The Philosophical Milieu of Elizabethan Formal Verse Satire.

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL MILIEU OF ELIZABETHAN FORMAL VERSE SATIRE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of English

by

Sam H. Henderson
B. S. Davidson College, 1943
M. A. Louisiana State University, 1948
August, 1952
MANUSCRIPT THESSES

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank Dr. Waldo F. McNeir, who directed this dissertation, for his encouragement, assistance, and invaluable criticism. I wish to express my gratitude also to Dr. John Olivo and to Dr. Nathaniel H. Gaffes for their critical comment and helpful suggestions. I am indebted also to Dr. Thomas A. Kirby for his kindness and assistance during my stay at Louisiana State University. My thanks are due finally to the library staff, especially to Mrs. Dyson of the Reference Library for assistance in obtaining the materials for this dissertation.
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ABSTRACT

This study of Elizabethan formal verse satire, it should be stated in the beginning, approaches verse satire in a very special way. It is an investigation into the philosophical, metaphysical and ontological aspects of formal satire and an attempt to determine why at a particular and in a rather limited time in the English Renaissance formal verse satire began to flourish almost over-night. In other words it is an attempt to see formal verse satire, not so much in its characteristics peculiar to a particular literary genre, but to see it as a manifestation of the varied intellectual and philosophical currents in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In this respect it naturally approaches a study in the history of ideas.

It has been suggested that satire always reflects in its ideological content the most prominent philosophical ideas of the age, that is to say, in Rome Stoicism, in the Renaissance humanism, and in the neo-Classic period the natural philosophies. It is on this suggestion that the main thesis of this study relies. No concentrated study up to this time has endeavored to relate Renaissance satire to the ideological currents of the period as has been done admirably for the Roman satire and for neo-classic English satire.

An approach of this kind will of course preclude such material that, on the surface, might seem essential to an inquiry into formal verse satire. It does not, for instance, get involved in the sometimes
vering problems of literary sources, except where they fit into the scheme of the ideological approach. It does not belabor the fact that some of the Renaissance satires are highly derivative. It is also out of the scope of this inquiry to deal in an exhaustive fashion with all the satires of the period. Emphasis is placed on those which are most representative. In addition this study deals only incidentally with what might be called the technical aspects of writing formal verse satire. A study of techniques would only duplicate without adding much to other works already in existence dealing with the technical aspects of writing formal verse satire. Finally this study makes no attempt to go into the extremely interesting problems involved in a study of the rhetoric and imagery of formal verse satire, except where these things have some bearing on the subject matter or philosophical content of the satires.

From the positive point of view this study shows that Elizabethan formal verse satire does indeed reflect the prevailing intellectual and philosophical currents of the Elizabethan and Jacobean milieu. It is demonstrated that although the genre itself is perhaps an outgrowth of the humanistic tradition, it often resembles the true humanistic approach only in the vaguest and most tenuous fashion. The cross-currents of Renaissance thought were too multi-formed and varied, especially near the end of the sixteenth century, for any kind of a philosophical system to be evolved, in the same sense as the Cartesian system some years later. It can be determined, however, that the satirists of the Elizabethan period are essentially Christian
moralists, and from the viewpoint of subject matter and philosophi-
cal content, must be placed in the main stream of English moralists
who give weight, body, and substance to the Elisabethan literary
effort— the essayists, character-writers, the great preachers and
their sermon-literature, to mention a few.

There is far too much variety and inconsistency among a group
which includes Donne, Hall, and Wither to justify placing all the
satirists arbitrarily in the same category. But their end was the
same and so was that of all the other satirists of the age—the end
of making virtue and right prevail.

The Elisabethan formal verse satirists fall roughly into three
main groups, if we allow for some over-lapping: the malcontents,
the Stoic-moralists, and the orthodox, bourgeois Christian. It is
within this somewhat arbitrary framework that the following investi-
gation is made.

Certain of the satirists, particularly Donne and Marston, adopt
the role of the malcontent type in writing their satires. The tra-
dition of the malcontent in satire goes back to the Greek Cynic philo-
sophers, and the tradition reappears in Elisabethan satire where it
is closely connected with the current theory of humours. Another

group of Elisabethan satirists, with Joseph Hall as their guide and
model, make their satires conform to Stoic-moralist tradition of the
satiric genre. The satirists working in this tradition view satire
principally as the vehicle for the promulgation of rising neo-Stoic
thought as it was modified to conform to Christian doctrine. A third
major group of satirists clings to the orthodox, conservative Christian
viewpoint and aims its satires at a bourgeoisie audience, with the goal of instructing the reader in the common-sense, practical aspects of religion. There reappear in this last group of satirists many of the themes and some of the techniques of the native English tradition in satire, although they are careful to maintain a semblance of classical influence in the framework device and other organizational techniques.

The ideological and philosophical approach to Elizabethan satire has not been thoroughly tried before. This study enables it to be seen in its true perspective as an integral part of the milieu to which it belongs and not as the amateureish, ineffectual product of inferior satirists who could neither imitate the Romans well nor achieve the polish and sophistication of the eighteenth century English satirists.
CHAPTER I
SATIRE: THE CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHIC TRADITION

The term satire, as it applies to a literary genre, has come to mean many things, and the feelings revolving about the term vary somewhat from age to age. To begin with we must reckon with a genre that was never clearly defined even by its founders, and one which has tended to add meanings and significances through the years.

It is important to emphasize at the outset that this study concerns itself with that particular literary genre known as formal verse satire and deals only incidentally, if at all, with the more amorphous satiric spirit, which may appear in any age in many forms of literature and expression other than formal verse satire. Most previous studies of formal verse satire have been content to devote themselves almost exclusively to the more technical aspects of the genre—verse form, framework scheme, rhetoric.

1 No one has yet been able to devise a definition of formal verse satire to satisfy all critics. The term is used here to a literary composition in verse, usually monometric, in which vices and follies are condemned. It is a subjective, reflective poem of varying tone, usually on a single theme, and enclosed within a fairly rigid rhetorical and structural framework. The satires under study in this dissertation cover a period of roughly three decades: 1590-1625. The term "Elizabehan" is used loosely to include the Jacobean period as well as the reign of Elizabeth.

2 Comprehensive, and in some cases technical, aspects of formal verse satire have been adequately treated in the following works: David Worcester, The Art of Satire (Cambridge, Mass., 1940); Mary Claire Randolph, The Neo-Classic Theory of Formal Verse Satire (University of North Carolina, unpublished dissertation, 1939); J. N. Duff, Roman Satire (Berkeley, 1936); Mary Claire Randolph, "The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire," PQ, 21(1942), 373 ff. There has never been an adequate treatment of the rhetoric of satire, yet no type of writing, at least in the Renaissance, shows more clearly the impact of formal logic and rhetoric.

1
Within comparatively recent years there has been a trend to study satire as part of the history of ideas, paying particular attention to the thesis that formal verse satire, as practiced by the ancients, was primarily a vehicle for the dissemination of popular philosophy. 3

Disregarding for the moment the efforts to link satire with certain of the ancient comic genres such as the Greek Old Comedy, 4 the "new critics" of formal verse satire emphasize its serious aspects and point for support to the many protestations in ancient satire that morals and ethics are its prime concern.

To view Elizabethan formal verse satire as a vehicle for the promulgation of current philosophical doctrines affords the most logical explanation yet proffered of its serious moralizing. It has distressed some critics that Elizabethan satire lacks the grace, wit, and urbanity of much of the later English satire. 5 Critics who dismiss the Elizabethan product as bumbling attempts of earlier writers to achieve the sophisticated satiric perfection of the eighteenth century not only do the Elizabethan satirist the injustice of assigning him a goal to which he did not aspire, but mistake altogether the tradition in which Renaissance English satire was written. This study will approach Elizabethan formal verse satire from an ontological and philosophical direction, attempting to show that the satire of the

3 This thesis was first advanced by C. W. Mendell in an essay entitled "Satire as Popular Philosophy," Classical Philology 15(1920), 139. It is supported by Mary C. Randolph in an unpublished dissertation, The Neo-Classical Theory of Formal Verse Satire (University of North Carolina, 1939).

4 Duff, Roman Satire, p. 20.

5 See, for example, Humbert Wolfe, Notes on English Verse Satire (London, 1929), Chapter II.
period is a reflection of current modes of thought, as is the satire of Augustan and post-Augustan Rome. This particular chapter surveys Roman satire with emphasis on its ideology and philosophical content in order to demonstrate that the classical satirists considered satire primarily a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas. It is important to establish this thesis because the Elizabethan formal verse satirists were to emulate them in this as well as in technique and formal organization. In the formal satire of the early seventeenth century there is a reversion to some of the themes and ideologies of medieval English satire, although the classical framework and general classical technique remain the same. The last section of this chapter highlights the major features of native English satire that reappear in the formal verse satire in the late Elizabethan period.

II

Renaissance satirists were probably not fully aware of the pagan tradition of satire as a conduit for philosophical ideas, but Renaissance theories of "imitation" aided them in accomplishing the same ends. Whereas the Elizabethan satirists "imitated" technique and certain conventions of the pagan satirists, they adapted them to current needs and current philosophies. The Stoicism, for instance, that we find in certain of the Elizabethan satirists is not the result of a slavish rehashing of Stoic ideas found in the Roman satirist, but

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6 They enthusiastically adopted, for instance, the framework structure, the groupings into books or similar divisions, and the dialogue or monologue technique.
a neo-Stoicism derived ultimately from Cicero and Seneca, and adapted to meet the needs of the Christian-Stoics who were becoming prominent and more vocal at this same period in history.⑦

One student of satire and philosophy argues that satire is related ultimately to the Greek Cynic street-preachers.⑧ The Cynics held that Virtus was the summum bonus. Their standard of virtue became the cause for the destructive criticism of the Vitia. The elimination of the forms of bad behavior was prerequisite to the goal of right behavior. The Stoics, the natural descendants of the Cynics, also acquired a reputation as preachers against evils.⑨

Roman Stoicism was much more genial than the earlier Greek Stoicism. The exaltation of the good, and the responsibility to country, friend, and finally self became the foremost Stoic doctrine.⑩ The philosophic influence in general, and the Stoic influence in particular, on the satiric genre can be traced in the adoption by the


⑧Mendell, "Satire as Popular Philosophy," 141-142. Arthur H. Heston maintains that the Christian Preacher who employs the pen of satire is really the successor of the wandering Stoic or Cynic philosopher who preached on street-corners in classical times. He states further that the "sermon" as a moral discourse is not far from Horace's "sermo." He points out, too, that many of the medieval church fathers—Tertullian, Arnobius, Prudentius, Hieronymus, Claudian—wrote sermons of a satiric type. Latin Satirical Writing Subsequent to Juvenal (Lancaster, Pa., 1915), p. 158.

⑨See G. R. Oswat, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England (Cambridge, 1933), especially Chapters 5, 6, and 7 for the analogies between sermon-satire and the native English satire.

⑩Mendell, "Satire as Popular Philosophy," 141.
satinists of certain modes of expression already associated with philosophical utterance. The dialogue became the most favored form among the satirists. The diatribe also long popular with the lyric preachers, became a favored form in satire. Lucilius is credited with first adopting the dialogue and associated forms to the purposes of satirical satire. It was Horace who perfected the forms after the adoption. It is in Horace's satires (

**Sermones**
)
that we find the earliest extant attempts to make verse satire the vehicle for philosophy, particularly the ethical aspects of philosophy.

Horace was above all the apostle of common sense. He boasted that his philosophy was eclectic. He has been called Stoic, yet he ridicules the excesses of Stoicism. He has been called Epicurean, yet he laughs at the extremes of Epicureanism. He lived up to what he felt to be the best in both philosophies, tempered, of course, with the 

**via media**. One critic of Horace says,

The Stoic thought that he could gain peace of mind by cultivating the four cardinal virtues of Socrates: wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, and by doing his duty. . . . The Epicurean thought that he could attain it by cultivating the four cardinal virtues of Socrates, and by eliminating the baser emotions: fear, envy, jealousy, anger, hatred. . . . The Peripatetic thought that he could attain peace of mind by following the golden mean and avoiding all excesses and deficiencies. . . . Horace combined all of these philosophies and coined into golden phrases their more important doctrines.

11 Ibid., 154. Mendell maintains that the dialogue served the Stoic philosophers and moralists, whereas the Epicureans were more attracted to the epistle as a vehicle for their moral and philosophical principles.

12 Ibid., 142-144.

Horace's satires do not form the philosophical whole that is to be found later in the Stoic utterances of Pericles. Some few of Horace's satires seem to be little more than *jeux d'esprit*, but there is implicit even in these an admonition to avoid the extremes and excesses which can lead only to discontent and unhappiness. It is sometimes stated that Book I of the *Satires* is more Epicurean in outlook than Stoic. This view would seem to be supported by the fact that Horace has attacked the extreme Stoic position in some of the satires. Satire 3, Book I, for instance, attacks the Stoic paradox that all offenses are equal. Such a position, he maintains, is historically unsound and repugnant to reason.

"Those whose creed is that all sins are much on a par are at a loss when they come to face facts. Feelings and customs rebel, and so does Expedience herself, the mother, we may say, of justice and right." Earlier in the same satire he says, in a plea for tolerance toward minor faults: "In fine, since the fault of anger, and all the other faults that cleave to fools cannot be wholly cut away, why does not Reason use her own weights and measures, and visit offenses with punishments suited to each." In the same Satire 3, Book I, Horace brings his sharpest wit to bear on another Stoic paradox: the only perfect man is the wise man or philosopher, he is therefore

14 Satire 5, Book I, for instance, "The Journey to Brundisium" or Satire 8, Book I, a relative of the *Praeae*.


16 Ibid., p. 39.
rich, accomplished, beautiful, a king among men.

In the second book of satires Horace has more regard for certain Stoic principles. He preaches that all men (except the true Stoic, of course) are slaves (to their desires and passions); or conversely, as he expresses it in Satire 7, Book II, only the wise are free. It is Davus, the slave, who really speaks for Horace in this essay.

Davus asks,

Who then is free? The wise man, who is lord over himself, whom neither poverty nor death nor bonds affright, who bravely defies his passions, and scorns ambition, who in himself is a whole, smooth and rounded, so that nothing from outside can rest on the polished surface, and against whom Fortune in her onset is ever maimed.17

An editor of Horace's Satires has called Satire 2, Book II, mainly a collection of commonplaces taken from the teachings of the various philosophical schools. The ideas expressed in it could have come equally well from Cicero or Lucretius.18 The satire extols the virtues of the simple life. To live frugally, however, is not to live meanly. In avoiding the extreme of luxurious living one should not fall into the opposite extreme of mean living. The true simple life promotes health, and leaves one free from care. Those who have always lived the simple life, as Ocellus has, can face misfortune bravely and in true philosophic fashion when it comes.

Horace reserves some of his satire for the foibles of the Epicurean school of philosophy. The best Epicureans interpreted

17 Ibid., p. 231.
18 Ibid., p. 134.
diem not to mean license, but interpreted it as a call to live life whole, taking advantage every day of all one's opportunities. Horace had nothing but scorn for those whose idea of the vita beata was to have good things to eat and drink.\(^\text{19}\)

The most persistent themes in Horace's satires are the themes of the philosophic mean and toleration of the shortcomings of mankind. Considering the theme of toleration first, it is interesting to note that Horace alone of all the satirists invariably, whether it be for the purposes of literature or not, adopts the role of the fool. If all men are fools, as the Stoics maintain, then Horace is one of them. He taunts the Stoics with the fact, however, that in reality, they are bigger fools than he in their unreasonable attitudes concerning virtue and vice. Horace never adopts the role of preacher himself; he puts his doctrinaire passages into the mouth of a Datus or an Ocellus or an Sturtinius. Invective and vituperation do not lend themselves to Horace's satiric method. He never assumed the cloak of righteous indignation.

If Horace preached anything, it was the doctrine of moderation. Although he seems at times to waver between Stoicism and Epicureanism, his respect for the Aristotelian via media never varies. Satire 2 of Book I, for instance, one of his earliest,\(^\text{20}\) points out the folly of running to extremes. The extremes under attack here are (in the main)

\(^{19}\) Satire 4 and 8 in Book II are satiric attacks on "The Art of Good Living" when that phrase refers only to dinner parties and delicate palates.

\(^{20}\) Duff, Roman Satires, p. 67.
those of sensual indulgence.

Should one now ask, 'what is the point of all this?'
'tis this: in avoiding a vice, fools run into its opposite. Malignus walks with his garments trailing low; another, a man of fashion, wears them tucked up indecently as far as his waist. Ruillisus smells like a scents-box. Gargenius like a coat. There is no middle course.21

In his satires Horace does not always present both departures from the mean in a kind of triptych. The extremes which attract most of his attention are those which involve the sins of avarice, lust, and ambition. Yet Horace could never attack even these vices with the unswerving devotion to virtus of the uncompromising Stoic. His sympathy for the human animal forced him most often to the Epicurean viewpoint which allowed man his foibles.

When the Elizabethan satirists turned to the Roman satirists for models and inspiration, it was not to Horace that they turned.22 Pericius and Juvenal had more attraction for them, largely because irony and subtlety had little place in the native tradition of English

21 Horace, Satires and Epistles, p. 21.

22 The earliest attempt to bring Horace to the English reader was a complete fiasco. Thomas Drant first translated the entire group of Horatian satires in 1566. His failure is perhaps best explained b his own words: "I have done as the people of God were commanded to do with their captive women that were handsome and beautiful: I have shaved of his beare, and bored of his nayles (that is) I have wyped away all his vanitie and superfluitie of matter. Further, I have for the most part drawn his private carpyng of this or that to a general moral. I have englished things no: according to the vein of the Latin proprieties, but of our own vulgar tongue. I have interfarsed (to remove his obscruitie and sometymes to better his matter) much of myne owne devysings. I have peeced his reason, sokado, and renderd his simillitudes, mollyfied his barrenes, prolonged his out-tall kynd of speches, changed, & muche altered his worde, but not his sentences; or at leaste (I dare say) not his purpose." Reproduced in Translations from the Classics into English, 1477-1620 (Madison, 1933), p. 145-146.
satire, nor in the hortatory literature which served many of the purposes of satire up until the late Elizabethan period. Inventive satire, or the direct frontal attack, was more in keeping with the spirit of English moral preaching in all its forms. The dead seriousness of Persius and the *grave indignatio* of Juvenal were the qualities which the Elizabethan English satirists sought to achieve in their own satires.

There was no more dedicated spirit to any cause than was Persius to the cause of Stoicism. He has been called "a hot gospeler ardent for the application of Stoicism to life." Bookish young man that he was, it was not the abstract, abstruse speculations of the early Stoics which appealed to Persius. It was the practical aspects of the modified Stoicism evolved by the utilitarian Roman Stoics. They were interested in establishing a code by which to live. An editor of Persius says,

> Under the iron grasp of the Roman mind, Stoicism . . . was being reduced more and more to a simply practical system, bearing but a faint impress of those abstruse cosmological speculations which had so great a charm for classical moralists the satirists had relatively few translations during the Renaissance. Horace's Satires 1 and 2 of Book I were translated by Lewis Evans in 1564. Drant's "translation" came in 1566 and a second by Drant in 1567. There was a other translation of Horace's Satires in Elizabethan period. Persius was not translated into English until 1616 by Barton Holyday. Holyday translated Persius again in 1617 and in 1635. Only Satire 10 by Juvenal was translated in the Elizabethan period, in 1617 by T. B. For a list of translations from the classics during the Elizabethan period see Lathrop, *Translations from the Classics into English*, pp. 311-316.

23 The second section of this chapter will deal at some length with the tradition of native English satire.

the intellect of Greece even in its most sober moments, and exhibiting in place of them an applicability to civil life the want of which had been noted as a defect in the conceptions of Zeno and Chrysippus.\(^{25}\)

The Roman moralists were drawn more and more to fixed literary forms for the dissemination of ethical, moral and philosophical ideas—the sermon, the moral epistle, the satire. Satire in the hands of Persius and Juvenal became almost exclusively a vehicle for the dissemination of philosophical precepts. It is for this reason more than any other that Elizabethan satirists were attracted to Persius and Juvenal as models for their satiric endeavors.\(^{26}\)

Persius, more than Horace or Juvenal, reflects in his satires the Stoic attitude that the corruption of literature and literary taste in Rome was a sign of a similar corruption in morals. Taking their cue from Persius, several of the English Renaissance satirists devote satires to the corruption of literature as a reflection of the corruption of the times in general.\(^{27}\)

In Satire 3 Persius treats the Stoic theme that was to appear so frequently in Elizabethan satire: that usage in vices dulls the sense to the point that man soon loses the will to resist.


\(^{26}\) Horace, Juvenal and Persius were not unknown during the Middle Ages as philosophic moralists. Both John of Salisbury and Peter of Blois call them ethicus. See Mondell, "Satire as Popular Philosophy," p. 139.

\(^{27}\) The most notable example of this view among Renaissance English satirists is Joseph Hall, who devotes one Book and part of another to so-called "literary" satires.
"Are you not ashamed to live the loose life of Natta? But he is paralyzed by vice; his heart is overgrown with thick deplopa of fat; he feels no reproach; he knows nothing of his loss; he is sunk in the depths and makes no more bubbles on the surface."

The philosophy of Persius might be summed up in the phrase, "Know thyself, and know where you are going." In Satire 3 the young pupil is questioned:

"Have you any goal? Any mark at which you aim? Or are you on a vague wild-goose chase armed with broken pots and mud, not caring where you go, and living by the rule of the moment?"

Satire 5, his tribute to his Stoic tutor, echoes this sentiment:

"You are the moral husbandman of the young, preparing the soil of their ears and sowing it with Cleanthes' corn. Yes! it is thence that all, young and old alike, should get a definite aim for their desires, and a provision for the sorrows of old age."

Persius' Satire 6 may be cited to show that Stoicism did not require its adherents to live meanly or even frugally as long as the purchasing power of money was seen in proper perspective. The satire is a vindication of the speaker's right to spend his income in moderate enjoyment. The simple life is not necessarily the frugal life, says the poet. On my farm I am free from disturbances of all

28 Persius, Satires, p. 57.
29 Ibid., p. 63.
30 Ibid., p. 99.
kinds. Let these grow rich who will; let those stint who will. I shall run to neither extreme. I shall live up to my income but not beyond it. I shall be generous to my friends; I shall be generous to my heir, but I shall not amass a fortune for his benefit.\textsuperscript{31}

Juvenal followed Persius in subscribing to the same high concept of the poet, particularly the satirist. Unlike Horace, both Persius and Juvenal felt that a certain amount of objectivity, a certain amount of aesthetic distance must be maintained by the satirist. In view of the high moral aims which Juvenal implicitly ascribes to satire, the profligate had no right to turn preacher; satirizing involved obligations.\textsuperscript{32}

Juvenal’s basic philosophy of life was grounded in Stoic doctrine. His earlier satires exhibit his so-called \textit{saeva indignatio}, the result, perhaps, of the disillusionment of an idealist who feels angry and resentful at the discrepancies between man’s capabilities on the one hand and his realization of them on the other. His later satires are said generally to exhibit a quieter, more reflective, more philosophical tone.\textsuperscript{33} It is in these later satires that Juvenal’s Stoicism is more explicit. But it is at least implicit in the more indignant satires also, though perhaps obscured by the venom of the attack.

We find expressed in the first satire the Stoic belief that a poor moral climate is reflected in the literary tastes of the

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 127-128.

\textsuperscript{32} Juvenal, \textit{Satires}, ed. G. G. Ramsay (London, 1930), Introduction, p. xxxvi. All quotation from Juvenal’s Satires will be taken from this volume.

\textsuperscript{33} Duff, \textit{Roman Satire}, pp. 154-55.
Implicit in several of the earlier satires, also, is the doctrine that all vices are equal. Consequently we find, for instance, that fairly harmless foibles such as transparent clothes and the use of cosmetics come under as severe condemnation in Satire 2 as the more serious vices of the Stoic hypocrites. Similarly in the highly regarded sixth satire on infamous women the relatively innocuous pastimes of the lady "blue-stockings" get scourged as severely as the most degrading pastimes of the courtesan.

It is apparent in Juvenal's Satire 8 that he has the proper Stoic concern with what constitutes true nobility. "What avail your pedigrees? What boots it, Ponticus, to be valued for one's ancient blood, and to display the painted visages of one's forefathers...? Though you deck your hall from end to end with ancient waxen images, Virtue is the one and only true nobility."

The nobles particularly are condemned in this same satire for neglecting their duties and obligations to the commonweal. They no longer observe the laws of decorum and act with dignity. It has become a common sight to see the sons of the noblest houses engaging in pursuits of the theater and the arena like any common actor or gladiator. He says to those who would be called noble: "You owe me, first of all things, the virtues of the soul; prove yourself stainless

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34 Juvenal, Satires, pp. 3 ff.
36 Ibid., pp. 119-121.
37 Ibid., p. 159.
in life, one who holds fast to the right both in word and deed,
and I acknowledge you as a lord."³⁸

Juvenal echoes here and there the Stoic precept that the only
real beauty comes from within; spiritual beauty can overcome the
disadvantages of physical unattractiveness. Furthermore the out­
ward man reflects the true nature of the man. In Satire 9, for in­
stance, the physical appearance of the notorious Naevolus reflects
his profligate life.

You have a hang-dog look; your head is a forest of un­
kempt, unanointed hair; your skin has lost all the gloss
that it got from swathes of hot Bruttian pitch, and your
legs are dirty and rough with sprouting hair. Why are
you as thin as a chronic invalid in whom a quartan fever
has long made its home? One can detect in a sickly body
the secret torments of the soul, as also its joys: the
face takes on the stamp of either.³⁹

Juvenal's justly famous tenth satire⁴⁰ is the first of his sa­
tires in the quieter, more reflective vein.⁴¹ In this profoundly
pessimistic satire Juvenal carries rejection of the world's goods
even beyond the point to which most Stoic devotees would go. Riches
come foremost among human wishes; they can only bring disaster.
Equally undependable are the glories of high station. Should we then
ask for long life? Take heed of the senile old man. Should we ask
for beauty in our children? Not unless we would see them debauched.
What then are we to pray for? Juvenal does not leave us in complete

³⁸ Ibid., p. 161.
³⁹ Ibid., p. 183.
⁴⁰ This satire has become well-known to English readers
through Samuel Johnson's paraphrase of it in "The Vanity of Human Wishes."
⁴¹ This is the opinion of Duff, Roman Satire, pp. 154-55.
despair, Hope is offered in the end by a Stoic insistence on virtue.

Is there nothing then for which men shall pray? If you ask my counsel, you will leave it to the Gods themselves to provide what is good for us, and what will be serviceable for our state; for, in place of what is pleasing they will give us what is best. Man is dearer to them than he is to himself. Impelled by strong and blind desire, we ask for wife and offspring; but the gods know of what sort the sons, of what sort the wife, will be. Nevertheless that you may have something to pray for, ... you should pray for a sound mind in a sound body; for a stout heart that has no fear of death, and seems length of days the least of Nature's gifts; that can endure any kind of toil; that knows neither wrath nor desire, and thinks that the woes and hard labors of Hercules are better than the loves and the banquets and the down cushions of Sardanapalus. What I commend to you, you can give to yourself; for it is assuredly through virtue that lies the one and only road to a life of peace. Thou wouldst have no divinity, O Fortune, if we had but wisdom; it is we that make a goddess of thee, and place thee in the skies.42

Thus in the last phrase Juvenal rejects what has seemed up to this point a fatalistic acceptance of man's helplessness in the face of the vicissitudes of fortune. If we are subject to the vagaries of fortune's wheel, it is we who make it so. We have within us the means to counteract fate's inconsistencies. The means lie in strict attention to the Stoic virtues.

Juvenal's remaining satires show an increasing reliance on the Stoic precepts for a simple life of peace and tranquility. Satire 11 is a comparison of the extravagant and the simple life. This satire is remarkable for its extended treatment of the austeres but happy existence of the Stoic household.43

Satire 13 is directed ostensibly at a friend, Calvinius, in consolation for a fraud he has suffered. It supports the Stoic doctrine

42 Juvenal, Satires, pp. 219-220.
43 Ibid., pp. 231-235.
that vengeance should be left to the gods. Besides, the greatest punishment comes from the terrors of a guilty conscience. The poet says, "Benign Philosophy, by degrees, strips from us most of our vices, and all our mistakes; it is she that first teaches us the right. For vengeance is always the delight of a little, weak, and petty mind."

That precept cannot teach like example is the thesis of Satire 14. Put a thousand bearded preceptors on a child's right and as many on his left, says the satirist, and he will still follow the example of his elders, particularly in vice. All vices save one the young imitate of their own accord; avarice alone is enjoined on them against the grain. "For that vice has a deceptive appearance and semblance of virtue, being glossey of mien, severe in face and garb. The miser is openly commended for his thrift, being deemed a saving man. . . . Moreover, such a one is thought to be skilled in the art of money-getting." The satire soon evolves into another of the frequent attacks on avarice, the bête noir of the Stoics in general and of Juvenal in particular. Not only is too much wealth vicious in itself, but it leads inevitably into other vices, treachery, falsehood, debauchery, miserliness and so on. The wise man will set a limit to his fortunes.

44 Ibid., p. 259.

45 Ibid., p. 273. This sentiment has a peculiarly modern ring. It was during the late Elizabethan period that the protestant sects began to elevate thrift to the position of a cardinal Christian virtue. Too often thrift merely served as an excuse for avarice. Elizabethan satirists, like Juvenal, were loud in their denunciations of "money-getting."
Yet if any should ask of me what measure of fortune is enough, I will tell him: as much as thirst, cold and hunger demand; as much as sufficed you, Epicurus, in your little garden; as much as in earlier days was to be found in the house of Socrates. Never does Nature say one thing and wisdom another. 46

In citing passages illustrating the philosophic content of classical satire, the positive side has been purposely emphasized. Satire as a genre emphasizes the negative side of a picture. The major portion of every satire is given over to iconoclastic attack—on morals, on institutions, on people. This disproportion of the negative in relation to the positive is apt to blind us to the constructive or positive side of satire, subordinate though it is. If satire is to be accounted the vehicle for the dissemination of current philosophical ideas and as an instrument, along with other types of didactic writing, for the improvement of manners and morals, it is important that satire be viewed as something more than a destructive weapon of the iconoclast. It has been, therefore, the object of this study up to this point to emphasize that the Roman satirists had a positive program, which they sincerely and even fervently believed in, and which, if it were followed, would lead to a reformation in man's ethical and moral life, and put a check to the increasing inroads of vice and corruption.

Elizabethan formal verse satire was an admitted "imitation" of Roman formal verse satire. 47 It imitated Roman satire not only in

46 Ibid., p. 287.

form, structure, style and technique, but in content as well. The
Elizabethan satirists recognised the ethical and moral value of sa-
tire and recognized also its value as an effective instrument for
the inculcation of ideas and ideals. It was to them, as to the Romans,
a utilitarian instrument. In imitating the Roman satirists as they
did, the Elizabethan formal verse satirists made an almost complete
break with the native English tradition of satire. Few traces of
medieval English satire can be found in the major Renaissance formal
satirists. When the revival of the satiric movement in verse was
joined by the poetasters and the writers who consciously appealed to
bourgeois tastes, the influence of medieval native English satire may
be found once again in English verse satire. In order that this
medieval influence in formal verse satire be recognized, incongruously
garbed in classical trappings, some emphasis must be given to the general
characteristics of native English satire.

III

The satiric spirit made itself manifest in a variety of forms in
the native English tradition with which it will not be necessary to
deal in this chapter. What we are concerned with here is only those

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48 One of the major instances of medieval influence in Eliza-
bethan formal verse satire occurs in Joseph Hall's Book II, which is
nothing more than the old satire against the estates (see section III of
this chapter) decked out in classical raiment.

49 There was, for example, an abundance of political satire di-
rected King John, William II and Edward II. This is closely allied to
personal satire which we find best exemplified in Skelton's attacks on
Wolsey. There was satire of the beast-fable type which remained in vogue
as late as Spenser's Mother Hubbard's Tale, 1591. These types had little
influence on the formal verse satirists with which this study is concerned.
forms of medieval satire which seem to have had some influence, although not necessarily direct, on formal verse satire of the Elizabethan period. In view of the fact that the Elizabethan formal satirists considered satire largely as the natural vehicle for the promulgation of doctrine, it is not in any way surprising to discover that it is to the more serious, reflective and doctrinaire medieval satire that they are attracted. Satire of this doctrinaire type, reflecting the conservative, orthodox religious views of the writer, made a strong resurgence in the satire of the minor figures of the early seventeenth century. Almost inevitably they reverted also to some of the themes and techniques of the early native English satirists, although they were careful to maintain most of the external framework which enables their satires to be classed as formal satire.

The allegorical method, always prominent in medieval literature as a whole, was no less prominent in medieval satire. The satire of allegorical type gained a wide vogue with the popularity of the Roman de la Rose and Piers Plowman which was maintained well down into the seventeenth century, when such poets as Wither, Rowlands, and Brathwaite continue to make use of it. The fact that Roman satire makes

For a full treatment of these types of satire see Samuel H. Tucker, Verse Satire in England Before the Renaissance (New York, 1906), especially chapters II, III, IV, and V. See also C. H.Previté-Orton, Political Satire in English Poetry (Cambridge, 1910), chapter 2.

50 Formal satire of this type from the ranks of bourgeoisie satirists of conservative Christian faith forms the basis for Chapter V of this dissertation.

51 See for example Wither's Abuses Stript and Shent, Book I; Rowland's A Terrible Battle Between Time and Death; Brathwaite, A Strappado for the Devil. These satires will be considered at some length in Chapter V of this study.
use of character types verging on the allegorical strengthened the tendency for Elizabethan satirists to make use of allegory. The type-names themselves such as Luxuria or Cornutus are an outgrowth of the classical type-names and medieval allegory. The Aristotelian vices and virtues were sometimes allegorised, and, of course, the personification of Christian virtues and the Seven Deadly Sins had wide vogue in medieval didactic literature. It is hardly necessary to point out how wide-spread the allegorical method was in medieval satire. The famous parade of the Seven Deadly Sins in *Piers Plowman* which pictures Wrath, "with white eyes staring, Snivelling through his nose, and with his neck hanging," and Sloth "all beslobbered, with slime on his eyes-lids," is a good case in point.\(^\text{52}\) The Scottish poet William Dunbar also makes use of allegory for satire in his comparatively short poem, "The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins."

\begin{verbatim}
And first of all in dance was Pryd,
With hair wyld bak and bonet on syd,
Lyk to nek vaistie wanlaf
And round about him, as a quhell,
Bang all in rumpillis to the heill
His kethat for the manis:
Moky proud trumpour with his trippit
Throw skaldand fyre, ay as they skippit
They gynd with hiddeous granis.\(^\text{53}\)
\end{verbatim}

Well into the sixteenth century allegory used satirically was prominent in the development of English drama,\(^\text{54}\) and this no doubt had its effect

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on the use of allegory in formal verse satire for it kept the allegorical method alive in one genre of literature long after it had begun to die out in most of the other genres.55

Samuel Tucker has said that in his moral satire Langland uses two distinct methods. In one he personifies some abstraction. In the other he arraigns society by its classes.56 This statement very accurately characterizes the medieval elements that appear in formal verse satire of the early seventeenth century, for among this army of poetasters there was a decided interest in the classifications of mankind, the chain of being, and in order.57

But medieval satire did not limit itself strictly to four estates. The satire against the estates was rapidly extended to include all the occupational endeavors of mankind, so that it came to be a kind of satire against the professions or the occupations. This is true even in Piers Plowman. Although the attacks against clergy, nobility, and yeomanry are expressed and implicit throughout the whole work, the more specific attacks cover the whole range of human occupation.58

55 Spenser's monumental allegory, The Fairy Queen is, of course, an exception to this statement. It was, however, something of an anachronism.

56 Tucker, Verse Satire in England Before the Renaissance, p. 73.


58 The same extension of range is to be found in the various types of "real literature of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, of which the most prominent example is Sebastian Brandt's Das Narrenschiff. Here we find the same breadth of classification that is characteristic of Langland and Chaucer.
The medieval moral satire of the four estates had a prominent exponent in the latter half of the sixteenth century in the one satire of George Gascoigne—*The Steel Glass*, 1576. The whole outlook of the satire is conservative and medieval. To Gascoigne the changing social pattern was an upsetting force that prevented the smooth functioning of social responsibility within the medieval hierarchy. His is essentially a Puritan Christian outlook. After surveying the hierarchy of society, from prince to peasant, he finds selfishness everywhere.

This is the cause (believe me now my Lorde)
That Realmes do rave, from high prosperity,
That Kings decline, from princely government,
That Lordes do lacke, their ancestors good will,
That knights consume, their patrimonie still,
That gentlewom, do make the merchant rise,
That plowmen begge, and craftsmen cannot thrive,
That clergie quyiles, and hath small reverence,
That laymen live, by moving mischiefe stil,
That courtiers thrive, at latter Lammas day,
That officers, can scarce enrich their heyers,
That Souldiers sterve, or preach at Tihorne crosse,
That lawyers byue, and purchase deadly hate,
That merchants clyme, and fel againe as fast,
That roysters brag, above their betters roam,
That sycophants, are counted jolly guests,
That Lais leads a Ladies life alofte,
And Lucrece lurkes, with sobre bashful grace.

Character and social responsibility, he feels, have disappeared. There are no longer any absolute standards by which men are judged.

It was, then, the change in the social order that motivated Gascoigne's satire. It is one of the earliest manifestations of awareness of this change which was not to strike with its full force until the

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last decade of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seven-
teenth century. Similar circumstances were at least partial motiva-
tion for such divergent works as Spenser’s *Faerie Queens* and the work
of the formal verse satirists. They went on to assert new moral and
spiritual values. The only solution Gascoigne can offer for the ills
of the world is increasing prayer, and most of all he says, "Pray for
me, Priests, I pray you pray for me."  

There are two other important characteristics of medieval satire
which reappear in the formal verse satire of the late sixteenth century
and the early seventeenth century. One of these is that it addressed
itself to a bourgeois audience; the other is that it displays a de-
cidedly humanitarian attitude, which is alien to Renaissance literature
in general.

It is true that the satirists often addressed their kings and
nobles, but it was primarily to the working people and the bourgeoisie
that they addressed themselves. The great preponderance of "fool
literature" that flourished in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth
centuries is good evidence for the shift in emphasis on the part of
some writers to an audience lower on the social scale. The people

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61 Chapter II of this study deals specifically with the condi-
tions of Elizabethan England which fostered this discontent and which
did much to encourage the growth of the satiric spirit.


(New York, 1944), Introduction, p. 4. There is little evidence of the
influence of fool satire on Elizabethan formal verse satire. Samuel
Rowland’s *Knave series* is, of course, fool satire but they are not formal
verse satires. It is intriguing to speculate on what connection medieval
fool literature might have had with the classical Stoic concept that all
who wrote this kind of satire and the people who read it knew little and cared less about the medieval chivalric literature that appealed to an earlier generation. The "fool literature" showed an implicit admiration for the common people and for what were becoming the virtues of the common people, although it chided them severely for their excesses and vices. It is the conservative viewpoint of the Christian church which the medieval satirists most reveal. For every one citation of a classical authority, there are several from the Bible or from the church fathers. In attacking particular vices and upholding particular virtues, the medieval satirist was less concerned with the more aristocratic and classical virtues, prominent in the pagan moralists—generosity, friendship, loyalty, justice, fortitude and the like—than with the more Christian virtues—humility, constancy, sobriety and so on. The vices and foibles that come under attack, while they may incidentally be the vices prominent in some classical satires, are predominantly those vices which form the basis for attack in any good medieval sermon. A partial list of them, found in almost every medieval satire, would include drunkenness, sloth, sensuality, adultery, avarice, jealousy, pedantry, anger, religious and social pride, lechery, gluttony, and gaming.

The professed object of both this type of medieval satire and classical satire is the regeneration of the individual and the consequent regeneration of society as a whole. Here the resemblance ends. The men are fools. I have not been able to establish any direct connection here. The idea of the distinction between fools and wise men is at least as old as the Bible and can be found in Greek and Roman literature other than satire. See Barbara Swain, Fools and Folly (New York, 1932), especially chapter III.
premise and the method in each case are entirely different. The classical satirist saw man as a rational human being who would turn to virtue of his own accord when he perceived that the virtuous way was the only way compatible with human dignity and the only way to achieve that peace of mind and tranquility of spirit for which he thirsted. The medieval satirist lacked any such trust in man's judgment. Man was to choose virtue because authority, particularly the Bible, said so. Any rewards for virtue in this life were incidental to the hoped-for rewards in after life.

The humanitarianism that we find so much in evidence in *Piers Plowman* and other moral satires in the native English tradition re-appears in the bourgeois formal satire of the early seventeenth century.64 This appearance of a real humanitarian attitude in both these cases cannot be explained in any light except that of Christian charity and kindness. It has nothing to do with the democratic idealism of the Romantic movement. The satirists urged a practical humanitarianism because it was sound Christian doctrine, and it was inevitably tied in with the doctrine that the principal "estates" of man had a duty one to the other. In Truth's letter to the merchants in *Piers Plowman* they are urged to the following practices:

That they should buy boldly what they best fancied,  
And sell it soon after and save the profits  
To help hospitals and the half and feeble  
Always to be busy at the bad highways,

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64 Humanitarianism is particularly strong in Wither and Brathwaite. Again chapter V of this investigation deals fully with this aspect of Elizabethan formal verse satire.
To build bridges broken in the springtime,
To marry maidens or make them novices,
To find the food for poor prisoners
To send scholars to the schools or some other
business,
To relieve religious orders and remedy their losses. 65

But everyone is not worthy to receive charity.

Bidders and beggars have no place in this pardon,
Unless an honest impulse has induced them to begging.
If one begs and bids and he not needy,
He is as false as a fiend and defrauds the wretched,
And beguiles the giver against his wishes. 66

This same humanitarian attitude, an eminently practical one involving
duty as well as charity, is one of the most characteristic features of
medieval satire, and we are to encounter it again as a prominent feature
of the bourgeois satire of the early seventeenth century.

There can be little doubt in view of the evidence that classical
satirists looked upon the genre of formal satire as an aid in the
dissemination of ideas. High moral standards are implied even in their
satires which seem most frivolous on the surface. Consciously or un-
consciously, as will be demonstrated in the body of this study,
Renaissance formal verse satirists emulated these high moral standards
in their own satires and adapted the pagan vessel to the needs of
their own age. With them, as with the classical satirists, satire
became a medium for the promulgation of ideologies. Certain types of
native medieval satire had also had a strong moralistic bent, and in
the early seventeenth century, when less well-educated, less astute,

65 Langland, _Piers Plowman_, Passus VII, p. 69.
66 Ibid., p. 91.
and less gifted poets entered the lists of the satirists, they re-
verted to many of the themes and some of the techniques of medieval
English satire, while retaining the rudiments of classical influence.
The remaining chapters of this study will be devoted to the rather
sudden development of formal verse satire in England near the end of
the sixteenth century and the conditions which encouraged it, and to
the gradual change which satire underwent in the early seventeenth
century at the hands of the bourgeois writers.
CHAPTER II

It has become commonplace among critics of the English Renaissance to note that the unbounded enthusiasm and the idealistic vistas of the high Renaissance did not last through the century. Undeniably something happened that blasted the hopes and dreams of an earlier generation of humanists and turned the world sour for many near the end of the sixteenth century. Students of the Renaissance in England have been at a loss to explain the phenomenon adequately, although many explanations have been suggested. It seems most likely that a combination of forces made its weight felt by about 1590 and succeeded in seriously undermining the age-old foundations of thought that had been building since Augustine and Aquinas. For the purposes of a study of satire we fortunately do not have to find the answer in any one cause or circumstance. Satire was not the cause of the change in climate, but was rather one of the earlier manifestations of the ever-increasing notion among intellectuals and educated men that all was not right with the world.

It does not seem adequate in any case to try to explain the reaction on a strictly scientific basis,¹ or on a strictly economic

¹ Some critics have been inclined to see the disillusionment largely in terms of the impact of the "new science" (see D. C. Allen, "The Degeneration of Man and Renaissance Pessimism," S.P., 35 (1938), 202-27.) but we should be cautious in applying such a premise. Douglas Bush warns that scientific ideas made their way slowly even
basis, or on a religious or political basis. Probably stirrings and
doubts from all these directions contributed to the total effect of
the darkening picture. It is interesting to note how thoroughly the
new forces permeated the life of the times. Gilbert Highet gives some
indication as to the extent of the reaction:

"With the latter half of the sixteenth century a cold
wind seems to blow in upon the world. Poets turn harsh;
heroes die ingloriously; men begin to hate more than they
love; aspiring societies and noble works are cut short by
violence . . . even the classical books which once connoted
stimulus and liberation came to mean regulation, law and
rules."2

Another commentator has noted the inroads of anxiety, doubt, and
skepticism during this same period.

"Public events during the latter years of Elizabeth's
reign filled men with anxiety. The high spirit of the Armada
period faded and the melancholy of the aging queen was
reflected in the forebodings of her counsellors. . . . Men
saw the very foundations of order and intelligibility dissolv­
ing before their eyes and they found nothing to fill the
fearful void."3

Because formal verse satire is in spirit closely akin to the
epigram, it is of value to observe what T. K. Whipple, a student of
the epigram, has to say about the milieu which produced these kindred
forms of social and moral criticism—the satire and the epigram. He
notes first of all that the two modes of expression appear suddenly
about 1590 and flourish simultaneously, and that they had ceased to be

among the learned. Most men were not, according to him, affected by
science at all and few of those who were troubled by it. See Science

2 Gilbert Highet, The Classical Tradition (New York, 1949),
p. 258.

3 Heyrick H. Carré, Phases of Thought in England (Oxford,
written during precisely the same period. He implies further that the
causes of their appearance may be found in the changing attitudes
apparent at that time. Elizabeth, he maintains, had lost touch with
her people; the crown and parliament were in sharper conflict; the
breach between Puritanism and the established Church widens; there
were frequent petty rebellions in London and occasionally in the
provinces. In other words, we find, according to Mr. Whipple, a
time which was ripe for satire, a time of disillusionment and skepti-
cism, sophisticated and cynical, having lost faith with all save the
separate and obvious. There was, moreover, an unprecedented influx
of wealth into the country, and London was full of the *nouveau riches*
and "upstart courtiers."

Hardin Craig maintains that the optimism of the Renaissance has
been exaggerated. The happiness of the time was strictly limited by
time and class. And in any case the jubilation was temporary.

"Writers of the high Renaissance were deceived by the
new learning and prosperity and saw a golden age about to
come upon them; they were temporarily jubilant. The low
casual tones came from men who had difficulty in seeing hope
in a world of so much danger and destitution and of for-
getting even momentarily the weight of gloomy doctrine past
and present."

To the sober observer it seemed that vice was rampant and that
the age had cast off all restraint. According to H. V. Routh these
tendencies were not only continued into the seventeenth century, but

4 T. K. Whipple, *Martial and the English Epigram from Wyatt to


6 Hardin Craig, *The Enchanted Glass: the Elizabethan Mind in
Literature* (New York, 1936), pp. 208-209.
they became even more pronounced. There was a sense of disillusionment pervading the nation, caused partly by the corruption of the governing classes (the cases of Bacon and Overbury come readily to mind), and even more by the increasingly bitter social and religious antagonisms among the people themselves. They had almost completely lost faith in the high ideals and heroic sentiments of the earlier age.  

But the roots of the problem of a loss of faith in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries go much deeper than mere disillusionment and frustration brought on by a failure to achieve the high aims of the humanist's programs. Far more disturbing were the doubts that had begun to form concerning the more basic problems of the nature of God, man and the universe. In this age, which has been continually off balance for so many years, it is perhaps hard for us to realize the tremendous impact such doubts would have on an age which was accustomed to thinking of the world as being more or less fixed in its physical make-up as well as in its standards of conduct.  

It should be remembered that the Elizabethan world was, in spite of the Renaissance, essentially a medieval world. Theodore Spencer says,  

... In the sixteenth century the combined elements of Aristotelianism, Platonism, Neo-Platonism, Stoicism and Christianity were almost indistinguishably woven into a pattern which was universally agreed upon and which in its main outlines was the same as that of the Middle Ages. New ideas ... were treated either as additions to the accepted

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picture or as fresh ways of interpreting the one universal truth about which there was no question.9

It should be pointed out here than the revival of learning and the whole humanist program in England, as different from the same program on the Continent, remained, and this in spite of the Reformation essentially within the religious framework. The Renaissance in England never took on the pagan and at times atheistical coloring that it took in its decline in Italy.10 In consequence of this the Renaissance viewpoint in England remained narrower and more nationalistic that it did in the countries of Europe proper. The full impact of skepticism and doubt would then hit a more devastating blow to the thinkers, leaders, and writers in England than it would to the same classes of society in Italy, where such forces had been at work for some time and the blow had been softened and ameliorated over a longer period of time through the subtle machinations of some of Italy's best thinkers.

In England until near the end of the sixteenth century the world view remained essentially the medieval Christian view so ably delineated by Mr. Spencer. Certain fundamental assumptions were taken for granted. Man does not exist by himself but is the knot and chain of the universe and cannot be thought of as being apart from the rest of creation, the whole of which was made for the service of God. As long as man fulfilled his proper function, the remainder of creation was made for his


10 Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (Vienna, 1938), pp. 364 ff.; See also J. E. Symonds, The Renaissance in Italy (New York, 1935), vol. 1, Chapter VIII.
service. To fulfill his role properly man must know his environment, and must know himself, above all. Man must do more, however, than simply contemplate and enjoy the world created for him; as a member of society he must rule it, govern it, control it. This is not only his privilege but also his duty. The Renaissance humanists, especially in England, were thoroughly imbued with a sense of destiny and with a high sense of duty. It was particularly distressing, therefore, to see in the Court and among the nobles generally an increasing disregard for the duties that went with their station. Pictures of corrupt courts and upstart courtiers were not new in literature, but they were given new prominence in the satires of the period and are a more or less accurate account of the dissolute and intrigue-ridden courts of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It is one of the favorite themes of the Renaissance moralists, who felt impelled to point out the evils of court life and the city and to exhort the people to return to the virtuous life of a former age.

The amalgamation of the medieval Christian heritage with the humanist tradition caused something of a dilemma among Renaissance Christians. The medieval viewpoint emphasised the inherent evil in man since the Fall and continually flaunted his wretchedness before him. The Renaissance humanists emphasised the inherent worth and dignity of man and waxed enthusiastic at his endless capabilities.


12 Sir Thomas Wyatt's *Satires*, published in 1557, and Robert Greene's *A Quip for an Instant Courtier* may be cited as earlier examples of court criticism.
There was thus a basis established for a continuing conflict between man's wretchedness on the one hand and his dignity on the other.  

The humanistic program had, of course, tipped the balance in favor of man's dignity and capabilities. As the sixteenth century wore on, the scales began to tip back in the direction of man's wretchedness and helplessness until the questions of "who am I" and "what do I know" became frequently heard cries in the writings of the period. Some men of the age sought to find the answers in occult speculations; some admitted that they knew nothing, and relying on faith alone, fell into the arms of the church; others attempted various kinds of compromises. The literature of the period reflects the uneasiness and doubt that assailed the minds of some—Fulke Greville, Donne, Thomas Browne. Others were able to buttress themselves with Christian stoicism—Joseph Hall, Lodge, and to a lesser degree, Ben Jonson.

The solutions and compromises of these men are merely further evidences of an age of paradox and inconsistencies. Says one authority,

"Often their natures seem to lack unity. Sentiment and conduct do not agree, nor the acts of one day tally with the words of another. The actors are strangely affected by the personal exigency or opportunity and the turn of fortune. One suspects insincerity. Sometimes deceitfulness seems the unifying or explanatory element of their characters."  

As we have already indicated, the medieval Christian heritage, with its hierarchies of things with man in the center only a little

13 Spencer, Shakespeare and the Nature of Man, p. 28.
lesser grand than the angels, was a neat and comforting scheme. During our period, as Theodore Spencer indicates, all Elizabethan thinking began to be punctured by doubts. The three things dearest to their scheme of things began to be seriously questioned for the first time. 15 Coper­nicus had questioned the cosmological order, although the full impact of his discoveries did not make itself felt until after the work of Kepler and Galileo in the same field. Along with the cosmo­logical order, the scheme of the four elements and the corresponding bodily humours came under a cloud. Somewhat later Montaigne began his insidious and subtle attack on the natural order, questioning the place of men in the universe and implying that he was in some respects little better than the animals. We shall see that this doctrine was to have far-reaching effects on the satirists in their portrayals of the animal­istic behavior of some men. Finally, Machiavelli had questioned the political order of things. By making expediency rather than right and honorable action the governing principle of rulers, he effectively cast into limbo most of the "mirror" and courtesy-book literature aimed at princes and governors. It helped open the way too for class restlessness and more or less gave sanction to the pushing and striving of the courtiers and rich merchants to advance themselves.

The religious changes of the age were significant also in contrib­uting to the general unrest of the late Elizabethan age. In matters of church organization and ecclesiastical policy the Church had never really settled into a rigid mold since Henry VIII established a state

15 Spencer, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man*, p. 29.
church. On the one hand, the Catholics were intermittently hounded with persecutions and enforcement of anti-Catholic laws, these being particularly severe during the restless period before the death of Mary of Scotland put an end to Catholic plotting for a while, and during the period of the Gunpowder Plot scare. On the other hand, the Puritan power was growing, and although the Puritans were content to be at first merely the left wing of the established Church, it soon became apparent that nothing short of a complete break with Anglicanism would satisfy the extremists. Meanwhile the Church of England strove desperately to establish the middle way and to maintain that happy combination of reason and faith defended and established in large part by Richard Hooker, and supported in varying degrees of enthusiasm by at least three of the major satirists with whom we shall be concerned—Donne, Hall, and Marston. The religious bickering began to be more pronounced near the end of the sixteenth century, and it helped to make many sensitive minds doubtful about their religious allegiance. Skepticism is the inevitable concomitant of uncertainty. Among the satirists of the Elizabethan period no better example of the impact of

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17 M. H. Carré maintains that Reason as established by Hooker discovers the main duties of man, those owed to God and those owed to man. The law of Reason is the law of nature, and for man to transgress the law of his nature provokes harm comparable to the ruin brought about by the failure of the heavenly bodies to perform their allotted work. See *Phases of Thought in England*, p. 200. This doctrine of reason and nature was important in the Stoic-moralist thought of the Romans and of the Renaissance moralists and satirists. If a man goes against his "nature" he must be shown his error and shown the right way again.
religious uncertainty can be found than in Donne's *Third Satire,* in which it is the form of religion about which he speculates, not the philosophical basis of religion itself, although Donne was to question the philosophical basis of religion by the time of the two *Anniversaries* some seventeen or eighteen years later.

The social and economic conditions during the late years of Elizabeth's reign and during the Jacobean era were such as to foster unrest and instability, and in them we can see some of the outward signs of the conflicts that were merely inner conflicts in the minds of some of the intelligentsia. On the brighter side, London had become after the fall of Antwerp in 1576 the capital of European commerce. The English merchants achieved in a short time wealth which they had not dreamed of. Less important but certainly more exciting to the public fancy was the wealth which flowed into the country from foreign enterprises such as the big trading companies and from the piratical expeditions of the English seamen. The main effect of this rapid increase of wealth on the satirists of the age was that it afforded them ample opportunity to attack the "new rich," the extravagant tastes of the rich, who suddenly found themselves able to indulge their most exotic appetites. The Elizabethan satirists needed no suggestions from the Roman satirists to prompt them to condemn avarice as one of the chief vices. They found condemnations of avarice prominent in medieval literature as well. Every day around

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19 This is the basis for the portrait of Sir Epicure Mannon in Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist.*
then they saw the ill-effects of greed and lust for riches on the

citizens. It was not until sometime later that the Puritans and the
evangelical sects were to make a virtue of thrift second only to
godliness.

But the influx of wealth into the country benefited comparatively
only a few and its effects were soon offset by a series of economic
ills which had begun to plague the country. The enclosures of land
had left many people without a means of livelihood, and scores of
unemployed made their way to the cities, especially London, to swell
the ranks of itinerant workers. According to Marchette Chute the
increasing gloom of the decade was precipitated by increasing taxation
since the war with Spain, and by a draining-off of England's material
resources. There was a trade war with Germany and a rebellion in
Ireland which tended to keep the economy of the country off-balance.
There was a sharp rise in prices all along the line, without a
corresponding rise in wages and rentals. To add further to the
miseries of the people, there was a serious depression in the late
years of the 1590's, the most serious effect of which was a critical
shortage of malt and other grains. 21

20 Land enclosures and other economic ills were cause for
concern in Renaissance England as far back as the early reign of
Henry VIII. Book I of Sir Thomas More's Utopia is severe in its
condemnation of land enclosures and the resultant ills.

21 Marchette Chute, Shakespeare of London (New York, 1949),
p. 190. The economic historians bear out Miss Chute in her picture
of sixteenth century economic woes. See M. Beers, Early British
Economics (London, 1938), Chapter VII; See also Arthur Birnie, An
Economic History of the British of the British Isles (New York,
1938), Chapter VIII.
The opinion cannot be supported that the economic woes of the late Elizabethan period were the sole or even the main cause of the prevailing discontent and gloom of the writers. The economic woes almost certainly added their weight to the other contributing factors. They were important, too, in another respect. The economic ills of the country at this time tended to heighten the contrast between the classes of society, between the poor and the rich, and it is on just such contrasts as these that all satire depends for effect. This is not to say that the satirists were humanitarians who championed the cause of the poor and downtrodden. They were not. Humanitarianism as we know it today was completely foreign to the temperament of the Elizabethan. Among the earlier group of verse satirists only Joseph Hall shows much concern for the social and economic injustices of the age, and such instances are rare in his works. With the advent of a later group of satirists of very pronounced bourgeois tendencies in the early seventeenth century, concern for these matters increases.

In the popular literature of the period there is evidence of considerable resentment at shady practices among the merchants and in the various trades, such as the ale and wine trades and the grain engrossers and a widespread distrust of money lenders and usurers.

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22 These are largely scattered throughout Hall's *Vigiliumiarum* (1598) and occur most frequently in Book IV. Satire 5 of this book is an attack upon money lenders.

23 The bourgeois tendencies in the satires of the Elizabethan period really begin with Samuel Boulain, but they become much more pronounced with the group including George Wither, Robert Antin, and Richard Braftwite.

24 Burton Milligan, "Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Satire Against Grain Engrossers," *P.P.*, 37 (1934), 555-597; "Satire Concerning
It has been advanced that the sixteenth century mind was carried forward on a flood of unorganized knowledge and surmise. It was a period of confused assimilation and hasty scepticism. Furthermore it is fairly obvious that the Elizabethan mind made little attempt to fashion a synthesis of its intellectual gains. No one in England, with the exception of Bacon and the possible exception of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, undertook a resolute investigation of principles, and the mass of new revolutionary material, inchoate but powerful, caused grave doubts and speculations in the minds of serious thinkers. What the sixteenth and seventeenth century representative thinkers were most interested in doing, as Basil Willey points out, was "to see things as they really are." The search for "truth" was of first importance to the Renaissance satirists. Donne says in the Third Satire that those who seek her "about and about must go" and expect to find her elusive. Difficult though the pursuit of her may have been, the Elizabethan moralists felt duty bound to continue the search, though they often discovered her in widely divergent places.

It has been said that theology, as practiced in the Renaissance, was one of the humanities. The classics and theology were the two chief matters of Renaissance culture, and the sentiments which moved


26 Basil Willey, Seventeenth Century Background (London, 1942), Foreword, p. VII.

the scholars and thinkers of the sixteenth century in England to seek knowledge and to study and reflect were eminently practical. They did not seek knowledge for its own sake, but for the sake of its bearing on life. The impelling motives of mental activity were ethical and devotional and were closely associated with moral discipline in both private and public life. In view of these tendencies, it is not surprising that so much of the "literature" of the period stressed morality, ethics and the proper conduct of life. To the question, "Is morality founded on right reason and divine precept, or on the current law of the land," the Christian moralists were strongly urging their fellows to put their faith in right reason. "The internal certainties," says Basil Willey, "... were chiefly relevant in the regions of faith and ethics, where truth came to mean that which is vouched for by the 'inner light,' by 'Reason' and the 'moral sense.'

26 Carré, Phases of Thought in England, p. 189.
30 Willey, Seventeenth Century Background, p. 76. Mr. Willey, p. 91, makes some interesting observations on late seventeenth century satire which hold true remarkably well for Elizabethan satire as well. "And to satire gone are can also be ascribed the remarkable prevalence of satire in the same period. For the identification of man's nature with the thinking principle within—the feeling that we are that part of us which cogitates—must produce the concurrent realization that there is a vast discrepancy between man's ideal and his actual nature. The temper which views all things in their theory rather than in their historical setting must also see little, as it gazes upon human institutions, but failure and futility, and as it contemplates human actions, little but departures from the rational norm. It is just in the comparison between actual things and their theory that satire consists, and the dry light of Cartesianism threw upon the deformities of actual humanity just the kind of illumination which is necessary to evoke the satiric comparison."

on the nature of things, it was upon natural instinct or "right reason" that he insisted, and his theory of truth was only a partially disguised stepchild of sixteenth century Ciceroan Stoicism, in which doctrine men is endowed with certain common notions, self-evident truths of knowledge, morality and religion, common to all mankind. 31

The attention to morality and ethics in English Renaissance thought and literature was always great. With the rise of Puritanism the emphasis on morality became even greater. Not until well into the seventeenth century did Puritanism become predominant in ecclesiastical thought, but much before that time it had been an undercurrent in the intellectual currents, and by 1584 had penetrated the philosophies at the universities to the extent that Emmanuel College was founded in that year at Cambridge to promote the reformed creed. 32 These facts are of peculiar significance when it is remembered that several of the formal verse satirists were affiliated with the Puritan colleges at Cambridge, the most prominent of these being Joseph Hall. 33 Neither is it insignificant that so many names prominent in the satiric lists were also prominent on the rolls of the churches. 34 The satiric genre seems to have been one that appealed to the moral purpose of the divines and one which in its techniques and style adopted much of the hortatory rhetoric.

31 Carré, 

32 Ibid., p. 194.

33 Hall went on to become an ardent champion of Anglicanism and adversary to Milton.

34 Donne, Hall and Marston ended their careers as stalwarts of the Anglican Church.
Several conclusions, I think, may be made in view of this brief discussion of the intellectual milieu of late Elizabethan England. To begin with, the moral tradition has always been strong in English letters. The Renaissance humanists did not change this emphasis, but rather strengthened it by bringing in the pagan moralists to support their views on virtue and the proper conduct of life. Even in the high Renaissance when lyricism and imagination played such an important role in the works of the literary giants, the didactic strain remains paramount in the works of most writers, as witness Gascoigne, Lyly, Sidney and Spenser, to mention a few. In the later years of the sixteenth century when various forces began to work from without and within to undermine the predominant Christian-humanist world picture, the moralists turned their attention to the salvation of the old order where possible, and failing that, turned most of their attention to the outward conformity to a strict code of morals and ethics which remained based on Christianity but which borrowed much from the pagan moralists, and to a dependence on man's inner resources, whether they be derived from a new fideism or from the Stoic via media, or from the Anglican "nature" and "right reason," or some combination of these.

The literature of this period lent itself in most cases wholeheartedly to the task of the moralists. There is a surprising resurgence of didactic literature which begins in the 1580's and

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35 It is interesting that Spenser brought out the last three books of his _Shepheard_ during the same period when the formal verse satirists were flourishing. Spenser is generally placed with the "old order" of poets. The tone of his work is not that of the satirists. His aim was much the same, however, and the "mortality cantas" indicate that the new forces had begun to affect his thinking.
continues well into the seventeenth century. It made its appearance often in the medieval garb already familiar to the readers of the period—the "mirrors," the "glasses," the "schools," and other manifestations of the old tradition of "behavior" books. More often than not, especially at the end of the sixteenth century, it appeared in wholly new guises, borrowed largely from the classic genres. There is a truly phenomenal outbreak of epigrams, satires, epistles, characters, and moral essays. It appeared at times in the entirely new garb of the familiar essay or the meditation. And then, of course, it appeared in the familiar, austere robes of the sermon.

It cannot be denied, as Hartin Craig indicates, that the literature of the high Renaissance has tended to brighten the age with a false lustre. The chroniclers, the religious controversialists, and the moralists must be used to correct the picture drawn from the poets and dramatists.\(^\text{36}\) Douglas Bush is even more emphatic in his comment on early seventeenth century literature. "Nearly all works which we now read as 'literature' were written as contributions to religion, ethics, politics, science, travel and other fields of inquiry and instruction."\(^\text{37}\)

We find that it was not only the satirists who deplored the decline of morality and virtue and sought in some way to re-establish the ideals which they supposed had flourished earlier. Fulke Greville writes in his "Inquisition on Fame and Honour,"

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\(^{36}\) Craig, The Enchanted Glass, p. 212.

What are Mns. lives, but labyrinths of error,
Shops of deceit, and Seas of Misery?
Yet Death yields so small comfort, so much terror;
Gain, Honour, Pleasure, such illusions be;
As though against Life, each man what his wit,
Yet all Mns hearts, and sense, take part with it.

... ...

Ah silly Creature, curnst Mortality!
What canst thou know, that knowest not Mns estate
To be but V стоимость, gilt with hypocrisy?
Which doth the life it most resembles, hate,
And yet affects that clouded unshadow'd light,
Wherein her dark deformities show bright?

And at the end of our period Robert Burton in the guise of Democritus
Junior addresses a long epistle to the readers of his Anatomy of
Melancholy informing them in so many words that it is occasioned
mainly by the enormities of the age.

Weep, Heroclitus, for this wretched age,
Hought dost thou see that is not base and sad;
Laugh on, Democritus, thou laughing sage,
Hought dost thou see that is not vain and bad.

Sir William Cornwallis finds that his world comes off a poor second
in comparison to the ancient's world, more especially since his is
the "noone time of the world" and theirs "the gray morning." As to
conditions in general he says,

"You shall hardly finds a father now a dayes, that
will care rather how his sonne is dead then dead, that
priseth his valor dearer than his life; yet in times past,
motheres had that hardines that they hated more that hee
should bee wounded in the backes then dead. It is not so
now. ..."

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38 Fulke Greville, Poems and Dramas, ed. Geoffrey Bullough
(Edinburgh, 1942), "Inquisition on Fame and Honour," pp. 192, 201.

39 Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, eds. Floyd Dell

40 Sir William Cornwallis, Essays, ed. Don C. Allen
(Baltimore, 1946), pp. 210-211.
These men, it should be emphasized, accepted a philosophy of Christian humanism, and their central doctrines were based on order— in the universe as well as in the individual. To such men the moral platitudes of the ancients could be living realities.\footnote{Bush, \textit{English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century}, p. 35.} They felt fewer differences than we do between Roman times and the modern world. They accepted the Romans almost as contemporaries and amplified their own society with the precepts and intellectual ideas of the ancients. The classics supplied the Renaissance writers and thinkers with forms, interpretations and materials. Many of these "materials" had been thoroughly medievalized beforehand; yet they seemed to the Renaissance to be fresh from the pages of the ancients.\footnote{Craig, \textit{The Enchanted Glass}, pp. 212-213, passim.}

Some critics have attributed the change in tone that occurred in English literature toward the end of the reign of Elizabeth to a turning away on the part of Renaissance writers from the "frivolous" story-tellers such as Ovid and Virgil to the stern authors of the Silver Age. Ben Jonson is cited as a leader in the movement. His works drew particularly from Juvenal, the Senecas, Tacitus and Suetonius.\footnote{H. B. Lathrop, \textit{Translations from the Classics into English, 1677-1690} (Madison, 1933), p. 233.} The spirit of the later humanists, it has been noted, was more critical than that of the earlier group. They read the more difficult Latin authors and some Greeks, who furnished them with classical ideas and forms. Such men as Jonson, Chapman, Marston and
Donne knew the more esoteric classic authors as well as the more familiar ones.\(^{44}\)

Whether it was a direct result of these readings in the classics it would be hard to determine, but there ensued in Renaissance English literature a phenomenon similar to the one which had taken place in Rome, that is, a reaction against the balanced oratorical period in favor of a concise, flexible and colloquial style, the theory of which derived from Aristotle and the stylistic models from such men as Seneca, Tacitus and Justus Lipsius.\(^{45}\) It resulted largely from a desire on the part of Renaissance thinkers and writers for a more realistic expression of both general ideas and private experience. One of the most characteristic products of this movement was the development of the essay and its associated forms in which Senecan prose was frequently joined with Stoic thought.\(^{46}\) This development in the essay is interesting in that it almost exactly parallels the rise of verse satire, the aims of which clearly resemble those of the essay. As to its didactic purpose and Christian-Stoic content, the verse satire is often an essay in verse. As Douglas Bush maintains, both forms are evidence of the heightened self-consciousness of the age, and they presuppose a class of readers who possess economic

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\(^{44}\) Craig, The Enchanted Glass, p. 253.


\(^{46}\) George Williamson, The Senecan Ambie (Chicago, 1951), especially chapter six. Joseph Hall's connection with this development is related on pages 193-194. His work in the satiric genre preceded his prose works by several years.
and social security and who can appreciate rational reflection upon
civilised manners and morals.47

At about the same time, or perhaps a little earlier, that the
"scientists," philosophers, and moralists were striving to create
and establish the plain or Senecan style, there developed quite
independently a large body of satiric and realistic prose in another
quarter which was to have its effect, at least indirectly, on verse
satire. This group of prose satirists, which included Stubbes, Lodge,
Greene, Nashe and Harvey, were at least ostensibly devoted to the
exposure of vice, and the prevalence of the satiric spirit—moral,
sarcastic, and savage—was doubtless one of the causes of the revival
of interest in formal Latin satire.48 The formal verse satirists
diverted the main stream of the satiric impulse into the narrower
confines of the Roman genre, a distinct improvement, in their esti-
mation, over the chaotic violence of the "Flytings" of Harvey and
Nashe. This is not to say that the formal satirists did not borrow
much from the more violent native invective tradition. Harston in
particular makes use of invective satire. There is not much difference
in spirit between this passage from Nashe

"Squise thy hart into thy inkhorne, and it shall but
congeall into clogged clearance of confutation: thy soule
bath no effects of a soule: thou canst not sprinkle it
into a sentence, and make arie line leape like a cup of
neat vine new poured out. . . ."49

47 Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century,
p. 182.

48 Oscar James Campbell, Comicall Sature and Shakespeares
"Trauies and Crozatide" (San Marino, 1938), p. 24.

and this from Marston.

Curio, know'st me? Why, thou bottle-sage,
Thou barest froth! O stay me lest I rail
Beyond all utter! To see this butterfly,
This windy bubble, task my balladry
With senseless censure.50

There were certain writers during the late Renaissance in
England who chose a more direct method of disseminating their
philosophical ideas. In addition to "The Complaint of Rosamond"
and the Civil Wars, both of which are in the moralistic tradition of
the Mirror for Magistrates, Daniel wrote a rather long philosophical
poem in dialogue form—Musophilus—in which he upholds the views of
Sidney on poetry, poets, learning and the status quo. Perhaps the
most elaborate verse presentation of philosophy in English literature
in the sixteenth century is in the Noses taíne of Sir John Davies.
He adds his cry to many others at the end of the century51

The vits that div'd most depe and scar'd most his
Seeking Man's pow'rs, have found his weaknesses such:
"Skill comes so slow, and life so fast doth flie,
"We learn so little and forget so much.


51 Felix E. Schelling maintains that Davies' Noses taíne
is as typical a representative of Elizabethan popular philosophy as
the Essay on Man is typical of the popular thought of the time of
Queen Anne. Both this poem by Davies and the Treatise of Human
Learning by Fulke Greville agree as to the limitations and varieties
of human knowledge. In this they are in contrast with such optimistic
philosophical treatises as Daniel's Musophilus. SeeEnglish Literature
during the Lifetime of Shakespeare (New York, 1910), pp. 218-219. We
shall find the Elizabethan formal verse satirists reflecting both the
pessimistic attitudes of Davies and Greville—Donne and Marston, for
instance—and the optimistic attitude of Daniel—as in Joseph Hall.
For how may ye others' things attains,
When none of us his own soule understands?
For which the Devil mocks our curious braine,
When 'know thy selfe' his oracle commands.

For why should we the busy Soule believe,
When boldly she concludes of that and this;
When of herselfe she can no judgement give.
Nor how, nor whence, nor where, nor what she is?

All things without, which round about we see,
We seek to know, and how therewith to doe;
But that whereby we reason, live and be,
Within ourselves, we strangers are thereto.

For the most part poemes made up exclusively of philosophical
precepts were relatively few during the Elizabthan period. Most
writers of the age sought to disguise their didacticism in a form
that would be more attractive to the reader. Cornwallis in his
comments on the wherewithall to obtain the "good life" comments that
self-observation is prerequisite:

"A self observation, which (as thinkes) is a garden
forsaken but not planted. To plant it, example is the
speediest meanes, for the way of precept is more long and
laborious than that of example."

The preponderance of Elizabthan didactic literature followed the ad­
vice of Cornwallis. The essays, the characters, the epigrams, the
epistles, the meditations, the fictionalised biographies, even the
histories and the drama were designed in the main to furnish

52 Sir John Davies, Complete Poems, ed. A. B. Grosart (London,

53 Cornwallis, Essaries, p. 206.

54 J. C. Grierson, Gross Currents in English Literature of
the Seventeenth Century (London, 1929), p. 82. Grierson maintains
that the greatest of the dramatists avoided the raising of moral and
religious issues in any definite or dogmatic fashion. He goes on to
say, however, that if a poet and thinker were impelled to make the
concrete example of the virtuous life to be cultivated and the evil life to be avoided.

The formal verse satire was a part of this didactic tradition. It was written for the most part by moralists with definite didactic aims, not, as has been intimated, by a coterie of dilettantes who set out to amuse the Court and their friends with their brilliance. Formal verse satire was not simply one more in a series of "literary conventions." We must agree with Hiram Haydn that if one accepts all of these "literary convention" interpretations, then the Elizabethans produced a literature so artificial that in comparison the literature of the eighteenth century seems naive and spontaneous.

The Renaissance was not the first age to make use of formal verse satire as a vehicle for the promulgation of the predominant philosophy of an era. Stoicism, or a modified Stoicism, was the principal philosophy expounded by the great Roman satirists, especially those of the Silver Age—Persius, Horace, Petronius. There is no more consistent

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55 Several critics of the Renaissance scene in England have attempted with little success to establish the influence of the various coteries of the time. There are actually only two of any consequence—the so-called Areopagite group and the Wilton group or "The Countess of Pembroke's Circle." The "bold, gay young men" spoken of in connection with the Court and the Inns of Court (see Whipple, *Martial and the English Epicure*, pp. 332-337, and Campbell, *Comical Satyrn*, p. 27) were the source of much Renaissance satire, but for the most part the satirists themselves were not a part of these cliques or coteries.

and unified dissemination of Stoic ideas than in the relatively brief
compass of the satires of Persius. Long before the Roman satirists,
moreover, the Cynic philosophers, in many respects the forerunners
of the Stoics, had made use of the dialogue form, and its associate
the diatribe, for a semi-dramatic and realistic presentation of their
doctrines, designed to appeal to the popular taste. The Renaissance
satirists are not unaware of this tradition of the philosophical
nature of satire (although they may not have understood all its im-
lications). Satire as a vehicle for introspective reflection,
personal ontological musings, and moral preachments seems to have
been discovered almost simultaneously and independently by several
Renaissance formal verse satirists.

By way of recapitulation it may be stated that near the end of
the sixteenth century there was a change in the intellectual climate
of the times. This change was brought on by a multiformed attack on
the verities and the status quo and shows itself most readily in the
areas of experience which include the scientific, the political, the
economic and the religious and metaphysical. Thinking men of the day
were particularly disturbed by the age old questions, "what is man,"

57 C. W. Kendall, "Satire as Popular Philosophy," Classical
Philology, 15 (1920), pp. 150 ff.

58 It is now thought that some of Donne's satires were written
as early as 1593. Lodge published his For the Monas in 1595 and Hall
the first books of his Vinicidemium in 1597. There is no evidence of
an interchange of ideas or technique beyond the fact that all three
poets were classic scholars and moralists. The vexing question as to
the validity of Hall's claim to be the first English satirist may be
reviewed in an article by Arnold Stein, "The Second English Satirist,"
M.L.B., 38 (1943), 273-278.
"what is man's relation to God and the universe," and "what is man's relation to man." The unrest of the period is reflected by the writers who turn to models from the Silver Age in Rome in their search for media to express the new attitudes. The ground-swell of uncertainty and melancholy was accompanied by a sharp increase in the output of didactic and moral literature of one kind or another, more particularly as guides in the conduct of life. This tendency began at least as early as the 1580's but it was not until near the end of the century that the trend became a truly remarkable phenomenon with a flood of material including, in addition to the older forms such as "anecdotes" and "mirrors," certain new forms inspired by and modeled on the classic authors, forms which include the essay, the moral epistle, the dialogue, the character, the meditation, the epigram and the satire.

At the same time the didactic purpose became more pronounced in the histories, both real and fictionalized, and in the drama. The feeling of uneasiness was manifest first in the intellectual circles connected with the Court, the Inns of Court and the universities, areas which would be most likely to feel the first breath of new intellectual winds. Such Elizabethan courtiers as Raleigh and Greville are affected by it. Major literary figures such as Chapman, Donne, Marston and Jonson express their doubts in their literary output. Various solutions are offered to counteract the new forces. The satirists with whom this study is concerned were for the most part moralists who found it expedient to make use of a classic genre which in times past had lent itself to criticism of the contemporary scene, and which had at the same time offered the populace in a palatable form the ideas and
dictates of the predominant philosophy of the age. It is a genre in which the negative approach looms overwhelmingly large, but the positive counterpart to it is nonetheless there, either expressed or implied. It is also a highly rhetorical and artificial genre. The late Elizabethan era was the first age in English letters sophisticated enough to support formal verse satire.
CHAPTER III

THE MALCONTENT

This chapter deals in some detail with a small group of Elizabethan formal verse satirists who may be classed as malcontents. The satire of these men cannot be properly understood without seeing it in relationship to the medieval and Renaissance theories concerning human motivation. Human motivation for the men of the Renaissance was closely connected to the current ideas revolving around the concepts of the elements and the "humours." It is the purpose of this chapter to survey first of all the theory of humours, particularly the malcontent humour, and to see how the humours are utilised by the writers of the Renaissance in general. The major portion of the chapter is devoted to relating the current doctrine of humours and the malcontent tradition specifically to the formal verse satire of the period. Emphasis is placed on the two major satirists writing in this tradition—John Donne and John Marston. This chapter emphasizes, in addition to the examination of the malcontent approach adopted by these satirists, the philosophical and metaphysical content of the satires.

During the late Renaissance in England the satiric spirit evidenced itself in many different forms. One of the favorite guises among the formal verse satirists was that of the melancholy man. The pose of the malcontent lent itself readily to the purpose of the satirist, and in particular to the English satirist, who inherited from the
native tradition of medieval and folk satire a liking for invective and caustic outspokenness. In order to understand the satirist in his role the melancholy man it will be necessary to survey briefly the strong tradition of the malcontent in English life and letters of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The tradition is inextricably involved in medieval and Renaissance science, pseudo-science and medicine, more particularly in the branch of "science" known as "humours." These were nothing more than the Renaissance man's attempts to account for his own desires and will and motivation—an early day psychology, in other words. That this period was intensely interested in the subject of causation and motivation is evidenced by the large number of works, beginning during the 150's, designed to aid man in knowing himself. Among these may be included Rogers' *Anatomy of the Mind*, 1576; Wright's *Passions of the Mind*, 1601; Davies' *Mosca Teignor*, 1599; and near the end of our period Burton's encyclopedic *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621.

It is important that we understand what the Renaissance man thought of himself, for the whole fabric and being of Renaissance satire stems from traditional ideas paramount at that time concerning reason and will, and indirectly "humours." In man the rational soul, as distinct from the vegetative and sensitive souls, should be the ruling power, the sensitive faculties merely its servants. The rational soul has two divisions—reason and will. Only the reason is capable of judgment. It seeks truth through a logical train of thought, and, having made conclusions about right and wrong, good and evil, informs the will of its conclusions. The will, on its part,
desires the good and abhors the evil because of instinct or the good planted in it by God. The sensitive desires do not always agree with the rational desires. In such case the sensitive desires (i.e., the passions) should yield to the reason, for, in the last analysis, the reason is the absolute mistress of the soul.¹

It is not difficult to see how these doctrines are of prime importance in the moralist tradition, and beliefs about reason and the will help explain why the moralists seem to put so much faith in their exhortations. It amounts, finally, to this: show the rational man the error of his ways, and he will restore himself to the path of reason and right-living. If he should not be persuaded, it is evidence that the passions have gained ascendancy over reason (hence the doctrine of "humours"), and more drastic measures must be taken to restore the intricate balance. In the science and medicine of the period these more drastic measures often took the form of phlebotomy or purgation, or some similar restorative technique. As a consequence of this, there grew up in the satire of the period a pronounced dependence in language, idiom, and figures of speech on the terms of medicine and surgery and legal punishment which were designed to restore the victim of the satirist to his normal status.

The fundamental principle of the cure is the restoration of the normal.

In the physical and psychological makeup of the medieval and Renaissance man there was a continual warfare between the rational

¹ Lawrence Babb, The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1662 (East Lansing, 1951), pp. 4-5.
and the sensitive, the human and the bestial, the intellectual and the physical.² It would seem that man left to his own devices would not allow his lower nature to gain the ascendancy over his higher nature, but that is to reckon without the Fall. The reason that man loses out to his passions, when by natural instinct he is inclined toward the good, is that his powers of resistance have been considerably enfeebled by the Fall. Original Sin inclines man away from virtue and reason. The Devil is the chief opponent of the satirist as well as of God.³

The authorities on the "humours" point out that the physical dangers which lie in the passions are grave, but the moral dangers are graver.⁴ The moralists of the Renaissance subscribe to the principle prominent in classical ethics that conduct motivated by reason is virtuous conduct, and that conduct motivated by the passions is vicious conduct. This attitude helps to explain the seeming preoccupation on the part of some of the Renaissance satirists with the more bestial aspects of man. Beasts had vegetative and sensitive souls as well as man. What distinguished man from the beasts was the rational soul. When man's rational soul was subverted by his passions so as to be no longer operative, he was, in effect, a beast. Continued subservience to the passions reduced man's will to resist,

² Ibid., p. 18.

³ The Christian theory of man's perverted nature after the Fall represents a significant departure from the traditional Greek view of man as naturally preferring the good and naturally inclined to be ruled by reason. The Christian concept is derived from the Greek but departs from it for theological causes. Consequently the Elizabethan satirists could go along with their pagan confreres on the power of reason just so far. Final absolution was, of course, dependent upon Divine Grace.

⁴ Ibid., The Elizabethan Falady, p. 17.
and he soon found himself wallowing in the morass of his sins with neither the power nor the will to desist.

The theory of "humours" was founded on the doctrine that the four principal humors—the sanguine, the melancholic, the phlegmatic and the choleric—were of equal proportion ideally and any preponderance of one over the other in man inclined him to be of that particular "humour." In a manner of speaking, we could say that the ideal was a kind of "mean" much like and complementary to the Aristotelian mean. Any immoderate passion was harmful. Even joy, the most salutary of passions, was accounted harmful if it was excessive. The golden mean to man in his earthly life was tranquility of spirit.5

That the search for tranquility continued to be of importance to the Renaissance is evidenced by the continued interest in the classical and medieval arguments over the respective values of the contemplative and the active lives. One evidence of this interest was the flourishing of the pastoral genre. The same interest is reflected in the satires. On the whole, the satirists advocated the contemplative life over the active one. The frequent exhortations in the satires to forsake the harried atmosphere of the court life for the peace of the secluded life are directly and closely connected to the search for tranquility of spirit so important to the moralists of the period.

In the search for tranquility among the moralists perhaps no phrase is more ubiquitous than nosce teipsum. This had been a favorite

5 Ibid., p. 19.
exhortation among the classic authors and moralists, and it lent itself readily to Renaissance psychology. Self-mastery became the greatest moral problem for the Renaissance man, for his chief enemies, the passions, lay within him. No man can achieve self-mastery, however, without seeking it through self-knowledge. The Renaissance man devoted himself to this task with a zeal unknown since the days of the classic philosophers. The late Renaissance period was the first really self-conscious age since classic times. The Renaissance mind at this time became introspective and analytical. It is in such an age that satire flourishes.

Among the "humours" it is the melancholy humor that is most closely involved with Renaissance satire; the choleric humor, paradoxically, practically not at all. In discussing the use made by the satirist of the melancholy humor it should be kept in mind that there is more than one type of melancholy man and that Renaissance ideas on the melancholy type stem from two distinct traditions. From the medieval or Galenic tradition we get the impression that malevolence and evil are associated with melancholy. The Galenic tradition stressed the evil side of melancholy; melancholy men were evil men. Not only that, but they are the most miserable of God's creatures. The evil side of melancholy was further strengthened by its

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traditional association with the malign planet Saturn. Saturnine
men were traditionally melancholy; melancholy men were almost always
Saturnine.7

There was another side, however, to the melancholy man, which
derived ultimately from Aristotle and which had, in addition, the con-
sensus of ancient authority behind it. According to this tradition
melancholy fosters intellectual and imaginative powers. Burton, the
foremost Renaissance authority on melancholy, says that the melancholy
man is "of a deep reach, excellent apprehension, judicious, wise and
witty."8 Men of letters are particularly prone to this kind of
melancholy. It endows them with faculties superior to those of the
common man. This type of melancholy mind enjoys the contemplation of
the innermost secrets of nature and the highest truths of heaven.
The Aristotelian tradition came to have far greater importance in
Renaissance literature than the Galenic tradition. It lent to melan-
choly a philosophic and artistic importance. Many men were more than
willing to declare themselves affected by it. Aristotle has, in fact,
been called the remote cause of the melancholy man in the English
drama, satires and character sketches of the late Renaissance period.9

In the satires of the period themselves two distinct types of
melancholy men can be recognized. One of these is the affected melan-
cholic, the melancholy travelers and their imitators. This type seems


8 Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, eds. Floyd Dell and

to have derived ultimately from Italy, or at least the Renaissance moralists thought that he did. He is a man who is noted for his surli-
ness, preoccupation, taciturnity and general unsociability. He has a pronounced sense of superiority and resents the world's neglect of
his superior abilities and accomplishments. He expresses his chagrin
taciturnly by railing indiscriminately at an unappreciative world.
He broadcasts his feelings and gives evidence of his melancholia by
various poses and mannerisms. Bruto, the returned traveler of Mar-
ston's Satires, is an outstanding example of this type of malcontent.

Look, look, with what a discontented grace
Bruto the traveller doth sadly pace
"O civil-seeming shade,
Mark his sad colours! - how demurely clad!
Staidness itself, and Master's gravity,
Are but the shade of his civility.
And now he sings: "O thou corrupted age,
Which slight regard'st men of sound carriage!
Virtue, knowledge, fly to heaven again;
Deign not 'mong these ungrateful sets remain!
Well, some tongues I know, some countries I have seen,
And yet these oily snails respect been
Of my good parts." O worthless puffy slave!
Didst thou to Venice go ought else to have,
But buy a bite and use a courtesan,
And there to live like a Gyllenian?
And now from thence what either dost thou bring,
But surphulings, new paints, and poisoning,
Aretine's pictures, some strange luxury,
And new-found use of Venice venery?
What art thou but black clothes? Sad Bruto, say,
Art anything but only sad array:
Which I am sure is all thou brought'st from
France,
Save Naples pox and Frenchmen's dalliance;

10 Fink, "Jacques and the Malcontent Traveler," 23-245. See also
Lewis Einstein, *The Italian Renaissance in Italy* (New York, 1907),
pp. 159-175. According to Mr. Einstein the Anti-Italian movement was
fostered by the growth of Puritanism, which looked with suspicion on
anything hailing from a Catholic nation. He lists as other contributing
factors the fear of atheism and the rise of nationalism and competition
in commerce.
From haughty Spain what brought’st thou else beside
But lofty looks and their Luciferian pride?
From Beligia what but their deep benvolence,
Their boot-carouse and their beer-buttering?
Well, then, exclaim not on our age, good man,
But hence, polluted Neapolitan.11

Marston is very clearly attacking the melancholy poxer in this satire.
The pretense, sham, and hypocrisy of this type were favorite targets
for the barbs of the satirists. Robert Anton, to mention one other
case, has directed a satire against Saturnists of this type.12

There were other types of melancholy men who are found little or
not at all in the satires. In the tradition of Galin, which pictured
the melancholic as evil, we may find, particularly in the drama, what
may be called the melancholy villain, as exemplified by Bosola, the
Cardinal and Ferdinand in Marston’s The Duchess of Malfi. We do not
find in the satires the genial type of melancholy man such as Jacques13
in As You Like It, in which type the malcontent exhibits a considerable
vein of humor which is heightened by the antics of an accompanying
fool.14

III, pp. 274-275. (Satire II of Euphues’s Image and Certain Satyres,
1598).

12 Robert Anton, The Philosopher’s Satyr (London, 1616), Microfilm
of Huntington Library Copy.

13 E. E. Stoll considers Jacques a humor character and relates him
to Marston’s Malevole. See “Shakespeare Marston and the Malevolent
Type,” 281.

14 Hiram Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance (New York, 1950), pp. 106-
107. Mr. Haydn points out that the "fool" of plain speech is linked
with the cynic or stoic "wise man" of plain speech and plain living,
whose "folly" is really wisdom. The satirists of the Renaissance, he
maintains, claim a privilege of immunity for their "plain-speaking"
which is derived from classical tradition, more particularly the tradi-
tion of Cynic and Stoic primitivism, with its antagonism to all artifices
of civilization, culture, and society. The satirists, like the fools,
The most prominent malcontent type in Renaissance satire is the melancholy philosopher, who is in most cases a melancholy cynic as well. This type may have been rendered melancholy by misfortune. He has been wronged by someone, or by society, and his role as the malcontent is excusable and authentic. As in the case of Duke Alfofronto (Malevole) in The Malcontent, he is able to pursue his goal under the guise of a harmless eccentric, toward whom others take a patronising air. They may question him, draw him out, bait him, use him, laugh at him. He is given almost unlimited freedom in his criticisms. He is the licensed critic of those about him.

The role of the Cynic in Renaissance literature did not begin with Marston nor with the satirists of his ilk. As early as Lyly's Campaspe about 1581 we find the Cynic taking a prominent role in English literature. The diatribe of Diogenes, the Cynic philosopher, directed against the city of Athens and its citizens has many parallels in formal verse satires of the late sixteenth century.

Yee wicked and beswitched Atheneans, whose bodies make the earth to groans, and whose breathes infect the aire with stench. Come ye to see Diogenes fly? Diogenes commeth to see you sinkes! Yee call me dog; so I am for I long to gnaw the beanes in your skins. Yee tearme me a hater of men; no, I am a hater of your maners. Your lives dissolute, not fearing death, will prove your deaths desperate, not hoping for life: what do you elis in Athens but sleepe in the day, and surfeite in the night; back Gods in the morning with pride, in the evening belly Gods with plottorie! You flatter kings, & call them Gods: speake truth of your selves, and confess

are "Nature's children." Hayin is supported by Clive K. Bushy, Studies in the Development of the Fool in Elizabethan Drama (Oxford, 1923), pp. 49 ff. She does not, however, make any attempt to link the Elizabethan fool to the Cynic-Stoic "wise-men."
you are divels! . . . Your filthy beasts you colour under a courtly colour of love, injuries abroad under the title of pollicies at home, and secrete malice creepeth under the name of publike justice. . . . Al soience is sealed at Athens. Swearing censeth of a hot mettal; lying o' a quick wit; flattery of a flowing tongue; undecent talk of a merry disposition. Al things are lawful at Athens. Either you think there are no Gods, or al must think ye are no men. You build as though you should live for ever, and surfeit as though you should die to morow. . . . O times! O mannes! O corruption in manners! . . . Thus have I flowne over your disordered lives, and if you wil not amend your manners, I wil study to fly further from you, that I may be nearer to honesty.15

Cynic philosophy had been one of the most important sources of subject matter of early Roman satire. The Renaissance satirists were aware of this tradition and freely adapted the pose of the Cynic philosopher to suit their own purposes. They seldom subscribed to the philosophy itself, but they were quick to see the advantages of freedom and license of the Cynic position, and made considerable use of the Cynic technique. The Renaissance satirist frequently speaks of his "Cynike satyrs." Cynic is the Greek word, "dog."16 In the mind of the Renaissance satirist canine and cynic are significantly linked together. A random example of the association can be found in The Malcontent in the remarks which Pietro addresses to Malevole. "Come downe, thou ragged Cur, and snarles here, I give thy dogged sullenness free liberty: trot about and be-spurte whom thou pleasest."17

The Cynic philosopher is prominent in the drama of the late


Let me look back upon thee, O thou wall,
That girdlest in these wolves, dive in the earth,
And feast not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
Obedience fail in children! Slaves and fools,
Fleck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads! To general filths
Convert e'the instant, green virginity!

Maid, to thy master's bed!
Thy mistress is e'the brothel. Son of sixteen,
Fleck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains! Piety and fear,
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
Domestic awe, night-rest and neighbourhood,
Instruction, manners, mysteries and trades,
Degrees, observances, customs and laws,
Decline to your confounding contraries,
And let confusion live!
Tlman will to the woods, where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind. 16

But Tlman's cynicism and melancholy are affectations, regardless of
the justice of his cause. Apenantus, the true Cynic philosopher of
the play, berates him for his posturing.

This is in thee a nature but infected;
A poor unmanly melancholy sprung
From change of fortune, ...

Shame not these woods
By putting on the cunning of a carper.
...

16 William Shakespeare, The Complete Works, ed. W. A. Wright

19 Ibid., pp. 1174-1175.
And later in the same scene:

If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on
To castigate thy pride, 'twere well; but thou
Dost it enforcedly; thou 'ldst courtier be again,
Fart thou not beggar.  

Apemantus tells Simon too that in large part his woes have been of
his own making.

The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but
The extremity of both ends: when thou wast in
Thy gilt and thy perfume, they mocked thee for
Too much curiosity; in thy rags thou know'st none,
but art despised for the contrary.  

A final type of melancholy man who figures prominently in the
satires of the late Renaissance is the melancholy scholar. Melancholy
has been called the occupational disease of the scholar. The asso­
ciation between scholarship and melancholy becomes so strong that not
only do scholars tend to be melancholy, but melancholics tend to be
scholarly. In the drama we find such ready examples as Bussy D'Ambois,
Bosola and ever Harlet. As a rule the melancholy scholar is less
bitter and less caustic than the melancholy Cynic, less evil and
amoral than the melancholy villain, less ludicrous and more consistent
than the melancholy traveler. The most elaborate treatment of him is
in the Parnassus trilogy, where we find the scholar-artist, Philomusus.
Macilente in Ben Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour is an example of

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20 Ibid., pp. 1175.
22 Ibid., p. 100.
the melancholy savant. Marston presents a rather fulsome portrait of the melancholy scholar in the person of Lampado in *What You Will*. He has been rendered melancholy by too much intellectual activity, which has left him confused and frustrated. He says,

I relish not this mirth, my spirit is untwist,
My heart is ravel'd out in discontents,
I am depe thoughtfull, and all shooty my soule
Through all creation of omnipotence.\(^23\)

Later in the same scene he laments the scholar's lot:

In heavens handiwork ther's naught
None more vile, accursed, reproude to blisse
Then man, and mong men a scholler most.
Things emly fleshly sensatve, an Ox or Horse,
They live and eate, and sleepes, and drinks, and die
And are not touched with recollections
Of things are past or staggerd infant doubts
Of things succeeding: but leave the manly beastes,
And give but pence a peace to have a sight
Of beastly man now.\(^24\)

He ends this dejected soliloquy by admitting that he knows nothing except that he 'knows nothing'.

The fate of the melancholy scholar-philosopher was often a miserable existence, as he would be the first to admit, yet it was not one of which he was necessarily ashamed. The melancholy man might retire within himself and find compensation for the ills of the world in sober contemplation and introspection. Contemplation in secluded grouts did not always bring him relief from his despondency. In any case the concept of melancholy in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth


\(^{24}\) Ibid., p. 257.
centuries gave him a name for his state of mind and a dignified pattern of conduct.  

By way of recapitulation up to this point, it can be said that Renaissance formal verse satire cannot be properly understood without seeing it in its relationship to the medieval and Renaissance theories concerning human motivation. Human motivation was inextricably involved in the current ideas revolving around the aged concepts of the elements and the "humours." To fail to view the Renaissance satires in this light is to make of them nothing more than servile imitations of the classic satirists, full of vapid platitudes and bombast. The Renaissance exhortations to virtue were not meaningless. The satirists (and other literary figures as well) had witnessed a gradual decline in the moral fiber of their country (however exaggerated the "decline" may have been in the satires). Their principal aim was to point the way back to virtue. The enormity of the task may make them seem naive to the twentieth century mind, and their satires ineffectual. If the satires are considered in the light of predominant doctrines on the three souls of man and the relationship of Reason and Will to the Senses or the Passions, then the satirists no longer seem ineffectual and naive. In accordance with current religious, moral and ethical doctrines they felt that an erring man could be purged of his "humour" or passion. And in accordance with the same doctrines, an erring man once purged could be shown the error of his conduct and Reason and Will would once again prevail in him, causing him to pursue the virtuous path.

rather than the evil one.

Closely connected with the theory of "humours" and an outgrowth of it was the use made by Renaissance authors of the melancholy humour. The development of the melancholy tradition in Renaissance letters was two-pronged: the medieval, Galenic tradition in which the associations were predominantly evil; and the classic, Aristotelian tradition in which the associations were beneficent and dignified. Both in the drama and the satire, where we find the melancholy type most often portrayed, it was the Aristotelian concept of melancholia which predominated.

The satirists of the late Renaissance in England made use principally of two rather specialized aspects of the melancholy man, and they attacked still another aspect of the melancholy man. They attacked with a great deal of caustic derision the melancholy traveler—the poseur with the black clothes and the haughty air. At least for the purposes of satire, they found it advantageous to adopt the role of the melancholy cynic-philosopher or the melancholy scholar. The two types tend to overlap somewhat; they both are unreservedly outspoken; they both may display a caustic wit and rail against the world and mankind; they both have just cause for their melancholia. The melancholy scholar, however, seems to be of a gentler persuasion and more inclined toward isolation (i.e., the study), contemplation, and introspection. The search for truth and virtue is of utmost importance to both.

It is not always easy to determine when a satirist is simply adopting the role of the melancholic and when he is actually of the melancholy type himself. Of the satirists with whom this study deals,
Donne and Marston are the main figures that conform most nearly in every respect to the melancholy type. Lawrence Babb places both of them uncategorically in the roster of prominent Elizabethan melancholics in his book, The Elizabethan Malady. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to corroborating Babb's findings by a close examination of the satires. Donne will be found to conform most nearly to the type of the melancholy-savant in his search for truth. Marston conforms to the type of the Cynic-philosopher. Both of them are using the melancholy role and the satiric genre to foster virtue, honesty, justice and truth, to maintain the status quo, or to lead erring man back to the "golden age" of their fathers when virtue and honor prevailed.

II

Scholars agree that John Donne wrote his Satyres between the years 1593 and 1598. In point of time this makes him the earliest English formal verse satirist, although his work in this vein did not appear in print until 1633 and after. Donne made his satires a vehicle for metaphysical and epistemological musings. Let us now examine the satires of Donne in order to determine wherein they conform.

26 Ibid., p. 181. Among the other Renaissance literary figures inclined toward melancholy Babb names Sidney, Lodge, Nash, Bacon, Spenser, Chapman, Breton, Ford, and Burton. Greene, he says, is the only one who apologizes for it.

27 Most scholars accept H. H. C. Grierson's dating of the Satyres. He places the date of the earliest at 1593. He places the date of Satyr 1, the last that can be positively identified as Donne's, in 1598. For a discussion of the canon and the dating of the Satyres, see Donne's Poetical Works, ed. H. H. C. Grierson (Oxford, 1912), vol. II, pp. 100-105.

28 The so-called sixth and seventh Satyres were added in 1635 and 1669 respectively. See Grierson, vol. II, p. 105.
to predominant cultural, intellectual and philosophical currents of
the late sixteenth century. Donne is one of the most protean figures
in English letters, and this in a period noted for its inconsistencies.
It would not be amiss at this point to emphasize a warning of Law­
rence Babb on this point of inconsistency. He says,

'It is astonishing to a twentieth-century reader to dis­
cover how much at home the Elizabethan could be with dis­
crepancies and illogicalities. Their indifference... does
not mean... that they were naive. On the contrary one	en often gets an impression... of a civilized urbanity... yet the Elizabethans lacked the remorseless passion for
exactitude, completeness, and logical perfection which
(properly) distinguishes the modern scientific mind.'

The John Donne of the Satyres is a fairly consistent man. He is
not the Jack Donne of the Songs and Sonnets, nor Dean Donne of the
Sermons, nor the Donne of the Holy Sonnets. The satires were written
during a transitional period in his career. He had been briefly to
the two universities, and he was connected with the In s o Court. He
no doubt saw that no young man of Catholic persuasion could attain

an advanced position politically or otherwise in Elizabethan Eng­
land. At the time of writing the satires Donne remained essentially
a Catholic in his viewpoint, not that he was an adherent of the Roman
Catholic Church, but he was a believer in the Aristotelian-Thomistic
philosophy of the schools. The Satyres reflect the doctrines of
universal correspondence, the chain of spheres, the grades of elements
and forms, and most important for the purposes of satire, the Aristotelian
tri-partite soul.

29 Babb, The Elizabethan Malady, p. 68.

30 Weyrick H. Carré, Phases of Thought in England (Oxford, 1949),
p. 218.
It is not surprising that Donne had retained the remnants of Catholic doctrine in his thinking at this early date. He was a relative of the strong Catholic families of Heywood, Rastell, and More. He had, himself, had Jesuitical training. His younger brother had lost his life as an indirect result of his having sheltered a Catholic priest. He had seen the effects of the harsh anti-Catholic policies of the government, not the least of which was the spectacular death of the Catholic poet, Southwell.

It is not that Donne argues for Catholicism in his Satyres. He does not. But neither does he argue against it. His true religious attitude at this time was one of tolerance. What distresses him most at this time is the divided state of Christ's Church. Nowhere is this more thoroughly brought out than in Satyre III. After reviewing the Catholic, the Lutheran, the Anglican, the aestheteic positions, he concludes,

... but unmoved thou
Of force must one, and fore'd but one allow;
And the right; ask thy father which is shee,
Let him ask his; though truth and falsehood bee
Nearc twins, yet truth a little elder is;
Be busie to seek her, believe me this,
She's not of none, nor worst, that seeks the best.
To adore, or scorne an image, or protest,
May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
To sleepe, or runne wrong, is. On a huge hill,
Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and bee that will
Reach her, about must, and about must goe;
And what the hills suddennes resists, winne so;

---

32 Ibid., p. 31.
Yet strive so, that before age, death's twilight,
Thy soule rest, for none can works in that night. 33

His main concern is not that man should follow one religion or sect.
What distresses him is that "our mistresse faire religion" no longer seems worthy of man's devotion and energies. Even the virtuous Ancients will sooner gain heaven than contemporary man, who has forsaken the faith of his fathers.

Is not our mistresse faire Religion,
As worthy of all our soules devotion,
As vertue was to the first blinded age?
Are not heavens joyes as valiant to assuage Lusts, as earths honour was to them? Alas,
As we do them in meanes, shall they surpasse Us in the end, and shall thy fathers spirit Mote blind Philosophers in heaven, whose merit Of strict life may be imputed faith, and hearre Thee, whom has taught so easie waies and neare To follow, damn'd? 34

Logan Pearsall Smith states that Donne deals primarily in the sermons with three great themes—Sin, Death, and God. 35 In Satyre III Death hovers over those who forsake the path of religion and virtue. In their battle against Sin it is important that they recognize their true enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

O desperate coward, wilt thou seeme bold, and To thy foes and his (who made thee to stand Sentinell in his worlds garrison) thus yeeld, And for forbidden warres, leave th' appointed field? Know thy foes: the soule Devill (whom thou Strivest to please,) for hate, not love, would allow

33 John Donne, Poetical Works, ed. W. J. G. Grierson (Oxford, 1902), vol. i, p. 157. All future references to Donne's poetry will be from this volume.
34 Ibid., pp. 144-55.
Thee faine, his whole Realms to be quit; and as
The worlds all parts wither away and passe,
So the worlds selfe, thy other lovd foe, is
In her deserepit wayne, and thou loving this,
Dost love a withered and worne strumpet; last,
Flesh (it selfes death) and joyes which flesh can
taste,
They lovest; and thy faire goodly soule, which doth
Give this flesh power to taste joy, thou dost loath.
Sekes true religion.36

Donne ends the Satyre with a guarded discussion of power and the sources
of power. The religious persecutions must have occasioned these lines:

Keeps the truth which thou has found; men do
not stand
In so ill ease here, that God hath with his hand
Sign'd Kings blanch-charters to kill whom they hate,
Nor ar- they Vickers, but hangmen to fate.37

Both these lines and the ones that follow smack suspiciously of sedi-
tion and seem to argue for tradition in religion.

Fools and wretch, will thou let thy Soule be tyed
To -ans lawes, by which she shall not be tryed
At the last day? Oh, will it then boot thee
To say a Philip, or a Gregory,
A Harry, or a Martin taught thee this?
Is not this excuse for mere contraries,
Equally strong? cannot both sides say so?
That thou mayest rightly obey power, her bounds know;
Those past, her nature, and name is chang'd; to be
Then humble to her is idolatry.
As streams are, Power is; those blast flowers that
dwell
At the rough streams calme head, thrive and do well,
But having left their roots, and themselves given
to the streams tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
Through mills, and rockes, and woods; and at last
almost
Consum'd in going, in the sea are lost:

36 Donne, Poetical Works, pp. 155-56.
37 Ibid., p. 157.
So perish souls, which more choose mens unjust
Powers from God clays'd, then God himselfe to
trust.38

We need not restrict ourselves to Satyrh III for echoes of Donne's
Catholic heritage. He takes a sly dig at Luther in Satyrh III:

... as in those first days
When Luther was professor, he did desire
Short Peter nonstern; saying as a Fryer
Each day his head, but having left those laws,
Addes to Christ's prayer, the Power and glory
clause.39

And later in the same satire in upholding the "golden mean" he laments
the loss of the Catholic doctrine of works. This same passage inci-
dentially introduces the theme of the Golden Age versus the Iron Age,
long a favorite with satirists.40

Where are these speed woods which cloth'd heretofore
Those bought lands? not built, nor burnt within
dore.
Where's th'old landlords troops, and almes? In great
halls
Carthusian fasts, and fulsome Bashanalls
Equally I hate; menes blebes; in rich mens houses
I bid kill some beasts, but no Hecatombs,
Some starve, none surfeit so; But (oh) we allow,
Good works as good, but out of fashion now,
Like old rich wardrops; but my words none
draws
Within the vast reach of th'huge statute lawes.41

38 Ibid., p. 155.
40 Juvenal plays upon this theme and his influence probably
caused its widespread use in the English Renaissance. See his Satire 6
and Satire 11. Joseph Hall, like Donne, continues the tradition. See
Satire 1, Book III and Satire 3, Book V of Viridierianum.
41 Donne, Poetical Works, pp. 153-54.
The evidence is sufficient to show that Donne had not altogether forsaken the faith of his fathers at the time of the writing of the Satyres. Donne's philosophical position at this time, if we judge from the Satyres alone, seems a fairly secure one. It was not until a later period that the new philosophy called all into doubt. Even then it was not the new view of the heavens and the positions of the planets that disheartened Donne, but rather the implications carried by the new science of the falsity of the whole Scholastic synthesis.⁴² He was to return to fideism in his later years, the years of the Sermons and the Holy Sonnets.

In the 1590's, during the period of the Satyres, Donne saw the medieval synthesis of flesh and spirit seriously challenged. M. F. Holoney poses a legitimate question when he asks,

Is it too fanciful to suppose that Donne . . . had had a vision of the death of a culture and the annihilation of a civilization? Not the mere shattering of the Ptolemaic conception of the universe, but the final rejection by the Renaissance spirit of a metaphysical system, and with that an ethical and aesthetic system, which for a thousand years of medieval advance had explained away the doubts and minimized the misgivings from which the spirit of man is never free.⁴³

When the full impact of the new philosophy hit Donne it was reflected in the great pessimistic and skeptical works of the middle period—

The Progress of the Soul (1601), Meditationæ (1608) and Ignatius, his Conclave (1611). The Satyres contain nothing so despairing as these


⁴³ Michael F. Holoney, John Donne, His Flight from Medievalism (Urbana, 1944), p. 108.
lines from "An Anatomy of the World."

’Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation:

... ...

Prince, Subject, Father, Sense, are things forgot,
For every man alone thinks he hath got
To be a phoenix, and that then can bee
None of that kinds, of which he is, but bee. 44

Deane’s main concern in the Satyrion is to accomplish a reconciliati
on of the body and soul and to aid erring man in settling the rival claim
of flesh and spirit. 45 The way of settlement was a medieval one and was thoro
ously grounded in the doctrine of the "three souls." Mary Paton Ramsey says

Cette théorie de l’union des trois âmes indiquent en réalité une conception sur laquelle nous ne saurions trop insister chez Deane: celle de la dépendance réciproque des deux parties qui forment l’homme. Elle est à la-base de toutes ses réflexions sur l’homme et sur la vie présente. 46

The doctrine of the three souls of man, with its concomitant belief in the power of Reason and Will over the Senses, lends itself to the theory of satire as a corrective agent. It makes the satire of the


45 Needless to say the reconciliation of them was not affected. Not long afterwards Cartesian dualism succeeded in separating them permanently for many seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers. See Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1945), pp. 247 ff. See also Basil Willey, Seventeenth Century Background (London, 1942), pp. 76 ff. See also A. R. Gibson, The Philosophy of Descartes (London, 1932), especially chapters 8, 9, and 10.

Renaissance essentially optimistic because it implies that correction is not only possible but probable if the person involved can be persuaded to accept the cure. Back of the melancholy satirists, including Donne, there is at least implied the belief that correction can be carried out. This must be true of all good satire, otherwise it becomes purposeless.

In his role as social critic Donne adopts the attitude of the melancholy-savant. We know that Donne, himself, was an ardent scholar.\(^47\) In his letters he writes of his "hydropic, immoderate desire of human learning and languages"\(^48\) while in his youth. The imagery in his Satyres is full of learned allusion to the classics and to the monumental literature of the churches, old and new.\(^49\) We know, too, that Donne was naturally of a melancholy frame of mind. His biographer Walton says, "The melancholy and pleasant humor were in him so tempered, that each gave advantage to the other, and made his company one of the delights of mankind."\(^50\) Most modern critics maintain either that he suffers from melancholy\(^51\) or that he is of a "melancholy cast of thought."\(^52\) In the Holy Sonnet, "La Corona,"


\(^{49}\) Mahoud, Poetry and Humanism, pp. 103-104.

\(^{50}\) Isaac Walton, The Life of Dr. John Donne (London, 1928), p. 83.


\(^{52}\) Smith, Donne's Sermons, Introduction, xxv.
Donne writes

Deigne at my hands this crown of prayer and praise,
Weav'd in my low devout melancholie.53

And again in "To Mr. T. W." we find

So, though I languish, grest with Melancholy,
My verse, the strict Map of my misery,
Shall live to see that, for whose want I dye.54

In the framework of practically all of Donne's Satyres we find that he chose to play the role of the melancholy recluse who eschews the life of the city and the Court for the quiet and contemplation of the country and the study. In addressing the "fawning gallant" in Satyr I he says,

Away thou fondling motley humorist,
Leave me, and in this standing wooden chest,
Consortied with these few bookes, let me lye
In prison, and here be coffin'd, when I dye;
Here are Gods conduits, grave Divines; and here
Nature's Secretary, the Philosopher;
And jolly Statesmen, which teach how to tie
The sinewes of a cities mistique bodie; Here gathering chroniclers, and by them stand
Cudie fant-istique Poets of each land.
Shall I leave all this constant company,
And folow headlong, wild unceraine thee?55

He tells us, too, in the same satire that he chooses "course attire, which I now weare," in which he confers with God and with the muses. The coarse attire and rugged, unsouthish appearance is in keeping with the plain attire affected by the Cynics and Stoics and also with the mistaken etymology of the word "satire" from satyr, which was a widely

53 Donne, Poetical Works, p. 318.
54 Ibid., p. 206.
55 Ibid., p. 145.
held belief in the early Renaissance period.  

Continuing the melancholy vein Donne begins *Satyrs II* with:

Sir; though (I thank God for it) I do hate
Perfectly all this town, yet there's one state
In all ill things so excellently best,
That hate, toward them, breeds pity towards the rest.  

He continues then to scourge the corrupt lawyer-poet, Coecus.

In the beginning of *Satyres III* the tone of the malcontent gets more bitter.

Kinde pitty chokes my spleene; brave scorn forbids
Those tears to issue which swell my eye-lids;
I must not laugh, nor wepe sinners, and be wise,
Can railing then cure these worse maladies?  

*Satyre V* begins in the same vein.

Thou shalt not laugh in this leafe, Muse, nor they
Whom any pity warmes;  

for none can jest, he goes on to say, who views the rage and injustice
of Officers and the wretchedness of the Suier.

In *Satyre IV* when the Courtier tells the poet that he would leave his "lonesome" if he only knew the good of court life, the latter answers:

I said, not alone
My lonesome is, but Spartanes fashion,
To teach by painting drunkards, doth not last
Now; arstines pictures have made few chast;
No more can Princes courts, though there be few
Better pictures of vice, teach me virtus.  

---

56 Mary Claire Randolph, "Thomas Drant's Definition of Satire, 1566," *Notes and Queries*, June 14, 1941, 416-418.
57 Donne, *Poetical Works*, p. 149.
58 Ibid., p. 154.
59 Ibid., p. 163.
60 Ibid., p. 161.
Later in the same satire he repeats,

\[
\text{At home in wholesome solitariness,}
\]
\[
\text{My precious soul began, the wretchedness}
\]
\[
\text{Of suiters at court to mourn, and a trance}
\]
\[
\text{Like his, who dreamt he saw hell, did advance}
\]
\[
\text{It selfe on mee, Such men as he saw there,}
\]
\[
\text{I saw at court, and worse, and more.}\]

Attacks on court life are not new in Renaissance satire. At least as early as Sir Thomas Wyatt and Skelton we have serious denunciations of court life. These satiric attacks on the court are exclusively an English tradition. The theme does not appear in Roman satire. In the late Elizabethan period the attacks on the Court increased in number and virulence. Almost every satirist has criticism to voice of what Donne calls "th' huffing braggart, purf Nobility." The satirists saw the Court as a breeding place for vice, wickedness and affectation. They lamented the passing of the old nobility, which recognized a duty and responsibility in connection with their privilege. They unmercifully ridiculed the "upstart courtier."

Something should be said before leaving Donne's Satyres about his inordinate dislike for the law profession. He devotes practically the whole of two satires, the second and the fifth, to a devastating attack on lawyers, justices, and their associates. It is, of course, a tradition to lament the passing of justice in the satires. Justice is known to have thrived in the "Golden Age" and to have left the earth in the "Iron Age" never to reappear. Donne acknowledges

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61 Ibid., p. 164.

62 See Juvenal, Satire 6; Hall, Virgidiomierum, Satire 5; Marston, Pygmalion's Image, Satire 5.
the tradition in these lines:

O Age of rusty iron! Some better wit
Call it some worse name, if ought equal it;
The Iron Age that was, when justice was sold;
now
Injustice is sold dearer farre.63

Donne had several reasons for feeling as he does about the law and lawyers. His brief association with the Inns of Court does not seem to have softened his attitude. We have seen that he had personal reasons for disliking the laws and courts which condemned his brother to prison and the poet Southwell to death. In addition, in the late 1580's the common lawyers in England, who were jealous of the jurisdiction of the church courts and alarmed by the growth of prerogative courts, which did not use the traditional English law and were therefore a peril to their livelihood, began to cooperate with the Puritan clergy by contributing technical assistance and by going into action against the creaking machinery of the courts of the bishops.64 There resulted consequently a more zealous enforcement of the laws designed to restrict the Catholics. Finally, Donne had ample opportunity to witness the injustice of the magistrates and lawyers who enriched themselves at the expense of their helpless Catholic neighbors.

Would it not anger
A Stoicke, a coward, yea a Martyr,
To see a Pursivant come in, and call
All his cloathes, Copes; Sokes, Primers; and all
His Plate, Challices; and mistake them away,

63 Ibid., p. 169.

64 W. C. Knappen, Tudor Puritanism (Chicago, 1939), p. 270.
And ask a fee for coming?65

The injustice and hopelessness of the situation is brought out further:

But if the injury
Steele thee to dare complains, Alas, thou go'st
Against the stream, when upwards; when thou art most
Heavy and most faint; and in these labours they,
'Gainst whom thou should'st complains, will in the way
Become great seas, o' r which, when thou shalt bee
Fors'd to make golden bridges, thou shalt see
That all thy gold was drown'd in them before;
All things follow their like, only who have may have more.66

Two of Donne's satires, the first and the fourth, are concerned for the most part with an attack on gulls, gallants and courtiers. It may seem strange that the satirists, both Roman and English, should devote so much space and energy to the trifles and mannerisms of this type. The reason is precisely that it is these types who may be reformed. The truly wicked may not be reformed by satire.67 Murder, rape, and other major crimes are the subjects of tragedy, not satire. Donne is not posing a purely academic question when he asks the gull in Satyre I,

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

65 Donne, Poetical Works, p. 170.
66 Ibid., p. 170.
67 See Satyre IV. The "wretched or wicked" are free from the sting of jests. He calls for charity and liberty in his treatment of them. Ibid., p. 168.
At birth, and death, our bodies naked are;
And till our souls be unapparelled
Of bodies, they from bliss are banished.
Mans first blest state was naked, when by sinne
Hee lost that.

...

But since thou like a contrite penitent,
Charitably warn'd of thy sinnes, dost repent
These vanities, and giddinesses, I see
I shut my chamber doors, and come, lets goe.68

There is another reason that Donne and the other satirists emphasize so strongly that man should avoid the court, the city, and other areas prone to profligate living. It involves what we might call "guilt by association." When Donne accompanies the gull in Satyre I he asks,

But how shall I be pardon'd my offence
That thus have sinn'd against my conscience?69

And in Satyre IV:

My minde, neither with prides itch, nor yet hath been
Poison'd with love to see, or to be seen,
I had no suit there, nor new suite to shew,
Yet went to Court.70

...

I more amas'd then Circas prisoners, when
They felt themselves tyme beasts, felt my selfe then
Becoming Trayter, and mee thought I saw
One of our Giant Statutes ope his jaw
To sucke me in; for hearing him / the courtier/,
I found
That as burnt venome teachers do grow sound
By giving others their soares, I might grow
Guilty, and he free.71

68 Ibid., pp. 146-47.
69 Ibid., p. 147.
70 Ibid., p. 159.
71 Ibid., p. 163.
The John Donne of the Satyres can be described as a young man, brought up in the medieval-scholastic system and reared as a Catholic, who saw the deterioration of that system going on about him, and was dismayed. While it is not possible to call the Donne of the 1590's a Roman Catholic, he retained at this time much of his Catholic philosophical, moral and ethical training, and this training is reflected in the satiric poems. Miss Ramsay has said, "La philosophie scholastique après tout est moins un système spécial qu'une méthode de penser." This is what we find in the Satyres; not a philosophical system, but a way of thinking, a way of viewing the cosmos, which was theocentric. For Donne at the time of the writing of the Satyres, there were no values which could replace those of the deteriorated medieval synthesis. All about him he saw the inroads of injustice and materialism. He saw, or thought he saw, that the more gracious and humane elements of man's existence were continually exposed to the attacks of rising Puritanism. His Satyres are a protest against the sixteenth century revolution in manners, morals, taste and religion. For his role of the protestant he chose the guise of the melancholy recluse whose ventures into the world only sent him scurrying for the safety, seclusion and contentment of his books and his lamp. In all modesty he does not expect to be very effective in his protests.

Proverbs which are
Seas of Wit and Arts, you can, then dare,

---

73 Moloney, John Donne, p. 157.
Drown the sinnes of this place, for, for mee
Which am but a scarce brookes, it enough shall be
To wash the staines away; Although I yet
With Masochases modestie, the knowne merit
Of my works lessen; yet some wise men shall,
I hope, esteeme my writs Canonical. 74

III

John Marston fits even more obviously into the role of the malcontent than John Donne. It has become commonplace to place him in the list of prominent Elizabethan malcontents, largely because some of his plays such as *The Malcontent* and *What you Will*. It is the purpose of this study to relate Marston's satires to the malcontent tradition and to examine the philosophical and ontological speculations and assertions prominent in them.

Probably no Renaissance satirist has been more misunderstood than John Marston. Twentieth century critics have too often carried on the nineteenth century revulsion for Marston's indecency. 75 The nineteenth century critic Hannay has this to say: "He preferred to scold at his contemporaries in verse which is as pleasant to read as charcoal would be to eat, and to lecture an imaginary world made up of vices which he took at second hand from Latin books." 76

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75 It is true that some of his contemporary critics had much the same complaint, (e.g. the *Parnassus* trilogy.).

Another offended critic has this to say:

His enemy was not Hall but his own incompetence; he could never manage either the heroic couplet or his temper. He sought to atone with violence for what he lacked in strength. . . . The soul of satire was not in him. . . . His indignity was often feigned and was not the fruit of anger but of spite. 77

R. H. Weed reports the widely held, but erroneous, belief that Marston's indecency was the result of some kind of Freudian complex. He says, "the extravagance of his sardonic rage led to the belief that his cynicism was affected and his moral indignation merely a cloak for a prurient and perverted interest in the vices he chastised." 78

A recent critic of the satires concludes, "Marston was not really moved by what he was writing. . . . The interest is intellectual, not emotional; one has the feeling of a literary exercise." 79

These critics of Marston's satires either do not read the satires carefully, or they misread them. They do not, certainly, understand the tradition in which he writes. We have seen that Marston, himself, was of a melancholy turn of mind. 80 As a satirist he chose the role of the melancholy cynic-philosopher. In his address to the "worthy reader" prefacing The Scourge of Villainy, he maintains that he expects to be misread and to raise laughter.

79 Morse S. Allen, The Satire of John Marston (Columbus, 1920), p. 117. Douglas Bush, usually a very careful scholar and discerning critic, seems to have fallen into the same error of judgment. "It may be said that Marston's indecency is hardly that of a reforming satirist. But, as his satires show, Marston, like many another censor of society, derived a vicarious gratification from detailed accounts of the vices he attacked." Mythology and Renaissance Tradition (Minneapolis, 1932), p. 179.
80 Lawrence Babb lists him as one of the prime examples of the melancholy type among English writers of the Renaissance, The Elizabethan Melody, p. 182.
Where I but strive in honest seriousness
To scourge some soul-polluting beastliness,
So you will rail, and find huge errors lurk
In every corner of my cynical work. 81

In the "Proem" to the first book of The Scourge he calls not upon the
muses, but upon Melancholy to inspire him.

Thou nursing mother of fair Wisdom's lore,
Ingenious Melancholy, I implore
Thy grave assistance: take thy gloomy seat,
Enthroned there in my blood; let me entreat,
Stay his quick forested ships, and force him run
A wide-paced course, until my ship be done.
Daphne, unstop thine arms from my sad brow;
Black cypress crown me, whilst I up do plow
The hidden entrails of rank villainy, 82
Tearing the veil from damn'd impiety.

He frequently addresses "grim Reproof" as in Satire III of Evangeline
and the "Proem" of Book three in The Scourge. 83 Or he calls upon the
grim judges of the underworld to be his guide and stay.

Now doth Rhamusia Adrastian,
Daughter of Night, and of the Ocean,
Provoke my pen. What cold Saturnian
Can hold, and hear such vile detraction? 84

What, we may ask, is the cause of Marston's satiric outbursts,
that they are so savage, so vitriolic? We do not have to look far.
He points it up, in one way or another, in almost every satire: it
was that the connection between God and man had been interrupted, the

vol. III, p. 303. All further quotations from Marston's satires will be
taken from this volume.
82 Ibid., p. 307.
83 Ibid., p. 276; p. 332.
84 Ibid., p. 353.
union between body and soul broken and the body left to beastiality.

In what he calls his "cynic-Satyr" in The Cynic, when the interlocutor points out what he supposes to be a model of propriety and good-behavior, the Cynic always sees through the facade to uncover the sin and folly. The degradation, for example, of the military man is the result of his deadened spirit,

Weak ungrace lust hath now consumed quite,
And wasted clean away his martial sprite;
Enfeseling riot, all vices' confluence,
Hath eaten out that sacred influence
Which made him man.
That divine part is soak'd away in sin,
In sensual lust, and midnight beseeing,
Rank inundation of luxuriances
Have tainted him with such gross beastliness,
That now the seat of that celestial essence
Is all possess'd with Naples' pestilence.85

Man's condition has become so bad that the Cynic can no longer give credence to the view that the soul emanates from God.

Sure I ne'er think those axioms to be true,
That souls of men from that great soul ensue,
And of his essence do participate
As 'twere by pipes; when so degenerate,
So adverse is our nature's motion
To his immaculate condition,
That such foul filth from such fair purity,
Such sensual acts from such a Deity,
Can ne'er proceed. But if that dream were so,
Then sure the slime, that from our soule do flow,
Have stepp'd those pipes by which it was convey'd,
And now no human creatures, once desir'd
Of that fair gem.
Beasts' sense, plants growth, like being as a stone;
But out, alas! our cognizance is gone.86

85 Ibid., p. 349.
86 Ibid., pp. 351-52.
Repeated sin and indulgence dulls man's will to resist. His reason and will are then more easily overcome by passion. With his intellectual soul powerless, he is little better than a beast. How, he asks in Satire VIII of The Scourge, can the passions gain such mastery over the soul?

O frantic, fond, pathetic passion! Is't possible such sensual action Should clip the wings of contemplation? [reason]
O can it be the spirit's function, The soul, not subject to dimension, Should be made slave to reprehension Of crafty nature's paint? Fie! can our soul Be underling to such vile control?87

The role of the intellect is clearly delineated later in the same satire.

Reason, by prudence in her function, Had wont to tutor all our action, Aiding, with precepts of philosophy, Our feeble natures' imbecility; But now affection, will, concupiscence, Have got o'er reason chief pre-eminence.88

Marston continues, then, in the same satire to explain how man arrives at this degenerate state. It will be noted that the explanation he offers continues to expound the doctrine of the medieval and Renaissance "three souls" of man and the doctrines of the elements and the "humours."

Our adverse body, being earthly, cold, Heavy, dull, mortal, would not long enfold A stranger inmate, that was backward still To all his dunghy, brutish, sensual will; Now hereupon our intellectual, Compact of fire all celestial, Invisible, immortal, and divine, Grew straight to scorn his landlord's muddy slime; And therefore now is closely slunk away (Leaving his smoky house of mortal clay),

87 Ibid., p. 358.
88 Ibid., pp. 360-61.
Adorn'd with all his beauty's lineaments
And brightest gems of shining ornaments,
His parts divine, sacred, spiritual,
Attending on him; leaving the sensual
Base hangers-on lurking at home in slime.

... ...

Now doth the body, led with senseless will
(The which, in reason's absence, ruleth still),
Rave, talk idly, as 'twere some deity,

... ...

Employing all his wits in vain expense,
Abusing all his organons of sense.89

There is a similar lengthy passage in Satire XI of The Scourge in which the speaker addresses the "gallants" directly accusing them of making themselves slaves to their "humours," causing the soul to atrophy.90

Although Marston makes use of Cynic-Stoic convention in the warp and woof of his satires, he does not subscribe to their doctrines concerning Nature and natural religion. Man's Reason can take him just so

89 Ibid., pp. 361-62.

90 Ibid., p. 379. Marston is concerned mainly with what he feels to be the major vices, or subjects of satire. When he intends to deal with follies or errors in conduct of a lighter kind, he affects a rather inappropriate (to him) merriment and jesting. In Satire XI of The Scourge he attacks "Humours" and calls upon "sporting Merriment" and "cheek-dimpling Laughter" to inspire him. He cannot maintain the pose for long, however, and is soon his old railing, melancholy self.

Fie! Whither's fled my sprite's alacrity?
How dull I vent this humorous poesy!
In faith I am sad, I am possess'd with ruth,
To see the vainness of fair Albion's youth;
To see their richest time even wholly spent
In that which is but gentry's ornament;
Which, being meanly done, becomes them well;
But when with dear time's loss they do excell,
How ill they do things well.
far; the final absolution of sin is accorded by divine grace. He utterly rejects all dependence on natural religion in Satire IV of The Scourge and berates those who salve their consciences with it.

It is a sacred cure
To salve the soul's dread wounds; omnipotent
That Nature is, that cures the impotent,
Even in a moment. Sure, grace is infused
By Divine favour, not by actions used, 91
Which is as permanent as heaven's bliss,
To thee that have it; then no habit is,
To-morrow, may to-day, it may be got,
So please that gracious power cleanse thy spot.
Vice, from privation of that sacred grace
Which God withdraws, but puts not vice in place.

... 

Ye curious sots, vainly by Nature led,
Where is your vice or virtuous habit now? 92

He answers his would-be opponents with a text from Porphyry.

Then vice nor virtue have from habit place;
The one from want, the other sacred grace;
Infused, displaced; not in our will or force,
But as it please Jehovah have remorse. 93

Marston will have none of the Stoic doctrine, out of Zeno, of the relativity of virtue and vice, nor will he rely in their dependence on "will." Zeno, Seneca and the neo-Stoics in general are upbraided for their belief that man can live happily, apart from God. He maintains

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91 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, ed. J. L. G. Welldon (London, 1934), particularly Chapter VII of Book III, p. 75. Marston argues here against the "voluntariness" of virtue and vice. Aristotle says, "If then, as is generally allowed, the virtues are voluntary (for we are ourselves, in a sense, partly responsible for our moral states, and it is because we possess a certain character that the end which we set before ourselves is of a certain kind), it follows that our vices too must be voluntary, as what is true of one is equally true of the other.


93 Ibid., p. 330.
that they contradict themselves when they say that destiny, fate, and necessity rule the spiritual parts of man as well as the mortal parts. What happens then, he asks, to their vaunted "will." Can "will" and "fate" have equal sway? 94

On more mundane matters Marston almost always takes the conservative attitude. He laments the decay of England's yeomanry and her fighting men in Satire VIII.

O, now me think I hear swart Martius cry, Sweeping along in wars' feign'd maskery; By Lais' starry front he'll forthwith dye In clutter'd blood, his mistress' livery; Her fancy's colours waves upon his head, O, well-fenced Albion, mainly manly sped, Then those that are soldadoes in thy state Do bear the badge of base, effeminate, Even on their plumy crests. 95

Marston again betrays his intensely nationalistic attitude in his attack on Joseph Hall in Satire IV of *Pygmalion*. He felt that Hall had slighted the honor of England's national heroes.

But see his spirit of detract' on Must nible at a glorious action, Engage some gallant spirit, some resolved blood, Will hazard all to work his country's good, And to enrich his soul and raise his name, Will boldly sail into the rich Guianes; What then? Must straight some shameful satirist With odious and opprobrious terms insist To blast so high resolv'd intention With malignant vile detract' on. 96

As might be expected, Marston is suspicious of all foreign influence. His satires are filled with sharp attacks on the "Italianate Englishman,"

of which the one in Satire IX of The Scourge is typical.

But let a youth that hath abused his time
In wronged travel, in that hotter clime,
Swoop by old Jack, in clothes Italianate,
And I'll be hung'd if he will imitate
His strange fantastic suit-shapes:
Or let him bring o'er beastily luxuries,
Some hell-devised lustful villainies,
Even apes and beasts would blush with native shame,
And think it foul dishonour to their name,
Their beastly name, to imitate such sin
As our lewd youths do boast and glory in. 97

In matters of religion and theology Marston cleaves to the Anglican middle way. He has little sympathy for the Puritan or the Catholic. It is rather surprising to find, in view of his anti-foreign attitude, that his attacks on the Catholics are comparatively mild.

The most pronounced attack occurs in Satire II of The Scourge. His attacks on the Puritans are unmerciful. He accuses them of hypocrisy and usury in Satire II of Pygmalion. 98 They are accused of careless, sloppy religious observance in Satire II of The Scourge. 99 His sharpest attack occurs in Satire IX of The Scourge.

Why looks neat Curst all so simp'ringly?
Why babblest thou of deep divinity,
And of that sacred testimonial,
Living voluptuous like a bacchanal?
Good hath thy tongue; but thou, rank Puritan,
I'll make an ape as good a Christian;
I'll force his chatter, turning up his eye,
Look sad, go grave; demure civility
Shall seem to say, "Good brother, sister dear!"
As for the rest, to snort in belly-cheer,
To bite, to gnaw, and boldly intemper
With sacred things. 100

97 Ibid., p. 966.
98 Ibid., pp. 271-72.
99 Ibid., p. 315.
100 Ibid., pp. 366-67.
Naroten's greatest battles are with sham, hypocrisy, and things which are not what they seem to be. He attacks people, or rather types, who are "shades" of what they should be—the "apes" ases," and feels of society whose intellectual souls are so atrophied from lack of use that they have become only empty shells given over to beastly pursuits. Naroten, who signs himself Theriomenatrix (beast-whipper) in *The Scourge of Villainy*, adopts the role of the out-spoken, caustic Cynic-philosopher to anatome the vices and follies of the age.

IV

In 1599 there appeared a series of six satires under the heading, *Nigro-avison, Sive Sparing Satyras* by one T. M., Gent. The title indicates that these satires are in the railing, invective tradition of the Cynic preachers, but the connection is very tenuous. In the "Authors Prologue" T. M. attempts to place himself in the Cynic tradition:

Dismounted from the his aspiring hils,
Whích the all empty airie Kingdom fills,
Leaving the scorched moutains threatening hewe,
Frő whence fel floris rage my soule hath drive:
Passing the downs steepv vallies all in hast,
Have tript it through the woods; & now at last
In vaild with a stonic sancturie,
To save my Ire stint soule least it miserie;

There is little else about these satires that indicate that the author was aware of the tradition of the malcontent in satire. Certainly


he misses altogether the philosophical, reflective strain of both Donne and Marston. Each satire is devoted to one particular vice personified under such semi-satirical names as Cronus, the usurer; Zodom, the spendthrift; Superbia, the insolent, proud woman; Droone, the cheat; Pyander, the wanton; and Innocent, the wise-one.

These satires are important only in that they reflect in one group of satires characteristics that are applicable to many types of satire. They retain the framework, the groupings into books and the apologias, prologues, and epilogues common to formal verse satire, but at the same time we find certain characteristics that are to be prominent in the bourgeois formal satire of the early seventeenth century. In Satire 3, for example, on Pride there is the sermon-like ending that is to become standard in orthodox, middle-class satire.

But former peacock pride, grand insolence,
Even in the highest thought hath residence.
But it on tiptoe stands, well: what of that?
It is more prompt to fall and ruinate:
And fall it will the deaths shrill glamorous bell
Shall summon you unto to depth of hell:
Repent proud Princeocks, cease for to aspire,
Or dye to live, with Pride in burning fire.103

The tendency for these satires to achieve a popularity with a lower class audience is even more apparent in Satire 4 concerning Droone, the cheat. The picture here of the cony-catcher and his gulls is in the best tradition of Greene and Dekker in its expose of the occupations of low-life. The poor country gull is taken in tow by Droone, who wines, dines and entertains him, and as we might expect,

103 Ibid., Sig. C1r.
Nine took possession of his drowsie head,
And cheating Droome hath brought the fool to bed,
The fiddlers were discharged, and al things whist,
Then pilfiring Droome gan use him as he list.
Ten pounds he finds, the reckoning he doth pay,
And with the residue passeth sheere away.
Ason the Cheere wakes, his eyes being gon,
He exalymes against dissimulation.
But tenn too late, the Cheater had his pray.
Be wise young heads, care for an afterday.104

The tendency to preach and moralize to a middle class audience is much
in evidence in these satires. We are to see these tendencies reach
an acme in such satirists as George Wither in the second decade of
the seventeenth century.

... 

With the advent of a bourgeois formal verse satire in the early
years of the seventeenth century the tradition of the malcontent
satirist died out. Donne and Marston are the only two major Eliza-
bethan satirists who adopt the role of the malcontent in their satires.
Being of a natural melancholy frame of mind, these two satirists found
it to their advantage to adopt the malcontent pose, which allowed them
the freedom of expression of the Cynic-Stoic preachers. They found
too that the Cynic-Stoic tradition of malecontendedness accorded with
prevailing beliefs on the humours, and they joined the many writers in
the late years of the sixteenth century and the early years of the
seventeenth who reflect the humours theory in their writings. Within
the framework of the melancholy humour Donne and Marston wrote satires

104 Ibid., Sig. C 4 v.
which reflected many of the intellectual and philosophical currents of
the late Elizabethan period. In Donne's satires can be found remnants
of his Catholicism although his plea is for Christ's church more than
for any one sect. Marston's satires reflect the orthodox Anglican
views on theology and epistemology. Whatever their final position as
to belief, it is clear that both Donne and Marston were aware of the
philosophical tradition in formal verse satire and succeeded in adopt-
ing the genre and adapting it to fit the modes of thought current in
late Elizabethan England.
CHAPTER IV
THE CHRISTIAN-STOIC MORALISTS

Satire as the vehicle for the dissemination of neo-Stoic doctrine forms the basis for this chapter. Two major Elizabethan formal verse satirists, Joseph Hall and Thomas Lodge, reflect neo-Stoic thought in their satires, although in both these satirists it was a neo-Stoicism which was subordinated to sound Christian precept. This chapter is first of all an investigation into the development of neo-Stoicism generally in Elizabethan England and second an examination of specific satires of Hall and Lodge to determine wherein they reflect neo-Stoic doctrine as modified by Christianity.

It has been said that the English have always had a taste for moral perfection. 1 Paradoxically, this taste for moral perfection was not destroyed or much altered by the introduction during the Renaissance of pagan ideas, ideals, and experiences. Rather, the renaissance of learning acted as a stimulus to the practical aspects of morals, ethics, and how to get on in life. Colet did not theorize about education; he established a school for boys. More did not deal in generalities; he told in detail how Utopia could be realized. Ascham, like Elyot before him, was not concerned with remote unattainable goals, but gave concrete advice on how to teach the humanist program. It should be reiterated that the humanist program in England

remained within the Christian framework. There was no attempt in England to establish a Platonic religion in the manner of the Florentine Academy. The English humanists did not intend that the pagan moralists whom they so much admired should supersede Christ and his Church. Instead they enlisted the pagan moralists on the side of the church in its fight against the world, the Flesh, and the Devil.

In literature the humanist program found itself buttressed from two sides. The humanist writers inherited on the one hand a strong moral tradition from their medieval forebears. On the other hand they were supported by a strong moralistic tradition from certain of the writers of antiquity. Cicero, for example, was immensely popular and highly influential in both the medieval period and in the Renaissance. Plutarch and Seneca rivaled him in influence during the Renaissance. The Horatian principle of the utile and the dulce gave free reign to the imaginative development of literature without sacrificing the utilitarian, moralistic aspects of literature. Sidney did much to proclaim these Horatian ideals in the late sixteenth century. Ben Jonson fostered and promoted them during the early seventeenth century. The poets and poetasters put these ideas into practice with varying degrees of success. Obviously in a writer like Shakespeare the artist outweighs the preacher, but in the wealth of didactic literature, including courtesy books, meditations, sermons, and so on, the didacticism was only thinly disguised, if it was disguised at all.

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In consequence of this enthusiasm for the moral and practical aspects of life and conduct, many writers of the late Renaissance in England felt drawn to the satiric genre because of its professed moral purpose. Especially in Persius and Juvenal, to whom the Renaissance English satirists were most attracted, there were ready at hand among the pagan authors the models for highly moralistic satires. In Juvenal especially there is constant emphasis on the moral mission of satire. The moralist tradition in satire more or less forces the satirist into the sometimes awkward position of posing as a superior being who has not only perceived the current widespread vices and follies of his age, but who has been sufficiently moved by conscience and moral sense to take an active responsibility for eliminating them.3

It has become somewhat commonplace for critics of Renaissance satire to disparage the product of the satirists of the period on ground that they are too dependent on their Roman models, that the vices and follies which they portray are exaggerated, and are more in keeping with degenerate Rome than upright England.4 This judgment may be held partially correct if we consider only the jaundiced vision of a malcontent such as Marston, or even Donne at times, but as for the majority of English satirists of the late Renaissance, and for Joseph Hall, Lodge and the others of the Christian-moralist

3 Randolph, p 2, 21(1942), 67.

school of satire, to hold that their satires are slavish imitations and the vices and foibles they attack are gross exaggerations is to seriously misrepresent the main emphasis of English formal verse satire. Although we find in the English satirists many attacks on the ubiquitous, and to us, hackneyed, vices of avarice, pride, gluttonny and so on, it would be a mistake to maintain that this is merely stereotyped criticism based on the Roman world picture. It is true that these vices have a universality in any attack on them in any age. That makes them, however, no less real to the age immediately concerned with them. The threat which the economic revolution during the late Elizabethan age raised over the established order was clearly seen by the moralists and satirists\(^5\), and they turned the full brunt of their attack on avarice, greed, usury, corrupt-lawyers, magistrates and bailiffs, against rack-renting, enclosures, nepotism and various sharp trade practices\(^6\) which seemed in their eyes to have

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\(^5\) Ibid., p. 42. The moralists were fighting a losing battle from the beginning. R. W. Tawney says, "If a philosophy of society is to be effective, it must be as mobile and realistic as the forces which it would control. The weakness of an attitude which met the onset of insurgent economic interests with a generalized appeal to traditional morality and an idealization of the past was only too obvious. Shocked, confused, thrown on to a helpless, if courageous and eloquent, defensive by changes even in the slowly moving world of agriculture, medieval social theory, to which the most representative minds of the English church still clung, found itself swept off its feet after the middle of the century by the swift rise of a commercial civilization, in which all traditional landmarks seemed one by one to be submerged." See Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York, 1926), p. 150.

\(^6\) Books IV and V of Hall's Viridomarum are particularly rich in allusion to contemporary economic ills.
come to absorb the major interests and energies of the "upstarts" and the *nouveaux riches*.

The satiric moralists of the late Elizabethan period were primarily concerned, as were all the moralists of the period, with combating and offering a solution to what they felt to be the degeneration of the morals and mores of the time and were interested too in offering an antidote to the wave of pessimism and disillusionment that began to engulf many minds at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. The man of the Renaissance was a doubter primarily to whom the classics had given new values of the world. Unlike the medieval man, when Renaissance man considered the discomforts of this life he was prone to question "why?" He was zealous to find the answer to the question "That shall man do?" In his searchings for the answers to these questions he soon reasoned that with reference to all action and policy there existed, if man could but discover it, an adequate and appropriate doctrine.

Many penetrating and influential thinkers, writers, and statesmen of the age found answers most acceptable to their heritage and religion in a new Stoicism which began to grow up in England during the last years of the sixteenth century. In the Stoic philosophy

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7 Don Cameron Allen, "The Degeneration of Man and Renaissance Pessimism, E P, 35(1938), 203.

8 Ibid., 205.

the hopelessness of man's position is no longer stressed. The comprehension of man's estate does not overwhelm a true Stoic. Prominent among the English Stoics was a small group of satirists who promulgated in their satires a Christian-Stoic attitude. The central theme of their work, as of all the Stoic writers in the period, is how to keep one's equilibrium in a world of upheaval.\(^\text{10}\)

The reason for the appeal that Stoicism had for many thinkers in the later Renaissance is not hard to determine. Gilbert Murray has summed up the appeal of Stoicism in any age: he says, "Stoicism fulfilled two main demands that man makes upon his religion: it gave him armour when the world was predominantly evil; it encouraged him forward when the world was predominantly good. It afforded guidance both for the saint and the public servant."\(^\text{11}\) In other words, in their search for the "good life" the Stoics were propelled by two predominant urges—that of outward striving and that of inward peace.

Stoic doctrine was not hard to come by in the Renaissance. Nor were the tenets of Stoic philosophy unfamiliar to Renaissance scholars and thinkers. Stoic thought had really entered England during the medieval period. Boethius was an important source of Stoic philosophy.\(^\text{12}\) Cicero, although professedly eclectic in his philosophy,

\(^{10}\) Allen, S P, 35(1938), 224.


is essentially Stoic. He was perhaps the most widely read of Latin
authors, known and respected by both the Schoolmen and Renaissance
scholars.\textsuperscript{13} Seneca, a representative Stoic, was known also to the
Schoolmen. In the Renaissance his moral teachings became widely
disseminated. Among the English satirists Joseph Hall was his pro-
fessed disciple.\textsuperscript{14} By 1590 much of Seneca, as well as Epictetus and
Plutarch, was in translation; in fact, all the principal ethical
translations of the period are mainly Stoic.\textsuperscript{15}

It should always be kept in mind that Stoic doctrine in English
thought was interfused with Christian doctrine and transmuted in Chris-
tian terms. The correspondence between Stoic doctrine and Christian
document is at times quite striking. Remarkable parallels have been
noted between Seneca and St. Paul, for example, and there are a number
of coincidences in thought and expression in Epictetus and the Gos-
pels.\textsuperscript{16} Up to the time of the dissemination of pagan ethical and
moral doctrine into western culture, ethics and morals had been
largely the domain of the Church. The body of Stoic works did some-
thing to lay the foundation for the secularization of ethics once
more, and later, of course, for the rationalization of religion.
The Deists, according to one commentator, were later to find the
foundation of their doctrine laid in Stoicism.\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} R. B. Lathrop, \textit{Translations from the Classics into English,
\item \textsuperscript{14} See the dedicatory letter to the Earl of Huntingdon pre-
faced to \textit{Heaven Upon Earth}.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Lathrop, \textit{Translations from the Classics}, p. 202.
\item \textsuperscript{16} R. W. Wenley, \textit{Stoicism and its Influence} (New York, 1927),
p. 114.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Lathrop, \textit{Translations from the Classics}, p. 206.
\end{itemize}
In Renaissance England, however, Stoicism remained essentially within the Christian orbit. The Christian Stoics borrowed what they felt inclined toward in the pagan moralists but retained their ultimate dependence in Christian faith.\footnote{Hall, for instance, speaks of having followed Seneca and of having "gone beyond him." He says of the pagan philosophers in general, "I have trod in their paths, but with an higher and wider step." See the dedicatory letter to Heaven Upon Earth and the "Premonition" prefacing Characters of Virtues and Vices.}

If Renaissance satire in the Christian-Stoic tradition is to be fully understood, the peculiar doctrines of Stoic philosophy which had widest appeal and which recur with varying degrees of frequency in the literature of the period and in formal satire in particular should be emphasized. The Roman Stoics had greatly altered the pantheism of the older Stoics, and with them Stoicism tended steadily toward theism. The Universe is constantly personalized, and the Deity is spoken of as Creator, Father, Guardian, and men are viewed as his sons.\footnote{William L. Davidson, \textit{The Stoic Creed} (Edinburgh, 1907), p. 59.} In addition, sin is set forth as disloyalty to an unseen Master, whose eye is ever upon us, who knows our every thought, and to whom we are responsible.\footnote{Ibid., p. 60.} It was noted that Seneca had said that a man ought to choose some good man \textit{Christ}, and always have him before his eyes, in order that man may live as if he watched us, and do everything as if he saw.\footnote{Ibid., p. 60.}

\cite{18, 19, 20, 21}
The missionary seal of the ancient Stoics was another characteristic of the philosophy which had a strong appeal for Renaissance neostoics. The corruption of the times often sent the Stoics forth as missionaries and moral preachers dedicated to a goal of reclaiming and reforming the world. 22

Another very important doctrine of Stoicism which lent itself readily to Christian belief, and in particular to the theory of satire, is that which maintains that the mind is capable of reform. The mind, according to the Stoics, is no inert thing which does not respond to impressions. It is instead active and responsible and capable of giving free assent to the material and impressions supplied it. 22 From this idea the importance of example in teaching took firm root. The idea of the "good man" to be emulated and the "bad man" to be condemned and avoided became commonplace. The Renaissance moralists adopted this idea wholeheartedly. There grew up, consequently, a whole literature based on the principle of precept illustrated by profuse and detailed example, with the satire and the "character" both employing this method.

The Stoic philosophers begin with the optimistic belief that life is worth living, that Good is desirable and is to be followed in all circumstances. 23 Goodness is acting in harmony with the will of God. God is in all except the actions of the "bad," who are bad of their

22 Davidson, The Stoic Creed, pp. 60-68, passim.
23 Ibid., p. 1/6.
own choosing and not because of external, mechanistic circumstance.\textsuperscript{24}

To the question, "What is virtue?" the Stoic answered, "Wisdom," or moral insight. Wisdom was the clear and consistent perception of what is good and what is evil and the deliberate accepting of one and rejecting of the other.\textsuperscript{25} Virtue is of absolute worth. There can be degrees only in things that have relative value. Virtue is the same under all circumstances and is to be sought for its own sake.\textsuperscript{26} This became an important doctrine to Renaissance satirists of the moralistic, Stoic persuasion. It is well to clear up a misconception about their satire. The neostoic satirists are often criticized and were criticized even in their own day,\textsuperscript{27} for their carping against seemingly trivial things. The answer to this criticism is that nothing reprehensible was trivial to the neostoic moralist. If there are not degrees in virtue, there are not, correspondingly, degrees in vice. All sins became of equal importance. The omission of the most trivial duty and the commission of the most noxious crime stood on the same level. As one critic has said, what now seems exaggerated concern with negligible folly was to the satirist a menace of social revolution.\textsuperscript{28} It is noteworthy in this respect that the correction of abuses can only come about through

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\textsuperscript{24} Murray, \textit{Stoic, Christian, and Humanist}, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{25} Davidson, \textit{The Stoic Creed}, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 154.
\textsuperscript{27} Marston's main objection to Hall's satires seems to have been that they ignored what he considered the major vices of the age and were devoted on the other hand to what Marston, not understanding Stoic relativity, considered insignificant follies. See Satire X in \textit{The Scourge of Villainy}, II. 9-38.
\textsuperscript{28} Campbell, \textit{Comical Satyr}, p. 43.
\end{flushright}
the ethical reform of individuals.

It is easy to see that so rigid a concept of virtue and vice leads inevitably to a fallacious narrowness. Nevertheless the doctrine was made use of considerably in classic and Renaissance literature, but it led to some stereotyped, two-dimensional figures even in the drama, and the same result is conspicuous in such minor genres as the satire and the "character," where the good were very, very good and the bad were horrid. W. L. Davidson explains the inevitable dilemma succinctly:

As a stick must be either straight or crooked, as a man must be either just or unjust and cannot be more just than just or more unjust than unjust. This carries with it the paradox that there are two, and only two, classes of men—the good and the bad, or, as the Stoics called them--'the wise' and 'the foolish.'

Almost inevitably, also, this doctrine was extended eventually to the point that the vast majority of men belonged to the class of the foolish.

As part of their ideas concerning "goodness" and how to achieve it, the Stoics conceived what might be termed a "doctrine of work."

A good man must do his work well or he ceases to be good. In order

29 In the drama the morality plays, by their very nature, lent themselves to this kind of two-dimensional characterization. Certain of the villains in the domestic tragedy of the period are prone to be blacker than reality would allow, as for instance the murderer Browne in A Warning for Fair Women. For other examples see W. H. Adams, English Domestic or Homiletic Tragedy (New York, 1943), especially chapters IV, VI, VII, and VIII. The penchant for fiendish, uncompromising villains is found, too, among the better dramatists—Lorenzo in Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy and Ferdinand and the Cardinal in Webster's The Duchess of Malfi, for instance.

30 Davidson, The Stoic Creed, p. 155.
to be good he must perform his function. What was really meant by performing one's function well was simply to perform it in accordance with "nature." The necessity of living in accordance with nature was an important doctrine to both the Cynic philosophers and to the Stoics, who borrowed it from the Cynics and modified it. It became an important doctrine in the Renaissance also and is especially prominent in pastoral and satiric writing. To the Cynic philosophers, living in accordance with nature involved what we now call primitivism, and they made a conscious effort to live a careful, frugal, even austere life, affecting coarse food and coarse dress, and eschewing all luxury. The Stoics ameliorated the harshness of the system to the point that living according to nature meant living in conformity to the course of the universe, for the universe is under the governance of reason, and man has the privilege of knowing or becoming acquainted with the world course and of conforming to it. This was true freedom of the will.

Closely connected to the concept of "nature" in both Cynic and Stoic thought was the belief that man, as nature made him, must have been perfect. There was then implicit in their philosophy the assumption of a fall of mankind from its pristine and natural excellence.

31 Murray, Stoic, Christian, and Humanist, p. 108.
33 Davidson, The Stoic Creed, p. 142.
34 Lovejoy and Boas, Primitivism and Related Ideas, p. 261.
We find consequently many references in pagan literature to the so-called "Golden Age" and subsequent "Iron Age" which replaced it. There was a concentrated effort, on the part of some individuals at least, to return to the former age of primeval excellence when goodness and justice ruled undisturbed, and there was constant exhortation by the moralists for mankind to return to this earlier age when all was right with the world. The convention of the "Golden Age," and it did become a literary convention, made a strong appeal to the Renaissance satirists. Some of them were quite sincere in their belief that somewhere years ago there was a better age from which there had been an increasingly precipitous decline. This does not mean that they necessarily believed in a sort of Greek pastoral idyl, but they often felt, as we shall see Joseph Hall did, that there was a time within the memory of man when justice reigned, when honor and duty were more than names, and when men played the masculine role with dignity.

According to Stoic philosophy there were four cardinal virtues, either mentioned in their taught by name, or implied through various traits. They were Prudence, Fortitude, Justice, and Temperance. Their opposite members were Fear, Discontent, Greed and Envy, and it is these that satire is most concerned with in view of the fact that in satire the negative picture far outweighs the positive. It is these opposites of the virtues which are, for the Stoic at any rate, the main cause of man's unquietness and unhappiness. It is perhaps

noteworthy that the Renaissance Stoic-satirists are far less concerned with the sins of lust and passion than are the melancholy satirists such as Donne or Marston. This can probably be attributed to the fact that for most Stoics the sins of desire are more heinous than the sins of passion. For passion, according to them, is an estrangement from reason and is often accompanied by a sense of pain and inward contrition. The sins of desire, on the other hand, are most often not separated from reason. They imply a feminine incontinence. Sinning, in other words, is more blameworthy when accompanied by pleasure.

In Stoic philosophy the main reason for man's unhappiness and dissatisfaction lies within him. Yet the most unhappy man often behaves as if he thought the state he is in is best to him. The main difficulty with most men is that they put their faith not in internals which matter most, but in externals such as wealth, ambition, honor, pleasure, all of which can only bring unhappiness in the form of fear, discontent, or one of the other principal hindrances to man's peace. Nothing external can really affect the Stoic. He does not develop an imaginary and false idea of the importance of such things as wealth and honor.

It has been noted that Stoic doctrine entered English thought throughout the medieval period. Cicero and Seneca were well known to the Schoolmen. It is true, nonetheless, that there was a greatly

36 Davidson, *The Stoic Creed*, p. 177.
38 Ibid., p. 19.
stimulated interest in Stoic thought during the Renaissance. In England there were translations of Plutarch and Seneca in the 1540's, of Epictetus in 1567. Before Stoicism was naturalized into English thought it had to become transformed into Christian doctrine. In France, Montaigne and Philippe de Morneay proceeded to write as Christian Stoics. Justus Lipsius in De Constantia pointed out the similarities between Stoicism and Christianity. Near the end of the sixteenth century in England Stoic philosophy began to have a prominent place in English philosophical thought and moral teaching. Bacon and Ben Jenson were affected by it. Sir John Davies exhibits much Stoic thought in Nocce Taipsum but goes beyond it finally into complete fideism. Certain aspects of the creed had a strong appeal for Fulke Greville: the insistence on self-knowledge and self-control, the insistence on virtue as an end in itself and as a means to happiness.

39 Ibid., p. 20.
40 Ibid., p. 20.
41 See Bacon's essays "Of Goodness and Goodness of Nature," "Of Riches," "Of Nature in War," "Of Vain Glory." Ben Jenson's Stoicism is more subtly disguised. He knew and admired many of the Stoic pagan writers—Cicero, Horace, Juvenal, Seneca. He was familiar with prominent Neo-Stoics, such as Lipsius. (See Helene W. Baum, The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy, pp. 30 ff.). The Stoic doctrine that Ben Jenson preached most consistently was that only a good man could be a good poet. This idea was inherent in all Jonson's critical dicta and is especially apparent in the sections of timber dealing with poets and poetry.

42 Compare "The Passions of Sense," "Reason, Understanding" in Nocce taipsum to "An Acclamation" in the same poem.
Sir William Cornwallis let himself be persuaded reluctantly to an admiration for the traditional Stoic fathers and to an acceptance of some of their precepts. He says,

"I have beene content thus farre to talk Stoically, a profession, I confess, contrary to my nature, who am easilie bent and wreted. . . . Some part of their doctrine strayeth from Christianity. But where it may be tolerated, a nature able to maintain the civil warres of his owne resistance and that findes a possibilitie of being at last victorious shall do well to persever; for there can be no life safe, which if not wholly the enemie of hope and feare, yet that borrowes not some rules from their precepts."

The dramatist George Chapman was strongly tinged with Stoic thought. It is particularly evident in the concept he maintains of the tragic hero. In both his poems and plays Chapman glorified truth and wisdom. He admires and attempts to portray the "Senecall man" who rules over his fears and passions and who has contempt for the buffetings and calamities of the world. His heroes, like all Stoic heroes, can successfully map their own course of action, for they know what must be done, and they endeavor to maintain control over any situation which confronts them.

Some of the more prominent of the Christian-Stoic moralists are to be found among the formal verse satirists. Thomas Lodge, for instance, was influenced by Seneca and in 1614 published an edition of

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45 A full treatment of Stoicism in Chapman is contained in John R. Nielsen's, George Chapman, The Effect of Stoicism Upon His Tragedies (New York, 1949).

his works. Perhaps the most thoroughgoing and systematic Stoic among English Renaissance thinkers was the "English Seneca," Joseph Hall. The remainder of this chapter will deal in some detail with Lodge and Hall as Stoic satirists.

II

In 1606 Joseph Hall published Heaven Upon Earth, a neo-stoic treatise in which he gave the most systematic expression up to that time to the philosophical precepts of the Stoics, but the document remained centered in Christianity. In the dedication to the Earl of Huntingdon he says, "I have undertaken a great task, to teach men how to be happy in this life: I have undertaken and performed it: wherein I have followed Seneca, and gone beyond him; followed him as a Philosopher, gone beyond him as a Christian, as a Divine." The treatise consists of some twenty-seven essays in the Senecan manner forming a single whole around a single thesis. In 1608 Hall published Characters of Virtues and Vices, a series of characters modeled on Theophrastus, which showed the philosophical ideas of the previous work in practical application. He acknowledges Seneca as his master again, but even at this late date he feels compelled to defend his heavy reliance on the pagan authors.

47 N. Burton Paradise, Thomas Lodge (New Haven, 1931), p. 169. There was a second edition in 1620.

48 Hall was first called the "English Seneca" by Thomas Fuller in 1662. See Hall, Heaven Upon Earth, ed. Kirk, Introduction, p. 64.

49 Ibid., p. 84.
It is no shame for us to learn of Heathens, neither is it material, in whose Schools we take out a good lesson: yes, it is more shame not to follow their good, than not to lead them better. As one therefore that in worthy examples hold imitation better than invention, I have trod in their paths, but with an higher & wider step.\textsuperscript{50}

In the "Premonition" to the Characters Hall gives evidence of his concept of what the function of the moral philosopher consists. It will be noted the function of the satirist is closely allied to these precepts.

The Divines of the old Heathens were their Morall Philosophers: these received the Acts of an imbred law, in the Sinai of Nature, and delivered them with many expositions to the multitudes: these were the Overseers of manners, Correctors of vices, Directors of lives, Doctors of vertue, which yet taught their people the body of their naturall Divinity.\textsuperscript{51}

Hall admired and sought in the Characters to emulate the moral philosophers who imparted their knowledge through "speaking pictures." He says, "Their papers were so many tables, their writings so many speaking pictures, or living images, whereby the ruder multitude might even by their sense learn to know vertue, and discern what to detest."\textsuperscript{52}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{50} Ibid., pp. 143-44.
\bibitem{51} Ibid., p. 143.
\bibitem{52} Ibid., p. 143. The whole question of Hall's Stoic-Christianity has been discussed fully by Philip A. Smith, "Bishop Hall, 'Our English Seneca,' " \textit{P.H.L.A} 63(1943), 1191-1204 and in Rudolph Kirk's recent edition of Hall's \textit{Heaven Upon Earth} and \textit{Characters of Virtue and Vice}, pp. 616. They demonstrate that Hall adopted Senecan ideas to Christian use. Audrey Chew in a more recent article, "Joseph Hall and Neo-Stoicism," \textit{P.H.L.A} 65(1950), 1130-1145, maintains that Hall cannot be called a Neo-Stoic in the later eighteenth century sense.
\end{thebibliography}
Although the companion pieces, Heaven Upon Earth and Characters of Virtue and Vice, give Hall's most systematically worked out presentation of Stoic precept and example, they are not his earliest works which show considerable Neostoic influence. One year before Heaven Upon Earth, in 1605, he published Meditations and Vows which exhibit much of the naturalised thought and style of Seneca. Something over five years earlier in 1597, 1598, and 1599 Hall had written and published his satires in six Books entitled Virgiliadearum, which show that even at that early date Hall was thoroughly familiar with Christian-Stoic doctrine and fitted the concepts of that philosophical viewpoint the purposes of satire.

Satire I of Book III of the "Toothless Satyres" is the most concentrated presentation of Stoic doctrine in Virgiliadearum and bears quoting at some length. The satire begins by giving an over-idealised picture of life in the "Golden Age." His portrait is derived largely from Seneca and, it will be noticed, gives the traditional Stoic view that this pristine society was hard, physically harsh, and morally pure.

Time was, and that was term'd the time of Gold, When world & time were young, that now are old. (When quiet Saturne sawald the mace of lead, And pride was yet unborne, and yet unbred,) Time was, that whiles the Autumns fall did last, Our hungry sires gap't for the falling mast Of the Dodonian oaks.

53 The first edition of "Tooth-leaze Satyres" came out in 1597 and was re-edited in 1598 and in 1602. The first edition of "Byting Satyres" came out in 1598 and was re-edited in 1599. See the bibliographical notes to Arnold Davenport's edition of Joseph Hall's Poems (Liverpool, 1949). All future references to Hall's poems will indicate this edition.
Could no unhusked Akorne leave the tree,
But there was challenge made where it might bee.
And if some nice and licorous appetite,
Desir'd more daintie dish of rare delite,
Till they had sated their delicious eyes:
Or search'd the hopefull thick's of hedgy-rowes,
For bryer-barryes, or hawes, or sourer sloes:

In this happy time the natural order of things was observed by all
with scrupulous nicety. Even the king and nobles paid strict regard
to order, duty and honor.

No Squire durst touch, the law would not afford,
Kept for the Court, and for the Kings owne bord.
Their royall Plate was clay, or wood, or stone:
The vulgar, save his hand, else had he none.

During this time, too, there was no greed; there were no unscrupulous
trade practices; there was no concern for the material things.

Great change came about at the entry into the world of riches, pride,
and greed. The whole natural order of the world and of society was
upset. Man even began to think of himself as a god.

But when by cereas humifrie and pains,
Men learn'd to bury the reviving graine:
And father Janus taught the new found vine,
Rise on the Elme, with many a friendly twine:
And base desire bad men to delven low,
For needlesse mettals: then gan mischief grow.

Then crept in Pride and peevish Covetise:
And men grew greedy, discordious and nice.

54 Hall, Poems, pp. 33-35, passim.
Now men, that earst maile-fellow was with beast,
Wore on to weene himselfe a God at least. 54

Hall professes to regret the passing of the day when our forefather's
words "savor of thriftie Leekes" and "manly Garlieke." He says fur­
ther,

Then men were men, but now the greater part
Bestes are in life, and women are in heart.
Good Saturne selfe, that homely Emperor,
In proudest pomps was not so clad of yore.
As is the undergromes of the Estlierie,
Husbanding it in work-day yoemanrie;
Lo the lowe state of those expired dates,
When the inspired Merlius word foresays:
When dunghill Peasants shall be dight as kings,
Then one confusion another brings;
Then farewell fairest age, the worlds best daies
Thriving in ill, as it in age decays. 54

Many other satires in Viridiesarius play upon the theme of the
primeval "golden age" and the subsequent decay of the present age.

Most prominent among these are Satire 6 of Book IV of the "Byting
Satyres" which begins

I note not how the world's degenerate,
That men or know, or like not their estate. 55

The young men affect feminine fashions; the young women affect mas­
culine ones. The sturdy Plough-man envies the opportunity of the ad­
venturous soldier of fortune.

The sturdiest Plough-man doth the soldier see,
All scarfed with pide colors to the knee,
Whom Indian pillage hath made fortunate,
And now he gins to loath his former state;
Now doth he wily scorne his kendall-greene,
And his patch't Cookes now despised beane.
Nor list he now go whistling to the Carrer,
But sells his teame and fetleth to the warre.

55 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
Oh happy Ploughman were thy weals well known;
Oh happy all estates except his own!55

In Satire 3 in Book V of the "Bying Satyres" the complaint against
the present Iron Age continues, but the satirist gets more specific,
attacking such current ills as enclosures and rack-renting.

And so our Grandfathers were in ages past
That let their lands lie all so widely waste,
That nothing was in pale or hedge ypres
Within some province or whole shires extent:
As Nature made the earth, so did it lie,
Save for the furrows of their husbandry:

... ...

Oh happy dales of olde Deucalion,
When one was Landlord of the world alone!
But now whose choler would not rise to yeeld
A paissant halfe-stakes of his new-mowne field
Whiles yet he may not for the treble price
Buy out the remnant of his royalties?56

From these more general satires on the decay of the age as com-
pared to the age of their forefathers, Hall turns often to more specific
satires designed to illustrate the effects of the sins of desire
(as distinguished from passion) on mankind. He is most severe on any
inordinate striving after wealth of various kinds, on various forms of
ambition and pride, both clerical and secular, on the "pleasures" —
gluttony, wine-bibbing: a too meticulous attention to dress and eti-
quette. When man places his faith in these externals above everything
else, it leads inevitably to greed, fear, uneasiness, and unhappiness
in general. In addition, material things are ephemeral. The harder
one works for them, the more they elude the grasp. They cannot be planned
for. There is no permanence in them. Satire 2, Book III, speaks out

56 Ibid., p. 84.
against pride of accomplishment and the futility of trying to preserve one's face in anything other than virtuous deeds.

Small honour can be got with gaudie grave;  
Nor it thy rotting name from death can save.  
The fayer tombe, the fowler is the name;  
The greater pompe procuring greater shame.  
Thy monument make thou thy living deeds,  
No other tombe then that, true vertue needs.  

Religious pride and ostentation is attacked in Satire 3, Book III, and in Satire 3, Book IV, pride of ancestry comes under attack, the implication in the motto being, "we were Trojans, but are no longer worthy of our ancestors." Real worth and virtue cannot be inherited but must be striven for by each generation.

Hall seems, more than any other Renaissance satirist, sensitive to the spectacle of greed and pursuit of material gain. His own reaction toward wealth and its associated evils was no doubt strengthened by his readings in Stoic philosophy, which taught that riches were not conducive to happiness, in fact, were the chief means to unhappiness and discontent. In his almost numberless attacks on wealth, usury, and ill-got gains he emphasizes that fear is the constant companion of Pecunia. In Satire 5, Book IV, Teculio, the usurer, through fear tries to buy his fame and salvation.

57 Ibid., p. 36.  
58 Ibid., p. 60.
Tocullio was a welthie usurer,
Such store of incomes had he every yeares,
By Bushels was he wont to met his coyne
As did the elde wife of Trimelion.
Could he doe more that finds an idle room,
For many hundred thousands on a toombe?
Or who reares up foure free-schoole in his age,
Of his old pillage, and damn'd surplusage?

He is especially bitter toward the upstart nouveaux riches, but warns
\[\text{in Satire 6, Book IV.}\] that they cannot be content with their ill-got gains.

\[\text{In connection with Hall's condemnation of crooked monetary prac-}\]
\[\text{tices, it is interesting to note several devastating attacks on the}\]
\[\text{law profession in the person of the crooked lawyer, Matho.}\]
\[\text{According to Stoic belief, Justice left the world forever when the Iron}\]
\[\text{Age began. In Satire 3, Book II he says,}\]

\[\text{Who doubts? The lawes fel down from heavens height}\]
\[\text{Like to some gliding sterre in winters night.}\]
\[\text{Then is the Scribe of God did long agone,}\]

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59 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
60 Ibid., p. 70.
61 These attacks are parallel to Donne's attacks on lawyers and justices in Satires 2 and 3.
Engrave them deeps in during Marble-stone
And cast them downe on this unruly clay,
That man might know to rule and to obey.
But now their characters deprav'd bin,
By them that would make gaiane of others sin.

... 

Woe to the weale where manie Lawyers bee,
For there is sure much store of maladie. 62

Lawyers are accused of taking advantage of careless and ignorant clients,
of accepting bribes, of perjury, of vexing wards and minors left to
their care, of forgery, of unscrupulous landlord practices, even of
writing bad poetry for the sake of flattery. 63

Hall shows considerable Stoic regard for learning. The second
satire of Book II is devoted to a lament for the state of learning in
general and the present hard lot of the scholar. As might be expected
of Hall, the classic scholar, he finds himself in complete sympathy
with the frugal but rewarding life of the scholar. In Satire 2, Book
III, the satirist says,

Fond fools, six featse shall serve for all thy stor:e,
And he that cares for most, shall finde no more.
We seorne that wealth should be the finall end,
Whereo the heavenly Muse her course doth bend;
And rather had be pale with learned cares
Then paunched with thy choyce of changed fares,
Or doth thy glory stand in outward glee,
A law-ear'd Asse with gold may trapped bee;
Or if in pleasures: live we as we may:
Let swinish Grill delight in dunghill clay. 64

63 The bulk of three satires is devoted to an attack on law-
yers: Satire 3, Book II; Satire 5, Book IV; Satire 1, Book V.
64 Ibid., p. 25.
Like the Stoic philosophers, though perhaps for different reasons, Hall was against divination, prognostication and what he calls "the damned mock-arts, and thou brainsick tale/of olde Astrology." Not only is it presumptuous for man to try to read God's will in fallacious rituals, but such activities lead only to fear and uneasiness rather than to tranquility.

So that the Vulgars count, for faire or foules,
For living or for dead, for sicke or whole;
His feare or hope, for plentie or for lags,
Hangs all upon his New-yeares Almanack.

In Satire 5 of Book IV Hall shows that he conforms to the Stoic belief that the non-virtuous man is physically repulsive. The virtuous man shines with an inward beauty. Everyone's character may be read in his face and his physiognomy. In speaking of Matho, the unscrupulous lawyer, he says,

Soone is his arrand red in his pale face,
Which beares dumb characters of every case,
So Cyned's dusky cheeks and fiery eye,
And hayre-less brow, tells where he last did lye;
So Matho doth bewray his guilty thought,
While his pale face doth say, his cause is nought.

And Gellis, the courtesan of Satire 1, Book VI, reveals her true

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65 Ibid., p. 29.
66 Ibid., p. 30.
67 According to Stoic belief only the wise, however ill-favored, are beautiful, for the lineaments of the soul are more beautiful than those of the body. Conversely, a wicked man will appear physically unattractive. See Henley, *Stoicism and Its Influence*, p. 97.
Or Gellia wore a velvet Mastic-patch
Upon her temples when no tooth did ache,
When Beauty was her Reume I soon espied,
Nor could her plaister cure her of her pride. 69

The whole of Book I and part of Book II of Hall's 
Virgiliasticum
are made up of satires directed against the literature of the period.
Following Marston's lead, 70 perhaps, many critics are prone to dismiss 
these pieces of literary criticism as ill-humored and unjustifiable 
criticism of the glories of Elizabethan literature. 71 Read in their 
proper light, they turn out to be one of the most thorough and sensi-
ble bodies of literary criticism to come out of the English 
Renaissance. They deal more concretely and specifically with the actual 
practice of writing in the Elizabethan period than many better-known 
pieces of Renaissance criticism. 72 There is implicit in all of Hall's 
literary satires a plea for restraint and an appeal to common sense 
and reason. It is the excesses of the current literature which Hall 
attacks most insistently. His attacks on such writers as Marlowe, 
Nashe, and Greene 73 indicate that he was in full accord with the Stoic

69 Ibid., p. 90.

70 Marston, for instance, was mistaken in thinking that Hall 
attacks Spenser or attacks religious poetry as such. See Marston's 
Satire 4 of Eros and Hall's Satire 4, Book I, and Satire 8, Book I.

71 George Saintsbury, A History of Elizabethan Literature 
"is the stale and commonplace impertinence with which their author, un-
like the best breed of young poets and men of letters, attempts to 
satirize his literary betters." See also Humbert Wolfe, Notes on Eng-

72 Sidney, for instance, has very little to say 
concerning contemporary literature.

73 Hall, Poems, Satire 3, p. 14; Satire 9, pp. 19-20.
doctrine, later adopted and fostered by Jonson, that only a good man could write good literature. The poet should be the teacher of mankind in morals and manners. Hall felt, as the pagan Stoics had earlier, that the license apparent in the literature was a reflection of the license of the age in general. The writers of the day appeared to be more interested in disturbing the tranquility of man and leading him further into excesses of one kind or another than they were in reforming him and teaching him the values of virtue and right-living. The infallible guide of the poet, in the last analysis, should be the reason. He urges them in Satire 4, Book I,

Painters and poets hold your ancient right;
Write what you wil, and write not what you might;
Their limits be their list, their reason will.74

These selected passages from Hall's satires and comments on the satires in general indicate that even at this early date in his career Hall was steeped in neostoic doctrine and had in fact made it a guiding principle in his conduct of life and in his attitudes toward the current ills of the age. If the principal reason d'etre of Hall's satires was a desire to emulate the classical satirists, certainly an important one, although perhaps secondary, was a desire on his part to check the moral and social decline of his age. He offered what was a positive and practical program for improving manners and morals based on a nicely balanced amalgam of Stoic and Christian precept liberally limned in concrete example. Hall's personal readings in the Stoic philosophers, particularly Seneca, who seems to have influenced him

74 Hall, *Sonn*, p. 16.
most, were augmented by his acquaintance with the Roman satirists, the most Stoic of which, Juvenal and Persius, served him as models of literary form.

Hall's satires are full of such well-known Stoic doctrines as the belief in a Golden Age and a subsequent decadent Iron Age, when Justice had fled the world and the natural order of the universe had become disturbed; the belief that happiness and tranquility are the result of living a virtuous life based on the proper relationship between reason and the will on one hand and the desires and passions on the other; the belief that putting one's trust in material and transient things is creating a set of false values which lead only to fear and discontent.

After the publication of his avowed Christian-Stoic works—The Meditations and Vows, Heaven Upon Earth, and the Characters of Virtues and Vices—Hall became known as "The English Seneca," the foremost exponent of Stoic moral doctrine of his age. No passage in these works, however, is more professedly Stoic than this passage from Satire 6, Book IV, in which the satirist speaks in his own voice:

Among all these sturs of discontented strife,
Oh let me lead an Academicke life,
To know much, and to thinkes we nothing know;
Nothing to have, yet thinkes we have enough,
In skill to want, and wanting seekes for more,
In want nor want nor wish for greater store;
Envy ye Monarchs with your proud excesses
At our low Sayle, and our hye Happinesse.75

75 Ibid., pp. 71-72.
Lodge's satires do not reveal him as so systematic a thinker as Hall, nor is his neo-Stoicism so obvious as Hall's. It is latent and implicit rather than exposed and explicit. The examination of Lodge's satires in this section reveals elements of neo-Stoic thought as well as orthodox Christian doctrine, and the satires indicate that Lodge is essentially a Christian moralist whose philosophy and theology was colored by neo-Stoicism long before Lodge's edition of Seneca in 1614, which placed him firmly in the front rank of early seventeenth century Stoic-moralists.

It is not easy to think of Thomas Lodge as either a moralist or a satirist. He lacked the dedication and high seriousness of the one and the wit and acerbity of the other. He did, however, write a series of satires which are among the earliest Elizabethan formal verse satires, and his work shows, the nearer he approached his conversion to Catholicism, a decided moralistic bent. He published *A Fig for Momus*, which contains four satires, in 1595, and promised that if they were well received, "the whole Centon of them, alreadie in my hands shall sodainly bee published." They were not well received. The volume saw only one edition, and the world was spared

76 The satires are actually misnumbered so as to indicate five satires; there is no second satire, however, and the numbers run in the Hunterian Club edition of Lodge's works 1, 3, 4, and 5.

77 Thomas Lodge, *The Works*, The Hunterian Club edition, (Glasgow, 1883), "A Fig for Momus." See "To the Gentlemen Readers," p. 6. All further citation of Lodge's poems will refer to this edition.
more satires like the original ones, which are on the whole dull, imitative, and unimaginative. Lodge professes to understand the conventions of satire. He says in his address to the readers: "In them (under the names of certaine Romaines) where I reprehend vice, I purposely wrong no man, but observe the lawes of that kind of poem: If any repine thereat, I am sure he is guiltie, because he bevarayeth himselfe."\(^78\)

Whatever else Lodge's satires lack, they demonstrate that he understood the moral purpose of satire and followed his classic models in expounding in them a prominent philosophical approach to life, in Lodge's case a Christian-Stoic approach. The satires themselves, as we shall see, contain considerable Stoic doctrine. One year after the satires, in 1596, Lodge published *Wits Alforo*, which was modeled on Theophrastus's *Characters*, among other things,\(^79\) and which depend largely on the Stoic fathers, especially Seneca, for many of the moral and ethical views presented in them. After retiring from the writing profession in 1596 to become a doctor, Lodge made only two major excursions into print. He published in 1614 the first complete English edition of the works of Seneca.\(^80\) He brought out a second edition of his Seneca in 1620. As the satires indicate Lodge had been strongly interested in Seneca and Stoic philosophy in general long before he published his edition. Three years before it appeared, he

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\(^78\) Ibid., p. 6.


\(^80\) Paradise, *Thomas Lodge*, p. 169.
wrote to Sir Thomas Edmondson, "When Seneca speakeoth good English, as I hope he shortly shall, I will send him over into France to attend your Honor." His biographers believe that his work on Seneca was a labor of love which occupied him for many years. In the prefixed epistle "To the Courteous Reader" Lodge explains why he was prompted to translate these moral works of a pagan author into English.

But seeing the worlds Lithargie so farre grown, that it is benumbed wholly with false appearance, I made choice of this author, whose life was a pattern of continence, whose doctrine a detection and correction of vanities, and whose death a certain instance of constancy. Would God Christians would endeavour to practise his good precepts, to reform their owne in seeing his errours, and perceiving so great light of learning from a Pagans pen, were at the true light of devotion and pietie, which becommeth Christians. Learne in him these good lessons, and commit them to memory, that to be truly virtuous is to be happy, to subdue passion is to be truly a man, to containe fortune is to conquer her, to foresee and unmaske miseries in their greatest terrors is to lessen them, to live well is to be virtuous, and to die well is the way to eternite."83

Satire 5 in A Fig for Moses is the most Stoic in attitude of Lodge's satires. It has to do with the futility of false aims and false values, and the fear and unrest which unavoidably accompany ambition and an ever-seasous concern with material things in life. Like most Stoics, and a good number of Christians, Lodge was attracted to the simple, rude but happy life, free from the vain pursuits of worldliness.

81 Tenney, Thomas Lodge, p. 180.
82 Ibid., p. 181.
83 Reprinted in Paradise, Thomas Lodge, p. 170.
An humble cot entappisid with moss,  
A lowly life that fears no sodaine losse;  
A mind that dreads no fall, nor craves no crowne;  
But makes his true-content, his best renowne.  
These are the choice contents, the goods, the gaine  
Which rightly can be ours: the rest are vaine.  

Too few people, he claims, can discern what is best for them, but are  
wracked by ambitions of one kind or another.  

In every form Gades to Ganges flood  
Too few they be that thinke upon their good;  
Too few that by discretion can discern  
What profit rightly doth themselves concerns.  
Behold ambitions true begotten source,  
Spent in desire before his hope be wonne,  
Striving for kingdoms which are sooner lost,  
Then kept, desir'd, then had, with mightie cost.  

Briefly, the greatest gifts whereof we boast  
Are those which doe attempt and tire us most.  

Although Lodge is no Skeptic, he does conform to the Stoic belief that  
the ambitious pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is evil and unsatisfying. He says,  

Behold a mind pressing beyond his might,  
Catching at stars censur'd by oversight,  
Like him that eger scales a mountaine steeps,  
And headlong falls into the valley deeps.  

Ranking with ambition as something to be avoided in the search  
for happiness and tranquility is covetousness. Satire 4 of A Fig  
for Nyes is addressed "to a deere friend lately given over to covetous- 

ness." Greed, he tells his friend, is unbecoming in any age but  

84 Lodge, Works, p. 51.  
85 Ibid., pp. 48-49.  
86 Ibid., p. 49.
particularly so in old age. At the time of life when one should be thinking of his good name and the grave, his friend has given himself over to niggardly, sharp practices, so that his friends are dismayed and the public whispers about him.

Briefly, they say that for the world thou art too wretched, and for God too false in heart. 87

Not only is his niggardliness a prejudice to his fame, but it does not succeed in bringing him the hoped-for peace and happiness. The satirist warns him of what his state may be:

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Marke me a miserable wretch,
Thu that lives by others loss, and subtle theft,
We is not only plagud with heavines,
For that which other happlie men possess,
But takes no taste of that himselfe partakes,
And sooner life, than miserie forsakes;
And what in most aboundance, he retaines
In seeming little, doth augment his pains;
His travaules, are suspitions baskt by fear,
His thoughts distraught incessant troubles leese,
He doubts the raine, for feare it raise a floyd
And beare away his houses, and his good,
He dreads his neighbours cattle as they passe,
For feare they stay and feed upon his grass,
He hides his treasures under locks and key,
Lest theves breaks in, and bears his bags away:
Onely unto himselfe, for whom he spares,
He gathers nothing but continual cares. 88
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Lodge's third satire supports the Stoic doctrine that virtue can be taught and that custom or usage gradually inclines one toward the right. Conversely, vices may be taught and usage gradually

87 Ibid., p. 49.

88 Lodge's play upon the word "miser" is worth noting here. The Latin miser - wretched, unfortunate - is the etymological parent of "miser" and "miserable".

89 Ibid., pp. 45-46.
immures one in a prison of his own building. In the teaching of either virtue or vice example is of prime importance. The young are particularly impressionable and should be carefully reared so that good example inclines them toward the virtuous life rather than bad example toward the unvirtuous life.

It is as common as unkind a fault
In youth, (too subject to this world's assault)
To imitate, admit, and daylie chuse,
Those errors, which their lawles parents use.
For what by vaire example youth conceaves,
The same for lawfull, daily be receaves.90

Human nature alone is not sufficient to resist the impulse toward evil, especially if evil example has been set. Custom helps, and sometimes special grace, yet example plays the largest role in the formation of character.

For nature, joyned with custom, never failes
But by her self, and in her helpe prevails:

... ... ...

Th' examples are more forcible and strict:
And though some natures, by especiall grace
Correct themselves, and give not follie place,
Yet leave the most part, to example so,
That what they like, they hardly can forgoe.

... ... ...

And what impressions we in youth retains
In age, our reason hardly will restraine.91

On the positive side, the satirist offers a concrete program for the inculcating of virtue and ethics in the young:

90 Ibid., p. 34.

91 Ibid., pp. 35-37, passim.
Satire 1 concerns itself principally with two Stoic themes: things are not what they seem, and no man insured in sin or folly will concede that his is not the happiest of estates. 93

Lodge's satires are too few to show to what extent he was under the influence of Stoic thought at the time of the publication of A Fig for Women. Perhaps if he had published his "Canton" he, rather than Hall, would have earned the name "our English Seneca." Lodge's satires do indicate, however, that he understood the classic function of satire as a vehicle for the dissemination of philosophical thought. His A Fig for Women shows also that he had come under the influence of neo-Stoic doctrine years before he culminated his stoic apprenticeship with the publication in 1614 of his edition of Seneca. It shows furthermore that Lodge was immersed in Christian-Stoic thought at least as early as Hall. A Fig for Women, however, was destined

92 Ibid., p. 96.

93 The Eclogues and Epistles in A Fig for Women contain considerable Stoic doctrine. As might be expected the Eclogues extol the primitive and rustic virtues. Stoic forethought is displayed in the speech by Felicinus in Eclogue 4.

I travaile in my soule, when thou doest sleepe
I for my countrie comite by fore-caet,
And how by day, the danger shall be past
By night I studie; thus by care I keepe
That hed-stong youth might loose, & loosing wepe.
to be still-born. The satires, perhaps fortunately, had no influence on the future development of the satiric genre. Their neo-Stoicism went unnoticed in the stream of Stoic thought which was beginning to swell on the Continent and in England in the late sixteenth century.

. . .

The evidence in this chapter further strengthens the contention that among the Elizabethan formal verse satirists, as well as among the classical satirists, formal verse satire was considered, along with other literary genres such as the epistle and the "character," to be a proper medium for the promulgation of current, popular philosophical and metaphysical doctrine. When neo-Stoic doctrine was adapted in the sixteenth century to conform to the principles of Christianity, one of the earliest manifestations of it in Elizabethan England was in the satires of Joseph Hall and Thomas Lodge.

It is customary to refer to Joseph Hall as "The English Seneca," largely because of his avowedly Stoic works, The Meditations and Vows, Heaven Upon Earth, and the Characters of Virtue and Vice. Years earlier than these works, however, Hall reflected in his satires a considerable amount of less systematic Stoic precept. Hall found in the combination of Stoic and Christian principles the surest check to the moral and social decline of his age. In his satires he offers a positive and practical program for the improvement of morals and manners.
While Lodge's satires are too few to enable us to reach any con-
crete conclusions about his neo-Stoicism, they do enable us to con-
clude that Lodge used his satires for the dissemination of some
neo-Stoic ideas in the gestation period of his Stoic development. It
may be concluded in the case of Lodge, as well as in the case of Hall,
that formal verse satire served him in the early days of his neo-
Stoic development as a popular vehicle for the diffusion of Christian-
Stoic principles. Hall was later to abandon it for the meditation
and the "character." Lodge was to culminate his neo-Stoic development
in a translation of Seneca.
CHAPTER V

BOURGEOIS AND HOMILATIC SATIRE

Early seventeenth century formal verse satire in England shows a decided change of tone from the philosophical and reflective excursions in satire of the prominent verse satirists of the late sixteenth century. The tone became instead more religious, more didactic, more hortatory, more homiletic. This change of tone was due in large part to the fact that formal verse satire was recognized for its value as an agent for instruction by a group of bourgeois satirists who confiscated the genre to use as the vehicle for the promulgation of conservative, middle-class ideals as to religion, politics, and conduct. Their satires maintain a semblance of the rigid outer framework characteristic of formal verse satire, but they revert in theme and technique to many of the practices characteristic of native English medieval satire. They are aimed clearly at an audience lower on the social scale and lower in education, if not intellect, than were the formal satires of earlier Elizabethan satirists such as Donne, Hall, and Marston. In the hands of bourgeois writers, satire becomes eminently more practical and down-to-earth rather than abstruse and speculative. There was really nothing to be speculative about. These conservative moralists knew exactly what position to uphold—that of sound, conservative Christianity. The Bible replaced the classics as a source book for
The conclusions in this chapter are based on a comprehensive study of the formal verse satires of the early seventeenth century. There was by actual count a greater body of formal verse satire produced in the early seventeenth century than at any previous time in English literature, although it must be admitted that much of it is of doubtful literary value. This comparatively large body of satire reveals a decided change in tone and focus from the reflective, philosophical satires of earlier Elizabethan formal verse satirists such as Donne, Lodge and Hall. Evidences of this change can be found in satire as early as 1600, but it does not become pronounced until the second decade of the seventeenth century, when satire was given

1 The satires and epigrams examined for the purpose of this chapter include the following: Edward Quilpin, Galatea, 1598; Nicholas Breton, Pasquil's Madcap, 1600; Pasquil's Foolscap, 1600; Pasquil's Mistrance, 1600; Pasquil's Fasque, 1600; The Whipping of the Satyr, 1601; Samuel Rowland, The Lettering of Humours Blood, 1600; Leake to It, for the Stables Ye, 1604; Humors Looking Glasses, 1608; A Foole's Bolt in Some Shots, 1614; the Knave series, 1609-1613; Richard Middleton, Epigrams and Satyres, 1608; John Davies of Hereford, The Scourge of Folly, 1610; George Wither, Abuse, Stript and Thift, 1613; William Goddard, A Mastiff Help, c. 1615; A Satyrical Dialogue, c. 1615; Henry Parrot, The House-Trap, 1606; R. C., The Tyme's Whistle, c. 1614; Robert Anton, The Philosopher's Satyr, 1616; Henry Fitzgeffrey, Certain Elaxies, 1617; Henry Hutton, Folly's Anatomie, 1619; Richard Brathwite, A Strappado for the Divall, 1615; Nature's Embassie, 1621; Tyme's Curtaine, 1621. This list includes almost all the formal verse satires mentioned in The Rise of Formal Verse Satire in England (Philadelphia, 1899), by R. W. Alden. For complete bibliographical information, see the Selected Bibliography.

2 The list produced in note 1 includes some twenty or more groups of satires. Previous to 1600 there were only four major group of satires—those of Donne, Lodge, Hall and Marston.
over almost exclusively to bourgeois, didactic, hortatory and utilitarian purposes. George Wither's satires are most representative of the new trend in formal verse satire in the early seventeenth century, and the main focus of this chapter is on his series of satires, "Abuses Stript and Whit," 1613, as typical of this trend. A host of poetasters contemporary with Wither also illustrate the new tone in their satires, some in more, some in less degree. These minor satires are cited in varying degrees of frequency to support the major thesis of this chapter.

The tendency for literature as a whole to cater more and more in the early seventeenth century to a new middle class audience is apparent in other genres as well as satire. This is especially true of the didactic genres closely associated with satire in aim and method, that is, the essay, "Character," conduct book, sermon and allied forms. Louis B. Wright has pointed out that in the seventeenth century, as bourgeois and Puritan influence grew, emphasis on the moral virtues grew stronger in the conduct books, and their appeal to the middle class increased. Their aim was to produce a godly man whose Christian character would be an example to others, one who should be intent on doing good to his fellow man. Another student of Elizabethan folkways, John E. Mason, demonstrates that according to the conduct books of the period virtue could be achieved, not only by praising good and condemning evil, but also by satirizing

the frailties of human nature. He points out further that the courtesy writers are often closely in touch with the satirists; in fact, he maintains that satire and character writing became a powerful influence on courtesy books. It is not, he says, always easy to draw the line which separates the courtesy book from the social essay, the satire, the character sketch, or even the sermon.  

Miss Mary Claire Randolph has noted the analogy between seventeenth century satire and the sermon. It is her belief that seventeenth century satire reveals its generic alliance with the underlying principles of the medieval sermon more strongly than the satire of any other period. She cites George Wither as the most significant of a cluster of satirists whose work is not so much a throw-back to the literary forms of the Middle Ages as it is a coming to light under favorable conditions of the strong medieval current in English satire. She states further that Italian (she might add classical) influence is almost negligible; while on the other hand the native or medieval, as well as the Celtic, tradition is considerable and lively.

That the average Elizabethan had an infinite capacity for moral literature is undeniable in the face of the mass of it which he seems to have absorbed. We sometimes find this didactic moralizing in areas where it is least to be expected. Henry W. Adams has done a thorough


study of didactic, bourgeois tendencies in tragedy from 1575 to 1642. His remarks on "the new tragedy of the common people" might apply just as well to the "new satire." He says:

The new tragedy of the common people . . . also dealt with the problem of evil. Questions of right and wrong in everyday life loomed large to the shopkeepers, artisans and other respectable citizens who made up a great part of the audience. . . . These people had an infinite capacity to stomach large doses of moral instruction. . . . They expected a discussion of the problems of life and death. As earnest Christians, they viewed death as a passage to the next world, either to rewards for virtue or to punishments for sin. They had absorbed from their preachers ideas about the methods of attaining salvation and avoiding damnation. . . . These dramas appealed to the same type of audience and to the same interests and prejudices as did the morality plays. . . . Their tales . . . served the same purpose as the examples of the sermons preached every Sunday in every parish church.6

It is an error to think that the zeal for religion and the insatiable taste for moral literature in Elizabethan England was limited to one segment of society or to one sect of religion. Certainly the petty satirists were not restricted to any one viewpoint. They include such diverse men as the author of Time's Whistle, a staunch Church of England man; George Wither, the moderate Puritan; Richard Brathwaite, the country squire. One thing at least, they had in common—a conservative viewpoint, ethically, politically and theologically. The doctrinaire quality of satire, it should be emphasized, was not unique. The tendency to be positive and doctrinaire was ubiquitous in almost all varieties of literature in the late Elizabethan period; and it was not limited entirely to one level of society or to one sect

of religion. Louis B. Wright sums up the situation in the following paragraph:

No phase of Elizabethan literary interest seems stranger today than the inordinate appetite of that age for 'good books.' The vast for collections of pious aphorisms, books of prayers and religious guidance, printed sermons, adaptations of the Psalms, and moralized allegories was limited only by the ability of the printers to pour out such works. Nor was the zeal for godly reading confined merely to a few Puritan fanatics; in every rank of society from the dissolute courtier to the ribald apprentice, pious books found their place. Whatever the personal conduct of the individual might be, he recognized that books teaching good morality were second only to the keys of salvation—that salvation toward which the whole creation moved. . . . An Elizabethan who would not buy one of the countless pathways to piety offered by the booksellers of St. Paul's was indeed but little better than one of the wicked.7

Douglas Bush points out that more than two-fifths of the books printed in England from 1480 to 1640 were religious, and that the percentage was still higher for the years 1600 to 1640.8 He maintains further that the appetite for counsels of piety and warnings against sin grew with the middle-class and Puritan public. It was, he says, an age in which there was a sincere and insatiable demand for devotional and hortatory works, an age in which there was an endless repetition and application of the central truths of faith and practice, which corresponded to and ran simultaneously with a re-expression of the commonplaces of ancient ethics.9

The formal verse satire of the early seventeenth century was a part of this great body of homiletic and hortatory material which has

7 Wright, Middle-Class Culture, p. 228.
9 Ibid., p. 295.
been noted by most historians of English literature. In devoting themselves exclusively to the cause of religion, the seventeenth century formal verse satirists deviated considerably from the practice of the earlier Elizabethan formal satirists such as Lodge, Marston, Hall, and Donne. The satires became less philosophical and less reflective. Yet, there could be no more conclusive example than that which we find in this satire of the early seventeenth century that formal verse satire in any age is the vehicle for the dissemination of popular philosophical, metaphysical and epistemological currents of thought. In other words, formal verse satire in any age remains the vehicle for popular philosophical ideas, but the ideas themselves may change. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to an examination of the principal religious and theological ideas found in representative satires of the early seventeenth century.

II

George Wither's satires, *Abuses Strictt and Whipt*, which appeared in 1613, form the basis for the study of seventeenth century satire, not only because he is perhaps the most competent of the satirists writing at that time, but because his satires are most representative of the type of formal verse satire then being written and because they usher in a period in which satire flourished anew after languishing for a period of some ten or twelve years. 10

10 Oscar J. Campbell, *Comicall Satyrie and Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida."
(San Marino, 1938), p. 3.
Abuses Strict and Writ is divided into two Books, the first containing sixteen satires, each of which is a castigation of one of the "passions" or "humours" of man which overpower man's reason and lead him into vice and wickedness. The whole Book is prefaced by a satire on man and his nature. Book II contains four much longer satires on vices particularly reprehensible to the Christian—vanity, inconstancy, weakness, and presumption. This Book ends with an epilogue on man. The whole group of satires thus begin and end with rather lengthy discourses on man and his nature. Miss Mary Claire Randolph has said, with some truth, that Wither sets his satires in a morality play framework. In a manner of speaking, the series does represent the ageless struggle of the Devil to possess man's soul.

In the Introduction Wither makes a gesture toward conforming to the formal call upon the muses to come to his aid in anatomizing man and his misdeeds. But Wither is not really interested in any classical muse. It soon becomes apparent that his real muse is God, or the Divine Spirit of inspiration. In the Præface to the second Book we find this prayer:

```plaintext
Thou that Createdst all things in a Week,
Great God (whose favour I do solely seek),
E'en thou by whose desired inspirations
I undertook to make these Observations;
Oh grant I pray, with thou hast daign'd to show
Thy servant that which thousands do not know,
That this my noting of mans hum'rous Passion
May works within me some good Alteration,
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12 The view is held by some that the cathartic effects of satire work on the satirist as well as on the reader. See David Worcester, The Art of Satire (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 138 ff.
And make me so for mine owne follies sorry,
That I may lead a life unto thy glory.

Moreover, now inspire my soule with Art,
And grant me thy assistance to impart
The rest of mens ill customes yet remaining,
And their vaine humours; that by my explaining,
They may perceive how odious I can make them,
Blushe at the reading, and at last forsake them,
Yea, let me muse in this, and things to come,
Sing to thy glory, Lord, or else be dumbs.13

In the Conclusion to Book I Wither shows that he is aware that his obvious and unadorned didacticism is a departure from what is commonly expected in satire, but he feels, at least in his own mind, that he is justified in this intensification of the didactic.

If any thinke I from my purpose swerve,
Cause my intent was chiefly to Observe,
And not to Teach: let them not blame he tho;
For who can see his friends lie sicke, and know
Which way to cure them? But you'll say my skill
Cannot instruct you: yet may my good will
Be worth accepting: and that howsoever
Is not to be rejected altogether.
For, I have seene when in a knowne disease,
Doctors with all their Art could give no ease
To their weake Patient; a poore Countrye Dame.
Hath with a home-made medicine cur'd the same:
And why not I, in thi3?14

One of the most striking characteristics of Wither's satires is the almost complete lack of classical or mythological allusion. Bible anecdote is the main source of the characters and examples used in

13 George Wither, Juvenilia. Poems contained in the collection which appeared in 1626 and 1633. Reprinted for the Spenser Society, (Manchester, 1871), vol. 9, pp. 187-188. All further citation from Wither's poems will be from this edition.

14 Ibid., p. 183.
these satires. The examples of this are many. Even the idiom is Biblical, it will be noted.

Yes, like to Jerobeam Priests we see
They of the lowest of the people be
And though we know the Israelites allow'd
God the first borne, for his: we are so proud.

Few think's Gods service worthy the bestowing
Their Childe upon it.15

Another example smacks of the home-made parable:

'Witnesse a certaine rich man; who of late
Much pittyng a Neighbours wofull state,
Put to his helping hand, and set him clear
From all his former misery and fears.
But when he saw that through his thrift and heed,
He had well cur'd again his former need,

•••

All his study's how
'To ruinate the poore man's state agains,
'And make (through Envy) his owne labour vaines.16

The satires often serve for the re-telling in more popular, down-to-earth form of Biblical story, often amounting to a versification of some familiar text. The satire "Of Man" has several instances of this type of writing.

Hee man was a Creature,
First made by God; just and upright by nature.
That in his likeness fram'd he was compounded
Of Soule and Body: that, this last, was founded
Of earth: the first, influs'd by inspiration.
And that, the finall cause of his creation,
Was to set forth the glory of his Maker;
And with him, to be made a joynt-partaker

15 Ibid., p. 310.
16 Ibid., p. 81.
17 Ibid., p. 50.
Of endless happiness. 17

Whatever man has been, says Withar, he is now

A reasonable living Creature, who,
Consisteth of a Soul and Body too.
His Body flesh and blood, to sins subjected,
And from his very birth therewith infected
Grows riper in uncleanness. Then his Soul,
A pure and lasting substance, is made foul
Through th'others filthiness, and much suppressed
By divers hurtful passions, which molest
And hinder her proceedings. 18

It is with these "hurtfull passions" that Withar is most concerned:

The minds is nothing but a mint of jarres,
Or little world of mad domesticque warres;
Vertue's depos'd thence, and Vice rule obtains;
Yes Vice from Vice there by succession reigns:

... ...

Fond Love, and Lust, Ambition, Enmitie,
Foolish compassion, Joy and Jealousie,
Fears, Hope, Despair, and Sadnesse, with the vice
Call'd Hate; Revenge, and greedy Avarice,
Choler and Cruelty:

... ...

These losing Reason, their true Prince, began
To breed disturbance in the heart of Man. 19

Each satire is devoted to a separate "passion." In each case the
passion is presented in an abstract, semi-allegorical character sketch.
These are liberally provided with all the accouterments dear to the
heart of the preacher and the moralist—example, sententias, and
above all, admonitions. These exhortations to the reader may break

17 Ibid., p. 50.
18 Ibid., pp. 51-52.
19 Ibid., pp. 53-54.
into the narrative at any time, but they are most conspicuous at the end of each satire. Each satire is, in fact, formally closed with an impassioned plea to the reader to mend his ways or suffer not only the pangs of conscience, but the danger of everlasting damnation. Satire 4 of Book I, "Of Envy," ends in the following exhortation:

But think, oh think; to know and shunne this evill. This watchlesse inspiration of the devill. Remember 'tis a knowne apparent foe To Charities; and friendships overthrow; A vicious humour, that with Hell acquaints, And hinders the Communion of Saints, Consider, that, and how it makes unable To be partaker of the holy Table. Doe so; Survey your selves; and if you finde Such guests within you, root them from your minde; Banish that gnawing Fury from your hart; And as One wisely counsels, Lay apart Dissembling, Envy, Slander, Malice, Guile. With Evill-speaking, as most bad and vile; In those men chiefly, whose Religion saith, Her manifest pillar, is true-love, next Faith.20

In Satire 4, Book II we see the role that conscience plays in discouraging vice.

Silly man take heed, Doe not before thy selfe an evill deed; For when God doth forgive, and can forget, Thine owne ill conscience will oppose and set Her selfe against thee, tell thee thine offending, And keeps thee backe from ever apprehending Grace or forgiveness; neither will afford The smallest comfort of the sacred word; But rather to thy sad remembrance call Each saying that may serve to prove thy fall; And though that fier wondrous tortures brings Unto the body, yet when Conscience stings,
Nor fire, nor sword, nor hell it selfe can yeeld
A worser torment.21

Hall, it appears a little later, can indeed yield "a worser torment."

Death takes men who do not forego "rash Presumption,"

And beares them (ere they can repent them) hence,
To such a place where nothing shall appears,
But all the ghastly objects of grimme feare.
Where every Sense shall severally sustains
The miserable smart of endless pains;
The tender feeling, shall in every part,
Be subject to th' intollerable smart
Of hellish flames, commixt with chilling cold;
Tortures beyond conceit; not to be told.22

However, Wither cannot resist the telling, and he launches into the
description of a chamber of horrors gruesome enough to dissuade the
blackest sinner. Following the description he addresses the reader
with almost sadistic pleasure.

Reader, if this doe no impression leave,
So that thou canst not any feare conceive
Through this description; thinkes upon't at night,
Seeme in thy bed, when earth's depriv'd of light;
I say at mid-night, when thou wak'st from sleepe,
And lonely darkness, doth in silence keepe
The grim fac't night.23

This note of gloom and pessimism is comparatively rare in Wither's
satires. They are on the whole optimistic and full of practical and
sound advice to the common man on how to get on in life. Man should
not, for instance, be too much concerned with his neighbors' affairs
to the neglect of his own. He says in Satire 1, Book 2,

22 Ibid., p. 322.
23 Ibid., p. 323.
Some free-born men I have observed too
Who are thought wise, yet very vainly doe.
These as if they lacke troubles of their own,
For other men are slaves and drudges grown.
I tax not such as honestly have stood
In the maintaining a poore neighbours good;
But rather those who are so out of measure
Emurde to be for other men at leisure,
That they can find almost no time to be
Employed about their own commodities. 24

The humanitarianism displayed by Wither and other seventeenth
century satirists has nothing to do with sentimental idealism. There
was nothing, they felt, so misguided as misplaced compassion, which
they felt often went contrary to God's wishes. In speaking of the overly-
sensitive man, Wither says,

But he I fear whose judgement is so slender,
Or hath a yielding heart so fondly tender
To stoop unto this Passion; neither spares
The laws of God nor man; but oft times dares
Pervert them both; supposing his intent
Shall free him from deserved punishment.
And though that God himself saies Kill, reply
With no alas! this pity he should die:

... ...

Certaine it is (and cannot be withstood,)
That Pity sometimes hurts the common good.

... ...

For seeme how 'twill, all pity is unfit,
Unless Gods laws and Mans doe warrant it. 25

Although Wither's sympathies are on the whole with the common
man, he is not blind to the faults of the commoner. In Satire 2 of

24 Ibid., p. 232. Cf. Piers Plowman, Passus VI and VII.

25 Ibid., pp. 159-60.
Book II, "Of Inconstancie," he lashes out at their fickleness,

... the vulgar are as rude,
A strange-inconstant-hare-brained multitude:
Boren to and fro with every idle Passion;
And by Opinion led beside all fashion.
For novelty they hunt, and to a Song,
Or idle tale they'll listen all day long.
Good things some try then and they ever try
To all reports how they may add alle;
Like that of Scoggins Crowes; and with them still
Customs hath borne most away, and ever will.26

In quoting passages of condemnation, we are apt to leave the
impression that Wither's program is one of resignation and negation.
Nothing could be more false. Wither, of all the Elizabethan satirists,
has the most lucid, practical, positive approach to offer his readers.
Furthermore, he is always careful to leave the final emphasis on
hope. In the conclusion to Book I he asks the question, "By what
means may men these Passions kill?" then proceeds to answer it.

Sure, not by the procuring of their will,
As some imagine. For, first it may be
A thing that's not in possibility
For them to reach unto. But say, it were,
Will the Ambitious-minded-man forbear
To be Ambitious, if he once fulfill
His longing thoughts? No, he will rather still
Increase the Passion which at first he had,
Or fall into some other that's as bad.
For, altering the Condition, or Estate,
The soules vexation doth no more abate,
Than changing rooms or beds doth ease his paines
That hath a fever; with, the Cause remains
Still in himselfe. But how and which way then
May these diseases be recur'd in men?
Why, by Philosophy, Counsel, and Reason:

26 Ibid., p. 254.
These being well apply'd in their due season,
May do much good.\(^{27}\)

He does not give the final answer to these questions until he reaches the Epilogues of Book II. The answer hinges on how we meet the snares placed in our way by the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

First, see if'd be thy flesh that moves thee to These things thou art so oft about to doe.
Next, to consider well it doth befove thee, What kinds of men they are that doe approve thee:

... ...
And sith to thrust thee forward unto evil,
Thou hast an ill Heart, proud Flesh, and the Devils,
With bad example; learn (oh man) to season
Thy heart with sacred thoughts, with truth and reason;
Thy flesh and labour, and with fasting, tame,
And 'twill not be so subject unto blame.
Prevent the Devils baits and his temptations
With earnest Prayers, and good Meditations:

... ...
Yea, sith thou art so subject unto sin,
Shun all occasions that may draw thee in.\(^{28}\)

Staunch Christian that he is, Neither places the final responsibility in the hands of God, who will surely accord man absolution by his Divine Grace if He sees that man is truly repentant and makes an earnest effort to correct his sinful condition. This sermon-like warning and exhortation closes the Epilogue to Book II.

So, when thy God shall see thou hast a will,
And truly dost desire to mend what's ill;
Hee will accept it (for his sonne deare sake)
And thee more willing, and more able make.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., p. 181.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 331.
Yea, should thy sinnès more red than Scarlet grow,
Yet, he would make them whiter than the Snows:
Thy now blacke Soule (wore it thrice more defil'd)
As innocent as is the new-born child:
And thy most miserable body, farre
More glorious, than is the brightest Starre. 29

The evidence presented from the satires of George Wither is
sufficient to demonstrate the change that appeared in the tone and
philosophical content of most formal verse satire in the early years
of the seventeenth century. Satire in the hands of Wither was made
to serve the purpose of Christian propaganda, and it reflects the
religious and theological tenets of the bourgeois Christian in those
years of increasing interest in things pertaining to religion and
conduct. Wither's was no isolated case. Other formal verse satirists
of the early seventeenth century reflect the same attitudes in
varying degrees. The last section of this chapter examines briefly
some of them.

III

A group of seven satires entitled The Times's Whistle by E. G., Gent.
appeared sometime between 1614 and 1616. 30 These satires are nothing
more than a series of sermons each taking for examination one of the
major vices against which Christians preach. They do not correspond
exactly to the Seven Deadly Sins, but the influence of the medieval

29 Ibid., p. 332.

30 For speculation as to the dating and authorship of this
poem, see the Introduction by J. B. Cooper to his edition of The Times's
Whistle, EETS, NS(1871), no. 48, ix-xvii.
parade of the Seven Deadly Sins is unquestionable. The satires are
directed against Atheism, hypocrisy, pride, avarice, gluttony, lust,
and the passions of the mind, these last being the same humours or "passions" which occupied Wither's attention.

The satirist tells us that he intends to direct his attack
first against the Atheists,

... to inveigh against those that doe committ
The greatest offences; whom I took to be
Our Atheists, which strive to root up the tree
of true religion; ... .
First, that this sinne might be from us remov'd;
Without the which, it were in vaine to take
Other offenses. 31

The satirist addresses his muse as Jove throughout the satires,
but it is obvious that he means God.

All that we are is his, from whom alone
We do all good derive, when every one
Moves by his power, lives by his permission,
And can do nothing of the prohibition
Of the Almighty doe oppugne; it lies
Only in him to end each enterprise.
These things concurring, I my selfe did sitt
To use the inchoation of my witte
First in his cause, by whose direction
I hope to bring the rest unto perfection. 32

Satire 1 directed against atheists and Sabbath-breakers is the
most elaborately worked out sermon and can serve to illustrate the
genral method in all these satires. He begins by addressing the
personified abstraction Atheos, accusing him of having been sent here

31 R. C., The Times' Whistle, ed. J. M. Cowper, BETS, NS(1871),
no. 48, p. 3.
32 Ibid., p. 3.
by the devil to cause a schism in the church. He next allows
Atheois to present his arguments for a natural religion, then pro-
ceeds to answer each point. The carefully constructed and systema-
tic nature of his arguments is well represented in the transition
passages from point to point. After settling, to his own satisfac-
tion, the question as to the existence of God, he shifts to the next.

Being once granted (this our true position)
Thar is a God; let's now make inquisition
What this God is; which must be by relation
Unto his works, or else by meer negation
Of what he is not, we may make collection
Of what he is.33

He then begins a long disquisition on the nature of God, the crea-
tion, the coming of Christ, the Bible and so on. This leads him
into an attack on the multiplication of sects and schisms, in which
he attacks first the Puritans, then the Catholics, and last the corrupt
Anglicans. Finally comes a long digression on Sabbath-breakers, in
which he relates in realistic fashion the many abuses of church-
goers such as sleeping in church and repairing to the ale-house after
the service. He ends the satire with the usual exhortation and warning.

Thus is man blowne, by every puffe of vanity,
From the true scope of Christianity,
His soules salvation. Wretched, wicked man,
Returns, repent! Thy life is but a spanne,
A breath, a bubble; think that thou must die
To live in joyes or endesse miserie.
And if the comfort of celestiall blisse,
Whose joy beyond imagination is,
Have not sufficient power to mollifie
Thy heart, heart hardened in iniquity,

33 Ibid., p. 7.
Yet let the horror of damnation,
Of whose strange paines no tongue can make relation,
Enforce repentance with a true contrition,
And that produce a forward disposition
To a new course of life; refuse not grace
While it is offered; while there's time and space
Dally not with repentance, least Jove convert
Of his contemned love;
And in that ire, justly conceived ire,
Confine thy soul to hell's tormenting fire.34

In 1621 a prolific English country squire, Richard Brathwaite,
published a series of satires entitled *Times Curtaine Drams, or
The Anatomy of Vanity*.35 It is divided into two Books, the first
containing six satires on riches, poverty, justice, injustice, fate,
and death, the second containing four satires on preparation, secur­
ity, courtship, and hospitality. These satires are little better
than sermons on these subjects, the most notable feature of which is
the increasing amount of sentiment and humanitarianism to be found
in them. In Satire 1 "Of Riches" in exposing the follies of rich
men he says,

These will not do as we in Scripture read,
That bids us on the waters throw our bread,
"For then be sure, how ere we seem to others,
"We would regard our poor distressed brothers,
And make his tears which his poor soul sends forth
As regisse when we produced our birth,
For 'las when we shall from this house of Clay,
Be clean dissolved, as we must one day;

34 Ibid., pp. 20-21.

35 He had published earlier satirical writings, *A Strappado for
the Dyell*, 1615, a miscellaneous collection of epigrams, eclogues,
emblems, odes, and a few satires, and *Nature's Embassy, or the Wild-Man's
Measures*, 1621, a series of some thirty satires each representing one of
the vices in the person of a mythological or historical character, each
preceded by a prose explanation.
How heavy will our doome at that time be,
That pitied not our Brothers penurie? 36

Brathwaite is full of comfort for those who suffer on this earth. Their rewards he maintains will come in Heaven. They should meanwhile bear up under their burdens with resignation. Virtue is the only thing that really counts in this life. This argument is his principal comfort for the poor. He says in Satire 2, "Of Poverty,"

It's true indeed that Virtue only gives Life to our Name, by which it only lives;
For outward States how glorious so ere,
Make us but honou'rd onely while we'r here,
For when the hour-glasse of our life is runne,
That admiration which we had is done,
And all that pompe and beautie of our day
By Sth of Fate is taken cleans away. 37

In discussing subjects which he feels may be beyond the intelligence of his reader Brathwaite has a habit of putting the argument into very homely idiom. In Satire 5, "Of Fate," instead of making use of the usual abstruse and complex arguments about fate, he reduces his arguments to a series of homely analogies. Each case is a 

reductio ad absurdum, but very effective for eliciting the proper response in his reader. 38

In an earlier group of satires by Brathwaite, A Strangemado for the Divell, 1615, there are few formal verse satires. In fact, the work is a strange miscellany of satires, epigrams, eclogues and


37 Ibid., Sig. C3v.

38 Ibid., Sig. D4, 5.
emblems, in some of which it is difficult to see the moral intent.\textsuperscript{39}

There is a group of formal verse satires at the end of this volume, however, remarkable in that they are addressed directly to various classes of bourgeois society, giving them advice on how to conduct themselves, and praising the various trades and professions much in the manner of Dekker and Deloney. The first of these is addressed "To the truly worthy, the Alderman of Kendall, and his brethren."

Near the beginning he cites the occasion for his addressing this satire to him.

\begin{quote}
I must be bold (affection makes me bold,)
To tell you of some errors uncontrol'd,
Which to your best discretion Ile reforme
Having full power to punish such as erre.\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

He then continues to enumerate a number of vices rampant in Kendall, the chief of which is idleness, which spawns too many idlers and knaves. He points out to the alderman

\begin{quote}
What punishments inflicted used to be
On such as could not give account what they
Did make profession of from day to day;
Yea such as could not (upon their demand
Expresse how they did live upon their hand;
I make no question (but by Pagans care,)
You that both Magistrates and Christians are,
Would see your townes . . .
By selfe-same censures to be some redrect.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

Brathwaite's condemnation is not really so harsh as it sounds here.

In the satire addressed "To the Cottoners" he tells how the troubles

\textsuperscript{39} See, for instance, "Frank's Anatomie," "The Wooer," and "A Satyre called the coni-borrowe."


\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 176.
of the poor affect him.

... yea I'm tied too,
In countries love to doe that which I does;
For even their teares, mones, and distressed state,
Have made me for them so compassionate,
That my soul yearned within me, but to heare,
Their mones despis'd, that were esteem'd so deare,
To their Creator, see their Image them;
And make resourse to him that gave it them,
Whose mansion is above the highest sphere,
And bottle up the smallest trickling teare,
Shed by the poorest soul.

In the satire "To Lands-lords" [sic] Brathwaite reminds them that they have a duty to their tenants and should refrain from the various sharp practices for which landlords have become infamous.

In taking of advantage, thinks on this,
If God advantage take for each amisse,
In what a case wert thou, how woe-begone,
That of a thousand cannot answer one?
If thou to grieve God's little ones begin,
Thinks thereon still, that thou art grieving him,
Who in his mercy hares [sic] the widows cry,
And in his pity wipes the Orphan's eye.

The satire addressed "To the Tenant" reminds that they have duties to the landlord as an occupant of his property, but the satire is designed chiefly to comfort the poor and make them satisfied with their lot.

He opens the satire in the following manner:

What state soever thou art seazed on,
Or in what tenure thou dost hold upon,
Il's now address my speech in brief to thee,
In part to rectifie what may seems ill,
In thy perverse and un-conformed will;

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42 Ibid., p. 195.
43 Ibid., p. 223.
44 Diligence and the avoidance of idleness by application to one's appointed task were the surest comforts, and were, in fact, often made moral issues upon which the soul's salvation depended. See Wright, Middle Class Culture, especially Chapter 6.
That in them both for th'love which I doe owe,
To him thou represents, I may so show,
That deare affection which we're bound to beare,
To one another while we sojourns heare,

... ...

It is better to be good, then to be great.
For then, as well it may be understood,
They onely shall be great that are found good.
But thou wilt ask, is there no comfort else?
Yes that there is, thy daily labour tells,
There's a reward of glory that's reserv'd,
For such as have their Maister duly serv'd,
In their vocation.45

A number of the satires in the late Elisabethan period make use of the prevailing medieval and Renaissance theories concerning the "humours" and the influence of the various heavenly bodies on them. One of the earliest of these was The Letting of Humours Blood in the Head-Yaines, published in 1600 by Samuel Rowlands.46 The first section of this volume is made up exclusively of epigrams. The second section contains seven satires, although for the most part they are only extended epigrams. These satires are predominantly medieval in outlook. The "Leaven grand Deville" who appear in Satire 7 are the same Seven Deadly Sins presented in Piers Plowman.47 The satires are also directed to a bourgeois audience and reflect the humanitarianism that was becoming apparent in the late Elisabethan period.


46 Rowlands wrote many other types of satires, but these are the only ones that can be called formal satires. All of his satirical works, however, reflect the reversion to medieval themes. The Knaves series, 1609-1613 and A Fool's Polt in Some Shott, 1614, belong in the tradition of "fool" literature. Look to It: for Ill Stabbe Is, 1604, and Humours Looking Glass, 1608, contain epigrams in the "humorous" vein.

An ingenious and rigid framework based on the connection between the days of the week and the corresponding astrological planets and the humours was employed by William Rankins in 1598 to enclose a group of lackluster satires setting forth in very abstract fashion a series of portraits depicting the characteristics appropriate to a particular planet and a particular humour. Their only importance lies in the fact that they undoubtedly influenced a later group of much more forceful and competent satires employing the same scheme—The Philosopher's Satyr, 1616, by Robert Anton. The first satire deals with Heaven itself and gives all the learned opinion on the nature of the heavens, quoting at length from Ptolemy, Pythagoras, Pliny, Scaliger, Aristotle, Aquinas, Anaxagoras, Theophrastus, and the Bible on the formation of the world. Each satire then is devoted to one of the planets and each is prefaced by an elaborate dedication to an appropriate member of royalty or the nobility. The Sunne, for instance, is dedicated to James, Jupiter to Prince Charles, Mars to Essex and so on. This scheme of dedication places the satires in the tradition of the conduct book and the various "mirrors" for princes and magistrates. In the satire "Of the Sunne" the satirist attempts to set forth the king's power, prerogatives and duties.

Princes and Oracles, from whom no cause,
Can be demanded, onely wills are lawes:

Yet were they Gods, and infinite to sense,
Untide to circles; or circumference
Of mortall limitation; being divine,
Yet there are some things that e'en them confine
From absolute freedom: as not to have a will,
To covet contradictions, or doe ill;
Both which, so stint the universall grace
To perfect actions: that it leaves no place
To unproportion'd freedoms: which in Kings,
Infinite in power, finite conditions bring.48

Satire 3 "Of Jupiter" gives sound advice to Prince Charles along with
unstinted praise.

Thinks what it is, great Prince, that makes you live
Greater, than you were born: when worth shall give
Unto your actions such a long-lived fame,
As to all ages shall enrowle your name:
And such is vertue, that can ne'er expire,
But like a Salamander lives in fire,
And fierce of the times, . . .
For 'tis not that great great title, that you weare
Of princely greatnes, and a future feares:
That can make you controller of the starrs;
Or write your name in endless characters
To all posterities: nor is it applause,
Or popularie, that can give cause,
To make you live forever: but in fine
'Tis vertue gives a Godhead, makes divine;

. . .

Actions crowne vertues, and like Pules proove,
Whether the soule of greatnesse sweetly moove
With Natures harmony: . . .
All this (sweet Prince) is to instruct your youth
Without equivocation to the truth.49

A few of the minor satirists of the late Elizabethan period show
the bourgeois and homiletic tendencies to a less degree. Henry Fitz-
geffrey, for instance, published in 1617 a collection of epigrams and
satires entitled Satyres and Satyrical Epigrams. They are largely
classical in form and subject-matter, but contain in the third book an
obvious bid for popularity in a theater-piece in the manner of Dekker,

48 Robert Anton, The Philosophers Satyres (London, 1616), Sig.
D 3 v. Microfilm of the Huntington Library copy.

49 Ibid., Sig. G 3r.
"Notes from Black-Fryars."

These seventeenth century formal verse satires by men with decided bourgeois tastes such as Wither, Brathwaite, and Rowlands are of questionable literary merit, but they serve to illustrate the fact that satire in every age reflects the predominant currents of thought in that age. Satire in the first and second decades of the seventeenth century tended to fall into the same pattern as the volumes of didactic literature which had as their purpose the instruction of society in the right ways of religion and conduct.

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50 Henry Fitzgeoffrey, Satyres and Satyricall Epigrams (London, 1617), Sig. E7r-8v. Microfilm of the copy in the British Museum.
In the late Elizabethan period in England, beginning approximately with the last decade of the sixteenth century, there began to flourish a literary genre which had been more or less neglected in England up to that time. This genre was formal verse satire. Elizabethan formal verse satire was an admitted "imitation" of Roman formal satire. It imitated Roman satire not only in form, structure, style and technique, but in content as well. The Elizabethan satirists recognized the ethical and moral value of satire and recognized also its value as an effective instrument for the inculcation of ideas and ideals. It was to them, as to the Romans, a utilitarian instrument.

Near the end of the sixteenth century there was in England a change in the intellectual climate. This change was brought about by a multifaceted attack on the verities and the status quo and showed itself most readily in the areas of experience which include the scientific, the political, the economic and the religious and metaphysical. The resulting uncertainty was accompanied by a sharp increase in the output of didactic and moral literature of one kind or another. Various solutions were offered by these writers to counteract the new forces. The satirists were an important group in the ranks of didactic writers. The satirists with whom this study
is concerned were for the most part moralists who found it expedient to make use of a classic genre which in times past had lent itself to criticism of the contemporary scene, and which at the same time offered the populace in palatable form the ideas and precepts of the predominant philosophy of the age. The Elizabethan age was the first age in English letters that was sophisticated and introspective enough to support formal verse satire. Formal verse satire was not the cause but simply another manifestation of the change in the intellectual milieu.

John Donne and John Marston are the only two major Elizabethan satirists who adopt the role of the malcontent in their satires, following the tradition of the outspoken Cynic street-preacher in order to be able to freely criticise the manners and morals of their fellow men. They found that the Cynic-Stoic tradition of malcontent-edness accorded with the prevailing beliefs on the humours, and they joined the many writers in the late years of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth who reflect the humours Theory in their writing. Within the framework of the melancholy humour Donne and Marston wrote satires which reflect many of the intellectual and philosophical currents of the late Elizabethan period. In Donne's satires can be found remnants of Catholicism, although his plea is for Christ's church more than for any one sect. Marston's satires reflect the orthodox Anglican views on theology and epistemology. Whatever their final position as to belief, it is clear that both Donne and Marston were aware of the philosophical tradition in formal verse satire and succeeded in adopting the genre
and adapting it to fit the modes of thought current in late Elizabethan England.

When neo-Stoic doctrine was adapted in the sixteenth century to conform to the principles of Christianity, one of the earliest manifestations of it in Elizabethan England was in the satires of Joseph Hall and Thomas Lodge. It is customary to refer to Joseph Hall as "The English Seneca," largely because of his avowedly Stoic works, The Meditations and Vows, Heaven Upon Earth, and the Characters of Virtue and Vices. Years earlier than these works, however, Hall reflected in his satires a considerable amount of less systematic stoic precept. Hall found in the combination of Stoic and Christian principles the surest check to the moral and social decline of the age. In his satires he offers a positive and practical program for the improvement of morals and manners.

While Lodge's satires are too few to be the basis for any concrete conclusions regarding his neo-Stoicism, they do enable us to conclude that Lodge used his satires for the dissemination of some neo-Stoic ideas in the incubation period of his Stoic development. It may be concluded in the case of Lodge, as well as in the case of Hall, that formal verse satire served him in the early days of his neo-Stoic development as a popular vehicle for the diffusion of Christian-Stoic principles. Hall was later to abandon it for the meditation, the "character" and the sermon. Lodge was to culminate his neo-Stoic development in a translation of the works of Seneca. An examination of the satires of these two moralists clearly reveals
that they considered formal verse satire, along with other didactic literary genres such as the epistle, the "character" and the conduct book, to be the proper medium for the promulgation of current, popular philosophical and metaphysical doctrine.

In the early seventeenth century formal verse satire was taken over by the bourgeois moralists who turned it into yet another branch of the mass of pointedly didactic, hortatory, and homiletic literature that poured from the presses in increasing abundance in the first few decades of the seventeenth century. Up to that time the writing of formal verse satire had always been undertaken by literate men who aimed it at a literate audience high on the social scale. The satirists of the early seventeenth century were often much less well-educated men who wrote satires which appealed to a bourgeois audience. With this change in audience came an increased emphasis on the didactic in satire.

Three major characteristics may be discerned in the formal verse satire of the early seventeenth century. First, it retained the form and framework of classical satire, but reverted in many of its themes and techniques to the native medieval English satire. Second, it was conservative in outlook and aimed at a middle-class audience, for the express purpose of giving practical advice as to manners, morals and religion. Third, the formal verse satire of the early seventeenth century represents a change in tone from the satire of the major satirists of the sixteenth century. It changed from the reflective, speculative, and philosophical tone as represented by the satires of Hall, Donne, Lodge, and Marston to the more didactic,
positive, and hortatory tone as represented in the satires of such poets as Wither, Howlands and Brathwaite.

Formal verse satire did not survive this change. The genre soon played itself out in the religious bickerings of the mid-seventeenth century to re-emerge during the Restoration and eighteenth century as the vehicle for a new philosophy. While Elizabethan formal verse satire represents a relatively unimportant form of literary expression when compared to the glories of Elizabethan literature as a whole, it cannot be dismissed as negligible or ineffective. If we view Elizabethan formal verse satire in its proper relationship as a product of the milieu to which it belongs, we find that it was as much an outgrowth of the intellectual environment of its time as was eighteenth century satire of its time. Elizabethan formal verse satire has long been overlooked as one of the prime manifestations of a serious undercurrent that was never far below the surface in an age which too many consider frivolous, if not naive.
THE PHILOSOPHICAL MILIEU OF ELIZABETHAN FORMAL VERSIC SATIRE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The Department of English

by
Sam H. Henderson
B. S. Davidson College, 1943
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August, 1952
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Major Field:  English

Title of Thesis:  The Philosophical Milieu of Elizabethan Formal Verse Satire

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Date of Examination:  July 31, 1952

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