 13: 1-5)

The King was therefore the rectifier, the mender of all the wrong deeds on earth. Tyndale echoed a similar note when he spoke on how the Christian rulers ought to govern. He said:

> He that judgeth the king judgeth God; and he that resisteth the king; resisteth God and damneth God's law and ordinance. The king is, in

> this world, without law, and may at his lust do right or wrong and shall give accounts but to God only.[13]

Tyndale also went so far as to say that the King,

> though he be the greatest tyrant in the world, yet is he unto these a great benefit of God.[14]

Protestantism under Henry VIII was more a kind of religious allegiance for national prosperity rather than a direct confrontation with the Papal autocracy in the church. The Protestants did not altogether abolish the medieval theories but rather stressed them to popularize Christianity under a civil head. The duty of a true Christian was to be a true citizen, loyal and faithful to the state. Every Christian was therefore a subject to the King and this included the Pope too. As a result he too was answerable to the King for the cause of the nation. It was the responsibility of the clergy to assist the national government to convert it to a secular state, self-sufficient and independent of all external forces. The Protestants, in other words, set out to establish a commonwealth programme of unity in politics and religion.[15]

It is clear from the study of historians that sixteenth century England was simultaneously passing through a major economic crisis as well as a religious one.[16] The Tudor government decided to reform religious habits and was eager to appropriate Church property in order to promote economic stability. Henry VIII had received financial and political support from the landowners and upper class gentry except from the residents of Northern England. He found that complaints and grievances existed at all levels of the Church orders particularly among the common man against the corruption of the Pope, who was charged with materialism, selfishness and the desire for self-gratification. Some Catholics derived their authority

from Rome and a majority of the Catholics chose unreformed papacy. Untouched by the severe claims of royalty of the time, staunch Catholics like Sir Thomas More believed that the Pope was the chosen vicar of God. God had not intended anything like the Church Universal, which could be brought under one head. In *A Dialogue Concerning Heresyes and Matters of Religion*, 1528, he said:

> Is it not, this company and congregation of all those nations that profess the name and faith of Christ? By this Church we know the Scripture and this is the very Church; and this hath begun at Christ and hath had him for their head and St. Peter, his vicar, after him and head under him and always since, and successors of his continually and have had his holy faith and his blessed sacraments and his holy scriptures delivered, kept and conserved therein by God and His Holy Spirit.[17]

On the other hand Tyndale and Cranmer following Luther were trying to establish their claims in favour of the King and to formulate their anti-papal theory. More, in his *Apology* of 1533, defended the issue of the papacy in answer to them. He said:

> The Church was gathered and the faith believed, before ever any part of the New Testament was put in writing. And which writing was or is the true scripture, neither Luther nor Tyndale knoweth but by the credence that they give to the church which is this word written Tyndale cannot tell but by the church Why should not Luther and Tyndale as well believe the Church, in that it telleth them this thing did Christ and his Apostles say, as they must believe the Church (or else believe nothing) in that it telleth them this thing did Christ's evangelists and apostles write.[18]

Protestants did believe in the God as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures. "Protestantism thus relies on God as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe,

existent through hidden, being and not nonbeing…."[19] Most of them conceived God as personally addressable and hence the Pope had no function as a mediator between God and Man. His purpose was only to preach the words of God and minister the sacraments. The clergy looked after individual welfare and had no power to make law and present social order. It was the sovereign who was to decide on all matters relating to the Church and the state.

The target of national prosperity set by the Protestants was only feasible if England came under one head. William of Occam had pointed out that a civilization that was ruled by two heads was always in the danger of perishing. [20] Rebellion of any kind was sternly suppressed in Protestant England. [21] The Wycliffite lobby had started a practice of protesting against priests practicing the system of indulgences. John Huss, the Czech priest had demanded the deposition of Pope John XXIII of Bohemia, who was accused of several offences such as selling ecclesiastical offices to children, adultery and debauchery.[22] During the reign of Edward VI (1547-53), a book of Homilies was published. It stated clearly that,

> It is intolerable ignorance, madness and wickedness for subjects to make any murmuring, rebellion or insurrection against their most dear and most dread sovereign Lord and King, ordained and appointed by God's goodness for their commodity, peace and quietness. Yet let us believe undoubtedly that we may not obey kings, magistrates or any other, if they would command us to do anything contrary to God's commandments.[23]

Famous theologians of Edwardian times such as Latimer, Cranmer, Barnes, Cheke, Hooper and Tyndale all demanded a reformation of the Catholic Church under the commandment of a single authority. Sir Thomas Elyot, in his book *The Governour*

wrote that,

> The public weal is a body living compact or made up of sundry states and degrees of men, which is disposed by the order of equity and governed by the rule and moderation of reason.[24]

He insisted that public order could be achieved through allegiance to contract and to law. Elyot's writings were striking for when speaking on the best form of government, he did not go back to the Scriptures to cite instances but adopted a very practical outlook. He supported the rule of a King for he believed that, "…God hath ordained a diversity or pre-eminence in degrees to be among men for the necessary direction and preservation of them in conformity of living."[25] The King, according to Elyot was fit to rule because of his higher birth, wealth and background. A book was published in 1543 asserting the Royal Supremacy, called *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*, which was also referred to as King Henry's Book. It said, "No subjects may draw their sword against their prince for any cause whatsoever".[26]

However, the religious and political atmosphere of England changed when the Catholic Queen Mary ascended the throne. Reformists like Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley were executed and several others fled into exile to Geneva. It was with the coronation of Queen Elizabeth I, that the Protestants regained their lost grounds of glory. Elizabeth was determined to rule both the Church and the state. She was neither ready to hand over England's welfare to the papal authority like her sister Queen Mary and nor did she like the agitation for a Presbyterian form of Church government demanding radical reformation to dispense with the royal supremacy, episcopacy and the liturgy. Both the Catholics and the Puritans were dissatisfied with the supremacy

of the Queen over the Church and hence shared a common discontent. Religious controversy thus became inextricably entangled with the political thought in Elizabethan England much more than in the reigns of the early Tudor rulers.[27]

With the accession in 1558 of Mary's half-sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn, the English church became at least theoretically a "Reformed" one. For the third time in little over a decade, instructions were issued to the parishes declaring a major reversal of religious practice. Those appointed to oversee this process of transformation included among their ranks many zealous Protestants who had spent Mary's reign in exile on the Continent. Yet if at this point of time a thoroughgoing change was not affected, the principal reason appears to be the monarch herself. There is considerable controversy on this point. Some claim that Elizabeth possessed a grasp on the national pulse which many of her astute counsellors lacked, and that she must be seen as being the architect of the Anglican compromise. She was well aware that the need of the hour was religious stability and, unlike both her siblings, she was anxious to make arrangements that would assuage the fears and uncertainties of the majority of the people. Others have seen her as inwardly tending towards the old faith, and that she was constrained by parliaments.[28].

Whatever the cause, the religious settlement effected during the 1559 parliamentary session in her name was a masterpiece to appease those of more conservative leanings. Whereas her father had styled himself "Supreme Head" of the church in England, Elizabeth adopted the title "Supreme Governor". This may have assuaged anxieties about female headship and was certainly less offensive to Catholics who affirmed the Pope as head of the church, and to extreme Protestants who insisted that Christ alone was head. Rosman points out that the Elizabethan compromise is well

illustrated in the communion liturgy of the 1559 prayer book, a central doctrinal document of the new regime. The 1552 injunction, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving", seemed to imply that communion was essentially a memorial act. It appears that Elizabeth encouraged the adoption of the words from the 1549 book, "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life", and had them prefixed to the 1552 reading. The language of the liturgy thus incorporated elements that made it possible for people of varied beliefs to use the same liturgy.[29]

Yet if the Elizabethan settlement served to assuage the fears and uncertainties of a wide spectrum of people, it also marks the beginning of the rift between the Catholic and the Anglican churches. Under this Act of Supremacy in 1559, the English citizens were bound to take an Oath in favour of the Queen, whereby they would owe their allegiance only to the queen and follow Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* of 1549, revised in 1552, which was now the authorized text used in the Church.[22] Elizabeth was determined to develop the common awareness of the Bible which was previously written in Latin and accessible only to the clergy and the selected few. Vernacular editions of the Bible which had started appearing in the early decades, now circulated much more vigorously. The Protestant Church vehemently banned the rituals of Mass and transubstantiation by declaring them as blasphemous and repugnant to the words of the Scripture. Although Elizabeth restored the supremacy of the Crown, she retained the old forms of Church government without bringing any major change in its structure. She recruited new bishops in the Episcopal seats including the one at Canterbury, which had been left vacant during the reign of Queen Mary. Toby Matthew, Edmund Grindal, Matthew Parker, and John Whitgift were among those

bishops who were made Archbishops during her reign. The Queen vested the authority of the bishops in them. Their power to ordain sacraments and to dictate doctrines arbitrarily was disclaimed. It was the Queen who proclaimed what doctrines and sacraments in the Scripture would be preached. Thus the authority of the Scriptures had to be legally sanctioned by the Queen before they could be preached. Elizabeth preserved her Catholic sentiments though she preached the Protestant doctrine. Famous Catholics were retained at her court, and as Edward Norman says, "even the music of the Chapel Royal was directed by a Catholic, William Byrd."[30] In fact the authority of the people preserving their Catholic sentiments did not find it harmful to attend the parish church, which was made compulsory by the 1559 Act in order to save them from financial penalties and social harassments. Bishop Whitgift strongly defended the Queen's position on the issue of social unity.

This partial agreement with the Queen's decrees created a division among the ecclesiasts and intellectuals of the time. The Roman Church became divided on issues regarding what should be the nature and form of the Church of England. Under Elizabeth, there was no definite doctrinal position, no distinctive theology, and no real search for the salvation of souls. The only established form of religion adhered to was in the *Book of Common Prayer* and the Thirty-Nine Articles. Profound theologians thus became divided on the issue of the fundamental content of the Church. J.W. Allen, points out that,

> The one was the Protestantism of Calvin and of Knox, of Geneva or of Scotland, the other was derived from that Catholic tradition which Elizabeth's arrangements modified but did not kill. As a result, the one developed into a Puritanism that became more and more definite in

> aim and more and more antagonistic to the Church established. The other developed far more slowly, into Anglican Catholicism.[31]

Thus Elizabeth's reign can be marked as the fountainhead of Anglican Catholicism in England. This compromise between Catholicism and Protestantism soon suffered a jolt with the return of the exiled Catholic Queen Mary of Scotland in 1568. In 1569, the Northern Earls broke out into an agitation demanding the restoration of Catholicism. Mass was said in the Durham Cathedral, the practice of which had been banned for a long time. In 1570, St. Pius V excommunicated the Queen and proclaimed her as a heretic in the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*. Consequently in 1571 new laws were made which proclaimed that it was treason to call the Queen a heretic. The new act imposed fines and imprisonment for the clergy who refused to obey the Prayer Book and ordered everyone to attend church on Sunday or else a twelve-pence fine (later raised to £20) would be exacted from them.[32] A Homily entitled *Against Disobedience and Willful Rebellion* was published in 1571 and it declared that "all kings, queens and other governors are specially appointed by the ordinance of God."[33] Rebellion of any kind was suppressed and the traitors executed. In fact by the end of the century, all the rebellions including the massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, the Ridolfi Plot in 1572, the "Spanish Fury" in Antwerp in 1576, the Babington Plot in 1586 and the Armada in 1588 were all considered to be the conspiracy of the Catholics.[34] As a consequence, the Queen's wrath came down upon the clergy and England saw the execution of numerous priests. Edward Norman computes this number precisely. The Tudor government was responsible for religious bloodshed irrespective of doctrinal discrimination. On grounds of humanity, it can be charged that religious fanaticism came to be accepted in the name of national ideology and a vast killing took place for which the government was solely responsible. Norman

observes, "… in the last years of Henry VIII's reign, one Catholic bishop and 41 priests had been executed; in Elizabeth's reign 123 Catholic priests were put to death. In Queen Mary's reign 273 Protestants were burned." [35] In the midst of all this chaos most Anglicans adhered to the government prescriptions to reap the benefit, whereas the more orthodox Catholics martyred their lives for a sacred cause. They were not at all satisfied with the Protestant Church under Elizabeth, for it was neither Catholic nor a fully reformed one but rather an independent national Church, that followed a middle course between a citizen's sense of national duty and his religious beliefs.

The Anglican Reformation thus took place in England in a climate of religious fluidity, where religion had lost much of its formal and spiritual significance. .Luther's religion, as Quentin Skinner points out, was founded upon a profound conviction in the utter unworthiness of the human subject. It drew heavily upon earlier views, notably on Augustinian theology, but the extent to which it emphasised the subjugation to sinfulness was clearly unprecedented. [36] He had stressed the principle of "solifidianism" based upon the teaching of St. Paul and St. Augustine. Luther's contemporary Huldreich Zwingli at Zurich similarly had established that salvation lay in believing the essentials of the Gospels and not in the formula devised by the Church.[37] But sixteenth century England was more concerned with the conflict between orthodoxy and reformation. Religious doctrine had become compartmentalized since 1530 and the craze was to renounce pilgrimages, saint-worship, formal penances, pardons, intercessary Masses, and chantries. It lacked interest in mystical life and its resultant pieties. English Protestantism, or Anglicanism, thus evolved as an uneasy compromise of essentially incompatible elements. Doctrine and discipline moved on different lines; the elaborate structure of the Renaissance church in England was harnessed with the ascetic theology of the

European Reformation. The Thirty Nine Articles embodied fairly standard Calvinist ideas. Thus, throughout Elizabeth's and James's reigns, Puritan activism was directed towards the anomalies existing in Church doctrine and did not have any serious theological (i.e. doctrinal) point at stake.[38] One might say that Elizabeth's settlement appealed at once to the strong traditionalist sentiments of English society, as well as fulfilling an emotional need for a national church. What must also be recognized is the fact that the settlement as it brought stability in a troubled nation, also created two major problems, both of which took the shape of extremist activism. On the one hand, it paved the way for Puritan opposition. On the other, it defined the target for Catholic propagandists.

The Suffering of the Catholics

The Jesuit priest William Weston, who came to England in 1584 gives an account of the state of religion under the reign of Elizabeth I. He says that,

> Religion is in almost total neglect. The only god the people worship is their belly and the prince of this world. And now they have had enough of both. Unreckonable numbers groan and sigh to bring forth… It has reached this point now that if we were given freedom to preach and teach publicly, I believe we would hardly see a thousand heretics left within a year.[39]

The following section depends largely on Weston's harrowing account for information. He informs us that the Jesuit priests were not given any liberty to preach their doctrines openly. On 14th December 1584, "A Bill for the utter extirpation of Popery, against Jesuits and others" was introduced into the House of Commons, which came into force from 29th March 1585.[40] No sooner did the session of the Parliament close, than this Act was enforced. Under this Act, Papacy was condemned

as a medieval practice. Popes were accused of idolatry and misuse of ecclesiastical power and hence any kind of adherence to ritualism was banned. Catholics were charged with treason for their dual allegiance to the Pope as well as to the Queen. Harbouring priests and giving them protection was considered a severe offence which cost their lives. It was under this Act that Donne's brother Henry was captured by Richard Young, the chief colleague of Richard Topcliffe, the Anglican inquisitor. Henry was imprisoned in May 1593, for sheltering a Yorkshire priest named William Harrington. Both were arrested. Henry died of plague at Newgate prison. Harrington was brought to trial, and was confined to prison for some months before he suffered a brutal death on 18th February 1594. He was "drawn from Newgate to Tyborne; and there hanged, cut down alive, struggled with the hang-man, but was bowel1ed and quartered."[41]

The Tower of London was filled with saints, priests and martyrs among whom the names of Fr. Jasper Heywood, son of Sir John Heywood, the epigrammatist, and the grand nephew of Sir Thomas More, deserve mention. It was in the Tower that the great meeting between Jasper Heywood and William Weston took place under the supervision of Elizabeth Donne, a staunch Catholic. Fr. Weston describes the trembling experience of his visit to the Tower prison where he saw the vast battle-ments and gate with iron fastenings closing behind him as he entered the prison chambers. One can imagine the claustrophobic terror that prevailed inside, for after moving out of the Tower gates, Weston exclaims that he felt as if he had been "restored to the light of the day."[42]

Such darkness prevailed inside all the prisons of Elizabeth's time. New prisons were being built at Wisbech, Ely and Reading to accommodate the innumerable number of

captured priests before they were sent for trial. In Yorkshire and at Hull, special cells were built where the female prisoners were thrown in.[43] Life inside the prison was uncertain too. Many seminary priests were found dead within the bars without any proper explanation or account. Henry Percy, the eighth earl of Northumberland, who was kept a prisoner in the Towers, was found dead on 21 June 1585, murdered in his cell.[44] Perhaps one of the cruelest instances was the death of Phillip Howard, Earl of Arundel, who died in 1595 after suffering more than ten years of imprisonment. His estates and honours were confiscated during the term of his imprisonment and he was refused permission to see his wife and children by the Queen at the time of his death until he promised to give up his religion.[45]

Life in general had become a nightmare for the Catholics residing in Elizabethan England. Spies were deployed everywhere to provide information about and search for priests in inns, taverns, lodging houses, and even in bedchambers. The Act of 1585 had forbidden the presence of priests within the Queen's territory. All laypersons were charged with felony if they received or relieved any priest. "In the remaining eighteen years of Elizabeth's reign a hundred priests and fifty-three layfolk (including two women) were executed under this statute."[46] The Catholics who had overseas connections were suspected and imprisoned on charges of disloyalty to the state and to the Queen.

This penal code was also in operation against Nonconformist Protestants, Anabaptists and Puritans. Anyone who did not participate actively in the unitary enterprise of the state to engulf the Church within its body under the Act of Supremacy in 1559 fell a prey to the pursuivants. Catholic parents were not allowed "to send their children to seminaries in foreign countries and students abroad had to return to England and

subscribe to the Act of Supremacy."[47] The Five Mile Act of 1593 restricted the movements of the Catholics around the country. In order to break hereditary religious allegiance, furthermore, "some Catholic children of noble and gentry families were removed to become wards of the Crown and brought up as Protestants"[48] Life became so uncertain that it can best be summed up in the words of William Weston, "…at no hour are we certain to survive."[49]

Such was the state of the English Catholics that the general body of Catholics fell a victim to the fears of imprisonment and captivity. They were encircled by pursuivants everywhere. No one or nothing was spared from the stringent search. Any suspect who failed to account for his identity properly was taken into custody and kept overnight before his trial took place next morning. The number of recusants in the Court increased to such a number that the judges had to work late hours to consider other matters of importance. Prison and courts were busy and packed with recusants charged with sedition, rebellion, conspiracy and open hostility against the Queen. To enhance the panic, some spies disguised themselves as Catholics and attended Mass and Holy Communion in order to probe deep into the network and capture the priests red-handed. Poley was one of those notorious informers who remained constantly with Ballard and Babington feigning himself to be a Catholic and attended Mass as an agent of Walsingham.[50] Apart from professional pursuivants like Poley and Berden, there were also Catholic renegades who worked for both sides. Among them were Thomas Morgan, Gilbert Gifford and William Gifford.[51] They not only worked as informers but sometimes got themselves captured and confessed their conspiracy against the Queen. This roused the people's antipathy towards the Catholics and increased their hatred towards them.

After the discovery of the Babington plot in 1585, a mass persecution of priests took place. William Weston accounts that, "… between July 1585 and December 1591, seventy-five Catholics, priests and layfolk were hanged, drawn and quartered."[52] York, Canterbury and Winchester were the chief centres of this persecution. The Queen's Council, particularly Burghley and Leicester were responsible for this extensive massacre.[53] The Catholics did not only have to bear immeasurable suffering for the loss of lives but sometimes, they were even denied burial by the Protestant clergy. They also had to endure the wreckage of their lands, houses and properties, which were raided, ransacked and confiscated.[54] People abandoned their houses in terror and there was a dearth of priests to give them Holy Communion. The Jesuit Mission that had started in the 1570s underwent a crisis until the arrival of William Weston in 1584. He was followed by Fr. Southwell and Fr. Garnet who arrived in 1586 to help Weston. Meanwhile, on 21 January 1585, their superior Fr. Jasper Heywood (along with Fr. Thomas Bosgrave and Fr. John Hart) was sent into exile after a period of long confinement at the Towers.[55] Weston was accompanied by Henry Hubert and Ralph Emerson, the latter being imprisoned at the very moment of his arrival. Both Hubert and Weston "refused to attend church and were consequently summoned before the Bishop of London and deprived of their fellowship of the Inn."[56] The ordinary Catholics risked their lives and gave shelter to the priests, who undertook the task of developing a systematic organisation of the Catholic resistance against the Protestant supremacy in houses, districts and countries respectively. Their task was an extremely difficult one with the fear of death hanging upon their heads every moment. It was during this time that the building of priest-holes came into practice in order to hide the priests in the attic or in the underground chambers. Weston gives a nightmarish account of a heretic raid in the house of one of his

friends. He had to remain confined in a cellar for the whole day, standing crabbed and cloaked with cobwebs on the topmost rung of a ladder, holding his breath lest the least sound should draw the attention of the hounding pursuivants.[57] But this did not dampen his spirits.

From the reports of Francis Walsingham, we come to know that Fr. Weston was regarded as being the leader of the Catholic resistance in England. He was repeatedly imprisoned, and though his life was spared, he suffered four prolonged years of solitary confinement, which brought him almost to the verge of losing his mental balance.[58]

Donne's Early Life

Izaak Walton in his *Lives* says that Donne does not need a lineage to establish himself, for "his own Learning and other Multiplied Merits may justly appear sufficiently to dignifie both Himself and his Posterity."[59] This view may be questioned for though Donne's learning and brilliance enabled him to secure himself a place among his contemporaries, we need to know something of his family history to understand the mind which was at work behind all his writings. He was not only an intellectual frequenting the Court circle waiting to come into the limelight with the help of patronage. Behind all his practical purposes and intentions, was a mind, which was being tormented by the religious tensions that had become an inherent part of his social existence. His physical existence had already begun to commit itself to Anglicanism while his spirit was always sensitive to the agonized cries of his Catholic brothers, martyred at the scaffold. To understand Donne's sentiments better, one needs to go back to his ancestry. Bald observes that "Donne was a Londoner born and bred."[60] Walton claims that, he was lineally descended from a very ancient Family in

Wales. He recounts that: "By his Mother he was descended of the Family of the famous and learned Sir Thomas More, sometimes Lord Chancellor of England as also, from that worthy and laborious, Judge Rastall, who left Posterity the vast statutes of the Law of this Nation most exactly abridged."[61]

Donne's mother therefore had a more illustrious lineage than his father who was a London ironmonger. Donne's father, though a descendant of the Dwns of Kidwelly [62] had been separated from his Welsh predecessors and "was apprenticed to Thomas Lewen, a successful ironmonger and alderman of the City of London", also an ex-sheriff during 1537-8.[63] Elizabeth Donne, on the other hand, was the youngest daughter of John Heywood, epigrammatist and interlude writer. "On his mother's side, therefore, Donne was descended from a group of men remarkable for their intellectual attainments, most of whom won distinction in literature as well as in law." [64] This distinction was thus passed on to Donne along with an independent intellect, which sought to move through a range of experience steeped in life's complexities. In the Advertisement to the Reader in *Pseudo-Martyr*, Donne describes himself as:

> Being derived from such a stocke and race, as, I beleave, no family, (which is not of farre larger extent, and greater branches) hath endured and suffered more in their persons and fortunes, for obeing the Teachers of Romane Doctrine, then it hath done.[65]

Ancestry offered its pleasures as well as its problems and pains to Donne. There is a long record of suffering on Donne's maternal side going back to the execution of Sir Thomas More. The Mores were devout Catholics who suffered civil disadvantages and exile due to their recusancy. Donne's immediate maternal relatives, the Heywoods, also underwent similar assaults. John Heywood fled to Louvain in 1564 in fear of persecution. Donne's granduncle Thomas Heywood who was "…a former

monk of St. Osyth's in Essex was executed for saying mass."[66] William Parry, who once acted as a spy on the Catholics, later was convicted of treason and was persecuted. He was the second husband of Donne's grandaunt, the ex-wife of Richard Heywood.[67]

John Heywood, the second son of Richard Heywood, was Donne's uncle and also a close friend. Donne had seen him suffer greatly because of his refusal to embrace Protestantism. Elizabeth Donne's two brothers Ellis and Jasper Heywood were also staunch Catholics. Ellis was in service under the Jesuit priest Cardinal Reginald Pole, and preached Roman doctrines at Louvain. Both Ellis and Jasper Heywood were elected Fellows of All Souls.[68] But it was the younger brother, Jasper Heywood, who became one of the noted figures of the Jesuit mission in England. He was chosen the Professor of Theology at the Jesuit College at Dillingen in 1564 and remained there till 1581. He was the most successful Jesuit missionary who had been sent to England since the 1570s. However, a controversial decision taken by him over the observance of fasts unsettled his stay in England. The old orthodox priests of Queen Mary's time rose in vehement protest against the newly trained Jesuits sent from abroad. There appeared a rift among the Catholics on this issue and the Jesuits soon started being hated severely. Jasper Heywood was immediately called back to France.[69] He set out to cross the Channel but was detained and driven back to the coasts of England because of a violent storm. There Jasper was captured on suspicion and later when his identity was disclosed he was sent to prison. He was convicted of high treason for conspiring at Rheims and Rome against the Queen. He underwent trial along with five other priests in February 1584 and was proclaimed guilty. Though they received the sentence of death, it was not implemented on Heywood and he was taken to the Tower as a prisoner where he remained for one year before he was sent to exile. The

Queen exempted the Heywoods, both John and Jasper, from execution, remembering their previous loyalty, but they underwent great sufferings during imprisonment. It was during Jasper Heywood's imprisonment in the Tower that his sister, Donne's mother, Elizabeth came to visit him regularly, bringing him information about the Catholic movement outside. It was with Elizabeth Donne that William Weston had entered the Tower for their famous conference.[70]

Donne therefore, had been closely acquainted with the religious anxieties of his time while growing up. Soon after he had been born, the Rising in the North, in 1584, prompted the Parliament to pass a statute (13 Elizabeth C.3) commending all the fugitives to return to England within six months. Those who disobeyed were penalized and their lands forfeited by the Crown. The Heywoods who had fled in 1564 fell a prey to the statute. However, though Donne did not directly have Jesuit education, Jesuit priests like Southwell, and others, with whom his mother had close connections, influenced him.[71]

Like all other Catholics of his time, Donne suffered certain "disabilities at the universities as in other spheres of English life."[72] Under the Oxford statute of Matriculation of 1581, any student who wanted to obtain a university degree and was above sixteen years of age had to sign the Oath and obey the Thirty-Nine Articles. Children below sixteen years were exempted from taking the Oath for they were too young to comprehend the nature of the Oath.[73] It was for this reason that Donne and his brother Henry entered Oxford so early. They studied at Hart Hall, a reputed Catholic centre, where the principal, Philip Rondell, held office from 1549 to 1599. According to Anthony Wood, Rondell "had weathered out several changes of religion, though in his heart he was a Papist."[74] Donne came across many notable

Catholics, Jesuits and Wykehamists at Oxford among whom were Henry Wotton, Hugh Holland and Richard Martin.[75] Though Walton asserts that Donne migrated to Cambridge from Oxford, there is no substantial record proving this.[76] In fact religious discipline at Cambridge was more rigid than at Oxford. The college chapel had to be attended daily or else a fine was imposed. It is possible that Donne occupied one of the medieval hostels at Cambridge which were exempted from observing the religious strictures. Though his mature mind craved for the acquisition of knowledge, it is certain that he could not remain unaffected by the religious controversy of his time.[77] He was a Catholic in a Protestant state. His studies were not only confined to humanist authors but also branched out to learning French, Italian, Latin and also medicine and law. He studied law while he was at Lincoln's Inn from 1592 to1594, after a preliminary one year stay at Thavies Inn. It was the death of his brother Henry that shocked Donne the most.[78] He had been preparing himself for quite some time to renounce Catholicism while he was at Oxford. Henry's death increased Donne's anxieties regarding the impending doom. So long, Donne had seen or heard about the sufferings of his relatives and predecessors. Now it had struck his own immediate family. He had also witnessed his mother being harassed for her obstinate recusancy. For Donne, it was enough. He considered the martyrdom of the Catholics as futile for he firmly believed that, "Wee are not sent into this world to suffer but to Doe."[79] He realised that confinement to Catholicism would offer him only suffering. Time was ripe for him to give shape to his ambitions, even if it was at the cost of his religion. He heard the beckoning call of the Renaissance dominated by new learning, scientific experiment and the revival of the Bible. The Court predominated over men's lives and was the centre of action and contemplation. Donne as a fresh university wit did not find any justification in not reaping the harvest offered by the Court. For a free mind

like his, it was a punishable offence to waste one's merit when just an oath to the Queen could open new horizons for him. He was in love with life at any cost. For Donne, time was something that could only be exploited from within its flow. Like Giordano Bruno, Donne believed in seizing opportunities only "amid the changes and chances of life", for if, "there were not mutation, variety and vicissitude, there would be nothing agreeable, nothing good, and nothing pleasurable".[80]

While a mind like his could not be confined by any dogma, it is also true that he could not enjoy the bargains made at the cost of heresy either. His Catholic upbringing had planted in him a root, which was much stronger than he had considered it to be. He could never forget his inherent upbringing as a Catholic. Throughout his life, though Donne wrote as an Anglican propagandist, his Catholic sentiment never left him totally and surfaced from time to time. He set out to acquire power, patronage and glamour on the roads of Protestantism with a disturbed mind and a fragmented soul, not knowing which of the two Churches was right. His journey as a poet, as a satirist, in the early years of his career was therefore a voyage into an uncertain world. His confusion increased and his moral sensibility was wounded as he set out to make his fortune at Court. An analysis of his "Satyres" in the following chapters will help us to understand his religious predicament better.[81]

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3 D.M. Rosman, *From Catholic to Protestant: Religion and the People in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, Routledge, 2003), p. 18

4 J W. Allen, A *History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1928), rpt. in pb. 1960, pp. 121-24.

5 Allen, *History of Political Thought*, pp. 125-133

[6] E. Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England: From the Elizabethan Settlement to the second Vatican Council* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 8.

[7] Allen, *History of Political Thought,* p. 121

[8] Rosman, *From Catholic to Protestant*, pp. 24-25

[9] Rosman, *From Catholic to Protestant*, p. 25.

[10] Allen, *History of Political Thought*, p, 121

[11] G. R. Elton, *Reformation Europe: 1517-1559*, (London: Collins, 1963) rpt. in 1967, p. 15.

[12] Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 127

[13] Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, as cited in Allen, op. cit., p. 128.

[14] Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 129

[15] Allen, *History of Political Thought*., pp. 157-58

[16] On this see for instance Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (New York: Schocken, 1964); G.R.Elton, *Reformation Europe: 1517-1559*, (London: Collins, 1963).

[17] Thomas More, cit. Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 162

[18] Thomas More, cit. Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 162

[19] *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, Vol. 12, New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1987), p. 244.

[20] Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 124

[21] Allen, *History of Political Thought*., p. 132

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[23] From *An exhortation concerning Good Order and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates* (1547), p. 112, as cited in Allen, op. cit., pp. 127-28.

[24] *The Governour*, ed. 1880, I, p. 1, as cited in Allen, op. cit., p. 248.

[25] *The Governour*, 1883, I, p. 209 as cited in Allen, pp. 135-36.

[26] Allen, *History of Political Thought*, p. 128.

[27] Allen, *History of Political Thought*, pp. 169-171.

[28] On Elizabethan religion, see A.G. Dickens, The English Reformation (London: Fontana Collins, 1964), rpt. 1980, ch. 12-13.

[29] Rosman, *From Catholic to Protestant*, p. 34.

[30] Norman, op. cit., p. 11.

[31] Allen, *History of Political Thought*, p. 182

[32] Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 12-13

[33] Cited in Allen *History of Political Thought*, p. 127.

[34] Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 12.

[35] Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 9.

[36] Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought:*. Vol. 2, *The Age of Reformation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp. 3-4.

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[41] Fr. John Morris, "The Martyrdom of William Harrington", *The Month*, XX, 1874, pp. 411-23 as cited in R. C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), rpt. 1986, p. 58.

[42] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 11

[43] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 42, n. 12

[44] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 16. n.5

[45] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 21, n. 23.

[46] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 16, n. 4

[47] Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 14.

[48] Norman, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 14.

[49] Weston, *Autobiography*. intro. p. xviii.

[50] Weston, *Autobiography*, pp. 105-106, n.4

[51] Weston, *Autobiography*.p.86. n. 8.

[52] Weston, *Autobiography*, p.41, n. 10.,

[53] Weston, *Autobiography*. p. 39, n. 1

[54] Weston, *Autobiography*.p. 41, n. 9.

[55] Weston, *Autobiography*, p, 17, n.9.

[56] Weston, *Autobiography*, intro. p, xxv.

[57] Weston, *Autobiography.*, p. 46

[58] Weston, *Autobiography*, .pp. 29-30, n. 9.

[59] Walton, *Life*, ed. G. Saintsbury (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 23.

[60] R. C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), rpt. in pb. 1986, p. 19.

[61] Walton, *Life*, p. 23.

[62] Bald, *Life*, p.21

[63] Bald, *Life*, p. 26.

[64] Bald, *Life*, p. 22.

[65] Bald, *Life*, p. 23.

[66] Bald, *Life*, p. 24.

[67] Bald, *Life*, p. 24

[68] Bald, *Life*, p. 25.

[69] Bald, *Life*, p. 41.

[70] Weston, *Autobiography*, pp. 10-11

[71] Weston, *Autobiography*, p. 64.

[72] Bald, *Life*, p. 42.

[73] Bald, *Life*, p. 43.

[74] Cited in Bald, *Life*, p. 43.

[75] Bald, *Life*, p. 43.

[76] Bald, *Life*, p. 46.

[77] Bald, *Life*, p. 48.

[78] Bald, *Life*, p. 58.

[79] *Pseudo-Martyr*, cited in Gary Waller, *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*, (London and New York: Longman, 1986), p. 231.

[80] Bruno, cited in Gary Waller, *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 248.

[81] On questions of Elizabethan conversion generally, see M. Murray, *The Poetics of Conversion*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion, 1580-1625*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and A. Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

CHAPTER III

The First Two Satires: The Satirist's World

Satyre I

Donne's "Satyre I" presents to us two figures, a reclusive and scholarly speaker, and a foppish and wayward acquaintance, who importunes the speaker to abandon his studies and join him in a stroll through the streets. We may read this poem as marking a contrast between a strong and stable satirical standpoint, standing outside the instability of quotidian life, and a dangerous inconstancy, which needs to be stigmatized and controlled. However, it is also possible to read the poem as marking a division within the poetic self. The acquaintance that the poem addresses is a projection of the speaker's own foibles and weaknesses, which threatens to subvert the autonomy and stability of the desired satirical stance. If we accept the traditional dating of the "Satyres", a question comprehensively surveyed by Milgate[1], "Satyre I" was the first to be composed, sometime around 1593. The question of self-division assumes importance, as none of the other poems in the series shows this concern. Thus the satirist figure who speaks so eloquently in the other poems is in some sense constituted in the first poem of the series.

"Satyre I" begins with the close confinement of Donne's satirist who shuts himself from the outer world. He prefers an isolated imprisonment to the turbulence outside. The opening lines give the impression of an introverted man who seeks relief from social, political and religious turmoil among his few chosen books. The persona of the satirist is that of the humanist-scholar devoted to the contemplative life, but it acquires a special force in Donne's world. He relinquishes his freedom to move out of his

room and opts to be “coffined” there, where he desires to die. The first four lines of the satire give the impression that Donne’s satirist has withdrawn from life as he can no longer be certain of any good and orderly existence amidst the prevailing chaos of his times.

It has been remarked that the speaker of the first satire is generally mild in tone and adopts more the role of a friend and advisor than that of the classical satirist. In his cell, he confers with God and with the Muses, and presumably the goal is self-reform. But the contemplative aim is changed when he sees the friend “contrite [ly] penitent”.[2] This sudden change evidently strikes the reader. Donne’s satirist begins with a careless repugnance against the fop’s invitation, which quickly turns to acceptance on his part. The constancy with which he had examined the inconstancy of the friend stands no more. In spite of knowing that he may be forsaken midway down the streets, he follows the humorist.

Hester draws attention to a central problem in "Satyre I", the "apparent inconsistency" of the speaker figure.[3] The central motif is strongly Horatian, drawing upon the description of how the poet is trapped into walking down the streets with an over-familiar and foolish companion (Horace, Satires, 1.9). However, Donne brilliantly recasts the motif in the context of the pulsating life of conspicuous consumption and mercantile excess in Elizabethan London. The satirist is aware - painfully so - that the fop who invades his solitary labour will abandon him at the end. Much as the satirist harshly criticizes the friend's way of life, his sexual excess, his proneness to flattery and dissimulation, his attraction towards passing fashion, his servility towards the wealthy, he is unable to disclaim responsibility for his companion. He follows the friend into the street, suffers his wayward behaviour and disregard of advice. The pair

thus might be seen to mark out a contrast of character types, between inconstant foppishness and single minded constancy. However such a view, if taken exclusively, would ignore the possibility that the binary really marks a division within the self, the troubled reconciliation of which is the poem's subject.

On analysis, "Satyre I" presents three interpretive possibilities. It would be unwise to rule any of them out, as the poem seems to validate all three stances. The first is a fairly conventional view, that the satire presents a strong contrast between the speaker of the satire and its recipient. Like his Roman masters, Donne too is investing the satirist's position with a kind of autonomy. He stands outside and apart from those who are satirized, adopts a high moral tone, and marks clear moral divisions between right and wrong. The second possibility, stated quite clearly by critics like Chorney marks a break within a complex poetic persona:

> In Donne's first satire, the ambivalent poetic persona is divided between the scholar moralist, i.e., a man at the Inns engrossed in study, and the inconstant fop, addicted to the trends and fashions of court. The splitting may also be seen as an ironic comment on the divisions between the "private" and the "public" sphere of life.[4]

There is much to support this point of view in the poem. Both the inconstancy of the friend and the ascetic position of the speaker are exaggerated, and may be read as expressing the need for constant self-scrutiny, the identification of error, and moral exhortation. The reluctant reunion at the end of the poem marks at least a partial success:

> Directly came to mee hanging the head,
> And constantly a while must keepe his bed. (111-12)

The third possibility is more difficult to tease out of the text, but may be the most radical. One senses that in the course of the first satire, the ability to maintain satiric distance is compromised by a sense of responsibility, care, friendship and even compassion. Satire as we have seen it with the classical writers may be more or less severe, corrosive or reflective, but the degree of responsibility that the speaker here is willing to assume for his wayward charge is clearly unprecedented. It would be unwise to think that one reading cancels out the others: the poet's tone is ambivalent and seems to keep all three in view.

Hester analyzes the difference between the inconstancy and foolishness of the foppish friend and the exemplary scholarship of the satirist-speaker. For him this contrast marks the tension within the speaker of assuming the role of the Christian humanist correctly. Rather more obscure is Hester's assertion that the speaker assumes the role of the Erasmian wise fool in exposing the worldly folly of the friend.[5]. What may seem more pertinent is to note how there is an urgency in the speaker's need to convince the friend of his folly and his undertaking actions that are the opposite of what he claims he ought to be doing. Like Lear's fool - an immeasurably greater Erasmian figure - the speaker shows himself capable of doing things that are unwise, uncharacteristic and unprofitable, even while inveighing against them.

The ascetic stance that the speaker adopts at the beginning of “Satyre 1” is both overdone and affected. He assumes the persona of a recluse and an ascetic and his programme of study is conducted within a coffin-like space in which he wishes to be entombed with his books after he dies. Nevertheless we may feel a kind of speculativeness getting the better of him. We see this in the care he takes with the catalogue of books and writers that he gives us. His library contains theology, natural

philosophy, political theory, history and poetry. The incorporation of the curriculum of the Renaissance humanist is notable. Learning constitutes for the speaker a realm of constancy, a protection against fluidity and change. The friend seeks to draw him out into the uncertainties and contingencies of the world of experience.

Again one might feel that the traditional satiric stance - classical or Christian - in most cases establishes the speaker in a high moral position or, at any rate, at a critical distance. In Donne's "Satyre I", as we have already seen, the central problem is the formation of the satirist's personality. It is effected by a healing of binaries: between contemplation and action, between devotion to study and a fascination for the quotidian, between withdrawal and engagement. What Donne seeks to do is to reconcile the two parts of a single personality. The friend is the speaker's reflection in an inverted form. A desire for union expressed as early as line 15, "Thou wilt not leave me in the middle street", is finally completed in the return of the friend to the speaker at the end of the poem. This recognition may help us to understand the ease with which the speaker sheds his reclusive pose and immerses himself in the pulsing life of the street.

The satirist's study contains a variety of books, which might serve to indicate the ideal of scholarship that is held up as being exemplary. Unsurprisingly, the list begins with theology, the writings of "grave divines" referred to as "God's conduits", which act as a guiding light through his confusion. There is also a reference to Aristotelian philosophy, unmistakable in the reference to "the Philosopher", even the appellation "Nature's Secretary" which as Milgate observes, is applied to Aristotle in the *Suda*.[6] But he is also the Renaissance man reading humanist authors: a participant perhaps in the new print culture, one who sees the world through a prism of books. In keeping

with the culture of late Humanism, the religious and secular strains have become closely mingled. The library contains political philosophy, history and poetry. Donne's satirist approvingly says that the statesman can teach us "to tie / The sinews of a city's mystic body". The incorporation of political theory, history, and even more obviously, the writings of "giddie fantastique Poets" in the ambit of necessary knowledge, works against the sense of exclusionist Christian asceticism. Thus in spite of the speaker's conscious unwillingness to accompany the "whimsical motley humourist" on his promenade through the streets, the study in itself seems to offer contrasts. It is a living grave, a hermit's cell, a cramped space which will serve as a coffin after he is dead. He scorns the humorist and tells him to go his way and not to disturb him in his scholarly pursuits. Nevertheless, the nature of his scholarly pursuits may suggest a broadmindedness and variety that indicates the ever-broadening scope of humanist enquiry.

Milgate notes that the setting of the speaker's cell is remarkably similar to Donne's situation at Lincoln's Inn, where, according to Walton, he was particularly sensitive to closed spaces, "and such a room might have seemed to him like a chest 'standing'". [7] A chest also meant a coffin in contemporary usage, and this may have induced the phrasing of this section. Milgate [8] also draws attention to a remembrance of this passage in Andrew Marvell's *Flecknoe: An English Priest in Rome*:

> I found at last a Chamber, as 'twas said,
> But seem'd a Coffin set on the Stairs head.
> Not higher then Seav'n, nor larger then three feet;
> Only there was nor Seeling, nor a Sheet,
> Save that th'ingenious Door did as you come
> Turn in, and shew to Wainscot half the Room.

The speaker meets the friend's importunings - marked by the former's reactions, not direct speech - with a vivid recreation of the dangers and attractions of the world outside. In fact the friend's voice is not heard till it erupts dramatically in line 83. Even more strikingly, the possible encounters of the friend with the various "spruce companion(s)" that he is likely to meet are all imagined by the speaker. The Captain, the Courtier and the Justice are figures that form a tableau against which the moral dereliction of the friend is mapped. They are imagined in all the vividness of their bright apparel. The greatness of the poetry lies in the casual brilliance with which peculiarities of dress and behaviour are marked by the speaker. The “bright parcell gilt” of the captain's dress, the “perfume” exuded by the courtier, the voluminous dress of the “velvet Justice”, are all indications of this. This immersion in sensory experience suggests that the cloistered existence thought desirable at the beginning of the poem is seen as moral reform of an individual who is more than familiar with the ways of the world.

The descriptions of the figures imaginatively encountered on the street deserve to be uncompressed to reveal their sharpness of insight. It is here that we see Donne's satirical genius at its most acute. The “forty dead men's pay” that the Captain carries on his cloak refers to the practice of retaining the names of dead soldiers on the payroll and quietly appropriating their pay, one that was widely known and indeed accepted as a perquisite of military leaders. The O.E.D entry under “dead pay” lists several mentions between the sixteenth and seventeenth century.[9] The Captain is seen as the practitioner of a prevalent social vice, but to carry forty dead men's pay on one's back is surely a mark of inordinate excess. Similarly, to appear on the street with twelve or fourteen servants, all dressed in blue livery, is also an extravagance and mark of ostentatious behaviour. It is such subtle asides that make it difficult for us to

wholly discount the traditional function of "Satyre I". In a more general way, the poem identifies and stigmatizes an excessive desire for the company of the rich and the fashionable. The speaker imagines the friend cultivating the Justice with an eye on striking up an acquaintance with his heir. Later too, the friend is hypnotically drawn towards the purveyors and exemplars of fashion and genteel behaviour.

An acute sense of insecurity attends the moral exhortation addressed by the poet towards the friend. The latter's constant lapses into distraction, his uncontrollable attraction towards the moneyed and powerful, appear to be a denial of love for the speaker. What may also strike one as surprising is the need of the speaker to receive the undying and unchanging love of the friend. It would not be an exaggeration to see this as a kind of jealous intolerance of competition. What starts as an indictment of devotion to formal ceremony and exaggerated courtesy, which occasions the paradoxical yoking together of the appellations "Puritan" and "ceremoniall man" (27-28), ends up as a searing commentary on sexual incontinence.

> Why should'st thou (that dost not onely approve,
> But in ranke itchie lust, desire, and love
> The nakednesse and barenesse to enjoy,
> Of thy plumpe muddy whore, or prostitute boy)
> Hate vertue, though shee be naked, and bare? (37-41)

But what should also be noted is the strength of the friend's attachment to the speaker. This is clearly very different from the fawning servility of Horace's companion-figure in Satire 1.9. His waywardness and inconstancy notwithstanding, he listens to the speaker's admonitions, professes penitence, agrees to walk submissively beside him and returns to him after he is beaten and wounded. One might feel that what is manifested here is a weakness or disability, rather than a strong willfulness. Above all

it allows us to map the first satire in terms of friendship, compassion and care. As Annabel Patterson writes:

> These two people, the sociable humorist and the reclusive scholar, know and like each other. They are almost married: ‘‘For better or worse, take mee, or leave mee: / To take, and leave mee is adultery’’ (25–26). Once the humorist has persuaded the scholar out into the street he becomes not a ‘‘thee’’ but a ‘‘he’’, but the tone remains affectionate, even protective. ‘‘I for my lost sheep stay’’ (93). The humorist’s only fault is too indiscriminate a congeniality. And when he finds himself involved in a duel over his inconstant mistress, he heads back into the scholar’s protection: ‘‘Directly came to mee hanging the head, / And constantly a while must keep his bed’’ (111–12).[10]

Considerable discussion has focused on the imagery of clothing in "Satyre I". The friend looks forward to meeting the spruce companion (16) adorned with the gilt, armour and lace of the captain, or towards the velvet scarf of the judges (21), or waits for the great train of blue coats (22). He is never tired of his relentless search for “silk and gold”. The human actors are described merely in terms of their costly appurtenances, and are seen as being solely constituted by their apparel and riches. On the contrary, Donne reminds us, the original state of mankind, "the first blessed state", was one of nakedness. But it would be too simple to see the distinction as being one between clothing as a mark of sophistication and excess on the one hand and happy bareness on the other. The images in the extraordinarily dense passage in lines 38-48 make several other points as well. The friend is accused of attraction towards the gross nudity of male and female prostitutes and a hatred of the pristine nakedness of virtue. The body is at birth and death naked, a commonplace deriving from Job 1.21 ("Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return

thither"). He says that man since his first fall has forgotten the bliss of nakedness and has always striven towards garments that were not his, that were not made for him. The first attire that man had ever obtained from God was “coarse”, for it was given to man as a punishment for his divine disobedience. But a more radical form of pristine nakedness is envisaged for the soul: the body, sinful flesh, now stands for apparel, and as long as we are not divested of it we "from bliss are banished". The speaker however acknowledges his location in the post-lapsarian world. After the fall, it becomes obligatory to be clothed, but Adam receives from God the simplest of attire, made of animal skins. Simplicity of clothing becomes a marker of moral reform. The speaker is also clothed in coarse animal hides, a detail clearly amplifying the ascetic, hermit-like persona affected at the beginning of the poem. Only one detail stands out here as unusual:

> And in this course attire, which I now weare,
> With God, and with the Muses I conferre. (47-48)

As we saw at the beginning of the poem the ambit of study grows from grave divinity to include the labours of the jolly statesman, the gathering chronicler and the giddy fantastic poet. Here too the speaker confers not just with God but with the Muses too.

As many commentators on the poem have commented, the speaker in spite of his reluctance to step out ultimately does so, and this might be seen as evidence of the complicity that Patterson notes between the speaker and the friend; a closeness that overrides the differences in moral outlook. But the actual emergence into the heteronomous space of the street from the safety of the scholar's chamber is deferred, first, for the space of over forty lines, from the mention of the friend's importunate demands ("Shall I leave all this constant company, / And follow headlong, wild

uncertaine thee?", 11-12) to the acquiescence ("loe / I shut my chamber doore, and 'Come, let's go'", 51-52). But another 15 lines or so intervene between this and the actual stepping out ("Now we are in the street", 67). The shutting of the chamber door must itself be seen as a significant moment, for that is all that stands between safety and danger, the pursuit of virtue and the world of temptation. An apparently trivial gesture marks the transition.

Between the closing of the door and the emergence on to the street we find a diatribe on inconstancy, criticizing the friend's infirmity of will. The speaker is aware that this stepping out will be morally retrogressive. The images which are applied are cynical and startling and their point becomes clear only at the end of the passage. The prostitute who has known many men cannot discern her child's father; one can only speculate as to who will be successful in winning the favours of a rich London heiress. The astrologer could more easily anticipate next year's smart fashions. These three unrelated comparisons emphasizing inability are matched by the friend's inability to explain " Whither, why, when, or with whom thou wouldst go" (64). In the event, even such inconstancy or whimsicality does not surprise the speaker. What he feels acutely is that his bond with the friend leads him to act in a way that he knows is wrong:

> But how shall I be pardoned my offence
> That thus have sinned against my conscience? (65-66)

Once on the street, the friend from the beginning chafes under the discipline enforced by the speaker. The street, one might note, is one of the principal locations of Roman satire, both in Horace and in Juvenal. If the scholar's study is regulated by intellectual discipline and ascetic practice, the street is fickle and unpredictable. Studies of

Renaissance London draw attention to its dirt and squalor, its scenes of poverty and vice, its insanitary conditions. Milgate reminds us that the decision taken by the speaker to walk on the far side from the wall and hem in the friend actually places him in greater danger of soiling his clothes with the "mire underfoot and the refuse thrown from the windows above".[11] The friend's restlessness finds expression in grimaces and gestures. There is something child-like about his behaviour:

> As prentises, or schoole-boyes which doe know
> Of some gay sport abroad, yet dare not goe. (75-76)

The use of the words "dare not" again foregrounds the peculiar relationship between the two companions. Even after he has succeeded in getting the speaker to accompany him on his stroll, there seems to be a reliance of the friend on the speaker. We sense in him a trust and need that acts as a reminder - however ineffectual it might be - of his need to obey. The temptations of the street, predictably, prove far more powerful. Initially the friend, now physically restrained, gestures and smiles towards acquaintances and strangers alike. He is drawn by appearances, not moral qualities. So the friend signals towards the "brave", but disregards "the grave". It is interesting to see this as a growing alienation between the two companions as they move up the street. The friend's admonitions now fall on deaf ears, as performing animals were trained to remain still when they did not wish to entertain particular requests.

It is in line 84 that for the first time we find the hitherto silent friend bursting into direct speech.

> Now leaps he upright, joggs me,'and cryes, 'Do'you see
> Yonder well favour'd youth?' 'Which?' 'Oh, 'tis hee
> That dances so divinely.' (83-85)

There is a new energy and excitement in these lines. However the speaker manages to silence him, at least temporarily.

> 'Oh,' said I,
> 'Stand still, must you dance here for company?'
> Hee droopt (85-87)

But the speaker can no longer command the friend's attention. No sooner than he drags the friend away from the dancer, they encounter the tobacco-drinker and the "many-coloured peacock". The friend can no longer be restrained, and he now leaves his companion. Moral exhortation seems to have failed at last: the speaker laments "He hears not me". In this brief section the friend's growing loquacity is what is also sought to be controlled by the withering comments of the speaker:

> He followes, overtakes, goes on the way,
> Saying, 'Him whom I last left, all repute
> For his device, in hansoming a sute,
> To judge of lace, pinke, panes, print, cut and plight,
> Of all the Court, to have the best conceit.'
> 'Our dull Comedians want him, let him goe;
> But Oh, God strengthen thee, why stoop'st thou so?'
> 'Why? he hath travail'd.' 'Long?' 'No, but to me'
> (Which understand none,) 'he doth seeme to be
> Perfect French, and Italian.' I reply'd,
> 'So is the Poxe.' He answer'd not, but spy'd
> More men of sort, of parts, and qualities (94-105).

The friend at this point argues and spouts opinions that reveal his ignorance and poor judgement. His final departure is described in terms of a violent disjuncture. The mistress sucks him away as the sun makes dew evaporate. The friend "flings" himself

away from the speaker to join her, only to be turned out of doors and thrown back into the street, beaten and wounded by her rough companions.

At the end, the wounds that the friend receives drive him back to the speaker. The breach is healed, at least temporarily:

> Directly came to me hanging the head,
> And constantly a while must keep his bed. (111-112)

The word "constantly" reflects directly on the central theme of the poem. The inconstant friend is now forced into inaction by weakness and debility. What moral instruction and watchfulness have not been able to achieve is effected by the last violent sequence of the poem.

"Satyre I" has relatively little of the intense religious speculativeness of “Satyre III”. Nor is it specifically about institutions like the law or the court as in II, IV and V. Even though Milgate sees the setting of the scholar's cell reminiscent of the living conditions at the Inns of Court, it has no direct allusion to contemporary legal institutions. The speaker portrays himself very much as a Christian humanist, and subscribes to a life of learned contemplation. Its troubled other is the *street* which, as we have seen, is depicted as a space of heteronomy and ambivalence. As such, Donne's understanding of the street demands critical attention. As an epitome of the early modern city itself, the street is in "Satyre I", a site of excess, ostentation and moral fluidity.

The city is of course prominent in the classical satire too. Aristophanes's plays, most obviously, are about the polis, the city of Athens and its privileged institutions. In the verse satire too, questions of the city are prominent. Horace's Satire 1.9 describes a

city walk; Juvenal's ninth Satire contrasts the corruption of Roman life with the pleasant life of Cumae. For the writer in early modern England, particularly London, the presence of the city is arguably a more pressing and contested one. We are familiar with the fact that Renaissance London shows an amazing rate of growth, its population more than doubling between 1500 and 1600 and multiplying similarly by 1650. Between 1550 and 1750, the population of London grew from something like 70,000 to 750,000. The effects of this growth have been extensively studied by demographers and urban historians. Interpretations of the phenomenon have ranged from the celebration of civic development to suggesting that the growth was largely unplanned and chaotic leading to social unrest and often intolerable living conditions.[12]

There is little doubt that the rapidly changing landscape of the metropolis is the principal site of the literary revolution of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Ian Munro in a recent study speaks of the way in which authorities often responded to the teeming multitudes by seeking to regulate them, or even to reverse the tide.[13] The advent of the crowded city, and the significance with which it was invested, is best seen in the initial attempt to eradicate it: as for example, Elizabeth's 1580 proclamation against new building or subdividing of houses in London and its environs. This was the first official response to the population crisis of the early modern metropolis, and it begins with an aptly panoramic imagining of "the state of the city".[14] The relevant sections from Elizabeth's proclamation, cited by Munro, make interesting reading:

> The Queen's Majesty, perceiving the state of the city of London (being anciently termed her chamber) and the suburbs and confines thereof to increase daily by excess of people to inhabit in the same in such ample

> sort as thereby many inconveniences are seen already, but many greater of necessity like to follow … where there are such great multitudes of people brought to inhabit in small rooms (whereof a great part are seen very poor, yea, such as must live of begging or by worse means, and they heaped up together, and in a sort smothered with many families of children and servants in one house or small tenement) [15]

The sheer numbers of the city was the first sensory impact that it made. Much labour has gone into understanding the theatrical institutions of the city as being directly related to its demographic changes. The development of prose fiction in the form of rogue pamphlets or urban tales has also been much discussed. But it is clear that the contemporary verse satire also mirrors the same urban vision In this respect there is little difference between Donne's street and that of Lucio in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.

The entry into the street in "Satyre I" is thus an emergence into a space that above all is densely populated. Even before they step on to it the speaker imagines it in terms of the different types of people they will meet. Constant mobility seems to define the physical *habitus* of the figures on the street. They are imagined as being in continuous motion, passing in and out of the field of vision. Famous among the spaces of congregation in London was Paul's Walk, the "unofficial cultural centre"[16] of the city. Many of the adjoining streets were also well known for their opulence, with Fleet Street, leading to St Paul's credited with having no less than 52 goldsmiths' establishments. At the same time the roads of London were often insanitary to the extreme, with refuse and excreta being regularly emptied on to them. Twyning, in his study of literature and social spaces in early modern England, speaks about the kind of heterogeneity that constituted the attraction of Paul's Walk. Other spaces too

offered comparable spectacles:

> Immersion in the heterogeneous crowd was a universal, rather than a utopic or even democratic thrill. Although you could take pleasure in being at once the same and different, it was a materially competitive world. To occupy this unique arena, where social resources could be transmogrified, was to inhabit the very essence of the city. The vigour, the contention, the comparisons, the dynamic juxtapositions, the rubbing together of cheek and jowl, this was where the city took place, in its potential for an infinite number of interactions denied by other types of social space.[17]

As Twyning goes on to discuss, apart from the pleasure of mingling with infinite types of humanity, there was also the pleasure of assuming new identities. He quotes Jonathan Raban's study of city life:

> 'In the city, we are barraged with images of the people we might become', and so in this environment, 'identity is presented as plastic, a matter of possessions and appearances'[18]

The friend in "Satyre I" is strongly presented as seeking to assimilate himself to the characters encountered on the street. He forgets his commitment to his friend at the sight of each of the figures that he encounters, be it captain, courtier or justice. He feeds off the slight gestures of familiarity or recognition that he gets from them, be it a nod or smile. He is willing to act with over-familiar obsequiousness towards them. There is also the constant calculation of profit on his part, a feature that brings to mind the mercantile ethos of the city, a space in which material concerns predominate.

As Twyning also notes, primary among the visible characteristics of metropolitan

London in the Elizabethan age were the extravagances of fashion. The London gallant is continually described in contemporary literature as excessively concerned with dress and appearance. The figure is commonly seen in a critical, often derisory, gaze. Twyning cites Buffone's comment in *Everyman Out of his Humour:*

> First (to be an accomplisht gentleman, that is, a gentleman of the time) you must give o'er house-keeping in the countrey, and live altogether in the citie among gallants: where, at your first appearence, 'twere good you turnd foure or five hundred acres of your best land into two or three trunkes of apparell.[19]

Writers like Jonson and Middleton treat the extravagances of the country gentleman turned city gallant in a severely moral light. Themes of profligacy, moral weakness and even effeminacy are common. Twyning comments:

> To be a gallant one had to be a connoisseur, a cognoscente, of metropolitan goods and services. Clearly, the figure of the gallant functioned as a vector for the massive changes taking place in the city's self-fashioning, and dress codes quickly characterized the enormous stress of transition.[20] (93)

The relevance of this discussion for Donne's "Satyre I" particularly is not difficult to see. What we have seen simply as the imagery of clothing now holds particularly pointed satiric charge. The theme is sounded early in the poem, where the captain appears to outdo Buffone's gallant in carrying the salary of forty soldiers on his back, another example how clothing takes on a particularly exploitative character, marking a fluidity between the meagre rewards of difficult and dangerous employment and conspicuous consumption and sartorial excess. Similarly the speaker knows that the friend will value the persons they will meet on the basis of what they wear:

> when thou meet'st one, with enquiring eyes
> Dost search, and like a needy broker prize
> The silke, and gold he weares, and to that rate
> So high or low, dost raise thy formall hat (29-32)

Later, he shapes his gestures towards people on the basis of what they wear:

> Yet though he cannot skip forth now to greet
> Every fine silken painted fool we meet,
> He them to him with amorous smiles allures,
> And grins, smacks, shrugs, and such an itch endures,
> As 'prentices, or school-boys which do know
> Of some gay sport abroad, yet dare not go.
> And as fiddlers stop lowest, at highest sound,
> So to the most brave, stoops he nigh'st the ground.
> But to a grave man, he doth move no more
> Than the wise politic horse would heretofore,
> Or thou O elephant or ape wilt do,
> When any names the King of Spain to you. (71-82)

His first abandonment of the speaker comes through his seeing a "many-coloured Peacock" (92), who is praised enthusiastically as being the veritable nonpareil of fashion.

As we have seen earlier, the satiric description continually focuses on the superficies of persons, their bright clothing as much as their habits and gestures. This might be seen as another iteration of the *habitus* of the metropolis, that moulding of social practices as bodily disposition. In Donne's satiric vision, the sober and (presumably) normative posture and gait of the speaker is contrasted with the flurry of physical actions attributed to the friend. The moral difference between the two companions is highlighted by the difference in the verbs used to describe their motion. Between line

67, the entry onto the street, and the end of the poem, the friend's body is imagined in different kinds of mobility, which act as an index of moral instability. He creeps, skips, grins, smacks, shrugs, stoops and leaps, all in the space of some 15 lines. At the end of the walk, he "flings" himself away from his companion. Once wounded, and incapacitated, this restless mobility seems to come to an end.

> Directly came to mee hanging the head,
> And constantly a while must keepe his bed. (111-12)

It is obvious that the themes of clothing and physical mobility have strong resonances in the Christian framework that forms the structural context of Donne's *"*Satyres*"*. Here, we can no longer maintain the difference between the position of an ideal and privileged satirist and that of the inconstant companion. The satire here is comprehensive and is directed at the speaker too. It is tempting to see aspects of Donne's biography being illuminated by these concerns. Donne's satirist expresses an awareness of the political and religious situation prevalent in England towards the closing years of Elizabeth's reign. One may even sense a reference to the fact of religious apostasy. Donne himself was no exception to this as his biography reveals. R. C. Bald in his *John Donne: A Life*,[21] describes how on the one hand Donne was suffering for his family members who became the victims of the grim reality of the Catholic executions and how on the other hand, by the end of 1596 and 1597, he was preparing himself for the Essex expeditions. He was no more an uncompromising Catholic when he joined Egerton as his secretary. Apostasy for security and ambition was a regular feature of the l590s. Religious compromise had led to a loss of integrity and values. The friend leaving the satirist in preference for "Bright parcel gilt", or for "a brisk perfumed pert courtier" exposes man's superficial craze for temporal objectives in life. He is easily influenced and is susceptible to change sides for

extravagance and ostentation. The speaker locates instability in the very person of the friend, who is wild and uncertain. The ascetic mask has now slipped enough for us to sense a profound anxiety in the speaker. He makes the friend swear that he will not abandon the speaker. So even though Donne's satirist presents himself as deeply committed to the contemplative life, he has evidently not fully interiorized the poise and balance of the scholar. However reluctantly he goes off with the companion, we sense that he is representing his own inability to resist as inconsistency on the others' part.

Satyre II

Donne's "Satyre II"[22] has received relatively little critical attention, and the meagre amount that it has is generally unflattering. Partly it has to do with the fact that the famous "Satyre III", and, to a lesser extent, "Satyre I", has engaged readers more consistently. By contrast the second satire has appeared to be deficient both in style and subject matter. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this trend. Clayton D. Lein, in a fine essay, argues for the thematic seriousness and artistic brilliance of the poem[23] and Gregory Kneidel succinctly analyses its legal problems. Lein does a fine job of demonstrating the careful use of classical models in the poem, particularly Juvenal's Satire 7. The pairing of poetry and law in "Satyre II" has clearly a Juvenalian antecedent. Hester too deals with the poem in detail. But Donne's poem is not just important as a pioneering and successful adaptation of classical satire. It transforms its classical sources into something wholly relevant to its own time.

At the outset, two points need to be made. The first is that in the second satire, we see the fully formed figure of the satirist, magisterially surveying social ills. The second is that the satire deals with the two areas in which Donne's career was developing:

poetry and the law. Its positioning in the sequence seems meaningful and relevant. Milgate dates the poem around 1594, on the evidence that it refers to the anonymous *Zepheria* (published 1594), a sonnet sequence that used extravagant legal language. The butt of satire in Donne's poem, Coscus the poet-turned-lawyer, can have achieved little more than some of the verbal excesses of *Zepheria*:

> How often hath my pen mine hearts solicitour
> Instructed thee in breuiat of my case?
> While fancie pleading eyes (thy beauties visitour)
> Haue patternd to my quill an angels face. (Canzon 20)
>
> or
>
> When last mine eyes dislodged from thy beautie,
> Though seru'd with proces of a parents writ,
> A Supersedeas countermanding dutie
> Euen then I saw vpon thy smiles to sit. (Canzon 37)[24]

Donne's poem, we will claim, explores sensitive ground. Even though one might well say that the poem merely anatomizes bad poetry and dishonest legal practice, the questions that it raises are, as expected, more troubling and complicated than that.

The poem begins with the satirist assuming a misanthropic stance, claiming that he "hates" the entire "towne". However, we find that this is not wholly true. As there is one thing which is among ill things "excellently best", that is to say supremely evil, other vices and defects fade into insignificance compared to it. The pure hate inspired by the worst thing "breeds pitty towards the rest". There is thus a broad tolerance towards the greater part of society, only contrasted with the savage indignation prompted by Coscus and his antics. In continuation of our discussion of the first satire, we should note that the satirist's world is here too bounded by the limits of the

city. In a true sense Donne's satire is intimately related to the city in both its geographic and moral dimensions. It is no accident of course that the test case for understanding these relatively venial forms of sin is poetry. Donne is familiar of course with the long tradition of anti-poetic philosophical and religious discourse, equally prominent in its classical, patristic, medieval and Renaissance versions. Milgate points to the fact that the best known Renaissance site for anti-poetic views was Stephen Gosson's *School of Abuse* (1579), purportedly the work that prompted Sidney's brilliant response in *An Apology for Poetry*[25].

Donne's satirist appears to accept the common criticism of poets - available in Gosson too - that poetry was the nurse of idleness and effeminacy, sapping men's virtues and thus making them unproductive as food-producers and ineffective as soldiers:

> Though Poetry indeed be such a sinne
> As I thinke that brings dearths, and Spaniards in (5-6)

Yet it would be unwise to accept the satirist at face value, for more reasons than one. Firstly, the whole section is concessive, viewing the poets, even the worst of them, as ineffectual or self-destructive, rarely harmful towards others. Secondly, the passage is, as Hester observes, ironic:

> ...the satirist's attack on the poets begins with hyperbolic mimicry of their detractors and concludes with a catalogue of worse malefactors who exhibit even more serious perversions of the sacred, creative gestures of exchange and community.[26]

Hyperbole is part of the poem's studied ironic posture. So if the satiric phrasing confronts us with the vision of the poor poet being responsible for famine and the Spanish invasion, it uses other rhetorical tropes to point out the absurdity of some of

the wilder accusations against poets. "Pestilence" and "old-fashion'd love" share the same verbal construction: "Ridlingly it catch men". "Ridlingly" is mysterious as well as quibbling, a frightening uncertainty in life like endemic and epidemic disease, or merely verbal sleight of hand, like what the poets are good at. "Old-fashion'd love" might be either the older, more traditional experience of love, but also as Milgate observes, an older kind of love poetry.[27] Again the phenomenon of love is associated with loss of appetite in the lover; the medicine for unrestrained passion is fasting. Burton writes in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*:

> The first rule to be observed in this stubborn and unbridled passion, is exercise and diet. It is an old and well-known, sentence, *Sine Cerere et Saccho friget Venus* (love grows cool without bread and wine).[28]

The rhetorical flourishes of Donne's language here may also draw attention to the problems of accepting the charges at face value. Poetry being a "sinne" that brings in dearth and the Spaniards, is something like zeugma, at least a condensed construction, that is repeated again in the next part of the verse sentence. Poetry like plague and love can only be removed by starving it out. The absurdity of such charges becomes clear in the last section of the verse sentence:

> yet their state
> Is poore, disarm'd, like Papists, not worth hate. (9-10)

Donne's satirist counters the exaggerated fears of poetic power with a vision of weakness and penury. Like Catholics in late 16th century England - the allusion here is very deliberately to another bugbear of popular imagination, the supposed source of countless vices and evils - poets are to be pitied rather than feared. We shall look at the religious setting of the poem more fully later. However it would not be out of

place to comment that if the two forms of identity, of poet and lawyer, are directly related to the writer's own self-image. The projection of his Catholic desire is evidently far more difficult to place within the same framework.

The two poetic types that exemplify the comment are figures of derision, but the laughter is tinged with pity at the miserable lot of the poet, dramatist and sonneteer alike. One, himself starving, writes contrived scenes for doltish actors; the other, seeks to inspire love through poetic rhymes. The two similes used are particularly striking and one might feel that it is through these comparisons that the emotional engagement of the poet is fully revealed. The first is of a prisoner at bar, himself condemned to death, whispering the saving words of the neck-verse to the illiterate litigant. Reading the English Bible and accepting the authority of the Anglican church were ways in which individuals could escape extreme punishment, and here we encounter the condemned Catholic, prompting another with the right words, while himself under the sentence of death. Milgate explains that the specific reference here may be to the reading of the "neck-verse" (usually the beginning of Psalm 51), by which a prisoner accused of manslaughter could claim "benefit of clergy" and escape capital punishment.[29] The second simile likens the poet to an organist playing an instrument in which figurines attached to the organ move when the bellows of the organ are operated. John Stubbs in a recent biography of Donne comments:

> Donne was rather more conscious of the actual circumstances of those who tried living by the pen, and scathing of them for even trying. Many poets wrote for the stage, which was hard work, poorly and inconstantly rewarded. Donne scorned the writer who 'gives ideot actors meanes / (Starving himselfe) to live'.[30]

One feels however that the dramatic poet's relationship with the actors is thus glossed in terms both of curiously selfless altruism and as a kind of agency. In his role of a love poet - perhaps a Petrarchan sonneteer - he is less effective, for the kind of magic that he seeks to perform, of miraculously arousing the feeling of love, has lost its efficacy. This may well be an early indication of Donne's reaction to the conventional incantatory devices of Petrarchan love poetry which are now seen as outmoded and ineffectual.

> ...witchcrafts charms
> Bring not now their old feares, nor their old harmes:
> Rammes, and slings now are seely battery,
> Pistolets are the best Artillerie. (17-20)

The pun on the two meanings of "pistolets", one, as a handgun, tokening a more efficient form of warfare, and the other as a unit of currency, ultimately more effective than weapons altogether, introduces a note of cynicism into the argument.

The satirist seems unwilling to hold the poet in blame for other, and greater, offences. At the same time one might sense distaste for the actions that the poet has to perform to keep body and soul together. The poet who writes for patrons, is no worse than a common minstrel, serenading the feasts of the rich. John Stubbs comments:

> One could not make money by publishing verse; very often a writer had to cover the costs of publication himself. Instead remuneration came (or was supposed to come) by way of suing for the patronage of some wealthy person. In his thirties and forties, Donne was reduced to directing much of his poetry to this end: his elegies and complimentary epistles became much sought after. But as a younger, more independent man this custom disgusted him:

> And they who write to Lords, rewards to get,
> Are they not like singers at doores for meat?[31]

Donne in this passage cites many of the specific complaints that aspiring poets had to make. The difficulties of making a living as a dramatic poet, the problems of patronage and the fear of plagiarism are some of them. However, he is also intensely aware of the defects within the craft of poetry itself. Even though he professes not to be over-critical about such defects, we should undoubtedly be aware of the intensity of his sense of the corruption and meanness that has befallen the name of the poet.

Donne also dismisses the poetaster merely following a fashion pityingly. The worst kind of poet in his account is the plagiarist who both steals and distorts the writings of others claiming them to be his own. The harshness and condescension of the satirist's tone can hardly be missed.

> they are his owne, 'tis true,
> For if one eate my meate, though it be knowne
> The meate was mine, th'excrement is his owne. (28-30)

In fact Donne is willing to excuse the poet of virtually any sin of both omission and commission. If he shows an elitist snobbery towards the plagiarist and poetaster, he is equally dismissive towards the excessively sensual, the abusive and the blasphemous. None he says do him any harm, not even those whose sins are so great that theologians have to discover new dwelling places in hell to house them. The sinner merely harms himself.

The satirist's expansive indulgence towards even the worst forms of sin however appears as part of a larger poetic strategy. The universal pardon prefaces an individual attack. This finds expression when Donne begins to shower his hatred on Coscus

(who, as we have seen, may have been the anonymous author of the sonnet sequence *Zepheria*).[32] Although Donne was studying law, he had no intention of making it his profession. He is contemptuous of men "which choose / Law practice for mere gain" (63-64), and prostitute law for their interest. He jeers at Coscus for writing mean poetry and wooing a lady in legal terms, in the language of the "Pleas" and the "Bench". Coscus, according to Donne's satirist, is both a bad poet and an unsatisfactory human being. He regards his love as a piece of property which can be gained by a shrewd manipulation of legal terms. He is easily corruptible and thus an enemy to social integrity. Coscus's crimes are magnified as the poem proceeds: from a mere poet he grows to be a vile enemy of the state. But then, time, the great governing force of the poem, as the poet reminds us, "rots all".

The satirist goes on to anatomize greedy lawyers. As purveyors of language, poets and lawyers have a similarity. But if Coscus is a bad poet, he is a rapacious and dangerous exponent of the law. Donne's religious satire is remarkably even-handed, for the apt comparison for Coscus's unreliable legal documents is Luther's revision of his version of the Lord's Prayer, initially dropping the doxology, but later reintroducing it. Milgate comments that Donne's later references to Luther are respectful: but here like Coscus he is guilty of abandoning "principles he once held "[33]. Coscus "unwatched" drops the *ses heires* phrase, thus paving the way for his own avarice and lust for gain. Kneidel explains the legal subtlety of the passage well:

> …the anecdote about Luther's flip-flop on the Paternoster underscores Donne's two main points: first, supposedly immutable texts can be altered depending on the circumstances of those using them; and second, these legal texts assert and are shaped specifically by the authority that fathers claim and want to keep over their sons. The line

> that Erasmus and then Luther added to the Paternoster is Jesus' clearest affirmation of both his own filial piety and his submission to his father's dominion: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, Amen." In the context of Donne's poem, it is not difficult to hear an echo of the first sentence of the common law's most sacrosanct text, Thomas Littleton's *Tenures* (ca. 1481): "Tenant in fee simple is he which hath lands or tenements to hold to him and his heires for ever."
>
> Donne's satire, then, emphasizes the contingencies of land law, its dependence on written (or writable) texts and unwritten assurances, and its participation in family conflict.[34]

Lawyers like Coscus merely possess land and property illegally, thus amassing large holdings, but at the same time destroy an idyllic rural landscape. Like Jonson's eulogist of the country house[35], Donne's satirist pines for a more settled and gracious feudal past.

The Erasmian sense of an ethical life well lived is what the poem finally turns to. Carthusian fasts and fulsome bacchanals are equally distasteful to the poet, the aggressive posturing of assumed poverty and the wasteful excess of the landed rich. But the life of active virtue, such as Erasmus advocated in the *Manual of the Christian Knight (Enchiridion Militis Christiani)*[36], is now sabotaged by the schism of faith and works. All, not just Protestants, considered men to be justified before God by faith (Gal. 11:16), but not all agreed that good works could be regarded as the fruits of faith, pleasing and acceptable to God. Donne's satirist finds the value of good works now lost, out of fashion in the prevailing corruption of the time.

We will argue in this study that the anatomy of poetry in "Satyre II" is deeply enmeshed with reflections on a deep religious malaise that grips England. The fullest

and most obvious treatment of this is in "Satyre III", but it can convincingly be argued that in fact all the *"*Satyres*"* profoundly reflect on Donne's religious predicament. As John Carey magisterially demonstrated, and Dennis Flynn subsequently elaborated, Donne's poetry constantly problematizes its Catholic roots, and obsessively returns to the trauma of apostasy. Flynn writes, elaborating Carey's characterization of the position of the English Catholic as being similar to the Jew under Nazism: "We should no more separate study of Donne's life and writings from his and his family's religious persecution and exile than we would separate study of the writings of Solzhenitsyn and Wiesel from theirs".[37] Carey's approach has been criticized for valorizing biography over the evidence of poetry and a more recent study (in 2009) by Molly Murray looks at the conversion of Donne as a more determined event, both sincere and final:

> I will begin by taking Donne at his word: that he was born into the Roman Catholicism of his family, and that he converted to the Protestantism of his nation. This conversion seems to have been sincere, and it was certainly final.[38]

Our contention is that without debating whether the poems are the product of residual guilt at the fact of apostasy, one can see in the poetry traces of an interesting linguistic alterity. Catholic experience surfaces constantly in the satires in certain words, concepts and collocations. The richness and unpredictability of Donne's poetic idiom has many ingredients, but an important place must be given to the specific linguistic habits of an oppressed minority. Given the circumstances of Donne's upbringing, it could hardly be otherwise. Even as he made preparations to join the Anglican church, Donne exhibits a position of religious neutrality and even scepticism. The catalogue of churches in "Satyre III" is evidence in itself. There may be virtue in reiterating Paul

Johnson's observation that Donne was the leading Erasmian figure in Elizabethan England.[39] In a charged section of "Satyre V", Donne writes:

> Would it not anger
> A stoic, a coward, yea a martyr,
> To see a pursuivant come in, and call
> All his clothes, copes; books, primers; and all
> His plate, chalices; and mistake them away,
> And ask a fee for coming? ("SatyreV", 63-8)

In the second satire, we have the confessor, the schoolman and the canonist, the father of the church and the friar telling his beads, all figures close to the world of Catholic practice. Donne has a peculiar ability to use and yet to stand apart from the instruments of his familial religion. Others – first generation Anglicans and recently lapsed Catholics alike – routinely presented the same in darker and often demonic contexts.[40] Alison Shell examines the anti-Catholicism latent in English literary culture. Readers often assume, she argues, a comfortable universalism in the world-view of the English Renaissance, for instance that of the Jacobean drama. She says "… critics of these plays have tended to impute a false universality to the playwrights' conception of evil, and, as a result, criticism has suffered over several generations from a lack of historical locatedness, and from an unconscious entrenched anti-Catholic bias".[41] Donne's Catholic may be biased and narrow-minded, but who could know better than him exactly how harmless they were? Speaking of the poet (an identity he was seeking) he writes: "their state/ Is poor, disarmed, like papists, not worth hate."

The late 1580s and the early 1590s saw an unprecedented hardening of attitudes towards Catholics. Even after the failure of the Spanish Armada, fears of a further

attack were widely advertised. The imprisoned Mary was writing to the Spanish ambassador in Paris requesting a Spanish attack. The Babington plot brought matters to a head, leading finally to the execution of the deposed queen. The ruthlessly efficient intelligence service of Francis Walsingham had seen to it that every detail of the conspiracy was known to Elizabeth's spymaster. Between 1581 and 1588 no less than sixty-four Catholic priests and 18 laymen were executed in England. Donne is writing the satire at the very height of anti-Catholic feeling.[42] If we assume that Donne is by this time questioning his familial faith and experiencing uncertainty and insecurity, his references to Catholics are tolerant, indeed almost pitying. They neither express the beleaguered heroism of the Elizabethan Catholic, nor the savage criticism of the anti-Catholic mainstream. We wish to point to this moment, brilliantly captured in the *"*Satyres*"*, as being an authentically "Erasmian" moment in Donne's poetic life. At the same time, it is a time it is experienced as an *absence* of a valid religious option, a zero-condition of faith.

The second satire is a very early poem, a plausible date being 1594[43], the year following the death of Henry Donne of bubonic plague in Newgate Prison. The uncertainty and tensions of the decade of the 1590s in Donne's life scarcely needs any elaboration. The *"*Satyres*"* as a whole are the best testimony to this critical phase in Donne's life. The reflections on law, patronage and poetry in "Satyre II" succinctly reflect Donne's major interests around the 1590s. Donne studied law at Lincoln's Inn from 1591 to 1594. R.C. Bald comments: "Like his other contemporaries at the Inn, Donne seems not wholly to have confined himself to the routine of law studies but from time to time to have presented himself at Court."[44] Donne's attraction to the Court is easily understood. Unwilling to share the fate of his brother, he regarded the Court as the only place where his soaring ambitions could take flight. There were

other risks too. John Carey points out that with his Jesuit connections, Donne would have been asked to join the Catholic mission immediately after his education. Supremely confident of his abilities, he was prepared to negotiate the murky world of court politics to get on with his life and his career.[45]

But however much Donne temporized in public life, he seems to have been rarely willing to compromise with his intellectual abilities or his religious conscience. Surrounded by poetasters and flatterers, he uses the potent weapon of satire to anatomize intellectual folly. In "Satyre II" it is directed against the state of poetry in England. The critique of bad poetry, of course, is a validation of the art that the poet himself loves and serves. The thrust of the satire is both towards bad poets and detractors of the art. The opening lines relate bad poetry to dearth and foreign invasion.

> Though Poetry indeed be such a sinne
> As I thinke that brings dearths, and Spaniards in (5-6)

The Act of Parliament of 1585, had made it high treason for any Jesuit priest to be found in England forty days after the passing of the act. The state of poetry is similar to that of the poor “disarmed” papists, the focus of draconian law and state terror, but ultimately a demoralized and hapless lot, posing no challenge to the state that could in any way justify this campaign against them. No matter how much they tried, by the end of the century, the Jesuits were a tiny minority compared to the vast number of Catholics who were converting to the religion of the state. Donne’s religious convictions appear between the lines. He compares inferior poetry to “pestilence” and “old fashioned love” that “ridlingly” catches men. If the fear of persecution at least to some degree prompted Donne’s apostasy, the death of Henry Donne in prison of

plague seems worth remembering here. Like Oedipus's sphinx, religious creeds were "ridlingly" catching adherents. On the other hand, the wave of apostasy was prompted by the desire for safety, security and survival.

The powerful images of the illiterate litigant being prompted by the doomed prisoner and the starving poet writing for the idiot actor are equally strongly charged with religious significance. Much as he had distanced himself from the ethos of Catholicism, Donne in his early poetry constantly uncovers the dangerous – and often heroic- edge of martyrdom that the Catholic minority lived on. The first great wave of apostasy was over by the 1570s, and most of the inhabitants of the country had found a place in the new church. For those who remained loyal to the old church, either through personal choice, or as in Donne's case, family ties, some degree of scepticism about the new reading culture may well have remained: Bible reading itself hardly guaranteed religious awareness. The idiot actors that the poet labours for may well represent the complacent and ignorant laity.

"Satyre II" is not mainly concerned with a specific poet, but with a social condition. The seething anger of the poet directs itself equally at "stale" poetry and a society that is unresponsive to poetic effort. He names the greedy poet who writes "to lords, rewards to get", the fashionable scribbler who writes because "all write", and the plagiarist "who beggarly doth chaw / Others' wit's fruits" (25-26). But these poets do no harm, as they punish themselves by starving. Nor do Catholics bother him much, those who outswear the litany and are familiar with all kinds of sins practised in the Church.[46] Towards the end of the poem there comes the famous "*ses heires*" passage where religious controversialists are impartially denounced:

when he sells or changes land, he'impaires
His writings, and (unwatch'd) leaves out, *ses heires*,
As slily'as any Commenter goes by
Hard words, or sense; or in Divinity
As controverters, in vouch'd texts, leave out
Shrewd words, which might against them cleare the doubt (97-102)

R.C. Bald comments: "there creeps a note of impatience, almost of cynicism, at the methods of religious controversialists on both sides…[his] natural inclination to scepticism [is] reinforced by a mood of cynicism in which he flaunt[s] his sense of insecurity".[47] Both Catholics and Reformed theologians of all varieties had played about with texts and translations of the Bible to suit their particular arguments, and Donne seems impartial in his scepticism towards the practice.

The religious background of Donne's "Satyres" is not a comfortable, liberal Anglicanism but the disputed ground that lay between Catholicism, state religion and the various reformed churches. All claimed exclusive and absolute access to religious truth. If the third satire makes explicit Donne's desire for a non-denominational faith, "Satyre II" expresses in a troubled and negative way the same feeling. Donne's attitude here is more ambivalent, evincing an impatience with Catholics and Protestants alike. He is not a hypocrite who tries to suppress his Catholic concerns and adopt unquestioningly the new discourse of religion: the satirist presents himself as a true believer and proponent of a system in which good works originating from faith are of value.

[1] W. Milgate, *John Donne: The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters* (Oxford: OUP, 1967) , Introduction.

[2] See Annabel Patterson, " Satirical Writing: Donne in Shadows", in Achsah Guibbory (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 121.

[3] Hester, *Kinde Pitty* (2004), p. 18

[4] T. Chorney, "John Donne's Satires: How Will They Reform?" *Reader*, Number 50, Spring 2004, p,. 21.

[5] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, pp. l 8-19

[6] Cited in Milgate, *Satires*, notes, p. 117.

[7] Milgate, *Satires*, notes, p. 118

[8] Andrew Marvell, Flecknoe. ll. 9-14; cit. Milgate, *Satires*, notes, p. 118

[9] O.E.D., s.v. "dead pay", 2.

[10] Patterson, "Satirical Writing", p. 122

[11] Milgate, *Satires*, notes, p. 124.

[12] See I.Munro, *The Figure of the Crowd in Early Modern London: The City and its Double* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Chapter I.

[13] Munro, *Figure of the Crowd*, p. 15.

[14] Munro, *Figure of the Crowd*, p. 15 ff.

[15] Munro, *Figure of the Crowd*, p. 15.

[16] John Twyning, *London Dispossessed: Literature and Social Space in the Early Modern City* (London: Macmillan, 1998) p. 123

[17] Twyning, *London Dispossessed*, p. 124.

[18] Raban, Jonathan, *Soft City* (London: Dutton, 1984). p. 64; cit. Tywning, London Dispossessed, p. 124.

[19] Buffone in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, I.ii.37–42 cit. Twyning. London Dispossessed, p. 92.

[20] Twyning, *London Dispossessed*, p. 93.

[21] Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, p. 50.

[22] A brief version of this section has been published in *Essays and Studies*, Jadavpur University, Vol. 25, 2010.

[23] "Theme and Structure in Donne's "Satyre II", Clayton D. Lein, *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Spring,1980), pp. 130-150.

[24] J.B. Leishman, The Monarch of Wit (London: Hutchinson, 1962), p. 114. See also Milgate, notes to "Satyre II", *Satires*, p. 128 ff. The text of Zepheria is available in Margaret Christian, "Zepheria (1595; STC 26124): A Critical Edition", *Studies in Philology*, Volume 100, Number 2, Spring 2003, pp. 177-243

[25] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 129.

[26] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p. 42.

[27] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 129

[28] Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 3.1.5. (London, 1676, no page numbers), e-book at Google Books : stable URL: https://books.google.co.in/books?id=8razRnPRCFkC&pg=PA333&lpg=PA333&dq.

[29] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 130.

[30] J. Stubbs, *John Donne, The Reformed Soul* (New York: Norton, 2007), unpaginated e-book, Chapter II.

[31] Stubbs, *The Reformed Soul*, Chapter II.

[32] J.B. Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit* (London: Hutchinson, 1962), p. 114.

[33] Milgate, *Satires*. p.137

[34] G Kneidel, "Coscus, Queen Elizabeth, and Law in John Donne's 'Satyre II'", *Renaissance Quarterly*, 2008), p. 98

[35] See for instance, Ben Jonson, "To Penshurst", and "To Sir Robert Wroth".

[36] Erasmus, *A Book Called in Latin Enchiridion Militis Christiani and in English The Manual of the Christian Knight*., (London: Methuen, 1905).

[37] J. Carey, *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, (London: Faber, 1981), pp. 15-24; D.Flynn, *John Donne and the Ancient Catholic Nobility*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, p. 176.

[38] M. Murray, *The Poetics of Conversion*, (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 71

[39] Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1976), p. 325: Johnson calls Donne "the outstanding figure" of the moderate, eirenist (Erasmian) third force.

[40] On other conversions to Anglicanism, see Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion*, 1580-1625, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 46 ff.

[41] A. Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558-1660*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 24

[42] On this, see Edward Norman, *Roman Catholicism in England: From the Elizabethan Settlement to the second Vatican Council* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).; discussed above, Chapter II.

[43] On this, see Milgate, *Satires*, Introduction.

[44] R.C. Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, p.53

[45] J. Carey, *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art*, loc. cit.

[46] Milgate, *Satires*, p.132

[47] Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, pp. 70-71

CHAPTER IV

The Third Satire: Of Religion

Satyre III

If the critical reception of the first two satires has been at best lukewarm, the same can hardly be said of "Satyre III". It is not only by far the most exhaustively discussed of the satires: it is indeed one of the most readily anthologized and admired poems of the poet. A consequence has been that the poem has been discussed more in terms of its content and opinions than as a part of the sequence of satires, or indeed in the larger context of verse satire. The reasons for this kind of approach are quite clear: the poem is undoubtedly a profound meditation on religion and life, and Carey's description of its position in Donne's works is highly perceptive. Carey looks at the religious crisis in Donne's early life and sees his apostasy as being neither sudden nor hasty. He writes:

> The poetic evidence of this crisis is Satire III—the great, crucial poem of Donne's early manhood. For most of its length it is not a satire at all, but a self-lacerating record of that moment which comes in the lives of almost all thinking people, when the beliefs of youth, unquestioningly assimilated and bound up with our closest personal attachments, come into conflict with the scepticism of the mature intellect. The poem begins in a flurry of anguish and derision, fighting back tears and choking down scornful laughter at the same instant.[1]

Richard Strier, in a deeply perceptive study of the third satire, observes that whereas the first two satires establish "a dialogic frame" at their beginnings, the third is without a clear interlocutor.[2] It is in fact for the most part a series of troubled

reflections on the part of the speaker himself, only occasionally acknowledging the presence of an addressee. Moreover, the addressee is not individualized in the manner of "Satyre I" or complicit in the scathing criticism of the abuses of poetry and law as in “Satyre II". One could well say that the silent and unresponding listener in "Satyre III" is the speaker himself, or a poetic projection of his own uncertainties. It is in this context that the powerful use of imperatives in "Satyre III" become more telling and enigmatic: "seeke true religion", "doubt wisely" are exhortations to the thinking Christian, one who understands the perilous need for divine grace and succour, but is also aware of the man-made divisions and fragmentation of God's church.

The date of the third satire is not clearly determined. In line with Drummond of Hawthornden's comments, Milgate suggests a date of around 1594 or 1595, on the eve of Donne's volunteering for service in the Cadiz expedition. Other conjectures are widely at variance: P.E Sellin argues that the date should be set more than 20 years later, in 1620.[3] Internal evidence is notoriously uncertain, and in the absence of any firm reason to disturb the traditional sequence, it may be advisable to go along with it. Annabel Patterson gives an interesting reason for supporting a sequential dating:

> Drummond of Hawthornden, who seemed to know a good deal about Donne’s satires by way of Ben Jonson, implied that their numerical order was also the order of composition. Though written at different moments over a five- or six-year period, they retroactively create a master narrative: a story of increasing social knowledge and analytic power, of increasing disillusionment, followed by compromise. There is no such narrative in the satires of any of his contemporaries. One can rearrange the satires of Hall or Guilpin or Marston with no loss (or gain) of coherence. In fact, the more one returns to Donne’s satires after having attempted to read the satires of Hall, Guilpin, and especially Marston, whose hysterical overstatement makes it

> impossible to concentrate on what his target might be, the more they rise above the group project of being satirical in late Elizabethan London. They are simply better, more interesting[4]

The first line of "Satyre III" reveals a man who is deeply engrossed in religion. Through the voice of a single dramatic persona the satirist expresses the precarious condition of man's existence on earth.

> I must not laugh, nor weep sins, and be wise. (3)

He begins with "kind pity" for the sinners and "brave scorn" for the sins of his days. Yet he knows that railing cannot cure the "worn maladies". The worn maladies that Donne points to are the afflictions of the mind, the weaknesses in our ratiocinative powers. Three parts were customarily distinguished - the memory, the understanding and the will. Hester points out that in the baptismal sermon, Donne's major concern is that man's rational faculties "had fallen into a third Trinity". "The memory [had fallen] into a weakness that comprehends not God, it glorifies not what is true: and the will to a perverseness that wishes not what's good."[5] The only way by which man could attain salvation was by searching eternal truth with complete devotion. "Faire Religion" is the satirist's mistress, whom he desires to serve ardently. The satirist can only serve fair religion by denouncing the worldly gains and seeking the truth. He no more says:

> For better or worse take me, or leave me.("Satyre I", 25)

The confidence in worldly activities, which had thrown a challenge to the hidden God, now changes to a tone of contempt for worldly pursuits and endeavours and

finally commits itself to total surrender of human existence to the power of the Almighty.

"Satyre III" begins by balancing scorn and pity, two emotions warring with each other. The extreme compression of the language demands close attention. "Kinde pitty", clearly a human and humane disposition, forcibly restrains the production of the physiological secretions of the spleen, principally bile, the cause of melancholy (and also in other authorities the source of laughter).[6] But the proud scorn of the speaker bans the tears which naturally well up in the speaker's eyes, a result undoubtedly of his sympathy with the human condition. Strier sees scorn as enforcing a masculine interdiction on the natural and feminine birth of the tears, which "swell" the poet's eyelids, easily imagined as a kind of pregnancy.[7] If thus the speaker is seen fleetingly as both masculine and assertive on the one hand, preferring scornful laughter, and feminine and prone to natural but unproductive melancholy - two emotions warring with each other - the proper course of action is a reasoned withdrawal from the extremes of emotional response. He advises himself to "be wise". The preferred path may be philosophically more desirable, but comes of denying the physicality of the earlier responses, by engaging with the question purely on the intellectual plane. There is no break between the injunction to be wise and the interrogative sentence that constitutes line 4:

> Can railing then cure these worne maladies?

It is to be noted that efficacy of the solution is not guaranteed, but remains a question. If railing is the answer or response of the satirist, the approach of vituperative satire in the Lucilian or Juvenalian mode is by no means given unquestioned authorial support. The line remains in suspension in the poem, only tenuously connected with what

comes before and after. The moral fervour and sense of doubt in the questions which pour forth seem to suggest that railing may not be the immediate answer either.

> Is not our Mistresse faire Religion,
> As worth'of all our Soules devotion,
> As vertue was to the first blinded age?
> Are not heavens joyes as valiant to asswage
> Lusts, as earths honour was to them? (5-9)

One notes that a peculiar inversion occurs in these lines: there is no hesitation or doubt in declaring that the pagan philosophers were committed to virtue, whereas the absence of Christian devotion to "faire Religion" occasions a troubled question. What should have been easy, or universal, or self-evident, is conspicuous by its absence.

Paul Johnson described Donne as "the outstanding figure" in the moderate, ecumenical version of Christianity that appeared possible in England in the early Jacobean period, and notes his irenical approach towards religion, his belief that there were different routes to heaven. As he wrote to his Catholic correspondent Toby Matthew in a letter probably of August 1619: "Men go to China both by the Straits and by the Cape". [8] The larger context of Johnson's discussion of the third way (apart from doctrinaire Catholicism and rigid Protestantism) establishes its greatest and most charismatic exponent as being Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam. Whatever may be scholarly opinion about the nature of Donne's Anglicanism, there is no doubt that the presence of Erasmian moderation is a powerful one in "Satyre III": in fact its entire philosophy may be thought of as being Erasmian in character. We shall take this question up in greater detail later, but the incomprehension that Donne experiences when considering the lack of concern for "faire Religion" in his times is reminiscent

of a famous passage from Erasmus's *Paraclesis* or Exhortation that prefaced his 1516 edition of the Greek New Testament:

> We can not call any man a Platonist, unless he have read the works of Plato. Yet call we them Christian, yea and divines, which never have read the scripture of Christ. Christ sayeth, he that loveth me doth keep my sayings, this is the knowledge and mark which he hath prescribed. Therefore if we be true Christian men in our hearts, if we believe unfeignedly that he was sent down from heaven to teach us such things as the wisdom of the philosophers could never attain, if faithfully we trust or look for such things of Him, as no worldly prince (be he never so rich) can give unto us, [then] why have we any thing in more reverence and authority, then his scripture, word, and promise, which he left here among us to be our consolation?[9]

Virtue and honour appear as sufficient spurs to the good life for pagans. Importantly, the pursuit of honours enables the pagan hero - not necessarily a philosopher - to subdue physical desire. The pagans seem in fact to better off on the whole. It may be that they give a better account of themselves than the Christians who have the most efficacious means for attaining heavenly joy.

The description of "the father's spirit" encountering pagan philosophers in heaven presents us with a host of interpretive problems. First of all, it is never explained whose father is being alluded to: that of the speaker himself or that of the supposed and elusory listener. It might be pertinent to note that Donne's father himself, a devoted Catholic and London businessman, had died in 1576, after which his mother married again. One also notes that the sentence is in the interrogative, framing the meeting between the spirit and the "blinde Philosophers" as a speculative possibility rather than something certain. The possibility that virtuous pagans would be granted

happiness in the afterlife is, as Milgate points out, supported by biblical authority, and repeated in patristic and later commentary.[10] However, a number of small points need to be noted. The first is that the pagan philosophers are seen to be squarely in heaven, not in purgatory or limbo. The process by which they reach heaven however does not follow any standard theological line. The "imputation of faith" necessary for salvation much discussed in Protestant circles was an external supplement, a product of God's saving grace, and was thus squarely opposed to any real notion of merit. For Luther, as for many later Reformers, all saints were inevitably sinners too, and the question of any intrinsic goodness or merit could not be admitted. As Strier observes:

> It turns out that salvation is by faith, after all, and Donne is speculating or postulating that "merit/ Of strict life" may be imputed faith." This is a startlingly un-Lutheran use of the key Lutheran concepts of "imputation" and faith, since the force of the notion of "imputed" righteousness was precisely to oppose the philosophical, classical, and "common sense" idea of achieved, actual righteousness.[11]

It is also unclear as to how the "father's spirit" reaches heaven. In effect there is no statement as to whether the father is saved by merit or by imputed faith. One notes that it is the son who is the recipient of the teaching about "easie wayes and neare / To follow", and the teacher is in this case the father. It is presumably a form of Christian teaching but beyond that there is no specification as to what form of Christian action constitutes "easie wayes". In any case, there is evidently no special distinctiveness being claimed for Christian life: pagans may be saved, and Christians damned.

The satirist next presents us with a world of varied earthly endeavours full of eccentricity and zeal for temporal ends. Donne's world of satire is busy, positively crowded, almost as full and various as that of Jonson's comedies. Donne draws out

characters from every section of society to bring them together. Donne vividly records the human follies of running after material achievements. He does this skilfully with the help of the images of sea and war. He mocks at the false courage of man in participating in wars seeking victory. He says:

> Dar'st thou aid mutinous Dutch, and dar'st thou lay
>
> Thee in ships' wooden sepulchres, a prey
> To leaders' rage, to storms, to shot, to dearth?
>
> Dar'st thou dive seas, and dungeons of the earth? (17-20)

As Hester points out, all these actions are descents[12] (dive, lay, cryes, yield) evocative of man's helplessness and failure to remember who made them and for what purpose. The satirist condemns their "courage of straw" (28) that leads to spiritual suicide. Man must realise and acknowledge his given task. He must realise that life on earth is a military service. Our whole life is warfare, "militia vita" and God would not choose cowards.

Donne makes man aware of his duties as a guard in the garrison of God. Donne's satire becomes a vehicle of Christian devotion. We are sent as so many soldiers into this world, to strive with it, the flesh, the devil; our life is warfare, and who knows it not. Like Burton, he deals with each in turn: the foul Devil (33-35), the World (36-39) and last, Flesh (39-42).[13] Man has encountered these three eternal foes since creation. Man is foolish to taste the joys of flesh for the flesh itself has no power to taste joy but owes all its power to the soul. Milgate observes that Donne further goes on to explain the function of the soul in "The Ecstasy", and in "The Progress of the Soul".[14]

The speaker now imagines a whole list of dangerous and life-threatening activities that human beings engage in with impunity, manifesting thus a kind of peculiar perversity. Men have no qualms in engaging in dangerous activity in war, or in love, or for the sake of discovery. But when it comes to being brave in God's cause they are found to be wanting. When called upon to act as Christ's soldiers in the war of life, they show themselves to be unprepared for combat. The fear of damnation is for the speaker a form of unparalleled courage:

> O if thou dar'st, feare this;
> This feare great courage, and high valour is.

The word "dar'st" is repeated in the next line, but whereas the fear of damnation is courage, other forms are less substantially so. Of course, Donne's intense speculativeness reveals itself in the minute detail in which these forms of supposed courage are rendered in the poem. In fact there is even a kind of reluctant admiration of the immense resourcefulness of the human spirit, even while considering them of little value in the spiritual realm. They are in fact summed up contemptuously in the words "courage of straw". Thus Englishmen aid the Dutch in their struggle against the Spanish, they voyage in mouldering ships, they delve into the depths of the seas, travel to the far corners of the earth, and fight imaginary duels to avenge slighted mistresses. Even as he derides these vainglorious forms of enterprise, he acutely imagines the agents in fine detail. The travellers to northern climes and the equator are described as:

> ... thrise
> Colder then Salamanders, like divine
> Children in th'oven, fires of Spaine, and the line,
> Whose countries limbecks to our bodies bee,

Canst thou for gaine beare? (22-26)

We note that men put up with such untold sufferings "for gaine", not out of a pure spirit of adventure. The “gaine" may be economic or of any other kind, but it is sufficient to make individuals face both the dangers of the Spanish Inquisition (fires of Spain) and physical suffering. Evidently human beings are unable to see properly what constitutes true "gaine".

It is difficult to miss the Erasmian cast of the image of the beleaguered city and its unwilling defenders. Erasmus's *Enchiridion Militis Christiani,* or *the Handbook of the Christian Soldier* (1501, the work was translated into English by William Tyndale in 1533). This was one of most widely circulated spiritual manuals of the Renaissance which went into more than 50 editions and countless translations. The title of the work is a pun, conflating the little dagger and the little book, both serviceable tools in the battle against the Devil. It is addressed to a soldier, but its recommendations are relevant to the larger Christian community. For Erasmus, the apparent peacefulness of our human lives is delusive, for it is actually a furious kind of activity, full of sieges and attacks. The failure to perceive life as such means that we have in fact lost the war and capitulated to the foe.[15]

> It is a marvellous thing to behold how without care and circumspection we live, how idly we sleep, now upon the one side, and now upon the other, when without ceasing we are besieged with so great a number of armed vices, sought and hunted for with so great craft, invaded daily with so great lying await. Behold over thy head wicked devils that never sleep, but keep watch for our destruction, armed against us with a thousand deceits, with a thousand crafts of noysances, which enforce from on high to wound our minds with weapons burning and dipped in deadly poison ...[16]

Of all Donne's “Satyres”, the third is undoubtedly the closest to Erasmus in spirit, and as we shall try to show, the discussion of forms of belief is illuminated by a consideration of Erasmus's "philosophia Christi."

The repeated imperatives in the poem are a sign of its moral urgency and hortatory character. "Know thy foes": the speaker advises us and proceeds to itemize them conventionally as the Devil, the World and the Flesh, the triad of enemies of the soul. The Litany in the Book of Common Prayer (reiterates the commonplace in reverse order: "[F]rom all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil, Good Lord, deliver us". In the poem the first is imagined in a military metaphor, the next in one of perverse sexuality. One notes that the world stigmatized in terms of its decrepitude is not the one which is mentioned in line 31, where the interlocutor is described as "Sentinell in his (i.e., Christ's) worlds garrison". In line 35 the world reappears as Satan's realm, changes into a mortal enemy, and then into the aged prostitute. The final element of the triad, the flesh, is imagined in conventional contrast with the soul. The sensory faculties of the body are singled out, as they are seen to determine the access of the body to forms of pleasure. The soul on the contrary is seen in its enabling and cognitive function. Human beings, we are told, love pleasure, but are heedless of the source of power that enables us to recognize these pleasures.

The true function of courage, as Thomas Moore points out in an important article, is the pursuit of true religion.[17] If the images of rotting and aging flesh are necessary to stigmatize one kind of carnal love, its desirable counterpart is the love of the "faire" mistress, Religion. The next section too is inaugurated by a powerful imperative: "Seeke true religion". But if the earlier section offered a way of distinguishing between the pleasures of worldly existence and those spiritual or divine in nature, we

might be led to believe that the latter are at least permanent and unmistakeable. But the attempt to turn to religion as an antidote to carnal pleasure results in an agonized question: "O where?" Moore observes:

> However, in a diseased world, such a command is not easy to obey, as the question which immediately follows it suggests: "O where?" This question reflects the central religious problem of Donne's time, namely, which of the existing Christian churches was really the one true church? Each church, needless to say, had its own opinion and devoted much time, energy and propaganda in defending its own claims and belittling those of the others. Yet, the very fact that the question existed is proof that the one true church could no longer be located with absolute certainty.[18]

The list of adherents to various churches has occasioned much discussion. It has been suggested, as for instance by Grierson, that it is a comment on the unreflective quality of religious belief at large: "the religion of most men is largely a matter of accident."[19] Moore, and following him Hester, regards the five named persons as "bad examples". They merit ridicule "not because of the practices of their specific sects but because of the lack of understanding their individual choices"[20] Considering that this particular section is the properly "satiric" part of this poem, it would be unwise to read it in any straightforward way. The debate whether Donne was at the time of composition of this poem more inclined towards Catholicism or towards Anglicanism is unlikely to be settled easily. However, it is to be noted that it is not just individuals who are being satirized, but *justifications* for particular forms of belief. Also it seems likely that they are all types of English believers or non-believers, one looking at the Roman Church, the other at Geneva; one an agnostic, the other embracing some kind of extreme

ecumenism. The third type is one who stays with the church of his country, out of inertia rather than genuine belief.

As the satirist describes the religious pursuits of the five seekers of religion, he gets involved in the controversy about where religion dwells - whether it dwells in the painted Church of Rome or in the naked, plain church of Geneva or somewhere else. Perhaps Donne was not sure which body of Divinity to follow, whether to follow the Reformed Church or the Roman Church. To the five lovers of religion, it is a practical – even political - necessity to follow a religion; their concern is not to devote both mind and soul for the understanding of the divine will. The search for true religion will fail whenever it is directed, and followed with superficial motives. Donne later identifies such errors in understanding religion in *Sermons* VIII, lines 364-65. This error corresponds to that abuse of reason which Augustine called *scientia*, knowledge only of this world, in contrast to *sapientia*, knowledge of the next world.[21] Man must try to reach Truth by a continuous mental quest – "Winne so yet strive", thus echoing the admonition of St. John that "man must work the works of Him that sent [him], while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9. 4). Man must necessarily pursue a religion and seek truth. The satirist with all earnestness and moral gravity advises man to abandon the conventional attitudes towards life and religion and to adhere to a true faith in God; for truth, says Donne, is older than falsehood:

> though truth and falshood bee
> Neare twins, yet truth a little elder is; (72-73)

One may wonder which true religion Donne was talking about. The true religion was that which was nearest to the Primitive Church. All the Churches claimed to present the primitive Gospel. The point is that in the seventeenth century it was not possible

to maintain a non-institutional personal faith in the Primitive Gospel. So Donne is asking us to adopt an antinomian attitude (which is unlikely) or suggesting that labels do not matter.

Leishman writes, "[b]ut later in his sermons and public controversies Donne admits a feeling of unity, with all Churches, who believe in God and in Christ".[22] Therefore the conflict between the old and the reformed faiths was not the only, nor perhaps the principal, trouble for Donne's enlightened mind, ready to recognize in all the Churches virtual beams of one sun, 'connatural pieces of one circle'. A harder fight was that between the secular and the man-of-the-world temper of his mind and the claims of a pious and ascetic calling.[23]

> To'adore, or scorne an image, or protest,
> May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
> To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
> To sleepe, or runne wrong, is. (76-79)

The satirist does not merely scorn or mock at men and criticise them but also provides them with a way to inquire about truth. The tone of the speaker as a satirist no longer has that brave scorn and kind pity for the people around but like preachers and moralists of other ages he brings to his denunciation images of corruption and advises men to seek truth.

> Be busie to seeke her, believe mee this,
> Hee's not of none, nor worst, that seekes the best. (74-75)

Donne now performs a dual function, that of the satirist who digs out the follies of every aspect of life and that of the religious preacher who asks man to believe in God.

Bald writes that it was the practice at that time to refer recusants, especially converts, to some theologian of distinction who would then hold a series of conferences with them on matters of faith and doctrine. The Dean of Gloucester to whom Donne showed his annotated copy of Bellarmine's writings was Antony Rudd, who became Bishop of St. David's in 1594. Donne "must have been able to persuade Rudd that his attitude towards Bellarmine was by no means uncritical and that he was far from being an unyielding Catholic."[24] In "Satyre III", Donne tries to convince man about religion, to distinguish appearance from reality. Yet in "Satyre IV" he realises that however violently a satirist scorns, he cannot correct vice and folly. It is the preacher not the poet who has the means of cleansing and purifying society:

> 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; ("Satyre IV", 237-41).

There is no doubt that Donne is here sailing very close to the wind. If one considers the many forms of religious controversy in the Elizabethan period, one is likely to find a great deal of savage invective against particular options: against the Catholics, or even against forms of Elizabethan Puritanism. The Puritan preachers were equally likely to criticize the Anglicans as being insufficiently reformed, either in respect of specific ecclesiastical practices or even in support of the demand for "root and branch" reform. There was an available space for this kind of polemic as well. What "Satyre III" consciously forgoes is a stable position within this framework. "Faire Religion", the acknowledged object of devotion seems to disavow any recognizable form of private or institutional faith. The satiric content of "Satyre III" appears to be

truly radical here, not through a Juvenalian excess, but through a cancellation of available options.

The characterization of the different figures is profoundly satiric, even reductive. The satirist's attitude towards their forms of belief is dismissive and belittling. Apart from the Catholic Mirreus, the others are accused of sexual excess or perversity. There is a slight difference in tone after line 48. More importantly, one notes that the continued analogy between religion and objects of sexual desire transforms the initial image of religion as the faire Mistress in shocking ways. We also find that Mirreus, who appears to represent Catholic recusancy, and turns to Rome on account of its greater antiquity, is relatively lightly let off. His error is to confuse antiquity with religious value. He ends up valuing the rags - which might remind us of the "decrepit wayne", of the world mentioned earlier, and certainly alludes to Catholic relic worship. However, idolatry is suddenly merged with quite a different order of reference. The rags that constitute the object of servile devotion are compared to the political subservience shown towards the canopy under which the queen sat. Even apart from the political edginess of the reference, there seems little difference between Catholic relic-worship and Anglican state religion.

If Elizabethan religion were to be represented in a linear form, two small areas at two ends would have to be marked off as representing the options of Catholicism and "Puritanism", the immeasurably greater central part standing for the Anglican church. But whereas to be a Catholic was to cut oneself off irretrievably from both English religious and social life, what we call Puritanism was largely a movement within the Anglican church itself. If Crants is a Calvinist, we should remember that the English church itself was not inhospitable to Calvinist ideas. The 39 Articles that stood

between the Catholic and the Anglican church created no barrier for the Calvinist, for they were largely based upon Calvin's teachings. In a well-known essay Nicholas Tyacke argued that the Elizabethan church was largely able to reconcile Calvinist doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline, thus satisfying the need for reformed religion on the one hand and the familiarity of traditional church practices on the other.[25] Yet it is also true that the harshest criticism of the English church came from Calvinist divines who advocated a thoroughgoing reform of the church and the removal of a hierarchical official clergy.

Crants represents the latter kind, perhaps that of the Presbyterian extreme. He scorns the "brave" religion of Rome. The O.E.D. gives the meaning "finely-dressed… splendid, showy, grand, fine, handsome". The "rags" of the earlier portrait now reappear as gorgeous attire. Contrasted with that is the "plaine religion" of Geneva, indicating not merely simplicity of attire, but if one likes, an intentional slovenliness. Milgate observes that the distinction between the religious practices of Rome and Geneva is frequently made in Donne's sermons, and cites a passage in Sermon 14 (1625). The whole passage is worth quoting:

> ...for as Moses says, That *the Word of God is not beyond Sea*, so the Church of God is not so *beyond Sea,* as that we must needs seek it *there*, either in a *painted Church*, on the one side, or in a *naked Church*, on another a church in a *Dropsie*, overflowne withe *Ceremonies*, or a church in a *Consumptio*n for want of such Ceremonies, as the primitive church found usefull and beneficiall for the advancing the glory of God, and the devotion of the Congregation.[26]

The comfortable advocacy of a mean or via media, such as that offered by Anglicanism, that we find in this sermon is of course singularly absent from "Satyre III". However, the contrast between the Roman and the Genevan as being one of overmuch and too little is visible here as well. The image of Crants's religious devotion is given, as we have earlier pointed out, a shockingly physical character. The sexual component of "true religion" is now made fully explicit, and the reference to the earlier evocation of the “faire Mistresse” is unmistakeable. It is represented as an exclusive devotion to a graceless and ill-formed person. The speaker sees this as being a familiar, yet reprehensible sexual perversity, which comes out in the misogynistic language of the qualifying description:

> As among
> Lecherous humors, there is one that judges
> No wenches wholsome, but course country drudges. (52-54)

It is of course in the next portrait, that of the Anglican, Graius, that we encounter the greatest problems, given that Donne must have been actively in the process of joining the English church. But again, one should emphasise that this entire section is more to do with the reasons and justifications behind religious faith rather than the forms of faith themselves. If the acerbity of the satirical comments seems difficult to contain, one should remember that the poet - not just the imagined speaker of the poem - is subjecting his own choices to the most lacerating of examinations. Strier describes it well, and his comments bear quoting in full:

> This is powerful and passionate writing. There is a level of outright contempt here unprecedented in the poem; there has been nothing like this attack on "some" established English preachers-the qualifier is perhaps self-protective-as "vile ambitious bawds." This is the first true

> instance in the poem of "railing," of the Juvenalian mode of "bold and open crying out against naughtiness." As the extraordinary lines on English state-worship imply, Donne has contempt for the whole system of state-enforced religion, with its ambitious preachers willing to sell "faire Religion" to the highest political bidder, and with its associated legislative system constantly issuing new laws to regulate religious behaviour. And Donne has equal or perhaps greater contempt for the individual who allows his thought to be controlled by this machinery, who thinks what the preachers and laws "bid him thinke," namely, "that shee / Which dwels with us, is onely perfect." In the erotic context, this figure is a child-groom: "hee / Imbraceth her, whom his Godfathers will / Tender to him, being tender." He willingly accepts whatever religion his official sponsors "Tender to him." He allows himself to be treated as an intellectual and spiritual "ward" of the state church. Donne has only contempt for such "tenderness".[27]

These lines evoke the spirit of "Satyre II", with the sponsors and guardians being much like the ravening and hated Coscus. In spite of the qualifying particularizations -"some preachers" - it is clear that there is a level of religious and political plain speaking here, as there is in the passage on "Symonie and Sodomy" in the second satire. Even the formal licence of Juvenalian imitation would hardly contain and justify such excess. It is clear that Donne is risking much here, and his contempt for a thoughtless and servile subservience to established practice outweighs his fears of personal safety.

These three portraits exhaust the major options available to the English subject in the 1590s. It gives us a conspectus of the religious situation in England at the time. Historically it may be true that there were more radical dissenting options such as the Family of Love of Henry Niklaes or Nicholas (born c.1501) or the Brownists, but Donne does not mention them. Rather he goes on, rather surprisingly, to mention two

possibilities which stand at the two ends of the spectrum: the one who believes in none, and the one who believes in all. Clearly unlike the previous portraits they do not refer to identifiable sects or historical positions, but are more in the nature of intellectual possibilities. They present us with considerable difficulties of interpretation, not the least because they represent, contrastingly, what may seem possible once the certainty of historically available religious positions are denied.

Strier notes that "Carelesse Phrygius" is the only name to be qualified with an adjective.[28] Phrygius avoids all forms of belief on the ground that since if all cannot be good, all must be bad. At first sight this appears like a logical fallacy, as the denial of a universal affirmative proposition cannot prove a universal negative. The use of the language of logical argument - "all ... some ... none" (64-65), is important here, but Phrygius is not being criticized here for his bad logic, but for something that goes far deeper. Strier, in a much-cited passage in his essay "Radical Donne", interpreted the word "careless" as standing for something akin to the sceptical ideal of *ataraxia*, freedom from care or tranquillity, which is valued by Hellenistic and Roman philosophers of varying persuasions.[29] "Careless" here is not so much heedless or rash [30], as tranquil, in the sense of being without care or worry. So if Phrygius seeks to maximize his happiness through a policy of non-attachment, and thus is willing to jettison all, the decision comes from another example of notoriously shaky logic, that since some women are not faithful, none are faithful. It is necessary to remember the crisis that Donne has indicated earlier: faith is unavoidable and imperative. Phrygius's policy of non-attachment is thus a sure recipe for disaster. Even if the position seems philosophically sound and emotionally comfortable, a position that we might think Donne would be attracted to intellectually, it must be rejected in the most unequivocal terms, as religious life is one of commitment and making the right decision.

The final portrait is equally complex. If no religion is unacceptable, so is the servile compliance of Graccus, willing to love all religions as one. This is merely an inversion of Phrygius's position, for where in the former instance "all" leads to "none", here "all " leads to "all". There is persuasiveness about Graccus's argument. This is underlined by the relatively unaggressive use of the recurrent sexual metaphor. Graccus knows that women dress in different forms in different countries and is thus willing to accept all with equal alacrity. The belief that all religions were acceptable in the eyes of God was a frequently iterated speculation in the Renaissance, and is to be found in many sources.[31] However, Donne indicates quite harshly, that this is not acceptable, for this too is a kind of "blindness" as reprehensible as unthinking adherence to a single sect, or fashionable agnosticism:

> So doth, so is Religion; and this blind-
> nesse too much light breeds; but unmoved thou
> Of force must one, and forc'd but one allow;
> And the right; (68-71)

This section marks another stylistic transition, a return to the tone of high moral urgency that we found before the catalogue of options. It may also help us to hazard an opinion as to why Donne feels it necessary to use such deeply corrosive sexual images in the context of various religious options. These include his familial faith, the one that he was gravitating towards, and philosophical positions that in other contexts might seem attractive to him. Faith is a necessity, and we are obliged to choose single options, a unique and clearly defined path, and at the same time be confident that we have made the right choice. The argument one might say is not about the content of religious faith but about its form. The wrong reasons that impel individuals and are used to justify their options are what Donne is hostile too, and it is this process of

choosing for the wrong reasons that attracts the acerbic banter. Thus we might say that the method of choosing rather than the choices themselves are the subject of satiric attack in this passage.

This then might be thought to be the true crisis of the poem. Choosing rightly is an imperative, but this choice is in no sense a free one. For such an acute Christian poet, Donne's views here are strongly and surprisingly necessitarian, as the act of choosing is mandatory ("of force must one"), and singular ("and forc'd but one allow"). But then what can be the right choice? Is Donne, in some ultra-Calvinist manner, proposing something that by definition is beyond human grasp? This does not seem to be the case, as the subsequent part of the poem deal specifically with this problem of choice, and the ways in which we can try to reach towards a saving option. The first suggestion seems fairly conservative, that of an appeal to tradition:

> aske thy father which is shee,
> Let him aske his; (71-72)

The speaker seems to be suggesting that a study of Christian tradition may be the first step at arriving at an answer. Milgate cites Tertullian as a source of the belief that truth is prior to falsehood.[32] What it may imply in this context, however, is the Erasmian conviction of the need to go back to the pristine origins of Christian faith, unencumbered by received opinion or inherited dogma.

Equally Erasmian is the idea of the Christian life as striving for truth rather than a set of fixed beliefs.

> Be busie to seeke her, beleeve mee this,
> Hee's not of none, nor worst, that seekes the best.

To'adore, or scorne an image, or protest,
May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
To sleepe, or runne wrong, is. (74-79)

"Seeking the best", continually being in the state of enquiry, is thus what must animate whatever formal belief one adheres too. Catholic image worship, Calvinist iconoclasm and Protestant activism may all prove futile unless they are part of a dynamic faith. Yet even this dynamism may be misdirected for the spirit of enquiry need not impel us to seek for newer options or philosophical positions. Tensions about movement underscore the sense of crisis. If "seeking" is desirable, it needs to be distinguished from "running wrong. Standing "inquiring right", where the way is unfamiliar, is desirable to both misdirected action and spiritual torpor. Neither are philosophical positions in themselves good or bad, for the powerful imperative "doubt wisely" reminds us of the scepticism of Phrygius. But where Phrygius's doubt is not conducive to wisdom, Donne advocates a position that may be equally Socratic and Erasmian. Unexamined faith, like unexamined life, is unacceptable.

When material knowledge thus proves both impossible and unrewarding, man's divine pilgrimage towards truth begins.

On a huge hill,
Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will
Reach her, about must, and about must goe;(79-81)

The circularity of the eternal hill of truth and the circling of it by the rational soul recalls "the scenes of theophanies where God reveals Himself to man."[33] The steepness of the hill along with its spiral ascent suggests the timelessness of the

portrait of man's unending struggle for truth. Standing at the foot of the hill, one does not know how to reach the top and he is not sure whether he can reach it. It is here that the crucial question arises. Does man have to put in all his "effort" (both physical and mental) to reach Truth on a hill, or can it be attained by total surrender to God's will? The gross physicality of this image of man climbing upwards on a steep, cragged slope, breathless and weary gives us a picture of the Christian individual, lonely and struggling for truth in this world of confusion. Whether the act is voluntary or predestined is never resolved in the poem. Donne himself cannot arrive at an absolute truth regarding this and hence proposes an ideal of total surrender and acceptance.

It is in this phase of the satire that Donne says that man can reach God through the zealous exercise of his mental faculties of memory, understanding and will, and discover the worth of devotion to God's glory. "Mens sana" or humility and right reason are the prerequisites for devotion as St. Augustine says, "for your reason which converses with you promises that it will make God known to your mind just as the Sun is shown to the eyes."[34] Donne similarly stresses the ability of reason to initiate and reconstruct the reunion with God. Man must tune the instrument of his rational soul in order to respond to and prepare for the grace of God. Donne had assured his congregation in one of his sermons:

> Often God admits into his owne Name, this addition of Universality, Omne, All as though he would be knowne by that especially. He is Omnipotent, there he can doe All; He is Omniscient, there he can know All; He is Omnipresent, there he can direct All.[35]

Such a description of God raises the question of man's place in the universe. Is man so naked, so exposed, so helpless and predestined to surrender to God? If God is All-knowing, Almighty, then why is there so much suffering, so much evil, so much unmerited pain and loss in the universe? Why is man misdirected towards temporal ends instead of pursuing true knowledge? Donne justifies this by going back to the patristic theology. In patristic theology justification of the sinner is undertaken by God, but appears as a long and arduous process, slowly turning the individual away from sinfulness and making him a fit recipient of salvation. This is best shown by the hill of Truth metaphor. The remote origins of the image are found in Hesiod: "But in front of virtue the gods immortal have put sweat; long and steep is the path to her and rough at first; but when you reach the top, then at length the road is easy hard though it was."[36] Donne says:

> hee that will
> Reach her, about must, and about must goe;
> And what th'hills suddenness resists, winne so;
> Yet strive so, (80-83)

By this continuous striving towards Truth, man can achieve what the unexpected abruptness of the hill prevents him from obtaining. Man must contour the hill when he comes to a sudden towering crag. Standing at the base of the hill, one does not know how difficult the road to Truth is. The more he climbs, the more difficult it becomes to reach the top. And yet he must doubt, and doubt wisely, that he shall know the Truth someday. Milgate says that the fact that one must doubt is the voice and presence of God in him. To doubt about the attainment of truth, to debate on any religious duty is the voice of God in our conscience. We know that Truth exists but

whether we shall attain it is a matter of doubt. The soul receives an answer only to the question, which it previously doubted. Donne justifies this in *Sermons* V, 38. He says:

> As no man resolves of anything wisely, firmly, safely, of which he never doubted, never debated, so neither does God. Withdraw a resolution from any man that doubts with a humble purpose to settle his own faith, and not with a wrangling purpose to shake another man's.

Ultimately it is always grace that justifies, but traditionally certain possibilities of personal reform are envisaged. Donne says that one must strive towards truth with full faith or rather by faith alone (*sola fide*) and in consequence be redeemed by His merciful grace.

In *Sermons* IX, 85, Donne later warned, "doe not thinke that because a natural man cannot doe all, therefore he hath; nothing to doe for himself."[37] As "Satyre III" approaches its end we find that the only thing man can do to attain salvation is to achieve trust in God. Donne says:

> So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust
> Power from God claym'd, then God himselfe to trust. (109-110)

The tone of prayer or advice changes to a metaphoric description of the dangers of failing to seek the Truth and submit to His infinite will. Luther insists that the commands of God must be obeyed not because they seem to us just but simply because they are God's commands. There is one God who has chosen to reveal Himself in one word, whose will can in consequence be preached, revealed, offered and worshipped.

> But there is also the hidden God, the Deus Absconditus whose immutable, eternal and infallible will is incapable of being comprehended by men at all. The will of the hidden God is omnipotent, ordaining everything that happens in the world. But it is also beyond our understanding and can only be reverently adored as by far the most awe-inspiring secret of the divine majesty." [38]

The ambivalence about movement lasts till the very end of the poem. The two great images of the second half of the poem, that of the hill and that of the blessed flowers appear to pull us in two different directions. The image of the hill of Truth, unquestionably the most famous passage of the poem, actually emphasizes the difficulty of achieving it. Initially it may seem as if the assertion is about the eternal presence of truth. Bur as Thomas Moore observes:

> The image of Truth on a high hill is not supposed to indicate that it is immediately apparent to all eyes (it is clear from the rest of the satire that most people have no idea whatsoever where it is), but that it is extremely difficult and dangerous to reach. The adjectives used to describe the hill are "huge," "cragged," and "steep," all of which emphasize the effort that is required to climb the hill rather than how visible it is.[39]

Donne is more concerned with striving rather than winning. The words "winne so" which conclude line 82, hold out a slim possibility of achieving the truth, but do nothing to weaken the sense of danger and difficulty involved in the process. Clearly more than the certainty of achievement Donne emphasises the need for perseverance:

> Yet strive so, that before age, deaths twilight,
>
> Thy Soule rest, for none can worke in that night (83-84)

The imperative is general and clear. It is the duty of all individuals to arrive at some kind of belief or certainty before old age sets in. Here, as earlier, the paradoxical character of the speaker's recommendations must strike us strongly. Having despaired of the available forms of religious belief in the Christian world, the speaker nevertheless is certain that some form of "rest" of the soul, some kind of conviction has to be arrived at. The pressure of time is felt strongly. Beyond twilight and old age is the indescribable night, in which all human efforts cease.

The speaker recommends immediate action on our part, but the end seems to be a kind of mental and spiritual discipline rather than a choice.

> To will, implyes delay, therefore now doe:
> Hard deeds, the bodies paines; hard knowledge too
> The mindes indeavours reach (85-87)

The significance of "to will" and the contrast between doing and willing seems to have been largely unexplored. Luke Andrew Wilson takes the distinction to be one between intentional and unintentional action, drawing attention to Aristotle's discussion of practical reasoning in the third book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*[40] However, in a much more immediate and familiar context, the distinction between "I do" and "I will" formed part of much iterated discourse of matrimonial law, where the form of words distinguished present spousals from future spousals. The commitment "I will" was more ambiguous and less binding than the answer “I do". In the present context, to say "I will" interposes an indeterminate temporality in initiating the reparative action of the soul. The syntax of the verse line draws us forward to the object of doing: "hard deeds, the bodies paines", and then to the

consequence of action. The effect is in the acquisition of "hard knowledge", something concrete and tangible, the product of the mind's efforts.

Donne thus outlines a process of mental activity that is notably secular. "Hard knowledge" surely could suffice for the acquisition of truth in general. However, as the poem proceeds, we are brought back to the specific needs of religious truth. The "mysteries" here are the ineffable divine truths, too bright to look on for long, but nevertheless clear and unambiguous. It might be difficult to reconcile the activity of the mind with the perception of manifest divine truths, for there is clearly no question of intellectual labour involved here. If the problem with divine knowledge is that it is obvious, but too great for human understanding - a common Christian position - how do we reconcile that with the saving activity of interpretive labour on the part of the individual? The poem does not sort this out.

However, it may be that the problem is more apparent than real, for both premises, the self-sufficient and self-evident character of truth and the difficulty involved in achieving it are well established Christian positions. A generation later, Milton would memorably write:

> The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness; the darkness and crookedness is our own. The wisdom of God created understanding, fit and proportionable to truth, the object and end of it, as the eye to the thing visible. If our understanding have a film of ignorance over it, or be blear with gazing on other false glitterings, what is that to truth? [41]

The paradox of something that is manifest and yet difficult to achieve is in some sense the fruit of the human condition as we experience it. It is not then, a sceptical position

stating the unavailability of truth, but one which emphasizes the difficulty of achieving it.

As always, the satire stresses the autonomy of the individual believer. Lines 89-92 are remarkably supportive of the true striver after the truth, however or whatever the result of the striving may have been.

> Keepe the truth which thou'hast found; men do not stand
> In so ill case here, that God hath with his hand
> Sign'd Kings blanck-charters to kill whom they hate,
> Nor are they Vicars, but hangmen to Fate. (89-92)

These lines seem to countenance an undefined range of religious beliefs, each sufficient and approved of by God. This is contrasted with the suasive and regulatory power of religious authority and their secular counterparts. Even though the lines arraign "Kinges" as the executors of the religious policy, Donne is less interested in monarchs and tyrants than in the tendency of individual judgment to be swayed by external opinion. Milgate cites Luther as a possible source of the belief: "Bad princes are God's executioners and hangmen".[42] The vehement tone returns in the following lines, which carefully includes the ultimate arbiters of religious policy in Donne's time, including Luther:

> Foole and wretch, wilt thou let thy Soule be ty'd
> To mans lawes, by which she shall not be try'd
> At the last day? Will it then boot thee
> To say a Philip, or a Gregory,
> A Harry, or a Martin taught thee this? (93-97)

The speaker points out the obvious fact that claims of religious authority are unavailing because it can be cited by all. In the divine reckoning it counts for nothing at all.

The last section of the poem focuses on the question of power. Contrasted with it is the great bugbear of Christian, particularly Protestant, faith: idolatry. Here the question is one which had exercised Renaissance thinkers continually: what kinds of obedience are obligatory for the Christian? Can matters of religious faith be determined by secular, or even religious, authority?

> That thou may'st rightly obey power, her bounds know;
> Those past, her nature and name's chang'd; to be
> Then humble to her is idolatrie; (100-102)

One notes that the recommendation here may be the preservation of a kind of private core of freedom within the bounds of institutional or state religion. There is no doubting that "power" continually transgresses its limits, demanding that which is not rightfully its. The responsibility here too rests squarely on the extent to which the individual believer is willing to allow the agents of power to invade this realm of private determination.

As Richard Strier points out, the mention of power and bounds gives Donne his river image.[43]

> 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
> 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: (103-109)

Initially, the coordinates are simple. Power is like the river. Flowers at the river's head thrive, while those which fall in its way when it is a mighty flood, perish. The image, however, is complex and multi-layered, a fitting conclusion to this amazingly difficult poem. For one thing, the question of limits posed just before this is shelved. The contrast is between two parts of the river, the "calme head" and the "rough streames". The question of transgression is not evident here: both parts are natural, inevitable natural phenomena. The focal point is not the stream, but the flower, one content to dwell at the tranquil point of origin, the other one which travels through the length to the stream through various natural obstacles and is lost in the sea. It is clear thus that the flower-image reverses the force of the earlier image of purposive striving, the ascent of the perilous mount. The desired state here is one of stasis.

One might however object that the flowers cannot choose their fate, to remain at the stream's head or to be carried away by the stream to perdition. While it is certainly true that the sense of a contented inhabitation of a gentle environment is powerfully portrayed here, it might be difficult to reconcile the specifics of the image with the conclusion drawn from it:

So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust
Power from God claym'd, then God himselfe to trust. (110-111)

The end of the poem makes meaning in terms of the pervasive Erasmian argument that we have tried earlier to point at. The poem's ending powerfully locates fulfilling Christian life in a form of *repristination*, a return to the foundational message of

Christ, which is the true source of all power, and eschews human interpolations and embellishments as being false and destructive.

The preacher in Donne warns us from idolatry for even kings are answerable to God. He forbids man to tie his soul to the laws of man. Instead he offers freedom by suggesting that man can free himself from earthly bonds by surrendering to the divine bond. He believes in a direct communion with God, "...flowers that dwell at the rough streames calme head, thrive and prove well". Donne insists on going back to primitive religion. Fear is aroused in us in realising the power of Power; in realising the littleness of man in the middle of the vast sea of God. Man is as insignificant, as little as a straw tossed up and down the stream violently. His lack of faith prevents him from reaching the banks of grace and leads him to destruction. He must leave behind his free will and wisdom; accept the futility of learning and proceed towards revelation with unquestioning acceptance. This only can help man to acquire self-knowledge leading towards salvation.[44]

Donne's last mystical reliance upon faith and grace is combined with scepticism, which induces and supports the reliance. There is a shift in emphasis, which completes the religious progress. Donne's "Satyre III" is therefore the starting point of his journey towards that religious destination which he later reached in his Sermons. As "Satyre III" reaches its last two lines, Donne admits that the flickering light of ethical nature can be made steady by faith:

> It is not now a question of doubting wisely, for to possesse us of the hill it selfe and to come to such a knowledge of the mysteries of religion, as must save us, we must leave our naturall reason, and humane Arts at the bottom of the hill, and climb up only by the light and strength of faith. (*Sermons*, VIII, 54)

The basic contention is that there is conflict between the reflections of the satirist and his recommendation on one hand and the doubt and uncertainties that lie deep in the poem on the other. This conflict remains unresolved till the end. In other words, Donne uses the traditional professions of honesty and sincerity that traditional satire authorises. The satirist is a persona who is used for specific purpose in this poem and too simple an identification between the poet and satirist may make us miss some of the subtle ambiguities of the poem. The main point that emerges from the study of "Satyre III" is a sense of doubt and for this reason in my reading of the poem the injunction "doubt wisely" assumes great importance. Donne's satire, written at a time when his final choice of the Anglican faith had not been made, is racked with confusion and uncertainty. The earlier satires are clear and more confident. "Satyre III" is far less clear, in fact ambiguous in its recommendations.

When Donne considers wars or conflicts of Churches he finds himself unable to exercise the satirist's prerogative of criticising a number of opposing positions from a strongly held personal conviction. This leads to a special use of the persona of the satirist who speaks in good faith, but does not make any definite statements in matters of religious choice. Essentially, the issues of the poem centres on the treatment of rival faiths all of which are sceptically viewed. The satirist advocates a return to the primitive Church, to the Gospel; the entire problem is in the interpretation of the Gospel, and how man can go back to it. There is circularity in the argument of the satire. But such circularity expresses the intense pressure that Donne subjects his faith to. The poet has certain radical prescriptions, of leaving behind everything and surrendering to God, but the way of approaching Truth is not specified clearly. One may conclude by quoting Grierson, "Satire III is a young thinker's consciousness of the problems of religion in an age of divided faith and of justice in a corrupt world…

He is an intensely personal religious poet expressing not always the mind simply of a Christian, but the conflicts and longings of a troubled soul."[45]

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1 Carey, *John Donne: Life Mind and Art*, p. 26.

2 Richard Strier," Radical Donne: Satire III", *ELH*, 60, p. 286

3 P.E. Sellin, "The Proper Dating of John Donne's 'Satyre III' ", *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 1980, p. 275ff.

4 Annabel Patterson, " Satirical Writing: Donne in Shadows", in Achsah Guibbory (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to John Donne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 121.

5 Donne, *Sermons*, Vol 1, 135, cited by Hester, *Kinde Pitty and Brave Scorn*, 1982, p. 55.

6 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 143

7 Richard Strier, "Radical Donne", p. 287

8 Quoted in A H Mathew, *The Life of Sir Toby Matthew*, London 1907, p. 156.

9 Erasmus, *Paraclesis*, (trans. F. Luttmer, stable url: http://history.hanover.edu/courses/excerpts/346erasmus.html

10 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 141.

11 Strier, "Radical Donne", p. 289.

12 Hester, *Kinde Pitty and Brave Scorn*, p. 60

13 Burton, *Anatomy*, Part 2, Sect. 3 memb. 2 as cited in Milgate, *Satires*, p. 143.

14 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 143.

15 Amlan Das Gupta, *John Milton and the Idea of Reform*, PhD thesis, Jadavpur University, 1992 p. 48.

16 Erasmus, *A Book Called in Latin Enchiridion MilitisChristiani*…. (London: Methuen. 1905), pp. 42-43

17 T.V.Moore, "Donne's Use of Uncertainty as a Vital Force in 'Satyre III'" *Modern Philology*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Aug., 1969), p. 44

18 Moore, "Donne's Use of Uncertainty", pp. 44-45.

19 *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Sir Herbert Grierson, (London, 1964), p. xxvii

20 Hester, *Kinde Pitty and Brave Scorn*, p. 63.

[21] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XII, 14 as cited in Hester, *KindePitty and Brave Scorn*, pp. 63 ff,

[22] J. B. Leishman, *The Monarch of Wit* (London: Hutchinson, 1955), p. 116.

[23] H. J. C. Grierson, *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, (London, 1921) introd., pp. xxvi-xxvii.

[24] Bald, *John Donne*, pp. 69-70

[25] See N.Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution", in C.Russell, *The Origins of the English Civil War*, London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

[26] Donne, *Sermons*, vi, 284, cited by Milgate, 144.

[27] Strier, "Radical Donne", p. 294.

[28] Strier, "Radical Donne", p. 297.

[29] Strier, "Radical Donne", p.297f. See also G.Striker, "Ataraxia: Happiness as Tranquillity" in *The Monist*, Vol . 73, No 1, 1990, pp.97-110, for a full discussion of the use of ataraxia in Epicurean, Stoic and Pyrrhonian systems. Whereas all of them valued ataraxia highly, the Pyrrhonists identified tranquillity with happiness directly.

[30] For a different view see Joshua Scodel, "The Medium is the Message: Donne's Satire 3", *Mod. Phil*. Vol. 90 no.4, 1993, p.488.

[31] Strier, "Radical Donne", pp. 298-299

[32] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 147.

[33] John R. Roberts, "Donne's Satyre III Reconsidered", CLA, 12, 1968, 113 as cited in Hester, *Kinde Pitty and Brave Scorn*, Ch. 3.

[34] Thomas F. Gilligan, *Soliloquies of St Augustine*, 1943, I, VI. 12 as cited in George William, *Seventeenth Century Contexts*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,1960), p. 57.

[35] Donne, Sermons VIII, p. 247

[36] Hesiod Works and Days, ll 285-292. See Milgate, *Satires*, Appendix C, p. 290

[37] Donne, Sermons IX, 85.

[38] Cited in Milgate, *Satires*, Appendix C, pp. 290-291

[39] Moore. "Donne's Use of Uncertainty", p. 47

[40] L.A. Wilson, *Theaters of Intention: Drama and the Law in Early Modern England* (New York: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 15-16.

[41] Milton, *Of Reformation*, *Prose Works*, Vol. I, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 566.

[42] Milgate, *Satires*, p.113

[43] Strier,"Radical Donne", p. 300.

[44] Sukanta Chaudhuri, *Infirm Glory: Shakespeare and the Renaissance Image of Man*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 10.

[45] H. J. C. Grierson, *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century*, (London, 1921) introd., xv ff.

CHAPTER V

The Fourth and Fifth Satires: Rebuke and Reform

Satyre IV

The Fourth Satire has not attracted in quantity much critical attention or commentary, but some of Donne's most acute readers have rated it very highly. No less an authority than R.C. Bald called it the most brilliant of the five satires[1]. Other professed admirers of the poem include Harold Erskine Hill, K.W. Gransden and Ejner Jensen. There is no doubt that the poem is a challenging and complex one. By far the longest of the satires, it allows us to understand better the connections among the five poems. As such, it fleetingly touches upon some of the key concerns of the first three satires. The importuning acquaintance of "Satyre I" returns here; so does the theme of an unwelcome journey. The pointed and potentially dangerous references to state power in "Satyre II" (lines 74-75) are multiplied in the description of the Queen's Presence Chamber. Tellingly, it uses the famous appellation of "Satyre III": "Mistresse Truth", thus allowing us to see the connection of the satirist's stance in satires III and IV. More fundamentally, the fourth satire offers us a more comprehensive idea of the name and nature of the form of the satire than any of the preceding poems in the series. It is fairly late, being dated to having been composed in or after 1597. It adapts the model - also used in "Satyre I" - of the irritating and persistent acquaintance, taken from Horace's Satire 1.9. But it also goes beyond this, using elements of dream and vision. Above all it allows us to most fully examine Donne's idea of the satirist's vocation.

In an illuminating comment on the poem, Hester writes:

> Satyre IV is the longest, most complex, the most comprehensive of the five poems, its narrative complicated by the conflation of horizontal and vertical levels of discourse, its unity complicated by diverse strands of imagery ... Framed as a *meditatio mortis*, the poem falls into five sections: an introduction (1-4) and conclusion (237-244) spoken from the dramatic present moment, the three central sections of retrospective analysis, which recount and evaluate the satirist's adventures prior to the time of the poem. [2]

The poem begins with a startling immediacy ("Well: I may now receive and die..."), establishing a location in the dramatic present, which serves as the vantage point to examine the past. The ironic confession of sinfulness also looks forward to prospective damnation, but compared to what the speaker has been through, the fear of hell seems trivial. Hell appears to be a "recreation", a holiday compared to his recent experience, or a "scant map", that is to say, an inadequate representation. "Map" may also imply an outline, an abstract or diagrammatic representation of the vivid reality of lived experience. One notes that the poem quite clearly reveals its speaker's religious orientation. If “Satyre III” finally leaves the question of formal allegiance problematic, from the beginning of “Satyre IV” we are in the world of the embattled Catholic minority that was Donne's by birthright. But if Catholic beliefs come in for acute criticism in the third satire, here the poet's orientation is seen as a given and essentially unchangeable condition. The ironic beginning imagines the speaker about to receive the last rites of the Catholic church, the set of sacraments that are administered to the dying individual. Though apparently casual, it is difficult to miss the topical reference of the allusion to "receiving". It was against the law to participate in any Catholic sacrament and the desire of English Catholics to receive

the Eucharist and Extreme Unction from the hands of priests created occasions of particular danger. The belief in Purgatory (l.3) was another marker of a specifically Catholic identity. For instance, in 1583 a Sussex parson named Henry Shales was accused of being a Catholic and the specific charges were that he had gone to a Catholic seminary, administered the Mass, spoken in favour of justification by good works and the doctrine of Purgatory, and had preached on the need of reading the church fathers for salvation.[3]

The poem's beginning with its apparent foregrounding of a Catholic identity has been discussed by critics. Surveying critical opinion on this issue, James Baumlin notes that the satirist relies upon a Roman Catholic vocabulary for guilt, punishment, and reform. His summary of main critical opinions on the matter is useful. Howard Erskine - Hill, for example, suggests that "Donne's satires express, if somewhat covertly, something of the viewpoint of a Roman Catholic." After noting the many allusions to Catholicism and anti-Catholic legislation he concludes, however, that "the Catholic background is subsumed in the Christian poem" M. Thomas Hester is less timorous in asserting the Catholic influence, calling the poem "Donne's boldest commentary on his own situation in the 1590s through its equivocal but consistent glances at the predicament of the Catholic in Elizabethan England." Yet he, too, concludes that "this subject never becomes the major thesis of the poem" and that "one must be careful not to overemphasize the effects" of this strategy of Catholic allusion. The satirist does not champion Catholic devotion qua Catholic devotion over Anglican devotion. His technique is to compare and contrast failures in Anglican morality with sincere Catholic morality.[4]

It is probably right to say that the imagery and lexical items of the beginning of the poem are instrumental rather than autonomous, serving a poetic function than drawing attention to themselves. Purgatory here is the experience of visiting the Court. It is initially not clear why the speaker went to Court, for it is made clear to us that it is neither as a result of pride nor carnal love ("Poyson'd with love to see, or to bee seene", 6) or desire for self-advertisement. Yet he goes to Court: we are left with an apparently irrational action. The speaker mentions a fictitious character called Glaze who went to a mass and had to pay the statutory fine. The poet thinks that he has to suffer the same punishment as one who goes there for some specific reason or because of some deficiency of character. Like Glaze he makes only one visit to the Court but nevertheless does not escape punishment. Destiny considers him to be as sinful or as flawed as they who dwell at Court in spite of his single visit. This therefore relates to the question: why does he go to the Court? Destiny, which marks him out for the same punishment as the deeply flawed denizens of the Court, does not distinguish between single and multiple instances of wrongdoing. The suggestion may be that even a single error of this magnitude is deserving of this kind of punishment.

> ... So'it pleas'd my destinie
> (Guilty of my sin of going,) to thinke me
> As prone to'all ill, and of good as forget-
> full, as proud, as lustfull, and as much in debt,
> As vaine, as witlesse, and as false as they
> Which dwell at Court... (11-16)

It is at this point that the poet introduces the interlocutor of the first part of the poem. The origins of the figure, are as we know, in Horace, but here the figure takes on a

wholly new aspect of the grotesque, which is certainly not there in the classical model. Neither does it bear much resemblance to the recalcitrant friend of “Satyre I”.

> Towards me did runne
> A thing more strange, then on Niles slime, the Sunne
> E'r bred (17-19)

The sense of the exotic or the monstrous is strongly conveyed. Donne refers to the belief that the heat of the sun spontaneously generated creatures in the mud of the river Nile, most familiar to us from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (2.7) but well established in natural history since the days of Pliny.[5] Yet the resulting creature is so odd that even Adam would have had trouble in naming it, nor would it be found in Noah's Ark, which was supposed to have contained all the living creatures known to men including ones known to us only through myth and religion. The poem conflates the loading of the Ark with the primal naming of the creatures of the universe by Adam. Donne also refers to the many books of “natural history" which listed unfamiliar and fantastic creatures locating many of them in strange and unfamiliar countries. Africa and the West Indies were particularly rich in such supposedly exotic fauna. Much of this information was derived from classical writers such as Pliny, but was much discussed by Renaissance travellers and antiquarians. Milgate refers us to the lists available in the works of the late classical writer Solinus Polyhistor, which listed many such marvels and rarities.[6] There appears to be a particular emphasis in this description on “foreignness”. As on the one hand the denizens of exotic countries are mentioned, on the other, the poet mentions the massacre of the Danes by King Ethelred in 1012. Donne also alludes to the common hatred of foreigners amongst London traders and to the fact that foreigners were singled out for assault during the riots engineered by apprentices. Milgate points to

the description in Stow's *Annals* (1601) of the May Day Riots of 1517 in which apprentices took a leading part. The animus against foreign traders continued right through the century. As late as 1593 there were libels and threats published against them.[7]

The entire discourse of alienness - revelling in its very excess - is founded upon the relatively slight figure of the stranger, a chance acquaintance who knows the speaker, but of whom the speaker stoutly denies previous acquaintance. From the exotic and unfamiliar contexts, ranging through classical and biblical history to medieval and contemporary annals, we come to more topical images. The prospective interlocutor is so peculiar in appearance that he is challenged by the watchman, but at the same time is mistaken for a Catholic by the examining magistrate. The poem rehearses in a short space a series of images representing foreigners as objects of fear, hatred and ridicule. But the evocations of markers of unfamiliarity do not end here. The poem focuses first on the clothing of the stranger and then on his language.

> His cloths were strange, though coarse; and black, though bare;
> Sleevelesse his jerkin was, and it had beene
> Velvet, but 'twas now (so much ground was seene)
> Become Tufftaffatie; and our children shall
> See it plaine Rashe awhile, then nought at all. (30-34)

It is important to note that though the clothes are strange and idiosyncratic they are hardly ostentatious as those worn by "the subtile-witted antique youths" in “Satyre I”. On the contrary the speaker appears to be somewhat impoverished because his clothing has become worn with age. The jerkin, which was initially made of velvet, has become patchy with clumps of raised fabric. In time it will become entirely plain and worn out altogether. It may in fact seem at this point that the interlocutor is a

somewhat slender target for the anti-court satire that the poem aims at. The stranger is a gossip, full of stories about the court and its denizens, but himself hardly a part of it. What the stranger truly appears to be is a traveller and a linguist. It seems to the poet that he has made up his language from all the scraps that he has picked up in the course of his travel.

All of a sudden the stranger seems a more sinister and potentially dangerous figure. This sense has clearly to do with the power of language itself. The speaker seems to recognize the versatility of the stranger's mode of speaking. He possesses a unique gift of language though it is regarded with suspicion as to how he picked it up.

> This thing hath travail'd, and saith, speakes all tongues,
> And only know'th what to all States belongs;
> Made of th'Accents, and best phrase of all these,
> He speakes one language; (35-38)

Familiar as he is with various kinds of argots and jargon - those of the pedant, the soldier, the physician and the lawyer - the speaker feels the stranger's language intolerable. Perhaps it comes from the recognition of the "complement" that this language represents. It gives him power over various kinds of people, and mastery in social intercourse. The poorly dressed, scarcely human figure, now seems to be the possessor of a kind of hypnotic control over men's minds. Much of the fear he inspires is familiar from the descriptions of rhetoric and its power to move, something that squarely set it apart in Platonic discussion from philosophical discourse. This deep and disturbing concern about the power of language, particularly its power to influence others, runs like a sub-text through the next 100 lines or so of the poem, and the stranger's conversation causes greater and greater discomfort to the speaker. The

idea of the dangerous power of language is very old in the Western rhetorical tradition and made explicit in one of its foundational texts: Gorgias of Leontini's *Encomium of Helen*:

Speech is a powerful ruler. Its substance is minute and invisible, but its achievements are superhuman; for it is able to stop fear and to remove sorrow and to create joy and to augment pity. I shall prove that this is so ...[8]

and again:

> ... indeed persuasion (*peitho*) , not having an appearance of compulsion (*anangke*), has the same power... persuasion, when added to speech, also moulds the mind in the way it wishes ...[9]

James Baumlin perceptively observes that the poem problematizes the generic claim of satire to influence and change human beings:

> when a traditional form like satire claims for itself the power to achieve certain goals - the power to make guilty and reform men - it necessarily makes a claim for the power of its language: the satirist's words must have the capacity to curse and cure, the kind of punitive, persuasive force that Archilochus, the Greek precursor of Latin satire, claimed for his own verse. We must ask whether the imitation, in this case Donne's "Satyre IV," claims for its own language a similar power to punish, persuade, reform: we shall find that it does not. It would be an understatement, then, to observe that "Satyre IV", Donne's imitation of Horace's Sermo 1.9, reveals an ambivalence toward language: the satirist condemns the words of others for their deception and abuse, at the same time noting the inability of his own words to cause reform. And accompanying this ambivalence toward language is a skepticism about the satirist's role, whether he is ever capable of accomplishing

> anything other than his own self-incrimination. The poet's skepticism toward the form and function of satire perhaps results from such an ambivalence: for if his words fail to reform, then the classical model and the genre itself have equally failed.[10]

Of course, the anxiety about the potentially dangerous uses of persuasive speech is voiced from the beginning of the tradition, even before Plato formally lays out the charges in his dialogue *Gorgias*. The great sophist himself *in The Encomium of Helen* apostrophizes: "How many men have persuaded and do persuade how many, on how many subjects, by fabricating false speech!"[11] The "complement" that the stranger possesses is something entirely related to language, more sinister than its usual meaning of "fine conversation and polished behaviour"[12] or "formal civility, politeness or courtesy" (O.E.D. s.v. "complement", sb., 8b). Neither the stranger's strange appearance nor his worn clothes seem to account for his power. The gift is entirely a linguistic one.

> With his tongue, in his tongue, call'd complement:
> In which he can win widdowes, and pay scores,
> Make men speake treason, cosen subtlest whores,
> Out-flatter favorites, or outlie either
> Jovius, or Surius, or both together. (44-48)

The stranger puts language to the wrong uses, and that may leave some scope for regarding language as a more neutral field of operation. Linguistic misuse is a continuing theme in the satires and the putative uses of language here in “Satyre IV” may remind us of Coscus's vices in “Satyre II”. Even though the speaker himself regards his interlocutor as a stranger (the word “strange” and its derivatives occur no less than six times between lines 18 and 30), the person himself claims familiarity

with the speaker. He calls him by name and thrusts himself on the poet. The speaker regards this as a kind of divine punishment, recalling the earlier discussion of guilt and punishment that we have looked at earlier.

Milgate [13] points to the fact that the mention of the Catholic historians Paulus Jovius and Laurentius Surius directs our attention towards the religious ambivalence of "Satyre IV". Apparently, from manuscript evidence, it appears that Donne had earlier bracketed the Catholic Jovius with the Protestant John Sleidan, perhaps to suggest the endemic untrustworthiness of historical records. Later he may have thought it more "prudent" to substitute the name of another Catholic historian. Later, however, the poem's speaker brackets the Calvinist Theodore Beza and "some Jesuites" (55-56) as exemplars of linguistic excellence. Also mentioned are the "two reverend men" from the "Academies", a reference undoubtedly to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Milgate identifies these as the great English scholars John Reynolds and Lancelot Andrewes, both renowned as linguists, and contributors to the 1611 Authorized Version. What seems to be the point here is that the response is made in earnest, without any satiric slant. Notable also is the willingness at this point to think beyond sectarian boundaries. The extreme Calvinist, the Jesuit and the Anglican are all honoured members of the great republic of letters.

The stranger's response is so patently bizarre that it drives the speaker to resume the tone of satiric mockery. He interrupts the speaker saying flatteringly that while he approves of his "judgement", the linguists that he would choose are the Apostles - who received the gift of languages at Pentecost (Acts 2.1-13) and the fictional Panurge of Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, described as a linguist but also as a knave and libertine.[14] The obvious absurdity of the response leads the speaker to make

the rejoinder that had the stranger been present at the building of the Tower of Babel, its building would have been completed. It may seem to us that in referring to two key Biblical *topoi*, the gift of tongues and the Tower of Babel, in close succession, the poem is highlighting the gift of multilinguality in both its positive and negative aspects. We must also remember that the idea of linguistic virtuosity is placed under close scrutiny, and limited to the unique experience of the Apostles. In any case as Paul says in I Corinthians 13, it is always inferior to Christian charity.

The next part of the dialogue highlights a different idea, locating language in the context of another important Renaissance concern, that of discourse as a social bond.

> He adds, 'If of court life you knew the good,
> You would leave lonenesse.' I said, 'Not alone
> My lonenesse is. But Spartanes fashion,
> To teach by painting drunkards, doth not tast
> Now; Aretines pictures have made few chast;
> No more can Princes courts, though there be few
> Better pictures of vice, teach me vertue.' (66-72)

It is notable that the stranger's words are framed as an exhortation to participate in court life. It may be interesting to locate this particular debate in an important Renaissance text, much read and used both in the Continent and in England. The work that we are referring to is Stefano Guazzo's *Civil Conversation*, translated into English by William Pettie (Bks. 1-3, 1581) and Bartholomew Young (Bk.4, 1586). Often thought to be comparable to Castiglione's *The Courtier* in its influence, Guazzo in fact uses anti-courtly sentiments to frame "conversation" as the fundamental bonding force in society. John Lievsay in an important study established the significance of the work for ideas about language in the English Renaissance.[15] A brief look at the early

sections of Guazzo would help us to understand the issue better. The work presents two speakers, William and Annibal conversing about court life. The former, a courtier, seeks to retire to a contemplative and solitary life. The vices of the world, the corruption and pettiness that “growe hot in the Cities and assemblies of men" lead him to long for a solitary natural state in which a pre-social contract purity might be regained:

> we cannot but curse ... whosoever it were who gathered and assembled people into one bodie, the people scattered abroade in Forrestes and Mountaines ... .leading a loyall, simple and innocent life ... "[16]

It gradually becomes clear that William's recent experience as a courtier has made him lose faith in all society, and his anti-courtly bias finds repeated expression. He is, we understand, a scholar, but true scholarship is unappreciated and learning is undervalued, in favour of the common fashion of how to dance and sing and jest.

William's views contribute largely to the anti-courtly tone of the book. His complaints about swearing, tale-bearing and false accusations at court, and his ironical commendation of flattery and dissimulation, show court life in a bleak light. At the bottom lies a distrust of empty ceremony and ritual, of masking emotions and expressing unfelt feelings. It is important to remember that Anniball rejects William's view of court, even while not disagreeing with many of his objections. His insistence is on social involvement, in the belief that the civilizing force of conversation and social intercourse must reform society. If he shares William's pessimism about the state of society, it is tempered by the faith that proper conversation can improve it. The stress on conversation, on the moral implications of verbal style, reflect Guazzo's belief not only in the way man's speech defines his place in human societies, but also

in the ideal that there should be perfect correspondence between man's outer and inner selves.[17]

The speaker's savage endorsement of the solitary position in “Satyre IV” focuses attention on the conjunction of the court and linguistic corruption. For the speaker "the court" appears to be the more the object of discourse than of actual participation in its regular practices. He is anxious to talk about it, sing its virtues, show familiarity with it. His rather plaintive claim is that if only the speaker knew about the pleasures of courtly life, he would not shun them. But for the speaker courtly life can only offer counter-examples, those which suggest what to avoid. The "Spartan fashion" alluded to here appears, as Milgate points out, to be a reference to the fact that the Spartans were said to show their young warriors persons who were drunk and incapable to inculcate in them the virtues of sobriety and self-control.[18] For the speaker, this is as unlikely as learning continence by looking at pornographic images, such as those which illustrate the scandalous verses of Pietro Aretino. For the stranger, talking about those in high position is in itself pleasurable, though later we find that his courtly conversation amounts to nothing more than scandal-mongering, bordering on the treasonable. The speaker refers him to the keeper of the royal tombs, a man reputed to be able to talk endlessly about the kings of England and their kin. The stranger strongly demurs, saying that the individual in question is vulgar and base, not fit to be taken as a model of polite discourse.

Baumlin is probably right in saying that there is here a complete breakdown of a common discursive space, leading to wilful misunderstanding and mutual incomprehension.[19] Attempts to continue it lead to mere “babble”. The sense of unrelated meaningless sounds is interestingly framed here by repeated references to

the order and harmony of music. The stranger's voice is like a high pitched lute string (73); the speaker sets the pitch of musical sound (87); the stranger tries a new key (92). He speaks slowly separating his statements with intervals enough to let a semi-breve or full note elapse. Sharply contrasted is the trivial household gossip that the stranger retails with the air of one conveying state secrets. The satirist turns this into another form of oral intercourse, that of eating. The string of images that ensues at line 109 combines powerfully the senses of language, food and sex. The passage is probably inspired by the sense of physical revulsion that is experienced by Horace in Satires 1.9: "while the sweat trickled down to my very ankles". But Donne develops this idea into one of unwelcome eating and the discomfort of pregnancy.

> I belch, spue, spit,
> Looke pale, and sickly, like a Patient; Yet
> He thrusts me more; ...
> Like a bigge wife, at sight of loathed meat,
> Readie to travaile: So I sigh, and sweat
> To heare this Makeron talke: (110-112, 116-118)

If anything, the violence of the description of the speaker's physical revulsion again focuses attention on the power of language. The "complement" that had previously been seen as the particular persuasive gift that the stranger possesses, is now described as physically repulsive - like a poison, causing vomiting - and like aggressive sexual behaviour, "he thrusts me more". There is a special sense of inappropriateness that is suggested by the description of the speaker as a woman already pregnant and near her time of delivery. The "home-meats" of line 109 surface again in 115 as "loathed meats".

Yet apparently neither we nor the speaker have fully assessed the full extent of the danger that the stranger's language represents. He waxes more and more unrestrained in his speech, both in loquacity and in dangerousness. There is a growing desperation in his voice and the efforts that he makes to retain his unwilling hearer. It is as if he would, if he could, recite from memory the entirety of the contents of *Mercurius Gallo-Belgicus*, a contemporary periodical dealing with sensational information.[20] One notes however that the speaker uses as historical references two dates that were particularly sensitive in Protestant circles: those of the coming of the Armada in 1588 (also the date of the first issue of *Gallo-Belgicus*) and the taking of Amiens in 1597 by the Spaniards. As we have seen before the "Catholic" register of the poem is at best uncertain and fragmented. It is true of course that English Catholics were always anxious, at least publicly, to profess their loyalty to the state, but it may be significant that Donne uses these two where any other might presumably have served quite as well.

The stranger seems to sense that he is losing his audience and he makes one last attempt to hold on to him. He goes on speaking, entirely disregarding the irritation and discomfort of the speaker. He makes more daring claims. He speaks as if he were an official informer, a "Priviledg'd spie", making a claim of authority both as observer and reporter. As such he professes to speak in a manner which invites the respondent to commit indiscretions and risk due punishment.

> Either my humour, or his owne to fit,
> He like a priviledg'd spie, whom nothing can
> Discredit, Libells now 'gainst each great man. (119-121)

Thus he speaks against the great. He accuses them of having bought their offices, and blames them for the lack of success in war because of delay. He speaks of irregularities in allocations of public office, of wasteful expenditure and sexual perversions. Perhaps even more dangerously he accuses the courtiers of being traitors themselves and consorting with other dangerous people: "great officers, / Doe with the Pirates share, and Dunkirkers". Dunkirk was thought to be a major haven for piratical activity, and the English ports were periodically subject to raids. Milgate also points out that there is no contemporary evidence that state officers were ever regarded as being complicit in such activity.[21] Here as earlier, the danger of the stranger's language is that he constantly seeks consent to suck the hearer into his web of words. In line 118 the speaker recognizes that the stranger may be choosing the subject of his discourse either on the basis of his own preference, or to suit the hearer's "humour". In line 129 he feels himself succumbing to the power of the "complement" that the speaker possesses.

> I more amas'd then Circes prisoners, when
> They felt themselves turne beasts, felt my selfe then
> Becomming Traytor, and mee thought I saw
> One of our Giant Statutes ope his jaw
> To sucke me in; (130-134)

Language thus is a kind of enchantment, a form of irresistible magic, and it is no coincidence that the comparison is with Circe's transformation of Odysseus's sailors. As we know, the figure of the dangerous enchantress is widely disseminated in Renaissance literature, particularly the epic.[22] What is striking in this particular use - passing and trivial as it may seem at first sight - is the equation of language and dangerous magic. As Circe's victims became beasts, here the speaker feels himself

becoming traitor as he is sucked into the web of words spun by the stranger. Donne also repeats an image he had used at the end of "Satyre II", making explicit the play on "statue" and "statute".

> [M]y words none drawes
> Within the vast reach of th' huge statute lawes ("Satyre II", lines111-112)
> Mee thought I saw
> One of our Giant Statutes ope his jaw
> To sucke me in ("Satyre IV", lines 132-134)

A peculiar transference is happening here. By speaking of treason - and treasonously - and by forcing the speaker to hear him, the stranger in effect transfers his guilt to his unwilling interlocutor. The comparison used is a harsh and unattractive one, of persons infected with venereal disease trying to cure themselves by engaging in sexual activity with healthy partners. Speaking thus is both sexual activity and therapy; a way of ridding oneself of guilt. The image of unwelcome sexual advances applied to the stranger's words initiated in line 111 takes on a more dangerous and sinister character here.

The poem begins as we have seen with an admission of guilt: "My sinne / Indeed is great". Much as the speaker professes both intellectual disgust and physical revulsion at this long conversation, he quietly undergoes the suffering. He sees it as a result of ancestral and personal guilt, something that needs to be atoned in full. "Therefore to my power / Toughly and stubbornly I beare this crosse", he says. Even when it seems that escape is at hand, it is deferred by a long and unnecessary leave taking. The speaker has to pay the stranger to leave him in peace, but as a result has to undergo a lengthy round of thanks. At the end he departs, as on one hand he is needy, and on the other has the inducement of the speaker's crown coin. The word "complement" recurs

("long complementall thankes"), but is now devoid of danger, merely the importunate behaviour of an indigent and irritating intruder. The stranger starts off as being a figure of fun, and at the end he is possibly the object of pity ("needy want"). At neither point is there any evidence of the sheer power of the reactions that he evokes from the poet. One notes that all these reactions are directly related to the way in which the power of language is imagined in the poem. The speaker has no trouble in countering the opinions of the stranger on the intellectual plane.

The "Horatian" part of "Satyre IV" comes to an end at line 154. Horace's speaker is delivered from his tormentor through a lucky chance, when his companion comes across one of his enemies, and the poet is able to escape in the resulting confusion (Satires 1.9, lines 74-77). But Donne's poem continues on a different plane altogether. The stranger departs, and the speaker is left in a state of "wholesome solitarinesse". Where Horace's speaker credits Apollo for his escape from his unwelcome companion and is presumably restored to a state of equanimity, Donne's satirist appears to see his task as only half done. The welcome solitude allows him space to meditate not only on the experience that he has undergone but also on the court as an institution. At the beginning of the poem he had spoken of his visit to Court as a journey to "Purgatorie" (3). Here the Dantean reference is made fully explicit and pushed further:

> a trance
> Like his, who dreamt he saw hell, did advance
> It selfe on mee; (157-9)

Baumlin's comment on this section is apt:

> Donne's reference to the *Divina Commedia* is poignant: the speaker journeys in the first section of his own poem to "Purgatorie" (line 3); in the second, within his dream-state, to "hell" (line 158). The speaker's own spiritual progress brings him, then, to an apocalyptic vision of hell-on-earth, and yet there is no beatific vision to follow, no paradiso, no promise of redemption. And Donne's speaker, unlike Dante's, has no sure guide through his hell - only a court spy to lead him on and entrap him. Beyond the antiapocalyptic ending of the *Dunciad*, few satires in English achieve so desperate a climax.[23]

Milgate further notes that Donne's references to Dante are among the first in England.[24] One might note that Donne describes Dante's experience both as "dream" and "trance". To briefly refer to A.C. Spearing's tripartite distinction among *visio*, *somnium* and *oraculum*, Donne's experience is more like the *visio*, or prophetic vision, than the enigmatic or oracular dream.[25] The important difference as Baumlin points out is that he has no guide or companion.[26] On the contrary, the speaker assumes a high moral tone here, and now though he is aware that the denizens of court he sees are worse than the residents of Inferno, he does not shrink from his satiric duty of recording and castigating the ills of court life. The poem begins with an apologia for having visited the court. Earlier, the speaker disclaims any contact with the court altogether; but at the end he adopts a more combative stance.

> Low feare
> Becomes the guiltie, not th'accuser; Then,
> Shall I, nones slave, of high borne, or rais'd men
> Feare frownes? And, my Mistresse Truth, betray thee
> To th'huffing braggart, puft Nobility?
> No, no, (161-166)

The speaker analyses his own feelings and detects a fear of the court. However he asserts that he has no reason to be afraid of the court and the courtiers. As a true satirist, he has no cause to fear anything or anyone. On the contrary those who are guilty of various kind of wrongdoing should fear the punishment or criticism that is due to them. Because he is free he has no cause to fear men in high position. His only allegiance is to Truth. Nowhere else is Donne's criticism of the fading court culture of the 1590s sharper and more intense. One notes that when the stranger in his persona of a "priviledg'd spie" maligns the members of the court, accusing them severally of various wrongdoings, the speaker fears being sucked into treasonous complicity. But in the final section of the poem he takes on the role of critic. For him it is not the sly insinuations of vice, but the open condemnation of wrongdoing. As such the speaker's prerogative as satirist, which is under shadow in the first part of the poem, emerges clearly once again. The service of truth cannot be denied or delayed any longer.

The apostrophe to the sun rhetorically enquiring whether it has in the course of its travels seen anything like the pride of the court is interestingly supplemented by a reference to a garden made of wax. Milgate points out, Drayton, *Heroical Epistles,* lines 53-56 also refers to an artificial garden made of wax, imported from Italy, and exhibited in London.[27] The satire on the court is very pointed because Donne is referring directly to the Presence Chamber of Queen Elizabeth through which the Queen passed and was viewed by onlookers. Donne implies that the Court is all show and no substance like the waxworks. The obsession of courtiers with clothing and appearance may have inspired the comparison with painted wax flowers and plants. The image conveys a sense of artifice but also of perverse and decadent taste. But further, as trees and flowers made of wax are inert and lifeless, the same may be said

of some of denizens of the court. The complementary image is of "natural" life, here implying illegitimacy.

> … such gay painted things, which no sappe, nor
> Tast have in them, ours are; And naturall
> Some of the stocks are, their fruits, bastard all. (172-74)

Lifelessness is complemented here by the results of unrestrained sexuality. "Fruits" may refer here, as Milgate thinks, to the "base" courtiers themselves, or to the fruits of their actions.[28]

From line 175, we are given a description of a second visit to the Court, and it is not clear whether we are still in the dream vision. There is no description of the journey to Court. But the speaker is clearly there, observing and commenting. He is also largely unapologetic about his presence there. There is no textual evidence of course that this is a second visit. This may well be a reference to the visit that the poem begins by describing and about which the speaker is ashamed.

> Well; I may now receive, and die; My sinne
> Indeed is great, but I have beene in
> A Purgatorie, such as fear'd hell is
> A recreation to,'and scant map of this. (1-4)

However, the satirist is clearly far more focused here on his satiric task, and indeed far more confident of his satiric stance.

> 'Tis ten a clock and past; All whom the Mues,
> Baloune, Tennis, Dyet, or the stewes,
> Had all the morning held, now the second
> Time made ready, that day, in flocks, are found

In the Presence, and I, (God pardon mee.) (175-179)

At ten o'clock in the morning the courtiers start the second phase of their daily activity. Earlier they had been riding, or playing games or disporting themselves at the brothels. Milgate observes that "dyet" is likely to refer to cures for sexual disease.[29] Now they throng the Presence Chamber of the court. The courtiers revel in their fine clothes, which their flatterers praise fulsomely as being fit for kings to wear. Donne reminds us that they sold their lands to buy them. The profligate behaviour of courtiers, particularly their selling their land or property to buy fineries was proverbial at the time. Burton in the *Anatomy of Melancholy* (3.2.2.3) mentions the proverb "wear a whole manor on his back".[30] People of all ranks feel the pinch of poverty, and the day's fine clothes are sold next week at the playhouse. Donne is referring to the conspicuous consumption indulged in by the courtiers, and by extension the court is compared to the stage. The satirist also remarks that the courtiers avoid the booksellers' district of Cheapside because that was where the moneylenders congregated, and the shops from which they bought the clothes on credit were to be found.

After the courtiers come the ladies of the court. The image that is used is of unprotected ships carrying valuable dyes. The value of the red dye cochineal ("Cutchannel"), found in South America, and relentlessly exploited by European traders, made the ships carrying this cargo the object of piratical depredation. In this description the men are like pirates. They board the "ships" by praising women's beauty. Women for their part praise men's intelligence. It is a convention of mutual convenience and driven by mercenary concerns. In this image of economic exchange, praise is bought and sold. Cochineal was the most coveted of red dyes in the

Renaissance. It was used for a variety of purposes, and because of its value, used for the pleasures of the rich and the famous. Edward D. Melillo in a recent essay on global trade in lac, silks and dyes notes, "In 1599, the respected Mexico City resident Gonzalo Gomez de Cervantes noted that Castilians were as eager for shipments of *grana fina* [cochineal] as they were for cargoes of gold and

silver."[31] However, Donne's satirist while describing the ceremonial robes worn by University doctors and State officials speculates why clever people never wear them. It is because the rich buy the intellectual labours of the scholars and women buy up all the red dyes as cosmetics.

The satirist observes that the antics of these inhabitants of the court would have driven the "weeping philosopher" Heraclitus to laughter. He describes the behaviour of a courtier (named Macrine, probably an invented name) whose behaviour before entering the Presence Chamber is like that of one entering into a mosque. He attends to his clothes, he removes his shoes. Then, in a return of Christian imagery, he calls his clothes to confession finding in them both grave ("mortall") sins, like tears and stains, and trivial ones ("veniall") like dirt and debris.

> And then by Durers rules survay the state
> Of his each limbe, and with strings the odds tries
> Of his neck to his legge, and wast to thighes.
> So in immaculate clothes, and Symetrie
> Perfect as circles ... (205-209)

"Durer's rules" is a fine conceit, referring to the lengthy discussion and diagrams of the famous engraver Albrecht Durer describing the artistic proportions of the human bodies in his work *Four Books on Human Proportion* (1528).[32] The courtier's anxiety

about his appearance is compared with that of a young preacher about to preach his first sermon. The courtier meets the lady and forces her to make conversation and replies to her protests with objections of his own. The pun on “Protestant” is obvious. Donne mockingly comments that such behaviour would have delivered cardinals in Rome to the Inquisition. The courtier takes the name of Christ so often that a pursuivant would have arrested him for reciting a Catholic prayer. Milgate also notes that the earliest version of the satire has "Topcliffe" in place of "pursuivant". The change is probably due to a desire for self-preservation, as any slighting reference to Topcliffe could have merited punishment.[33]

The satirist next presents a contrasting character type named Glorius. Unlike Macrine's foppishness, Glorius behaves in a rough aggressive manner. He affects a rough carelessness, acts in a violent and heedless manner and is always ready to fight to prove his point. Donne ironically says that in old tapestries of Christ's flagellation, those bearing the whips are represented as being deformed and ugly. Glorius tries to look even more frightening than them. The satirist now leaves this place and says that he is happy to do so. However on his way out he has to pass the great Chamber where large assemblies were held. This is compared to going from prison to the place of execution. There appears to be a direct reference to the tapestries which were displayed in court. It is also ironical that these tapestries would represent the Seven Deadly Sins for according to the satirist it is here that these sins are most clearly seen. He also mentions the impressively built Queen's Guard, who are compared to Giants, and who only value food and drink. The satirist fears detection by these guards. Here he falls prey to the fear that he had denied earlier and confesses "I shook like a spyed Spie".

The satirist here appears to contrast the power of the preacher and the power of satire. Preaching or moral instruction should direct itself at the court and try to rectify its defects. Preaching is compared to a mighty river (an image that we are familiar with from "Satyre III"), but the implication is that preachers do not dare to speak against the Court. The satirist on the other hand is like a slender stream but it has the efficacy to wash the Court of its sins. The satirist defers to the modesty of the writer of the pseudo-biblical book of the Maccabees who ends his work saying that if the work is good, it is because of the subject; if it is bad it is because of the deficiency of the writer. The Book of the Maccabees was regarded as not being one of the canonical books of the Bible. Nevertheless, Donne says that wise men will consider the satirist's account of the court as truly canonical.

"Satyre IV", as Baumlin persuasively argues, undermines the very authority of the form. The Horatian model appears ineffective in the rapacious courtly ethos of late Elizabethan England. He writes:

> As the first part of "Satyre IV" demonstrates, the satirist can enter the power structure of court only by playing its games and assuming its values ... And if he attempts to maintain his values, he must hide them, for it is the satirist who will be punished in a world in which his values (his Catholicism, if he is indeed Catholic, his conservatism in dress and behavior , and his hatred of pretension, deception and injustice) run so strongly against the stream of contemporary court policies and practices.[34]

By the end of the fourth satire, the consequences of the poet's own religious commitment must extend beyond the way the poet seeks to present his poetic self to affect, as Baumlin points out, not only the poet's relationship with political authority

but more fundamentally with genre, model, and medium.[35] The poem is as Bradbury pointed out, not a gloomy and confused work as earlier critics supposed, but one in which the poet's striving for truth partakes of an idealistic fervour:

> ... the evocation of his Mistress Truth placed at the poem's center provides an ideal against which the corruption of the court and the debasement of language can be measured. Ideals are not easy to come by in this genre, and Donne places at the centers of Satyres III and IV ideals as high as any that can be found in Elizabethan satire.[36]

Satyre V

"Satyre V" has always been regarded as being distinct from the other four both in terms of the satirist's subject position and the tone and content of the poem. Written at a time when Donne has entered the service of Thomas Egerton, who became Lord Keeper in 1596, the poem addresses the question of the reform of the law, and refers specifically to the steps taken by Egerton in this regard. It can be dated, thus, to some point between 1597 (when Donne entered Egerton's service) and the Queen's death in 1603. Milgate tentatively places the poem at the beginning of 1598.[37] As Egerton's employee, the poet describes himself as having a stake in this process. Consequently, the claim of disinterestedness in the satirist's stance is not much in evidence here. It also is closely focused on a single theme; even as it powerfully lays bare the deficiencies of the legal process, it also speaks of the possibility of systemic change.

"Satyre V" has commonly suffered through comparison with the other satires. Milgate sums up the general drift of the rather meagre critical literature on the poem when he says, "This is the weakest of the five Satires" (165).[38] John Stubbs in his recent biography calls the fifth satire "less poised, less zestful than any of the others"[39]. Hester, on the contrary, admires the poem's mature and reasoned approach.

> Satyre V expands the merely legal ramifications of "the world of human law and its manipulations" into a judicious, meditative analysis of the eternal Law on which law is founded. Not merely an attempt to impress his new employer with his ingenuity (as some readers have suggested), the poem meditates the ultimate foundations and spiritual significances of Donne's new position.[40]

"Satyre V" begins by situating its concerns as well as its approach within the framework of the earlier satires; we find the legal mechanisms of "Satyre II" and the images of corrupt court power in “Satyre IV”. We are also reminded of the beginning of "Satyre III" and the conflicting pull of "kinde pitty" and "brave scorne".

> Thou shalt not laugh in this leafe, Muse, nor they
> Whom any pity warmes (1-2)

But the speaker of "Satyre V" dissociates the poem from the twin tasks of producing scorn and laughter among its readers as nobody who experiences the slightest twinge of human feeling can laugh at abject misery and utter viciousness. The objects of the poem's investigation are not exempted from derision because they are beyond its reach, but because it is both inappropriate and inadequate. He cites the authority of Castiglione, the most important Renaissance authority on courtly behaviour, claiming that those who are truly wretched or truly wicked cannot form the subject of "mocke and scorne".[41] It may be that the curative role claimed by satire is unable to generate the extent of human sympathy excited by the spectacle of complete wretchedness, nor the fierce reprobation necessary to castigate the truly wicked. Donne thus seeks a new role for the satirist in this poem. The outcome is a poem which is more in the nature of a moral epistle, written by a committed and steadfast poet to a sympathetic reader.

It shows a deepening in the moral content of the satirist's stance. No longer is ridicule in itself an adequate goal.

The poem's theme, thus, is provided by "Charity and liberty". Charity, with its Christian connotations, suggests a degree of involvement in the fates of those who suffer through the many injustices that the legal system breeds. Liberty, on the other hand, suggests the poet's independence and autonomy, his moral right to criticize wrongdoers without fear or favour. Seen in the context of Donne's involvement in Egerton's programme of legal reform, this freedom may appear to be intentionally distanced from the kind of freedom that is claimed by the satirist, and the difference may be in the nature of response:

> What is hee
> Who Officers rage, and Suiters misery
> Can write, and jest? (7-9)

Hester notes that Donne's speaker founds his satiric exercise on the basis of Christian ethics and morality.[42] We also note that this poem avoids the stylistic and topical variety that is fundamental to the form of the satire and aims at a close focus on a single theme. The matter of the poem is provided by one of Egerton's principal investigations into legal malpractice: specifically, the inordinate fees demanded by officials of the Chancery and Council from intending suitors and the resultant bribery and corruption.[43] R. C. Bald observes that the poem is concerned with the demands placed on suitors by lawyers and officials alike "not merely in the Star Chamber and in the law courts generally, but also in the Chancery and other offices to which those who had obtained royal grants had to go to get their grants validated".[44] The recurring themes of Donne's "Satyre V" may thus be simply described as "Officers rage, and

Suiters misery"(8). Predator and victim are fixed in their respective conditions without hope of alteration. The possibility of change comes from outside. No longer imagined as the prerogative of the satirist, it now exists in the programme of legal reform.

It may be interesting to note that the poem has no single announced addressee. It starts with an address to the Muse and includes direct statements to the Queen and Egerton. For the most part it is the hapless litigant who is apostrophized. One might sense that this poem containing a savage outburst against the law also presupposes a more distant and sympathetic listener or reader. It is for such a person one might claim that this rhetorical exercise is conducted. That would help us to account for the witty speculativeness and learned allusion that is much in evidence. There is more than a trace of metaphysical wit in the passage in which the poet claims that all things that exist are constituted out of the same substances:

> If all things be in all,
> As I thinke, since all, which were, are, and shall
> Bee, be made of the same elements:
> Each thing, each thing implyes or represents.
> Then man is a world; (9-13)

As Milgate notes, Donne is alluding to a Paracelsian doctrine that "all things are concealed in all".[45] Allied to this is the more familiar Galenic doctrine of the elements which is very common in the English Renaissance. However, Donne uses these authorities to engage in a piece of witty equivocation. In the following passage (lines 13-18), "man" is used in two distinct ways: first collectively, standing for the natural world, in which the officers are compared to seas and then to the body-politic in which officers are stomachs. As Milgate observes, there is "a double logical fallacy

in Donne's 'proof' that 'man is the world' and that, consequently, 'the world is man'."[46] But the metaphysical conceit does little to lessen the violence of the imagery. As Andreason points out, "Satyre V" uses the images of sea and streams used before in "Satyre III", but now it is applied to God's Law, the source of power.[47] However, in the actual course of things, it is the officers who take on the function of the raging seas, and the streams representing suitors helplessly rush towards them and their own destruction. Again, in the savage representation of the body of the State, legal officers are the ravening stomachs in which the suitors are digested and expelled as refuse. The relation between officer and suitor is both symbiotic and exploitative. The suitors are streams that feed the seas, the food that nourishes the stomach, the wind that drives the mills, the cannon fodder which enables wars to be fought. In each case, the suitors actively provide the means for their own destruction. There is searing anger in the image that concludes this first paragraph in which the suitors are described as fools conniving at their own cuckoldry.

The image of water returns in the address to Queen Elizabeth:

> Greatest and fairest Empresse, know you this?
> Alas, no more then Thames calme head doth know
> Whose meades her armes drowne, or whose corne o'rflow: (28-30)

In "Satyre III", the calm head of the stream was the source of God's power. Here it is translated into the secular force of the Queen's authority. As the distance between source and destination expresses in "Satyre III" a progressive corruption and deterioration of religious power, here too the Queen is unaware of the injustices perpetrated in her name. This is followed by a direct address to Egerton and finally a reference to the poet himself who is richly paid for the duties he has been asked to

perform. The hierarchic devolution of power from Queen to Lord Keeper to Secretary may be seen as Donne's formal insertion of himself into the chain of power.

It is in this context of active engagement in a process of judicial reform already underway that one needs to judge the remaining part of the poem. Obviously the objects of attack are not the suitors but the officers. Yet the poem's techniques of persuasion and its angry tirades are directed at the former. Denis Flynn examining the evidence of the Ellesmere manuscripts comes to the conclusion that Donne's actual role in Egerton's household was very limited. Bald's belief in Donne's substantial and active role as Egerton's secretary has been questioned by Flynn. He comments: "a more reasonable answer to the question of what Donne did as Egerton's secretary would be: very little", and adds:

> Donne was going nowhere in Egerton's service. The lord keeper was a stern and unsentimental judge of character, and his household documents show that from his employees he demanded a high standard of performance within rigidly conceived job descriptions. Donne, who was always unwilling to wed himself to any narrow occupation, does not impress us as a young man who would thrive in Egerton's employ.[48]

What, however, is relevant to our present study is that the poet imagines himself as directly implicated in the long-needed task of reform.

The poet imagines that the age in which he lives is one of rusty iron. Conventionally the epithet "the Iron Age" was used to describe the current condition of the world, particularly to mark the decline from the Golden Age of classical mythology. Some writers, as Milgate points out, also spoke of a further decline into the Age of Lead. Donne however uses 'rusty iron' to underscore a sense of pervasive moral decline.[49]

In the Iron Age, we are told, justice could be bought with money. At the present time much money is expended but that only purchases injustice. A series of images bring out Donne's sense of futility and wasted effort. Corruption is seen to exist in every sphere of the law. Fortunes are swallowed up by the law courts: estates elude the hands of those who fight over them.

> If Law be in the Judges heart, and hee
> Have no heart to resist letter, or fee,
> Where wilt thou'appeale? (43-45).

The location of the law in the heart of the judge is actually a travesty for it is the written code which must prevail over individual interpretation. Here of course the judges themselves are rotten to the core, unable to resist either influence or money. The remedy of legal appeal is also paralysed because presumably the entire system is completely dysfunctional. The image of the stream returns here with the lower courts situated downstream and the higher ones situated upstream. To appeal to the lower court would be to consign oneself to the inevitable injustices, but should one seek to appeal such a judgement to a higher court, it would mean a hard struggle against the current of the stream. By the time one can reach the higher court, one is already feeble and impoverished. The natural phenomenon of struggling against the current of flowing water is brilliantly captured in this image.

Yet this is not all. To try to appeal against the judgement of a lower court creates such resentment that the process becomes many times more difficult. Donne uses a dense array of images which are extravagant in their imaginative scope. Should one appeal against a judge, one would see a vast body of water suddenly impeding one's progress. The only way to cross it is through bridges of gold referring undoubtedly to both

exorbitant legal fees and substantial bribes. But the seas swallow up the gold and the bridge cannot be built. Even after one has exhausted oneself paying fees and bribes, the objective of legal redress remains unreachable. Donne's language here is richly allusive, and the Biblical allusions in particular give a special force to his arguments about the function and prerogative of judges. Hester notes that the lines:

> If Law be in the Judges heart, and hee
> Have no heart to resist letter, or fee, (43-44)

refer to the injunction in Psalms LX that the vow of man should be to "delight to do thy will, O my God; thy Law is within mine heart" (v. 8).[50] The irony is even more pointed in lines 57-9:

> Judges are Gods; he who made and said them so,
> Meant not that men should be forc'd to them to goe,
> By meanes of Angels; (57-59).

This refers us to Psalms LXXII: "How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked … I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High". The whole Psalm is an admonition to the pride of earthly power. The Psalmist enjoins the judge to "Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked" (Psalms LXXII, 2-7). Evidently this is not the case on earth. The angels used as means of communication are not the heavenly beings that carry our supplications to God (Lat *angelus* from Gk. *aggelos*, messenger). Here it is the valuable gold coin called the angel or angel-noble (Milgate 168). If one had to pay the exorbitant sums that one pays for petitions to legal authorities in one's prayers to God and the celestial

hierarchy, even kings would starve. The parenthetical "so 'tis"(63) underlines the poet's sense of moral urgency. This, in effect, is the state of the world.

It may never be known exactly when Donne renounced his Catholic faith, or even whether such a specific date may be thought of. John Stubbs in his recent biography puts it well:

> In time, Donne would see the Roman Catholic position as a denial of the historical moment, a failure to adapt to an evolution in the Christian Church that was truly 'Catholic', universal. But when he left the army to take up his job as a secretary in the Elizabethan government, his theological position was not fully formed. He had taken a decision that was personal and political, yet only intuitively religious, and it was only over the following years and decades that he managed to explain it to himself. His later writing on the issues of recusancy, in Pseudo-martyr and throughout his sermons, suggests that he really saw militant Roman Catholics as a threat to the peace and stability of his country. By joining Egerton's staff, as by volunteering for the expeditions against Spain, he was signalling his loyalty to the governing order.
>
> It should not be thought that Donne lacked reservations about the government's methods, however. He was not brutalized into approving of the practices of Topcliffe and his men. An important historical fact to bear in mind is that torture and physical violence were generally accepted means of law enforcement; not so much for any real efficiency in producing reliable evidence as in allowing the sovereign to show that the law had total power over the bodies of all subjects in the realm. Even so, as a preacher during the 1620s, when this assertion began to be questioned by legal experts – among them an acquaintance of his, John Selden – Donne was in the avant garde of those who attacked the use of torture on both ethical and pragmatic grounds.[51]

This long quotation might help us to understand why Donne's outburst at line 63 is so moving.

> Would it not anger
> A Stoicke, a coward, yea a Martyr,
> To see a Pursivant come in, and call
> All his cloathes, Copes; Bookes, Primers; and all
> His Plate, Challices; and mistake them away,
> And aske a fee for comming? (63-68)

This describes a condition which is intimately and exclusively experienced by the English Catholic. The unlikely triad of line 64 are unified by their disinclination to experience anger; the first because of his philosophical persuasion, the second because of timorousness, and the third because of his willingness to suffer for his faith. Yet all three, thinks the speaker, would experience anger if they were subjected to the intolerable exactions that the Catholic faced in the present regime. We know that the finding of Catholic prayer books and priestly vestments was considered evidence for conviction under the harsh anti-recusancy laws of the time. Stubbs observes that the Inns of Court were both sites for Catholic recruitment and inevitably also of Anglican retribution:

> In March 1572, around the time Donne was born, the Bishop of London gleefully reported a raid on student digs in a house belonging to a Portuguese man: 'There was found the altar prepared, the chalisse and their bread god; and in the house, as I hear, a great number of Englishmen hyd, as ready to hear masse.' Among those apprehended, as so often, were 'four students at law, freshmen I suppose...' The discovery and capture of rebel Catholics in the Inns of Court remained a frequent event in Donne's time.[52]

Lisa McClain describes the situation:

> In 1581, the Act of Persuasions decreed that anyone withdrawing an English subject from his natural loyalty to the queen or her religion would be charged with treason and subject to execution. Moreover, this act raised the fine for non-attendance at Protestant services from one shilling per week (the penalty imposed by the 1559 Act of Uniformity) to £20 per week for four successive absences.... By 1585, the threat of invasion by Catholic Spain increased. New penal laws reflected the government's increased suspicion of Catholics who, officials feared, would support a Spanish invading force rather than defend their Protestant queen. According to these laws, any priest found in England ordained beyond the English shores was automatically guilty of treason. It was now illegal and punishable by death just to be a priest ordained after 1559 in England. Harborers and helpers of priests were to "suffer death, loss, and forfeit as in cases of one attainted of felony".[53]

In an undated sermon preached on the Penitential Psalms,[54] Donne mentions the fact that if one was visited by a pursuivant or sergeant, who had come to remove his belongings and trouble him, the individual was nevertheless bound to receive him, entertain him and pay him a fee. But whereas in the sermon this memory of Catholic tribulations is in the context of the meek acceptance of divine retribution, the anger is far more explicit in the satire. The tone of moral exhortation is strongly voiced in the last section of the poem. Law, which is ideally the voice of God on earth, should not be used for the purpose of private gain or to justify depredations.

> Oh, ne'r may
> Faire lawes white reverend name be strumpeted,
> To warrant thefts: she is established
> Recorder to Destiny, on earth, and shee

> Speakes Fates words, and but tells us who must bee
> Rich, who poore, who in chaires, who in jayles: (68-73)

The words "recorder to destiny", for which Milgate finds no textual precedent,[55] powerfully imagines law as the agent of Fate, inexorably mapping out the destinies of individuals, deciding who is to be rich and who poor, who in power and who in chains. The effects of entering into the legal process are usually always painful for suitors. The "foule long nailes", the only blemish in the fair form of the law, are in fact the only part that suitors feel.

> In bodies
> Of men, so'in law, nailes are th'extremities,
> So Officers stretch to more then Law can doe,
> As our nailes reach what no else part comes to. (75-78)

The fault is thus not of the law, which is good, but its agents who are evil. The last few lines admonish the suitor to abandon the habit of seeking legal redress altogether. As Hester points out:

> Having acquired "goods" by devious methods and then lost them to the officers, the suitor is a triple fool in now begging for legal justice only after finding that prostitution of the law has failed to advance him personally. "That dole," with its suggestions of a final grief as well as a final justice simultaneously, "comes not till these dye" (l.82), the satirist warns.

He advises the suitor to sell his papers and give up his hope of attaining justice. All that the suitor has amassed are valueless piles of paper, enough to wrap vast cargoes of merchandise. Like Haman - who proverbially was hung high - the suitor has wasted

his wealth for disastrous returns. Like the swimming dog of Phaedrus's fable whom shadows cozened into dropping the meat into the water, the litigants were diving and "near[ly] drowning" themselves for something which had already vanished.[56] Man was desperately running after shadows instead of restoring himself to the real world of his abilities and convictions. Donne probably does not see himself as an exception to it.

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1 Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, cit. Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p.75.

2 Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p.75.

3 A. Cummings, "Catholic Exiles in Elizabethan and Jacobean England," MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 2006, p.33

4 J.S. Baumlin, Donne's "Satyre IV": The Failure of Language and Genre, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Vol. 30, No. 3, p. 367

5 Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*, 9.179, cit. Milgate, *Satires*, p. 150.

6 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 150.

7 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 151.

8 Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, tr. D.M.MacDowell (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1982, pp. 24-25.

9 Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, pp. 25-26.

10 Baumlin, "Satyre IV", p. 364.

11 Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, p. 26.

12 Milgate, *Satires*, p. 152.

13 Milgate , *Satires*, p. 153.

14 Milgate, *Satires*, p.154. see also, W.M.Frohock, "Panurge as Comic Character", *Yale French Studies*, Vol 23, 1959, pp 71-76.

15 J. Lievsay, *Stefano Guazzo and the English Renaissance* 1575-1675 (Chapel Hill, 1961). On this see also A. Das Gupta. ":The Idea of the Courtier", *Jadavpur University Essays and Studies*, Vol, VIII , 1994. p. 16-18 I have used this article in the present discussion.

16 Cited by Das Gupta, "Idea of the Courtier", p. 16.

[17] Das Gupta, "Idea of the Courtier", pp. 16-17.

[18] Milgate , "Satires", p. 154.

[19] Baumlin, "Satyre IV", p. 375.

[20] Milgate , "Satires", p. 157.

[21] Milgate , "Satires", p. 158.

[22] See for instance Judith Yarnall, *Transformations of Circe*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994, p. 99 ff.

[23] Baumlin "Satyre IV", p. 379.

[24] Milgate , "Satires", p.159.

[25] A.C. Spearing, *Medieval Dream-Poetry* , Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p.10.

[26] Baumlin, "Satyre IV", p. 379.

[27] Milgate , "Satires", p.159.

[28] Milgate , "Satires", p.159.

[29] Milgate , "Satires", p.160.

[30] Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson, London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1978, Book.3, p. 98.

[31] E. D. Melillo, "Global Entomologies: Insects, Empires and the 'Synthetic Age'in World History", *Past and Present*, no. 223, May 2014, p. 64

[32] Milgate , "Satires", p.162.

[33] Milgate , "Satires", p.162.

[34] Baumlin, "Satyre IV", p. 383.

[35] Baumlin, "Satyre IV", p. 383.

[36] N.M.Bradbury, "Speaker and Structure in Donne's Satyre IV", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Winter, 1985), p. 106.

[37] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 165.

[38] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 165.

[39] J. Stubbs, *John Donne: The Reformed Soul*, New York and London: Norton, 2006, consulted as unpaginated e-book, Chapter 2.

[40] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p. 350.

[41] cit. Milgate, *Satires*, p. 165.

[42] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p. 351.

[43] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p. 350.

[44] Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, pp. 100-101.

[45] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 165.

[46] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 165.

[47] N. J. C. Andreasen, "Theme and Structure in Donne's Satyres", *Studies in English Literature*, 1500-1900, Vol. 3, No. 1, Winter, 1963, p. 73.

[48] D. Flynn, "John Donne in the Ellesmere Manuscripts", *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 46, No. 4, Autumn, 1983, p. 336.

[49] see, for instance, Milgate, *Satires*, p. 166.

[50] Hester, *Kinde Pitty*, p. 352.

[51] Stubbs, *John Donne: The Reformed Soul*, unpaginated e-book, Chapter 6.

[52] Stubbs, *John Donne: The Reformed Soul*, unpaginated e-book, Chapter 2.

[53] Lisa McClain, *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation & Lived Experience Among Catholics in Protestant England, 1559–1642*, New York: Routledge, 2004. p. 21. (Consulted on Google Books)

[54] Donne, *Sermons*, ed. Potter and Simpson, V, p. 370.

[55] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 168.

[56] Milgate, *Satires*, p. 168.

CONCLUSION

We have attempted in this study to present a close reading of Donne's “Satyres”. We have tried in the first chapter to understand the development of the form of the satire from its beginnings in classical antiquity through the many shapes it takes in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. We have also claimed that fundamental to the understanding of Donne's “Satyres” is an awareness of the complex religious environment they were created in. We shall briefly conclude our study by attempting to generalize some of our specific conclusions, and by raising two theoretical questions. Our study is primarily a close study of selected texts, but these general reflections may suggest future lines of development that fall outside the purview of the present essay.

As we have seen, the term "satire", refers both to a mode of thought and a specific literary form. Even though our principal interest is in the form of the verse satire as it was developed by Roman poets and its adaptation in the late 16th century by Donne, it is necessary to bear in mind that there are a whole range of literary or cultural forms which overtly or silently claim to be recognized as satiric, in whole or in part. Thus the Aristophanic drama, the Menippean satire and the medieval complaint are all seen to exemplify a "satiric" spirit. Renaissance satire stands on the back of its classical exemplars. If classical satire continually draws attention to its "mixed" character, its continual subversion of generic propriety, then the Renaissance adds a new feature to this sense of variety. The Renaissance poet has a much greater textual variety, with all the models circulating within a heteronomous space of Renaissance textual culture. As a scholarly poet, Donne was deeply conversant with a variety of classical,

medieval and Renaissance models. His satires draw upon this medley - to borrow Juvenal's phrase this "mixed mash" (Satires 1.86) - of textual models and results in these five immensely complex poems. In doing so he, along with his contemporaries, inaugurates a new approach to satire. Particularly when one thinks of the great triumvirate of Roman satirists, Horace, Persius and Juvenal, one might think that all three contribute to his satiric vision, Donne has variously been seen as an imitator and follower of all these three individually. It would perhaps make more sense to see him as drawing upon all three at various times and occasions. One sees in him Horatian moderation and balance, as much as Persius's high moral tone and Juvenal's bitter invective.

But there is also another layer in Donne's satires. The entire repertoire of classical satire is reimplanted in an uncompromising discourse of Christian ideology. We have seen in the first chapter how the form of satire lends itself easily to Christian moralism. The general themes of worldly pomp and glory, the deadly sins that beset human life, as well as specific instances of corruption and wrongdoing fall within the scope of the religious observer of life. One is aware of course that such a view may owe nothing inherently to the formal devices of satire, and may be found in all forms of writing, from sermons and tracts to complex literary forms. Nevertheless, in its reappearance in the Christian world, the satire too draws upon this rich vein of thinking. Perhaps, a little imaginatively it might be suggested that satire in the Christian world can never be wholly secular, but somewhere, even covertly, brings into play the foundational binaries of the Christian way of thinking, between God and man, between heaven and hell, between fallen and unfallen, between salvation and damnation. This is the reason why Donne's “Satyres” require to be examined in the light of its charged and tension-filled religious background.

The five satires in the order that we find them do not show an easy or predictable progression. Indeed, some would think that there is no progression at all, and the five satires are independent of each other. But there is clearly a way in which the ideas of the five satires converge and supplement each other. Even bearing in mind the uncertainties of dating, it might seem that a kind of pattern is visible. From the emergence of the satirist in “Satyre I” in the roads of London in a relatively light hearted mood to the uneasy and despairing compromise with the legal system in "Satyre V", there is a continual process of negotiation and adjustment. If on the one hand there is the sense of anarchy, vice and confusion, on the other there is a bewildered quest for some kind of order. All in all, through the changing stances of the satirist one senses a movement towards some kind of clarification of consciousness amidst the doldrums, the turmoil of a disturbing time. As an intellectual of his time, writing for his friends at the Inns of Court, seeking patronage, as well as mocking the ways of the rich and powerful, we find in the ”Satyres” a mind at once angry and anguished, in search of stability both in terms of career, of social order and above all of religious tolerance.

The four satires I, II, IV, and V though widely differing in theme and treatment, demonstrate how the mechanisms of formal verse satire may be used to explore these problems. Importantly, one might consider the division between the speaker and the world, the tentative autonomy that the satirist claims. He claims to be able to speak of the ills of the world from a position of strength, claiming to be able to speak without fear and favour. The critique of foppishness in “Satyre I”, of legal malpractice in II and V, and of courtly pomp and vanity in “Satyre IV” claim - even provisionally - that the satirist is able to speak because he sees more clearly, feels more deeply and articulates more powerfully the problems that beset his fellow men. He speaks to all

who are implicated in a condition that he recognizes but also sets himself apart from. One has to repeat that this is merely a question of a formal disengagement. One realizes that in the case of Donne's “Satyres” such a separation can be tentative at the best. The central position of “Satyre III” in critical discourse may stem from the fact that of all the satires it is least satiric. It is here that the distinction between speaker and addressee can no longer be maintained. It is here that we witness a search for some kind of order amidst the unrest and that order being a search for the fountain-head of truth, the spiralling progress towards Truth standing on top of a hill being symbolic of an ascent through steep, rough steps of lust, ambition, greed, avarice. Equally, the awareness that salvation is only achieved through humility, the supplication of grace and a radical simplicity of thought does not claim any special status for the speaker.

This may be a good point to try to introduce the first of the two theoretical points with which we intend to conclude this study. The satirist, one might say, makes a claim to speak the "truth", and this act assumes importance in the light of the fact that it habitually sets itself against hypocrisy and blindness. The satirist's speech is necessitated by the failure of others to see where they have gone wrong. It may be that the poet of satire also seeks validation for what he says from an audience, in whom he can expect a clear understanding of his need to speak truthfully. However, it is also necessary to say that such a profession of "truth" is in no way abstract or philosophical: rather, it is contingent and practical. The impulse of truth-telling comes from the way in which the satirist is joined to his fallible and erring fellow human beings. Speech is necessary, even critical, at a certain moment. Thus it may be that the impulse that we are trying to discern is less an objective or doctrinal truth than an impulse towards frankness or openness. At a certain moment speech becomes

obligatory, however much it may go against the common run of observed behaviour. Satire thus may internalize a claim to be a kind of candid speaking, the kind that Michel Foucault famously discussed in his treatment of the idea of *parrhesia* in an unpublished series of lectures delivered in 1983[1]. Foucault's lectures were quickly circulated in typescript and are also available in an edited print form, as are other series of unpublished lectures that the philosopher gave. Foucault describes *parrhesia* as a kind of "speech activity", involving a commitment which may place the speaker in danger: for candid speech becomes meaningful only when it exposes the speaker to a kind of danger:

> the commitment involved in *parrhesia* is linked to a certain social situation, to a difference of status between the speaker and his audience, to the fact that the *parrhesiastes* says something which is dangerous to himself and thus involves a risk …[2]

Foucault also observes that the willingness to engage in *parrhesia* implies that the speaker is someone "who has the moral qualities which are required, first, to know the truth, and secondly, to convey such truth to others".[3] In this discussion Foucault deals with the relation of *parrhesia* to rhetoric, politics and philosophy; to Greek tragedy and to the philosophy of Plato and Seneca. The larger implications of this brilliant and difficult contribution to Foucault's late philosophy are far beyond our abilities and scope. One might however briefly point to a brief section on rhetoric where Foucault observes that whereas in Platonic philosophy (e.g. in *Phaedrus*) *parrhesia* and rhetorical speech are continually opposed to each other, in the writers on rhetoric we find that *parrhesia* (also described as *licentia*) is treated as a figure of speech. However:

> *Parrhesia* is thus a sort of "figure" among rhetorical figures, but with this characteristic: that it is without any figure since it is completely natural. *Parrhesia* is the zero degree of those rhetorical figures which intensify the emotions of the audience.[4]

This brilliant comment may direct us towards a better understanding of the claim of satire to candid speech. In fact Foucault here echoes a thought that we find in Quintilian himself:

> When such exclamations, however, arise from sincere feeling, they are not figurative in the sense of which I am speaking, but when they are fictitious and the offspring of art, they must indisputably be regarded as figures. The same may be said of that freedom of speech which Cornificius calls *licentia*, and the Greeks *parrhesia*. For what can be less figurative than plain and sincere speech? Out under the appearance of it there frequently lurks flattery.[5]

That satire runs the risk of being thought subversive towards established authority is a fact that is attested to by history and one need look no further than the Bishop's Ban of 1599 that specifically mentions Hall's satires among the list of proscribed books and declares that "noe *Satyres* or Epigrams be printed hereafter". Other works, like those of Donne, undoubtedly escaped because they were circulating privately.[6] The question that comes to mind however is one about the way in which satire operates: standing as it were on the dividing line between rhetorical persuasion and truth-telling, between its formal craft and the reason why it comes into being.

The verse satire from the time of its appearance in Rome claimed a certain power of instruction, which stemmed from the double role that the satirist claimed to be playing. As an observer, the satirist stands apart from the crowd, but at the same time shows himself to be deeply concerned and involved with the actions of people around

him. The forms of persuasion that are used, such as admonition, exhortation, censure, rebuke, reproach and so on, are not so much a part of the old and valorized status of poet as prophet, but as a man speaking to men. Charles Witke perceptively writes about Latin satire:

> For the first time society is encouraged toward a more excellent way of life by poetic teachers who leaving the heroic age and the chronicles of cursed houses, discuss morality by means of the trivia of existence set forth in a style which is often low. ... He addresses all men who share his time and language. He speaks to those who share the problems which he has detected in their common culture.[7]

The satirist's claim to be a parrhesiast is thus not entirely limited to his assumption of a kind of linguistic freedom. Such freedom, to be sure, is sited firmly in the form, and claimed from the time of Lucilius onwards. As such verbal liberty is a prerogative of the genre itself, one might think that some kind of containment is also at work. If the role of the satirist as a speaker of candid but uncomfortable truths were judged purely in the light of the very substantial opportunities that the form offers, then satire might appear to be less dangerous than it threatens to be, probing the limits of social tolerance rather than seeking radical urgency.

It is not in what satire says, but that the need to choose and practice the form of satire recurrently becomes pressing and unavoidable, which appears to be critical. The desire, rather than the execution, the compulsion rather than the verbal content, may be the tenuous link with *parrhesia*, candid speech that is radical in nature, which we may claim for the satirist. This may also be the point to briefly raise the second of the questions that we would like to consider. Can the satirist make a significant claim to be an ethical agent? The question may itself be difficult to formulate cogently, given

that the satirist habitually claims a moral high ground, a position of strength from which he can apportion praise and blame. Not only does the satirist claim an ethical position, he also acts as a judge of others. As with the prerogative of "candid" speech, the assumption of an ethical stance may be seen as part of the formal mechanisms of satire.

The question becomes a little more complex when we consider the satire in a Christian context, and here we shall try to come closer to the subject of our study. The Christian satirist unlike his classical counterpart does not operate in a purely human scale of values, but also claims to be the spokesperson of a higher, absolute, moral standard. By this logic it would be possible to claim that the Christian satire is always an ethical construct, representing a truth that is greater than the satirist himself. But it may well be that with the adoption of a Christian standpoint the line between the speaker and the society that he addresses becomes blurred. The satirist can claim to anatomize shortcomings that he sees all around him: but he himself is also implicated in the general corruption of mankind. Thus what the satirist speaks of others, he also speaks of himself. It is of course true that Christian satirists of various ages, be it the medieval proponent of "sanative castigation" or a sophisticated Renaissance humanist like Donne, give the impression of standing outside and apart from the object of their satiric vision.

In conclusion, then, we might look for one last time at the greatest of Donne's "Satyres". "Satyre III", as we have noted earlier, is for the most part, the most untypical of Donne's five satires. John Carey puts it well when he says, "For most of its length it is not a satire at all, but a self-lacerating record of that moment which comes in the lives of almost all thinking people, when the beliefs of youth,

unquestioningly assimilated and bound up with our closest personal attachments, come into conflict with the scepticism of the mature intellect."[8] The poem only intermittently acknowledges the existence of an addressee. Even when it does, it is not a clearly defined figure like the friend or the fop, but somebody who might be very much like the poet himself. If the other satires express the poet's bitterness, his sense of alienation, his indignation at the various forms of perceived social ill, the third satire expresses pain and bewilderment. At the moment when bitterness gives way to pain, there is a realization of the futility of conventional satiric stances. There is now a profound abjection, a surrendering of his towering pride which is very rare in Donne. At that moment there dawns his candid understanding that those do well who dwell "at the rough stream's calm head". The "tyrannous rage" "consumes" everything and he who trusts power-heads more than God Himself perish in the tide of time. Religious faith thus becomes the intellectual quest in Donne. It is here that Donne is both candid and profoundly ethical: "doubt wisely, in strange way / To stand inquiring right, is not to stray; / To sleep or run wrong is" (77-79).

As a learned humanist poet, Donne in his satires powerfully adapts the themes and conventions of classical satire to the rich repertoire of English poetry. As one deeply involved in the religious debates of his time, Donne in perhaps an unparalleled manner, expresses the crisis of Elizabethan religion. Our study has attempted to give some idea of the measure of Donne's poetic achievement in the five satires. Despite their uneven and occasionally disjointed character, in their distinctive singularity they represent as a group, a major contribution to English Renaissance poetry. In its finest moments, it is also able to hint at, even momentarily, how the form of satire can transcend itself in pursuit of a form of utterance that is truly ethical in nature.

[1] Michel Foucault, *Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia*, based on the notes given to seminar given at University of California at Berkeley, 1983. Edited by Joseph Pearson. Circulated in mimeographed and later digital format.

[2] Foucault, *Parrhesia*, p.2.

[3] Foucault, *Parrhesia*, p.4

[4] Foucault, *Parrhesia*, p.7

[5] Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, Book 9 Section 27, .ed. Lee Honeycutt. trans. John Selby Watson, 2006. Iowa State. 15 July 2015. <http://rhetoric.eserver.org/quintilian/>.

[6] There is a considerable amount of material available on *parrhesia* and early English satire, see for instance, Andrew McRae, *Literature, Satire and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2004), pp. 89-90; D. Colclough, "*Parrhesia*, The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Early Modern England", *Rhetorica* 17:2, 1999 , p.177 ff.

[7] Charle Witke, *Latin Satire: The Structure of Persuasion* (Leyden: E.J.Brill, 1970), pp. 11-12.

[8] John Carey, *John Donne: Life Mind and Art*, p.26

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