1976

Robert Burns's Satiric Poetry.

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KENNERLY, Jane Bowling, 1942-
ROBERT BURNS'S SATIRIC POETRY.

The Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College,
Ph.D., 1976
Literature, English

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author wishes to express her appreciation to many who have assisted her in completing this manuscript. Dr. Annette McCormick, the director, has made generous contributions of time and advice; without her reasonableness, patience, and untiring efforts in reviewing the manuscript, the work could not have been finished. The author also expresses her thanks to the other members of the committee, Dr. Don Moore and Dr. John Wildman, for their careful readings and their helpful suggestions. She thanks her family for their steadfast confidence: her parents, for their patience, continued support, and emphasis on academic achievement; her brother and sister-in-law, for their interest and excellent example. The precept, example, and concern, of two friends, Drs. Steve and Carolyn Morris Pyrek, have been invaluable. Her husband John has been unswerving in his expressions of faith and encouragement.
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ABSTRACT

Although the life and writings of Robert Burns have been subjected to much scrutiny and critical discussion, a major gap in Burns scholarship has long existed. No intensive or comprehensive analysis of Burns's satires has been written. Yet his satires, when examined in detail, comprise an impressive body of work. This study, then, fills a needed function by focusing on his achievements in satire. Moreover, the examination reveals that by the time the Kilmarnock Edition was published (July 31, 1786) he had revealed fully or semi-nally the scope of his satiric ability.

Following the introduction, subsequent chapters focus on four features of Burns's satire: targets, vehicles, techniques, and alternatives. Analysis of his satiric pieces indicates that throughout his career he attacks five major targets: insensitivity and intolerance that lead to unjust oppression; the hypocrisy of pretensions; false pride; greed for power, money, and knowledge; incompetence that injures others. Chapter II shows him employing six major vehicles in those poems composed both before and after August 1786: epistles, monologues, dialogues, burlesques, songs, and Christis Kirk. Throughout his writings, he illustrates varying degrees of success at merging satiric theme to the distinctive features of each poetic form. Chapter III examines his use of satiric devices. In order to place emphases, reveal tone, and delineate individual flaws, he makes careful use of these kinds of poetic techniques: diction--including juxtapositions, concrete language, ambiguities in some words, and
syntactical arrangement of words; metrical features—encompassing rhyming, rhythmical, accentual, and alliterative patterns; and metaphorical imagery—figures of speech drawn mainly from traditional and common sources, such as the natural world, the animal kingdom, domestic concerns, and written learning. He illustrates both dexterity and clumsiness in manipulating these techniques for satiric effects. Chapter IV examines the alternatives, or norms, which he offers in opposition to the vices and follies he attacks. Usually suggesting his affirmed values through indirection, Burns exposes his passionate commitment to broadly based humanitarian principles: integrity, tolerant compassion, evaluation of others by standards of mind and character, brotherly love, independence in thought and action.

This detailed study of Robert Burns's satires not only analyzes the attributes of all his satiric poems; it also supports the theory that by August 1786, he had achieved the fullness of his ability to use certain vehicles and techniques for satiric development and that he had conclusively enunciated targets for attacks and values for affirmation. Burns grew to full command of his satiric muse early in his career; neither consistent deterioration nor maturity as an artist is reflected in his later poems. This examination of Burns's satires thus accomplishes three ends: it offers the first full and comprehensive view of the complete body of his satire; it evaluates the excellence and mediocrity of the poems in comparison to one another; and it illustrates that Burns is one of those writers whose poetic maturity came early in his career, one to whom time and experience do not bring increased proficiency.
INTRODUCTION

Although Robert Burns's poetry has been examined in over three thousand articles and books, as well as in all surveys of Scottish literature and culture, and although numerous biographies and editions of his poetry have been published, the body of his satirical poems has received only limited consideration. No critic has assessed his satiric achievement at length or examined the whole body of his satiric poetry. Some of the better known pieces--such as "Holy Willie's Prayer," "Love and Liberty," "To a Louse," "The Holy Fair," and "Tam o' Shanter"--receive a great deal of attention from various critics. But the books usually merge discussions of the individual satires with studies of a large number of his non-satiric poems; articles limit themselves to analyses of one or a very few satires. Moreover, some of his satiric poetry has never been discussed by any critic. Although the poetry is indeed varied--some pieces excellent achievements, some poor, many uneven--the breadth of his satiric accomplishments merits careful consideration. Furthermore, an examination of his satires indicates that the satiric pieces he wrote before August 1786 (when the Kilmarnock Edition was published) illustrate the range and depth of Burns's satiric achievements. The later (post-July 1786) pieces show no new techniques or targets or forms and do not, in general, exhibit Burns's increased skill in development; in fact, some of the later poems actually show a decrease in competency. By July 1786, then, he had either fully or seminally developed the satiric targets, forms, techniques, and alternatives that characterize all of his satiric poetry.
The first chapter will examine Burns's satiric targets, the subjects and themes that permeate all his satires. His targets are the frailties (vices and follies) of human character that are harmful and obnoxious both to the individual himself and to the public. He draws specific illustrations of these flaws from various individuals. A number of local clerical leaders--such as Fisher, Auld, and Russell--serve as the specific examples of arrogant pride, intolerance, hypocrisy, and oppressive denial of freedom. He finds in the British government and in local village politics ample illustrations of greed, sham, and incompetence. After he interacts with many of the aristocracy, he attacks those who demonstrate haughtiness, lack of compassion, and false standards of judgment. But the point is not whom Burns names in his satires so much as what he attacks; individuals simply serve as the "historic particulars" without which satires cannot really work. The qualities he satirizes can be viewed in five main categories: insensitivity and intolerance that lead to unjust oppression; the hypocrisy of pretensions; false pride; greed for power, money, and knowledge; incompetence that injures others. Burns attacks these traits throughout his poetry. Examination of the contents of the early and later poems shows that he does not grow fonder in time of these frailties nor add new items to his list of targets.

The second chapter considers the vehicles that Burns uses to convey the attacks on flaws of character. He advances his satiric ideas in six major modes: epistles, monologues, dialogues, burlesques, songs, and Christis Kirk. His satiric epistles are informal, conversational letters never totally satiric; but the thirteen letters
contain passages of attack. He writes all except one to receptive audiences whose approval he anticipates, usually employs the conversa-
tional qualities common to Standard Habbie, and makes his satiric
tone clear. The ten epistles written by July 1786 represent the full-
ness of his competency and versatility with that vehicle. Throughout
his poetry he finds the monologue to be a flexible instrument for
satire; in later satiric monologues, however, he does not demonstrate
significantly different techniques or additional effectiveness.
Some of the monologues are actually dramatic monologues in which the
tension between the reader's sympathy for the speaker and his moral
judgment of him as well as the discrepancy between the reader's and
speaker's understanding of a situation is essential for full revela-
tion of Burns's theme. He uses the dialogue more infrequently—only
three times. One of the early dialogues, "The Twa Dogs," is far
superior in dramatic credibility and structural cohesion to the only
dialogue of the later group, "The Brigs of Ayr." The paucity of
examples and the construction of these dialogues support the theory
that Burns preferred to state his view rather than to use a dialogue
form to explore both sides of an issue before announcing a judgment.
Only slightly more common as a vehicle of satire are burlesque
pieces--mock-odes, -elegies, -lyrics, and -celebrations. Burns
creates discrepancies between subject and style so as to mock flaws
and to ridicule the banality of other writers' expressions. Although
Burns had a hand in the publication of over three hundred songs, only
a few are satiric. Because of his careful ear and his ability to
match lyric and tune to best advantage, he is able to secure satiric effects from selecting tunes that bolster these techniques as well as personae, sounds, repetition, and refrains to secure successful fusions of satiric attack and song. The Christis Kirk form, last of the six vehicles, appears only among the early group. Creating special effectiveness is the disequilibrium between form (associated with secular celebrations) and content ("The Ordination" of a minister and "The Holy Fair," a revival). Each of the six vehicles has distinguishing characteristics that Burns is able to use to advantage when unfolding his charges. In later poems he makes no significant additions to his manipulation of each vehicle.

Chapter three examines Burns's control of the diction, metaphorical imagery, and metrics with which he develops his satiric points. Again, between the early and later poetry there is no noteworthy increase in skill or versatility, nor does he alter his basic approach to the use of these devices. In his satires Burns generally writes a Scots vernacular-standard English mixture. But he draws from other areas of language for juxtapositions that stress his point. For instance, he mixes the language of aristocracy, vulgarisms, and idiomatic Scots, or he combines homely vernacular and Biblical phraseology--the effect is a reduction of some values or characteristics because the language is inappropriate to the context. This kind of juxtaposition is a major structural pattern in some poems, such as "Holy Willie's Prayer," "Libel Summons," "Tam Samson's Elegy," and "Tam o' Shanter." In many poems it is essential to Burns's satire of
personae and to his disclosures of ironic reversal. He also takes advantage of the potentials in ambivalent diction; thus, an apparent word of praise may, because of its connotation or multiple denotations, become a point of mockery. Burns's use of language that is especially specific and concrete helps him to indicate his tone, hold up personae to ridicule, and delineate other individuals' flaws. Thus he obtains desired emphases and revelations from the injection of ambiguous or concrete words. Similarly, Burns in both early and later poems develops his themes by his use of syntax, a technique which helps him to identify a mocking tone, expose the personae's errors, and emphasize individual points of attack. Anti-climax is a principal tool, well adapted to the dimeter lines of Standard Habbie. Inversion of "normal" sentence order, insertion of imperatives and questions, and repeated parallelism function variously: to convey demeaning innuendoes by associating someone with an undesirable person or quality, to build cumulatively to a climactic charge, to manipulate vacillating tones, and to secure unity. Examination of Burns's rhyming, rhythmical, and alliterative patterns indicates that he understood the ways in which the arrangements of sounds can intensify satiric concepts. Rhyming choices--masculine, feminine, and internal--allow him to establish his attitude, connect apparently disparate ideas, and characterize individuals he attacks. Similarly, he makes rhythmical patterns and variations in patterns place emphases on important ideas and create tones that coincide or contrast with the content. He takes advantage of the ability of alliteration to stress similar and contrasting ideas, to modulate pace, to suggest auditory images that denigrate. The
elements of prosody, then, help him to create appropriate tones and stresses and to produce ironically inappropriate conjunctions. The third major subdivision of chapter three considers Burns's use of metaphorical imagery. His imagery, dividable into four large categories—that drawn from the natural environment, from animals, from human activity (domestic concerns, business and commerce, war and government, and socializing), and written learning—mainly appears in brief phrases and lines. But sometimes, as in "The Twa Dogs," "The Holy Tulzie," and "The Calf," for instance, a pattern of imagery extends throughout the poem to create a dominant motif and contribute to structural coherence. These images serve his satire especially well when he lets metaphor suggest a demeaning association. He understands the contributions that prosody, imagery, and diction make to satire as thoroughly in the early poems as in the later. The later poetry does not illustrate innovative variations or more organically functional diction, figures of speech, or sound effects. Both functional and merely ornamental techniques appear in his satires but in no clear pattern based on time of composition.

The last chapter examines Burns's satiric alternatives. Burns is no nihilist nor does he write in a vacuum; it is in part because he values certain characteristics that he assails opposing qualities. Those who harm others because of greed, indifference, and intolerance, those who affect feigned emotions and principles, those who deny the human potential for goodness—by attacking these, he reveals his alternatives. Those alternatives, indirectly suggested in the satires
and unequivocally asserted in a few satires and letters, include several firm beliefs: evaluation of others according to mind and character, brotherly and compassionate love for fellow humans, a tolerant sympathy for others' weaknesses, ability and honesty in performance of duties, the right to exercise independent choices free of authoritarian or conventional rules, honest expression of thoughts and emotions. Burns, in brief, believes that life in all its fullness is to be enjoyed and that each of us has the capacity for goodness as well as happiness. He does not vary his commitment to these broad principles any more than he ceases to attack vices and follies. The later poems are no more passionate or clear in enunciating his affirmations than are the early satires.

Because statements in Burns's letters and events in his life occasionally reveal important information about his satiric purposes, they will be referred to when they elucidate the topic under discussion. Primarily, however, the focus in this study falls on the early group of satires; the later group is viewed as subordinate, though they too must be discussed at some length if we are to see how few changes the later poems inaugurate. Throughout his career, the targets, forms, techniques, and alternatives that Burns develops in the early poems remain much the same.

Robert Burns has been subjected to so much study, criticism, and eulogy that it scarcely seems possible to shed new light on any single feature of his achievement. Yet, little light has heretofore illuminated his accomplishments in satire. The lack of a comprehensive examination of his satires as a group leaves a major gap in our
understanding of Burns's poetic performance. By focusing on his satiric poems, without reference to the non-satiric poetry, we can more readily ascertain his skills as a satirist as well as construct a foundation for inquiries into other important questions about Burns's poetry. Without a careful analysis of the satires as a group, however, we are left with only a poem-by-poem approach (which numerous full-length studies exemplify) that fails to relate the satires to each other in terms of targets, forms, or devices and that fails to evaluate his total satiric achievement. Furthermore, by focusing on those pieces Burns composed by the time of the Kilmarnock Edition, we learn that he demonstrates the full breadth of his versatility and competence in the earlier satires. That is not to argue that he steadily deteriorates as a satirist or that he remains consistently the same. But the later satires do not demonstrate increased skill resulting from maturity or enlarged experience. This, then, is a two-pronged study that produces the first comprehensive discussion of Burns's satires as a group and that illustrates how early Burns grew to full command of his satiric muse. Because a specific discussion of the body of Burns's satires now exists, a foundation for further studies is supplied: consideration of the relationship between his satiric and non-satiric poetry; evaluation of his place as a satirist among other eighteenth-century British satirists and among all satirists; examination of the contributions of tradition and originality to his satiric accomplishments. Because we now see that he attained mature satiric skill by late 1786, others can address themselves to a

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significant question: Burns's growth as a poet. The ensuing dis-
cussion not only fills a gap that has too long existed in Burns
scholarship, but also opens the way for important contributions from
future studies.
In this study the term *satire* will be used to denote a method of treatment, a spirit existent within various modes; satire attacks human vices and follies in order to expose them to punishment or reform.

Although the Kilmarnock Edition was published on July 31, 1786, Burns did not include in it all of the satires he had composed by then; thus I am avoiding the label "Kilmarnock Edition" and referring to these poems as the "early group" or "early poems" so that all that he composed before August, 1786 may be considered. "The later poems" or "later group" refers to those poems he wrote after August, 1786.

CHAPTER I--TARGETS OF SATIRE

Read thematically, Burns's satires raise objections of a sort that poets have often voiced against principal values and goals of their times. He satirizes repressive strictures that deny independence and natural instinct, the pursuit of money or power regardless of the means, dishonorable use of authority, and pretensions assumed by those who desire a good reputation. Read topically, his satires appear to be stages in a personal war against political leadership, the Kirk ministry, and the affluent. Viewing the early poems, we can see that he mounted an intense satiric campaign against ecclesiastical figures and the Calvinist system; to these persons and dogmas he looks again and again for specific illustrations of pride, pretension, intolerance, and repression. Although the political arena provides few subjects for Burns's satire in the early poems, nevertheless we can see that King George III, the Highland Society, Parliamentary laws, and Prime Minister Fox exemplify greed, sham, incompetence, oppression. The mores and behavior of individuals not involved in Scottish politics or ecclesiasticism serve also as illustrations in Burns's satires. We can group the targets of his satiric attack into five categories: intolerance and insensitivity that cause unjust oppression; the hypocrisy of pretensions; false pride; greed for money, power, and information; and incompetence that abuses others. Of these five groups, hypocrisy and oppression are the most prominent topics of Burns's satires. Within all five, ministers, Calvinism, politicians, the wealthy, the aristocracy, and ordinary citizens manifest these
qualities and thus serve as the "historic particulars" for his satiric attacks. These topics comprise the targets in both his early and later satiric poems; Burns adds no new subjects for satires after July 1786.

Insensitivity, even indifference, and intolerance are human failings that Burns satirizes in the early poems. He attacks them not so much for themselves as for what they lead to—unjust oppression of other people's beliefs, behavior, and basic rights. Himself an imperfect individual prone to woman-chasing, drinking, irreverent mockery, he asks that people view each other with compassionate eyes:

Let any of the strictest character for regularity of conduct among us, examine impartially how many of his virtues are owing to constitution and education; how many vices he has never been guilty of, not from any care or vigilance, but from want of opportunity, or some accidental circumstances, intervening; how many of the weakness's [sic] of mankind he has escaped because he was out of the line of such temptation; and, what often, if not always, weighs more than all the rest; how much he is indebted to the World's good opinion, because the World does not know all: I say any man who can thus think, will scan the failings, nay the faults & crimes of mankind around him, with a brothers' [sic] eye.

Those who do not "scan the failings . . . the faults & crimes of mankind . . . with a brothers' eye" receive contemptuous denigration in "Address to the Unco Guid, or the Rigidly Righteous." Speaking to "ye what are sae guid yoursel,/Sae pious and sae holy," he attacks their inflexible refusal to consider what causes differences between themselves and the disreputable. Quick to condemn others, they are blind to their own lack of opportunity or to any extenuating
circumstances. The "unco guid" judge inner virtue by outer appearances; akin to them are those attacked in "To Mr. John Kennedy":

Now if ye're ane o' warTs folk,
Wha rate the wearer by the cloak
An' skent on poverty their joke squint maliciously
Wi' bitter sneer,
Wi' you no friendship I will troke deal for
Nor cheap nor dear. (11.19-24)

Such narrow-minded people possess "the flinty heart that canna feel" ("To Kennedy," 1.27). "Flinty" lords of estates, lacking sensitivity to the needs of their tenants, impose harsh treatment. Ceasar [sic], in "The Twa Dogs," questions why servants, dog-keepers, and the garbage pail receive fine food while the tenants are "negleket, /How huff'd, an' cuff'd, an' disrespeket" (11.61-70, 87-88). The lords' oppression crushes the tenants' self-respect and dignity:

Poor tenant-bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole a factor's snash; endure; abuse
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear,
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear, seize and sell their goods
While they maun stand, wi' aspect humble, gpgds
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble! (11.95-100)

When the aristocracy even deny freedom of movement to their fellow Scots, Burns lashes them. "Address of Beelzebub" attacks the Highland Society and the government for their proscription of five hundred Highlanders' plan to emigrate to Canada. Burns indicates in a scathing preface his opinion of such injustice: "the HIGHLANDERS ... were so audacious as to attempt an escape from their lawful lords and masters whose property they are by emigrating ... in search of that fantastic thing--LIBERTY." He assails the nobility for denying the basic necessities to the impoverished and weakened Highlanders:
... what right hae they
To Meat, or Sleep, or light o' day,
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordships PLEASE TO GIE THEM? (11.27-30)

More commonly, however, than the Scottish Establishment's oppression of the poor, his satiric target is what Burns censures in the "unco guid": repression and bigotry that are encouraged by the teachings of the Kirk. He finds within Calvinism numerous examples as well as cause of repression. Because Calvinism takes particular views of sex, hereditary depravity, predestination, Hell, God, the Devil, and good works, in Burns's eyes the Kirk, a potent arm of oppression, is an appropriate satiric subject. Three things apparently provide impetus to his belittlement: the Kirk imposed on Burns fines and several sessions on the cutty stool; the Kirk censured Burns's friend, Gavin Hamilton, for trivial offenses; perhaps most important, Burns viewed humans as innately good, God as a beneficent Father, and fleshly needs as natural.6

Rejecting Calvinism's beliefs in original sin, inherited depravity, and predestination, he mocks these concepts, as in "Address to the Deil," in which the Fall from Paradise is just a mischievous trick:

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing dog! latch or bar
Ye cam to Paradise incog,
An' play'd on man a cursed brogue, trick or hoax
(Black be your fa'!)
An' gied the infant warld a shog, jog or shock
'Maist ruin'd a'! (11.91-96)

The concept of predestination is absurd:
But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblins might--I dinna ken--
Still hae a stake--
I'm wae to think up' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake. (11.121-26)

Holy Willie's too-literal understanding of predestination mocks the whole theory. Burns especially underlines the immoral absurdities of Calvinism when Willie describes his anthropomorphic concept of God--a malicious, spiteful, vengeful, unjust, unfair, stupid, unforgiving Creator.

Related to the Calvinist concepts of predestination and total depravity is the belief that anything done by an unregenerate person is sinful and is displeasing to God. That idea receives attack most pointedly in "Dedication to Hamilton":

Ye'll get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoos, and Pagan Turks, 
Or Hunters wild on Ponotaxi, 
Wha never heard of Orth_d_xy. (11.41-44)

The Kirk, of course, preached that the terrors of Satan and Hell await the unregenerate sinner (more likely him who openly commits immoral acts than him who gives the impression of righteous piety).

Repudiating those teachings, Burns creates Satan as "Auld Hornie ... Nick, or Clootie," a trickster, maybe redeemable; the view proffered in "Address to the Deil" mocks the Kirk's depiction of Satan as the embodiment of all evil, as a vitally potent force for eternal destruction. Burn's "Clootie" contrasts to Holy Willie's picture of Satan and Hell:
Thou [God] might hae plunged me deep in hell,
To gnash my gooms, and weep, and wail,
In burning lakes,
Where damned devils roar and yell
Chain'd to their stakes.--(11.20-24)

Mocking the conventional picture of Hell, Burns is also belittling the tactics of the evangelical, fire-and-brimstone preachers:

A vast, unbottom'd, boundless Pit,
Fill'd fou o' Lowan brunstane. blazing
Whase raging flame, an' scorching heat,
Wad melt the hardest whunstane!
The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
An' think they hear it roaran,
When presently it does appear,
'Twas but some neebor snovan
Asleep that day. ("The Holy Fair," 11.190-93)

The Kirk generally depended on threats of Hell and Satan as a way to enforce its rules against carousing, drinking, and fornicating—the sins of the flesh. By laughing at the ministers' depiction of Hell and the Devil, Burns attacks the Kirk's attempts to circumscribe sensual pleasures. In "Dedication to Hamilton" he belittles the Kirk's hostility to the carnal:

The GENTLEMAN in word and deed,
It's no through terror of D*m*n t*n;
It's just a carnal inclination. (11.46-48)

The Kirk's threatened punishments he labels "Naething" ("Extempore--to Gavin Hamilton," 11.41-44). He satirically indicts the Kirk's dictums about fornication by constructing a court of equity, parallel to the Kirk Session, in which duplicity is punished but fornication is praised ("Libel Summons"). He puts fornicators on "our noble list," and pronounces the Kirk's punishment futile; not only did "my vows [begin] to scatter" while he stood before the congregation but that
evening he committed the same "sin" ("The Fornicator," 11.47,22). He mocks the impact of the Kirk's punishment by insisting that the only penalty that might prevent his fornication is gelding ("Reply to a Tailor").

Making ecclesiastical leaders' harsh treatment of supposed sinners seem even more unjust is the fact that these professed Christians are intolerant of and even malicious toward other religious sects. Ministers are too prone to "damn a' Parties but your own" ("Dedication to Hamilton," 1.64). Burns mocks these internal ecclesiastical disputes:

Some quarrel the presbyter gown,
Some quarrel Episcopal graithing, vestments
But every good fellow will own
Their quarrel is all about—naething.—("Extempore--to Hamilton," 11.17-20)

Verbal quarrelling about parish boundaries ("Holy Tulzie") and about two factions' dogma ("To William Simpson--Postscript") generates physical abuse:

He [Russell] fine a maingie sheep could scrub,
And nobly swing the Gospel-club;
Or New-light Herds could nicely drub,
And pay their skin; flog
Or hing them o'er the burning dub, pool
Or shute them in. ("The Holy Tulzie," 11.43-48)

The Auld Lichts oppress the New Lichts by chasing them with "the nine-tail'd cat," torturing them on a rope, and even beheading them ("The Ordination," 11.93,114-17).

Labelled hopeless sinners by the Kirk and misfits by society, the beggars in "Love and Liberty" contradict the behavior approved by the law, the social order, the business world, Calvinist dogma, the
unco guid, and the aristocracy. Burns describes the fiddler's casual use of the bard's woman; the camp follower's promiscuity, for which she expresses no shame or regret; and the older woman's affair with a highwayman, for which she makes no apology (11.190-93, 57-80, 89-116). The Kirk's and society's rules of moral and proper behavior are flaunted, as is the sacrament of marriage: the tinker vows loyalty to his woman by swearing on a tankard of whiskey (1.177). The bard declares "I hold it still/A mortal sin to throw [deny or frustrate] that [sexual desire]" (11.222-23). In the final song, the group state their opinion of the world of respectability and propriety:

What is TITLE, what is TREASURE,
What is REPUTATION's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter HOW or WHERE.

Here's to BUDGETS, BAGS and WALLETs!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged BRATS and CALLETS!
One and all cry out, AMEN!
A fig for those by LAW protected,
LIBERTY's a glorious feast!
COURTS for Cowards were erected,
CHURCHES built to please the Priest. (11.258-61, 274-81)

Through the beggars' words and deeds Burns sums up his repudiation of social and ecclesiastical strictures against carnal desires.

In Burns's later poetry, he continues to make oppression a major target of his satire. In a variety of poems he attacks political and religious factions that treat opponents spitefully, government leaders who oppress commoners by their war-mongering, and Calvinism's incompassionate view of human failings. The Kirk's intolerance of carnal sins appears especially harsh when "The Kirk of Scotland's
Garland" exposes internal factions' malice toward each other. Feeling threatened by an opponent, the Auld Lichts seize their "spiritual guns" and lead a pack against him so that they may stretch him on a rack (11.18,28,6). The Auld Lichts take so narrow a view of their divine function that even a merging of faith and sense is heresy (11.8-9). Also, the focus of some later satires falls on factions within the government and political leaders' indifference to the desires of their constituents for peace and freedom. Although the French Revolution brought the "tree of liberty" to fruition, no such tree grows in England; it "cannot be found,/Twixt London and the Tweed" ("The Tree of Liberty," 11.63-64). Leaders who initiate war brutally oppress the common people, for the latter pay with lives and property. "Logan Water" invokes "wae upon you, Men o' State,/That brethren rouse in deadly hate!" (11.25-26). These same "Great Men" are condemned in "When Princes and Prelates." Rather than stirring up war, as the Duke of Brunswick, King Frederick William II, and Catherine II do, he suggests they "spend" creatively in "Mowe" (copulation).

"Mowe" is the basic topic of The Merry Muses of Caledonia, a collection of poems notable for their bawdiness; but in some, the bawdiness serves to satirize basic Calvinist dogma and the Kirk's repression of sexual appetites. In "Case of Conscience" a female whig seeks her minister's advice on how to restrain her sexual drive. Burns reveals his satire in the illogic of the minister's explanation that sexual desire is "naught but Beelzebub's art,/ But that's the
mair sign of a saunt"; that good works and morals are irrelevant, for only sound and orthodox Faith matters; that the woman is Elect, so nothing she does will change that "Eternal Decree" (11.17-18, 21-24, 29-32). The speaker in "They Took Me to Haly Band" indicates the uselessness of sermonizing against the demands of lust:

"What deel need a' this clatter;
"As lang as she cou'd keep the grip
"I aye was m_ g at her." (11.6-8)

Completely demolishing the Kirk's case against carnal pleasures, "Act Sedurant of the Session" explains the law against fornicators:

"standing pr_ cks are fauteors [faults] a',/And guilty of a high transgression" (11.3-4). For this transgression the offender must lie in "dungeons deep,/Ilk lass has ane in her possession" until they "wail and weep" (11.9-11). 13

In "Tam o' Shanter" Burns lets his narrator state the Kirk's preachments against drunken merrymaking:

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white--then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.--(11.59-66)

As Crawford notes, this passage points to the poem's theme: "the relationship between Pleasures (condemned in toto by Calvinism and in part by the business world) and the Devil and Art and Music, for whom 'Energy is Eternal Delight.'" 14 The narrator, however, cannot maintain his pose as an "unco guid," for he too confesses attraction to naked females and cheers the inebriated Tam's escape. Burns
ridicules the Kirk's threat that "the Devil will carry you off to Hell" by showing that only Meg's tail is taken. Mocked also, as Troutner notes, is "anyone who would think that inebriation and carousing are folly for a man who can find his eyes 'enriched' after drinking, while remaining sober enough to spur his horse home at the crucial moment." As if to emphasize the futility of Kirk threats, Burns sets the memorable confrontation in a churchyard pre-empted by ghosts and devils, lechery and uninhibited festivity.

Not only oppressive intolerance and insensitivity evoke Burns's satiric attacks. He also sees that the Establishment, by praising those who project an image of righteousness and by condemning the honest sinner, encourages professions of spurious moral virtues, intellectual capacity, social status, and emotional fervor. The hypocrisy of pretensions is clearly one of Burns's principal topics for satire; he perceives incisively the gap between appearance and reality.

Burns's most memorable embodiment of an unctuously pious hypocrite is Holy Willie, the main character in one of the early poems. Praying to his God, Willie speaks with assurance of his own salvation, his Election. Burns indicts the Calvinist doctrine of election by showing the hypocrisy caused in one who thinks himself chosen. Willie self-righteously vows,

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. . . what zeal I bear,
When drinkers drink, and swearers swear,
And singin' there, and dancin' here,
  Wi' great an' sma';
For I am kept by thy fear,
  Free frae them a'.--("Holy Willie's Prayer,"
11.31-36)
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Yet he confesses to fornicating with Meg and with Leezie's lass, lapses he excuses on the grounds that he was drunk; in fact, he admits "at times I'm fash'd [afflicted] wi' fleshly lust" but suggests such failings are God's predestined plan since God created people as "dust,/Defil'd wi' sin" (11.38,41-42). Christian love and forgiveness seem foreign to him. He pettily demands that God curse Hamilton's "basket and his store,/Kail and potatoes" (11.77-78); then, as if his and God's cause are one, he demands,

Thy strong right hand, L__d, make it bare
Upon their heads!
L__d visit them, and dinna spare,
For their misdeeds! (11.81-84)

His professed Christian faith brings to Willie no strength in times of stress: "My very heart and flesh are quaking/To think how I sat, sweating, shaking,/And p_ss'd wi' dread" (11.86-88). Despite his claims to Christian virtue, Willie shows no piety, acceptance of God's will, moral worth, or contrition.

The lack of such qualities in some participants in "The Holy Fair" is signalled by the presence of Hypocrisy (along with Fun and Superstition). Some at the religious festival do indeed come for pious reasons, but some are busy "winkan on the lasses," thinking "up' their claesa, "forming assignations/To meet some day," and commenting on "this ane's dress, an' that ane's leuk" (11.89,84,179-80,176). The admixture of carnival atmosphere, flirting, praying, drinking, preaching, and celebrating communion suggests a discrepancy between what people do and what the Kirk thinks they should do. Here, however, Burns is not attacking hypocrisy so much as he is satirizing the Kirk's rules that create the hypocrisy.
Pretensions to piety and moral worth are targets of attack not only in "Holy Willie's Prayer" and "The Holy Fair," but also in many other poems. "Epistle to Rankin" voices bitter attack:

Think, wicked Sinner, wha ye're skaithing: harming
It's just the Blue-gown badge an' claithing,
O' Saunts; tak that, ye lea'e them naething,
To ken them by,
From ony unregenerate Heathen,
Like you or I. (11.19-24)

Especially angering Burns is that these pretentious ministers use their claims to piety as an excuse to harass self-admitted sinners:

They [ministers] take religion in their mouth;
They talk o' mercy, grace an' truth,
For what?--to gie their malice skouth
On some puir wight,
An' hunt him down, o'er right an' ruth,
To ruin streight. ("To the Rev. John M'Math," 11.55-60)

With "rotten, hollow hearts," these clerics use "jugglin' hocus pocus arts/To cheat the crowd" and "under gospel colors hid be/Just for a screen" (11.39-42,47-48). The outer show of "sighan, cantan, grace-proof faces" hides "their raxan [flexible] conscience,/Whase greed, revenge, an' pride disgraces/Waur nor their nonsense" (11.20-24).

Not only ministers call themselves devout believers yet behave maliciously and thoughtlessly:

No--stretch a point to catch a plack; get money
Abuse a Brother to his back;
Steal thro' the winnock frae a wh_re,
But point the Rake that takes the door;
Be to the Poor like onie whunstane,
And haud their noses to the grunstane;
Ply ev'ry art o' legal thieving;
No matter--stick to sound believing. ("Dedication to Hamilton," 11.53-60)
These "pious" believers act hypocritically, encourage others to feign virtue, and separate belief from act. The latter is one of Burns's principal objections to Calvinism; belief and good works remain separated. Burns mocks this simulated piety in "The Libel Summons," where he praises fornication but condemns those who hide their actions; in Burns's court, the moral coward who will not confess his sins is the one to receive punishment. "The Fornicator," in which Burns admits a feigned repentance ("with rueful face and signs of grace"), suggests that others who are punished also merely fake penitence. He blames, at least in part, the Kirk's insistence that profession and appearance of righteousness imply Election. Burns indicates, in opposition, that a veneer of piety disguises malicious pursuit of sinners, creates inequities, and proscribes honesty.

Pretensions to social status are less harshly satirized, perhaps because such sham causes less harm to others and to one's self. In "To a Louse" Burns emphasizes the temerity of a "crowlan ferlie": "How daur ye set your fit upon her,/Sae fine a Lady!" (11.9-10). The louse belongs naturally on some "beggar's haffet" or "on an auld wife's flainen toy [flannel cap];/Or aiblins [perhaps] some bit duddie boy" but not on a lady's bonnet (11.13,32-33). Burns's last words expose Jenny's sham and offer a solution to social pretensions:

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
An' foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
And ev'n Devotion!
Although feigned knowledge and sentiment are rarely his targets, Burns does occasionally satirize these two kinds of hypocrisy. In "Death and Doctor Hornbook" the self-described doctor, educated as a schoolteacher, has convinced others of his medical expertise. But

the untrained doctor is harmful to others:

"Where I [Death] kill'd ane, a fair strae-death, natural death
"By loss o' blood, or want o' breath,
"This night I'm free to tak my aith,
"That Hornbook's skill
"Has clad a score i' their last claiith,
"By drap and pill." (11.145-50)

Burns also ridicules a person's pretense of knowing what is desirable for another person's life. For example, he describes a dying mother who "lev'e[s]... her blessings," asks her children "to be kind to anither" and hopes that the son will learn good manners, that he will not ruin his feet, and that he will be content with the females nearby; she also advises them to consort with friends of good character and requests that they never plunder or steal food ("The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie," 11.35-37,46-49,55-60). By making Mailie, a sheep, deliver these words to a half-wit (the listener in the poem), Burns satirizes conventional and hackneyed advice. In a similar vein, "A Dream" parodies the birthday ode written by Thomas Warton, Poet Laureate; Burns mocks Warton's faked joy and the falsity of poets' praises of King George III's "greatness" (11.14-17).

Obviously, Burns is most frequently satirizing simulated piety and moral superiority rather than pretensions to intellectual knowledge, emotion, or social rank. Among several possible explanations for this emphasis, two spring instantly to mind. People who feign
moral worth are more prevalent in Burns's environment than those who pretend to a high social rank or much wisdom. Pretended moral superiority is, furthermore, more harmful to one's own soul and to one's fellow man than the follies of pretending to elevated social status.

Although in the later poems Burns continues to emphasize hypocrisy as a main topic of his satires, the type of pretense he most often attacks is feigned virtue. Less frequently satirized, as is true for the early poems, are foolish pretenses to emotions not felt and to abilities not possessed. Whereas in "A Dream" Burns mocks the poet who wrote a glowing tribute to the king, in the later group he mocks a pastoral lyric's depiction of love. A paraphrase of "Ode to Spring" makes it sound quite conventional; amid the glory of green foliage, dewy glens, singing birds, and redolent fragrances, Damon and Sylvia make love. But Burns quickly reveals his mockery, as in these lines:

There Damon lay, with Sylvia gay,
To love they thought no crime, Sir;
The wild-birds sang, the echoes rang,
While Damon's a_5e beat time, Sir. (11.13-16)

"Tam Samson's Elegy" also mocks false sentiment, though not so bawdily. Burns is not satirizing Tam but the overblown despair and praise that often appear in elegies. Writing of a man who did not die until nine years after Burns wrote the poem, Burns reverses the conventional elegiac formula that "all Nature mourns" and excessively praises the dead man's talents (despite two 'fatal' heart attacks Tam still manages with his 'dying' shot to kill five deer).
In the later poems, however, Burns most often belittles feigned piety and virtue. He repeatedly satirizes ministers who profess devotion and moral probity. "Errock Brae" describes a woman's encounter with a Cameronian who flings aside his Bible while "the solemn league and covenant/He laid below my a_se"(11.14-16). In praise of this ecclesiastical leader, the woman says

A Prelate he loups on before,         leaps
A Catholic behin',
But gie me a Cameronian,
He'll m_w a body blin'. (11.25-28)

Counseling with a woman confessing her sexual desires, a Priest concludes the session by physically easing her sexual frustrations ("Case of Conscience"). Burns does not hesitate to name specific religious leaders whom he judges guilty of hypocrisy, such as Holy Willie whose character has not improved:

Holy Will, Holy Will, there was wit i' your skull,
When ye pilfer'd the alms o' the poor;
The trimmer is scant, when ye're ta'en for a saint,
Wha should swing in a rape for an hour. . . . ("The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," 11.66-69)

With ministers setting such an example, it seems only natural that members of the community feign virtues just as frequently. Burns accuses Maria Riddell of adultery and lechery; she has a "rotten heart" and her poetry is "the idiot strum of vanity bemused" ("Esopus to Maria," 11.22-26,48,53,72). Lacking wisdom and goodness, she will lie in her grave "a prey to insulting Neglect" ("Monody on Maria," 11.21-24). Yet Maria feigns chastity, poetic skill, and virtue. She is not much better than "godly" Girzie, who, on a "haly" night after
a "haly" day, "was [so] faint wi' haly work," she had no strength to deny the man she encountered:

But ay she glower'd up to the moon,
   And ay she sigh'd most piouslie;
"I trust my heart's in heaven aboon,
"Whare'er your sinfu' p____e be." ("Godly Girzie," 11.13-16)

The two main topics in all of his satiric poetry interrelate. Hypocrisy reinforces oppressive policies; trying to avoid oppression, many pretend to virtues or abilities they lack. Burns sees also how often the hypocrite succeeds in convincing himself of his worth and swells with pride. Pride in one's abilities or behavior is not in itself a vice; often the pride is merited. But when conceit appears in one who only pretends to admirable deeds and capabilities, then Burns turns his attack on the egoist. Such undeserved pride comprises the third target of his satire.

By reexamining Holy Willie we can see the reciprocation of hypocrisy and pride. When Willie speaks of his own Election, he boasts:

I bless and praise thy matchless might,
When thousands thou has left in night,
That I am here before thy sight,
For gifts and grace,
A burning and a shining light
   To a' this place.--(11.7-12)

Even his expressions of humility are tinged with smug arrogance. He asserts that he deserves damnation while wondering why he is exalted, but any modesty is overwhelmed by his egocentric assumption that he is saved. Even when he informs God of Hamilton's sins, we can denote the arrogance in this man who seems to have forgotten that God is all-knowing. There is nothing but pride in the terms by which he describes himself:
I'm here, a pillar o' thy temple
Strong as a rock,
A guide, a ruler and example
To a' thy flock.--(11.27-30)

Burns satirizes not only a person's pride in his presumed spiritual superiority but also unwarranted pride in knowledge, moral character, and social position. It is Jenny's pride in her new bonnet that makes her toss her head around, thus accelerating the louse's movement and allowing everyone to see her fakery. The sisters of the bride are proud of the attire that they think denotes a high social rank ("Mauchline Wedding," 11.26-30). Even those who in fact belong to the upper class reek with pride as if clothing and money make them superior people:

... the paughty, feudal Thane,
Wi' ruffl'd sark an' glancin cane,
Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane, one of no little
But lordly stalks, importance
While caps an' bonnets aff are taen,
As by he walks? ("Second Epistle to Lapraik," 11.67-72)

Burns satirizes "doctor" Hornbook as much for conceit as he does for sham. This "self-conceited sot" enjoys being called "doctor" and being surrounded by equipment and potions with Latin names (11.177, 115-33).

In later poems Burns mocks unwarranted vanity in "godly" Girzie, "godly" Leezie Lundie, Maria Riddell, and Mrs. Oswald. Burns unleashes bitter attack on Mrs. Oswald, who he said haughtily inconvenienced him one night (Letters, I,295-96). To punish her pompous arrogance, he slanders her physical appearance, her lack of compassion, and her greed. His characterization of her leaves us
unable to find cause for her vanity; she even goes to hell "unpitied and unblest" (1.15). As the paucity of examples indicates, Burns, although he satirizes pride, does not denigrate this frailty of human nature as frequently as he belittles other failings. When he does satirize pride, he interlinks it with pretense and usually attacks harshly and bitterly.

Sometimes interacting with pride is the fourth moral weakness that Burns satirizes: greed for money, power, or knowledge. Often the rapacious act as if any means justify the end and then have the gall to boast proudly of their financial or intellectual accomplishments. Most often Burns condemns avarice, perhaps because he lacked economic security or because he saw that when money arrives, kindness, understanding, and courtesy frequently disappear:

Awa ye selfish, warly race,  
Wha think that havins, sense an' grace  
Ev'n love an' friendship should give place  
To catch-the-plack! money grubbing
("Epistle to Lapraik," 11.115-18)

The money-grubber devotes himself to a futile expenditure of energy:

Poor Centum per centum may fast,  
And grumble his hurdies their claithing; things  
He'll find, when the balance is cast,  
He's gane to the devil for--naething.--("Extempore--Hamilton," 11.9-12)

Despite such warnings, money motivates human actions, even a groom's:

Ae morning quondam Mason Will . . .  
Gaed down to meet wi' Nansie Bell  
And her Jamaica siller, silver  
To wed, that day.--("Mauchline Wedding," 11.5-9)

And Holy Willie desires money as a boon to his ego, for he is taught by Calvinism that financial success signifies God's favor.
Burns's most expansive attack on avarice appears in "The Twa Dogs" in which Luath avers,

There's monie a creditable stock
0' decent, honest, fawson't folk, respectable
Are riven out baith root an' branch, broken up
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench. . . . (11.141-44)

Possession of wealth might, of course, lead to good deeds as Luath suggests (11.147-48); but that possibility is repudiated when Ceasar describes how the rich use their money:

At Operas an' Plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading:
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To HAGUE or CALAIS takes a waft, seatrip
To make a tour an' take a whirl,
To learn bon ton an' see the worl'. (11.153-58;also 11.159-68)

Those who worship Mammon do so for their selfish needs. Burns ascribes no generous or self-sacrificing motives or deeds to Willie, the lords, Master Will, and Centum by Centum. He treats each harshly, exposing their avarice to our contemptuous laughter. Just as harmful to the general public is greed for power, because, as Burns shows in "Author's Cry and Prayer," some abdicate principle in search for political favors (11.25-27). He reserves much gentler chiding for the peasants in "Halloween" who covet information about their future spouses; their reliance on magic as a way to secure that knowledge is foolish, but certainly neither vicious nor malignant.

Greed as a target of satire appears less frequently in later poems. Burns blames Scotland's loss of fame, glory and name (in the 1707 Union) on rogues who sold out "for hireling traitors' wages" ("Such a Parcel of Rogues," 1.12). He attacks the "harpy, hoodock
[plundering, rapacious] purse-proud" who look on "POORTITH as disgrace" ("Epistle to Logan," 11.37-42). In "Buy Braw Troggin" and "The Fête Champetre" he satirizes political candidates' willingness to trade principles for cash (11.1-4; 11.9-14). He has not totally abandoned greed as a topic but certainly pays minimal attention to this subject.

Burns gives more emphasis to a fifth target. He sees that one might sate his excessive appetite for wealth and power by securing an official position in the government or Kirk. Noting the dishonest methods by which some attain positions of authority and the extent of those persons' incapable rule and shameful activities, Burns satirizes incompetent and dishonorable actions by members of the Scottish Establishment. All of his satires mentioning religious leaders reveal that the ecclesiasts lack the spiritual and moral ability to perform their duties. The teachings of Christianity are perverted by the ministers' hypocrisy, arrogance, intolerance, injustice, and repression. But it is in the political realm that Burns most frequently discerns treachery, fraud, and incompetence. Several letters express a cynicism about politicians that is echoed in his satires. For example, he defines politics as "a science wherewith, by means of nefarious cunning, & hypocritical pretence, we govern civil Politics for the emolument of ourselves & our adherents" (Letters, II,149).

An especially incompetent king, George III, is obvious prey. Burns chides the king for mishandling the American colonies:
Your royal nest, beneath Your wing,
Is e'en right reft an' clouted,
And now the third part o' the string,
An' less, will gang about it. . . . ("A Dream," 11.32-35)

He condemns George's harsh taxation of the commoners, his misuse of public funds, and his poor judgment in selecting counselors:

Ye've trusted 'Ministration,
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre,
Wad better fill'd their station Than courts yon day. (11.42-45;11.56,61-63)

Indirectly attacking the king, Burns ridicules Charles Fox for incapable management of his post; the cause of Fox's weakness, Burns indicates, is not lack of talent, but lack of attentiveness to his duty. Fox is much too enraptured with "his dicing box,/An' sportin lady" to do more than "taunt [opponents] . . . wi' his jeers an' mocks" ("Author's Cry and Prayer," 11.110,113-14). Burns also chastizes Scots Members of Parliament who are not performing the duties for which they were elected; he urges them to remember principle, withstand pressures, and overcome fear ("Author's Cry and Prayer," 11.31-32,25-26,135-36,182).

In later poems Burns particularizes his satiric attacks by belittling not just the king and his ministers but also Advocates, local candidates for office, patrons, and council members. The targets, however, are the same: inability to function and dishonorable methods. He ridicules William Pitt and Charles Fox:

In vain with Squire Billy for laurels you struggle,
He'll have them by fair trade, if not, he will smuggle;
Not cabinets even of kings would conceal 'em,
He'd up the back-stairs and by G__ he would steal 'em!
Then feats like Squire Billy's you ne'er can atchieve 'em,
It is not, outdo him, the task is, outthieve him.--("Sketch to Fox," 11.45-50)
Burns turns similar mockery on two advocates who function poorly. The Lord Advocate, often losing his train of thought, argues in a "declamation-mist"; Erskine delivers words "like wind-driv'n hail" or "torrents owre a lin"; the judge is "half-wauken'd" by all the noise ("Extempore, in Court of Sessions," 11.3,13-14,16). The Faculty of Advocates is too stupid or too dishonest to elect a man of merit, for "The more incapacity they [candidates].bring,/The more they're to your liking" ("Dean of the Faculty," 11.33-40). Burns describes Robert Dundas, newly elected dean, as stupid, dishonest, and inarticulate (11.11-12,21-24,31-32).

Equally repugnant was the Duke of Queensberry, principal land owner in Dumfriesshire. Burns calls the Duke a "Renegado," a "flaming Zealot," "a mustering faggot" at the Whigs' "mysterious orgies," a "character of which one cannot speak with patience" (Letters, 1,371). Burns exposes the Duke's lack of honor and patriotism by indicting him for cowardice, for devoting his energies to "the all-important cares/Of fiddles, wh_res and hunters," and for serving himself but never the public ("Laddies by the Banks of Nith," "Epistle to Robert Graham"). He finds ample illustration of similar failings in candidates for local office. He indicts one group for their "rank repro-bation of character, the utter dereliction of all principle, in a profligate junto, which has not only outraged virtue, but violated common decency . . . spurning even hypocrisy as paltry iniquity below their daring . . ." (Letters, II,292). In these candidates he perceives stupidity, toadying to the powerful, unused consciences, lying,
and thieving ("Second Heron Ballad," "Johnie B's Lament," "Buy Braw Troggin"). Burns credits neither former nor current council members with much sense. The current members are "staumrel, corky-headed, graceless Gentry,/The herryment and ruin of the country"; but the former councilors were equally poor:

   Nae mair the Council waddles down the street,
   In all the pomp of ignorant conceit . . .
   If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
   Had shor'd them with a glimmer of his lamp,
   And would to Common-sense for once betray'd them,
   Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them. ("Brigs of Ayr," 11. 170-71, 184-91)

For all such "public servants" Burns offers a prayer:

   Lord, send a rough-shod troop o' hell,
   O'er a', wad Scotland buy, or sell,
   And grind them in the mire!!! ("Epistle to Graham," 11.124-26)

Thus, in all spheres of government and public service Burns finds specific individuals who illustrate dishonesty and incompetency.

Although Burns varies the specific persons, act, and words, all of his satiric poetry attacks five frailties of human nature: dishonest and incapable management of a position of authority; greed for riches, power, and status; inflated pride in abilities or possessions; hypocritical pretense to non-existent traits; unfair oppression of others because of insensitivity, indifference, and intolerance. The early poems demonstrate his recurrent use of these topics for satires; the same topics reappear in later poems, in which he introduces no new satiric targets. Furthermore, these frailties exist in all of his satires both as vice and folly. Jenny
acts unwisely, Tam shows lack of sensible foresight, and Fox ill-advisedly neglects his job. Such follies Burns mocks gently, in poems pervaded by gaiety and good humor. In contrast, his tone is Juvenalian when he examines the corrupt, depraved, and evil--such as the immoral clerics, the malicious Willie, the spiteful Mrs. Oswald and Maria Riddell. The latter group, themselves eager to damn others for imperfections, impair the workings of society and damage the lives and reputations of their fellow humans. In "Man Was Made to Mourn" Burns sums up the general target of his satires:

And Man, whose heav'n-erected face,
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to Man
Makes countless thousands mourn! (11.53-56)

2Robert Burns, "Address to the Unco Guid," in The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns, ed. James Kinsley, I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 11. 1-2. Hereafter, unless otherwise noted, all references are to volumes I and II of this work and are cited by title and line numbers; all glosses come also from Kinsley's glossary.


4Burns says he would rather face Satan "than crawl in, a dust-licking Petitioner, before the lofty presence of a Mighty Man, & bear, amid all the mortifying pangs of Self-annihilation, the swelling consequence of his damned State, & the cold monosyllables of his hollow heart" (Letters, II, 41). See also Letters, I, 244, where he comments on "how wretched is the man that hangs on & by the favors of the Great"; in Letters, II, 78 he describes the pain of having "helplessly to tremble for a subsistence." Unless otherwise noted, all italics, omitted words, and omitted letters are reproduced as they appear in the texts of Burns's writings.

5After the 1745 Uprising the Highlanders, most of whom had supported the Stuart cause, were subjected to severe social, legal, and military restrictions; for various reasons, they began to emigrate.

6Burns was penalized by the Kirk Session for fornication with Elizabeth Paton and with Jean Armour. Gavin Hamilton was censured by the Mauchline Kirk Session for neglect of public worship. The Kirk Session punished an offender by fining him and/or making him sit on a punishment stool for one or more worship days. In Letters, I, 242, Burns writes, "I am in perpetual warfare with that doctrine of our Reverend Priesthood, that 'we are born into this world bond slaves of inequity and heirs of perdition, wholly inclined' to that which is evil ... I believe ... we come into this world with a heart & disposition to do good for it. ..."

7See also "Dedication to Hamilton," 11. 70-77.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the Moderates (or New Lichts) and Evangelicals (or Auld Lichts), two factions within the Kirk, quarreled about dogma and methods. Whereas the Evangelicals continued to emphasize Calvinist dogma, seek and punish heretics and even minor moral offenders, and condemn secular amusements, the Moderates favored relaxation of the strict creed, the ban against secular pleasures, and the strict enforcement of discipline. The Moderates preached calmly, directing their words to their congregation's rational faculties; in keeping with a "reasonable" approach to morality, they argued against superstitious beliefs. On the other hand, the Evangelicals spoke of witches as if they were real, and they still delivered stirring, emotional sermons. The Auld Lichts also favored the democratic selection of ministers while the New Lichts preferred that the "Patron" of the community name the local minister. In communities where Burns lived, the Auld Licht brand of old-style Calvinism still dominated, but New Lichts were advancing their power; controversy between the two groups raged sporadically, and Burns usually sided with the New Lichts.

Burns often expressed his sympathy for the French Revolution, as recorded in *Letters*, II, 196, 249, 281-82.

See also *Letters*, II, 178, 250.


See also "The Bonniest Lass" and "Wha'll M_w Me Now" for further illustrations of his attacks on the Kirk's conventional morality and its profession of knowing the Elect from the Damned.


For other examples, see also "The Holy Tulzie," II. 31-36; "The Libel Summons," II. 130-33; and "Love and Liberty," II. 65-69.

For other examples, see also "Buy Braw Troggin" and "Wha'll M_w Me Now."

See also the pomposity of the Rev. James Steven attacked in "The Calf."
See also "Second Epistle to Lapraik," 11. 61-64.

See also *Letters*, II, 37.

Note also "Lines at Stirling," in which the Hanovers are called "a Race outlandish" and "an idiot race, to honor lost."

For other examples of his attacks on Fox, see "A Dream," 11. 89-90 and "When Guilford Good," 11. 39-40, 49-52.
Burns uses various poetic forms in order to convey his satiric attacks on "man's inhumanity to man." Rarely does he write the specific classical form called "satire"; usually, in both the early and later poetry, he delivers his attacks in other modes: the epistle, the monologue, the dramatic monologue, the dialogue, the burlesque, the song, and Christis Kirk. In short, his satiric spirit is protean. He finds the epistolary form an effective medium for his expressions of personal feelings and satiric judgments about moral failings he witnesses. He writes the informal verse letter--chatty, spontaneous, private; into thirteen of these he inserts satiric elements, which both occupy only a few lines and dominate whole poems. The monologue he uses in various ways as a vehicle of his satire. Some are fully realized dramatic monologues, some are only addresses given by one speaker to an audience, and some are mixtures of the two; in all, however, Burns weds form to the satiric point. Closely related is the dialogue, used in only three pieces as a medium for ridicule. His "mock" poems or burlesques, such as the mock-elegy, -celebration, and -heroic, offer different advantages to his satiric intents. In each, Burns treats an important subject frivolously and thus attacks others' seriousness on the subject; at the same time he assails human frailties. Songs are a favorite form, especially in the later poems; but even in the early group, Burns shows his control over the song utilized for satiric purposes. Last, Burns always inserts satiric
material into the Christis Kirk form. Although for these pieces he sometimes creates a persona, the focus is not on the speaker or the speaker's attitudes; rather, he concentrates on the activities of participants, such as their excessive desire for knowledge or wealth or their failures to reconcile Kirk restrictions with natural desire. In these seven modes Burns attacks the moral and intellectual failings prevalent in ministers, Calvinism, political events, government leaders, the rich, and ordinary citizens. Moreover, he demonstrates in the early group skilled control and mastery of each mode he uses for satiric purposes.

EPISTLES

One of Burns's favorite modes for his satiric expression is the epistle, the verse letter. Although only one epistle ("To Robert Graham") is totally satiric, thirteen of them include satiric passages of varying lengths. In the early group, ten letters in verse contain passages attacking human imperfections. The epistolary form apparently loses his favor as a satiric instrument after July 1786. The early poems, however, demonstrate the breadth of Burns's skill with this form; the later three pieces show no advancement in mastery of the satiric epistle. A closer look at the epistles' satiric targets, verse forms, and the interrelationship between audience, speaker, tone, and structure can let us see more specifically the nature of these satiric letters and can allow us to assess Burns's skill in adapting the form to his purposes.
The content of Burns's satiric epistles, as well as the tone, varies according to the audience he addresses. For the most part, he writes to friends receptive to his ideas. Furthermore, when he includes satiric remarks, he anticipates his reader's agreement. That is, he does not attack the Kirk elders' hypocrisy by writing to William Fisher or "Daddy" Auld but by writing to Gavin Hamilton, who was censured by the Kirk Session ("Dedication to Hamilton"). After a local poet, William Simpson, asked Burns about his satires on ecclesiastical wrangling, Burns's epistle answers Simpson by creating a light-hearted fantasy about the moon, describing metaphorically the Auld Licht-New Licht disputes. Burns feels that John Rankin, whom he characterizes as a fellow carouser, shares his indictment of hypocritical clerics and sympathizes with his violation of Kirk rules about fornication. Even when Burns is using an epistle as a means to begin a friendship, such as with John Lapraik, he makes satiric remarks; he attacks avarice (repeated in his second epistle to Lapraik), perhaps because he wishes to clarify his own values, to advise the man that no friendship can evolve if Lapraik himself is avaricious. Sometimes he writes to men who have publicly announced their hostility to the Auld Licht brand of Calvinism; for example, Burns knows that John M'Math and John Goldie, who in essays scorned the Evangelicals, and Gavin Hamilton, who felt the Auld Lichts' punishment, will agree with his attack against the Auld Lichts. Burns anticipates also that Robert Aiken, whom he calls a patron and a friend, will appreciate the lightly mocking description of Burns's taxable possessions ("The
Inventory"). The reciprocal relationship between audience and satiric content is similarly important in the later epistles. Burns expects Captain Logan, a local friend noted for his wit and his hearty indulgence in women, liquor, and song, to applaud Burns's assaults on the indifferent rich and on the ministers' antagonism to sexual liberty. Robert Graham, who helped Burns secure and retain a post in the Excise, was knowledgeable about local politics and a promoter of Burns's poetry; he seems a natural choice as recipient of the poet's epistle that mocks political candidates and local elections, ridiculing again the Kirk's strictures against sexual expression. Burns varies his approach; in "Reply to a Tailor" he writes to a nonsympathetic stranger. Instead of seeking this man's friendship, Burns flaunts his own sexual activities in order to mock both the Kirk and the presumptuous tailor who dared send Burns a poor poem chastizing him for his lustiness.

In all of his epistles, his knowledge of his readers' interests and attitudes allows Burns freedom to include satiric remarks he knows his friends will agree with and even laugh at. Such familiarity with his readers and his choice of versification create the conversational and even chatty tone that characterizes many of these verse letters. John Weston adds that the Scots literary epistle "was a genre which, while giving him the established formal boundaries and literary conventions which his genius almost invariably required, allowed for a colloquial and discursive ease and the motivation of one of his strongest feelings, congenial friendship, which in turn
encouraged earnest confidences and witty extravagances." A good bit of his "discursive ease" is also attributable to his usual verse pattern, Standard Habbie. Its flexibility allows him to create a casual, informal tone, as revealed in these remarks to Simpson:

My memory's no worth a preen; pin
I had amaist forgotten clean,
Ye bad me write you what they mean
By this new-light,
'Bout which our herds sae aft hae been
Maist like to fight. ("To William Simpson--
Postscript," 11.109-14)

Indicating how adaptive the stanza is, these three examples show him using the same stanzaic pattern to create three different tones:

While briers an' woodbines budding green,
An' Paitricks scraichan loud at e'en, partridges or girls
And morning Poossie whiddan seen, hares; moves sound-
Inspire ir Muse, lessly
This freedom, in an unknown frien',
I pray excuse. ("Epistle to Lapraik," 11.1-6)

O Gowdie, terror o' the whigs,
Dread o' black coats and reverend wigs!
Sour Bigotry on his last legs
Grins and looks back, gr'ns and snarls
Wishing the ten Egyptian plagues
May seize you quick.--("Epistle to Goldie," 11.1-6)

While new-ca'd kye rowte at the stake, cows; bellow
An' pownies reek in pleugh or braik, plow; harrow
This hour on e'enin's edge I take,
To ow'n I'm debtor,
To honest-hearted, auld ******K,
For his kind letter. ("Second Epistle to Lapraik,"
11.1-6)

Much of the first stanza seems appropriate to a sober descriptive lyric or philosophical piece; Burns is on his good behavior, writing to a man he has never met but one he thinks will prove a friend. The
second goes to a casual acquaintance, though a supporter of views that Burns approves; he is writing as if praising his local congressman. The third is to a man already friendly to Burns; Burns is as casual as we all are with close friends, and he writes Standard Habbie as fluently as if he were conversing with the man over a beer. Later epistles use only the Standard Habbie stanza, emphasizing Burns's confidence with this verse. And the adaptation of Standard Habbie to relatively informal and even rambunctious tones continues in the later pieces. Burns could hardly more informally address his friend:

Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg, kick
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
And ye shall see me try him.—("Epistle to Graham," 11.4-6)

As boisterously as he greets Lapraik, he salutes William Logan:

Hail, thairm-inspirin, rattling Willie! fiddle-inspiring
Though Fortune's road be rough an' hilly
To ev'ry fiddling, rhyming billie,
We never heed;
But tak it like th' unbacked Fillie,
Proud o' her speed. ("Epistle to Logan," 11.1-6)

And we can clearly recognize Burns's opinion by the way he opens "Reply to a Tailor":

What ails ye now, ye lousie b__ h,
To thresh my back at sic a pitch?

In the verse letters, naturally enough, Burns speaks in his own voice. He will vary aesthetic distance, modifying his use of first person by speaking personally and intimately in some poems, intoning objectively as a disinterested observer in others, or adopting a mask, never far removed from his own personality. When Burns
writes to Rankin, for example, he is speaking personally to an intimate friend:

I've sent you here, some rhymin ware,
A' that I bargain'd for, an' mair;
Sae when ye hae an hour to spare,
I will expect,
Yon Sang ye'll sen 't, wi' cannie care,
And no neglect. (11.25-30)

When he speaks in his own voice, we must be especially alert to inflections and tone of voice so that we discern the sarcasm in remarks such as

Hypocrisy, in mercy spare it!
That *holy* robe, O dinna tear it!
Spare 't for their sakes wha aften wear it,
The lads in *black*;
But your curst wit, when it comes near it,
Rives 't aff their back. (11.13-18)

Burns is more detached in the "Postscript" to Simpson, where he describes the activities of the Auld and New Lichts. Pretending he has no bias, he seems to be the indifferent observer who pays no compliments to either side but merely watches, records, and laughs; but Burns is, in the fantasy, actually passing judgment when he mocks both groups, although he leaves us to form conclusions about his satiric point rather than directly stating it or using ironic reversal. Occasionally, he will don a mask; for instance, in "To M'Math" he projects himself as a "simple, countra bardie" (1.14). Assuming the view of an unsophisticated rustic, Burns pretends ignorance of ministers' motives:
They take religion in their mouth;
They talk o' mercy, grace an' truth,
For what?—to gie their malice skouth
On some puir wight,
An' hunt him down, o'er right an' ruth,
To ruin streight. (11.55-60)

The exaggerated description of what the ministers do shows the
naivete' of a simple peasant; yet the reader can easily penetrate
the disguise and recognize Burns's indictment of their hypocrisy
and cruelty.

Among the later epistles, Burns shows no new variation in his
use of first person. In his own voice, he speaks casually and con­
versationally to the tailor and to Logan. In "Epistle to Graham"
he presents himself as a sympathetic observer, ruing the battlefield
losses:

O, that my een were flowing burns!       rivers
My voice, a lioness that mourns         My voice, a lioness that mourns
Her darling cub's undoing!              Her darling cub's undoing!
That I might greet, that I might cry,   weep
While Tories fall, while Tories fly    While Tories fall, while Tories fly
   From furious whigs pursuing.--(11.97-102)

Since Burns wrote the poem when he favored the Whigs, we can recognize
the sarcasm in his overstated sorrow. He is using a mask of sorts,
pretending a bias that reverses his real opinion.

Not only versification, the poet's relationship to his audience,
the poet's use of masks, and his tone characterize the epistles. The
structures of these letters also contribute to their satiric
effectiveness. In the early group only the "Postscript" to Simpson
and "Epistle to Goldie" and in the later group only "Epistle to
Graham" show a unified development of topic. That is, Burns adds
nothing extraneous to his fantasy about a debate over the moon's origin, his praise of Goldie's ecclesiastical Moderatism, or his attacks on politicians' methods and motives. But even these cannot be considered cohesive in structure. The postscript to Simpson itself is a coherent whole, but it inaugurates a total shift of subject from the letter. The postscript, however, does develop one subject with no mention of irrelevant material. It presents a chronological account of the origins of the quarrel, each side's opinion, each side's behavior towards its opponents, and the proposed solution. Any disgression from the fable would detract from its satiric effectiveness, because without unity of subject the postscript would not be satiric. Similarly "Epistle to Goldie" adheres to one topic, an attack of Auld Lichts and their teachings. In imperative sentences its first four stanzas personify bigotry, superstition, enthusiasm, and orthodoxy; although the pattern may seem abruptly interrupted by the fifth stanza's shift to declarative sentences and non-figurative comments, the poem does develop just one subject. The shift at the fifth stanza changes tone and perspective but continues the same topic: the Auld Lichts' poverty of spiritual devotion and the Moderates' acceptance of secular pleasures.

Among the later group, in "Epistle to Graham" Burns first satirically describes various persons, then constructs a fictive anecdote about a war among the politicians, and concludes with another list of people whom he ridicules; his satiric point is clearly enunciated in this epistle, whose cohesiveness derives from its singleness in satiric tone and its attack of only one target.
These three epistles exhibit some unified development of topic. Others, which show less unity, do not maintain the satiric tone throughout. For example, when he writes about his taxable possessions, he gives as much attention to mocking those who tax him or who are rich as he does to describing his property; however, if he had adhered to his purported topic—a list of property—the poem would lack the elements that make it satiric ("The Inventory"). Burns's epistle to M'Math is not totally satiric; he talks about his own religious beliefs, attacks the hypocritical, admits his own sins, and explains why he satirizes clerics. Thus, in a sense, he adheres to similar topics, even if mixing satiric passages with straightforward discussions. That so many of the epistles lack cohesive structure and contain scattered satiric comments can perhaps be explained by the nature of the mode. As do his prose letters, Burns's verse letters ramble, wandering from one subject to another. For example, in "Dedication to Hamilton" he starts with praise of Hamilton's character, moves to a scornful passage about the "great-folk" and his own unwillingness to truckle to anyone, describes the kindnesses a true gentleman shows toward others, and, at line 49, unleashes harsh attack on the hypocritical and intolerant ecclesiasts; with a less than smooth transition—"your pardon, Sir, for this digression,/I maist forgot m y Dedication"—he returns to his original topic—praise of Hamilton and wishes for his friend's future happiness. Then he supposedly concludes:
I will not wind a lang conclusion,
With complimentary effusion:
But whilst your wishes and endeavours,
Are blest with Fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, Dear Sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant. (11.113-18)

But Burns apparently does not recognize his own conclusion, for he adds sixteen more lines of praise and blessings. Although the structure is disjointed, there is no mistaking the satiric fervor and point of certain passages; lack of cohesion does not mar satiric clarity. Similarly, in "To Mr. John Kennedy" only the last two stanzas satirize; he ridicules those who oppress the poor and judge character by external appearances. These stanzas are added not because they naturally evolve from the material in the first three stanzas but because Burns apparently thought of another topic and tacked these lines on. In two later pieces, to Logan and to the tailor, he shows the same vacillation in topic. Half of "Reply to a Tailor" attacks the tailor for daring to censure Burns and refers to Biblical figures whose polygamy and lust Burns thinks excuse his own; then the second half of the poem records a fictive anecdote, recreating imaginatively an encounter between Burns and a Kirk elder. The two halves of the poem do concern the same general topic—Burns's fornication, his defense, and the Kirk's punishment—and although he does not interlink those parts, the reader should have no difficulty in understanding the target of attack.

Thus, it is easy to speak of satiric elements in Burns's verse letters, but he rarely sustains satiric development throughout an entire epistle. The disjointedness, vacillation in topic, and abrupt shifts
in tone and subject do not, however, obscure the satiric points he
includes. Furthermore, if the epistles could be labelled "satires"
in the classical sense of the term, there would be no need to discuss
them as "vehicles for satire." Lack of cohesive structure does not
obscure his point any more than his choices of versification veil his
indictments. For satiric purposes the epistle functions well in
Burns's hands.

MONOLOGUES

Also as vehicles for satires, Burns frequently uses monologues,
in which speakers express ideas and feelings about certain topics.
In some of his first-person narratives, Burns creates dramatic mono-
logues. According to Robert Langbaum's description of its crucial
elements, the dramatic monologue has the ability to create tension
between the reader's sympathy and his moral judgment. As readers
we may sympathize because we recognize the humanness of the speaker's
flaws, so like our own, or because we admire his power or vitality.
Noting that "we must suspend moral judgment, [that] we must sympa-
thize in order to read the poem," Langbaum also points out that the
poet must establish judgment even while he creates sympathy. In some
way he must clarify what the reader is to think of the speaker and
his viewpoint. Moreover, the meaning of the dramatic monologue lies
in the disequilibrium between "what the speaker reveals and under-
stands."6 That is, the reader perceives the speaker and/or his
subject differently from the way the speaker conceives of himself
or the subject. Such disequilibrium and tension are, however,
absent from a "nondramatic" monologue, which does contain similar elements; organized around a single perspective, it is a first-person narrative which subordinates story to character and does to varying degrees reveal the speaker's character. But we do not find our judgment and the speaker's in tension, nor do we discern a discrepancy between the speaker's understanding and our own. Examinations of Burns's early monologues and dramatic monologues reveal how skillfully he uses the forms for satiric ends; although he employs these modes for later poems, he does not significantly change his use of the form nor demonstrate increased mastery.

Among the early group, only one fully realized satirical dramatic monologue exists--"Holy Willie's Prayer"; eight other poems, exhibiting in varying degrees the characteristic features of the dramatic monologue, demonstrate Burns's skill in adapting the monologue to satire.

In "Address to the Unco Guid," one of his early monologues, Burns speaks in his own voice. It is the poet who straightforwardly attacks the "unco guid" for their pious demeanors and incompassionate hearts. He makes no attempt to justify his own feelings but conceives of himself as speaking anyone's scorn of the rigidly righteous: "I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes/Would here propose defences" (11.13-14). Speaking directly and persuasively to the inflexibly devout, he cites examples in order to support his pleas for tolerance. The speaker, of course, reveals his own character--his sympathy with the blackguard, his own commissions of errors, his belief in God as
the final Judge—but he is conscious of all that he discloses. In the poem there is no indication that he tries to hide his opinions, for he openly commits himself to a tolerance of moral flaws and to distress over others' narrow-mindedness (see stanzas IV and VI). Furthermore, the poem lacks drama in that the group to which he addresses himself is never defined specifically. The poet does not speak as if the persons were physically present but just describes their actions and tries to persuade them to engage in self-analyses that would encourage them to be more compassionate. By ridiculing those who think themselves so good, he is suggesting that sympathy in act and feeling forms the core of a person's moral consciousness and should guide his behavior. In this monologue the reader can clearly discern the target of Burns's satire as well as his motives for attack. To be sure, much of the satiric point is indirectly conveyed; most of the poem explains why the unco guid should be more tolerant and how they can modify their behavior. Direct attack consumes only a small portion of the piece. But the satiric tone is enunciated clearly enough, even though he gives more weight to explaining solutions and relies on statement rather than dramatized action.

Further exhibiting his use of the monologue form is "Author's Cry and Prayer." In this first-person address, Burns characterizes himself as "a simple Bardie" and "a nameless wight." Although this persona is more fully characterized than the one-dimensional speaker in "Address to the Unco Guid," he is not revealing anything of which
he is unconscious. No discrepancy between the speaker's and the reader's understandings exists. The speaker introduces his view when he expresses his distress about one of Parliament's laws:

Alas! my roupet Museis haerse! 
husky
Your Honors' hearts wi' grief 'twad pierce,
To see her sittan on her arse
Low i' the dust,
An' scriechan out prosaic verse,
An' like to brust [sic]! (11.7-12)

This conversational, energetic tone continues as Burns demonstrates his knowledge of several ministers' flaws and virtues: the "aith-detesting, chaste Kilkerran"; Erskine, "a spunkie norland billie"; "yon ill-tongu'd tinkler, Charlie Fox" (11.74,79,109). The whole group is chastized for leaving Scotland thirsty. The speaker illustrates also how skillfully he can apply the tools of persuasive rhetoric. Not seeking to satirize the ministers so bitingly that they will reject his pleas, he appeals to their manliness, patriotism, sense of fair play, and fears of revolution. The concluding stanza illustrates his approach:

SCOTLAND, my auld, respected Mither!
Tho' whyles ye moistify your leather,
Till when ye speak, ye aiblins blether;
Yet deil-mak-metter! no matter
FREEDOM and WHISKY gang thegither,
Tak aff your whitter. (11.181-86) draught of liquor

While intoning patriotically, he is also ridiculing the fearful Scots and creating a convincing triumvirate of whiskey, freedom, and Scots nationalism. This poem illustrates Burns's skillful interweaving of satiric and non-satiric passages. Never too harsh in his indictments, he exposes his target to ridicule while at the same time convincingly persuades us of the justness of his proposed solution.
In his preface to "A Dream," Burns says that he read the Poet Laureate's laudatory ode about the king's birthday, then fell asleep and dreamed he addressed this poem to the king. This device and his outlines of the speaker's character create a thin disguise. Clearly, the persona is not too unlike Burns, but by constructing a persona Burns is able to add a protective garment and to make irony a principal technique. The persona characterizes himself as an humble poet whose "skill may weel be doubted," who refuses to flatter just for favors, and who self-effacingly professes his reticence, as in "Far be't frae me that I aspire/To blame your Legislation" and 
"[I cast] nae reflection on YOUR GRACE,/Your Kingship to bespatter" (11.29,20-22,37-38,23-24). The naive, chatty speaker professes respect and hesitation to criticize. Just this much modesty creates ironic tone; the persona may hesitate to chastize royalty, but the presence of denigrating remarks demonstrates Burns's intent in the poem. The stupid king blindly accepts flattery from lying poets, appoints incompetent ministers, and disregards the needs of his constituents (11.14-17,32-33,42-29). In fact, the persona is a flexible vehicle, varyingly the voice of virtue and the flatterer of folly.

To permit this persona to damn with faint praise, Burns places him at the levee where royalty is celebrating, but there is no interaction between the persona and the group. There is little development of the inherent drama. The speaker addresses members of the royal family, as if standing among them; at first he speaks
directly to the king, then shifts his attention to the "young Potentate o' W[ales]," the "right rev'rend 0[snaburg]," and the "royal Lasses dainty" (11.82,100,119). But we never hear the family's responses nor sense that the speaker adjusts his remarks to any rejoinders they might be voicing. Moreover, this poem is not a fully realized dramatic monologue because there is not enough disparity between the speaker's understanding—he thinks that at least some of his comments are complimentary—and ours—we recognize the blame-by-praise device.

In the octosyllabic couplets of the monologue "Libel Summons," Burns expresses his contempt for cowardly lovers and snubs his nose at the Kirk's attempted restrictions of sexual desire. The poem is fairly direct in its attacks, the persona a thin disguise for Burns. This is, however, an odd sort of monologue in that no single individual speaks; rather, one voice represents a group, its members not distinguished from one another:

> WE, Fornicators by profession,  
> As per extractum from each Session,  
> In way and manner here narrated,  
> Pro bono Amor congregated. . . . (11.5-8)

This persona (presented as a solitary voice, even if referred to as "we") narrates the convening of the court, describes the judges (of which "Poet Burns" is one) and then speaks directly to the audience, Brown and Dow, the two fornicators who refuse to admit their deeds. We receive a limited view of the single character of this persona, knowing little more than that the "we" are male fornicators who censure those who will not confess their sexual activities. The piece shows
some dramatic potential in the lines which describe the punishments accorded:

You MONSIEUR BROWN, as it is proven,
JEAN MITCHEL's wame by you was hoven; belly; distended
Without you by a quick repentance
Acknowledge Jean's an' your acquaintance,
Depend on 't, this shall be your sentence.--
Our beadle to the Cross shall take you,
And there shall mither naked make you;
Some cane grip near by your middle, cautious
They shall it bind as tight's a fiddle;
The raep they round the PUMP shall tak
An' tye your han's behint your back;
Wi' just an' ell o' string allow'd fraction of an inch
To jink an' hide you frae the crowd: jerk
There ye shall stan', a legal seizure,
In during Jeanie Mitchel's pleasure;
So be, her pleasure dinna pass
Seven turnings of a half-hour glass:
Nor shall it in her pleasure be
To louse you out in less than THREE. (11.136-54) loose

But for the most part, the poem is a static, set piece, consisting of generalized description and speeches to which the recipients apparently make no response. The persona is conscious of all "he" reveals about himself and his subject; thus there is not the disequilibrium common to dramatic monologue. However, the discrepancy between the reader's and speaker's views is crucial to Burns's satiric point. The Kirk leaders would certainly dispute the fornicators' casual acceptance of copulation; the individual must decide whether it is more appropriate to judge the persona as immoral, accept the naturalness of any and all sexual activity, sympathize with sexual desires but demand self-discipline, or react in some other fashion. Burns's use of the monologue form for this topic does tend, however, to force the reader to side with or against the persona, to react both emotionally and rationally to the material presented.
Adhering more closely to the characteristics of the dramatic monologue are three other early satiric poems. In "Address of Beelzebub," as the title predicts, Burns selects Beelzebub as his persona. Knowing the name of this speaker creates expectations in the reader, for our culture has taught us that Beelzebub is the embodiment of all evil. We are probably doubtful of his veracity even before we read his speech. Certainly, it is difficult for a reader to suspend judgment of him; we have been too thoroughly instructed to judge Satan harshly. Satan's offers of hospitality and his display of intelligence are not sufficient to gain our respect or sympathy (11.53-61,13-26). Partly because the devil praises the Society's decisions, even protesting "Your HAND'S OWRE LIGHT ON THEM [the Highlanders seeking to emigrate]" and because we detect the sarcasm in Burns's tone, we reject the persona's appraisal (1.32). Beelzebub is, in effect, just a mouthpiece, a puppet whose traditional associations with evil are all we need know, for Burns apparently has no particular reason for selecting Beelzebub rather than Mammon or Belial or some other devil; he makes no attempt to delineate the speaker's character. But, by letting a devil praise the Society's actions, Burns can forcefully express his attack. A straightforward indictment in prose or verse with Burns speaking in his own voice could convey his angry attack just as easily, but his choice of persona and his sustained use of ironic reversal do provide intensity and interest.

Burns again selects the Devil as a character, this time as the audience for a speaker's chatty and amiable monologue. Although
"Address to the Deil" only records one side of the conversation, we are made aware of the presence of the silent listener, expecting him to speak up at any moment, perhaps in response to the persona's question "D' ye mind that day, when in a bizz [flurry],/Wi' reeket [smoky] duds, an' reestet gizz [smoke-dried wig]. . . ." (11.97-102).

The focus falls on the Devil's activities--unroofing the churches, scaring wayfarers with moans, stealing milk from housewives' churns, causing temporary impotence among young men, melting ice so the unsuspecting may fall, leading drunkards into mires. The persona reveals little of himself except for one crucial attitude: he views the Devil as "Auld Hornie" and "Clootie," a mischievous trickster, a rougish jokester. Because the reader traditionally associates the Devil with malignant evil, there seems to be a discrepancy between the speaker's attitude and the reader's. It is in this discrepancy that Burns's satiric point exists. By turning to folklore father than to the Kirk's dogma for examples of Satan's behavior, Burns mocks the Kirk's conception of the Devil. The reader too is mocked if he takes the traditional Christian view of Satan, for he is too seriously and sternly perceiving a figure who, to the persona, is just a friendly fellow. Suggesting that Satan may be redeemable, the persona dissolves Calvinist concepts of predestination, evil, and original sin into nothingness (11.121-26). Although the reader may judge the Devil to be a malignant force in the universe, it is not difficult to sympathetic with the persona's amiable acceptance of popular lore about Satan. In short, the dramatic monologue form
and the attack are inseparable; Burns exposes, through the dramatic mode, his satiric view of the Kirk's strict conception of the Devil.

Viewing "To a Louse" as a dramatic monologue gives an entirely new dimension to the poem, one not emphasized by other analysts. Three characters interact, as if playing out a scene which Burns directs. The focus falls, at least until the final stanza, on Jenny, whose pretensions and vanity are exposed by the louse, the catalyst. The persona, a nearby observer, reveals that he is aware of social distinctions, that he can feel sympathetic amusement, and that he perceives the world foolishly. Only an outside observer could suggest the satiric point about pride and hypocrisy, for the other two characters lack sufficient knowledge of all the events. Only the reader, however, understands Burns's point fully; not only Jenny but also the speaker is ridiculed. At first shocked and fascinated by the louse's activities, the persona tries to warn it away: "Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner" (1.11). Then he tries to warn Jenny, voicing a compassion the reader can share: "O Jenny dinna toss you head,/An' set your beauties a' abroad!" (11.37-38).

Finally the persona passes judgment on what he has seen:

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
An' foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
And ev'n Devotion! (11.43-48)

Suddenly, the reader realizes that he and the persona no longer share the same understanding of the situation; for the reader feels a tension between his sympathy for and judgment of the persona. For the speaker
has in his last words revealed his foolishness, not seeing the truth in Jonathan Swift's judgment—"satire is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's faces except their own." If Jenny knew a louse was creeping along her bonnet, would she cease wearing fancy hats or trying to feign a higher social rank? Do humans merely need to see their follies exposed in order to apply corrective measures? Although we can sympathize with the speaker's solution, by wishing self-improvement were so simple, we must reject his vision of human behavior, because his perception is limited, naive, and wrong-headed.

These poems convey Burns's attacks on various targets and reveal varied skill in manipulating dramatic and non-dramatic monologues. But the masterpiece among Burns's dramatic monologues is "Holy Willie's Prayer." In a unified, controlled piece, Burns lets Willie damn himself. He stands back and allows his subject to be dramatized rather than summarized. In this dramatic monologue the reader's perception of Willie diverges from Willie's self-realization; the piece focuses on Willie's unconscious exposure of himself; and the reader experiences tension between sympathy and judgment. Long before the persona voices "Amen! Amen!" we detect the irony and see that there is no reason or evidence to support the speaker's assumption of election or God's favor. In brief, the poem is "a satirical crucifixion—slow, lingering, inexorable." Contributing to this crucifixion is Burns's decision to follow the sequence of a prayer: invocation (11.1-6) and praise (11.7-30), confession and penitence...
The use of the prayer's structure intensifies the irony, for in every phase, Willie exposes how far removed he is from a prayerful attitude. Addressing God, Willie thinks he compliments God for his power and thanks Him for electing him. But he praises as if to reward God for God's wisdom and graciousness in saving Willie. He compliments God only because he believes God has given him grace (11.7-12, 25-30). Confessing his drinking and fornication, he thinks he openly repents; but instead of taking responsibility for his sins, he is anxious to justify himself and to escape any consequences by blaming them on God, calling them part of God's predestined plan (11.41-42, 55-60). He is apparently unaware of his pettiness in urging that Hamilton's food be cursed or the unchristian tone of his demands for vengeance. He is similarly unconscious of the irony in his call for Hamilton's damnation for lesser offenses than Willie's own or in his demand for God's wrath on the Presbytery of Ayr, composed of Willie's fellow leaders and presumably themselves Chosen. In brief, Willie wants God to avenge those who have harmed Willie, not those who have repudiated God; to Willie, only Willie matters. When Willie recalls his nervousness during the Kirk Session, he does not perceive that he reveals how little strength he truly derives from his faith. When he argues that it will be for God's glory if God "remember[s] me and mine/Wi' mercies temporal and divine," he is unconsciously reemphasizing his own selfishness (11.97-98).

Burns remains detached throughout the poem; part of the expertise in this monologue is that the poet never intrudes but so
completely creates Willie as a character that we are persuaded that we are overhearing his prayer. Variations in Willie's tone are not imposed by Burns but evolve naturally within Willie. For instance, in the lines in which he confesses his sins and tries to offer alibis, he seems to stumble, as the dashes and fragmentary bursts of words indicate: "O L___d--yestreen--thou kens--wi' Meg--/Thy pardon I sincerely beg!" (11.43-44). His voice rises to anger when he thinks of Hamilton; with fiery imperatives he demands that God punish Hamilton, not for his sins but for setting "the warld in a roar/0' laughin at us" and for making Willie nervously uncomfortable (11.75-76, 87-88, and last six stanzas).

Willie sees himself as Chosen for salvation and as an example of Christian virtue; the reader sees him as egocentric, arrogant, spiteful, and malicious. A similar discrepancy exists between the reader's and Willie's views of God. The God whom Willie worships is malicious, unfair, fickle, illogical, vengeful, and stupid. Willie's God, in short, is an extension of the speaker's own character, a figment of his distorted understanding. Furthermore, Willie unknowingly reveals the horror and absurdities of the religious system that has created a picture of a wrathful God, the concept of predestination, and the belief in "perserverance of the saints."

In this poem, Burns is denigrating both Willie and the Calvinist system that misformed him. As Crawford notes, Burns's merciless irony "strips bare the perverse barbarity of Willie's distorted Calvinism." No mode other than the dramatic monologue could so vividly or tellingly communicate Burns's angry attack.
In his later poetry, Burns continues his use of monologues and dramatic monologues for satiric purposes. In standard English—a rarity for Burns's satires—"Sketch to Fox" presents Burns's address to Charles Fox. The opening lines indicate the monologue's imitative formality and its tendency to speak in hackneyed generalities:

How Wisdom and Folly meet, mix and unite;
How Virtue and Vice blend their black and their white;
How Genius, th' illustrious father of fiction,
Confounds rule and law, reconciles contradiction,
I sing; if these mortals, the Critics, should bustle,
I care not, not I, let the Critics go whistle! (11.1-6)

That last line does sound distinctively like Burns's mockery. The five-to-one mixture, however, characterizes the sketch as a whole. Most of the piece consists of a general and abstract discussion of mankind; not until the last stanza does Burns become personal and satiric. Then he labels William Pitt a smuggler and thief, adding that Fox too can ably compete in those activities (11.45-50). The poem is weak in that Burns seems never to have decided whether he wanted to win Fox's approval and patronage through flattery and pompous philosophizing, or whether he wanted to attack Fox's frailties. The resulting monologue coheres like oil and water. Burns does not, in this later use of the monologue, demonstrate increased skill with the form; if anything, "Sketch to Fox" shows less competency than any of the early satiric monologues.

Another of his later poems, "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," exhibits the characteristic features of the monologue. The persona sounds an alarm:
Orthodox, Orthodox, who believe in John Knox
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience;
A heretic blast has been blown i' the West—
That what is not Sense must be Nonsense, Orthodox. . . .

(11.1-4)

Knowing Burns's habit of attacking orthodox Calvinists, we are wary of accepting this injunction at face value. Indeed, we soon realize that much of the poem's satire evolves from ironic reversal. It is only the persona, not the poet, who wants McGill stretched on a rack for his "heretic, damnable error" of joining faith and sense (11.6-9).

Yet, because the poem is not sustained ironic reversal and because there is no sustained disequilibrium between the persona's views and the reader's, the poem fails to become fully realized dramatic monologue. Much like the speaker in "A Dream," this persona vacillates in his views, sometimes voicing praise, sometimes attack. For example, the speaker, poet, and reader all share the same understanding of such imperatives as:

Calvin's Sons, Calvin's Sons, seize your spiritual guns--
Ammunition ye never can need;
Your HEARTS are the stuff that will be POWDER enough,
And your SCULLS are a storehouse o' LEAD. . . . (11.18-21)

Or when he urges David Grant to help punish McGill, the speaker understands, as do we, the import of his description: "Davie Rant, Davie Rant, wi' a face like a saunt,/And a heart that wad poison a hog" (11.50-52). And the persona recognizes the implications in

Poet Burns, Poet Burns, wi' your priest-skelping turns,
Why desert ye your auld native shire?
Tho' your Muse is a gipsey, yet were she even tipsey,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are. . . . (11.70-74)

In a very rhythmical, rambunctious poem, the speaker, by direct invective and blame-by-praise, unveils the opponent's hypocrisy and
brutality. In that Burns sustains his satiric attack throughout, and uses the same pattern of mockery, the poem is unified. The admixture of irony and direct abuse, although detracting from the monologue form, creates no real problem for the reader; for Burns clearly delineates his satiric target.

A more skillful and consistent dramatic monologue is a poem whose title makes it seem more appropriate to another classification. "Epistle from Esopus to Maria" is, however, totally unlike Burns's other epistles and shows the distinctive characteristics of the dramatic monologue. In this address, Burns dons the persona of Esopus, an actor who was imprisoned on a charge of vagrancy. Esopus states his motives for writing: "From these dire scenes my wretched lines I date,/To tell Maria her Esopus' fate" (11.11-12). In the course of his description of himself and Maria, the persona unconsciously reveals information about both; his revelations create in the reader an awareness of the disparity between what he says and understands, as well as evoke both our sympathy and judgment.

Esopus apparently considers himself both a fine poet and an heroic figure; he apes openings written by epic poets (11.1-12), compares himself to Shakespearean heroes (11.21-23), and fills his lines with carefully wrought imagery. But the inflated pomposity of the opening sentence simply emphasizes the obscurely phrased syntax and the triviality of the topic; through bombastic diction and periodic sentence structure, he vainly tries to make significant his description of the people in the jail. And, in such passages as
[My story] Will turn thy very rouge to deadly pale;
    Will make thy hair, tho erst from gypsy poll'd,
    By Barber woven and by Barber sold . . .
    Like Boary bristles to erect and stare. (11.16-20)

he chooses such grotesquely unsuitable images that instead of evoking
our compassion for his imprisonment, he merely convinces us of his
foolishness. His yearnings for Maria's compassion and his eagerness
to defend her from attacks can evoke our sympathy. But his self-
revelations demand we judge him a pompous, incompetent fool.

Similarly, the persona does not succeed in winning much
sympathy for the maligned Maria, for while trying to awaken our
compassion he is simultaneously revealing her flaws. Esopus seemingly
is unaware of what these lines reveal about Maria:

    What scandal call'd Maria's janty stagger
    The ricket reeling of a crooked swagger?
    What slander nam'd her seeming want of art
    The flimsey wrapper of a rotten heart. . . .
    Who christen'd thus Maria's Lyre divine,
    The idiot strum of vanity bemused,
    And e'en th' abuse of poesy abused?
    Who called her verse a parish workhouse, made
    For motely, foundling fancies, stolen or strayed? (11.45-56)

Simple ironic reversal indicates Burns's target as well as the speci-
fic charges he has levelled against Maria, for praise in the mouth
of a criminal, a man incapable of stating things clearly and unable
to differentiate between flattery and insults, is no praise at all.
Even in his concluding comment, Esopus unwittingly condemns both
himself and Maria:

    For who can write and speak as thou and I--
    My periods that decyphering defy,
    And thy still matchless tongue that conquers all reply?
    (11.81-83)
Esopus, in brief, while trying to inflate his own reputation and defend Maria's, reveals only his buffoonery and her immorality. Through his characterization of the persona, his sustained use of ironic reversal, and his choice of the dramatic monologue, Burns vindictively strikes at Maria Riddell and those who would defend her character.

Among Burns's later poetry there exists one other satiric monologue: "Tam o' Shanter." Though rarely called a dramatic monologue, this poem should be viewed as one. Certainly, as readers have recognized, it has characteristics of the mock-heroic. Some of the formal speeches (11.59-66), the prophecy attributed to Kate (11.29-32), the structural pattern of a journey, the "hero's" battles, courage, and eventual triumph over obstacles, the importance of the supernatural forces, and the epic similes (parodied in 11.193-200) suggest the poem's mock-epic qualities. And it exhibits others parallels to narratives: a progressive series of interrelated events, characters engaged in the events, and a narrator who relates the incidents. But, by concentrating on its satiric elements, we see that we must primarily consider it as a dramatic monologue, not as a mock-epic.

The narrator-persona is the primary target of Burns's attack. Within the disjunction between his understanding and ours and within the tension we feel between sympathy and judgment of his views, we find the core of Burns's satiric point. The narrator, one of the group at a local tavern, recounts for us Tam's experiences one evening;
he does not, however, just tell what happens to Tam but intrudes
his own judgments, warnings, and advice. Because he is inconsistent
in his view of the events and their significance, we become aware of
a discrepancy in his self-evaluation as well as in his understanding
of the events.

Throughout the poem, the speaker delivers prescriptive advice:

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet, makes me cry
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises! (11.33-36)

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed:
Where'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare. (11.219-24; see also 11.17-18)

But we are aware that advice, whether spoken by males or females, is
often fallacious. Suppose Tam had followed his wife's advice and
suppose we do forever remember Meg's shortened tail, what admonitions
are we to remember? We are not to drink or to ride late at night,
should avoid admiring beautiful women or letting curiosity lead us
to adventures. The speaker justifies his denials of these activities
by reference to Meg's stump of a tail. The Kirk would agree with his
warnings; but the reader is filled with doubts--the consequences seem
minor in contrast to the pleasures that must be denied. The
reader is thus aware of a discrepancy between the persona's view and
his own.

That disjunction is more obvious when we consider other char-
acteristics of the speaker. The narrator is eager to share his
philosophical views and to cite Tam as his specific example. So he sermonizes about the transience of pleasure (11.59-66); but he also exposes his own attractions to pleasure:

While we sit bousing at the nappy,  
And getting fou and unco happy. . . .(11.5-6)

. . . had they [the group dancing in the Kirk yard] been queans,  
A' plump and strapping in their teens. . . .  
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurlies, . . .  
legs  
For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!  
(11.151-52,157-58) girls

Apparently he is unable to sacrifice his own fleshly desires to the moralistic lessons and is thus unable to follow his own rules. It is because the speaker is so imaginatively involved in Tam's experiences that we know of the adventure. And the narrator is not merely reciting the details so that he can pass moral judgment; he becomes, unconsciously, caught up in the scene. He is responding sensually to the sight of curvaceous females. Even though he modestly insists that his Muse is unable to report on the dance, he almost immediately describes it:

But here my Muse her wing maun cour;  
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;  
To sing how Nannie lap and flang,  
(A souple jade she was, and strang). . . .  
(11.179ff.)

Although he condemns Tam's drunken lechery, he also cheers Tam's escape: "Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,/And win the key-stane of the brig" (11.205-06).

The narrator, who intrudes passages of lofty sermonizing, seems detached from participation in or sympathy for Tam's activities; repeatedly, however, he indicates his involvement. The speaker is unable to maintain a consistent perspective. He is the detached and
morally superior observer, but he is also a participant riding alongside Tam, admiring scantily attired women, and cheering Tam's escape. Within a single mind, we see the interplay between conflicting views. The persona reveals himself as serious, prudent, and conservative in his moral judgments, and a staunch opposer of lust, drunkenness, and irresponsibility—the very image of righteous superiority. Yet he conveys through vividly realistic description his own excitement at viewing the witches and his sympathy for Tam's danger. This persona, unable to reconcile both the moralistic and sensual facets of himself, is an object of Burns's mockery.

But what has created such a disunified character? Burns, by dramatizing the speaker's constant vacillation between decorous prudence and excited participation, suggests the Kirk's teachings are one cause. The persona is trying to meet Calvinist expectations, but his natural sympathy for a man in danger, his aesthetic responses, and his belief in superstitions—in a word, his humanness—betray him. Burns exposes the gap created by the persona's torturous struggle between what he feels and what he knows the Kirk wants him to feel. We can sympathize with both his instinctual response to the experiences and with his surrender to religious pressures; but we must also harshly judge the system that creates in the speaker so much struggle, doubt, and pain.

Among the monologues appear some of Burns's best and best-known poems, such as "To a Louse," "Holy Willie's Prayer," and "Tam o' Shanter." Varying in each of the monologues—among the early and later poetry—are the degrees of drama, of tension between the
reader's sympathy for and judgment of the speakers' viewpoints, of
the discrepancy between the reader's and personae's understanding,
of skill in delineating the personae; variations in tone exist as
do differences in the poet's ability to merge form and satiric
content. The later monologues do not, however, illustrate an
increased mastery of the monologue's characteristics; the second of
his monologues (the first fully realized dramatic monologue) is
"Holy Willie's Prayer"--none of his later satiric monologues is
better.

DIALOGUES

Related to the monologue form is the dialogue (something of a
dual monologue), which Burns uses infrequently for satiric attack.
In his early poetry, Burns has included two dialogues--"The Twa
Dogs" and "Death and Doctor Hornbook"; "The Brigs of Ayr" is the only
element of the satiric dialogue in his later poems. In all three,
the form develops the satire. None is conceived as a philosophical
or Platonic dialogue in which the search for truth determines both
purpose and means. Instead, their links are with Cicero's and
Lucian's dialogues. Into "The Twa Dogs" Burns inserts his already
formed sympathy for the oppressed poor and his indictments of the
indifferent, wasteful, arrogant rich; in "Death and Doctor Hornbook"
the dialogue between a narrator-speaker and Death expresses Burns's
previously conceived opinions of Hornbook's pretensions and vanity.
"The Brigs of Ayr" similarly expounds Burns's beliefs about vanity
and incompetence. Thus, these are like Ciceronian dialogues in their similarity to essays expressing previously formulated ideas, arbitrarily put into dialogue form. In that the poems stress description, "satire through simple characterization," and some narrative elements, they also follow the Lucian tradition.17

Directly bearing on their satiric effectiveness are the degree of dramatic conception of the characters, the creation of on-going conversation, and a framework that coheres with the dialogue itself. Of the three, the most dramatically conceived conversation occurs in "The Tw a Dogs," which contains also the most effective satire. "The Brigs of Ayr," the latest of the dialogues, is the poorest poem of the three, the least credible, the least dramatic, and the least cohesive; it is also the least effective as satire.

For each of these dialogues Burns constructs a frame, a device he sometimes uses to suggest authenticity, to establish his own detachment from what he overhears, and to insert satiric comments that foreshadow tone and content of the dialogues themselves. Predicting both the humor and the satiric attacks to follow are the speaker's remarks in "Death and Doctor Hornbook"; beginning with condemnation of "some books [that] are lies frae end to end" and ministers who have spoken a "rousing whid[lie] . . . And nail 't wi' Scripture," he professes his own sincerity:

\[
\text{But this that I am gaun to tell,} \\
\text{Which lately on a night befel,} \\
\text{Is just as true's the Deil's in h [l],} \\
\text{Or Dublin city. . . . (11.1-6,7-10)}
\]

Despite Burns's and the speaker's attempts to affirm the truthfulness
of the account, the analogy persuades us to doubt his authenticity, as does the speaker's description of his inebriation and staggering gait (11.15-24). The framing device does not advance the action of the poem but does create some suspense about the particular experiences the speaker will relate; moreover, it prepares us for the rather incredible encounter with Death and establishes Burns's satiric attitude.

In "The Twa Dogs" Burns frames the dogs' discussion within passages of concrete description. The narrator, who locates the site of the conversation, the time, and the participants, remains impersonal, simply a recorder. His description establishes the animal nature of the dogs. Ceasar was whelped abroad, wears a dog collar, mingles with other dogs, "An' stroan't [urinated] on stanes an' hillocks wi' him" (11.7-22). Luath, a brindled collie, possesses a "gawsie tail" which hangs over his "hurdies" [thighs]" (11.23-36). Their activities are typical of dogs--chasing other animals and sniffing new trails. But the narrator, by his choice of details, alerts us to the dogs' parallels to humans. The comment that they are "na thrang [busy] at hame" suggests their links with the human plane. Ceasar is a "gentleman an' scholar," and the humanness of Luath is implied, as Daiches notes, by the description that echoes that of a medieval knight:

He was a gash an' faithfu' tyke, talkative
As ever lap a sheugh, or dyke! trench; wall
His honest sonsie, baws'nt face, brindled
Ay gat him friends in ilka place;
His breast was white, his towzie back, warm
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black. . . . (11.29-34)
Ironically, however, whereas the beast fable is injurious to man because it suggests that animals act like humans and thus also implies that people act like animals, Burns's poem shows the animals cooperating better than their human counterparts and expressing gratitude that "they were na men but dogs" (1.236). These two dogs ignore the artificial barriers that separate the aristocracy and the peasant; the use of dogs as mouthpieces thus intensifies the satire. 21

The major feature of the prefatory description in "The Brigs of Ayr" is its stilted, philosophical tone, at odds with the Scots dialect and conversational effect in the dialogue itself. The frame does not suggest the satiric nature of the dialogue or seek to convince us to suspend disbelief about two bridges talking. The prefatory passage (11.1-90) expends only one-third of its lines on describing the bridges or setting a perspective from which we can hear the conversation. The concluding passage (11.192-234) consists of a lengthy description of a "fairy train"; at the sight of "white-rob'd Peace" in the train, the bridges arbitrarily "forgat their kindling wrath," Both the beginning and end of the frame are artificial and contrived, not preparing for the attacks or motivating the argument. Except for establishing a concrete sense of place and trying to establish authenticity, the frame serves little purpose; it and the conversation itself have minimal relation in thought, tone, or language.

Looking more particularly at each conversation, we see that in "The Twa Dogs" Burns uses the discussion between Ceasar and
Luath as his means of revealing his own opinions about the relationships between the poor and the rich and between the humble peasantry and the arrogant aristocracy. To enliven his indictments and avoid an abstract account, he creates a concrete discussion between two real dogs in a specific place. For the purposes of debate, Ceasar, a nobleman's pet, is made the angry critic of the rich, the attacker of their wastefulness (11.151-70), their arrogant insensitivity (11.93-100), and their superficial activities designed to ward off boredom (11.205-28). Ceasar, the experienced and sophisticated and cynical dog of the world, voices satiric condemnation of the rich and powerful; he speaks for Burns. Luath, a cotter's dog, is differentiated by his naiveté and inexperience and kind-hearted acceptance of the superficial; he functions well as the curious but unknowing antagonist whose doubts, questions, and ignorance prompt Ceasar to attack the rich by citing examples and evidence.

By selecting animal personae, Burns can avoid the bitterness or anger that might have been explicit had a lord and peasant conversed. Yet, we feel the artificiality of the choice of animal personae. The descriptive details presented by the narrator characterize their animal qualities, but in the conversation itself Burns makes little attempt to produce satiric exposures that evolve directly or logically from their animal natures. Dramatic potential is undermined by the obviously arbitrary motive for opening the conversation; the dogs, tired of their play, stop to rest and start "a lang digression/About the lords o' the creation" (11.45-46).
Limiting the effectiveness of the poem also is the fact that although their conversation describes actions by the lords and the rustics, the actions are only general. There is no individualization of a lord or a peasant, nor is there any sense that the dogs comment on past action taken by specific persons in specific places; nor do they comment on some concrete present action which they are simultaneously observing and discussing. In this dialogue statement substitutes for action. There is, however, some dramatic effectiveness in that each dog, once arbitrarily characterized by Burns, speaks consistently; that is, no reader, once aware of which side each dog takes, could be confused as to which speaks other passages. The fictive conversation achieves liveliness and irony, as in Luath's compassion for the rich who oppress his class. And structuring the poem as a learning experience for Luath, who does change his opinions by the end of the discussion, allows Burns to suggest that the reader, like Luath, must discover the same truth; as we read we sense the drama of an immediate experience--Luath's growth in knowledge.

Burns makes no overt judgments in this poem, leaving us to form our own conclusions based on the ideas exposed in the conversation. He is able to attack and teach more vividly and somewhat more dramatically than he could have in a poetic or prose essay simply listing the abuses and labelling them unjust and cruel.

Despite unfulfilled dramatic potential, "The Twa Dogs" is far more dramatic in its presentation than is "Death and Doctor Hornbook," just barely definable as a dialogue. One side of the conversation
belongs to the speaker who recounts a past experience, swears the truth of his story, particularizes his location that evening, describes the physical appearance of the other speaker, and records his own speeches. The human speaker both establishes a frame of reference and also summarizes his part in the dialogue. After his initial challenge to the strange figure, threats should Death try to cause harm, and agreement to converse with Death, the speaker in effect "disappears" until in the last stanza he describes their parting. Thus, there is no on-going conversation nor any exchange of views that would advance any action. The dialogue is essentially one-sided. We never know what the speaker thinks of Hornbook nor of Death's attacks on the doctor's incompetence and pomposity. We can only assume that the speaker, like the reader, is a neophyte learning new information and being taught to indict the doctor. To perceive Burns's opinion, we must depend on Death's statements, for in Death's examples and condemnation we find Burns's satiric point. By letting Death voice the attacks, Burns avoids direct invective and avoids the charge of envy or meanness that might have been voiced had he chosen a human speaker much like himself. Furthermore, Death would be more familiar with the doctor's activities and voice a more comprehensive view than could a local villager.

Whether satiric effect is lost by the lack of a give-and-take discussion we cannot accurately judge; but the poem does lack drama and the dialogue becomes mostly a monologue, with Death expounding his own views of one man. Furthermore, the dialogue lacks unity of form,
for essentially it is two separate monologues, bridged by two brief conversational exchanges. The persona's monologue prepares us for the satiric point and the humor; Death's monologue conveys the specific evidence that has evoked Burns's censure. The dialogue comes to no particular end; one episode in the experience of the speaker and Death has concluded, but their conversation may again continue:

"But hark! I'll tell you of a plot,
"Tho' dinna ye be speakin o't;
"I'll nail the self-conceited Sot,
"As dead's a herrin. . . ." (11.175-78)

Explanation of that plot must await another meeting, for the ringing of the Kirk bell brings us and the persona back to reality while Death continues on his way.

Henderson comments that the poem is most memorable to us for its "amusingly realistic exposition of the physical and mental characteristics of an inebriated countryman, and its eerie yet surpassingly droll picture of the terrible something whose name was 'Death.'" 22 The references to "exposition" and "characterization" accurately place this dialogue in the Lucian-Cicero tradition. Burns has not presented this poem as an exchange of ideas from which either participant can discover the truth or from which Burns can formulate his own opinions. Instead, within this conversation recorded by the persona as past action, we and the speaker can recognize Hornbook's vanity and pretensions, in which Burns already firmly believed.

"The Brigs of Ayr," Burns's contribution to the debate between moderns and ancients so popular in the eighteenth century, records two
bridges' dispute about each other's merits. The dialogue has a conversational, informal quality, contributed by Scots dialect and such rhythmic lines as

Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride!

Now haud you there! for faith ye've said enough,
And muckle mair than ye can mak to through. (II.107,174-75)

Each bragging of its merits, abusing the other's "personality" and architectural design, the two bridges create an on-going conversation. That is, once the Auld Brig begins the discussion, each responds directly to the other's statements, that response in turn evoking a rejoinder. Each speaks in relatively short passages, ranging from six to twenty-four lines. Burns lets both bridges convey his views; he remains detached, letting the reader see the fallacies in each one's assertions. Although the conversation advances smoothly enough and makes the denigrating remarks appear to evolve naturally from these two speakers' characters, there is no apparent reason why two bridges, rather than two animals, or two persons, should speak. And, as in Burns's earlier examples of the dialogue, he enunciates his satire clearly enough; but this poem has little unity, mainly because in language, tone, and ideas, the frame and the discussion do not cohere.

Burns recorded no reason for so infrequently using the dialogue form—or for using it at all—but perhaps he recognized his own difficulties with it. He is much more accomplished when he writes monologues or epistles, in which he presents his one view of a given topic. He seems to write satire after he has decided his viewpoint,
not as a means of discovering which of two sides is preferable. Either he voices his bias for one side rather clearly--scorn for Dr. Hornbook's pretense and rich people's cruelty--or scoffs at both sides. There is not much subtlety in his dialogues. And he fails to take full advantage of the dramatic potential in the dialogue form, although "The Twa Dogs" shows more proficiency than the other two exhibit. Yet, we cannot fault the dialogues for obscurity or for failure to make a satiric point; as vehicles for satire, they are clear, even if not his most artistically developed poems.

BURLESQUES

Burns does write serious elegies, odes, and lamentations, and does, in some poems, stress heroic virtues; but he voices his satiric opinions in mock-poems. These burlesques serve him as "a species of indirect satire" which uses or imitates "serious matter or manner, made amusing by the creation of an incongruity between style and subject"; moreover, burlesque "achieves its end by creating a sense of the absurd because by serious standards the form does not fit the theme, because the flesh and the spirit are not one." Burns, in his "mock-poems" will either treat a serious subject frivolously or a trivial subject seriously. Among the early poetry "The Holy Tulzie," "The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie," and "Poor Mailie's Elegy" exemplify his usage of burlesque; later poems--"Tam Samson's Elegy," "Monody on Maria," "Ode to Mrs. Oswald," and "New Psalm"--illustrate continued application of the form but show
no significant alterations of pattern or increase in craft. His selection of such forms as the ode or elegy becomes an essential part of his satiric strategy: his attack is supported and intensified because we know the "usual" contents of those forms and recognize the incongruity between pattern and content.

"The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two reverend Calvinists," Burns told Dr. Moore; he was describing "The Holy Tulzie," sometimes printed with the subtitle, "An Unco Mournful Tale" (Letters, 1.114). This mock-lamentation ridicules a local dispute about parish boundaries. By devising a persona who speaks woefully of the acts of two ministers and their congregations' loss and who censures the New Lichts, Burns is using simple blame-by-praise. Satiric theme and elegiac form do not coalesce any more than do the ministers' precepts and their behavior; by treating a trivial subject seriously, Burns has generated a sense of the absurd. The persona establishes his attitude of sorrow by lamenting the fate of the "pious, godly Flocks" whom other animals will now prey on because the "two best Herds . . ./That e'er gae gospel horns a blast" have "had a bitter, black outcast/Atween themsel" (11.1-12). Burns, however, in his headnote to the poem enunciates his ironic tone as well as his satiric target: "Blockheads with reason wicked Wits abhor,/But Fool with Fool is barbarous civil war.--Pope."26 Into this burlesque, Burns injects animals, scenes and actions common to pastorals in order to form a not very subtle allegory; the pastoral imagery permeates the poem as does the very
generalized use of animal parallels. This poem is frequently criticized by some who consider it too local and limited in its attack
to have much appeal to a modern audience; but its concreteness and
dependence on specific references are the qualities that make its
attack on hypocrisy and cruelty meaningful. It may not be Burns's
best satire, but its burlesque lamentation derives vitality from the
poet's use of Scots idioms, the Standard Habbie stanza, sustained
ironic reversal, and careful attention to concrete details.

In "Death and Dying Words" and "Poor Mailie's Elegy" Burns
is writing mock-elegy as a means to criticize certain foibles of
people and to expose the elegy's often false and excessive sentimentality. John Weston asserts that Burns is the first Scots to
write a mock-elegy in which there is a "totally-informing ironic
polarity between res and verba." Burns does not consciously parody
any particular classical or English formal elegies or use the classi-
cal elegiac meter. He merely works from the generalized concept of
an elegy as a formal meditation on death or some similarly serious
theme. His elegies, however, express no serious mourning.

In his earliest mock-elegy, "Death and Dying Words of Mailie,"
he focuses on Mailie's speech. The narrator informs us that Mailie,
a sheep, has strangled in her tether and is now addressing her dying
words of advice and insight to Hughoc, a dim-witted shepherd. Usually
a human witness tends to increase the pathos, but by not allowing
Hughoc to express any words of sorrow and making him a half-wit
whose responses might be viewed as untrustworthy, Burns avoids and
even mocks any hint of genuine sentiment. Deathbed statements, which people generally view with seriousness, are travestied by Burns's characterization of the speaker. Serious discussions of important issues—agricultural methods, Calvinism's restrictions, sexual morality, educational concepts—are reduced to the ridiculous when voiced by a sheep. The excessive sentimentality—"but waes my heart"—indicates that Burns speaks ironically, mocking tritely conventional moral advice. Burns emphasizes the mocking tone of his piece by juxtaposing Mailie's lofty desires and conventional advice, voiced in elevated though vague language, against her pragmatic and specific instructions, expressed in idiomatic Scots. These two passages illustrate that stylistic and semantic contrast:

Tell him, he was a Master kin',
An' ay was guid to me an' mine;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him. (11.25-28)

O, bid him save their harmless lives,
Frae dogs an' tods, an' butchers' knives! foxes
But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,
Till they be fit to fend themsel;
An' tent them duely, e'en an' morn,
Wi' taets o' hay an' ripps o' corn. (11.29-34) tufts; handfuls

The poem attacks both by frivolously treating what, in other poems, may be viewed as serious matters and by depicting seriously the death of a mere sheep. Not a corrosive indictment of humans' advice to others or of serious problems, the poem is permeated with gentle humor.

Taking a slightly different approach to the same subject, Burns creates a discrepancy between style and subject in "Poor Mailie's
Elegy." The excessive pathos conveys mockery; the trivial—a sheep's
death—is mourned so extravagantly that the piece becomes bathetic,
as established in the opening lines:

Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;
Our Bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remead! remedy
The last, sad cape-stane of his woes; coping-stone
Poor Mailie's dead!

Burns mockingly inflates the importance of this ewe's death by over-emphasizing the sheep's affection (11.13-18), by accentuating the speaker's exaggerated grief (11.1-6,45-48), and by inserting inappropriate diction and sentiments:

For her forbears were brought in ships,
Frae 'yont the TWEED. . . .
Wae worth that man wha first did shape,
That vile, wanchancie thing—a rae? (11.33-38) dangerous

In both of these mock-elegies Burns mingles standard English and Scots dialect, the latter adding a coarse, earthy touch of realism appropriate to the subject. The Standard Habbie form and the repetition of "dead" as the last word in each stanza provide "Poor Mailie's Elegy" with a buoyant, cheerful rhythm totally unsuitable to any serious elegy. The presence of the word "dead" in an elegy is not unusual; in this poem, however, the word does not stress the sorrow of loss but cumulatively builds an ironic emphasis. The rhythm and the lively diction give an animation to the poem that is not necessarily out of place in an elegy if counterpointed by sober meditation. But here the only contrast to the liveliness is given by the bathos of inappropriate sentiments:
It macks guid fellows gire an' gape, grimace
Wi' chokin' dread;
An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape
For Mailie dead. (11.39-42)

Similarly, in "Death and Dying Words" the rhyming couplets of tetrameter lines lend an almost sing-song effect. An abundance of Scots idioms and the merry, fast-moving verse help define the incongruity between the expected tone and content of an elegy and the amusingly satiric style of the mock-elegy. Although among the early poems there are few examples of Burns's burlesques, he has exhibited his understanding of the basic characteristics and his ability to use the "mock-poem" as a means of satire. Indeed, lively and good-natured humor, structural cohesion, wit, and vividly concrete language make these two mock-elegies delightful poems as well as good examples of Burns's abilities in burlesque.

In his later poetry Burns repeats, with minor variations, the usage of the mock-elegy and adapts his satiric spirit to the mock-ode, mock-encomium, and mock-heroic. As clear in their satiric direction as they are, they do not exhibit increased skill in use of burlesque, just some minor alterations in approach and technique. In the later poetry, for example, mock-elegies reappear. Similarly to his approach in "Death and Dying Words" Burns incorporates exaggerated praise and sorrow in "Tam Samson's Elegy." He also includes two other characteristics: inversion of the conventional elegiac formula that "all Nature mourns" and praise of a man not yet dead. As in the earlier mock-elegies, sentimental and pretentious mourning are amusingly and generally burlesqued.
Merging techniques developed in his early mock-elegies and the bitter tone apparent in some of his early monologues and epistles, Burns directs a scathing attack against Maria Riddell in "Monody on Maria." He reverses the expected features of an elegy in that Maria is not dead and in his failure to praise her:

How cold is that bosom which folly once fired,
How pale is that cheek where the rouge lately glistened;
How silent that tongue which the echoes oft tired,
How dull is that ear which to flattery so listened.--(ll.1-4)

Her mourners will be "offspring of folly" and the flowers will be "idle weed[s]" and "chiefly the nettle" (ll.11,13-15). Her epitaph will describe her vanity. In short, no one really mourns her. Burns's poem, expressing people's lack of grief over her death, combines straightforward lampooning and indirect burlesque. His elegy for the dead Mrs. Oswald is similarly harsh. Here Burns is not treating a serious subject trivially, for he is quite serious in his scorn for her; that scorn and his rather vulgar abuse of the woman establish a corrosive tone. The non-elegiac elegy, celebrating her loss rather than mourning it, takes the form of a Pindaric ode, with strophe, antistrophe, and epode; Burns is combining the serious style of the ode and the non-eulogistic comments as a way to create satire. Both of these poems, though certainly expressing the poet's attack clearly, lack wit or good taste and exemplify Burns's vindictiveness rather than any desire to amuse or reform or instruct.

Continuing his pattern of burlesque by approaching serious topics with a frivolous attitude and scoffing tone, Burns writes a mock-encomium: "A New Psalm for the Chapel of Kilmarnock." Here
Burns parodies the Presbyterian metrical psalter and the sentiments of Psalm 144:30

0, SING a new Song to the L____!
Make, all and every one,
A joyful noise, ev'n for the king
His Restoration.--(11.1-4)

His intent is neither to denigrate the Bible nor the psalter; pretending praise, he ridicules King George III's recuperation from a bout of madness. Rather than the exaggerated sorrow characterizing "The Holy Tulzie," this persona voices exaggerated joy; but in both poems, Burns relies on ironic reversal. The burlesque form helps to convey his attack against the king and other political leaders who poorly served the country.

Burns's burlesque poems are not his more memorable nor his more skillfully shaped poems, although he infuses them with lucid enunciations of his satiric points. He uses the burlesque always as a medium of criticism--of individuals' flaws, of other poets' triteness or simulation, of some poetic types' conventionality. At their best, in their criticism they offer to us both amusement and instruction; in cleverness, wit, cohesiveness, and interest, the three early burlesques are his most successful achievements.

SONGS

Burns's later poetry is dominated in quantity by the songs he wrote for George Thompson's and James Johnson's collections. The majority of them are not satiric. But those that are, such as the
Heron election ballads, some of the *Merry Muses of Caledonia* group, "Dean of the Faculty," and "Such a Parcel of Rogues," have been prepared for by a few satiric songs among the early poetry. Although quantitatively the later group is impressive, the quality of the early songs indicates that he has learned early how to use them as vehicles of satire. "The Fornicator" and "When Guilford Good" illustrate a firm control of the tune and lyric; especially notable is his achievement in "Love and Liberty." The Scottish folk tunes that Burns uses for satire are of two principal types: the reel, a quick-moving dance usually in 4/4 time, has a smoothly flowing rhythm; the strathspey, sometimes using the 'Scotch snap,' is a slower dance with many dotted notes and a less smoothly flowing rhythm. In brief, a Scots folk song has a simple melody, maintains the same pace and pitch, repeats a word at the ends of lines, and adapts well to parallel expressions of the same emotion. Analysts of his songs have focused on their musicality, the degrees of traditional and original material in them, and his decision to devote much of his poetic effort after 1787 to the song; these are not, however, the major concerns here. By looking at their verbal and rhythmical patterns, their use of refrains, the characteristics of the tunes themselves, the personae, dramatic scenes, and structures, we can assess Burns's application of melody and verse to satire.

His earliest satiric song, "When Guilford Good," is set to the tune "The Earl of Glencairn's," its lyric shows prominent musical references even if words and tune are separated. Every second line
ends with "man," every alternate line uses internal rhyme, substituting for the lack of end rhyme, and all the lines have a pronounced, almost sing-song, iambic beat. In this strathspey each second line, with "man" concluding the unit of thought, ends a melodic pattern. Throughout the nine-stanza song the "aw" sound, in such words as "thraw," "jaw," "America," and "law," always precedes the repeated "man"; a repetitious pattern develops that is echoed in the melody because the notes for "man" and "aw" are the same. Burns is describing a series of actions taken by British generals and politicians during the American Revolution; these actions, which others viewed seriously, even sadly, reveal the incompetence of the British leaders. Burns undermines any solemn or grieving mood by the qualities of his verse and tune. The repetition of words and melodic motifs, the internal rhymes the assonance, and the lively tempo all present a happy unconcern for the failures he records. Thus, the disparity between the subject and the song develops the satiric point.

In "The Fornicator" Burns turns to a different sort of target and to a more self-revealing persona, one who is not just commenting but who is intimately involved in what he describes. The most distinctive characteristic of "Clout the Caldron" is its staccato rhythm. Notes are rarely linked but are frequently repeated (as in the first full measure which consists of dotted eighth notes, the middle six of which are C). Within each stanza the last word is always "Fornicator," musically given an upward run that suggests the
singer's happiness and that boldly accents the word. Internal rhyme is randomly placed in at least two lines per stanza, helping link each stanza together. Four of the six stanzas develop an ironic contrast, exemplified by

Before the Congregation wide
I pass'd the muster fairly,
My handsome Betsey by my side,
We gat our ditty rarely;
But my downcast eye by chance did spy
What made my lips to water,
Those limbs so clean where I, between,
Commenc'd a Fornicator. (11.9-16)

This contrast is accented by the shift in the tune, after the fourth line, to a higher octave and to a melodic variation. The tune is much like a chant that tends to give equal weight to all the words, sounding like someone pounding on metal. The hammering staccato of the tune is appropriate to a tinker's profession; perhaps it is straining a point to suggest that Burns views fornicating as a kind of profession or that he is aware of the parallels between the rhythm of the tune and the rhythm of sexual intercourse. Whether he matched lyrics and tune for these reasons does not preclude our awareness of the irony. Certainly the brash, swaggering pronouncement that "I am a Fornicator" keynotes the description and defense of the sexual experience; the lively tempo does not disguise nor soften but emphasizes the impact of the words. Burns is flaunting his activities in the face of Kirk disapproval, thus mocking their restrictions; his mockery is particularly obvious in the last stanza:
Your warlike Kings and Heros bold,
Great Captains and Commanders;
Your mighty Caesars fam'd of old,
And Conquering Alexanders;
In fields they fought and laurels bought
And bulwarks strong did batter,
But still they grac'd our noble list
And ranked Fornicator!!!

In tune, image, and language he brashly and vigorously thrusts at
the sham of the Kirk's repressions.

Burns chooses "Clout the Caudron" as one of eight tunes for
his most ambitious attempt with songs: "Love and Liberty--A Cantata."
He has combined eight songs, a detached but sympathetic narrator,
a specially chosen scene, recitativos in varied stanzaic patterns,33
seven active participants, and satiric commentary. All this is
molded into a structural pattern that advances a thread of events,
from the initial description of the warmth in Poosie Nansie's tavern
to the climatic finale in which all sing their defiance of outside
society. The connective tissue between the songs consists of the
recitativos,34 in which the narrator describes and dramatizes the
"jolly beggars" and their actions. For example, these lines elucidate
the relationship between the soldier and his doxy as well as lead
into the first song:

She blinket on her Sodger:
An' ay he gies the tozie drab warm or tipsey; whore
The tither skelpan kiss, smacking
While she held up her greedy gab, mouth
Just like an aumous dish:
alms' dish
Ilk smack still, did crack still, travelling hawker
Just like a cadger's whip;
Then staggering, an' swaggering,
He roar'd this ditty up--(11.20-28)
The interludes record the listeners' responses to each song, introduce the next singer, and draw the reader into the scene; mainly, by showing interrelationships among the characters and among the tunes, they help to prevent the poem from being just a series of eight different songs. Aiding coherence also is Burns's ability to make both lyrics and melody fit and reveal the characters of the singers. All of these songs show Burns's careful attention to unity through rhyme, melodic repetitions, and repeated refrains. For example, in "Soldier's Joy" the first and third lines of the quatrains and of the chorus repeat the same melodic line; the first and third lines use internal rhyme; the second and fourth lines have end rhyme; and the refrain "sound of a drum" appears at the end of each quatrain and the chorus. In "Whistle o' the lave o't" the refrain (same as the title), the AAAX rhyme pattern, repeated melodic motifs, and parallel structures give unity. More specific examination of the songs reveals how carefully Burns organizes the assorted materials, matches song to singer, and makes his satiric point.

The soldier, who calls himself a "son of Mars," stalks forward to "roar this ditty" (11.27-28). His experiences in battle and love and his loss of an arm and a leg are explained in a simple, fast-moving tune, "Soldier's Joy," marked "allegro." The tempo and accented beat, especially in the chorus, reinforce the thrust of his words: his pride in being a soldier and his boast, "I could meet a troop of HELL at the sound of a drum" (1.48). Words and sounds also help one another because the repeated "of a drum" is
sung on the same notes. The simple tune has a regular, repetitive beat, suggesting perhaps the marching cadence of an army. Nothing in the words or tune suggests that the soldier protests war or his discharge by the army. But implied in the description of his eagerness to fight for his country despite his physical handicaps are two questions: what has merited such loyalty? why has his country discarded him as useless?

After resounding applause from the group, "up arose the martial CHUCK [sweetheart]," the soldier's woman. She too sings a quick-moving reel, boldly describing her past life as a lover to "the regiment AT LARGE"; "Sodger Laddie" is marked by a quick tempo and emphatic reiteration of the melodic theme. Phrases such as "sanctified sot" suggest her mockery of her chaplain lover's hypocrisy; the tune, which stresses those words, emphasizes her contempt. She expresses no shame, self-pity, or regret for her life in the melody or lyrics. Instead, in this lively tune she flaunts her amorality (or so society would label it). Despite losses, beggary, and social ostracism, she can still defy:

And still I can join in a cup and a song;
But whilst with both hands I can hold the glass steady,
Here's to thee, MY HERO, MY SODGER LADDIE. (11.78-80)

Hers and the soldier's songs are similar in their tempo, pronounced rhythmical beat, candid revelations, and defiant non-repentance. The fast-moving tunes define the singers' self-images; had Burns chosen solemn, slow paces, he would encourage us to view them as self-pitying complainers. He lets them place no blame on themselves or
others but leaves us to wonder about the army and society that thrust them into their beggary.

Burns's next song is somewhat different, for Merry Andrew sings bitterly about himself and others. The key word is "fool," repeated in each stanza and receiving the main beat of each measure in which it appears. To the tune of "Auld Sir Symon," marked "gravely," he describes various fools, leading to the climax:

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
For faith I'm confoundedly dry:
The chiel that's a fool for himsel, fellow
Guil L__d, he's far dafter than I.

Daiches comments that this conclusion "strikes a deft balance between satire and self-mockery." More explicitly satiric are two earlier stanzas:

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport copulates
Let nae body name wi' a jeer;
There's even, I'm tauld, i' the Court
A Tumbler ca'd the Premier.

Oberv'd ye yon reverend lad
Mak faces to tickle the Mob;
He rails at our mountebank squad,
Its rivalship just i' the job.

Significantly, the slow tempo of this bitter expression helps underline the mournful, self-pitying tone while not mitigating the satiric bite.

Combining elements of the preceding tunes--brisk tempo, defiant unwillingness to buckle under adversity, and elegiac overtones--the "raucle carlin" [old, rough woman] begins "wi' sighs an' sobs" to "wail her braw JOHN HIGHLANDMAN" (11.81-88). Burns creates ironic contrast by juxtaposing her description of her lover who was killed
by the law and her sorrow at his loss with a chipper, bouncy tune, "O, an' ye were dead Gudeman." Perhaps the strongly accented and fast-paced melody points to her defiance; sorry he is dead, she expresses no sorrow that she loved him or that he was a criminal, nor is she submerged in self-pity. Even when she sings "And now a Widow I must mourn/The Pleasures that will ne'er return," she does not sound bitter or excessively sad--because the tune's cheerful quickness overrides potential elegy. The suggestion of the tune--a cheerfulness amid mourning--is stressed later when she immediately accepts the tinker's offer to be her lover.

The two women's songs having raised the question of love, the fiddler steps forward to sing a lively love song of his own:

Then in an ARIOSO key,
   The wee Apollo
Set of wi' ALLEGRETTO glee
   His GIGA SOLO--(11.125-28)

Taken with the carlin's charms, he urges her to "Whistle owre the lave o't" with him. The liveliness of the reel fits with the fiddler's optimistic vision of their life together. Not until later do we see any irony in this profession of love; when the tinker threatens violence, the fiddler drops all claims to the carlin, drinks to their health, and takes one of the bard's women "Behind the Chicken cavie" where he "RAK'D her, FORE AND AFT" (11.151-60, 187-89,192-93). The cheeriness of his tune outweighs the protestation of impassionate devotion, for loss of one woman does not diminish his high spirits.
The fiddler's rival is a tinker. His tune, "Clout the Caudron," with its staccato rhythm and emphatic beat, is well suited to one who makes his living hammering metal. The abrupt emphases also pound home his admission of deceit and his imprecations against the fiddler, "that SHRIMP, that withered IMP" (ll.169-73). The tune is very fast-moving, as if echoing not only his speed in hammering but also the speed of his interest and claim to the carlin. The fast tempo cancels any intimations of regret for his deceptions or his poverty; instead, it better fits his manner of swearing loyalty to the woman and of abusing the fiddler.

The bard, who is described as "a care-defying blade" who hates only to be sad, ends any rifts among the group and changes the tempo (ll.199-205). His song, to the tune of "For a' that an' a' that" has a slow tempo. After the observer's description, one expects a jaunty, defiant outburst; the slowness underlines the gravity of his theme. Stating, without indication of anger or regret, that "I AM A BARD of no regard," and describing his lack of poetic training, he turns to an exuberant and graphic account of what pleases him most: sex and beautiful young women. Society's disregard for his poetry and disapproval of his sexual morals apparently bother him not at all. In fact, "An' a' that an' a' that" after so much repetition (in every quatrain and chorus) begins to sound like a sneer, a dismissal of anyone or anything that tries to restrain or judge him. This last song by an individual introduces the theme that the group's final tune will develop: independence and freedom from demands on or by others.
"Impatient for the chorus," the whole group shouts out a drinking song, "Jolly Mortals, fill your glasses" (1.249). Each has within his or her song challenged the sham and cruelty of society; now they do so as one united voice. The simple melody has a fast tempo, a regular, even staccato beat that pronounces their defiance of the scornful world outside:

A fig for those by LAW protected,  
LIBERTY's a glorious feast!  
COURTS for Cowards were erected,  
CHURCHES built to please the Priest. (11.278-81)

The first two lines of each quatrain establish a melodic line which the next two lines repeat until the second word of line four; there a shift to a higher octave provides emphasis. It is a "deliberate, almost marchlike melody in common time, with something of the quality of a hymn tune about it; it is precisely suited for this kind of final chorus, for though as a tune it lacks character it has exactly the right kind of emphasis." Bentman adds that "the justification of sexual license within the form of a hymn . . . asserts that religion and sexual pleasure often cannot be separated and the insistence that they always can be is self-delusion and hypocrisy. Sexual license . . . can . . . become part of a true religion." Read as individual units rather than joined with their tunes and each other, only two of the songs--Merry Andrew's and the combined group's--contain obvious satiric statements. When words are tied to music, though, we realize that ironic contrasts appear in the songs by the soldier's doxy, the bard, and the soldier. In the poem's totality--scene, characters, tunes, recitativos, structural
pattern—Burns reveals the fullness of his satiric commentary. A phrase here and there (such as "sanctified sot"), antithetical tunes and words, the whole picture of these outcasts who can be jolly, defiant, and self-accepting—these contribute to an overall impression of implicit satire. Burns does not summarize nor directly attack; it is his dramatization that conveys the attack on conventional society.

None of the later songs appears in a grouping so complex or so organically unified as "Love and Liberty." Most develop more trivial topics of limited appeal than do the early songs; the bawdy songs in particular are mainly "sophomoric" in conception and development, except for the rather clever "Ode to Spring." These satiric songs, just a few of the over three hundred songs that Burns worked on after 1786, do clearly convey Burns's attacks. We can look at these later pieces under three headings: those with governmental and political targets; those with tunes used in the early group of satiric songs; and those "bawdy" songs that challenge conventional morality. In these Burns is using topics and techniques similar to those he developed in the early satiric songs.

In "I'll Tell You a Tale of a Wife" Burns adapts one of the tunes in "Love and Liberty." Whereas the slow tempo of "Auld Sir Symon" in the earlier poem corresponded with the bitterness of Merry Andrew's words, the tune and the new lyrics contrast ironically. Certainly the wife is upset about a problem--
Poor woman! she gaed to the Priest,
   And till him she made her complaint;
"There's naething that troubles my breast
   Sae sair as the sins o' my ___.--"(11.5-8)

It is not her complaint that provides the focus, however, but the introduction of a series of actions that illustrate Burns's mockery of the lecherous and hypocritical minister whose advice culminates with his copulation with her. The very regular rhythm of the tune gives unity to this slight narrative, as do the ABAB rhyme scheme and the repetition of ___ (the last "word" of each stanza is always left blank, but rhyme and content indicate that the word is "cunt"). Words, sounds, and tune all move forward to the observer's final judgment:

   Then high to her memory charge;
   And may he who takes it affront,
   Still ride in Love's channel at large,
   And never make port in a ____!!! (11.41-44)

The solemn pace of the melody might suit a minister's advice; but this poem's tempo and content contrast, the slow rhythm emphasizing the minister's immoral advice and actions. He not only distorts the teachings of Christ but uses the woman as a sex object.

More candid about his sexuality is the speaker in "They Took Me to the Haly Band." Burns again borrows a tune, "Clout the Caudron," from "Love and Liberty" and from "The Fornicator." The staccato emphases, the repetition of melodic motifs, the reiterated vowel sound in "Sir," and cheerful briskness accent the speaker's unconcern for any penalties threatened by the Kirk Session; his final words--"As lang as she cou'd keep the grip/I aye was m____g at her"-- flaunt his disregard for Kirk proscriptions.
Burns takes one more tune from "Love and Liberty" for later songs. He re-uses "For a' that an' a' that" as the tune of "The Bonniest Lass," in which the repeated refrain as well as straightforward invective expresses defiance of the judgments of others:

    The bonniest lass that ye meet neist
    Gie her a kiss an' a' that,
    In spite o' ilka parish priest,
    Repentin' stool, an' a' that. (11.1-4)

Defending his advice, the speaker notes that "patriarchs in days o' yore," such as King David and King Solomon, were lusty womanizers. The regular beat, repeated refrain, and rhyme scheme lead to the final point of his argument against sexual restraints: even if the "priest consign him to the deil,/As reprobate an' a' that," a man "shou'd kiss a lass, an' a' that" because the priests "ken nae mair wha's reprobate/Than you or I, for a' that." But when Burns adapts the same tune to the lyrics of the first of the "Heron ballads," another of the later poems, he uses the refrain not as an expression of scorn but as an illustration of Heron's superiority to his political opponent:

    To paughty Lordlings shall we jouk, bow
    And it against the law, that: fool
    For even a Lord may be a gowk,
    Tho' sprung frae kings and a' that.
    For a' that and a' that,
    Here's Heron yet for a' that;
    A lord may be a lousy loun,
    Wi' ribband, star and a' that.--(11.24-32)

Regardless of whether Burns adapts this tune's refrain to lyrics about sex, politics, or humanity in general, he always defies—in words and in the melody's accents—those who would restrain individual freedom of action.
Three other songs discuss the same "Heron election" although each introduces new melodies. "Fye let us a' to the bridal" is a tune which Burns labels "highly pleasing" to him because it is "simple and native" (Letters, II,210-11). The lyrics simply record a series of names and identifying remarks, most of them mocking:

And there will be ____ses doughty,  Douglasses
New-christening towns far and near;
Abjuring their democrat doings
By kissin the a__ of a Peer. (11.25-28)

He is not building to any climax and apparently arranges stanzas in no particular order. The tune, with its steady beat and repeated melodic line, helps link the stanzas, as do the rhyme scheme and parallel structures. The tune is simple and pleasant, but it neither adds to nor detracts from the satiric import of the words themselves. A more complicated piece, "Johnie B____'s Lament," satirizes the same target: incompetent and deceitful politicians. This song has a persona whose views are the reverse of Burns's, a concrete sense of time and place, and a single purpose. Such elements substitute for the absence of unifying links, such as a refrain, a consistent rhyme pattern, and a coherent organizational pattern. This slow-moving, simple tune, ending in a minor key, fits a lament; the tune's solemnity ironically contrasts with Burns's informal attack on his political foes. The last of the "Heron Ballads," however, is much more interesting and accomplished. The tune, "Buy broom Besoms," has a regular, brisk, repetitious tempo. Linked to this energetic dance is a peddler's description of what he carries:
Here's a noble Earl's
Fame and high renown,
For an auld sang--
It's thought the Gudes were stown. (11.9-12)

There is no obvious order to the descriptions, but the poem gains some unity from the single and consistent persona, a uniform rhyme pattern, repeated notes that emphasize certain words (such as "Buy Braw"), and reiteration of the melody in the first two lines of each quatrain. The cheery tune contrasts with the import of the peddler's charges that the individuals lack honor, conscience, honesty, piety. Although each of the four "Heron election ballads" delivers a clear attack, this last one illustrates the most skillful satiric merging of tune and lyrics.

Speaking of a different sort of election, Burns uses "Gilliecrankie" in "Extempore, Court of Sessions" and "The Fête Champetre." It is a very lively, fast-paced dance tune, highlighted by connected notes and varied rhythms. In "Extempore" the briskness accents the description of the two advocates' struggles with logic and ideas. Burns first describes Lord Campbell:

Till in a declamation-mist,

His argument he tint it:

He gaped for 't, he graped for 't,

He fand it was awa, man. . . .(11.3-6)

He ridicules Erskine just as pointedly, by comparing his speaking to "wind-driv'n hail" and to "torrents owre a lin [waterfall]" (11.13-14). The energetic tune supplies the interest and vitality absent from the debate between the advocates and thus stresses the poet's mockery of each man. Because of the tune's octave jumps and rapid movements up and down the scale, it seems particularly suited
to the questions that comprise the first ten lines of "The Fête Champetres." It is so cheerful a tune that it dulls any bitter or angry tone in such questions as "Come, will ye court a noble Lord,/ Or buy a score o' Lairds, man?" (11.9-10). The bulk of this song is not satiric, for the five stanzas describing a pastoral scene convey no attack of anyone. 40

In another group of Burns's satiric songs, a pastoral scene again dominates. Even the names of the tune, "The tither morn," and the song, "Ode to Spring," suggest a nature lyric. The lively tempo—aided by internal rhyme, reiteration of "Sir," and an emphatic beat—could fit a love song describing an early morning scene enacted by two lovers. Those expectations are shattered by the opening lines: "When maukin bucks, at early f____s,/In dewy glens are seen." To this vigorous rhythm, the speaker is describing the sexual intercourse between Damon and Sylvia, themselves fornicating to the rhythm of the birds' songs: "The wild-birds sang, the echoes rang,/While Damon's a_se beat time" (11.15-16). Each stanza, joined by the repeated "Sir" and a uniform rhyme scheme, leads to the climactic end: "Till Damon, fierce, mistim'd his a____./And f____'d quite out o' tune, Sir." Within this brief song, Burns has created a concrete scene and participants, recorded a sequence of events leading to a credible conclusion, ridiculed sentimental love lyrics and the banality of other poets' "odes to spring"; the sprightly tune accents the joy of the lovers and the observer while defying any who might object. This song illustrates Barke's theories about Scots bawdry:
it is "never sneering or sly or prurient or sexy or titillating. It is almost always blunt and broad and extremely coarse. . . ."[41]

Others of Burns's bawdy-satiric songs show similar features as well as mock those who voice moral or legal objections. For example, Burns combines a chorus repeating "O wha'll m_w me now, my jo," a female persona, coarse language, and the tune "Coming thro' the rye" into a criticism of the narrow-mindedness of others. The speaker, now pregnant and derided by others, bitterly asks why "our dame hauds [holds] up her wanton tail" but receives no criticism. Her major complaint, though, is that she is pregnant and there will be no one "to m_w me now." The grave, regular pace of the tune underlines her sadness tinged with anger. More cheerful is the tune "O'er the muir amang the heather," befitting the speaker's nonchalant attitude about the punishment inflicted upon fornicators ("Act Sedurant of the Session"). Instead of scorning the injustice of his situation, as the female does in "Wha'll M_w," he gleefully awaits the punishment:

> And they've provided dungeons deep,  
> Ilk lass has ane in her possession;  
> Untill the wretches wail and weep,  
> They there shall lie for their transgression.--(11.9-12)

His attitude of ridicule and unconcern is suggested by the bouncy tune, belying his pretended fear of the Session's threat: "The rogues in pouring tears shall weep,/By act Sederunt o' the Session" (11.15-16). Weeping may be what the Kirk expects, but this speaker sees only the benefits of the punishment. In fact, in the rhymes of such words as "transgression" and "session" he suggests who it is
that commits the real violation. Burns's statement about "Act Sedurant of the Session," that it is a "BAUDY-SONG to make me merry," is supported by the tune and speaker's words (Letters, II,212). Also given bawdy lyrics, "The Campbells are coming" is a gay song recounting the abuses of "Princes and Prelates and het-headed zealots" who insist on making war. The internal rhymes and the repetition of "mowe" add to the musicality, with the latter indicating Burns's emphases. The lively tune conveys Burns's disdain for warmongers while insisting how unimportant they are.42

Several features appear in most of Burns's satiric songs: frequent dependence on refrains, on a single repeated word, and on rhyme patterns that increase the effect of a melody; an ability to select melodies of varied tempos according to tone and purpose; an ability to create ironic contrasts between tempo and lyrics. Such characteristics pervade the early songs as well as the later. Consistently in each song he is able to combine the rhythms of words and melodies, a structural pattern, persona, sounds of vowels and consonants, refrains, repetitions that build cumulative effects, and satiric ideas. Burns shows early his talent in adapting the song to satiric attack. Later pieces show no pronounced differences in the use of the vehicles; furthermore, in no later song does he attempt to interrelate several songs into a unified whole as in "Love and Liberty."
CHRISTIS KIRK

Illustrating the fullness of Burns's satiric skill in the early poetry, for it is a form not used in later satires, is the vehicle we can call Christis Kirk or description/manners-painting. The poems include speakers who describe and thus shape our interpretation; but the poems' foci fall on the events, scenes, and participants, not on the characteristics or views of the speakers. Each of the three main examples of this form--"The Holy Fair," "Halloween," and "The Ordination"--uses the Christis Kirk stanza. A distinctly Scots form, the Christis Kirk is "the poetry of revelry or of festive occasions." It has also been pointed out that

The method of description is for the poet to give a total impression of the whole crowded and colorful scene of holiday merriment, confusion, horseplay, ribaldry, drunkenness, practical joking, and good-natured abandon through highlighting carefully chosen details. The poem is usually given structure and coherence through the introduction of a few rapidly sketched characters who lend specific human interest to the scene and provide the basis for a slender thread of narrative. In all cases the scene is described from the point of view of an amused spectator who takes no part in the action and is presumably on a higher social and intellectual level than the rustic merrymakers. The poem is swift-paced, with rapid and frequent transitions, full of robust movement and vivid detail.

The form effectively supports humorous satire in each of the poems in which it is used.

The first and best-known of Burns's Christis Kirk poems is "The Holy Fair," a description of the people and activities at a
large religious meeting attended by hundreds who supposedly come to
celebrate Holy Communion, hear preaching, and reaffirm their
commitment to God. One commentator has observed that "inevitably,
'The Occasion,' as it was popularly called, became a sort of de­
generated secular fair, with alcohol, religious enthusiasm, and
simple licentiousness each playing its part in stirring the
emotions of the audience." In that mixture of spiritual and
secular, Burns finds his raw material, his satiric target, and his
unifying theme. "The Holy Fair" has long won acclaim from critics,
such as this praise from David Daiches:

    The brilliance of the ambiguous imagery, the
    adroit intermingling of the carnal and the
    spiritual meanings of the same word, the
    variations of tempo and the manipulation
    of levels of suggestiveness show a high
    art: here is not spontaneous building-up
    of simple peasant emotion but a conscious
    use of the multiple resources of a complex
    verse form.

The Christis Kirk stanza and its traditional associations
give the poem certain effects. The dimeter ninth line and repeated
"day" at the end give unity to each stanza. Every stanza develops
a single topic (much like a prose paragraph) that is subordinate yet
necessary to the whole. In most stanzas Burns constructs a mini­
portrait, comprehensible by itself, vitalized by concrete details,
and potentially dramatic, such as in stanza XI:

    O happy is that man, an' blest!
    Nae wonder that it pride him!
    Whase ain dear lass, that he likes best,
    Comes clinkan down beside him!
Wi' arm repos'd on the chair back,
He sweetly does compose him;
Which, by degrees, slips round her neck,
An's loof upon her bosom paws or touches
Unkend that day.

There are sufficient details to let us visualize the acting out of this scene, the stanza builds to its own climax and dénouement, the man's sexuality takes precedence over the sermon thundering against lechery, and the preacher and the man have different definitions for "blest"—other stanzas use the same techniques to expose similar themes. Transitions between these stanza units are precluded by the poem's structure—essentially a flow of events comprehended by the speaker. Stanzas do not follow one another in the cohesive pattern observable in narrative or argument; the organizing element here is the physical and mental movement of the observer. The speaker, who remains an interested, amused, but non-participating observer, begins with his remarks about the lovely Sunday morning. Once he sees "three hizzies" walking toward him, the actual description of the fair is underway. All those at the fair embody, in varying degrees, the characteristics of these three hizzies—Fun, Hypocrisy, and Superstition. Moreover, the latter two introduce Burns's satiric targets, and "Fun" defines his tone. After he arrives at the fair, a sense of physical movement dominates, as the speaker, amid a bustling crowd, alternates between preaching tent and drinking area, between description of the overall scene and close ups of individuals. Because of his images and motion we are drawn into the scene, as if we hear people "crying out for bakes [biscuits] an' gills [drinking
vessels]" or we see "lasses, skelpen [hurrying] barefit, thrang,/ In silks an' scarlets glitter" (11.156,59-60). One event we do not see is celebration of Communion; Burns never describes the ministers administering the sacrament--the only taking of food and drink is in the areas away from the preachers, suggesting that a kind of Communion, though one not acceptable to the Kirk, has occurred.

Burns paints the ever-changing scene not just as an exercise in description but in order to accentuate the incongruities and paradoxes that are predominant at the fair. Without moral outrage or condemnation, he gives us insight to the activities and to the meaning of these activities: despite the Kirk's threats of hell ringing in their ears, participants engage in drinking, flirting, fornication--all those fleshly desires the preachers are inveighing against. The variegated scene is composed of many people who cannot deny either flesh or spirit. In effect, Burns is suggesting an old theme: there are similarities of sensation between religious enthusiasm and sexual desire. His last stanza marks the conclusion of the festivities and also reiterates the idea that piety and sensuality are intermingled:

How monie hearts this day converts,
O' Sinners and o' Lasses!
Their hearts o' stane, gin night are gane
As saft as ony flesh is.
There's some are fou o' love divine;
There's some are fou o' brandy;
An' monie jobs that day begin,
May end in Houghmagandie
Some ither day.

"Love divine" is as ambiguous as "holy ecstasy," blurring any division
between sensual and spiritual. The Christis Kirk tradition serves Burns well. Adhering to its characteristics in verse, subject, structure, and tone, he is able to show how the fair becomes a fun-filled celebration while not losing its spiritual overtones, and he is able to attack those too hypocritical and repressive to admit their fleshly needs, their human condition. Nothing else Burns does in Christis Kirk surpasses the skill here.

When Burns looks at another rustic occasion in "Halloween," he again selects Christis Kirk as the appropriate form for satiric description. Scots peasants gather on Halloween to cast spells and charms in attempts to read the future; specifically, they seek to learn the identities and characteristics of their future spouses. The subject--rustic festivities emphasizing fun, drinking, and games--is appropriate to the Christis Kirk form. No satire results from a contrast between form and subject. Rather, the satire is revealed in two other contrasts. First, there are apparent differences in language, tone, and purpose between the poem and Burns's footnotes. For example, in a footnote Burns explains

Whoever would, with success, try this spell, must strictly observe these directions. Steal out, all alone, to the kiln, and, darkling, throw into the pot, a clew of blue yarn: wind it in a new clew off the old one; and towards the latter end, something will hold the thread: demand, wha haude? i.e. who holds? and answer will be returned from the kiln-pot, by naming the christian and surname of your future Spouse.

Merran, who goes outside to try this ritual, has little success:
An' aye she win't, an' aye she swat, reached; sweated
I wat she made nae jaukin;
Till something held within the pat,
Guid L_d! but she was quakin!
But whether 'twas the Deil himsel,
Or whether 'twas a bauk-en end of a crossbeam
Or whether it was Andrew Bell,
She did na wait on talkin
To spier that night. (11.100-08)

Burns's footnotes explain the rituals succinctly and objectively as if merely recording accepted facts. The poem embellishes with Scots dialect and with depictions of flawed individuals the enactment of those facts. The poem's participants, who do believe the charms, are remarkably unsuccessful in deriving the desired information from them. In that contrast lies a second type of ridicule: there is incongruity between what seems to be (rituals that will reveal the future) and what is (because of fear, they are unwilling to complete the rituals, and thus they learn nothing about the future). Ironically, each person who tries a spell is easily scared off from completion, as was Merran. Shrieking and tumbling away, Jamie is scared by a cow wandering nearby; Meg hardly starts her ritual when the noise of a rat sends her running "thro' midden-hole [gutter at the bottom of a dung hill] an' a'" (1.196). Will mistakes a knotty timber of oak "For some black, grousome Carlin"; and Leezie is so terrified by a cow's moan that she plunges into the creek (11.203-04). All seem beset with overactive imaginations that deflect their desires for knowledge.

Structurally, the poem follows a sequence that helps give it unity. From a generalized meditation on the dream-like quality of
Halloween night, Burns moves indoors to give an overview of the festivities, as in stanza III:

The lasses feat, an' cleanly neat,
Mair braw than when they're fine;
Their faces blythe, fu' sweetly kythe,
Hearts leal, an' warm, an' kin':
The lads sae trig, wi' wooer-babs,
Weel knotted on their garten,
Some unco blates, an' some wi' gabs,
Gar lasses hearts gang startin
Whyles fast at night.

From the eighth stanza to the twenty seventh stanza, he focuses on specific rituals enacted by specific participants; linking them are two stands of commonality: each person seeks knowledge of his or her future spouse and each gains no such knowledge. The observer gives increasingly expanded details about individuals' attempts, culminating with the example that illustrates the most damaging consequences: Leezie's plunge into the stream leaves her cold and wet and ignorant of her future husband. The poem ends with the observer moving further away to give again a general view of the festivities of all the group (ll.244-50). Although some stanzas remain completed units, by extending his description of some persons' actions, he links some stanzas into groups. The major source of unity, however, is the single observer who maintains a consistent attitude and controls the movement of the poem, although he never explicitly judges what he sees. Even further removed is the writer of the footnotes, who gives just the facts, as a dispassionate researcher might. Neither labels the events silly or stupid or futile. Thus Thomas Crawford's opinion that the speaker
exhibits "elements of superciliousness, of conscious superiority, and even of thinly disguised cruelty" seems unfair. Burns describes no long-lasting or injurious consequences; he does not applaud the participants' failures or scorn their attempts. To be sure, he is not viewing the failures as tragic. The pervasive attitude the speaker does reflect is amusement—as is characteristic of Christis Kirk. For instance, there is laughter but not cruelty or condescension in these lines:

He roar'd a horrid murder-shout,
In dreadful desperation!
An' young an' auld come rinnan out,
An' hear the sad narration:
He svoor 'twas hilehan Jean M'Craw, a cow
Or crouchie Merran Humphie, limping
Till stop! she trotted thro' them a';
   Or crouchie Merran Humphie, hunch-backed
An' wha was it but Grumphie a cow
   An' hear the sad narration:
Asteer that night? (11.177-80)

Burns is gently mocking their beliefs and their fears, seeing the irony in the situations, revealed in his description of Nelly's search for stalks of oats that will show if she will be a virgin when she marries and of her near loss of the "top-pickle" (sign of virginity) while she cuddles with Rab in the shed. Burns does not coerce a certain reaction from us or state his satiric point in any direct way; he implies his ridicule through his selection of details and his examples of the participants trying to enact rituals, becoming frightened, and running away ignorant of any information.

Burns described "The Ordination" as "a poem on Mr. M'Kinlay's being called to Kilmarnock" (Letters, I,22). That terse description disguises the biting humor of his attack on the ministers' lack of sense and enormous pretense to spiritual insight: "For sense
they little owe to frugal Heav'n--/To please the Mob they hide the little giv'n" (Headnote). To describe the celebration Burns devises a persona who both records and comments on the events. The speaker--in opposition to Burns's own attitude--consistently praises the Auld Lichts and joyously celebrates their triumph (seeing one of their own ordained this day). The persona is equally delighted that "curst Common-Sense, that imp o' hell" has been routed, that the Kirk now has "Heresy . . . in her pow'r," that the new minister will "punish each transgression;/Especial, rams that cross the breed," and that learning, common sense, and morality are "packed aff to h_11" (11.10,25,42-43,106). Although the Christis Kirk practice is to make the speaker an amused, unbiased observer, Burns chooses to make him a vehicle for irony. We are easily aware of the disparity between the views of Burns and of his speaker, for the ironic reversal is simple enough. The observer's condemnation of learning, common sense, opposing ministers, and morality and his delight in the sadistic activities of the Auld Lichts make it impossible for us to share his view; we are left with no way to turn except to Burns's side, for he leaves us no room to remain disinterested bystanders.

But the poem's success does not come so much from Burns's use of the speaker as through his use of the Christis Kirk form. A serious theological ceremony is reduced to a village brawl by Burns's use of this form with its traditional associations as well as by his choice of Scots idioms, details, and images. The use of
Christis Kirk for this subject is crucial to the satiric effect:

It is the . . . same trick of popularising, bringing
down into the streets, the affairs of the great
which Burns deliberately works up into such rich
comedy . . . both in the whole idea of making over
a solemn Presbyterian ceremony into a village
festivity, and in the poetic turn whereby the
Presbyterian aggressiveness and denunciatory preaching
turn the Old Testament into a pub brawl.51

Each stanza accentuates the contrast of form and subject, thus
advancing Burns's attack on the cruelty, hypocrisy, and incompe­
tency of the Auld Licht extremists. The fourth stanza is an
especially effective example of how the verse (with its dimeter
line), the deliberately distorted imagery, the realistic diction,
and the theological overtones are combined to render biting satire:

Come, let a proper text be read,
An' touch it aff wi' vigour,
How graceless Ham leugh at his Dad, laughed
Which made Canaan a niger; negro
Or Phineas drove the murdering blade,
Wi' wh_re-abhorring rigour;
Or Zipporah, the scauldin jad, wench
Was like a bluidy tiger
I' th' inn that day.

More succinctly, his description of the group's movement from "Laigh
Kirk . . . aff to B_gb_s" [Begbies's, a tavern], where they will
"pour divine libations" in celebration (11.5,7-8), significantly
links the two elements--religious and secular--which give the piece
a unified theme. The poem gains unity also by its use of a single
voice that maintains a consistent attitude and by the fact that all
parts of the poem describe a single topic. Stanzas are arranged
in a pattern, an order apparently dictated both by chronology and
by the observer's moving eye. Woven into the fabric of the whole and holding all in coherence, however, is that theme defined by "divine libation": the religious and the secular are inseparably intertwined.

Borrowing from the European medieval tradition of the peasant brawl and more particularly from its adaptations by Scots poets, Burns has demonstrated his own skill in using Christis Kirk. Each of the satiric poems exhibiting Christis Kirk characteristics has its strengths. Even "Halloween," of limited appeal now because of its cumbersome dialect and restricted topic, has historical interest as a mocking description of a custom of Scots peasants. "The Ordination," also limited in its attraction to those not engaged in Kilmarnock's activities in 1785, is a humorous piece with larger appeal; all the specific data serves to illustrate universal flaws—hypocrisy and oppression—and to develop a long-lived theme of the intermixture of sensual and spiritual needs. The best, however, is "The Holy Fair," not so much for its specific subject matter as for its poetic values: unity, insights into human nature, carefully constructed contrasts, creation of vivid sense impressions, imagery not merely inserted but consciously used to develop more fully a theme similar to that suggested in "The Ordination." Burns controls the complicated verse form so well that is readers' loss that he used Christis Kirk so rarely.

Knowing the focus of attack is important to a discussion of a writer's satire. But our understanding of those targets depends to some degree on the form in which they are developed. In Burns's
poetry, the word "satire" does not define a form but a spirit he inserts into various poetic types: epistles, monologues, dialogues, burlesques, songs, and Christis Kirk description. In the early poems he exhibits firm control of each of these vehicles of satire. In some epistles he only includes brief passages of satiric remarks, but brevity does not obviate the clarity and intensity of the attack. Other verse letters are well-unified, steadily advancing the attack. Most of the satiric epistles share certain features: Standard Habbie used to achieve varying tones depending on the closeness of his friendship with the recipient; an audience whose approval he anticipates; his own voice rather than a mask. His decisions about personae, structure, versification, and tone reflect his desire to attack human weaknesses as lucidly and emphatically as possible. Monologues comprise one of the most impressive vehicles of his satire. Whether he writes monologue or the more specialized dramatic monologue, he seems at ease. Significantly, the second poem of this type is "Holy Willie's Prayer," long acclaimed as one of the best of all dramatic monologues. His ability to employ diverse kinds of personae to achieve varied satiric effects is a distinctive element of all the monologues. He creates some personae who are themselves the objects of satires, such as Willie and the speakers in "To a Louse" and "Tam o' Shanter." Others are the voices for Burns's attack against some other person or group, as in "Unco Guid," "Cry and Prayer," and "Libel Summons." Sometimes he uses personae ironically so that we must see through the speaker's view, as in
"A Dream" and "Address of Beelzebub," in order to discern Burns's own attitude. Also characterizing these monologues and defining their degrees of effectiveness are such elements as specific details, a concrete sense of an audience, and the sense of a scene unfolding before us. At his best, he makes us feel that we overhear a private speech; for example, Burns has so completely objectified his character that Holy Willie speaks for himself. In those totally unified in purpose and tone and characterization, we find the most telling attacks. Of his dialogues the most artistic and the most cohesive in their satiric attacks are the first two he wrote. Burns employs the dialogue infrequently, perhaps because he is not comfortable with its features. Certainly, though, in the early dialogues he shows the full range of his capabilities at creating characters, drama, on-going conversation, and unity, for the later dialogue marks deterioration in his use of the vehicle.

The poems in which he consciously imitates features of the mock-elegy, mock-celebration, and mock-encomium are few. The earliest ones demonstrate the scope of his abilities; he treats serious topics in a non-serious way by his selection of language, images, and stanzaic patterns. The later pieces show no particular improvement in his handling of the burlesque; in fact, the two angry attacks on women he disliked are his two poorest "mock" poems. The satiric songs do not represent the totality of his song-writing excellence but do illustrate that the song is so flexible an instrument in his hands that he can adapt a variety of tempos,
refrains, and versifications to satiric ideas. The satiric songs in the early group are not surpassed by the later examples. "Love and Liberty" stands alone as a complex, cohesive cantata. Within the demanding restraints of Christis Kirk he reflects his ability to inform about the customs of Scots. Into these descriptions he subtly threads ridiculing comments. Since Burns wrote no Christis Kirk poems after 1786, he shows the fullness of his achievement in the early group. He developed his satire through six forms. Viewing the vehicles individually and considering several examples of each leads to the conclusion that in the early group Burns wrote some of his best satire and that the later group--though containing some well-written poems--does not show significant changes or improvement in his ability to join satiric attack to these six vehicles. That which Burns wrote by August 1786 reveals the extent of his satiric power.
The early epistles are: "Epistle to J. R*****[ankin]," "Epistle to J. L*****k [Lapraik]," "To the Same [Lapraik]," "To W. S*****n [Simpson]," "Epistle to John Goldie," "To the Rev. John M'Math," "The Inventory," "To Mr. John Kennedy," "Extempore--to Mr. Gavin Hamilton," "A Dedication to G***** H****** [Gavin Hamilton]."

The later epistles are: "Robert Burns' Answer [to a Tailor]," "Epistle to Capt. Will. Logan," and "Epistle to Robt. Graham."


3 Standard Habbie, first used in the seventeenth century by Robert Sempill of Beltrees and later adopted by Ramsay, Fergusson, and Burns, rhymes AAABAB; the first three lines and the fifth line are iambic tetrameter or pentameter, and the fourth and sixth lines are dimeter, sometimes with an extra half foot.

4 Occasionally Burns uses other verse patterns that convey his satiric idea. For example, the four-stress pattern of rhyming couplets in "The Inventory" creates a lightly mocking tone. The refrain "Naething" emphasizes the satiric climax of each quatrain of "Extempore--to Hamilton."

5 In "Epistle to Robert Graham" Burns varies the Standard Habbie pattern, making the six lines rhyme AAABCCB, with the first, second, fourth, and fifth lines being iambic tetrameter and the third and sixth lines being iambic trimeter.


7 In his 1787 letter to Dr. Moore, Burns describes his first exposure to the folk stories about the supernatural and reveals his ambivalence about whether such stories should be believed or not (Letters, I, 106).


11 Crawford, p. 58.
Burns wrote that his detestation of ecclesiastical wrangling and of Dr. McGill's persecution prompted him to "serve them [McGill's opponents] up again in a different dish" (Letters, I, 345).

Some doubt that Burns wrote this poem; J. DeLancey Ferguson argues against it in "Robert Burns and Maria Riddell," Modern Philology, 28 (November 1930), 168-84. Even though no holograph has been traced, most, including James Kinsley, include it in Burns's canon (III, 1470-71).

Kinsley, III, 1470.

See, for example, the discussions of mock-epic elements in "Tam o' Shanter": Allan MacLaine, "Burns's Use of Parody in 'Tam o' Shanter','' Criticism, 1 (Fall 1959), 308-16; M. L. Mackenzie, "A New Dimension for Tam o' Shanter," Studies in Scottish Literature, 1 (October 1963), 89-93; James Kinsley, "A Note on 'Tam o' Shanter,''' English, 16 (Autumn 1967), 213-17; John C. Weston, "The Narrator of Tam o' Shanter," Studies in English Literature, 8 (Summer 1968), 537-50.


Merrill, pp. 5-11, 112; also influencing Burns's dialogues is a traditional Scots form--flyting--which is characterized by repartee-like exchanges between persons or inanimate objects, a personal and scurrilous tone, exaggeration, and strong rhythmical verse. See, for example, Kurt Wittig's discussion in The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1958), pp. 210 ff.

The subtitle is "A True Story"; Burns's footnote states, "This renencounter happened in seed-time 1785."

Burns said that he wrote this poem partially in memory of his own dog, Luath, who died (Gilbert Burns, quoted in Robert Chambers ed., The Life and Works of Robert Burns (London: W. and R. Chambers, 1860), I, 211-12). The other dog's name has no such relation to fact; perhaps Burns was struck by the suggestions of power, wealth, and leadership in "Cesar" [sic].


Among the early poems also, "A Dream" contains burlesque elements. The Christis Kirk stanza--traditionally describing peasant celebrations--is a form unsuited to a supposedly serious subject--celebration of the King's birthday. In effect, what the poem reveals in Burns treating frivolously what he views as a trivial subject. "Holy Willie's Prayer" can be viewed as a parody of prayer. "The Libel Summons," though basically a monologue, also illustrates Burns's burlesque of ecclesiastical and civil courts. It is "a fanciful satire parallel to the real disciplinary court of the kirk session" (Kinsley, III, 1186).

"To William Creech" seems an example of the mock-elegy in that Creech, Burns's publisher, was not dead though is described so by the poem. But the piece is sincerely praising Creech and lacks the satiric elements reflected in other burlesques discussed here. As noted above, "Tam o' Shanter" contains elements of the mock-heroic, for the minor incidents are given overtones of great significance and several characteristic elements of the epic appear. But the use of the mock-heroic is too inconsistent and sporadic to be considered the defining feature of the poem.


The Scots humorous elegy, using Standard Habbie, portrays the character and activities of some dead person, usually from the lower class, or satirizes him or "describes the place associated with him"; it contains little pathos or humor of language but has a "rollicking and vigorous" tone, an "ironic turn in the last two lines of each stanza and a repeated end-line terminating with the word 'dead.'" This information comes from John C. Weston, "An Example of Robert Burns' Contribution to the Scottish Vernacular Tradition," Studies in Philology, 57 (October 1960), 640.

Although Maria Riddell was alive, she had abruptly ended her friendship with Burns; perhaps, then, her scorn of his friendship makes her seem 'dead' to him.

Kinsley, III, 1304.
The "Scotch snap" is a short note on the beat, followed by a long note that occupies the rest of the beat; it can also be defined as a semi-quaver followed by a dotted quaver.


He uses Standard Habbie, common measure, the ballade, Christis Kirk, and Cherrie and the Slae. The latter is a fourteen-line stanza with a tripartite division: the first six lines rhyme AABCCB in iambic tetrameter; lines seven to ten rhyme DEDE in alternating tetrameter and trimeter; the last four lines, the wheel, are trimeter rhyming FGFG and serve as transition to the next stanza (Kinsley, III, 1040).

Although recitativo is defined as language expressed in the rhythm and phrasing of ordinary speech that is then set to music, Burns does not set his recitativos to melodies.

The recitativo preceding and the song by Merry Andrew are in Burns's holograph and appear in the Alloway MS but were written at a different time than was the rest of the poem (Kinsley, I, 198).

Daiches, p. 200.

Ibid., pp. 205-06.

Ibid., p. 207.


Also of a political nature are the tune and poem both named "Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation"; the slow tempo emphasizes the sadness of the speaker, yet the tune has sufficient forcefulness to shout out the charge of betrayal.


See also "Godly Girzie," set to "wat ye what I met yestreen," a tune not yet identified; reiteration of "haly" stresses the irony of Girzie's hasty yielding to lovemaking. And "Errock Brae," a woman's expression of joyous lovemaking with a Cameronian, is set to "Sir Alex. Don's Strathspey." Note bawdry also in "I'll Tell You a Tale of a Wife," "They Took Me to Haly Band," and "The Bonniest Lass."
See also "A Mauchline Wedding," which uses the Christis Kirk stanza while ridiculing two women's vanity and simulated grandeur. Also "A Dream" uses Christis Kirk, as do some recitatives in "Love and Liberty."

In the fifteenth century originals, the stanzas consisted of nine lines rhyming ABABABABB, alternating iambic tetrameter with iambic trimeter, with the ninth line being monometer; Burns makes some variations.


Grouped are stanzas 13-16, 17-20, and 24-26.

Crawford, p. 124.

CHAPTER III--SATIRIC TECHNIQUES

Understanding Burns' satiric targets and the way he develops his attacks in his six poetic vehicles adds to our insight into his satiric abilities. Knowledge of the satiric techniques he uses, the reasons he uses them, and the effects he achieves is no less essential to our understanding of his satiric achievement. Of course, all the mechanical elements of his poetic compositions serve his development of satiric themes. Three particular elements, however, are integral to Burns's accomplishments of satiric effects. He utilizes diction so as to secure satiric effects from the contrasts afforded by juxtaposing different levels of language, from the ambiguity and from the concreteness intrinsic to some words, and from the syntactical arrangements of words. Second, Burns gains satiric intensity from four related elements of versification: accentual, rhythmical, rhyming, and alliterative patterns. Using language in another way, he employs figurative language, or metaphorical imagery, to secure satiric results. The importance of these techniques to his satires is evident, for they produce effects useful to his development of attack: innuendo, ironic extravagance, anticlimax, caricature. The writer's skill with poetic techniques is what Dryden apparently had in mind when he made this differentiation:

how hard [it is] to make a man appear a Fool, a Blockhead, or a Knave, without using any of those opprobrious terms. . . . there is still a vast difference betwixt the slovenly butchering of a Man, and the fineness of a stroak [sic] that separates the Head from the Body, and leaves it standing in its place. . . .
Examination of these techniques reveals that in the early satires Burns demonstrates as much diversity and control over them as he does in the later poems.

DICTION

The language in Burns's poetry is of three kinds: Augustan and literary English, vernacular Scots, and a Scots-standard English mixture. The first, which he ordinarily reserves for serious poems, rarely appears in his satires. Speirs argues that because English is to Burns an alien language, when he abandons the familiar vernacular "he invariably loses contact with the source of his powers." Burns is at his most natural and unforced when using Scots vernacular, for that was the language of the rural society in which he lived most of his life. Use of the vernacular allows him to move freely and easily within couplets and stanzas, to place emphases where he wants them, to ignore "correct" syntactical order and strict prose logic in favor of the effects of conversational speech, and to select from a variety of richly expressive phrases. Most often, however, he intermingles in varying degrees the diction of vernacular Scots and standard English, finding advantages in the combined use of both languages: a wider range of synonyms; more flexibility in creating rhyme, alliterative, and accentual patterns; more latitude in the use of emphasis--e.g. a Scots word inserted into a predominantly English passage; juxtapositions of different levels and types of language that allow ironic contrasts; and the shock value inherent
in the use of language inappropriate for a particular subject.
Examination of the ways in which he uses diction in order to develop
his satire will include consideration of how and why he intermingles
different levels of language--literary and vernacular--and various
areas of language--legal, religious, courtly; of how he utilizes
ambiguous and concrete diction in order to insinuate or specify his
point; of how he arranges words into syntactical units so as to convey
his and his personae's attitudes. Such a discussion reveals a same-
ness in his patterns of usage throughout his satiric poetry, for the
later satires repeat the characteristic features of the early poetry
and introduce no new patterns. Since he must supply verbally the
context that gives objects significance, attributes, scale, and
quality, Burns usually selects diction and syntax that indicate the
preselected point of view from which the objects are to be seen
and thus guides us to share his valuation of the objects. Furthermore,
the impulse of his mixtures of standard English and the vernacular is
anti-poetic and conversational. His verse has a spoken quality and
broken, prosy rhythms that adhere to the natural movements of voice.
These conversational elements are predominant in his satires and
enhance the satiric attacks.

A major feature of his use of diction is the juxtaposition of
words chosen from one area or level of language with those derived
from a different area or level. He intermixes such language because
the combination develops his satiric attacks. The effect of such
juxtapositions can be muddily obscure, or they can create new and
important meanings: in his poetry Burns illustrates both effects. Furthermore, some of his contrasts in diction are developed at length; a single word, however, is often enough to communicate his satiric tone. Especially notable are the ways in which satiric oxymorons reduce certain values; when "high" and "low" language are combined, the latter tends to devalue the former, so Burns can make the point that the high was overvalued. In the early poetry his patterns of juxtaposition fall into three categories of content: "poetic" language of chivalry and aristocracy matched with realistic vernacular; legal terminology of ecclesiastical courts joined to common everyday speech; religious and Biblical phraseology combined with ordinary idioms.

Four of the early satires exemplify a similar pattern of juxtaposition: the vernacular and specific Scots plays against a more abstract, more conventional, more "poetic" diction. The contrast between and the intermingling of the two levels develop the satiric tone. Speirs adds that the effect of such a contrast is a "breaking-up of the moral and social conventions they imply." In "Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie" Burns consistently interweaves two kinds of language. He sandwiches such concrete Scots as

```
An' may they never learn the gaets,
Of ither vile, wanrestfu' Pets!', restless
To slink thro' slaps, an' reave an' steal, blackthorn; plunder
At stacks o' pease, or stocks o' kail. (11.35-38)
```

between the inflated abstractions:
Tell him, he was a Master kin',
An' ay was guid to me an' mine;
An' now my dying charge I gie him,
My helpless lambs, I trust them wi' him. (11.25-28)

and

My poor too-p-lamb, my son an' heir,
0, bid him breed him up wi' care! (11.43-44)

By having an ewe utter such grandiose thoughts he of course characterizes the poem's speaker; most important, because the language expresses more high-flown sentiments than the substance warrants, Burns emphasizes his ridicule of the banality and affectations of many elegies. Similarly, "Poor Mailie's Elegy" illustrates the inter-mingling of a generalized "poetic" diction more common to a serious elegy with a concrete idiom that depicts the commonplace acts of an animal:

Or, if he wanders up the howe,
Her living image in her yowe,
Comes bleating to him, owre the knowe,
For bits o' bread;
An' down the briny pearls rowe
For Mailie dead. (11.25-30)

The hackneyed "briny pearls" represents in miniature form the satiric point of the whole poem: many serious elegies lack an underlying reality of emotion, a lack that matches the artificial eloquence of the diction.

In contrast to the pattern of usage in the Mailie poems, such juxtaposition of colloquial Scots and aristocratic diction does not pervade or characterize "The Twa Dogs"; rather, it emphasizes Burns's attack in only one passage--Ceasar's most savage indictment of the indifferent rich (11.150-70). The larger world of "VIENNA or
VERSAILLES"—playgrounds of the wealthy—suffers "satiric depreciation" because it is juxtaposed with "the more 'immediate local world'' that Ceasar next mentions: "He rives his father's auld entails" (11.159-60). Craig points out that the line "To thrum gittarree an' fecht wi' nowt" (1.162) "moves with the effect of a sneer and then a blow . . . as though to say with a hoot of scorn, 'Fight with cattle!'" The grandeur of the aristocrats' tour "down Italian Vista" gravitates downward when the verb "startles" is added, for "startles" means "run as cattle stung by the gadfly" (1.163).

Divergent concepts clash also in "Wh_re-hunting amang groves o' myrtles" and "Love-gifts of Carnival Signioras" (11.164,168). The lust and venereal disease connoted by the first phrases in each line diminish the elevated stature of love suggested by the allusions to Venus and to upper-class ladies. There is not much subtlety in these innuendoes; explicit assault is more characteristic of Ceasar's utterances in the poem, but in these lines the suggestiveness seems to lessen the savage tone of Burns's speaker.

An extensive duality of language in "Love and Liberty" is particularly effective in showing an ironic correspondence between low life (the beggars in the tavern) and high life (the socially prominent who scorn the beggars). Burns has in effect mixed the language "of gallantry with common speech" in order to underline his social criticism. For example, the carlin sings of her "gallant" lover and of how they traveled "like lords an' ladies gay"; when he is hanged, "Adown my cheeks the pearls ran" for "now a Widow I must
mourn/The Pleasures that will ne'er return" (11.92,102,107,113-14).
Yet she is just a whore in whose mouth such glittering speech seems
incongruous; such expressions, however, may be equally stilted and
unsuitable even when voiced by an aristocrat. Other speeches and
events also stress Burns's mockery of aristocracy's arrogance and
poetic platitudes. The vocal contest between the fiddler and tinker,
both charmed by the carlin, parodies the courtly duel (11.151-56).
The second recitativo (11.49-56) parodies the classical epic's con­
ventional inclusion of the audience's response to a formal speech.7
The bard mocks the literary habit of consulting a Muse when he de­
clares "I never drank the Muses' STANK [pond],/Castalia's burn
[stream] an' a' that" and then points to his mug of ale as the source
of his inspiration (11.216-19). Juxtaposition also reveals Burns's
mockery of the Petrarchan tradition of courtly love, for phrases
such as "raptures sweet" are followed by the bard's graphic acclaim
for fornication (11.224-27). The description of a rape is shocking
when it follows an allusion to Cupid; the interwoven references to
classical myth, Italian music, and the raunchiness of the fiddler jar
the mind (11.190-92,125-28). Pervasively Burns intermingles the
language of chivalry with commonplace vernacular:
The Caird prevail'd--th' unblushing fair
In his embraces sunk;
Partly wi' LOVE o'ercome sae sair,
An' partly she was drunk:
SIR VIOLINO with an air,
That show'd a man o' spunk,
Wish'd UNISON between the PAIR,
An' made the bottle clunk
To their health that night. (11.181-89)
The intrusion of earthy realism and especially the inversion of the poetic "blushing fair" emphasize the empty pomposity of such high flown oratory. In these verses the poem places satirist and Literary Establishment on a direct collision course. Although the paradoxes suggested by his juxtapositions startle, because of their apparent absurdity, they do underscore the truth—differences between beggars and lords are mainly superficial; furthermore, the use of innuendo in developing such paradoxes gives Burns the advantage of speaking emotionally from a personal viewpoint without disturbing his apparent detachment. The juxtapositions are necessary tools in a poem that implicitly attacks the intolerant aristocracy as well as mocking the pretensions of some poets. 

Burns is drawing from another area of language for his juxtapositions in "Libel Summons." He joins legal terminology with Scots-English to create an exaggerated attack of the Kirk's Session Courts that unrealistically punish sexual offenders. The initial couplet and the concluding stanza are couched in straightforward legal language, as if the trial were serious:

In Truth and Honour's name—AMEN—
Know all men by these Presents plain:—(11.1-2)

THIS, mark'd before the date and place is,
SIGILLUM EST, PER,
B___s THE PRESES.

This Summons and the signet mark,
EXTRACTUM EST, PER
RICHMOND, CLERK.

At MAUCHLINE, idem date of June,
'Tween six and seven, the afternoon,
You twa, in propria personae,
Within design'd, SANDY and JOHNY,  
This SUMMONS legally have got,  
As vide witness underwrote:  
Within the house of JOHN DOW, vinter,  
NUNC FACIO HOC,  
GULLELMUS HUNTER. (11.159-70)

In the intervening passages he scatters Latinate legal words that sustain the fiction of a law court; usually, however, he joins language common to law courts, sex, gallantry, and coarsely common-place activities--

He who disowns the ruin'd Fair-one,  
And for her wants and woes does care none;  
The wretch that can refuse subsistence  
To those whom he has given existence;  
He who when at a lass's by-job,  
Defrauds her wi' a fr_g or dry-b b;  
The coof that stands on clishmaclavers  
When women haflins offer favors:--  
All who in any way or manner  
Distain the Fornicator's honor,  
We take cognisance thereanent,  
The proper Judges competent.--(11.16-28)

He emphasizes his mockery by contrasting the pomposity of occasional passages--

BUT, as reluctantly we PUNISH,  
An' rather, mildly would admonish:  
Since Better PUNISHMENT prevented,  
Than OBSTINANCY sair repented.--(11.99-102)--

with the realism of other passages--

Ne'er mind their solemn rev'rend facés,  
Had they--in proper times an' places,  
But SEEN an' FUN--I muckle dread it,  
They just would done as you an' WE did. (11.130-33)

Such juxtapositions prevent any misunderstanding of Burns's attitude toward the Kirk's repressive rules and toward sexual honesty.

In several of the early satiric poems Burns employs local ecclesiastical persons and events as the specific material for his
attacks of hypocrisy, arrogance, and repression. One of his major
techniques in developing those attacks is the juxtaposition of
religious and secular language. For example, in "Epistle to Rankin"
such a juxtaposition is a minor part of a poem which depends on
more direct attack. But in this epistle Burns introduces the tech­
nique of inserting Biblical parallels as a way to make his point:

O Rough, rude, ready-witted R******,
The wale o' cocks for fun an' drinkin! choice
There's monie godly folks are thinkin,
Your dreams an' tricks Will send you, Korah-like, a sinkin,
Straught to auld Nick's. (11.1-6)

The colloquial heartiness of the epistle's greeting makes it
impossible to believe that Burns is serious in his reference to
Korah—who was sent to Hell through a chasm opened at Moses' command. Instead, he seems sarcastically unconcerned about any such punish­
ment awaiting his friend or himself. Other juxtapositions of the
Biblical and secular are more fully illustrated in "The Holy Tulzie,
Willie's Prayer."

The juxtaposition of Biblical references, pastoral language,
and conventional sentiments pervades "The Holy Tulzie." Even in a
poem ostensibly lamenting two shepherds' quarrel, the bombast of "0,
do I live to see 't" is too excessive a response. When Biblical
language is used, it is so inextricably bound with pastoral/animal
activities that it does not elevate the shepherds' dispute to a
spiritual level; instead, the homely language diminishes the signifi­
cance of the religious argument. For instance, Burns implies that it
is ridiculous that the shepherds allow their flocks to taste only "Calvin's fountain-head"; one minister is ironically praised for swinging a "Gospel-club" (11.29,44). By including religious references and Biblical echoes—such as those evoked by "The twa best Herds in a' the west/That e'er gae gospel horns a blast"—Burns clarifies his parallel: the shepherds quarrelling over flocks represent two ministers disputing parish boundaries. The exaggerated sorrow, the commonplace activities of the animals, and the incompatible Biblical references are important for informing us that Burns iron­ically deviates from the attitude of grief that is voiced by his persona.

In "Address to the Deil" Burns intermingles language based on two views of Satan: that of popular folklore and that of the Bible and Kirk. References to the former dominate his delineation of Satan, for Burns draws heavily on a Scots literary and popular tradition that depicted Satan as a sly rascal, as a trickster who often disguised himself as a fisherman or laborer or kirk elder, and as an ordinary sinner whose weaknesses include girls, drink, dancing, and practical jokes. Burns draws from folklore when he inserts such phrases as "ragweed nags" that witches ride, the "eldritch croon" that the Devil makes, "water-kelpies" who work for Satan (11.50,30,69). For contrast he includes colloquialized Biblical language: the Devil is a "roaring lion" seeking prey "a' holes an' corners"; instead of the Hebrew image of Jehovah flying on the wind, Burns describes Satan "on the strong-wing'd Tempest flyin,"
Tirlan the *kirk* (11.19-20,21-22). Mentions of Eden, the Fall, Job, and Michael recall Biblical events, but Burns puts those names in contexts that show how casually he views the Devil's actions; for example, he asks if Satan recalls when he "sklented [squinted maliciously] on the *man of Uz*/Your spitefu' joke?" (11.101-02). The conversational quality of his Scots-English, his casual acceptance of a friendly companion, and the alterations he imposes on Biblical teachings about Satan imply Burns's repudiation of the Kirk's concept of the Devil.

Burns's mocking tone in "The Ordination"--purportedly the speaker's celebration of a serious theological event--is immediately defined by his choice of an idiomatic, conversational Scots-English that ironically counteracts the ostensible seriousness of his subject:

Switch to the *Laigh Kirk*, ane an' a' quickly
An' there tak up your stations;
Then aff to *Gb_ 's in a raw, a tavern
An' pour divine libations
For joy this day. (11.5-9)

The colloquial tenor of the verse calls attention to itself as if to exaggerate the contrast between the relaxed qualities of ordinary speech and the rigidity of the Auld Lichts' dogma and utterances. Moreover, some of the surprising juxtapositions demand that we see through the presumptions of the Auld Licht celebrants:

Mak haste an' turn king David owre,
An' lilt wi' holy clangor;
O' double verse come gie us four,
An' skirl up the Bangor. . . .(11.19-22)

"Clangor" is a deliberately snide way of describing the sound of psalms being sung, for not only does the word mean "loud, chaotic"
noise," but it also has associations with the harsh sounds of battle. "Skirl up the Bangor," meaning "yell out a psalm tune," is similarly derogatory in its implications. Saying "mak haste an' turn king David owre" instead of "hasten to sing a psalm" is both inappropriately informal for the ordination ceremony and vulgar. When he links commonplace details about cattle with the Auld Lichts' triumphant celebration, the effect is also ironic:

Now auld K**********, cock thy tail,  
An' toss thy horns fu' canty;  cheerfully
Nae mair thou'l rowte owre the dale, bellow
Because thy pasture's scanty;
For lapfu's large o' gospel hail
Shall fill thy crib in plenty,
An' runts o' grace the pick an' wale, choice
No gi'en by way o' dainty treat
Buy ilka day. (11.46-54)

The metaphor of the parish as a bull enjoying gospel food is coherent, but in the context of the poem it degrades the Evangelicals. Burns's tone in this passage is defined by the word "runts" which means "cabbage stalks" but as an adjective also means "stunted"; the latter meaning implies that the dogma of the Auld Lichts is somehow restricted, inadequate. Permeating the poem, this kind of paradoxical linkage helps reveal that Burns deviates from the opinion voiced by the persona and punctures the absurdity of the Auld Lichts' pretenses.

In "The Holy Fair" the constant balancing of pulpit rhetoric against the language of ordinary living supports the revelations of Burns's attitude and theme that are also exposed by his metaphorical imagery, structural pattern, direct statements, and juxtaposition of events; here all poetic elements merge into an organic whole. The
juxtaposition of words is a major technique, revealing Burns's basic contrast of "the life of nature and natural man" and "the artifices of religious hypocrisy and display." For the former he employs colloquial Scots-English, for the latter Biblical phraseology. For example, he begins one stanza with "O happy is that man, an' blest!/ Nae wonder that it pride him," then recounts in the vernacular the particular blessing--the man sits by his favorite girlfriend and rests his hand on her breast (11.91-99). Burns reserves his most telling juxtaposition for the concluding stanza: the participants "wi' faith an' hope, an' love an' drink" are singing in the drinking tent. This combination of St. Paul's three virtues with drink simultaneously elevates the latter to equal rank with the other virtues and casts doubts on Burns's interpretation of love. Whether he refers to eros or agape or both is left teasingly ambiguous. Similarly he modifies Ezekiel's promises--"A new heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I give within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"--into the ambivalent "Their hearts o' stane, gin night are gane/As saft as ony flesh is" (11.237-38). Joining the spiritual and sensual into an ambivalent mixture expands his belief that both are necessary and essentially inseparable. What he implicitly satirizes are those who refuse to see that humans encompass both.

Similar juxtapositions of diction are crucially important to the development of the monologue form and the satiric theme in "Holy Willie's Prayer." The linguistic juxtaposition of Biblical English
with colloquial, frank Scots permeates the poem and sustains the ironic contrast between Willie's view of himself and his God and the reader's understanding of his character. A prayer couched in Biblical phraseology is not unusual; nor is it incredible to conceive of a man privately addressing God in the idiom of his national language. But Willie's diction bespeaks a piety and an intimacy with God that ironically contrast with what his words actually reveal: impiety and alienation. Within the ritual pattern of the prayer, Willie attempts to reflect his dedication and nearness to God through his selection of language; but what he actually divulges in his coarse, cruel thought. Willie is in truth poorly equipped to explain himself in the Biblical parallels he voices. Paul describes proper Christian behavior when he urges that people exercise their God-given talents wisely and without conceit; Jesus praises John as a brightly shining light. These observations are echoed by Willie:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I bless and praise thy matchless might,} \\
\text{When thousands thou has left in night,} \\
\text{That I am here before thy sight,} \\
\text{For gifts and grace,} \\
\text{A burning and a shining light} \\
\text{To a' this place.}\quad\text{--(11.9-12)}
\end{align*}
\]

When he later refers to his misbehavior with Leezie's lass and Meg, Willie decides

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Maybe thou lets this fleshly thorn} \\
\text{Buffet thy servant e'en and morn,} \\
\text{Lest he o'er proud and high should turn,} \\
\text{That he's sae gifted;} \\
\text{If sae, thy hand mau n e'en be borne} \\
\text{Untill thou lift it.}\quad\text{--(11.55-60)}
\end{align*}
\]

The Old Testament abounds with accounts of God's heavy hand of
punishment on the disobedient, but the penalties are God's to assess rather than Willie's to allow. Similarly distorted by the littleness of Willie is the series of grand curses that God levels on those who disobey him: "Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shalt be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shalt be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land . . . " (Deut.XXVIII.15-20). Willie assumes the responsibility of telling God to "Curse thou his [Hamilton's] basket and his store,/Kail and potatoes" (11.77-78). When Solomon requested that God hear his prayer and supplication, he added, "When thou hearest, forgive"; when Willie asks "L__d hear my earnest cry and prayer," he asks no forgiveness and makes no confession but uses the prayer to call for God's vengeance against his personal enemies (11.79-84).18

Burns maintains this liturgical note throughout the poem; the inappropriateness of the diction becomes increasingly obvious while at the same time it helps us to penetrate Willie's projected image.

A scriptural framework, as in these passages--

For I am keepet by thy fear
Free frae them a'--(11.35-36)
But thou remembers we are dust,
Defil'd wi' sin.--(11.41-42)

encompasses his confessions expressed in the vernacular--

But yet--O L__d--confess I must--
At times I'm fash'd wi' fleshly lust . . . . afflicted
O L__d--yestreen--thou kens--wi' Meg--
Thy pardon I sincerely beg! (11.37-38,43-44)

He divulges his deviation from sense in the grotesquely inhuman image expressed in an amalgam of Biblical English and colloquial Scots:
When from my mother's womb I fell,
Thou might hae plunged me deep in hell,
To gnash my gooms, and weep, and wail,
In burning lakes. . . . (11.19-22)

"The agonised recollection of defeat" in

O L_ d my G_d, that glib-tongu'd Aiken!
My very heart and flesh are quaking
To think how I sat, sweating, shaking,
And p_ss'd wi' dread,
While Auld wi' hingin lip gaed sneaking
And hid his head! (11.85-91)

functions as a foil to the Biblical invocations expressed in the next stanza. Other passages unveil a union of self-pity, Biblical parallels, pompous self-opinion, and sanctimonious pretense (11.55-60). Burns carefully weaves these juxtapositions into the fabric of the poem and the speaker; incongruous amalgams of language serve as one of the poet's principal techniques for letting Willie condemn himself as an arrogant, intolerant, unpenitent hypocrite.

In his later poetry Burns continues to utilize the satiric effects available through juxtapositions of different kinds of language. Only a few poems juxtapose realistic idiom with religious and Biblical phraseology; but because Burns writes the bulk of his ecclesiastical satires before the end of 1786, it is understandable that the language of religion appears less frequently. Most of the juxtapositions contrast the vernacular with "poetic" and high-flown language. Rather than adding new dimensions to his technique of letting contrasts in diction develop satire, Burns in the later poetry seems less skilled at organically linking juxtapositions of language with satiric idea; the contrasts in diction are less crucial
to his development of satire than they are in many of the early
satires.

Although not so intrinsic to the total success or so skill-
fully used as in "Holy Willie's Prayer" or "The Holy Fair," merging
of religious/Biblical phraseology with realistic vernacular appears
in some later poems. In "Reply to a Tailor" Burns records a
fictitious encounter with a Kirk elder; Burns vernacularizes Biblical
language (Matt. V.30) in order to highlight his mockery of Kirk
dogma:

"Geld you!" quo' he, "and whatfore no,
"If that your right hand, leg or toe,
"Should ever prove your sp'ritual foe,
   "You shou'd remember
"To cut it aff, an' whatfore no,
   "Your dearest member." (11.49-54)

Biblical borrowings give a distinctive intonation to "New Psalm,"
Burns's mocking celebration of the monarch's recovery from madness;
the inappropriateness of the Biblical diction to his subject divulges
the poet's irony in this purported equating of King George III and
King David. Echoing Psalms and Isaiah, he urges:

O, SING a new Song to the L____!
   Make, all and every one,
A joyful noise, ev'n for the king
   His Restoration.--(11.1-4)

   Now hear our Prayer, accept our Song,
   And fight thy Chosen's battle. . . . (11.37-38)²⁰

In order to express his disgust for the King's enemies and supporters,
he selects demeaning Biblical passages: the King's opponents are
"sons of Belial" and his followers are "ravening wolves."²¹ He even
sneaks in an attack on the Kirk's method of selecting parish ministers
when he ironically urges: "Consume that High-Place, PATRONAGE,/From off thine holy hill" (11.33-34). The sustained juxtaposition of spoken idiom and Biblical language provides a coherence to "New Psalm"; by inserting Biblical texts into inappropriate contexts, Burns transmits his antipathy toward the King, political ministers, and the Kirk.

In three of the later bawdy poems, he emphasizes his defiance of the Kirk's proscriptive view of sexual pleasures. Into one frankly coarse account of copulation he intrudes phrases that would better suit a minister's sermon: "diviner blisses,/In holy ecstacy," "Heavenly joys before me," and "Rapture trembling o'er me" ("O Saw Ye My Maggie," 11.27-28,33-34). These words, however, record a male speaker's sexual excitement over a woman; the incongruity between the language and its context implies Burns's repudiation of Calvinist decorum. The pronouncement "I thought I was in heaven" would usually meet with ecclesiastical approval, but not when voiced in the context of "The Ploughman" (1.24): the female is announcing her intense joy during copulation. In "I'll Tell You a Tale of a Wife," a woman, labelled "a Whig and a Saunt," speaks to a priest about her eroticism (1.2). His advice is seemingly appropriate, for he mouths Calvinist belief: he says that erotic passions are "Beelzebub's art" and "mair sign of a saunt"; orthodox Faith, rather than deeds, "covers the fauts o' your ___" and "you" are "Elekit and chosen a saunt" (11.17-18,23-24,29-30). The juxtaposition of his platitudes with her vulgar explanation of her problem--"the sins o' my ___"--prepares for the priest's solution:
And now with a sanctify'd kiss
Let's kneel and renew covenant:
It's this--and it's this--and it's this--
That settles the pride o' your ___.--(11.33-36)

In each of the three poems, Burns makes ecclesiastical language stand in contrast to more vulgar speech and deeds; the contrast achieved by language conveys his attack of the same target: the repressive and hypocritical clergy. Burns is again underlining a concept that is more fully developed in "The Holy Fair"—the inextricable blending of spiritual and sensual elements, despite what the Kirk may preach.

More common in the later poetry is the contrast of "poetic," conventional, and literary diction with the realistic idiom of colloquial speech. Such a juxtaposition creates incongruous effects and helps to define Burns's mocking tone. In "The Brigs of Ayr," however, his juxtaposition of poetic and ordinary speech is so poorly handled that it creates confusion; the neoclassical didacticism and colloquially phrased satire do not create a meaningful contrast, a unified totality, or a clear expression of Burns's intent. Burns forces into the prologue and epilogue the language of a sentimental philosophical piece:

The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flow'r in field or meadow springs;
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the Robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree. . . .(11.36-43)

In their conversation the two bridges speak a vernacular untouched by such glittering phrases:
Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense,
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime,
Compare wi' bonie Brigs o' modern time? (11.97-102)

In the other pieces in which contrast of language appears, Burns does make juxtaposition aid his attack.

The variety of diction in "Tam Samson's Elegy" helps identify it as a comic elegy. "Poetic" phrases suitable to a serious elegy permeate the poem but are constantly devalued by their association with words drawn from masonry, sports, hunting, and fishing. For example, the language of masonry--"level," "bevel," and "bead"--dominates the third stanza; Burns ostensibly elevates that language by adding elaborate phrases: "mystic wofu'" and "the tears will revel,/Like ony bead." The next stanza begins with a personification suitable to didactic poetry--"When Winter muffles up his cloak"; he undermines that formal opening by filling subsequent lines with curling terms: "curlers," "cock," "guard," "draw," "wick a bore," "rink," and "hog-score" (11.19-30). The interjection of a Biblical allusion--"up the rink like Jehu roar"--adds another incompatible element, as do such conventional expressions as "safe the stately . . . sail," "bedropp'd wi' crimson hail," and "dark in [Death]" (11.27,31-35). By juxtaposing the vernacular accounts of Tam's commonplace activities with literary phrases that elevate him to noble stature, Burns creates intentional incongruity:

There, low he lies, in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast
Some spitfu' muirfowl bigs her nest,
To hatch an' breed. . . .(11.73-76)
Burns is not satirizing Tam as a man or a sportsman any more than he mocks Mailie for being a sheep; instead he is using the language of Augustan literary effusions in order to parody the insincerity and triteness characteristic of many serious elegies.

A similar kind of juxtaposition appears in "Epistle to Captain Logan," Burns's boisterous letter to a fellow carouser. Any expectation aroused by "Hail" is dashed by the vernacular conclusion of the first line: ". . . thairm-inspirin, rattlin Willie!" References to Fortune and Fancy are conventional but not when the abstractions are characterized as a horse and a dog; "this vile Warl" is a trite expression that is given new value when juxtaposed with Burns's suggestion that Logan dance and drink his way to joy. Pervasive use of musical terminology, personified abstractions, and even a line of French give the poem a literary cast that is overturned by his juxtaposition of these terms with idiomatic accounts of the everyday activities of two rambunctious bachelors.

Literary diction might be expected in a poem with the word "Ode" in its title; but in "Ode on Mrs. Oswald" and "Ode to Spring" the poetic diction gives an aristocratic aura that is emphatically depreciated by the addition of negative and obscene expressions. In "Ode on Mrs. Oswald" Burns utilizes the traditional three-part pattern of the Pindaric ode as well as flowery language and imagery; but the promise of the grandiose diction is inverted by juxtaposition with harsh epithets. For example, Burns asks "who in widow weeds appears,/ Laden with unhonoured years" (11.4-5). The single word
"unhonoured" colors the stanza and establishes the savage tone.

Conventional phrases of praise are distorted:

View the wither'd beldam's face--
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of Humanity's sweet melting grace?
Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows,
Pity's flood there never rose.
See those hands, ne'er stretch'd to save,
Hands that took--but never gave. (11.7-13)

In this piece Burns distorts an elegy's usual sentiments by explicitly negating conventional elegiac phrases. Even though the juxtaposition itself is simplistic in conception, his language leaves no doubts as to his target and tone. Burns includes in "Ode to Spring" the diction expected in a praise of spring and young love: "dewy glens," "birds, on boughs," "leaves sae green," "wandering rill that marks the hill,/And glances o'er the brae," "a bower where many a flower/Sheds fragrance on the day," etc. Because of the concentration of so many pastoral words Burns accents his parody of an overworked genre and defies the pastoral's usual description of young love.

Burns challenges conventionality and gains the originality he sought by juxtaposing the lovely lyrics with vulgarisms: "at early f____s," "his p__o rise . . . to r_ge_r Madame Thetis," "mistim'd his a__,/And f___'d quite out o' tune." The vulgar is not elevated by combination with the pastoral; rather, the few vulgarisms degrade the rhetorical extravagances and enunciate Burns's mocking tone.

Two other later poems--"Johnie B____'s Lament" and "Epistle to Robert Graham"--integrate diction drawn from the realistic vernacular and the literary (the events of battle are treated in courtly
and chivalric terms). Burns's juxtaposition of different types of language characterizes the persona in "Johnie B's Lament" but does little to clarify that Burns speaks ironically. The speaker describes his sorrow over one candidate's loss in an election; using generalized language drawn from battlefield actions he seeks to give grandeur to the event:

Earl G____y lang did rule this land
With equal right and fame;
Fast knit in chaste and haly bands
Wi' B____n's noble name.--(11.9-12)

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Unless one knows from other sources, however, which side Burns favors and knows that he had earlier made caustic remarks about Bushby, the poem would not clarify Burns's position. The poetic language is not so excessive or overdone as to confirm Burns's ironic reversal. In contrast, the objects of satire in "Epistle to Graham" are clarified within the context of the poem (irrespective of our knowledge of external events) by explicit statements and by the contrasts in diction. Early in the poem Burns outspokenly voices his antipathy to the Duke of Queensberry:

I'll sing the zeal Drunlanrig bears, the Duke's estate
Wha left the all-important cares
Of fiddles, wh_res and hunters. ... (11.7-9)

The language--that common to chivalric military endeavors and mythology matched with realistic idiom--also conveys his attack of both Whigs and Tories. The exaggeration of the bombast is emphasized by his insertion of Scots words:

What Verse can sing, or Prose narrate,
The butcher deeds of bloody Fate,
Amid this mighty tulzie! quarrel
Grim Horror girt'd; pale Terror roar'd, grinned
As Murder at his thrapple shor'd; throat; threatened
And Hell mix'd in the brulzie.--(11.61-66)
These two poems, both satirizing the flaws of politicians, illustrate the difference between organically functional juxtaposition ("Epistle to Graham") and incidental contrast that adds little to the attack ("Johnie B's Lament"); it is not coincidental that the former is the more skillfully crafted poem.

Of all the later poems "Tam o' Shanter" is most like the early ones in which juxtaposition in diction does not merely aid Burns's development of satire but is crucially necessary to his revelation of satiric target and theme. The contrasting dictions, interwoven throughout the poem, reveal the duality of the speaker, who is (along with the Scottish Establishment that has tried to mold him) a principal target of mockery. Thomas Carlyle's perceptive insight--"Tam o' Shanter" is "not so much a poem, as a piece of sparkling rhetoric"--pinpoints one of Burns's major satiric techniques. The story line is thin, the contrasting styles seem to obviate unity, and the adventures of a Scots farmer are apparently unimportant; Burns's triumph is in the rhetoric, especially his manipulation of diction. The speaker's vacillation between Augustan literary English and the realistic vernacular coincides with alterations in his attitude toward Tam's adventures and himself. Burns has his speaker principally use colloquial idiom, both when reflecting his empathy for Tam's experiences and when detachedly setting the scene. Juxtaposed with the vernacular are words drawn from an elaborate and formal vocabulary and some conventional artifices that burlesque the high style of serious didactic poetry, reveal the division in the
speaker's mind between the worlds of Scots peasants and eighteenth-century men of letters, and allow him to pose as a frowning moralist.

The speaker begins by briefly sketching the cozy, congenial scene at the tavern; the Scots passage concludes with four lines of English that first warn us of his moralistic bent (11.9-12). This initial tendency foreshadows the speaker's occasional interjection of prescriptive counsel amid idiomatic accounts of the events. In Scots-English he soon imposes more high-minded advice: "O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise, / As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!" (11.17-18). Burns mocks this sermonizing note by juxtaposing with it the next lines' idiomatic description of commonplace activities.

When the speaker for the third time (11.33-36) interposes moral strictures, we realize that Burns is deliberately developing a linguistic contrast in order to reflect the speaker's divided personality; Burns is also announcing his intent to parody the sermonizing style of didactic poetry. Thus when the prologue ends--

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet, makes me cry
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises! (11.33-36)--

Burns has described not only Tam's situation, his wife's angry warnings, and the prelude to the ride; he has also identified the divided mind of his speaker.

The racy idiom describing Tam's joy at the tavern is juxtaposed against abstractions that delay the narrative, stress the moralistic side of the persona, and parody the serious style of the epic:
Care, mad to see a man sae happy,  
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy:  
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,  
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:  
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,  
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious! (11.53-58)

The profundities of stock poetic phrases—"lades o' treasure," "minutes [that] wing'd," "Kings may be blest," and "o'er a' the ills o' life victorious"—contrast with the colloquial idiom, the "homey, intimate quality" of the preceding passage (11.37-52). The comparison of a drunken peasant to "Kings" and the apostrophe to "Care"—a favorite device of serious eighteenth-century poetry—are shockingly inappropriate. The passage, however, is only a prelude to the more extravagant comparisons in the next passage's bombastic English:

But pleasures are like poppies spread,  
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;  
Or like the snow falls in the river,  
A moment white--then melts for ever;  
Or like the borealis race,  
That flit ere you can point their place;  
Evanishing amid the storm.--(11.59-66)

Consciously using poetic diction, the speaker seeks with his elaborate similes to elevate the significance of the events and further illustrates his inability to find a style consistently appropriate to the "low" tale he records. The language is glaringly artificial, projecting a sham elegance and affected posturing—as if to parade his superiority to lowly Tam and homely Scots. Daiches argues that this "deliberately 'fancy' English" draws "attention to the literary quality of the utterance" and sets "the sternness of objective fact against the warm, cosy, and self-deluding view of the
The accumulation of similes, the artificial structure, and the clumsy rhetorical framework parody grandiose poetics" and "fine writing"; it is ironically incongruous that stylistic features of didactic, bombastic poetry describe the predicament of "an obscure Scots tenant farmer." After the four similes, the speaker reverts to a prosy vernacular: "Nae man can tether time or tide;/The hour approaches Tam maun ride" (11.67-68). Such conjunctions of Scots idiom with elaborate and formal diction not only confirm the speaker's split mind but also stress Burns's intent to parody the stiffly grand style. As the speaker moves further into the tale, however, he uses more Scots dialect, such as in his specifically detailed account of the objects on the Devil's altar:

A murderer's banes in gibbet airns; fetters
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns; babies
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape; mouth
Five tomahawks, wi' blude red-rusted;
Five scymitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The grey hairs yet stack to the heft. . . .(11.131-40 ff.)

In these passages also he concentrates most of the poem's references to traditional Scots lore about witches, such as fear of bogles [ghosts], the presence of witches at a kirk, the shape of the Devil, the offerings by witches to the Devil, the lights that corpses hold, and their inability to cross water. The speaker apparently believes in witches just as much as superstitious Tam does. In fact, the persona is so emotionally involved in the scene and incidents that
he does not return to any didactic or literary note until he is describing the young witch's dance: "But here my Muse her wing maun cour [lower];/Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r" (11.179-80). The allusion to his Muse is brief, something of an afterthought; he immediately returns his attention to the dance rather than expounding in formal English about Muses and literature.

The next major interruption of the adventure occurs at its peak of intensity—when Tam is being chased by the witches. A passage that parodies the epic simile interrupts the narrative, holds the curious reader in suspenseful uncertainty, and shocks with its extravagance:

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke, commotion
When plundering herds assail their byke; swarm
As open pussie's mortal foes, women
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When 'Catch the thief!' resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreech and hollow. (11.193-200)

The passage begins and ends with Scots idiom, but the middle lines are standard English; the language itself is not inflated or artificially elaborate, but the impetus to imitate the epic simile is inappropriate in the context. Perhaps the speaker is trying to keep both us and himself from becoming so involved with Tam that we lose objectivity and a sense of superiority to this drunken lecher; perhaps the narrator feels more comfortable with his obvious concern for Tam if he can pretend the farmer has the stature of the heroic warriors for whom epic poets construct extravagant similes. Despite the homeliness of the comparisons, using the triple similes is an
"exaggerated imitation of a style which is normally associated with dignified, serious poetry" rather than with an obscure farmer. 31

After the vernacular records the breathless chase and the happy escape of Tam, the narrator rises for the last time to a moralizing posture. The ending passage is prosaic, understated, and over-simplified:

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys o'er dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare. (11.219-24)

Unintentionally parodying Scottish pulpit rhetoric and imitating the moralizing style of eighteenth-century didactic poetry, 32 the speaker returns to his pose as a detached adviser; the moralistic fervor, however, cannot override his demonstrations of intense interest in the witches' scene and Tam's successful escape.

The speaker is unable to find and maintain a consistent or appropriate style for the events. The contrast between his inflated rhetoric and the lowliness of the events imbues the poem with tension and ironic effect. The persona cannot sustain vapid pomposity or imitations of elaborate diction; he cannot simply relax into a use of the Scots idiom of his environment. The poet uses his speaker's divided personality for two main satiric ends: to parody the extravagances and artificialities of much didactic poetry; and to attack the Establishment that proscribes yielding to natural instincts of sympathy, fear, appreciation of the beautiful.
In both the early and later satires Burns utilizes the inherent satiric power in juxtaposition of diverse levels of language. Incongruous associations help to characterize a persona who speaks for Burns, aid in pinpointing the specific individual(s) who embodies flaws that the poet attacks, and clarify his ironic reversal of a persona's attitude. Burns repeats two patterns of juxtaposition: contrast of the vernacular with formal, poetic, literary diction; opposition of the vernacular to religious and Biblical language (conjunction of legal terminology with colloquial idiom is atypical, appearing only in "Libel Summons"). His tendency to rely on disparity in diction as a tool for developing satiric themes is more common in the early poetry, where it is also more organically merged with other satiric elements and more crucial to revealing the satiric tone. Linguistic disjunction is significant to our understanding of his ironic tone in "Epistle to Graham" and "Tam o' Shanter"; but in other late poems the juxtapositions are either subordinated to other techniques or so awkwardly integrated that they damage the fabric of the attack. Among the early pieces, such as "The Ordination" and "The Holy Tulzie," the antithetical dictions are necessary for informing us of the discrepancy between the attitudes of the persona and of the poet. Holy Willie divulges the depth of his arrogant hypocrisy by his diversity in language. The whole of "The Holy Fair" depends on pervasive intermingling of contrasting languages, motifs, imagery, and events with structure, persona, and Christis Kirk stanzas.
With juxtapositions in language Burns supports and develops the attacks in his poetry. He also furthers his satiric attacks by adding ambiguous words, by including explicitly demeaning words, and by achieving a necessary tone and focus through the use of concrete diction. He often chooses words with emotionally neutral denotation but equivocal connotation, such as "leather"; sometimes he leaves no doubt of the abusive nature of his attitude, as when he charges "Calvin's Sons" with having "skulls [that] are a storehouse of lead" ("The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," 1.21). Redefining a word that becomes insulting because of its context is also a feature of his verbal expressions, such as "muckle wame [big stomach]" in "Second Epistle to Lapraik" (1.64). In both early and later poems these features of his language expose his satiric point and characterize different kinds of personae.

In some of the early poems he deliberately includes words with dual meanings, at least one of which has satiric bite. When Burns says the women in "Mauchline Wedding" are "bony Birdies," he might have meant these conceited females were "handsome ladies" on their way to a wedding; or perhaps he wished to emphasize his mockery of their vanity by calling them "fine-looking birds" (1.31). When he relates in "Halloween" that Nell almost lost the "tap-pickle" (the grain at the top of a stalk of oats) while she was cuddling with a man, he could simply be stating facts (11.52-54). More likely, he is punning on the sexual implications, for this "top-pickle" is a crucial ingredient in a ritual that reveals whether
or not the female goes to her marriage a virgin. The speaker enthusiastically welcomes to the ordination celebration "Ye wha leather rax [stretch] an' draw,/Of a' denominations" ("Ordination," ll.3-4). Although leather workers could be part of the festive group, the poem's description of the Auld Lichts' method of celebrating--by getting drunk and by torturing their opponents--suggests that Burns has deliberately put ambiguous words into the speaker's mouth. "Leather" does refer to hides and skins (of opponents to Auld Lichts as well as of animals) but also means "pudendum." The idea of sexual enthusiasts at the celebration accords with Burns's ironic temper. By the implications in "soon we grew lovingly big" he ridicules the "feminine whig" who futilely attempts to disguise her erotic interests ("Extempore--Hamilton," 1.35). Dual interpretations of "well spread looves [palms]" support the explicit attacks of the hypocritical and incompassionate ecclesiasts in "Dedication to Hamilton" (1.62). The palms could be placed together in a prayerful position; or they could be held open and ready to receive gifts.

Whereas the preceding poems contain isolated passages of ambiguity that help sustain satiric tone, in three of the early poems Burns expands the pattern of ambivalent language. The persona concludes "A Dream" with an apparent blessing of the royal family, beginning with the conventional "God bless you a'!" But the remainder of the stanza is so equivocably phrased that it can be variously interpreted:
Ye're unco muckle dautet; fondled
But ere the course o' life be through,
It may be bitter sautet: salted
An' I hae seen their coggie fou,
That yet hae tarrow't at it, hesitated
But or the day was done, I trow
The laggen they hae clautet dish or vagina; scraped
Fu' clean that day. (11.129-35)

On the surface the passage seems to contain advice that is simultaneously trite, pessimistic, and concerned. But some words--"dautet," "coggie," "laggen," and "clautet"--suggest a coarser meaning: you are fondled now, but one day your full womb will not produce a new creation but will instead be scraped out and the creation aborted. The ambivalence of this conclusion extends the poem's dominant tone: the persona constantly speaks apparent praise while simultaneously denigrating the family.

Much of Burns's diction in "Libel Summons" seems based on his desire to incorporate double entendres into the fabric of attack. In a poem that celebrates sexual intercourse, sneers at Kirk attempts to repress sexual desire, and chastizes those too cowed by social pressure to admit fornicating, the sexual puns are appropriate. He is both specific and suggestive in such lines as

That ye hae bred a hurly-burly
'Bout JEANY MITCHEL's tirlie-whirlie,
And blooster'd at her regulator
Till a' her wheels gang clutter-clatter.--(11.63-66)

"Tirlie-whirlie" means both "plaything" and "pudendum"; use of this word sets the tone of a passage in which Burns is unmistakeably--though not explicitly--describing copulation. His point is just as clear when he says that Dow gave her "canister a rattle," that he
was playing "at heads and tails," and that he gave "mony a hytch [thump] and kyrel [bang]" "at her byvel [gable or pudendum]"
(11.87,82,91-92).

In "Love and Liberty," as in "A Dream" and "Libel Summons,"
Burns makes his satiric point indirectly, through suggestiveness in language. Much of the ambiguous language in this poem characterizes the participants, describes them as if they are members of acceptable society; thus he slyly mocks the Establishment that scorns the beggars. For example, the soldier's doxy is labelled "the martial CHUCK" (1.55). "Chuck" means "sweetheart" or "dear," though, according to Grose's Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue, as a verb the word means "to show a propensity for a man." The term suits the woman in both senses, although polite society would call their women "chucks" in the first sense of the word. "Martial"--identifying her as a follower of the army--is appropriate in denotation, but is, as Crawford notes, too inflated a word for her, for it is more the language "of patriots and men of letters." This doxy then sings of her delight in "proper young men"; since "proper" means "handsome," "elegant," "fine," she suggests her preferences for well-mannered gentlemen--with whom it would seem she has little in common. But since the propensity of gentlemen to engage with whores is well documented, the woman's words are used by Burns not so much to mock her grandiose idea of her lovers as to deride the aristocrats who use whores selfishly and hypocritically. One of the carlin's fondest memories is the "guid
Claymore [sword]" her dead lover had "down by his side"; with it, she says, "the ladies' hearts he did trepan [ensnare]" (11.98-99). The obvious sexual quibble is appropriate to her character, although the indirection with which she refers to his sexual prowess suggests that she attempts to improve her image. The fiddler's wooing song contains a similar ambiguity—he promises the carlin he will "kittle hair on theirms," meaning both "tune up or play fiddle strings" and "tickle and excite the intestines." Since the phrase is preceded by his mention of "heav'n o' charms"—a common sexual metaphor—the sexual implications seem intentional (11.145-46). The bard also utters sexual puns after he calls it "a mortal sin" to frustrate will (meaning sexual desire); he insists that personal inclinations decree "how long the FLIE MAY STANG" ("flie" refers to sexual desire and to the aphrodisiac Spanish fly). Then the bard promises "My DEAREST BLUID" to serve the ladies, for they "hae put me deft,/They've ta'en me in" (11.228-29,234); "blood" can refer to seminal secretions and "taking one in" means women have made him wildly excited and have sexually received, him. These sexual entremêes suggest the beggars' defiance of Establishment-prescribed rules of sexual behavior and allow Burns to strike at those rules which seem unnatural as well as deceitful. The Kirk, chief proponent of the restrictive rules Burns challenges, is more specifically degraded by the tinkler—he swears fealty to the carlin not with an oath on the Bible but by the tankard of whiskey he holds—and by Merry Andrew, who says he "was abus'd i' the kirk,/For
towsing a lass i' my daffin" (11.177-78). Since Merry Andrew's statement can refer to his "rumpling a girl during a flirtation" or to his "indelicate handling of her," Burns's equivocable language suggests that the Kirk overreacted when it censured Merry Andrew. Much of the diction in "Love and Liberty" is ambivalent, but Burns's point is usually lucid once one realizes the several possible definitions of words he selects.

Burns's use of precise, concrete language to make explicit his attitude toward someone or an event is of a different nature. In many poems he is utilizing the kinds of concreteness that W. K. Wimsatt labels "the minimum concrete or specific substantive style" and "the extra-concrete, detailed, or more than specific style." The concrete diction, especially if expressed in the vernacular, creates a tone that contrasts with the "usual" attitude toward some subjects and aids Burns in developing levels of irony.

The persona's concrete description of Death in "Death and Doctor Hornbook" makes him seem a real presence whose conversation with the speaker is credible:

An awfu' scythe, out-owre ae shouther,  shoulder
  Clear-dangling, hang;
A three-tae'd leister on the ither  trident
  Lay, large an' lang.

Its stature seem'd lang Scotch ells twa,
The queerest shape that e'er I saw,
For fient a wame it had ava,  little belly; at al
  And then its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp an' sma'
  As cheeks o' branks. (11.33-42)

Although this account draws on traditional descriptions of Death, the
concrete language and the speaker's casual approval of his acquaintance create two major effects: Death is localized, shrunk to "kailyard dimensions"; the Kirk's depiction of him as awesome and terrifying is reduced to nothingness. Burns's mocking attitude toward the Kirk's trepidation about Death is reinforced by the dialogue he ascribes to Death:

"Folk maun do something for their bread,
"An' sae maun Death.

"Sax thousand years are near hand fled
"Sin' I was to the butchering bred. . . ." (11.71-74)

Death is as casually understated about his profession as a brickmason might be. Throughout the poem, in fact, Burns makes Death speak so simply and naturally that he seems a genial, familiar companion. A similar intonation pervades "Address to the Deil," in which the specific diction creates not only a vivid picture of "Auld Clootie" and his deeds but defines Burns's comfortable acceptance of the Devil as recorded by folklore. Even his expressions of fear lack convincing weight:

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
When wi' an eldritch, stoor, quiaick, quiaick, harsh
Amang the springs,
Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,
On whistling wings. (11.43-48)

The tone of a relaxed, casual chat with a friend, "Auld Nickie-ben," predominates. The detailed language gives a precise description of the Devil; the vernacular and the realistic details define Burns's comfortable receptivity and establish his hostility to the Kirk's overstated apprehensions. Even a single word can speak volumes about Burns's attitude toward his subject, as in "The Fornicator."
When describing the Kirk's punishment, he says he stands there "with rueful face and signs of grace" (1.17). "Signs" subtly indicates what the remainder of the poem more explicitly records: he is only pretending to repent. Furthermore, he implies that the Kirk is interested only in outward shows of penitence and cares little about internal awareness.

In three other poems in which the speaker is a fiction rather than Burns himself, the language aids his revelations of their characters—both those with whom Burns agrees and those he uses ironically. Holy Willie, who professes complacent assurance about Election, unconsciously divulges his fear of Hell by his verbs—"plunged," "gnash," "weep," "wail," "yell"; furthermore, his verbs dramatize his relish for vengeance—"confound" and "blast"—and his nervousness at the Kirk meeting—"quaking," "sweating," "shaking," "p'ss'd," "sneaking," and "hid" (11.20-24, 63-64, 86-90). In "Author's Cry and Prayer" the speaker projects himself as a lowly peasant hesitant to criticize the "great" lords of Parliament:

Does any great man glunch an' gloom?
Speak out an' never fash your thumb! (11.25-26)

Ne'er claw your lug, an' fidge your back, ear
An' hum an' haw. . . . (11.33-34)

The specifics of his idioms make him sound as if he is just too ignorant to recognize the sarcasm in his label for the Fox-North Coalition—"mixtie-maxtie, queer hotch-potch"—or the innuendo of his ostensible praise of the Members of Parliament: you who "dously [prudently and decorously; also, soberly] manage our affairs"
His concluding remarks epitomize his pose as a common petitioner:

God bless your Honors, a' your days,
Wi' sowps o' kail an' brats of claise, rags; clothes
In spite of a' the thievish kaes thieves
    That haunt St. Jamie's!
Your humble Bardie sings an' prays
    While Rab his name is. (11.139-44)

The image of the speaker as a naive, uneducated, common peasant is significant in the success of Burns's monologue; while making his persona express his attack through the implications in his specific language and maintaining a temperate tone that forestalls any angry response from the audience, Burns makes his satiric points. The realistic vernacular of "To a Louse" is similarly suitable to the persona and to the subject matter: an apostrophe to a louse by a gullible rustic in generalized, Augustan English would create an unintentionally ludicrous picture. In depicting the scene, Burns finds a ready flow of expressive phrases in the vernacular. All the verbs—not drawn from books but from life—are exactly right for describing the louse's movements and the persona's changing attitudes toward the vermin. Moreover, Bentman argues that Burns employs "provincial words, picturesque spelling, and conversational sounding diction" as a means to "create an ironically oafish speaker, one who looks at the world with wide-eyed astonishment and little apparent understanding." Such a projection of the persona's character is crucial to the dramatic monologue form used here and to Burns's unfolding of all the targets of his satire. It is not only Jenny's pride and pretense that are mocked but also the
speaker's naive belief that correction of flaws necessarily evolves from awareness of them.

Burns also uses specific diction to characterize the nature of those whom he and his personae attack. The forcefulness of Ceasar's verbs in "The Twa Dogs" pronounces Burns's indictments:

Poor tenant-bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole a factor's snash; endure; abuse
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear,
He'll apprehend them, point their gear, seize
While they maun stand, wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble! (11.95-100)

Ceasar's use of concrete idiom obviates some of the disadvantages of attacking the general activities of a large, undifferentiated mass. Similarly attacking the arrogance and indifference of a large group, "Second Epistle to Lapraik" depends on plain statement; but the stated antipathy is accented by single words that stand out in the passage:

Do ye envy the city-gent,
Behint a kist to lie an' sklent, coffer; squint greedily
Or purse-proud, big wi' cent per cent,
An' muckle wame... (11.61-64)

"Sklent" and "big wi' cent per cent" intensify his representation of a type of individual. When Burns later refers to these people as "cits," he is borrowing a commonly used derogatory Augustan abbreviation. He attacks the same general group more outspokenly in "To M'Math":

But I gae mad at their grimaces,
Their sighan, cantan, grace-prood faces,
Their three-mile prayers, an' hauf-mile graces,
Their raxan conscience, elastic
Whase greed, revenge, an' pride disgraces
Waur nor their nonsense. (11.19-24)
In each of the three poems the concrete and realistic diction prevents the attacks of unspecified masses from remaining vaguely general; the language also specifies those particular characteristics that Burns finds repugnant.

In "The Holy Fair" Burns presents demeaning portraits of the multitudes and of specific individuals even while he maintains the fiction of an objective persona. Although the persona projects himself as a recording observer, not a judge or interpreter of events, his labels and descriptive details discredit the participants at the fair. When describing an Auld Licht minister, the speaker records what he sees, but Burns has consciously selected language that mocks him:

Here how he clears the point o' Faith
Wi' rattlin an' thumpin!
Now meekly calm now wild in wrath,
He's stampan, an' he's jumpan!
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd up snout,
His eldritch squeel an' gestures,
0 how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plaisters... (11.109-16)

Similarly unflattering, a depiction of the Moderate minister is remarkably different in its diction and overall suggestions:

What signifies his barren shine,
Of moral pow'rs an' reason;
His English style, an' gesture fine,
Are a' clean out o' season.
Like SOCRATES or ANTONINE,
Or some auld pagan heathen,
The moral man he does define,
But ne'er a word o' faith in
That's right that day. (11.127-35)

Such phrases as "snout," "squeel," "rattlin," and "barren shine" are
especially sarcastic; Burns has seized on the central qualities of
each faction—the emotional, stirring delivery of Auld Licht preachers
and the calmer, more rational appeal by the New Lichts—and exaggerated
them into satiric exposés. Even the speaker's initial reports about
the three "hizzies" (meaning "wench" or "whore" or "silly girl") are
provocative. "Fun," who approaches "hap-step-an' loup [briskly]" is
described in such a way that a dominant motif is introduced: fun,
superstition, and hypocrisy will surface in spite of the Kirk's
attempts to repress them—the Kirk itself will even exemplify two
of these attributes. Concrete language thus joins with other poetic
techniques in "The Holy Fair" to advance Burns's satiric theme.

In the later poetry Burns again finds in language the proper­
ties that allow both specific exactness and ambiguous suggestion.
The later pieces illustrate similar techniques to those he utilizes
in the early satires: sexual puns imply his assault on society's
rigidity; concrete specificity reveals how and why a persona is a
satiric target; exactness in diction exposes Burns's attitudes toward
his targets.

Only two later poems exhibit Burns's use of ambivalent lan­
guage in order to make sexual innuendoes. Sexual suggestiveness in
"Wha'll M_w Me Now" helps the female persona and Burns convey hos­
tility toward the hypocritical who dare judge her immoral. She
characterizes herself as a "merry a__" and assails the deceit of
the upper class woman whose "c__t's as merry's mine"; "merry," a
colloquialism for a "harlot," stresses her point. Although
"dungeons" does not seem an ambiguous word, when used in this context--"And they've [Court of Session] provided dungeons deep,/Ilk lass has\[ane in her possession]\--the sexual innuendo is clear ("Act Sedurant of the Session," 11.9-10). The Court did cast fornicators into prison; Burns quibbles on the penalty so that fornicators are punished by having to fornicate. Although there are many bawdy poems and others that challenge the Kirk's restrictions on sexual expression, Burns's later poems illustrate fewer sexual ambiguities than the early poems do. Part of the explanation is that his later satires are usually more outspokenly explicit in their attacks.

More commonly in the later satires, Burns employs concrete language to create a vivid picture of his satiric targets. "Reply to a Tailor," "Tam o' Shanter," "When Princes and Prelates," "Epistle to Graham," and "Esopus to Maria" illustrate the diverse uses to which he puts concrete language.

The concrete diction in "Reply to a Tailor," "When Princes and Prelates," and "Epistle to Graham" aids in delineating Burns's satiric point; although none of the three depends on or uniformly utilizes specifics, each shows how much is added by just a few concrete words. The vivid nouns with which Burns describes himself in "Reply" convey his unconcern for judgmental moralists and his disregard for the tailor's criticism as well as his only half-mocking defense:
And maybe, Tam, for a' my cants,
My wicked rhymes, an' drucken rants,
I'll gie auld cloven Clooty's haunts
An' unco slip yet,
An' snugly sit amang the saunts
At Davie's hip yet. (11.19-24)

In "When Princes and Prelates" the concreteness of his advice for Catherine the Great—"May the deil in her a ram a hugh pr_ck o' brass!/And damn her in h_ll with a mowe!"--gives an explicitly vulgar tone to a poem which offers "mowing" (copulation) as a desirable substitute for war (11.23-24). Describing the Duke of Brunswick's invasion of France, he says, "When Br_nsw_ck's great Prince cam a cruising to Fr_nce/Republican billies to cowe" (11.9-10). "Cruising" is too casual, "billies" too familiar, and "cowe" too homely for a serious account of a major invasion; but Burns implies that political leaders too casually plot their wars. Burns's oversimplified descriptions of army movements, motives for war, and victories emphasize the satiric theme; he downgrades the professed noble motives that leaders mouth and reduces the "powerful" to the same level as the commoner--all do share in common the need to "mowe." Burns gives few specific details in "Epistle to Graham," choosing to depend on a generalized depiction of armies and battles that conveys the sense of noise, flurry, and bloodletting. When he does insert concrete particulars—"While WELSH, who never flinch'd his ground,/High-wav'd his magnum bonum round/With Cyclopean fury"--he stresses his mockery by exaggerating the language and by interrelating it with extravagant imagery (11.46-48). The specifics in his portrait of the Duke of Queensberry leave no doubt that Burns's professed concern for the
battlers is only assumed as an ironic device:

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig bears,
Wha left the all-important cares
Of fiddles, whres and hunters;
And, bent on buying Borough-towns,
Cam shaking hands wi' webster-louns,
And kissing barefit bunters.--(11.7-12)

In each of the three pieces Burns adds intensity to poems that would be recognized as satiric were the concreteness absent; that is, specifics in word choice are helpful but not indispensable to our realization of his attack.

"Tam o' Shanter's" effectiveness, however, is largely dependent on the concrete sense of movement, facial expressions, and emotions that are stimulated by the diction. The wife of a man who lingers to drink is "nursing her wrath to keep it warm" so that she can unleash it on Tam, "a skellum, A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum" (11.12,19-20). The vitality of the words creates a dramatic scene of conflict. It is the verbs that alert us to Tam's superstitious mind, although the narrator does not take us inside Tam's consciousness:

Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his gude blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glowring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares. . . . (11.81-86)

The scene at the kirkyard (11.101-50) receives the speaker's careful observation. His record of each detail effectively conveys Tam's subjective state and, more important, the speaker's own superstitious, mesmerized interest in the events; he is too emotionally intent to
remember to moralize about the awesome Devil, the sin of lechery, or Tam's intoxication. The specific diction rapidly carries Tam, the witches, the speaker, and us to the river; Burns efficiently and concisely describes the movements and the speaker's sympathy with Tam:

Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake! the devil a
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle. . . . purpose
(11.205-13)

He gives a particularized account that leaves no vagueness about the outcome. And Burns shows us that the speaker he mocks is unable to remain the detached, high-minded nay-sayer to Tam.

Selection of language is also important to Burns's characterization of Esopus as a pretentious fool who in his self-assumed importance and his attempted defense of Maria only reveals the depths of his ignorance ("Esopus to Maria"). While trying to impress upon Maria his dire condition, he cannot avoid meaningless adjectives that he thinks give intensity to his tale: "Turnkeys make the jealous portal fast,/Then deal from iron hands the spare repast" (11.3-4). Why the doors are jealous is incomprehensible; Kinsley's suggestion that the word is used to mean "vigilant in guarding" or "darkening" does not account for the more obvious synonym, "envious." Esopus's point in characterizing the guards' indifference by calling their hands "iron" is clearer, but he is still over stating, as if begging
for Maria's pity--and if he must beg, how much does she care for him? Then he lists "tiny thieves" as being fellow prisoners; what he means is unintelligible. When he speaks of his "wretched lines" it is probable that he means he is wretched while writing, not that the verse itself is execrable; ironically, the latter is as true a thing as the former (1.11). Esopus thinks he compliments Maria's eloquence, but the verbs suggest she is a mindless chatter box: "Still she, undaunted, reels and rattles on,/And dares the public like a noontide sun!" (11.43-44). By repeating others' remarks, Esopus unwittingly abuses her: "What scandal call'd Maria's janty stagger/The ricket reeling of a crooked swagger?" (11.44-45). The implications escape the letter-writer when he tries to praise her by saying she has a "seeming want of art" (1.47). He seeks pity when he tritely moans that the thought of prison "pillows on the thorn my racked repose," that he undergoes "durance vile," and that he must to "all my frowzy Couch in sorrow steep" (11.57-60). He misses the innuendo of "In all of thee, sure, thy Esopus shares" and "thy still matchless tongue . . . conquers all reply" (11.73,83). His most precise characterizations of her are borrowed from her opponents, such as "Who calls thee pert, affected, vain Coquette,/A wit in folly and a fool in wit?" (11.75-76). Diction is indispensable to our realization of Burns's target; the affected and insipid language that Esopus selects brands Maria and him as fools.

Except in "Act Sedurant," where the dual meanings of "dungeons" express the crux of the attack and in "Esopus to Maria" and "Tam o'
Shanter," where varied diction gives unity and satiric coherence to each, Burns's later satires do not show the dynanism available from concrete language or the subtle implications afforded by ambiguous words. He flexes his vocabulary in more diverse ways in the earlier poems. In many of them--e.g. "The Ordination," "The Fornicator," "Dedication to Hamilton," and "Second Epistle to Lapraik"--a single word gives essential support to other satiric elements; some derive a large part of their concentrated impact from his patterned manipulation of language--as in "Love and Liberty," "Libel Summons," and "Death and Doctor Hornbook." In the earlier satires he depends more on ambiguities and specific diction to indicate his own attitude and to persuade us to agree with his attacks; in the later poems, the concreteness and ambiguities are more often ornamental than functional.

His arrangement of words, the syntax of his poetry, is just as important to Burns's development of satire as are his choices of diction and his juxtapositions of different kinds of language. Syntax is one of the poet's most powerful ways of making an utterance meaningful, for it conveys the relationships behind the sequence of words and controls the order in which impressions are received by the reader. Sometimes the effect of Burns's syntax is inextricably bound with the thrust of the language, as in "The Holy Fair's" description of the three ministers; both the words themselves and the arrangement of the words characterize the men (11.109-17, 127-35, 136-44). Frequently, syntax and vernacular Scots cooperate in creating a conversational, fluent tone, as in "Address to the Deil" (such as 11.91-120)
that either ironically contrasts with the supposed magnitude of the
topic or reinforces the poet's explicit attitude. In general,
Burns's syntax follows the sequence of conversational speech; it
is characterized by loose and accumulative rather than periodic
sentences, "normal" subject-verb order, elliptical statements common
to spoken utterances, and simple constructions. Two matters have
special bearing on his satires: the ways in which he uses specific
features of his syntax to create satiric effects; and the manner in
which he combines several syntactical features in order to secure
satiric intensity and alterations in tone.

First, in all the stanzaic patterns that he employs Burns
skillfully utilizes the benefits of anti-climax. That is, in one
line (or several) he seems to develop a line of thought and create
in us certain expectations of a natural conclusion to that thought;
then, he deftly twists the idea into a jibe that identifies the
mocking intonation of the sentence or stanza. For example, in a
couplet in "Death and Dying Words of Mailie" the abstraction of the
first line--itself appropriate to a serious elegy--is made specifically
applicable to sheep in the second line: "O, bid him save their harm­
less lives,/Frae dogs an' tods [foxes], an' butchers' knives"; such
a twist coalesces with the thrust of the mock elegy's attacks of
the bathos and banality of some elegies (11.29-30). In "When Guilford
Good" he concludes a stanza describing warlike activities of British
generals: "But Cl_nt_n's glaive frae rust to save/He hung it to the
wa'." (11.31-32). The second line forces a reversal of our expectation
and the surprise of it focuses attention on Clinton's cowardice. Apparently describing the diagnostic prowess of Hornbook ("Death and Doctor Hornbook"), Death recounts a specific example of the doctor's techniques:

"A countra Laird had ta'en the batts, colic  
"Or some curmurring in his guts, flatulence  
"His only son for Hornbook sets,  
"And pays him well,  
"The lad, for twa guid gimmer-pets, yearling ewes  
"Was Laird himsel." (11.157-62)

The dimeter line that carries the stanza's satiric point is not particularly surprising since Death has in earlier passages indicted Hornbook for killing many of his patients; there is shock, however, in the implication that the doctor's greed rather than his incompetence has made him deliberately murder. The same poem contains a more complicated twist that strikes at more than one target. The persona swears:

But this that I am gaun to tell,  
Which lately on a night befel,  
Is just as true's the Deil's in h'11,  
Or Dublin city... (11.7-10)

Not only are the Irish singled out for ridicule and the speaker's veracity questioned, but Crawford argues that "there is an underlying audacity which implies that the Devil is not in Hell or even in Dublin--but that he is just as much a fabrication as the story whose truth Burns vouches for so loudly."46

The conventional Christis Kirk opening of "Mauchline Wedding" moves rapidly from a sketching of the scene to a definition of the poem's topic:
Now Merchant Master Miller,
Gaed down to meet wi' Nansie Bell
And her Jamaica siller,
To wed, that day.--(11.6-9)

Part of the satiric target is thus defined by the coordinate linking of Nansie Bell and silver; because of the proximity of "to wed" and "siller" Burns gains more emphasis than if "to wed" were placed with "to meet." Such twists of the dimeter lines in the Standard Habbie stanza convey much of the speaker's defiance of Kirk dogma in "Address to the Deil." The persona's understatement--

I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
Ev'n to a deil,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel! (11.9-12)--

reverses the traditional story that Satan wholeheartedly delights torturing sinners.47 Posing as a concerned observer, the speaker concludes his address with an outrageous suggestion: "Ye aiblins might--I dinna ken--/Still hae a stake" (11.123-24). This surprising concession seems to fit the persona's friendly attitude toward Satan. The concluding generalized observation of "To a Louse" gains impact because Burns has reserved for the climactic position his most specific attack and has divided the compound subject so that he can emphasize the point: "What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,/And ev'n Devotion!" The speaker's remarks about pretense in manners and attire are led into by the poem's specific data; until this last twist of thought, however, we have heard little about religion, for the fact that the scene is played out in church is mentioned but not emphasized. In "Extempore--to Hamilton" he utilizes a repetitious pattern of
concluding each quatrain with "Naething." After a few quatrains the pattern becomes clear and is anticipated; but in early stanzas, such as the second, expectations are subverted:

Ne'er scorn a poor Poet like me,
For idly just living and breathing,
While people of every degree
Are busy employed about--naething.--

"Important matters" would be more usual than "nothing"; that wrench of the anticipated conclusion establishes the satiric nature of the rest of the epistle. The antitheses in some couplets of "Libel Summons" contribute to the jovial tone of this pseudo-legalistic record of a "Court of Equity." The twisted logic of "YOUR CRIME, a manly deed we view it, / As MAN ALONE, can only do it" and "To TELL THE TRUTH's a manly lesson, / An' doubly proper in A MASON" underlines the poet's boisterous tone (11.109-10,34-35).

In other early poems Burns utilizes parallel structures, questions, and imperatives in order to achieve diverse effects important to his satire. In "The Holy Fair" contrasted ideas in similar grammatical structures suggest the duplicity of the superficially "grace-proud faces" of the ministers. The balanced sentences accent the incongruities in people's behavior and motives: "Here, some are thinkan on their sins, / An' some upo' their claes" (11.82-83). In this couplet he makes two diverse concepts equivalent: "There's some are fou o' love *divine*; / There's some are fou o' *brandy*" (11.239-40). Such equating is characteristic of the poem's uncritical description of the demands of both spiritual and sensual desires. Parallelism also emphasizes an idea in "To Simpson--Postscript." The parallelism
lulls us into certain expectations until near the end of the stanza when the pattern is broken; the interruption creates emphasis for the culminating blow:

Frae less to mair it gaed to sticks;
Frae words an' aiths to clours an' nicks; bumps
An' monie a fallow gat his licks,
Wi' hearty crunt;
An' some, to learn them for their tricks,
Were hang'd an' brunt. (11.145-50)

In "To M'Math" parallelism cumulatively builds an idea he initiates in one stanza and carries into the next. Speaking of those "Who boldly dare thy cause maintain/In spite of . . ." he begins listing all those people "in spite of . . ." whom he attacks; he abandons the pattern in order to gain emphasis in his most sarcastic lines: "By scoundrels, even wi' holy robes,/But hellish spirit" (11.71-79). Sometimes Burns inserts questions, as in "Second Epistle to Lapraik," that demand the reader to participate in the poem and decide if he is a satiric target himself or in agreement with Burns: "Do ye envy the city-gent . . ." (11.61-62). Creating a different effect, the questions and apostrophes in "Address to the Deil" argue that the Devil is an attentive audience to this monologue--he is humanized and familiarized because the speaker directs questions to him.

Some of Burns's most artistic satires are those in which he combines different syntactical features, letting the shifts accord with the subject matter and the changing tones of the speaker. In "Holy Willie's Prayer" Willie's varied syntax reflects his state of mind as he shifts his focus among self, God, Hamilton, women, and drink. Except for the fourth stanza, the first five stanzas of the
poem share distinct features—the Biblical language is clearly and easily enunciated. The predominance of monosyllabic words creates a slow-paced, psalm-like movement; his glorying in his self-assumed Election reeks of smug self-assurance:

I bless and praise thy matchless might,
When thousands thou has left in night,
That I am here before thy sight,
For gifts and grace,
A burning and a shining light
To a' this place.--(11.7-12)

But when he alludes to his sins, the stateliness of the long, graceful sentences disappears; the mode of syntax becomes hesitant, broken, short bursts of fragmented thought:

But yet--0 L__d--confess I must--
0 L__d--yestreen--thou kens--wi' Meg--

Wi' Leezie's lass, three times--I trow--
But L__d, that friday [sic] I was fou. . . .(11.37,43,50-51)

He becomes emotionally overwrought, even morally indignant, when he thinks of Hamilton; in imperatives he orders God to hurt Hamilton:

L__d, in thy day o' vengeance try him!
L__d visit him that did employ him!
And pass not in thy mercy by them,
    Nor hear their prayer;
But for thy people's sake destroy them,
    And dinna spare! (11.91-96)

Whereas Willie alternates syntax in a sequential pattern, the speaker of "Author's Cry and Prayer" more variedly intermingles different syntaxes that reflect his constantly vacillating tone. The opening stanza illustrates Burns's strategy and his prevailing tone:
Ye IRISH LORDS, ye knights an' squires,
Wha represent our BRUGHS an' SHIRES,
An' dously manage our affairs
In Parliament,
To you a simple Bardie's pray'rs
Are humbly sent.

The force of the thought comes in the beginning of the periodic sentence, with the last two lines presented as a modest afterthought—but the total meaning of the sentence depends on the last two lines. Addressing "Ye Irish Lords," rather than Scots, is a clever way to capture attention, for he insinuates that the English misallocate Parliamentary seats. The praise of the MP's is also designed to garner their favor, as is his modesty ("simple," "humbly," and "prayers" all characterize the speaker's purported subservience). He gains a conversational quality through such tactics in language; and with low-key imperatives and anti-climax, he secures emphasis:

Tell them wha hae the chief direction,
Scotland and me's in great affliction,
E'er sin' they laid that curst restriction
On AQUAVITAE;
An' rouse them up to strong conviction,
An' move their pity. (11.13-18)

Throughout the monologue he combines questions, exclamations of grief and anger, imperatives, and quiet statements of fact in order to voice his concern, derision, and advice. He never outrightly insults the MP's but lets syntax, juxtapositions, and anti-climax in dimeter lines emphasize his scorn:

Some o' you nicely ken the laws,
To round the period an' pause,
An' with rhetoric clause on clause
To mak harangues... (11.67-70)

The thrust of Burns's attack is implicit; he never lets his speaker
become openly scornful or angry, yet so skillfully merges different tones that the satire is evident and the tone never abrasive.

Comparably, Burns intermingles into the "Address of Beelzebub" a flexible combination of imperatives, questions, periodic sentences, smoothly flowing parallelism, and interrupted syntax. Apparent humility governs the persona's opening and closing lines. He speaks calmly in normal subject-verb order with parallelism in some lines unifying his third stanza (11.13-16, 22-26). When he begins to advise the Highland Society about actions they should take against the potential emigrees, he speaks short bursts of emphatic imperatives whose many active verbs underline his anger:

But smash them! crush them a' to spails! splinters
An' rot the DYSORS i' the JAILS! bankrupt
The young dogs, swinge them to the labour,
Let WARK an' HUNGER mak them sober! (11.39-42)

The angry emphasis remains even when he changes to lengthier sentences:

Get out a HORSE-WHIP, or a JOWLER,
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
An' gar the tatter'd gipseys pack compel
Wi' a' their bastarts on their back! (11.49-52)

The closing stanza returns to the quieter tone of the opening, with Beelzebub apparently extending sincere welcome to the Society members; beneath the serenity of his persona's voice, Burns is sarcastic. Beelzebub calmly concludes by describing the forthcoming festivities at his "HOUSE AT HAME"; thus, the satire drops to a lower key at the point of greatest intensity of meaning and of moral fervor. Burns controls the modulations in his persona's tone with deliberate intent.
Among the later satires the syntax continues to aid his attacks. Burns does not introduce new techniques or utilize anti-climax or other syntactical features more often or more skillfully than in the early poems. Anti-climax with its surprise reversals of prepared-for endings remains a useful tool for emphasizing the unimportance of some concepts. Other features—interrogatives, imperatives, catalogues in parallel grammatical forms, inversion of normal subject-verb order—add unity, demand the reader's participation in scorning the target, and accentuate certain ideas.

Burns's use of anti-climax helps him to convey the tone and target of his attacks. In some of the later satires the thrust of an anti-climactic couplet is the initial indicator of his mocking tone. For example, in "The Fête Champetre" the first stanza's questions establish the general topic: who will be elected to Parliament. The first couplet of the next stanza—"Come, will ye court a noble Lord,/Or buy a score o' Lairds, man?" identifies Burns's motive for mockery. Similarly in "Buy Braw Troggin" the opening defines the song's topic, but the second stanza clarifies Burns's intention of not merely describing but satirizing local leaders:

Here's a noble Earl's
Fame and high renown,
For an auld sang--
It's thought the Gudes were stown. (11.9-12)

The poem continues this pattern of naming someone, then exposing his corruption. Continuing to dash aroused expectations, while listing those who will be contesting the election at Kirkcudbright, Burns adds such comments as: "And there will be wealthy young RICHARD--/Dame
Fortune should hing by the neck" ("Second Heron Ballad," 11.49-50).

The persona of "Johnie B's Lament" states:

And there R'dc stle drew the sword
That ne'er was stain'd wi' gore;
Save on a wanderer, lame and blind,
To drive him frae his door.--(11.57-60)

Adding to his explicit indictments of the Duke of Queensberry, Burns begins an apparent defense of the Duke; then he decreases the dignity he has just given the man: "But cautious Queensberry left the war,/Th' unmanner'd dust might soil his star,/Besides, he hated Bleeding" ("Epistle to Graham," 11.19-21). Similarly in "Laddies by the Banks o' Nith" he lists a series of actions possible to the Duke; then he emphatically subverts our anticipation of praise:

The day he stude his country's friend,
Or gied her faes a claw, Jamie,
Or frae puir man a blessin wan,
That day the Duke ne'er saw... (11.9-12)

By building the reader's anticipation of a concluding thought or emotion, Burns gains emphasis for his attack when he denies those expectations and concludes with a remark that decreases the importance or dignity of someone or some idea.48

Not only his view of political incidents receives emphasis from distortions of expected endings; Burns's opinions about the relationship between morality and sexuality are also revealed in the thrust of anti-climaxes. In "Epistle to Graham" he implies his repugnance for the sneaky tactics of those who use fornication for selfish gain:
Mcmurdo and his lovely Spouse,
(Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows)
   Led on the Loves and Graces:
She won each gaping Burgess' heart,
   While he, sub rosa, play'd his part
      Among their wives and lasses.--(11.31-36)

An ending stanza of "Reply to a Tailor" gives an emphatic close to his epistle's attack of the tailor or anyone who criticizes Burns's sexual integrity:

"When next wi' yon lass I forgather,
   Whate'er betide it,
"I'll frankly gi'e her 't a' thegither,
   An' let her guide it." (11.63-66)

That implied vulgarity more openly colors the whole of "Ode to Spring." Obscene words scattered amid the pastoral phrases suggest his deliberate distortion of flowery odes. His concluding couplets for each of the three stanzas bring each strophe to a satisfying conclusion: "Till Damon, fierce, mistim'd his a__,/And f__'d quite out of tune, Sir"
(11.23-24; see also 11.7-8,15-16).

In most of the later pieces Burns utilizes a normal subject-verb pattern and "loose" sentences, as in "Extempore, Court of Sessions" where he arranges short clauses--each two lines long--into partial units of thought that are then integrated smoothly with other lines. Similarly "Epistle to Graham" reflects the ease of conversational speech appropriate in a letter to a close friend:

Fintry, my stay in worldly strife,
Friend o' my Muse, Friend o' my Life,
   Are ye as idle's I am?
Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg, kick
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
   And ye shall see me try him.--(11.1-6)

In these lines Burns seems unconcerned about the "correct" order of
subject-verb, adverb-verb, etc.; because of his confident assurance
with the vernacular, he can attain both "correctness" and prosy vigor,
In contrast, he sometimes distorts syntax in order to make the sentence
accord with a stanzaic formula. In "The Calf" he makes each quatrain
conclude with a word synonymous with "calf"; he sustains the pattern
without straining, except in one stanza where elliptical phrasing
and out-of-place modifiers create some awkwardness:

And, in your lug, most reverend J____, ear
   To hear you roar and rowte, bellow
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
   To rank amang the Nootie. (11.17-20) cattle

The initial series of questions in "The Fête Champetre" intro-
duces the bouncy rhythm of this lightly mocking account of politi-
cians' tactics; the parallelism in their structure affirms Burns's con-
trolling attitude. A repeated pattern in "The Kirk of Scotland's
Garland" gives a distinctive rhythm:

Doctor Mac, Doctor Mac, ye should streek on a rack,
   To strike Evildoers with terror;
To join FAITH and SENSE upon any pretence
   Was heretic, damnable error. . . . (11.6-9)

His uniform use of this pattern creates a rigid structural pattern for
the poem--itself essentially a list of people Burns attacks. The
cumulative effects create the dominant impression that all Burns's
opponents really are hypocritical, incompetent fools; but the monotony
of the reiteration tends to cause the reader's attention to wander.
Even more monotonous and lacking obvious purpose is the parallelism
of inverted structures in "Monody on Maria." Negative remarks in
parallel structures--"how cold is . . ./How pale is. . . ."--link the
first two stanzas. In the last two stanzas he repeats "We'll search . . ./We'll [verb]. . . ." pattern and "Want only of . . ./Want. . . ." in the epitaph. Other than giving some unity to what is basically a list of insulting epithets, the parallelism does not add satiric intensity. Parallelism in "Second Heron Ballad" is boringly repetitious:

And there will be Stamp-office Johnie,
Tak tent how ye purchase a dram:
And there will be gay C-as-nicary,
And there will be gleg Colonel Tam. quick-witted
And there will be trusty KIROCHTREE. . . . (11.57-61)

The similar grammatical patterns do not add intensity to a straightforward attack but only give an obviously artificial structure to a series of names. The catalogues of questions in "Esopus to Maria" are more skillfully handled, because they are integrated with other techniques and are not the sole source of unity:

What scandal call'd Maria's janty stagger
The ricket reeling of a crooked swagger?
What slander nam'd her seeming want of art
The flimsey wrapper of a rotten heart. . . . (11.45-48; see also 11.49-56, 63-70, 74-83)

Esopus may be interested in answers, but the questions serve Burns as rhetorical; they are a way to let Esopus unwittingly damn Maria and reveal his own lack of perspicacity.

Among the later satires "Tam o' Shanter" best exemplifies syntactical features that are both skillfully blended and essential to Burns's satiric development. In general, the speaker intermingles two distinctive styles, varying according to which events he is recording and which attitude he is projecting. In contrast to the "intensified speaking idiom" which "allows Burns to play upon his
subject with an endless fusillade of invention, exuberantly playing or attacking from all angles in rapid succession" is the inflated bombast that yields a ponderous, artificial rhythm. The prologue (11.1-35) illustrates the variations in syntax that characterize the poem. The speaker sets a scene in an initial twelve-line sentence; the smoothly flowing series of modifiers and dependent clauses demonstrate Burns's assurance with the vernacular and the speaker's relaxed approval of events. The persona's first intrusion of moral counsel is voiced in shorter bursts of thought; the apostrophe, imperative, and abruptness call attention to his change in tone: "O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,/As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!" (11.17-18). The subsequent lines recreate the style of a nagging wife's speech (11.19-27). The accusations hurled in parallel clauses build a cumulative effect that rises to the indignation in "even on Sunday"; Burns has incorporated in his speaker's style "the angry tones of Kate's voice" and has given in "rich folk idiom a vivid parody of the perennially scolding wife." When describing the stormy night and Tam's movements before he arrives at the kirkyard, the speaker moves confidently from point to point, letting parallel clauses reveal Tam's superstition and build our curiosity about Tam's experience:

By this time he was cross the ford,  
Whare, in the snaw, the chapman smoor'd; was smothered  
And past the birks and meikle stane, was birches; much  
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;  
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn, was gorse  
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn. . . .(11.89-94; see also 11.81-85)

The verbs and verb parts vividly dramatize situations in the form of
actions that seem to unfold in our mind's eye; Burns's language and syntax vitalize the witches' dance:

As Tamnie glow'rd, amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The pipers loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit, clutched
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit, smoked
And coost her duddies to the wark, sweated;
And linket at it in her sark! (11.143-50)

Craig praises the momentum that these clauses build, saying the flow of the words "is at one with the action"; he argues that Burns, because his "speech habits were mainly colloquial, with little interruption of a printed standard, ran straight from speech through into poetry." In contrast, the stiffness of a cumbersome syntax dominates when the speaker ceases to react instinctively to what he experiences and remembers his pose as a high-minded, disinterested outsider. Then he becomes more "literary" in language and sentence pattern, consciously imitating epic rhetoric and "aureate" diction:

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.--(11.59-66)

The narrator's repeated intrusion of exaggerately formal sentence patterns and elaborate diction reveals that he tries to judge Tam harshly. But the vacillation between this "fine writing" and the prosy conversational syntax emphasizes, as do language and imagery, that the speaker cannot find a consistent style any more than he can maintain detachment.
Burns seems to have recognized the advantages of varying syntax. Anti-climax is especially effective when placed in the dimeter lines of Standard Habbie stanzas where the shortness of the line forces careful scrutiny of the idea presented. In other verse forms also he can surprise the audience by beginning with seeming praise and then shattering our expectations when he expresses criticism. Interrogatives not only add a conversational effect, suggesting we or characters in the poem are listening; in one poem—"Second Epistle to Lapraik"—questions demand that we either confess our vices or share Burns's condemnation of a greedy and arrogant man. Parallelism, besides adding unity, also by force of repetition emphasizes major lines of attack. Imperatives, of course, accentuate specific ideas but also produce shifts in tone that fit Burns's purposes. Early and later poems exemplify these syntactical features, but the later satires do not demonstrate an increase in quantity or quality. In fact, of the three most successful achievements in combining various syntactical features, two are early poems: "Address of Beelzebub," "Holy Willie's Prayer," and "Tam o' Shanter."

RHYME, METRICS, AND ALLITERATION

In addition to the effects he derives from contrasting levels of language, from qualities of specific words, and from syntax, Burns frequently utilizes other prosodic devices to reinforce his satiric attacks. Aware that sounds--their relative speed, their suggestiveness, and their patterns of regularity or irregularity--can affect our
responses to a poem as much as the semantic content does, Burns often molds prosodic elements with his satiric themes and topics. Of concern here are not all elements of Burns's tone poetry but those features that blend with his satiric attacks. He uses alliteration to emphasize antitheses, to secure more intense unity of ideas or emotion, and to achieve modulation in rhythm. Similarly, his rhythmical and rhyming patterns help to create unity, to stress key points, and to define tone. Between his early and later poems, there is no observable increase in his use of prosody to develop satiric ideas; nor is there illustration that he becomes more skilled at interweaving auditory devices with other elements of attack.

None of Burns's satires is composed totally of only masculine or only feminine or only internal rhyme. He uses all three types of rhyme in various combinations in order to obtain specific effects. With masculine rhyme he can achieve a forceful, vigorous emphasis on particular ideas; from the feminine rhymes he gains a lighter, quicker effect well suited to much of his light mockery; with internal rhyme he secures a bounciness that stresses his flippant tone. The rhyming choices he makes thus enable him to stress what other features in the poems may also be emphasizing: specific flaws, alterations in attitude, connections between apparently antithetical ideas, characters of personae. For example, in "Holy Willie's Prayer" Burns depends mainly on masculine rhymes; he reserves the occasional feminine rhymes for special effects made more noticeable because he diverges from the dominant pattern. Because only five words in the first stanza have
more than one syllable each and because the stanza uses masculine rhyme, Willie's initial profession of faith has a slow and solemn emphasis befitting the speaker's assumed grandeur. In contrast, while the polysyllabic words in stanza three call to our attention Willie's pompous sense of self-worth, the feminine endings suggest that Willie should not be judged as pious as he pretends he is. Similarly, the unstressed double rhymes in stanza five--"sample," "ample," "temple," "example"--reiterate Burns's suggestion that Willie is the focus of attack. Sometimes Willie's rhymes--such as "dishonor" and "upon her" when he haltingly refers to his lust--make major exposures: Willie is hesitant to mention his sins; Burns is slyly sarcastic; and the forced rhyme creates a comic tone.

In other early poems Burns's combinations of masculine and feminine rhymes help clarify his attitude as well as stress certain concepts. Although Beelzebub thinks he praises British generals, Burns can imply that he sees the British from a harsher point of view; rhyming "Sackville" and "pack vile" is meant to cut ("Address of Beelzebub," 11.21-22). By using the stressed rhymes of "flocks," "orthodox," "fox," and "crows [old ewes]" in the first stanza of "The Holy Tulzie," Burns identifies his metaphorical parallel and suggests his intent to mock the ministers and their arrogance. By the fourth stanza, other elements have clarified Burns's tone and target, but the forced feminine rhyme of "expeckit," "negleckit," "respeckit," and "eleckit" underlines his flippant attitude toward the "serious" quarrel between ministers. Feminine rhymes in the first stanza of
"Death and Doctor Hornbook" serve a similar function; Burns is announcing that the unfolding dialogue is to be viewed lightly. The words "[holy] rapture" and "Scripture" have serious meanings, but the solemnity of the Bible and of divine ecstasies is undermined by the unstressed ending of the rhyme (11.4,6). Throughout the first half of the poem, feminine and unstressed rhymes dominate (as in 11.13-18,31-36,103-32); as Death speaks more scornfully about Hornbook's greed and incompetence, however, Burns lets masculine rhymes emphasize the vigor underlying his accusations of intentional murder and his promises of vengeance (11.145-68;169-80). "The Twa Dogs" also begins with a conversational quality that is established by the frequent unstressed double rhymes, such as "collar" and "scholar," "riches" and "wretches," "disasters" and "masters," "negleket" and "disrespekt." Such rhymes do more than create a sense of a colloquial, relaxed chat; many of the rhyming words stress antithetical ideas, such as the point that "masters" create "disasters." Less clear is Burns's choice of feminine endings in Ceasar's savage indictments of the rich; keeping the passages from gaining too light and joyous a beat is his insertion of masculine rhymes that impose a harsher conclusion to some lines:

Haith lad, ye little ken about it;
For Brit ain' guid! guid faith! I doubt it.
Say rather, gaun as PREMIERS lead him,
An' saying aye or nae they bid him:
At Operas an' Plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading:
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To HAGUE or CALAIS take: a waft,
To make a tour an' take a whirl'.
To learn bon ton an' see the worl'. (11.149-58; see also 11.159-70,86-102)
Another effect derived from mixing masculine and feminine rhymes appears in other early poems, such as "Address to the Deil," "Author's Cry and Prayer," "To a Louse," and "Libel Summons"; in each, Burns secures an appropriately flippant tone because of his rhyming patterns. In "Address to the Deil" the feminine rhymes of the first stanza--"suit thee," "Clootie," "sooty," "cootie," and "Hatches" and "wretches"--suggest the persona's inability to agree with the Kirk's depiction of the Devil. In "Author's Cry" Burns may only be illustrating some shortcomings in his rhyming vocabulary, but these rhymes lend a flip-pant air appropriate to the content and to the mock-humble facade of the speaker: "present her," "behind her," "Vintner," and "Winter"; "see 't," "greet," "feet," "hear it," "heat," and "bear it"; "tease him," "sees him," "gies him," and "leaves him" (11.43-48, 61-66, 169-74). Polysyllabic rhymes add vividness and emphasis to the louse:

Ye ugly, creepen, blastet wonner,
Detested, shunn'd, by saunt an' sinner. . . .
Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle;
There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle. . . .("To a Louse," 11.7-8, 11-12)

The rhyme variation in the last stanza--"gie us," "see us," "free us," and "lea'e us"--is not necessarily a sign of Burns's incapacity but a means for him to stress the broader concept of the poem: Jenny is not alone in her pride and pretensions, for all of us in varying degrees share these attributes. The many double rhymes with unstressed endings in "Libel Summons," combined with the regular beat of iambic tetrameter, give a jingling rhythm to the account; the trailing-off effect of the endings, the lightness of movement, and the polysyllabic rhyming
sounds create a flippancy suitable to the poem's attack on those who reject the naturalness of copulation:

He who disowns the ruin'd Fair-one,
And for her wants and woes does care none;
The wretch that can refuse subsistence
To those whom he has given existence;
He who when at a lass's by-job,
Defrauds her wi' a fr_g or dry-b_b;
The coof that stands on clishmacTavers
When women haflins offer favors. . . .(11.17-24)

Another noticeable feature of several of Burns's satires is internal rhyme. Without exception the repeated sound--usually emphasized by the accentual pattern--yields a bouncy, jingly effect that denotes his mocking tone. His satiric songs contain a preponderance of internal rhymes. For example, alternating lines of each eight-line stanza in "When Guilford Good" emphasize the metrical accent with internal rhymes:

Then thro' the lakes _Montgomery_ takes. . . .
Down _Lowrie's burn_ he took a turn. . . .
But yet, whatreck, he, at _Quebec_ . . .
Wi' sword in hand, before his band. . . .(11.9-17)

The bard's song in "Love and Liberty" combines iambic tetrameter with internal rhyme to underline his casual disregard for conventional poetry and society's rules of behavior:

I never drank the Muses' STANK pond
Castalia's burn an' a' that,
But there it streams an' richly reams,
My HELICON I ca' that. (11.216-18)

The soldier's song in the same poem gains a slightly different effect, for the martial rhythm is stressed by the refrain "at the sound of a drum" as well as by the rhyme of three words within each two lines:
My Prenticeship I past where my LEADER breath'd his last,
    When the bloody die was cast on the heights of ABRAM;
And I served out my TRADE when the gallant game was play'd,
    And the MORO low was laid at the sound of the drum. (11.33-36)

In other satiric pieces than songs occasional use of internal rhyme helps Burns establish his tone and emphasize contrast. In "Halloween" internal rhymes appear infrequently, most notably in the first stanza, where they substitute for end rhyme and introduce Burns's light tone. In "The Holy Fair" the internal rhymes fit the cheeriness of the tavern scene and act as a counterpoint to the thundering imprecations voiced by the ministers:

    While thick an' thrang, an' loud an' lang,
        Wi' Logic, an' wi' Scripture,
    They raise a din, that, in the end,
        Is like to breed a rupture... (11.158-61)

To insinuate his mockery into his descriptions of the preachers' serious sermons, Burns adds a bit of internal rhyme:

    His piercin words, like highlan swords,
        Divide the joints an' marrow;
    His talk o' Hell, whare devils dwell,
        Our vera 'Sauls does harrow'... (11.185-88)

Internal rhyme intensifies the effect of the ambiguities in these concluding lines:

    How monie hearts this day converts,
        O' Sinners an' Lasses!
    Their hearts o' stane, gin night are gane
        As saft as ony flesh is. (11.235-38)

Burns uses masculine, feminine, and internal rhyme schemes in similar ways among the later satires. For example, in "Act Sedurant of the Session" the feminine rhymes of "session," "transgression," and "possession" reinforce the revelations of other poetic elements:
Burns is mockingly challenging the power and rightness of Kirk Session rules against fornication. Similarly, in "Epistle to Logan" rhymes stress his satiric attitude as well as create fluctuations in tone. When he is being rather florid in advising and praising Logan, he uses mostly masculine rhymes; but the more realistic sections describing their carousing depend on feminine rhymes to give a suitable gaiety: "Willie," "hilly," "billie," and "Fillie"; "saunter," "canter," "mishanter," and "banter"; "FIDDLE," "diddle," "widdle," and "dridle" (11.1-18; see also 11.43-84). Unlike "Epistle to Logan" in which the unstressed double rhyme sound is repeated in four lines of each Standard Habbie stanza, "Epistle to Graham" includes in each stanza an unstressed feminine rhyme that is repeated only twice. Since Burns in the latter is recording in mock-epic style a battle between Whigs and Tories, the predominance of masculine rhymes gives a force suited to the description of war, while the unstressed double rhymes lighten the pace and remind us that his intent is to mock the politicians' efforts.

In "The Brigs of Ayr" and "Tam o' Shanter" feminine rhymes signal important shifts in tone. In the prologue and epilogue of "Brigs" the heroic couplets and occasional Alexandrines, combined with the flowery language, produce a slow pace and a stilted quality ill-suited to a flying; the meter is too slow to have much satiric bite. But in the conversation itself Burns frequently adds feminine unstressed rhymes that give the exchange of insults some lightness and comedy:

Fit only for a doited Monkish race, dull
Or frosty maids forsworn, the dear embrace,
Or Cuifs of latter times, wha held the notion, fools
That sullen gloom was sterling, true devotion:
Fancies that our guid Brugh denies protection,
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection!(11.144-49)
In "Tam o' Shanter" Burns intermingles masculine and feminine rhymes throughout the tale, but in three specific passages a shift in rhyme conveys a shift from a serious tone to a mocking, comic tone. After the opening passages, dominated by masculine rhymes, he turns to feminine rhymes for a lighter touch, as in

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonny lasses.). (11.13-16)

He continues to use unstressed double rhymes in his fictive account of Kate scolding Tam. By this shift in his pattern, Burns is able to suggest early in the poem that we should take neither the story nor the speaker too seriously. That Burns means us to see the pomposity in the speaker's first major use of a grand style is conveyed by the rhymes as well as by the inappropriateness of the pretentious similes:

Care, made to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy:
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious! (11.53-58)

Daiches adds that these double rhymes "give the impression of a grand, carefree snap of the fingers, while the final rhyming of 'glorious' with 'victorious' sounds a slightly drunken organ note which swells the climax of this account of Tam's state of mind."53 The shift in the rhyme after Tam has been seen by the witches implies a similar point. When the speaker stops the action to voice descriptive similes and warnings to Tam, he rhymes "fyke" and "byke," "foes" and "nose," "crowd" and " aloud," "follow" and "hollow," "fairin" and "herrin," "comin" and
"woman." The shift from masculine to feminine endings contributes to the gradual development in the lines of a quality of unsubstantiality, feeding our comic sense and warning against serious concern.

Internal rhyme appears in a few later poems, where it helps produce a sing-song bounciness suitable to Burns's mocking, high-spirited tone. The contributions of internal rhyme to rhythm and emphasis are most apparent in "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," wherein it regularly appears in the first and third line of each quatrain, such as "Simper James, Simper James, leave the fair Killie dames" and "Your HEARTS are the stuff will be POWDER enough" (11.26,20). He twice makes "sense" and "pretense" rhyme internally and usually is careful to let rhyme associate the name of the person with a characteristic or occupation, such as "Cessnock-side" and "pride" (11.8,44,54). The internal rhyme combines with meter, imagery, and invective to stress his satire of specific individuals. Internal rhyme in alternating lines of "Ode to Spring" helps fit the words to the tune, which Burns marked "lively, with expression." Here too the buoyancy added by repeated sounds works with other techniques in order to convey Burns's ridicule of the banality of conventional odes on spring.

Similarly, in "When Princes and Prelates" the internal rhyme functions mainly to merge words and tune to a quick-moving jingle. Although the rhyming words only twice stress a satiric point--"Prelates" and "zealots," "a__" and "brass"--the sing-song effect suits Burn's general theme: "Great Folk" are to be chastized for sending people to die in wars when it is better for all to "mowe."
Burns's decisions about types of rhyme and ways to vary rhyme schemes produce several results for his satires: he can create a buoyant, light movement that suits his mocking attitude, as in "Libel Summons," "When Guilford Good," and "Epistle to Graham"; he can stress points of attack by associating ideas through rhyme, as in "The Holy Tulzie," "To a Louse," and "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland"; he can modulate tone, letting shifts in rhyme signal his alterations between the serious and the ridiculous, as in "Love and Liberty," "Epistle to Logan," and "Tam o' Shanter." His frequent reliance on unaccented endings, feminine rhymes, and repeated sounds that lead to a sing-song rhythm reveals that he discards euphonious effects in favor of conversational inflections and light-hearted mocking. Both early and late poems illustrate similar utilization of rhymes to support his satiric themes. In later poems he does not introduce new techniques or seek new effects, nor does he make rhymes any more organically functional in the whole of the poem. In neither early nor later poems is special use of rhyme a major technique, and rhyme is never his sole method for conveying his satiric theme or attitude; but he employs the artifices of rhyme often enough to illustrate some skill at making selections of rhyme combine with other elements in order to unfold his attack.

Since Burns utilizes verse forms with regularized rhythmical and rhyming patterns--Standard Habbie, Christis Kirk, rhymed couplets, ballad quatrains--he always works within the limits defined by those forms. That circumscription, however, does not prevent variations in
the rhythmical pattern; in fact, the variations carry added emphasis. Both early and later satires are characterized by three main features: Burns's preference for dissonant rhythms in order to create conversational effects; his ability to slow or speed the pace by varying the strength of stresses; his ability to make verbal, rhetorical, and metrical accents coincide. Using the colloquial flow of natural speaking rhythms and syntax allows him leeway in creating ironic tone and personae; gradations of stress let him use emphasis to guide us to his viewpoint.

In several early poems, such as "Poor Mailie's Elegy," "The Twa Dogs," "Death and Doctor Hornbook," "To a Louse," "Address to the Deil," "The Ordination," and "Love and Liberty," Burns makes the rhythmical patterns, degrees of stress, and pace convey tone and pinpoint places of emphasis. The rhythmical pattern of "Poor Mailie's Elegy," for example, is the initial signal that this is no usual elegy. The tempo, almost a sing-song, indicates this elegy should not be understood as a serious mourning of Mailie:

Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,  
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose;  
Our Bardie's fate is at a close,  
Past a' remed!  
The last, sad cape-stane of his woes;  
Poor Mailie's dead! (11.1-6)

Here, as in so many of Burns's satires in Standard Habbie, the verse's two short lines, its use of just two different rhymes, and its regular iambic feet can be effectively linked with flippant, nonserious tones, a light and jingling movement, and deft twists of thought. Initial strict adherence to the stress pattern in other forms, such as the
octosyllabic couplets of "The Twa Dogs," alerts us to the mocking quality of what will follow: "'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle,/ That bears the name o' auld king COIL" (11.1-2). Variations in the iambic tetrameter of the second couplet combined with strong alliteration in the first line create different emphases and tempos for these lines:

They loiter, lounging, lank an' lazy;
Tho' deil-haet ails them, yet uneasy; nothing
Their days, insipid, dull an' tasteless,
Their nights, unquiet, lang an' restless. (11.207-10)

The beat is slower, emphasizing the emptiness of the lives of the rich. The iambic tetrameter of "Death and Doctor Hornbook," aided by the double rhymes and unstressed endings, creates the rhythm of a staggering persona as well as a vivid picture of the situation:

The Clachan yill has made me canty,
I was na fou, but just had plenty;
I stacher'd whyles, but yet took tent ay
To free the ditches;
An' hillocks, stanes, an' bushes kenn'd ay
Frae ghaists an' witches. (11.13-18)

One critic praises the exactness with which the accents accord with the tottering steps described in the third line of the passage and the way in which the run of words in the fifth line moves quickly until abruptly halted by "kenn'd ay." In "To a Louse" the iambic stresses accord with the spoken accents of the adjectives and verbs: "Ye ugly, creepan, blastet wonner,/Detested, shunn'd, by saunt an' sinner" (11.7-8). Each descriptive word receives an equally heavy stress, slowing the pace of the line and adding to the poem's vitality. In other lines the same, steady iambic tempo occurs, but sometimes
Burns modifies the pattern, weakening the stress of some words so that, in contrast, more important ideas receive stronger emphasis: "There ye may creep, and sprawl, and sprattle" (1.14). When he concludes with the general advice to "us" the stresses are more even; a conversational effect occurs because he follows the syntax of natural speech, and the tempo slows so that the total concept is clear. Similarly, in "Address to the Deil" the generally quick-moving iambics are occasionally slowed, while Burns jams together stressed words; the result is a harsher, more prosy rhythm:

Thence, mystical knots mak great abuse,
On Young-Guidmen, fond, keen an' croose;
When the best warble w the house,
By cantraip wit,
Is instant made no worth a louse,
Just at the bit. (11.61-66)

In "The Ordination" the heavy accents fall most often on verbs, extra unstressed syllables intrude into the iambic pattern, and an occasional trochee appears; the variations occur because Burns again prefers conversational roughness to smooth-flowing monotony:

Mak haste an' turn king David owre,
An' lilt w' holy clangor;
O' double verse come gie us four,
An' skirl up the Bangor:
This day the Kirk kicks up a stoure,
Nae mair the knaves shall wrang her
For Heresy is in her pow'r,
And gloriously sh' ll whang her
Wi' pith this day. (11.19-27)

The exuberant rhythm of this ironic poem calls attention to the contrast between the merrymaking and the bigoted Auld Lichts' excessive rigidity: the latter is Burns's principal satiric target.
Although the iambic is the most common rhythmic pattern in Burns's satires, he illustrates his awareness of the effects to be gained from other feet. In "Love and Liberty" many of the songs and recitativos use iambic meter; but just as he skillfully varies characters, verse forms, and tunes in the cantata, so too he achieves diversity in metrical schemes. The bard's song, for instance, uses iambic tetrameter, but the stresses are so heavy and unvaried that the song quickly gains a jingling movement. In contrast, the tinkler's song, also iambic tetrameter, secures a different effect because the staccato beat of its tune overrides many of the verbal stresses. The soldier's doxy sings in anapests, words and notes of the song coinciding in stress; the lightness and speed of the anapests call attention to her cheerfulness and underline her professions of gaiety despite her poverty and ostracism. Trochees in the last song, which all the beggars perform, make each line end on an unstressed syllable, giving a final, finished touch to this concluding song. The weighted stresses are placed regularly on the words that express what the group accepts and rejects; the heavy stresses not only give the ideas more vigor, energy, and meaning than weak stresses could, but they also suggest the sound of tankards beating time on the tables:

Here's to BUDGETS, BAGS and WALLETS!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged BRATS and CALLETS!
One and all cry out, AMEN!
A fig for those by LAW protected,
LIBERTY's a glorious feast!
COURTS for Cowards were erected,
CHURCHES built to please the Priest. (11.274-81)
The later poems also illustrate Burns's diversity in rhythmical patterns. Heavily stressed iambs, as in "Extempore, Court of Sessions," create a vigorous and swift movement that coincides with the tempo of the tune to which the words are set. Moreover, the metrical accents underline sarcastic points:

He gaped for 't, he graped for 't,
He fand it was awa, man. . . .
The BENCH sae wise lift up their eyes,
Half-wauken'd wi' the din, man. (11.5-6,15-16)

The tendency of heavy stresses to slow the line, thus focusing attention to the meaning of the words accented, is especially effective in "Tam o' Shanter": "A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum" and "His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony" (11.20,42). The speaker's description of the witches' dance is particularly vivid because of the pronounced contrast between heavy stresses and weak nonstresses and because Burns produces a speed in the regular rhythm of the iambs:

The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark! (11.145-50)

In "Ode to Spring" Burns merges accents and words so that the metrical accent always falls on vulgar words; thus he focuses on obscenity as a way to ridicule conventional lyrics. The persona of "Esopus to Maria" uses iambic tetrameter and pentameter, but Burns's speaker is not able to maintain regularity. It seems that Esopus does not intentionally seek the conversational roughness, for he uses flowery language and professes his desire to write smoothly flowing lines. Rather, it would
seem that in such irregular lines Esopus is in one more way revealing his incompetence.

Other feet than iambic appear also in the later satires. The tune for the "Second Heron Ballad" has a staccato, even beat joined to a mixture of iambics and anapests; the combination of musical and metrical emphases creates a monotonously regular beat, suitable for this poem's monotonous list of people and characteristics:

And there will be trusty KIROCHTREE,
Whase honour was ever his law;
If the VIRTUES were packt in a parcel
His WORTH might be sample for a'. (11.61-64)

Anapests, with an iamb at the beginning of each line, supply "When Princes and Prelates" and "Monody on Maria" with sing-song rhythms and strong accents that emphasize the individuals and characteristics that Burns attacks. The beat in "Monody on Maria" is ironically inappropriate to a monody, but the quick tempo with heavy stresses works well in expressing Burns's contempt for the woman. The anapests of "Sketch to Fox" also seem unsuitable, for they make the lines move lightly and cheerfully; this foot is just one more element creating confusion about Burns's intent. The semantic content indicates that Burns could not decide whether to satirize (in which case an anapestic jingle would be compatible) or sincerely praise Fox. "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland" best exemplifies Burns's ability to gain exuberance and dynamism from a combination of dactyls, anapests, and trochees; although some of the lines divorce verbal and metrical accents and have a dissonant quality, the poem has the pulsation and flow of a child's teasing chant:
Calvin's Sons, Calvin's Sons, seize your spiritual guns--
Ammunition ye never can need;
Your HEARTS are the stuff will be POWDER enough,
And your SCULLS are a storehouse o' LEAD... (11.18-21)

The metrical pattern, common to squibs and drinking songs, is ironically incompatible with the persona's profession of concern for the Auld Lichts; but it is perfect for Burns's ridicule of the Orthodox.

The hardy stresses and rapid rhythms fit the raucous tone and swift pace of some poems—the bard's and group's songs in "Love and Liberty," "Ode to Spring," "The Ordination"; apparently inappropriate to the content of such pieces as "Poor Mailie's Elegy," "Monody on Maria," and "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," they intimate that Burns speaks ironically because the metrical form qualifies rather than reinforces the surface meaning. He adapts metrical accent to musical accent, as in "Extempore, Court of Sessions," or lets them contradict each other so that he can convey irony, as in "When Princes and Prelates." Heavy stresses can slow a line for emphasis, as occurs in "Address to the Deil" or help speed a group of lines into a myriad dance, as in "Tam o' Shanter." It is probable that Burns sought instinctively the effects of diversity in rhythms and gradations of stress, that he learned about metrical sound patterns not in books but through listening—for the prosy, dissonant, conversational qualities of natural speech underlie his achievements with rhythm. Because of the reciprocation between tone and sound—movement of words, rhythmical schemes play a larger role in Burns's arsenal of satiric techniques than does rhyme.
Metrical strategies and rhyming devices do often underline the satiric thrust in several of Burns's poems. Even more prevalent, however, is Burns's reliance on alliterative devices to focus attention on similar or contrasting ideas, to modulate pace, to help create auditory images. As Wittig notes, the Scots vernacular contains "latent vituperative potentialities" because of its abundance of consonants and "consequent easy alliteration." Many of the alliterative phrases that Burns uses have no bearing on his satiric themes; some, such as "glunch an' gloom," "sink or swoom," "Stem an' stern," and "rant an' rave," repeat vernacular expressions without special alliterative significance. Several poems in both the early and later group, however, illustrate the ways in which Burns joins alliterative emphases with satiric statements.

Among the early poems, "Epistle to Rankin," "Love and Liberty," "The Mauchline Wedding," "The Holy Tulzie," and "Death and Doctor Hornbook" demonstrate the extent of Burns's fondness for repeated sibilants. After the slow-paced and sonorant first line of "Epistle to Rankin" characterizes the recipient, the next lines initiate a series of sibilants that emphasize the poet's mockingly sarcastic concern for the Kirk elders: "O rough, rude, ready-witted R******,... [the Kirk thinks] Your dreams an' tricks/Will send you, Korahlike, a sinkin,/Straught to auld Nick's" (11.1-6). The subsequent stanza continues Burns's hissing mockery of disapproving Auld Lichts:
Ye hae sae monie cracks an' cants,
And in your wicked, drunken rants,
Ye mak a devil o' the Saunts,
An' fill them fou;
And then their failings, flaws an' wants,
Are a' seen thro'. (11.7-12)

In "Love and Liberty" the doxy's repugnance for the hypocrisy of "my sanctified sot" is expressed by her diction; but the alliteration stresses the scorn in her epithet (1.69). Sibilance in the first, fifth, and sixth recitativos and in Merry Andrew's song also exemplifies how the repeated "s" sound underlines the semantic content; words and sound work together to secure a more intense accent on the beggars' scorn for conventionality. Alliteration of the sibilant sound emphasizes some of the most abusive indictments in "The Holy Tulzie," such as in the persona's depiction of one minister: "And liked weel to shed their [opponents'] blood, / And sell their skin" (11.35-36).

The hisses of "But now the gown wi' rustling sound,/Its silken pomp displays;/Sure there's no sin in being vain/O' siccan bony claes!" function onomatopoetically to create the appropriate auditory image in "The Mauchline Wedding" (11.26-29). This auditory suggestion of clothing rustling is more than just an ornamental addition, for Burns's means for attacking the women's inflated pride is to focus scrutiny on their clothing. The "s's" and dentals of the mostly monosyllabic first stanza of "Death and Doctor Hornbook" focus our attention on the speaker's ironic view of Death and emphasize the tone: Burns will make a fictive conversation with Death be the vehicle for an attack of the Kirk's rigid views of death. That reliance on alliteration to stress ideas permeates the rest of the poem, as in Death's scathingly
sarcastic description of Hornbook's medicines:

"Calces o' fossils, earths, and trees;
"True Sal-marinux o' the seas;
"The Farina of beans and pease,
   "He has 't in plenty. . . ."(11.121-24; also 11.115-20)

As in "Hornbook" Burns effectively combines alliterative patterns to secure more intense unity between logically related ideas and emotions in "The Twa Dogs." When Ceasar describes the rich women's mindless activities, the repeated "g" sound emphasizes the sarcasm behind the apparently complimentary "great an' gracious"; other alliterated plosives, in "ladies," "clusters," "sister," "absent," "thoughts," "run-deils," "jads," and "scandal potion pretty," add to the abusive quality of Ceasar's charges (11.219-24). Burns stresses his intense disgust for the hypocritical and intolerant Auld Lichts when he writes "To the Rev. M'Math":

But I gae mad at their grimaces,
Their sighan, cantan, grace-prood faces,
Their three-mile prayers, an' hauf-mile graces,
   Their raxan conscience, elastic
Whase greed, revenge, an' pride disgraces
   Waur nor their nonsense. (11.19-24; also 11.55-66)

The hissing "s's," the nasal "an's," and the percussive "d," "g," "t," and "p" emphasize the key concepts in his charges. Similarly, the hisses in Beelzebub's voice join with his insults that are also defined by the harsh "g" and "k" sounds in these lines:

Let WARK an' HUNGER mak them sober!
The HIZZIES, if they're oughtlins fausont, respectable
Let them in DRURY LANE be lesson'd!
An' if the wives, an' dirty brats,
Come thiggan at your doors an' yets. . . . begging; gates
Get out a HORSE-WHIP, or a JOWLER,
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
An' gar the tatter'd gipseys pack
Wi' a' their bastarts on their back! (11.42-52)
By emphasizing Beelzebub's harsh response to the Highlanders, Burns can in contrast underline the disequilibrium between the attitude of the persona and his own. The liquid "r" and "l," the sonorant nasals, and the breathless "h" in "Address to the Deil" create a different effect:

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame;
Far ken'd, an' noted is thy name;
An' tho' yon Iowan heugh's thy hame,
Thou travels far;
An' faith! thou's neither lag nor lame
Nor blate nor scaur. (11.13-18)

By giving the lines vibrancy and a slowed tempo, the repeated sounds support the attitude Burns has already established: he makes the persona voice his own friendly, uncritical view of the Devil as a means to state his repudiation of traditional Kirk dogma.

"Holy Willie's Prayer" and "The Holy Fair" most clearly illustrate how Burns patterns tonal qualities within and between individual stanzas so as to reinforce the satiric point conveyed by other elements in the poem. Thomas Crawford has discussed much of Burns's sound poetry in "Holy Willie's Prayer," pointing out, for example, that the sound of the verse reflects the opposing sides of Willie's nature. He notes that Burns selects "nasal consonants to convey sonority, and plosives and velar to reflect either strength, conflict, or both together," as in

Yet I am here, a chosen sample,
To shew thy grace is great and ample:
I'm here, a pillar o' thy temple
   Strong as a rock,
A guide, a ruler and example
   To a' thy flock.--(11.25-30)
In that stanza, the double rhymes, the alliterated "grace" and "great," and "the interlocking voiced and voiceless velars 'guide' . . . and 'flock'" produce unity and intensity. The stately rhythm of the fifth stanza suggests Willie's assumed philosophical grandeur; it contrasts significantly with the next four stanzas' admission and attempted justification of his sins. In one of those stanzas the sibilants, the voiceless fricative "f," the sonorant "l," and the plosive "t" emphasize his hesitation to speak of his flaws and his blustering attempts to excuse them:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{But yet--O L d--confess I must--} \\
\text{At times I'm } & \text{fash'd wi' fleshly lust;} \\
\text{And sometimes too, in worldly trust } & \text{Vile Self gets in;} \\
\text{But thou remembers we are } & \text{dust,} \\
\text{Defil'd } & \text{wi' sin.--} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(11.37-42; italics added)

Throughout "Holy Willie's Prayer" the alliteration in single lines and especially the longer interlocked patterns of repeated sounds reinforce the thrust of the poem's imagery and juxtapositions of language. In "The Holy Fair" Burns calls upon not only double rhymes, internal rhymes, and the juxtaposition of monosyllabic and polysyllabic lines, but adds alliterative patterns to secure emphasis and modulations in tone. The harsh plosives and short vowels, for instance, create an auditory image of the noisy drinking tent and its cheerful patrons:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Now, butt an' ben, the Change-house fills,} \\
\text{Wi' gill-clasp Commentators: } & \text{wooden bowls of ale} \\
\text{Here's crying out for bakes an' gills, } & \text{biscuits} \\
\text{An' there, the pint-stowp clatters. . . .} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(11.154-62)

In contrast, alliterative "t," "s," "r," and "l" suggest the texture of the minister's thunderous preaching:
But now the L__'s ain trumpet touts,
Till a' the hills are rairan,
An' echos back return the shouts,
Black ***** is na spairan. ...(11.181-89) Russell

When Burns restates the Auld Licht view of hell, he lets polysyllabic words, repeated "t," "s," "d," and a sequence of sounds requiring careful pronunciation slow down the pace and suggest the auditory image of the minister forcefully shouting his threats:

A vast, unbottom'd, boundless Pit,
Fill'd fou o' Iowan brunstane.
Whase raging flame, an' scorching heat,
Wad melt the hardest whunstane. ...(11.190-98)

Within stanzas Burns effectively balances opposing sound effects in order to stress the antithetical ideas. The dominant pattern in the poem is a contrast between "sibilants, voiceless f, and close vowels . . . [that] convey hatred, meanness or contempt" and "nasals, voiced z, and open vowels . . . [that] emphasize both the sonority of Scottish preaching and Burns's affirmation of life."60 The first two lines of the poem illustrate these opposing patterns, as if Burns is stating the theme he will develop: "Upon a simmer Sunday morn, When Nature's face is fair" (11.1-2). In the concluding lines, again the nasals and open vowels of "An' monie jobs that day begin, May end in Houghmagandie" contrast with the sibilance and closed vowels of "Some ither day."61 Burns affirms the naturalness of fornication, a major theme in his attack of the Kirk's restrictions, while deploring the need to delay natural appetites until "another day" when the preachers are not intruding between desire and action. As other critics have noted, "The Holy Fair" and "Holy Willie's Prayer" remain two of
Burns's finest achievements because the poet has skillfully joined many poetic elements—including alliterative effects—into organic wholes.

The same kinds of alliteration appear in Burns's later satires which illustrate similar diverse effects. Burns places emphases on words important to his satiric point. The sonorant "r," for instance, underlines the mocking words with which Burns describes his target in "The Calf": "To hear you roar and rowte [bellow]" (1.18). Similarly in "Extempore, Court of Sessions" the dentals in "He clench'd his pamphlets in his fist" and "He gap'd for 't, he grasped for 't" (11.1,6) reinforce the metrical accents on these verbs that pinpoint the lawyer's weaknesses as an orator. The harsh "c" of "The cave-lothed beggar, with a conscience clear/ . . . goes to Heaven" (11.30-31) concludes "Ode to Mrs. Oswald"; the alliteration draws together into one sarcastic thrust the gist of the poem: a savage indictment of this wealthy woman's hellish spirit. Harsh "g" also adds emphasis to the speaker's scorn for the double standard imposed by conventional morality: "Our dame can lae her ain gudeman,/An' m_w for glutton greed" ("Wha'll M_w Me Now," 11.18-19). "The Kirk of Scotland's Garland" has a musical movement, emphasized not only by the rhymes and boisterous metrical flow but also by the alliterative patterns that build up cumulative rhythms. The "s" in "O'er Pegasus' side ye ne'er laid a stride,/Ye only stood by where he sh_" spits forth Burns's scorn for the talents of "Poet Willie" (11.36-37). "Calvin's Sons, Calvin's Sons, seize your spiritual guns" is so filled with hisses
that it would be difficult to mistake this warning as the poet's serious profession of concern (1.18). Sibilants, the plosive "p," and dentals add emphasis to the mockery in his description of William Fisher:

    Holy Will, Holy Will, there was wit i' your skull,
    When ye pilfer'd the alms o' the poor;
    The timmer is scant, when ye're ta'en for a saint,
    Wha should swing in a rape for an hour. . . .(11.66-69)

In the later satires, as in the early group, Burns continues to illustrate one of the primary functions of alliteration: by creating an echoing sound through repetition, he confirms the attack expressed by the words.

Burns also uses alliteration sometimes when he wishes to modulate his tempo, accentuate alterations in tone, and link seemingly antithetical ideas. He heightens the contrast in the diction when he adds alliterative dentals, "s," "l," and "g" to the inflated polysyllabic language in this stanza of "Tam Samson's Elegy":

    Now safe the stately Sawmont sail,
    And Trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
    And Eels weel kend for souple tail,
    And Gedds for greed, since dark in Death's fish creel we wail
    Tam Samson dead! (11.31-36)

Not only does he slow the tempo to contrast with the appropriately faster pace of the preceding stanzas' description of curling, but he assures that we do not too quickly pass that grotesquely extravagant image of Tam in 'Death's fish creel." Alliteration thus combines with other techniques to present Burns's mockery of conventional elegies. Burns patterns sibilance and the harsh "c" in "I'll Tell
You a Tale of a Wife"; since he places most of the sibilance in the woman's speeches yet shows no desire to satirize her, it does not seem probable that he wants the "s" sound to suggest his antipathy toward her. Rather, he accumulates the hissing sounds into a series that he abruptly interrupts at the end of each line, as in "Sae sair as the sins o' my ____" (1.8). The harsh "c" of the understood "cunt" thus contrasts violently with the preceding sounds and receives a sharper emphasis. Burns uses two sounds in a comparable manner in portions of "Epistle to Graham": "I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig bears,/Wha left the all-important cares/Of fiddles, wh_res and hunters" (11.7-9). The droning "s" begins to lull us into accepting the ability of the Duke, when the abrupt movement to fricatives and breathless "h" coincides with a significant change in content. In these poems, then, Burns does not idly change alliterative patterns but makes the shifts guide us to a major thrust of his attack.

"Tam o' Shanter" illustrates Burns's continuing ability to make alliteration create emphases and pace, as well as to expose the person's divided mind. For example, sibilance underlines a vibrant auditory image of Tam's angry wife: "our sulky sullen dame,/ [is] Gathering her brows like gathering storm,/Nursing her wrath to keep it warm" (11.10-12). The plosive "b" and dentals of "A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum" help create a memorably vivid picture as well as stress the conflict between Tam and his wife (1.20). In both portraits the sounds suggest a visual picture and work in the manner of caricature to exaggerate the traits of the characters. In
The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd... (11.73-76)

the repeated consonants lend such a sing-song effect that the lines
would be poorly suited to a serious description of obstacles faced by
the hero; but they remind us, not long after the flowery similes
about pleasure (11.59-66), that the persona has not found a consis-
tent and suitable style for his subject and that Burns's tone is con-
sistently comic. The description of the witches' dance (11.145-50)
secures a sense of motion because of the contrast between heavy
stresses and weak nonstresses and the use of action verbs but also
because of the alliteration. Crawford notes that "crossed alliteration
and internal vowel rhymes" in "They reel'd, they set, they cross'd,
they cleekit,/Till ilka carlin swat and reekit" (11.147-48) "vividly
suggest the figures of a Scottish country dance." The breathless
"h" and sonorant "l" and "r" of "thou'll get thy fairin!/In hell they'1
roast thee like a herrin" (11.201-02) force the tempo of the lines to
slow (as do the initial spondees "Ah, Tam! Ah, Tam!"). Thus the per-
sona interrupts the climactic chase to scold the recalcitrant Tam; he
reveals a certain incompetence as a story-teller, for he does not
intrude in order to heighten suspense but just to attend to his pose
as a moralistic judge. The alliteration makes more striking the
antithesis between the exciting events and the attempts of the speaker
to remain emotionally uninvolved. In subsequent lines (11.211-14),
however, the persona excitedly urges Tam to speed. This passage
focuses our attention on the persona's vacillating attitude. "Tam o' Shanter" generally exhibits a skillful blending of alliterative effects with other auditory techniques, the dramatic monologue form, the juxtapositions in diction, and the imagery; the tone poetry is woven into the poem not for its own sake but to support divergent ideas and emotions and to produce a satisfying unity between semantic content and the interplay of consonants and vowels.

The breadth and intensity of his dependence on alliteration are much the same in the early and later poems. In the larger group Burns does not break new ground in usage or show any significant growth in his ability to mesh repeated sounds with other poetic elements. He lets alliteration aid in exposing personae, such as Holy Willie and the speaker in "Tam o' Shanter"; emphasize key points of his attack, as in "Epistle to Graham," "To M'Math," and "Mauchline Wedding"; and suggest an exaggerated visual picture that informs us of his comic tone, as in "Tam Samson's Elegy," "The Holy Fair," and "Tam o' Shanter." The alliteration that seems so natural to Burns and to the Scots idiom thus serves as more than just decoration: it functions in unity with other satiric elements to communicate Burns's attacks more intensely and clearly.

METAPHORICAL IMAGERY

In order to create and develop satire in both early and later poems, Burns uses metaphorical imagery--a convenient label defined here to include both analogy and figures of speech. Because of the
nature of Burns's use of tropes, analogies, and images, in this section metaphorical imagery will be considered as those sense-perceptible things amplified by his comparisons between dissimilar objects. Since the focus falls on satiric ends achieved through metaphor, neither grammatical, theoretical, nor comprehensive approaches are warranted. The aim is to determine the kinds of metaphors he employs as well as to understand when, how, and why he uses them; the focus falls always on the contributions of metaphorical imagery to his satires.

Burns's use of figurative language shows certain characteristics. Usually he makes the relationship between tenor and vehicle tight and specific, and he depends on our normal human experiences and common sense to guide us to a single conclusion; less frequently he leaves the metaphor ambiguous. The bulk of the satiric imagery is expressed in brief phrases and lines. Occasionally, he presents a series of related images that establish a motif and develop the satiric idea of the poem; even when there is a discontinuity of images, he sometimes makes them contribute to a single tone or single effect. Sources of his vehicles include traditional associations and readily observable "facts" from the natural and physical worlds, from commercial activities, and from common experiences. These sources fit into four major categories: the domain of nature, the animal kingdom, "human activities," and learning and written knowledge. The subject matter, the degree of extended development, the triteness or ingenuity, and the amount of explicitness or subtlety in his satiric comparisons
do not vary significantly between early and later poems; that is, the later poems do not illustrate an increased skill in manipulation of satiric imagery. Although his satiric metaphors are sometimes inorganic and decorative, sometimes functional and organic, there is no evidence that the early pieces manifest more of the former features and the others more of the latter; he is not demonstrating increased ability at organically merging metaphorical images with his satire.

The first major source of Burns's satiric figures of speech is the world of nature--physical properties, plant life, and natural phenomena. In both early and later satiric poems he draws mostly on commonplace things, usually making a metaphor a brief passage in the whole poem and rarely its controlling image. The later poems contain more fruition images, but they illustrate no fundamental changes in quality of imagery or the ends to which the metaphors are put.

Some of Burns's metaphors are clearly demeaning, as a conventional comparison illustrates: "Be to the Poor like onie whunstane [hard, dark rock]" ("Dedication to Hamilton," 1.57). Although Burns identifies his attitude when he says that Excise men seize and destroy Scots' liquor stills "like a muscle [mussel]/Or laimpet shell" and that a smuggler will pick "her pouch as bare as Winter," the kinesthetic images are so general that they make little impact ("Author's. Cry and Prayer," 11.40-42, 44-48). Luath's realization that sometimes the poor "are riven out baith root an' branch" contributes a lucid though trite image of the oppression fomented by the affluent; the metaphor, however, contributes little that is not elsewhere more
emphatically asserted ("The Twa Dogs," 1.143). Also commonplace and
generalized is Burns's metaphor in "Address to the Unco Guid":

Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
   Right on ye scud your sea-way;
But, in the teeth o' baith to sail,
   It mak's an unco leeway. (11.29-32)

The image's suggestion that humans are subject to forces beyond their
control merges effectively with this poem's pleas for compassionate
tolerance of sinners. By conveying insight about both groups--the
"unco guid" and the "blackguards"--and by being so generalized that
each reader must decide what "wind" and "tide" he battles, the
image is effective both in fitting Burns's overall theme and in demand­
ing that we consider which group we belong to and how we treat others.
Beelzebub's description of the Highlanders as "poor, dunghill sons of
dirt an' mire" expresses this persona's contempt ("Address of Beelzebub,'
1.19). But here the image is more complicated. Because of traditional
conceptions of Beelzebub and because of the context in which the
comparison is voiced, we cannot accept the validity of this scornful
comparison; we must view it instead as expression of Beelzebub's evil.
The devil is the spokesman for the poet's satiric target rather than
for his attack.

There are other such images in which the comparison cannot be
comprehended simply at face value, with tenor, vehicle, and linkage
immediately clear. When the persona of "Author's Cry and Prayer"
describes himself as "trode i' the mire out o' sight," he is apparently
subjugating himself (1.56). The point of the trope depends on its
not working; the speaker pretends to be no more significant than a
worm or blade of grass even while he simultaneously calls attention to himself by his aggressive speech. He demeans himself in order to delude the Parliament members into thinking he will not attack them. Similarly, when Holy Willie says "we are dust," he sounds piously humble and meek (1.41). But earlier lines of "Holy Willie's Prayer" have clearly specified that Willie is anything but humble. Burns's satiric point in that deceptively simple metaphor depends on the meaning of the poem as a whole and on the figure's appearance in context—just after Willie has confessed to drunken lust and just before he argues that God made man imperfect. Willie does not believe he is dust but is parroting dogma in order to shift responsibility to God for what are his own choices. When Willie refers to his lust and drinking as "this fleshly thorn," we misconstrue Burns's attack if we think this Kirk elder honestly feels the physical and spiritual pain that Paul describes (1.55; II Cor.VII.7-10). He is not accepting a thorn in his flesh as God's reminder of Satan's temptation nor viewing fleshly desires as a thorn; he is seeking to flatter God. Both images blend organically with the total meaning of the poem, for they reveal Willie's attempt to eliminate from himself the burden of decisions and the responsibility for wrong choices. Moreover, Burns has not insisted upon his own response nor ours but dramatized Willie's response; discerning the irony depends on our grasping the conflict in images that Willie does not see.

In other poems, such as "Love and Liberty" and "A Dream," the metaphor is immediately clear, but full realization of Burns's point
depends on that metaphor being considered in context. At the beginning of "Love and Liberty" he is describing the outdoors scene to which the indoor festivities will contrast; he personifies hailstones, that "drive wi' bitter skyte [sudden blow]" and "infant Frost," that "bite[s]" (11.4-5). At the end of the poem we realize that Burns has implied that society, not just the weather, has "driven" and "bitten" the outcasts; the tumult imagery suggests the disorder of that society. The matter is handled subtly, though at first glance the personifications of natural phenomena seem commonplace; full comprehension of the symbolic force depends on consideration of the total poem. Misleading also in its first appearance is the water imagery in "A Dream." Such imagery is suitable to a poem supposedly set on the banks of the Thames and addressed to the Prince of Wales, not long before commissioned in the Navy. Thus, it is neither surprising nor apparently satiric when the persona says to the Prince: "Down Pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails, /I'm tauld ye're driving rarely [finely]" (11.84-85). This trite metaphor is simultaneously complimentary and derogatory; the Prince is directing his life but preferring frivolity to serious matters of state. In subsequent lines, Burns is more outspoken:

Young, royal TARRY-BREEKS, I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious Galley, stem and stern,
Weel rigg'd for Venus barter;
But first hang out that she'll discern
Your hymeneal Charter,
Then heave abroad your grapple airn,
An', large upon her quarter,
Come full that day. (11.109-17)

The nautical terms, the references to classical myth, and the ambiguity
of "her" (common reference to a ship but also stated in Burns's footnote as a reference to the Prince's latest lover) become sexual metaphors that slyly mock the Prince's preference for love affairs rather than governmental affairs.

When he uses nature metaphors in his later satires, Burns utilizes them in a larger number of poems and does make two of them extensive enough to be considered controlling metaphors. The same pattern of usage appears: in some Burns specifies exactly what he satirizes—he uses physical images to represent the moral condition of a man's family that is "an auld crab-apple, Rotten at the core" ("Buy Braw Troggin," 11.31-32); in some, he leaves his point ambiguously general—the female persona ironically notes that the "sweet tree" of love bears "sic bitter fruit" but we must decide whether to interpret "fruit" as the child she is carrying or the "scornfu' sneer" she receives from society ("Wha'll M_w Me Now," 11.21-22). He still draws the vehicles from readily observable "facts" of the natural world and from traditional associations.

Some of the metaphors inserted into various pieces add to the overall satiric tone although they do not create an imagistic motif. Esopus thinks he praises Maria when he says her undaunted chatter "dares the public like a noontide sun" ("Esopus to Maria," 1.44). That the metaphor does not make much sense reflects Esopus' distorted understanding of Maria and of the simple properties of nature. The image does, however, accord with other examples of this persona's utterances, unrelated references, and incoherent attitudes. The Lord
Advocate in "Extempore, Court of Sessions" loses his argument in a "declamation-mist" (11.3-4). Burns explains his metaphor by the word "declamation"; "mist" suggests the reasons the advocate lost the threads of his case. The other lawyer's answer is compared to "the gathering storm," for this advocate speaks "like wind-driv'n hail" or "torrents owre a lin [waterfall]," emphasizing the disorderliness of his speech as well as its loudness, rapidity, and force (11.12-13). With this imagery Burns imposes his subjective conceptions on what he sees and hears. "Flame" is the trite vehicle that describes sexual passion in "I'll Tell You a Tale": "Devotion blew up in a flame" (1.37). Later the narrator hopes that any who are affronted by this poem's incidents "Still ride in Love's channel at large, / And never make port in a _____!!" (11.43-44). The metaphors of fire and sea do not logically reconcile; each is just the featured image in a different stanza in a poem that lacks a controlling metaphor. But the vulgar metaphor emphatically taunts the repressive Kirk with the futility of their rules and penalties, for copulation, it is implied, is as natural as fire and water. Of quite a different cast, a series of hackneyed similes contributes to our understanding of Burns's satire of the speaker in "Tam o' Shanter":

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white--then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.--(11.59-66)

When he voices these trite images, the speaker sounds high-minded and
righteous as he thinks he should—but some of his other statements suggest that this man fails to understand his total self. He piles up these lofty comparisons as if he is not sure he is making his point or as if he is trying to convince himself of the follies of pleasure; by overstating a simple idea—"it is time to go home"—he reveals his inadequacies as a storyteller. This passage allows Burns to expose one facet of the persona's personality, and it allows the poet to prepare for the irony emerging from some of the speaker's subsequent revelations about himself and "pleasure."

The most extensive developments of metaphors in the later satires appear in "The Fête Champetre" and "The Tree of Liberty."

The meaning of "The Tree of Liberty" depends on an extended metaphor. That tree has flourished in France (because of the 1789 Revolution), bearing "virtuous" fruit that even a peasant or beggar can share. He selects an effective, though static, metaphor to animate Liberty; Burns adds to his initial comparison by personifying growth, fruit, buds, blossoms, locations, branches, and diseases. The metaphors are so explicitly presented that it is impossible to miss his point: The French Revolution was admirable and it is distressful that no such freedom or "tree" exists in Britain (11.63-64). To make a negative point about politicians in a more indirect fashion than just saying candidates buy votes, Burns devises a nature scene as a metaphor in "The Fête Champetre." Mirth "on gleesome" wing flies to summon any sprite "That sports by wood or water"; the group ignores "Cauld Boreas" but enjoys "Cynthia's car" and welcomes the western breeze (11.25-48).
The panorama of the "echoing wood, the winding flood,/[which] Like
Paradise did glitter" contrasts with the final stanza's satiric point:
Politics comes to the "magic ground" but is not allowed to enter until
he "quat his name" (11.49-56). Burns has insinuated that politicians
are "unnatural," not an organic part of the harmonious natural world.

A second type of satiric imagery is closely related. In
several poems he includes both literal and figurative animals; he is
drawing from the pastoral tradition, the beast-fable tradition, and
personal observation when he makes animal metaphors the center of
some satires. Sometimes a real animal is alluded to (as in "To M'Math")
or even characterized as a literal presence in the poem (as in "Twa
Dogs"). Or he compares humans to beasts in order to disparage the
person by emphasizing the bestiality of the human and reduce his stature
or dignity. The physical similarity between an animal and a person
denigrates the human form; and the virtues of the animal reveal the
imperfections of man. He often makes the point that animals live
together in more harmony and cooperation than do people; thus it is
insulting to animals to be compared with humans.

Animals' mutual cooperation and respect is one of the main
disclosures in "The Twa Dogs," in which Burns sustains animal meta-
phors throughout the poem. Here we find Luath, the poor cotter's
mutt, and Ceasar, the lord's pedigreed pet, playing, talking, and
sharing a friendship. Not only is their superiority to their masters
implied by their friendly conversation, but Ceasar's words especially
damn the gentry who haughtily flaunt their status and wealth and rebuff
the poor. The narrator prepares us for the "dog's eye" view of man in an introductory description; he establishes that they are dogs, not men in the shape of brutes. Ceasar, "whalpet some place far abroad," shows no arrogance about his pedigree or handsome, engraved brass-collar: "The fient a pride na pride had he" (11.11,16). Unlike the lords he describes, neither "family" name nor wealth deters his friendships with "lesser" dogs--"a Tinkler-gipsey's measan [cur]" or any "tawtied [shaggy] tyke" no matter how "duddie [ragged]" (11.18-20). His companion, Luath, is described in more detail: handsome and popular even though a mixed breed, his honesty, loyalty, and shrewdness are stressed (11.29-36). Although the delineation of the two dogs is important, after establishing the general picture Burns does not develop the metaphor explicitly and reminds us only twice of their animal natures: "as lang's my tail" (1.57) and "I for joy hae basket wi' them" (1.138). This failure to reemphasize the animality of the dogs, however, does afford a benefit: by not stressing the dogs' animal qualities after the introductory description, Burns accents the human-like elements of these dogs and suggests we react to their conversation as if two people were talking. The satiric point resides in the idea that animals behaving like humans is more of a likelihood than is intelligent, nonbestial behavior by humans. The choice of conversationalists aids the satiric effect not because the talkers are dogs but because they are not two people of divergent social statuses. But Burns's most explicit thrusts exist in Ceasar's scornful delineation of the gentry. Even Ceasar uses animal images when attacking his
master's class. For example, he declares,

L'd man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle; laborers
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinkan brock. (ll.89-92) badger

In Ceasar's attack we find Burns expressing his own objections. Using dogs as masks does not allow the poet to attack indirectly or subtly but does free the satire from acerbity.

More crucial to Burns's satiric effect are the animals in "Death and Dying Words" and "Poor Mailie's Elegy." Had a human spoken "dying words" or had the poet elegized the death of a human friend, the satiric tone would be lost. The humor in "Death and Dying Words" evolves from the inappropriateness of the sheep's proclamation of advice to her offspring and to her human owner and from her deliberations on weighty issues--moral behavior, educational systems, agricultural methods, and theology. By putting serious ideas into the mouth of a sheep, Burns can mock those who pompously overemphasize such ideas. The banality of people's worries and advice is accentuated by Burns's use of a sheep as an orator:

    My poor toop-lamb, my son an' heir.
    O, bid him breed up wi' care!
    An' if he live to be a beast,
    To pit some havins in his breast! (ll.43-46) good manners or sense

Mailie is overwrought with her own importance, for she tells the shepherd listener:

    O thou, whose lamentable face
    Appears to mourn my woeful case!
    My dying words attentive hear,
    An' bear them to my Master dear. (ll.13-16)
The speaker of "Poor Mailie's Elegy" is discussing the same subject. The exaggerated grief for a mere sheep—"Our Bardie's fate is at a close,/Past a' remead!"—mocks those who excessively mourn people they did not like or hardly knew. In both pieces the animality of Mailie is firmly established (see, for example, 11.13-18 of "Poor Mailie's Elegy"); but her links with humans are suggested also. With the words "forbears," "lea'e my blessin," and "her living image" Burns creates a comparison of animal and humans that serve his point. Because he makes an animal the spokesman, he can mock hypocritically exaggerated grief, misplaced mourning, and the inanity of trite elegies. The conventions of the pastoral conflict in ironic fashion with the experiences created by the poems.

Sheep and their caretakers provide the dominating image and define the satiric tone in another of the early poems. In "The Holy Tulzie" Burns establishes both the pastoral/animal metaphors and his ironic tone—pretending concern even while ridiculing:

O a' ye pious, godly Flocks  
Weel fed in pastures orthodox,  
Wha now will keep you frae the fox,  
Or worryin tykes?  
Or wha will tent the waifs and crocks old ewes  
About the dykes? (11.1-6) fences

The subsequent description of sheep flocks, "Herds" (or shepherds), and other animals extends the metaphor into a controlling structural principle for this ironic lamentation. In the guise of describing various animals and shepherds, Burns, in a rare use of innuendo rather than unmistakable suggestions, insinuates his point by simulated innocent remarks. One shepherd (minister) likes to kill and skin
"the Fulmart [polecat], Wil-Cat, Brock [badger], and Tod [fox]"--the opponents of his gospel (11.31-36). The references to predatory animals demean this cleric's opponents, but the minister who enjoys an unchristian bloodthirstiness is censured also. The other shepherd, who "fine a maingie sheep could scrub" and flog and boil alive, is made to look equally vicious (11.43-48). The metaphor is interwoven into the thread of the burlesque by other concrete images: one man has made his followers "black and blae/W i' vengeful paws"; another will "buff [thump] our beef"; Common Sense is a "curst cur . . ./what bites sae sair"; and one minister demands that his flocks not taste "poison'd Ariminian stank [pond]" but must drink from "Calvin's fountain-head" (11.71-72,77,193-94,27-30). By attributing undesirable qualities to the shepherds and by selecting animal comparisons that deride humans, Burns reduces the ecclesiastical wranglers to ridiculous proportions. "Flocks" and "shepherds" are traditionally associated with ministers and congregations, so there is nothing innovative in his choice of metaphors. But his development of them unmask his pretended solicitude and serves as a unifying image. Moreover, since Burns presumably knew that sheep are exceptionally stupid, he adds another insult. Imagining the two ministers as sheep calls forth satiric associations--"rough husbandry, greedy feeding, and proprietary pride and grippiness." In short, the pastoral metaphor is useful for the transparency of its irony.

Not dominating but scattered throughout "The Ordination" are similar metaphors. Kilmarnock is figuratively transformed into a bull:
Now auld K********, cock thy tail,  
An' toss thy horns fu' canty;  
Nae mair thou'lt rowte out-owre the dale,  
Because thy pasture's scanty;  
cheerfully
bellow

For lapfu's large o' gospel kail  
Shall fill thy crib in plenty. . . .(11.46-51)

Fornicators are "rams that cross the breed" and villagers are "the flock." But the animal imagery appears only intermittently, adding to Burns's tone of mock-celebration but not determining the satiric point. In contrast, "Herds" who are "Maist like to fight" are the central metaphor of another of Burns's attacks on quarrels among ecclesiastics ("To William Simpson--Postscript," 11.113-14). "Auld-light flocks are bleatan" and "new-light herds gat sic a cowe [beating]" (11.163,157); they dispute about the origin and patterns of the moon. Depicting two shepherds (each with his flock) arguing about the moon is Burns's generalized way of describing two ecclesiastical groups' dispute about Calvinist dogma. This imagistic motif unfolds throughout the Postscript, unifies the stanzas, and thinly disguises the real victims of Burns's satire. In both poems, the masking devices--pretended celebration and pretended disinterest about a "moonshine matter"--allow Burns to satirize indirectly.

One of the smaller and more vulgar inhabitants of the animal world is spotlighted in "To a Louse," an early satire distinguished by its absorption of a conventionally unpoetic subject. The louse is addressed as if it could hear and heed the advice to leave Jenny's bonnet. The persona ascribes to this mobile creature other human qualities by mentioning its "impudence," by accusing it of being "right bauld," and by chastizing it for "daring" to invade a lady's
bonnet. The apostrophe to the louse does not persuade us to consider it human or to feel our human dignity insulted. The louse is just itself, unaware of the impact of its actions. It is the only "character" in the small scene that is true to its nature; not a victim of satire, the louse is the catalyst whose actions enable Burns to attack his real targets: Jenny's pretentiousness and the persona's naivété.65

Satiric imagery drawn from the animal kingdom is also pervasive in the later poetry. Many of these comparisons are brief, contained in single-word formulas whose unravelling Burns leaves to our experience and common sense. Others are more extensive, with Burns adding details about the vehicle that clarify its bearing on the tenor. His methods of utilizing animal imagery are much the same as in the early poetry.

Some of the comparisons of human action are made to vicious and predatory creatures, thus serving to demean the actors. The persona of "Tam o' Shanter" describes the witches chasing Tam "As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke [fuss],/When plundering herds assail their byke [swarm];" his choice of simile expresses their potential force and danger (11.193-94). When describing the preface to a political war, Burns dramatizes Confusion riding through the borough, "Whistling his roaring pack abroad/Of mad, unmuzzled lions" ("Epistle to Graham," 11.13-15). He characterizes the French Bourbons' treatment of those who seek liberty by labelling them "beagles hunting game" ("Tree of Liberty," 1.46). Saying that "Auld Kate [Catherine of Russia]" "laid
her claws" on Stanislaus fits the attack on warmakers voiced in "When Princes and Prelates." In "New Psalm" Pitt and Thurlow are likened to "two howling, ravening wolves" who are also so cowardly that they run away from dogs (Ezek.XXII.27;Zeph.III.3). None of these comparisons is novel or ingenious enough to bring freshness to well-worn themes.67

Brief animal metaphors not only contribute to the development of Burns's attacks, but a more expanded one creates a unified poem. "The Calf," based on a Biblical text--"And they shall go forth, and grow up, like CALVES of the stall"--puns on calves (Mal.IV.2). Each stanza of this epistle concludes with mention of some synonym for calf: "Stirk [young bullock]," "Stot," "horne," "Nowte [oxen or cattle]," "Bullock"; Burns is simultaneously tracing the man's life from minister to parish priest to husband to cuckold to corpse. The point of the cattle metaphor depends on our realization that the man is not a calf and shows none of the characteristics of one; Burns has merely elaborated on the metaphor implicit in the man's text for his sermon. Actually the poet seems to be cruelly ridiculing a minister he had met only once, and apparently he has no particular point to make. He demonstrates a similar enthusiasm for the pun in "Epistle to Graham," where he imagines himself a bird; he projects himself into the poem's events as "a cool Spectator purely" who is "The Robin in the hedge [that] descends,/And patient chirps securely" as if to emphasize his pose as a disinterested observer of the political war (11.115-20; italics added). He takes advantage of innuendo in order to leave undisturbed his pretended detachment from the scene.
Although the later poetry does illustrate Burns still using the same patterns and types of animal images, his attempts at extended or controlling metaphors are poorer—resulting in less unity and more confusion about his point. No later satires show him controlling real and figurative animals so closely interlinked with satiric ideas as is demonstrated in the Mailie poems or "The Twa Dogs" or "The Holy Tulzie." Brief metaphors appear, but no new complexities or uses are introduced in the later pieces.

To Burns, human life is just as fruitful a source of metaphoric imagery as are nature and animals. His vehicles are drawn from four areas of human activity: domestic concerns, such as clothing, eating, and drinking, sexual activity, caring for a family's household and medical needs; the more external concerns of business and commerce, of making a living; the events of war, state, and government; socializing, sports, and games. The same sorts of general patterns appear in both early and later satires. Burns will sometimes explicitly state his point but sometimes leave the image free for us to make appropriate associations. The metaphors may be brief, even single-word formulas, or extended over several stanzas, or even expanded into controlling metaphors for the total poem. There are no significant differences in the amount, types, uses, or patterns of metaphorical images between early and later poems.

In the early satires the domestic activities of child-care, sewing, drinking, and engaging in sex are inserted into brief passages. Burns concretely describes his Muse as if she were a small child who
has fallen down and is now calling for her mother: she sits "on her arse/Low i' the dust,/An' scriechan out prosaic verse/An' like to brust" ("Author's Cry and Prayer," 11.7-12). This self-mockery helps him quickly establish tone in a poem that gently chides the satiric victims. Similarly, contributing to be familiarized, human depiction of Death is this figure of speech: Death's work is to "nick the thread" ("Death and Doctor Hornbook," 1.69), making death sound as trivial as a housewife clipping loose threads from a garment. The idea of people drinking at God's fountain is conventional; Burns adds a derogatory sneer to this image when he equates "springs of C_Ev_n" and "gumlie [muddy] dubs" ("Dedication to Hamilton," 11.67-68). When Holy Willie says "I'll ne'er lift a lawless leg/Again upon her," he voices an abbreviated promise not to fornicate (11.47-48). Willie's use of the synedoche rather than a direct statement exposes his desire to avoid direct confession. He is trying to circumvent saying exactly what he did, a habit of evasion that he demonstrates throughout the poem. As these examples indicate, Burns, by closely observing human actions, can create concrete metaphors that focus our attention on attitudes of his personae and himself.

Clothing metaphors frequently reveal the wearer's character. In "The Holy Fair" Burns uses clothing imagery conventionally. "Superstition" and "Hypocrisy" are dressed in "manteels o' dolefu' black,/But ane wi' lyart [streaked, gray] lining" (11.14-15). "Fun," however, "Was in the fashion shining/Fu' gay that day" (11.17-18). All the participants in the fair have dressed in their best, indicating
their opinion of this social gathering; in fact, some are thinking "upo' their claes" rather than upon their sins or God (11.82-83).

Expressing his hostility toward the wearer, in another poem Burns imposes subjective conceptions of a man's attire:

Or is 't the paughty, feudal Thane, cunning
Wi' ruffl'd sark an' glancin cane,
Wha thinks himsel nae sheep-shank bane, not unimportant
But lordly stalks... ("Second Epistle to Lapraik," 11.67-70)

In another context the second line could be simply informative about someone's appearance. But exaggeration in the passage and especially the words "lordly stalks" and "paughty" strike at the victim's arrogance. In one of his more effective images, Burns again describes literal clothing: "Dames/Ty'd up in godly laces" ("Address to the Unco Guid," 1.42). Beyond informing that they wear corsets and are thus fashionable women, the image suggests that they are tied up or restrained in their self-righteousness. They are so constrained that they cannot breathe (feel compassion for anyone). In the compact metaphor Burns says economically what he reiterates throughout the poem.

Burns makes clothing metaphors serve his satire in another way; he shows that attire may merely camouflage the person's real character. Just as he scorns those who "rate the wearer by the cloak" ("To Mr. John Kennedy," 1.20), he argues:

Think, wicked Sinner, wha ye're skaithing: damaging
It's just the Blue-gown badge an' claithing,
O' Saunts; tak that, ye lea'e them naething,
To ken them by,
Frae ony unregenerate Heathen,
Like you or I. ("Epistle to Rankin," 11.19-24)
By wearing appropriate clothing, the minister suggests his pious character, but Burns perceives that priestly garb often disguises the hypocritical, vicious nonchristian beneath. The equating of "hypocrisy" and "holy robe" and the withering epithet--"a greedy glowr Black-bonnet"--make the same point more concisely ("Epistle to Rankin," 11.13-14; "The Holy Fair," 1.69).69

Remedies for illnesses and wounds are used in three poems as satiric metaphors. In "A Dream" the metaphor is brief and simple: peace will "plaister" Britain's "broken shins" (11.46-47). The metaphor is simultaneously complimentary and derogatory. At the same time the speaker is praising the government for bringing peace, he implies his disregard for the previous war and for the leaders who supported the war. Burns specifies "cantharidian plaisters" (plasters of Spanish fly used as medicine or as aphrodisiacs) in "The Holy Fair":

Hear how he [a minister] clears the point o' Faith  
Wi' rattlin an' thumpin'... 
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd up snout,  
His eldritch squeel an' gestures, 
0 how they fire the heart devout,  
Like cantharidin plaisters... (11.109-16)

The intrusion of the sexual reference into this exaggerated description of a sermon renders the man an object of laughter and contempt; moreover, it advances the poet's theme: sexual and spiritual needs are inextricably intertwined. Speirs adds that the gestures, already exaggerated by the minister, are magnified by Burns "to the point of it being suggested that the preacher dances a jig in the pulpit.\textsuperscript{70}
The extensive development of medical imagery in the first four stanzas of "Epistle to Goldie" is intrinsic to the satire, for those stanzas embody all the attack in the poem. By mention of "ten Egyptian plagues" the first stanza introduces the image pattern. The next three stanzas develop this motif: "gapin, glowrin Superstition" needs "Black Jock [a minister] her state-physician" but she will probably "ne'er get better"; Enthusiasm (religious extravagance) is "gane in a gallopin consumption" beyond the aid of "a' her quacks wi' a' their gumption"; Auld Orthodoxy "fetches at the thrapple [throat]/And fights for breath." The pattern expresses Burns's hope; the sick Auld Licht Orthodoxy, recipients of his satire here and elsewhere, is dying out in Scotland.

As its title suggests, medical imagery dominates in "Death and Doctor Hornbook." Here the focus is on the doctor working at his profession, rather than on the illnesses. The implied metaphor of the whole poem is that Hornbook is a quack, not a doctor. The speaker, Death, lists Hornbook's tools and his medications, giving us a picture of the presumptuous doctor surrounded by equipment while he tends his patients. The whole piece refers to diseases, medicines, and equipment as a way of attacking the incompetent and dishonest physician. We must call on our knowledge of doctors' proper procedures in order to understand the implications in Burns's depiction of Hornbook, as in this vivid description of his diagnostic techniques:
"Ev'n them he canna get attended,
"Altho' their face he ne'er had kend i t,
"Just sh__ in a kail-blade and send i t,
"As soon's he smells 't,
"Baith their disease, and what will mend i t,
"At once he tells 't." (11.109-14)

The scatology lends newness and shock value to a picture of a doctor diagnosing; more commonplace, though just as defamatory, is the assertion that the doctor "has clad a score i' their last claith" and sent some to their "lang hame" (11.149,167).

Other figures drawn from the world of work appear rarely in the early poems. Burns does reduce ministers to the level of patent-medicine hawkers when he says they sell lies and "nail" them with references to the Bible ("Death and Doctor Hornbook," 11.5-6), and he emphasizes the promiscuity of the soldier's woman by comparing her mouth to an alms' dish eager to receive anything ("Love and Liberty," 1.23). The domestic metaphors appear almost exclusively in the early satires--in fact, the later poetry exhibits no examples of satiric imagery drawn from illness or medications. Figures drawn from the world of work and commerce are somewhat more frequent in the later satires. Some are brief, simple comparisons, such as Burns's elucidation of dishonest political actions: William Pitt and Charles Fox are smugglers and sneak thieves of "laurels" ("Sketch to Fox," 11.45-50). Even more ordinary is his epithet for Mrs. Oswald--"keeper of Mammon's iron chest" ("Ode to Mrs. Oswald," 1.14). In "Buy Braw Troggin" the metaphorical imagery of commerce--buying, selling, stealing--is intrinsic to the satire. The persona is a peddler who does not sell pins or clothes or tools but hawks a conscience that "was never worn,"
the lead from a man's head, the worth of a man contained in a needle's eye, "a noble Earl's/Fame and high renown" that were probably stolen. Through metaphoric descriptions of what they do, Burns invokes the discrimination of common sense to judge his victims. All this builds to the climactic end that if no buyer can be found, Satan will gladly purchase them. The satiric point is made through repetition of the same pattern; the theme is not explored any further, and the trite metaphors bring no freshness to the theme.

Many of Burns's deprecating images in the early satires are drawn from the activities of governmental leaders. These metaphors appear as brief tropes in the satires, adding directly or indirectly to Burns's attack but are not organically crucial to the satire. In "Love and Liberty," for example, both the soldier and the doxy speak of their experiences with the military. The soldier's image of war as "the gallant game" and his image of himself as "a Son of Mars" characterize his enjoyment of war; Burns's attack is levelled at the society that views this partisan as useless. When the doxy describes her lovers among the Regiment, she does not mention names of personalities but says "From the gilded SPONTOON [half-pike with a hook] to the FIFE I was ready," emphasizing that war needs bodies for fodder, not fully realized individuals. In "The Ordination" the Auld Lichts are like some conquering army overtaking a town that has long defied them: "Auld Orthodoxy" uses the nine-tail cat to peel the skin "as ane were peeling onions"; two Auld Lichts torture and behead Heresy (11.91-93, 104-05,114-17). Having won the war the Auld Lichts take vengeance on
their foes. Even a minister's imprecations about Hell and lost souls are described as "piercin words, like highlan swords" ("The Holy Fair," 1.185); his speech is prefaced by "trumpet touts" as a battle might be. Although extravagant, these exaggerations are based on truth, making the attack more biting. The persona of "Author's Cry and Prayer" includes thinly disguised threats of war against Parliament, when he speculates that were he a fighter like Montgomery, "There's some sark-necks [collars] I wad draw tight,/An' tye some hose well" (11.59-60). He speaks figuratively when he warns:

Her [Scotland's] tartan petticoat she'll kilt
An' durk an' pistol at her belt,
She'll tak the streets,
An' rin her whittle to the hilt,
I' the first she meets! (11.98-102)

He exaggerates in both warnings; but he is only half-mockingly describing his or Scotland's actions. The hyperbole allows him to sound as if he gently chides but also contains a modicum of truth: if the Parliament does not change the whiskey laws, Scots members are likely to find themselves rejected at the next election or even threatened with bodily harm. A serious warning lies beneath the exaggeration. Similarly, Burns injects military terms with sarcasm when he describes the force of the Kirk:

The Priest anathemas may threat,
Predicament, Sir, that we're baith'in;
But when honor's reveillé is beat,
The holy artillery's naething.--("Extempore to Hamilton," 11.41-44)

In two other early poems--"Address of Beelzebub" and "The Fornicator"--he is using military forces and events of battle for comparative purposes. In "The Fornicator" his involvement is confirmed
by the personal attestation of the tone and of isolated passages. He seeks to defend his actions by paralleling himself with "warlike Kings and Heroes bold, / Great Captains and Commanders" who also are "ranked Fornicator" (11.41-48). In effect, he demands that the Kirk also condemn those heroes if they dare censure Burns's sexual deeds. Mention in "Beelzebub" of British and American leaders in the American Revolution allows Burns to compare the two groups and to note that the latter were the better generals; moreover, the context indicates that he links the Highland Society with the incompetent British generals and the Highlanders with the skilled Americans. The persona promises that he will seat the Highland Society members with Herod, Polycrate, Almagro, and Pizarro--a subtly ironic way for Burns to allude to the destination of the Society members.

In the later satires he re-uses many of the same types of military metaphors to achieve similar satiric ends. For example, he is able to strike a note of pretended concern in "Epistle to Graham" by wishing he had "a throat like huge Monsmeg" with which to celebrate the war (1.25). Although this poem uses some nature metaphors, it depends mainly on military images as its controlling pattern. Burns is describing a local election as if two armies--Whigs and Tories--are clashing. Direct mention of war (1.19) identifies his basic metaphor that is then reiterated by generalized references to "heroes bright," "muster," "banner," "field of Politics." Some soldiers led "light-arm'd core" and "blew up each Tory's dark designs," while others 'brought up 'n' artillery ranks" and led "Squadrons" to the charge (11.37,41-42,49-51,58-60) Then,
... o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns,
    But Fate the word has spoken... . .
The Tory ranks are broken.--(11.91-96)

In three other late poems—"The Kirk of Scotland's Garland," "Second Heron Ballad," and "Johnie B's Lament"—Burns makes such military images serve as satiric comparisons; although the metaphors contribute to satiric meanings of brief passages, they do not form a cohesive element in any of the three. Even though "Kirk's . . . Garland" starts with the persona sounding an alarm—"for Hannibal's just at your gates"—and declaring that Calvin's sons should bring their "spiritual guns," he does not maintain that initial metaphor. Some withering epithets—for those who have gun powder in their hearts and lead in their skulls—continue the metaphor, but after the fifth stanza he turns to other satiric images. Similarly, in the "Second Heron Ballad" he refers to "light horse" that must muster and thus in the first stanza introduces a potentially controlling metaphor; but Burns immediately abandons it and wanders aimlessly. An imagistic motif—rather than isolated brief metaphors drawn from various sources—might have given unity to a sprawling and repetitious list of politicians that Burns attacks. In "Johnie B's Lament" Burns sustains a war metaphor throughout the poem but does so in a generalized and mechanical way. The imagery has no organic relationship to this mock-lament; the words and phrases are so conventional and abstract that they give our imagination nothing specific to fix on. Although unity can be gained from a continuity of images, in none of these three satiric poems does he make the elements cohere.
In a fourth subsection of "human action" are satiric metaphors based on games, sports, socializing. To contrast the "selfish, warly [worldly]race," who yield good manners, "sense an' grace/Ev'n love an' friendship" to the quest for money, he invites those whom "the tide of kindness warms" to "come to my bowl, come to my arms" ("Epistle to Lapraik," 11.115-26). Such imagery is a controlling metaphor of "The Holy Fair," which is constructed "on the fundamental irony of worship, drink, and sexual love set in juxtaposition." While the ministers deliver sermons, some are listening but more are "winkan on the lasses," adding to the clamor of the "change-house," and making plans for later rendezvous. The consistent intermingling of the socializing with the contemplation of religious concerns is what gives "The Holy Fair" its distinctive quality as a satiric exposure of the futility of the Kirk's repression. Natural instincts will rise, no matter what the ministers threaten; the images Burns creates lead us naturally to an ambiguous conclusion--"some are fou o' love divine" and "some are fou o' brandy" (11.239-40). Subtlety and indirection are predominant characteristics of the satiric imagery in this poem. The subtlety comes mainly from the persona's amused and detached view; he makes no blatant attack. Implicit attack lies in the whole setting, the ironic contrast between what the Kirk wants and what people do.

In contrast to "The Holy Fair's" reflection of Burns's approval of social activities, in "The Iwa Dogs" he makes Ceasar's imagery caricature the gentry's socializing:
At Operas an' Plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading:
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To HAGUE or CALAIS takes a waft,
To make a tour an' take a whirl,
To learn bon ton an' see the worl'...
Wh_ re-hunting amang groves o' myrtles:
Then bowses drumlie German-water. . .(11.153-66) drinks;
turbid

The sense of madness in this imagery of action depends on the participants' mindless dedication to grotesque and ridiculous activity.

It is interesting that Burns also lets Luath use socializing images that contrast the unity and happiness of the cotters' actions with the pettiness in the gentry's affairs. Ceasar declares "There's sic parade, sic pomp an' art,/The joy can scarcely reach the heart" (11.213-14), while Luath expounds:

That merry day the year begins,  
They bar the door on frosty win's;  
The nappy reeks wi' mantling ream,  
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;  
The luntan pipe, an' sneeshin mill,  
Are handed round wi' right guid will;  
The cantie, auld folks, crackan crouse,  
The young anes rantan thro' the house--
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barket wi' them. (11.129-38; see also 11.123-28)

Thus Burns controls our view of these two groups—peasants and lords—through his metaphorical images, and he develops contrasts out of the same basic material. The dogs' camaraderie with each other and their use of social metaphors to depict their masters provide a cohering conception, a center upon which the poem turns.

"Love and Liberty" depicts the participants' drinking as important to their amicable gathering. In their final song, "Jolly mortals fill your glasses," communal drinking even becomes an expression of
defiance of the world outside which ostracizes and judges them harshly. The imagery of socializing is important, for it controls the poem's focus and contrasts with the implied restrictions the Establishment wants to impose. By the use of the social imagery Burns indirectly attacks the outside world's intolerance and approves the communal band. In "The Ordination" the social metaphors are inextricably tied to the satire. Wild exaggeration of the persona's joy and of the excessive drinking——"an' pour divine libations/For joy this day"——becomes a way for Burns to distort the actual event. Furthermore the celebration is held at a local tavern, an acceptable site for a party—but not for the ordination of an orthodox, strict minister. By making the theological ceremony a tavern gathering, Burns effectively insinuates his opinion of the minister, his followers, and their strait-laced beliefs.

In the preceding poems, the social metaphors center on drinking and conversing; in another group of early poems, Burns finds card games a source of satiric associations. The metaphors are brief, voicing simple and straightforward assaults on his targets. To the Prince of Wales, the speaker addresses a supposedly concerned warning that the heir will "curse your folly sairly" that he "rattl'd dice wi' Charlie/By night or day" ("A Dream," 11.87-90). The lightly mocking tone of the poem gains by the use of images from gambling; and Burns simultaneously demeans the frivolities of two men—the Prince and Charles Fox. Again suggesting that Fox pays insufficient attention to his job, Burns sneers:
To pinpoint a failure of British leadership, Burns once more links Fox and card games:

Then Clubs an' Hearts were Charlie's cartes,
He swept the stakes awa', man,
Till the Diamond's Ace, of Indian race,
Led him a sair faux pas, man. . . .("When Guilford Good," 11.49-52)

Crawford adds that in this stanza Burns is referring derogatorily to "Fox's short-lived political victory in 1783 and the collapse of the ministry after the defeat of his famous India Bill." It is no accident that the only three satiric images drawn from cards and gambling attack Fox, for he was noted for his proclivity to gamble. Thus certain epithets attacked to Fox trigger allusions for the reader.

The fourth major type of Burns's satiric imagery consists of those figures of speech and analogies drawn from written learning. He makes no satiric use of images drawn from scientific studies; references to classical mythology appear sparingly but are rarely used for satiric reasons. The predominant number of comparisons are drawn from the Bible, British literature, and Calvinist dogma.

Burns demonstrates an extensive knowledge of the Bible, the chief book in Scots homes, and of the Kirk's teachings. Biblical personages and stories, the Kirk's dogma, and the Kirk's actions are
used by Burns in elucidating his satire. One way in which Burns mocks the seriousness of the Kirk’s teachings is by borrowing its conventional picture of Hell and making it so exaggerated or placing it in such a context that the ridicule is obvious. For example, Holy Willie thinks Hell a place of "burning lakes, / Where damned devils roar and yell / Chain’d to their stakes" (11.22-24). In this generalized description he is apparently parroting what he has been taught, but he speaks very impersonally as if he is describing something that awaits other people, not him. He speaks superficially rather than as one who has seriously contemplated the reality of Hell or the possibility that it awaits him. Conventional, too, is the more detailed picture given in "The Holy Fair" where the ministers describe Hell as "A vast, unbottom’d, boundless Pit, / Fill’d fou o’ Lowan brunstane. / Whase raging flame, an’ scorching heat, / Wad melt the hardest whunstane" (11.190-93). Immediately after this "terrifying" image, Burns implies his opinion: "The half-asleep start up wi’ fear, / An’ think they hear it roaran’, / When presently it does appear, / ’Twas but some neebor snoran. . . ." (11.194-97). Daiches calls attention to the "mischievously ambiguous use of biblical and religious imagery" that pervades "The Holy Fair" and shows "how the claims of the flesh assert themselves in the very midst of a professedly spiritual exercise." Burns initiates here a conflict between flesh and spirit that he will emphasize throughout the poem. "Address to the Deil" also includes a frightening picture: Hell is "yon cavern grim an’ sooty" where the Devil "Spairges ['sprinkles'] about the brunstane cootie ['tub'], / To scaud
poor wretches" (11.3-6). But when this passage is preceded by characteriza­tion of Hell's ruler as "Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie," it loses serious force. The persona is not afraid; he repeats the conventional image of Hell without indicating that he agrees with it or even considers it seriously. In "Address of Beelzebub" the persona welcomes members of the Highland Society to "my HOUSE AT HAME." His "house" is like a castle where all dine together, given designated seats as if at a royal dinner party. Beelzebub's description of Hell contrasts with the Kirk's, but the devil is remarkably unconvincing about the merits of joining him. The traditional depiction of Hell depends on metaphoric associations, but those associations are not invented by Burns; he merely repeats them, in an exaggerated way. In these poems the irony lies in the contrast between the preachers' desired responses to their magnified threats of Hell and the listeners' misunderstanding or disregard.

The hospitality and generosity with which Burns imbues Beelzebub suggests that the devil has characteristics contrary to those described by the Kirk. Burns also mocks the ecclesiasts' solemn attitude toward Satan by such similes as

Auld Hornie did the Laigh Kirk watch,
Just like a winkin baudrons: cat
And ay he catch'd the tither wretch other
To fry them in his caudrons. . . .("The Ordination," 11.84-8

In the view of traditional Christianity, the Devil's major act was the seduction of Adam and Eve that led to the Fall from Paradise. This act, in "Address to the Deil," is equated, however, with all the other trivial pranks committed by the Devil. Burns's novel view of the Fall
and of Satan has ironic value:

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing dog!
Ye cam to Paradise incog,
An' play'd on a man a cursed brogue, trick
(Black be your fa'!)
An' gied the infant warld a shog, shock
'Maist ruin'd a'. (11.91-96)

Not from ignorance but from whim and a desire to jog the grave clerics, Burns makes Satan a prankster, a friendly fellow--the reverse of the church's depiction.

References to other Biblical persons and stories also develop Burns's satire. Much of "The Ordination's" attack emerges from the juxtaposition of Biblical images and sensual pursuits in this mocking celebration of a minister's ordination. The speaker asks that "a proper text be read": how Ham, father of Canaan, laughed at his naked father and was by him cursed to be slave to his brothers; how Phineas slew an Israelite and a heathen woman, thus winning for himself God's praise and covenant of priesthood; how Zipporah circumcised Moses so that the Lord would not kill him (11.28-36). All the texts, however, are indecorous and unsuitable to a religious celebration; in their emphasis on bloodletting and vengeance they are ironically suited to what Burns conceives to be the true character of the Auld Lichts. Two stanzas later he paraphrases another Biblical account (Ps.CXXXVII.1-2):

Nae mair by Babel's streams we'll weep,
To think upon our Zion;
And hing our fiddles up to sleep,
Like baby-clouts a-dryin. . . .(11.55-58)

The extravagance of this comparison--between the melancholy plaint of the Israelites and the lament of the Auld Lichts before one of their
group was ordained—produces irony. The comparison stresses just how trivial the Auld Licht festivity is and how hypocritical the celebrants are. Although the poem would still make its satiric point to someone unacquainted with these Biblical stories, knowledge of them reveals the degree to which Burns sustains his ironic tone.

In the later satires Burns continues to draw, though less frequently, on Biblical materials and the teachings of the Kirk. In all of these—as is true for "The Ordination"—he makes a relationship between the Biblical past and the experiences of the day—in order to be satiric about the present. The title of "New Psalm" indicates the metaphor in Burns's extravagant approach to the King's recovery from madness. The attack on the king and his counselors is conveyed by the exaggerated tone of joy and the inappropriateness of the Biblical comparison. He makes God's deliverance of King George III analogous to God's deliverance of David. Burns also ridicules "that Young Man" [William Pitt] whom he describes as "great in Issachar/The burden-bearing Tribe"; Issachar, a gelded ass who lies in the cattle-pens, cheerfully submitted to perpetual forced labor (11.15-16; Gen.XLIX.14-15). Without our sharing a knowledge of the Biblical text with Burns, that passage would not appear satiric and we would miss his point. Similar satirical analogies dominate "The Dean of the Faculty." The candidate whom Burns thinks incompetent is said to have "'mid Learning's store,/Commandment the tenth remember'd" (11.11-12). Although Burns offers vain hope-
As once on Pisgah purg'd was the sight
Of a son of Circumcision,
So may be, on this Pisgah height,
BOB's purblind, mental vision...(11.25-28)--
the comparison of Bob to Moses insinuates that the man will not cross
the "Jordan" and enter into "the promised land" (knowledge). Analogical imagery is again developed in "Reply to a Tailor"; here two basic metaphors appear, each the controlling image of one half of the poem. Burns, partly in self-justification and partly in contempt of this stranger who censured his sexuality, links himself with King David, who enjoyed many women sexually yet is ranked "the chief/0' lang syne saunts" (11.17-18). The second half of the poem develops around a pun on Matthew's injunction that if a member of the body is diseased or a cause of sin, then it should be cut off (Matt. V.30). Burns is adamant that his "offending member" (genitalia) should not be severed. The specific example--Burns is penalized for fornication by the same church that calls David saint--is overstated; controlled by his personal tone, the metaphor becomes an indictment of the whole of Kirk repression and hypocrisy. 82

Burns's use of Biblical analogies in both early and later satires has several features. He records a conventional metaphor--e.g. depiction of Hell--but puts the account in such a context that we are persuaded not to view it seriously. He is not presenting the conventional as one half of a comparison so much as restating an accepted image and then ridiculing it by hyperbole. For
example, the Kirk supposedly teaches of the horrors of Hell and the Devil in order to bring people penitently to God. In Burns's satires, however, the Kirk describes Hell as torturing indiscriminately, as God's punishment for those not labelled Chosen by the Kirk; those who think themselves Chosen talk of Hell in a show of arrogance, as a way of bragging about what will never be their fate; Hell is often ignored by the sinful because it has been prated about so much that it has become a "dead metaphor." Juxtaposing Biblical persons and events with human figures creates extravagant analogies that are not meant to attack the Bible but to mock the pomposity of the Auld Lichts, King George, and the new dean of the faculty. Burns's use of Biblical analogues accentuates how far removed the pompous are from the high levels they assume.

Burns makes similar uses of allusions and analogies to pieces of literature (again including the Bible, though utilized differently). He chooses some of the headnotes for his satires from literary pieces, sometimes quoting them exactly and sometimes parodying them. These headnotes serve one of two major functions: they identify the satiric subject and tone of the poem that follows; or they form an ironic contrast to the poem they introduce. He uses these epigraphs for satiric effects more frequently in the early satires than in the later. For the most part these allusions are obvious, although they require that we share knowledge with the poet if the allusion is to function as a satiric metaphor. Since the poems in which they appear are made satiric by other methods--often by other metaphorical images--
no obscurity results if we do not recognize the allusion. Understanding the reference, however, affords us with a more extensive perception of his attacks.

Some epigraphs identify the satiric tone and/or subject of the poems. Burns's interpretation of Solomon's speech identifies his satiric target, his own attitude, and his theme in "Address to the Unco Guid":

My Son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them ay thegither;
The Rigid Righteous is a fool,
The Rigid Wise anither:
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight
May hae some plyes o' caff in;
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daffin.

SOLOMON.--Eccles. ch. vii. vers. 16

As promised by the headnote, the poem censures the "rigidly righteous" for intolerance and arrogant lack of compassion toward those who reveal their "faults and folly." Similarly, Burns uses a couplet from Pope's Dunciad as the epigraph for "The Holy Tulzie": "Blockheads with reason wicked Wits abhor,/But Fool with Fool is barbarous civil war." He introduces his view of the quarreling ministers and the mocking tone he will adopt while making his persona express excessive sorrow. This passage prefaces "The Holy Fair":

A robe of seeming truth and trust
Hid crafty Observation;
And secret hung, with poison'd crust,
The dirk of Defamation:
A mask that like the gorget show'd,
Dye-varying, on the pigeon;
And for a mantle large and broad,
He wrapt him in Religion.--

Hypocrisy a-la-Mode
This preface, outlining the deceptive hypocrite who cloaks his "poisoned self" in Religion, fits a poem which unveils the hypocritical ministers who preach strict Calvinism but allow secular festivities in order to attract large crowds. In effect, this headnote alerts us to the satiric theme of "The Holy Fair." Two lines that Burns labels a "parody on Milton" precede "Author's Cry and Prayer." Whereas Milton wrote "O fairest of Creation, last and best" and "How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost," Burns says, "Dearest of Distillation! last and best!--/--how art thou lost!--" He has juxtaposed Adam and Eve's loss of Paradise because of Satan's deceit and their own weaknesses with Scotland's loss of whiskey distilleries because of Parliamentary law. The incongruity between the two prepares for Burns's mocking chastisement of Parliament and for his arguments for repeal.

Other epigraphs do not so obviously introduce the satiric qualities of poems they precede. Burns prefaces "Holy Willie's Prayer" with a line from Pope: "And send the Godly in a pet to pray." If we take this at face value, we expect a prayer by a godly man who happens to be vexed about something. The ironic twist emerges from "Godly," for this dramatic monologue reveals how alienated Willie is from God. The comparison of Willie and a "godly" Christian, however, gives a coherence to the poem. Burns's choice of epigraphs for "Halloween" is neither providing an ironic contrast nor identifying his topic. By quoting Goldsmith--

Yes! let the rich deride, the Proud disdain,
The simple pleasures of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the glose of art --
he is informing that his ridicule of the peasants' efforts to learn the future and their fear to await results of their rituals will not be derisive nor disdainful. In generally outlining subject matter and repudiating two possible attitudes, the epigraph guides us. His borrowing from Milton in "Address to the Deil" affords more obvious ironic contrasts. In his epigraph he quotes: "O Prince, O chief of many throned pow'rs, / That led th' embattl'd Seraphim to war"; in a letter he writes of "the dauntless magnanimity; the intrepid unyielding independance [sic]; the desperate daring, and noble defiance of hardship, in that great personage, Satan." Both of these passages seem to promise a depiction of an heroic Satan. What appears in "Address to the Deil," however, is quite different, more plainly foreshadowed by the first two lines--"O thou, whatever title suit thee!/Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clottie"--which echo Pope's "O thou! whatever title please thine ear,/Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!" The juxtaposition of Milton's seriousness and the poem's casual acceptance of Auld Hornie as a practical joker creates an enveloping irony. Furthermore, by selecting a headnote that contrasts with his own depiction, Burns can block off our usual ideas and associations about Satan.

By electing to use epigraphs for several of his satires, Burns demands that we make analogies—that we compare characters, events, and themes. The results are that he heightens his satiric intensity by playing on ironic discrepancies, by announcing the satiric intent so that we are prepared to read a poem with certain expectations
and attitudes. This type of analogical imagery is especially effective in the early satires as a way for him to identify and accent his mocking tone.

After viewing the ways in which Burns uses language to develop his satires, it becomes more obvious that Burns executes verbal strategies with more skill and coordination of parts in the early poetry—with the exception of "Tam o' Shanter," where he is again at the peak of his form. In the later poems he is more heavy-handed in his use of ambiguity as well as more hackneyed in imagery; in them he is more explicit, using more invective. In the earlier pieces, he works more indirectly, letting juxtapositions, equivocal diction, and imagery imply the point. It is as if attack is his first priority in the later poems, whereas in the early ones attack is subordinate to yet coordinated with the creation of an artistically successful poem. The least difference in quality exists in his employment of prosody; poems in both the early and later groups illustrate both Burns's skill and his clumsiness at underscoring satiric relationships with auditory suggestions. Certainly there are exceptions to these generalizations: "Tam o' Shanter" is excellent, much more artistic than the epistles to L'gprair and Rankin or "Dedication to Hamilton" or "When Guilford Good." But later poems such as the four Heron ballads, "Brigs of Ayr," "Tam Samson's Elegy," and "Monody on Maria," though lucid in their attack, do not have the organic unity of theme, form, and technique that exists in "The Holy Fair," "Love and Liberty," "Holy Willie's Prayer," "The Ordination," "Death and Doctor Hornbook,"
and other early satires. Selecting two pieces representing opposite ends on a spectrum of merit, we could say that Burns "slovenly butchers" his target in "Ode on Mrs. Oswald," whereas he delicately separates Holy Willie's "Head from the Body, and leaves it standing in its place."


Ibid., p. 217.

Ibid., p. 121.

Craig, p. 78.

Crawford, p. 139.

Ibid., p. 135.

For other examples of the effectiveness of Burns's juxtapositions of aristocratic language and the homely vernacular, see "A Dream," as in ll. 1-9, 28-31, 66-71, and "Author's Cry and Prayer," ll. 49-135.

Numbers XVI.30-33, in The Holy Bible, King James Version (Chicago: Good Counsel, 1960). Hereafter all citations to the Bible are listed by book, chapter, and verse. This reference is cited by Kinsley, III, 1037; for many of the subsequent citations to Biblical passages I am indebted to Kinsley's work in locating exact sources.

He alludes to King David's request that the sons of Herman play horns in praise of God, as recorded in I Chronicles XXV.4-6 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1044).

Wittig, p. 212.

I Peter V.8; II Samuel XXII.11; Psalms XVIII.10 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1129).

Kinsley, III, 1095.

Ezekiel XXXVI.26 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1104).

Kinsley adds that the poem is written in the "'language of the saints'--that improbable amalgam of biblical English and colloquial Scots which was characteristic of the Covenant and the Presbyterian evangelical" (III, 1048).

Romans XII.6 and John V.35 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1050). Kinsley adds that the second part of the passage from John is probably ironically implied: "He was a burning and a shining light and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."
He is echoing Paul's speech in II Corinthians XII.7-10 that he glories in the pain that is caused by Satan and permitted by God as a way of preventing Paul from becoming too egotistical about his abilities.

II Chronicles VI.19-21 and I Kings VIII.28-30 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1052).


Psalms XXXIII.3; Psalms LXVI.1; Psalms LXXXI.1; etc. (cited by Kinsley, III, 1304).

Deuteronomy XIII.13; II Samuel XX.1; Judges XIX.22; Ezekiel XXII.27.

Psalms II.6 (cited by Kinsley, III, 1305).

Kinsley, III, 1197.

Ibid.


Allan H. MacLaine, "Burns's Use of Parody in 'Tam o' Shanter,'" *Criticism*, 1 (Fall 1959), 311.

MacLaine also points out that the humor of inserting an apostrophe to Care is "enhanced by the offhand and highly indecorous way in which this usually dignified personage is disposed of—he drowns himself in Tam's liquor" (p. 311).


MacLaine, pp. 312-13.

Kinsley, III, 1130-32.

MacLaine, p. 311.


Kinsley, III, 1189.

35 Crawford, p. 136.
36 Kinsley, III, 1157.
37 Ibid., p. 1161.
39 Crawford, p. 119.
41 See also the intensity the satire gains from active, concrete verbs in ll. 160-68 and 215-28.
42 Kinsley, III, 1062.
43 See also the way that specific verbs give lines 109-14 and 181-86 a contrasting depiction to that evoked by lines 127-30; the qualities of the verbs and the contrasting degrees of concreteness create remarkably suitable pictures of two variant preaching styles.
44 Kinsley, III, 1525.
46 Crawford, pp. 118-19.
48 See also how anti-climax degrades Pitt and Fox in "Sketch to Fox," ll. 45-50; King Louis's antagonism to the French Revolution in "Tree of Liberty," ll. 37-40; the incompetent Faculty of Advocates in "Dean of the Faculty," ll. 17-20; and the wool-gathering judges in "Extempore, Court of Sessions," ll. 15-16.
49 Craig, p. 246.
50 MacLaine, p. 314.
51 Craig, p. 246.
52 It is significant that Burns does not use the "high style of the heroic couplet" in "Tam o' Shanter"; instead he prefers the "quick succession of rhymes" of the octosyllabic couplet, "long favoured by

53 Daiches, Burns, p. 254.


55 Kinsley, III, 1308.

56 Wittig, p. 208.

57 "The Mauchline Wedding," "The Holy Fair," and some portions of "Love and Liberty" use the Christis Kirk stanza, which has been from its inception characterized by reliance on alliteration.

58 Crawford, p. 354.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid., p. 356.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., p. 232.

63 I. A. Richards in The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 96, distinguishes tenor as the "underlying idea or principal subject which the vehicle or figure means."

64 Craig, p. 123.

65 See also "To Rev. M'Math" where the Auld Lichts are "a pack sae sturdy" (1. 15). In "Address to the Deil" Burns compares the devil to "a roaring lion," a serpent who lurks in "the human bosom," "a drake, / On whistling wings," a "snick-drawing dog" (11. 19, 23-24, 47-48, 91). See also "A Dream" in which he compares the king's taxes to a sheepsharer who "fleeces" the people; then he parallels the king and a bird who cannot keep order in his own nest (11. 48, 32-33).

66 Compare the persona's earlier image in which bees are mentioned in reference to the joy of the carousers in the tavern ("Tam o' Shanter," 11. 55-56).

67 Burns emphasizes his mock lament for a political battle in "Epistle to Graham" by wishing his voice were a "lioness that mourns/ Her darling cub's undoing!" (11. 98-99). Insultingly he labels one minister a puppy who will lead a pack, describes another's "CALF'S-HEAD o' sma' value," and mentions another's "turkey-cock pride" ("The
Kirk of Scotland's Garland," 11, 28-29, 41, 54). See also "Monody on Maria" (1. 22), "Esopus to Maria" (1. 20), "Buy Braw Troggin" (11. 33-36), and "Epistle to Logan" (11. 1-6) for other examples of short metaphorical passages employing animal images.

See also the image of grinding wheat in "Address to the Unco Guid," 11, 5-8.

See too in "To Rev. M'Math" a reference to "gospel colors" and "holy robes" that only screen a "hellish spirit" (11. 47-48, 77-78) and the mockery of "silken pomp" worn by the pretentious women in "The Mauchline Wedding." The later satires do not use this type of imagery except in these two isolated cases: in "Tam o' Shanter" Burns says lawyers' tongues are "wi' lies seam'd like a beggar's clout"; and in "The Ploughman" he makes a description of oxen plowing a furrow be a metaphorical representation of fornication.

Speirs, p. 123.

See also in "Tam o' Shanter" the witches chasing Tam and Meg like a "market-crowd,/When 'Catch the thief!' resounds aloud" (11. 197-98; Speirs, p. 123).

Note too the allusion to Hebrews IV.12-13.

The Monsmeg was a piece of ordnance, with a twenty-inch bore (Kinsley, III, 1345).

See similar images in "Wha'll M w Me Now," "Act Sedurant of the Session," the "Second Heron Ballad," and "To a Louse."


Crawford, Burns, p. 148.

Later satires do not use socializing imagery for satiric purposes, except "Monody on Maria" and "Esopus to Maria," where brief comparisons are made between Maria's poetry and an "idiot lyre."

Daiches, "Burns 200 Years After," p. 204.

See also the commonplace depiction of Hell in "Dedication to Hamilton," 11, 70-77.

Genesis IX 22-25; Numbers XXV.11-13; Exodus IV.24-26.

Describing "New Psalm," Burns said, "I cannot say that my heart ran any risk of bursting . . . with the struggling emotions of gratitude [upon learning of the king's recovery]. . . . I must say that I look on the whole business as a solemn farce of pageant mummery" (Letters, I, 329).
82 In "The Bonniest Lass" he adds that King Solomon, "prince of divines... Baith mistresses an' concubines/In hundre's had" (11. 32-36).

83 Pope, The Dunciad, p. 346 (III, 175-76).

84 Tom Brown, The Stage Beaux: lose'd in a Blanket; or Hypocrisy Alamode, in Kinsley, III, 1096.

85 Milton, Paradise Lost, IX, 896, 900.


88 Milton, Paradise Lost, I, 128-29; Burns, Letters, I, 96-97.


90 Among the later satires Burns adds a headnote only for "The Calf"; drawn from Malachi, the sentence is not itself satiric but enunciates the basic idea that Burns will adapt into a satiric pun.

91 Dryden, p. 93.
CHAPTER IV—SATIRIC ALTERNATIVES

Two passages—"Come to my bowl, Come to my arms,/My friends, my brothers" and "The heart ay's the part ay,/That makes us right or wrang"—epitomize the general thrust of Burns's satiric alternatives ("Epistle to Lapraik," 11.125-26; "Epistle to Davie," 11.69-70). In his satires he manipulates forms and techniques so as to develop his attacks; at the same time, however, he is showing us those qualities which he approves. He so identifies his satiric targets with the repulsive that he guides us to share his antagonistic attitude; repelled by certain qualities, the reader seeks alternatives—whether Burns has merely implied or explicitly stated the contrasting norms. Burns uses two major patterns for revealing his satiric norms: by delineating contrasting sides, attacking one, and explicitly stating preference for the other, he reveals his alternatives; more frequently, by attacking individuals or groups who illustrate repugnant qualities of character and/or behavior, he suggests his preference for contrasting values. Despite obvious variations in techniques, vehicles, and tactics, he embraces the same alternatives throughout his poetry. Not only his satiric poems but even his letters and his 1783-85 Commonplace Book illustrate the consistency in his targets and alternatives. Experience and time may intensify his commitment to satiric norms, but they do not create new ones. To look at it another way, Burns knows from his earliest manhood the traits he likes and dislikes, and he is not reluctant to state those opinions. The qualities he attacks include incompetence that results in harm to others, intolerance that
creates unjust oppression, avarice, hypocritical pretensions, and false pride. By examining these targets from a different angle, we can discern the particular characteristics he views as alternatives or norms.

One of Burns's targets, predominantly in satires whose specific illustrations are drawn from the political arena, is incompetence. He suggests that one must illustrate dedication and ability in his profession. Dr. Hornbook's lack of ability leads Death to call him a killer rather than a healer ("Death and Doctor Hornbook"). The priest violates the rules of his calling when he fornicates with the parishioner who sought aid in controlling her eroticism ("I'll Tell You a Tale"). When Burns attacks Fox, Pitt, North, King George III, the Duke of Queensberry, and other governmental leaders, he is showing how poorly they perform, how much courage, dedication, and principles they lack. Such British generals as Howe and Clinton are mocked for their failures in the American Revolution ("Address of Beelzebub"); Charles Fox's proclivity for gambling and whoring distracts him from his duties ("When Guilford Good" and "A Dream"); the Duke of Queensberry is too cowardly to fight loyally for his country ("Epistle to Graham" and "Ladies by the Banks of Nith"); King George cannot control his American colonies, heeds misguided counsel, and rewards flatterers with important positions ("A Dream"). Obviously, these inadequacies lead to ill effects, such as the bloodbaths in wars inaugurated for base motives ("When Princes and Prelates"). Burns does not explicitly state what political qualifications he deems
necessary for good and honest government; nor does he consistently adhere to one political faction's view or perceive politicians in general as being honest or able. By implication, however, he seems to favor leaders who possess integrity, genuine concern for the needs and rights of those whom they govern, and a commitment to productive working habits.

Throughout his life Burns places high value on independence.2 That is, he reiterates his faith in the right and need for each individual to know himself, to make his own choices, and to bear the consequences. He is constantly at odds with the forces of authority—societal, Calvinist, political—that seek to force people into certain courses of action. This respect for independent choices underlies the bitter attack of the Highland Society that is developed in "Address of Beelzebub." Beelzebub, the ironic persona, asks

... what right hae they [Highlanders trying to emigrate]
To Meat, or Sleep, or light o' day,
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordships PLEASE TO GIE THEM?  (11.27-30)

The attack in "Reply to a Tailor" evolves from Burns's implied question, "Who are you to presume to tell me how to conduct my private life?" This respect for the freedom to choose underlies his initial enthusiasm for the French Revolution's ideals of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality. It is with obvious regret that he notes that a similar tree of liberty does not grow in England ("Tree of Liberty," 11.63-64). "Holy Willie's Prayer" develops from Burns's irritation that Gavin Hamilton was censured by the local Kirk elders (including William Fisher) for his decisions about church attendance.3
Ecclesiasts are frequently the specific individuals whom Burns cites when attacking unjust oppression. Not only do Kirk rules undercut individual choice in general, but they particularly seek to repress natural human desires, such as sexual desire. The Kirk seeks to deny, divert, and punish what Burns believes is an elemental and natural function. "The Holy Fair" is structured on the contrasts between "the life of nature and natural man" and "the artifices of religious hypocrisy and display," between "the force of sexual and social instinct" and "the shams of pulpit rhetoric and 'polemical divinity.'" Of the three "hizzies" Burns's clear preference is Fun, certainly not the Superstition he seems to link with the Kirk's dogma and not the Hypocrisy the Kirk's oppressive rules encourage. The desire for Fun, though not exclusively of a sexual nature, is basically undeniable. Even while the preachers evoke the horrors of Hell and the Devil, the listeners are thinking "upo' their claes," the opposite sex, the "bakes an' gills" and "pint-stowp." The combination of "faith an' hope, an' love an' drink" (1.232) expresses Burns's alternatives to the Kirk's authoritarian repression. Again he mocks the Kirk's attempts to regulate sexual activity when he imagines the punishment is "dungeons deep," equated by Burns with female genitalia ("Act Sedurant of the Session"). He implies his acceptance of sexuality also when he sides with the female speaker in "Wha'll M_w Me Now" and with the vagabonds' casual approach to fornication in "Love and Liberty." By rather proudly recording some of his own sexual exploits, he more straightforwardly shows his beliefs (e.g. "Epistle to Rankin,"
"Epistle to Lapraik," and "The Fornicator"). The sins of the flesh are more honest, Burns suggests, than sins arising from lack of generosity and compassion. It would be false to assert that Burns's defense of the naturalness of sexual intercourse derives solely from an ideological bent, even though he does revere independence of choice and does state, "Whatsoever is not detrimental to Society & is of positive Enjoyment, is of God the Giver of all good things, & ought to be received & enjoyed by his creatures with thankful delight" (Letters, II, 58). Burns's opinions derive largely from his temperament; he engaged in sexual intercourse at will, and he twice ran afoul of the Kirk discipline—thus, personality explains to some degree the force of his attacks on Kirk repression.5

Furthermore, Burns believes generally in the principle of equality and specifically in the precept that an individual's worth be measured by mind and character rather than by wealth and status. He censures ambition because it leads "up the hill of life . . . for the dishonest pride of looking down on others of our fellow-creatures seemingly diminutive in humbler stations" and notes with bitterness that justice and societal opinion operate differently for the rich and the poor.6 Not only is judgment based on superficialities unfair but it encourages arrogance, pretense, and greed. As a member of the peasantry, Burns is personally sensitive to the haughty indifference he sees in many of the aristocracy. But he is not merely a "have-not" venting his envy of those who are wealthier or socially superior. Some of the aristocracy he likes and praises.7 But those who abuse their rank or riches stimulate his attack because their abuses often create
oppression of other people's rights and beliefs. When he writes in "To Mr. John Kennedy"

Now if ye're ane o' warl's folk,  
Wha rate the wearer by the cloak  
An' sk lent on poverty their joke  
Wi' bitter sneer,  
Wi' you no friendship I will troke  
Nor cheap nor dear. (11.19-24)

he explicitly declares his hostility. The haughty and miserly Mrs. Oswald is savagely mocked in "Ode on Mrs. Oswald," for Burns records that "Humanity's sweet melting grace," "pity's flood," and generosity are the desirable characteristics that she lacks. The distinction between qualities he attacks and those he admires is equally clear in "Epistle to Lapraik":

Awa ye selfish, warly race,  
Wha think that havins, sense an' grace  
Ev'n love an' friendship should give place  
To catch-the-plack! (11.115-18) money grubbing

Ceasar in "The Twa Dogs" not only indicts the powerful rich for their rudeness and cruelty but also exposes their boredom and the pointlessness of their pursuits of superficial pleasures. In contrast, Luath describes the deep-felt pleasure the peasants find in simple things--their families (the peasants' "dearest comfort"), their happiness with a little "nappy," their delight in "unite[ing] in common recreation at Hallowmass and New Year's Eve (11.129-38).

Stating his standards for judging friends and his alternatives to evaluation on mere appearance, Burns writes,

But ye whom social pleasure charms,  
Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,  
Who hold your being on the terms,  
"Each aid the others,"  
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,  
My friends, my brothers! ("Epistle to Lapraik," 11.121-26).
Judgments based on superficial qualities can not only cause one to overlook points of merit but they also foment hypocrisy. The latter Burns finds to be especially prevalent in the Kirk. Burns champions honesty, but the Kirk's rigid rules, its dogmatic interpretations of the Calvinist code, and its tendency to judge the spiritual worth of a person on the basis of appearances encourage pretense. The hypocrisy of Holy Willie has its foundation in the Calvinist dogma, for Willie believes that his errors are caused by God, not by himself. And it is only to God that he can even mention his drunkenness and lechery; to the community he presents himself as a "chosen sample," "a pillar," "a guide, a ruler and example" ("Holy Willie's Prayer," 11.25-30). Burns mocks the church member who sneaks out the back window of a brothel but is quick to condemn the honest sinner who goes openly to the front door ("Dedication to Hamilton," 11.55-56). The "true believer" who has the "face of a saint" also possesses the "heart that wad poison a hog" ("Kirk of Scotland's Garland," 11.50-51); the apparently pious who bows his head in prayer is really sleeping ("Holy Fair," 11.197-98); the man who thinks himself Elect has a "grace-prood face" and "raxan [elastic] conscience" ("To M'Math," 11.20-22); the persona in "Tam o' Shanter" suffers a divided mind because he tries to adhere to the morally rigid standards of his community. Repeatedly, then, Burns is making the point that he who professes his piety to outsiders is frequently a sinner; and it is Calvinist rigidity that forces this outward pretense. Burns suggests that honesty with oneself and with others
is a viable alternative; a refusal to pretend can lead to increased self-knowledge, a penitent heart, and more sympathetic understanding of others' lapses.

The attitudes of the aristocracy also feed the impetus to pretend. Those who judge worth on outward signs—dress, bank account, bearing—shortsightedly ignore intrinsic worth. Burns does not absolve individuals' avarice not their desires to seem important. But he does believe the social environment encourages a person's desire to secure or to pretend to have money and position. Jenny is, debatedly, a servant who dons a fancy bonnet in order to pretend to a higher social class ("To a Louse"). The women in "Mauchline Wedding" dress in fancy clothes in order to seem more important than they are. Doctor Hornbook enjoys being the village physician because it elevates his social standing ("Death and Doctor Hornbook"). Burns, in contrast, affirms honesty with others, because public pretense can create falsity in self-understanding and because sincerity and candor are distinguishing characteristics of honest friendship.

Just as he speaks against evaluation of worth by superficialities, Burns believes principles, emotions, and loyalty should not be subject to cash purchase. For example, "The Fête Champetire" mocks the voter who will sell his vote and the candidate who offers to buy it; "Such a Parcel of Rogues" scorns the "hireling traitors" who "bought and sold" Scotland "for English gold." The thrust of his burlesque poems is similar, for he attacks false sentiments as fiercely as he satirizes feigned piety, status, and political principles.
Burns again implies that honesty is the desirable alternative to simulated emotion. Through the use of the burlesque vehicle in "Poor Mailie's Elegy," "The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie," "Tam Samson's Elegy," and "Ode to Spring" he censures those who simulate excessive outpourings of grief and passion. It is not intensity of emotion or the ode and elegy forms that he mocks; rather, he ridicules emotion ill-suited to the stimulus. Odes and elegies can express sincere feelings, but too often they only record banalities and bathos.

Not only does Burns affirm honesty rather than sham, judgment by worth rather than by wealth and rank, and pride in character rather than pride in ill-gotten riches and status; he also feels strong antipathy for those intolerant of others' weaknesses. Whether those are physical, moral, or spiritual weaknesses, Burns urges compassion. Part of his definition of worth includes "Truth and Humanity respecting our fellow-creatures." In the same vein he states that mankind feels "detestation of . . . inhumanity to the distressed" and of "insolence to the fallen"; "who but sympathizes with the miseries of a ruined profligate brother?" (Letters, I, 269). In "Address to the Unco Guid" he is chiding those who incompassionately "mark and tell/Your Neighbours' faults and folly" (11.3-4). This poem also contains Burns's most explicit affirmation of alternatives to a critical, intolerant, unjust condemnation of human weaknesses:
Then gently scan your brother Man,
   Still gentler sister Woman;
Tho' they may gang a kennin wrang,
   To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
   The moving Why they do it;
And just as lamely can ye mark,
   How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
   Decidedly can try us,
He knows each chord its various tone,
   Each spring its various bias:
Then at the balance let's be mute,
   We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
   But know not what's resisted. (11.49-64)

That sort of tolerance is what he finds lacking in many Kirk leaders. The ministers delineated in "The Holy Tulzie" are not even compassionate toward each other, much less toward their parishioners. One minister "liked weel to shed their [sinners] blood, /And sell their skin" (11.35-36). His opponent

   .. fine a maingie sheep could scrub,
   And nobly swing the Gospel-club;  
   Or New-light Herds could nicely drub,
   And pay their skin;  
   Or hing them o'er the burning dub,  puddle
   Or shute them in.--(11.43-48)

In "To William Simpson--Postscript" the dispute between two religious sects is symbolized as a bloody battle; Holy Willie demands that a cruel God harshly punish Gavin Hamilton and his supporters. "The Ordination" and "Kirk of Scotland's Garland" also use the imagery of battles to record the ecclesiasts' lack of tolerance for opposing views. These verbal and physical disputes are obviously incompatible with Christian teachings. Burns need not even enunciate his alternatives, for the poems' depictions of brutal intolerance stimulate us
to question "How should a minister act?" The Kirk's intolerance and narrow-mindedness are well documented in Burns's satires. In a letter he explains one reason for his attacks on the Kirk: "I hate the very idea of controversial divinity; as I firmly believe, that every honest, upright man of whatever sect, will be accepted of the Deity." The Kirk by its rigidity promotes division, at odds with Burns's ideal of brotherly, understanding fellowship. Busily enforcing its rules, punishing offenders, and threatening the horrors of Hell, the Kirk fails to offer sympathy or understanding to the sinner. Moreover, Burns also attacks the Calvinist belief in salvation by faith alone. Burns advances an alternative--morally good works:

It's naething but a milder feature, generosity and honesty
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt Nature:
Ye'1l get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoo's, and Pagan Turks,
Or Hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of Orth_d*xy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The GENTLEMAN in word and deed,
It's no through terror of Damn.t'n;
It's just a carnal inclination. ("Dedication to Hamilton," 11.39-48)

In a letter to Hamilton he iterates the same principles--the "carnal moral works of charity, humanity, generosity, and forgiveness" are promoted by Burns but not by the Kirk (Letters, I, 142).

Despite his many attacks of Kirk leaders and dogma, Burns is no more an "irreligious monster" than he is an anarchist or disloyal Briton when he satirizes political personages (Letters, I, 184). But Burns's spiritual vision is not the same as the one enforced by
the Calvinist Kirk. It may be, as Fairchild says, that Burns attacks his enemies in an attempt to justify himself, that his religion "was a self-approving indulgence of his emotions." Noting that Burns is not "a wholly disinterested authority on the difference between real and pretended decorum," Fairchild adds that Burns embraced beliefs "which would sanction all his impulses, both good and bad." Indeed personal temperament is a factor in his formulation of beliefs. But there is more to Burns's vision than just self-indulgence. He has assimilated with the demands of his temperament several beliefs drawn from humanitarian deism and the cult of sentimentalism promulgated by contemporaneous Scottish men of letters. Burns, however, is no philosopher, no mystic, no meditative or reflective thinker; he subscribes to no single code in political or religious affiliations. Rather, the evidence of the satires indicates that he embraces a broad-based humanitarianism, similar to the convictions advanced in this statement: "Whatever mitigates the woes, or increases the happiness, of others, this is my criterion of goodness; and whatever injures society at large, or any individual in it, this is my measure of iniquity" (Letters, I, 342). Of course he recognizes that foolish and vicious behavior occurs; at the same time, nonetheless, he believes in the existence of virtue and in the theory that "we come into this world with a heart & disposition to do good for it . . ." (Letters, I, 242).

"Doing good" requires respect for the rights of others to choose their thoughts and behavior; hence Burns attacks the
Establishment for authoritarian imposition of rules. "Good" requires performing one's job, as politician, farmer, lord of an estate, or minister, in a capable and compassionate manner, while recognizing also that the more power one has the more wide-spread and intense the ill effects can be. He believes in kind, generous, compassionate treatment of others, for he professes that each of us must acknowledge the imperfections of all humans; thus, he assails the intolerance of clerical leaders, the self-serving acts of governmental leaders, and the indifferent arrogance of the aristocracy. Because he thinks honesty with one's self and with others is essential, Burns repeatedly exposes the hypocritical pretensions he sees. And because pretense often emerges when position and riches serve as standards of merit, he satirizes those who evaluate worth by superficial criteria. The greed that overrides principles, duty, and compassion leads to dishonesty and indifference; thus he exposes individuals' avarice to satiric mockery. By indirection—that is, by satirizing certain traits—he advances those principles he affirms. His letters do contain more explicit comment about his principles, but the satires are just as clear in their implications about his satiric norms.

A nineteenth-century critic is not alone in his estimation of Burns's characteristics: "large sympathy, generous enthusiasm, reckless abandonment, fierce indignation, melting compassion, rare flashes of moral insight..." Robert Fitzhugh, for example, more than a century later echoes these judgments in more detail:

He was bawdy, political, satiric, sentimental, impudent, humorous. He wrote of people he knew, and he spoke with the voice of men like his
father, driven by landlords and oppressed by
a class system. . . . He celebrated in his
poems the honest man of good heart, and the
sweet sonsy [jolly] lass, and the joys of
friendship and love. He dignified simple
life and spoke with zest of those even lower
down than himself. He cried out for recognition
of ability, wit, and worth, and he denounced
oppression, privilege, and the unevenness of
fortune. He contrasted the spontaneous,
impulsive, 'feeling' life with considered dull
attention to profit and advantage.12

Burns himself asserts that "Love is the Alpha and Omega of human enjoy­
ment" (Letters, I, 298), that the "GENTLEMAN in word and deed" is he
who is the "poor man's friend in need" ("Dedication to Hamilton,"
11.45-46). He apparently shares the jolly beggars' opinion that "if
we lead a life of pleasure,/'Tis no matter HOW or WHERE," for in com­
munal sharing of enjoyments exist mutual expressions of love and
compassion ("Love and Liberty," 11.260-61).13 Brotherly love, a
benevolent heart, a generous spirit, truthfulness, independence of
action, loyalty to principle and people--these may be generalities,
but they are the broad principles that Burns affirms throughout his
satiric poetry. That Burns once wrote "The Georgics are to me the
best of Virgil" is not surprising, for The Georgics and Burns's satires
extoll similar qualities: the simple virtues, the hardihood, the
self-reliance, and the sense of insular community that both found to
prevail in rural settings (Letters, I, 221). Scotland's rural areas
are literally and figuratively the solid place from which Burns viewed
and reacted; their values give to him an angle of vision from which to
formulate targets to attack and alternatives to affirm. And they give
focus to his celebrations of an almost Falstaffian enjoyment of life.
1For example, he states: "Politics is a science wherewith, by means of nefarious cunning, & hypocritical pretense, we govern civil Politics for the emolument of ourselves & our adherents" (Letters, II, 149). Burns favors no political party long. Because he expressed Jacobite sympathies, he could be called a Tory; but in the late 1780's he sided with Fox and the Whigs, and then in the early 1790's he opposed Whig candidates.

2Expressed in Letters, I, 59, 203, 283; II, 2, 72, 78, 164, 171, 300.

3Maurice Lindsay, in The Burns Encyclopedia, 2nd ed. (London: Hutchinson, 1970), p. 159, lists the charges against Hamilton: unnecessary absences from five Sunday services within two months, beginning a trip on a Sabbath, neglecting family worship, and sending an abusive letter to the Kirk Session.

4Kinsley, III, 1095.

5When he admitted responsibility for the pregnancies of Elizabeth Paton and of Jean Armour, he was punished by the Kirk.

6Letters, II, 12, 51-52.

7See, for examples, Letters, I, 42-43, 45, 61, 96.

8He adds, "Reverence and Humility in the presence of that Being, my Creator and Preserver, and who, I have every reason to believe, will one day be my Judge" (Letters, I, 154).

9Letters, I, 161; see also Letters, I, 345.


13For representative examples of these sentiments, see "Love and Liberty," "Halloween," "The Twa Dogs," "The Holy Fair," and "Epistle to Lapraik."
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VITA

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Date of Examination:

November 29, 1976