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*THE EVOLUTION OF SATYR DUALITY IN
JOHN MARSTON'S DRAMA*

by

James Omer Taylor

A THESIS

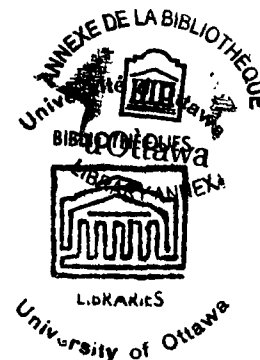
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The Satyr
copied by hand from the frontispiece to The Scourge by George Wither 1615.

CONTENTS

	Page
CURRICULUM VITAE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I <i>The Satyr in a Dramatic Context</i>	
<u>Histrion-Mastix</u>	59
<u>Jacke Drum's Entertainment</u>	77
CHAPTER II <i>Satyr Tension in Transition Plays</i>	
<u>Antonio and Mellida</u>	94
<u>What You Will</u>	125
CHAPTER III <i>The Satyr in the Revenge Play</i>	
<u>Antonio's Revenge</u>	151
CHAPTER IV <i>The Satyr Mask</i>	
<u>The Malcontent</u>	176
<u>The Dutch Courtezan</u>	192
<u>The Fawn</u>	222
CHAPTER V <i>The Satyr Faces in Tragedy</i>	
<u>Sophonisba</u>	247
CONCLUSION	316
BIBLIOGRAPHY	322

CURRICULUM VITAE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the satyr convention in relation to Marston's dramatic development. The understanding of this convention is arrived at through an examination of a special character type in Marston's plays who functions as a critic and satirist. In all of Marston's plays this satirist appears to have a split personality. He is either an indignant righteous scourge of vice or a perverse voyeur who takes ghoulish delight in dwelling on the very evil he scourges.

In Histrion-Mastix, by presenting the satirist as a hypocrite, Marston utilizes this duality in the simplest way possible. In subsequent plays, however, the duality of the satirist becomes the basis for the development of a complex character who synthesizes the two extreme moral positions ever present in Marston's works, positions that view man's nature as being either exclusively angelic or exclusively bestial.

Jacke Drum was Marston's first attempt to overcome certain practical problems that arose from the satirist's duality. Marston continues to experiment with the dramatic potential inherent in this conventional type in Antonio and Mellida. And in his next play, What You Will, Marston successfully presents the satirist in a dramatic context in

which he contributes to the atmosphere of decadence. In the second part of Antonio and Mellida, Antonio's Revenge, the revengers' fascination with attacking evil taints them as it taints all satirists. In short, the convention plays an important part in censuring the blood code.

The Malcontent marks a new stage in Marston's use of the convention. By expressing the odious side of his personality in terms of a disguise, Marston uses the satirist to present a poetic vision that was more positive and optimistic than was previously possible. In The Dutch Courtezan and The Fawn, Marston continues to use the disguise element in a similar manner with the result that the satirist finally arrives at a more balanced view of man's bestial and angelic nature.

In Sophonisba, Marston's last complete play, no one character can be seen as a satirist inasmuch as the single-minded characters are very one-sided. Yet the influence of the convention is present. The protagonists represent in isolation the two faces of this conventional type. An awareness of this separation of the two faces of the satirist is central to an understanding of Marston's conception of tragedy.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is concerned with a conventional character type and its relationship to the overall structure and development of the plays of John Marston. It is clearly recognizable as a type with certain characteristic features. A general description of the type and his role in the play would be as follows: he is frequently the protagonist; if he is not the central figure, he nevertheless manages to manipulate a large number of persons in the play — and usually they are manipulated so that they become aware of their own stupidity.

The personality of this type is very often complex. The type is a self-righteous railer and is constantly attacking specific and general vices in a language that is characteristically violent and forceful. He sees himself as a scourge of villainy and uses metaphors that describe his self-appointed task in terms of a whipper. He wants to rid the world of corruption, but he tells us little of the joys of the new kind of society that would apparently exist if everyone were purged of his vileness. His motivation as a scourge is not always clear, but there is never any question about the compulsive nature of his urge to reform. But, paradoxically, this type exhibits simultaneously another side of his personality which is not

always so obvious but nevertheless is invariably present. He is fascinated with the very vice that he attacks and in most cases the vice attacked is lust. He dwells on his description of perversity. He delights in bearing to a lover the ill tidings that his or her beloved has been unfaithful; he relishes describing at length the details of adultery or fornication to the cuckold.

When this dark side of his nature comes to the fore it is usually easy to discern that he is motivated by envy. Sometimes he acknowledges this envy within himself, and at other times, although not acknowledged as such, his envy takes the form of bitter disillusionment. In short, he is tainted by the very vice he scourges. This type is not entirely peculiar to Marston, although he employs it more frequently and more uniquely than any other dramatist. Moreover, it was used in formal verse satire before the ban in 1599 and was later (probably as a result of the ban) adapted so that the impulse to satire could find outlet in drama. The transfer of this convention — called a convention in that it is a consistent recurring type — from formal verse satire to drama was the main problem that Marston had to overcome. The various dramatic innovations and devices used to overcome this problem will be one of the central concerns of this dissertation. I will also attempt to show that the convention becomes a device that is the matrix for Marston's world view and, from a more practical perspective, it determines the dramatic movement in his plays.

From the outset, the extent of my debt to and dependence on two particular works should be clearly acknowledged. Alvin Kernan's book, The Cankered Muse,¹ and his dissertation, "John Marston's Concept and Use of Satire, Formal and Dramatic,"² are the works that provide the context for my examination of Marston's plays. They are the only studies parallel to mine. However, my dissertation differs very significantly in focus and approach, and, as a result, my interpretation of seven of the nine plays leads to different conclusions. The other two, Histrion-Mastix and The Malcontent, while more directly dependent on Kernan's ideas, differ in emphasis.

In The Cankered Muse, which is an expansion and further development of his dissertation, Kernan posits a critical theory that

. . . originally derived from an attempt to understand one part of English Renaissance satire, the plays of John Marston. This in turn led on to an examination of the Elizabethan conventions and theories of nondramatic satire.³

For Kernan, the character type described above is a convention that naturally grows out of the satiric genre. The scourge of villainy with his dual personality is a persona, a literary device used by many satirists from classical times to the present, and it is a mistake to equate the character with the

¹ Alvin Kernan, The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance (New Haven: 1959).

² Alvin Kernan, "John Marston's Concept and Use of Satire, Formal and Dramatic" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1954).

³ Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. vii.

author; it is a persona in its own right.

This persona manifests itself in two ways: there is a public face and a private face. The public face is essentially Juvenalian in that we see the satirist as a man filled with savage indignation, railing compulsively against the sins of the world. This compulsiveness, however, often enables us to see the less obvious private self which is characterized by the apparent perverse delight taken in the evil which is attacked. The important point is that these two facets of the persona have nothing to do with the author himself. Rather they are elements in a convention that is inherent in the satiric genre. Failure to understand this duality as a convention can lead one down the very dangerous road of biographical criticism and to charges that the author was insincere or suffering from some mental aberration or disorder. Such speculation gets us nowhere.

Kernan's understanding of the convention is broad and he applies it to all Elizabethan satire. My use of the term "satyr convention" is limited to the plays of Marston and is based on internal evidence which shows that this apparently contradictory character appears in all of Marston's plays. My reading of the plays, therefore, is in some instances supported by Kernan's theory, but it is not dependent on it.

My understanding of the convention is based on internal evidence; however, it is abundantly clear that the type was used by other writers of the period and was a direct

outgrowth of the Renaissance critical theory on satire. The purpose of the following discussion is to show that, from the pronouncements of the critics and the obvious attempts of certain poets to follow their dictates, there existed a very distinct picture of the satyr type. It is hoped that this rather simplified picture of the dual nature of the satyr will be viewed as an archetype for the more complex satyr type that appears in Marston's plays.

Although the critics of the Renaissance tended to treat satire as a lesser form than comic, tragic and epic poetry, nonetheless the satirists of the period were supported by a substantial body of critical theory and were careful not to contravene any of its basic tenets. The most significant of this theory can be found in the writings of Polydore Virgil, Thomas Lodge, and George Puttenham, all of whom drew some of their conclusions at least from the work of Aelius Donatus, although only Lodge specifically acknowledges this debt. Donatus, a grammarian writing in the fourth century, treated the origin of satire in his essay on the development of comedy and tragedy; and since this essay formed the preface of nearly every edition of Terence published at the time its contents became a part of every educated person's fund of knowledge.

Donatus claims that satyra was a new form of corrective writing introduced as a result of the prohibition placed on the writers of Old Comedy who had outrageously abused their literary freedom with their vicious and forthright attacks on

the citizenry. The satyr play was promptly devised in which actors assumed the disguise of these shaggy woodland deities and continued to attack the folly and vice of their society. Satyra took its name from the satyr, and since everyone accepted these creatures as lewd, coarse, and lascivious, the attacks could be delivered with impunity in coarse and lascivious language. Eventually, however, Satyra also proved too offensive for the citizenry and its authors were silenced as well. But the impulse to rebuke and revile the sins of the world proved too strong, and soon a new means of expression was devised under the name of New Comedy. This new form differed from its predecessors in that its tone was less vile and no wrong doer could be denounced by name.⁴

It is evident then that for Donatus Old Comedy, Satyra and New Comedy were simply related forms of corrective writing descending in direct line one from the other according to the dictates of social and political necessities. What is more important is that for Donatus and hence for the Elizabethans satire was directly related to the utterances of satyrs, and as such only a rough crude style was suitable for such rough crude creatures if the rule of decorum was to be observed.

All this is not to say that no one in Elizabethan England toyed with the notion of alternate derivations for the word. As Kernan has pointed out, Thomas Drant in the

⁴ See C.A. VanRooy, Studies in Classical Satire and Related Literary Theory (1963, rpt., Leiden: 1966), pp. 159, 168, et passim; also O.J. Campbell, Comical Satire and Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida (San Marino, California: 1970), p. 25, n. 16.

poem prefixed to his translation of Horace suggested four possibilities. This poem entitled Priscus Grammaticus de Satyra offers first a derivation from Arabic:⁵

And for as much as pynching instruments do perce
Yclept it was full well a Satyre then
A name of Arabique to it they gave
For Satyre there doth signifye a glave. (3-6).

The second possibility has to do with the woodland deity:

Or Satyra, of Satyrus, the mossy rude
Uncivile god: for those that will them write. (7-8).

The third makes reference to the planet Saturn (a reference with which I will deal in more depth later).

Satyre of writhled waspyshe Saturne may be namde
The Satyrist must be a waspe in moode,

.

As Saturne cuttes of tyme with equall sythe
So this man cuttes down synne (13-18).

The final possibility offered is a reference to the Latin Satur meaning full:

Or Satyra of Satur, th' authors must be full. (19).

Of these four, however, the one most firmly fixed in the Elizabethan mind was the association with the satyr, and if the other three were considered seriously at all, they would tend to support the Elizabethan belief that satire should be rough and bitter. And so on the basis of this together with their knowledge of classical satire the Elizabethans developed their critical theory.

⁵ Thomas Drant, trans., Horace His Arte of Poetry, Pistles and Satyre Englished (London: 1567). See also Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 55.

O.J. Campbell cites Polydore Virgil's account of the function and origin of satire as providing a simple outline of the beliefs prevalent at the time:

The Satires had their name of uplandishe Goddes that were rude, lassivious and wanton of behavior.

There bee twoo kyndes of Satyres, the one is both among the Grekes and Romanes of auncient tyme used, for the diversitie of Meters, muche like a Comody, savyng that it is more wanton. . . . The second maner of Satires is very railyng onely ordeined to rebuke vice, and devised of the Romaines, upon this occasion. When the Poetes, that wrote the olde Comodies, used to handle for their argumentes, not onely fained matters, but also thynges dooen in deede, whiche although at the firste, it was tollerable, yet afterwarde, it fortun'd by reason that thei inveighed so liberally & largely, at their pleasure, against every man that there was a law made, that no man should from thencefurthe reprehend any man by name. Then the Romaines in the place of those Comodies, substituted suche Satires, as thei had newly imagined.⁶

This passage from Virgil reiterates the view of Donatus in that both claim a direct relationship between satire and the satyr and both see satire and Old and New Comedy as allied forms of corrective writing. That these beliefs were prevalent is evident from the writings of both Thomas Lodge and George Puttenham.

Lodge, in his 1579 treatise entitled Defense of Poetry, claims tragedy to be the archetypal literary form arising naturally from the prayers and rites surrounding the sacrificial offerings of primitive people giving thanks for a plentiful harvest. But as people became more sophisticated they left this form and

invented an other, in the which they altered the nature but not the name; for, for sonnets in prayse of the gods, they did set forth the sower fortune of many exiles, the miserable fall of haples princes, the ruinous decay of many countryes; yet not content with this, they presented the lives of Satyers, so that they might wiselye, vnder the abuse of that name, discover the follies of many theyr folish fellow cutesens. And those monsters were then as our parasites are now adayes: suche as with pleasure reprehended abuse.

Two things are worth noting here besides the interesting explanation of the origin of tragedy. Lodge, writing in 1579, twenty years before the ban on formal verse Satire, claims that the ancients presented "the lives of Satyrs." Now if we recall the kind of creature the satyr was imagined to be, we have reason to blush at what the Elizabethans may have imagined the ancients presented. More interesting is the description of their mission. They were "monsters" who "with pleasure reprehended abuse." Here we have the first mention of the apparent delight or fascination with vice that was to become characteristic of the satires at the end of the century. Implied here is a delight in either the attack itself, a delight in the vice being attacked, or delight in both. The satyr as utilized by Marston exhibits both.

Puttenham, writing in 1589, also begins his discussion with the widely accepted theory that literature originated in man's desire to pay homage to his gods. It later took on

⁷ Thomas Lodge, Defense of Poetry in Elizabethan Critical Essays, ed. G. Gregory Smith (1904: rpt. London: 1950), I, 80.

the task of rebuking the folly and vice of the populace, and since people had no large meeting halls, the moral guardians of old seized the opportunity provided by prayer gatherings to chasten and rebuke their vices. However, such a direct form of preaching proved not so efficacious as it might be because it made

. . . the people
ashamed rather than afeard, the said auncient
Poets vsed for that purpose three kinds of poems
reprehensiuie, to wit, the Satyre, the Comedie,
and the Tragedie. And the first and most bitter
inuectiue against vice and vicious men was the
Satyre: which, to th' intent their bitternessse
should breede none ill will, either to the Poets,
or to the recitours (which could not haue bene
chosen if they had bene openly knowen), and be-
sides to make their admonitions and reproofs
seeme grauer and of more efficacie, they made
wise as if the gods of the woods, whom they
called Satyres or Siluanes, should appeare and
recite those verses of rebuke, whereas in deede
they were but disguised persons vnder the shape
of Satyres, as who would say, these terrene and
base gods, being conuersant with mans affaires,
and spiers out of all their secret faults,
had some great care ouer man, & desired by good
admonitions to reforme the euill of their life,
and to bring the bad to amendment by those
kinde of preachings; whereupon the Poets inuen-
tours of the deuise were called Satyristes.⁸

It is clear from what Puttenham writes that he saw satire as preceding both tragedy and comedy. It is also clear that for him the satyr disguise was used from the outset, and not only did it protect the actors from being identified and later abused, it also added gravity and weight to their utterances.

⁸ George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesy in Elizabethan Critical Essays, II, 32-33.

The Satyrs are further identified as "spiers" out of vice, again hinting at a fascination with vice. For Puttenham Old Comedy was simply a more effective form of rebuke which replaced satire much as satire had replaced the direct criticism of the ancient sages. It differed from satire in that dramatic scenes were actually presented and many different actors participated. However, it retained the bitter invective, openness of attack, and disguise that had been characteristic of satire. Indeed it was the openness of attack in Old Comedy which eventually caused its prohibition and replacement by New Comedy, for the actors were:

. . .openly & by expresse names taxing men more maliciously and impudently than became, so as they were enforced for feare of quarell & blame to disguise their players with strange apparell, and by colouring their faces and carying hattts & capps or diuerse fashions to make them selues lesse knowen. But as time & experience do reforme euery thing that is amisse, so, this bitter poeme called the old Comedy being disused and taken away, the new Comedy came in place, more ciuill and pleasant a great deale, and not touching any man by name,⁹

To briefly outline Puttenham's contribution to the Elizabethan understanding of satire: it was for him the first of the literary forms preceding both comedy and tragedy; it utilized actors disguised as satyrs; its purpose was to rebuke and correct the vices of simple men; its tone was harsh and bitter; and its method was the recitation of verses which

⁹ Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesy, pp. 33-34.

condemned individuals by name. Old Comedy replaced satire because it was considered more effective, and New Comedy replaced old because it was considered more refined.

Thus for Virgil, Puttenham, and Lodge satire was derived from the utterances of satyrs and properly took its tone from their crudity and lasciviousness. That this notion was generally accepted in Elizabethan England is without question. Indeed, the Elizabethans had a very quaint picture of the satyr as a creature half man and half goat who was very hairy and had a long tail. This picturesque character's image supplied the frontispiece for many of the satires published in the period.

Of course, it does not matter, save from the standpoint of historical interest, that the Elizabethans were mistaken in their notion of the etymology of the word; nor does it really matter that they were "imaginative," as O.J. Campbell suggests, in their development of a literary history. They were familiar with the classical satirists, particularly Juvenal whose influence is evident in all the satires of the Renaissance, and they attempted to imitate this classical tradition.

As Kernan has very ably pointed out:

. . . historical naïveté is not necessarily critical naïveté, and we are not entitled to dismiss the Elizabethan theories of satire as mere nonsense because they are historically inaccurate. Mistaken or doubtful etymologies frequently state truths of another order, . . . The identification of satire

and satyr, despite the fact that the Elizabethans present it as historical truth, must be understood as a critical proposition about satire which gathers up and focuses the Renaissance critical understanding of satire as a rough, savage poem in which the attack on vice is delivered by a fictional character possessing the traits required to make him effective in his work. Seen in this light the satyr theory is far more sophisticated, artistically at least, than our own theory which locates the origin of the word "satire" in a word meaning "filled with many different things" and then makes heterogeneity the distinguishing quality of satire.

It may well be that critics like Lodge and Puttenham thought they were writing a literal history of satire, but the crucial point is that their "facts" obviously must have fitted their own understanding of the satires, chiefly the classics, with which they were familiar. And satire was for them dramatic: it originated in the drama; attacks on vice were delivered by a man playing the part of the satyr,¹⁰ and his speech conformed to his character.

For Kernan, then, despite the mistaken derivation of the word, the Renaissance critical position was "artistically" sound inasmuch as it "fitted their own understanding of the satires, chiefly the classics."

That classical influence is present in all of Renaissance satire is unquestionable. This case has been so thoroughly demonstrated by Raymond MacDonald Alden in his book The Rise of Formal Satire in England Under Classical Influence that it needs no further elaboration here.¹¹ Alden

¹⁰ Kernan, The Cankered Muse, pp. 62-63.

¹¹ Raymond MacDonald Alden, The Rise of Formal Satire in England Under Classical Influence, University of Pennsylvania Series in Philology, Literature and Archeology, Vol. VII, No. 2 (1899: rpt., Archon Books, 1961).

traces the development of English satire from the Middle Ages through to the seventeenth century and concerns himself with the manner in which the English satirists imitated the classics in form, subject-matter, style, type, and spirit. He treats at length the formal verse satires of Wyatt, Lodge, Hall, Marston, Wither, and Donne showing that, while Horatian influence is clearly present, on the whole the Elizabethans preferred the harsh bitterness of Juvenal. Although he makes reference to the Elizabethan misunderstanding of the word satire, he never develops the correlative that this had a profound influence on their own satirical writing. He explains their preference for Juvenal as follows:

Since the strong moral sense of the English people had always made good use of the informal satire of the type of direct rebuke, it was natural that the type of Juvenal rather than of Horace should predominate when the classical satirists came to be followed. Rapidly this type developed into a convention, so that we have found satirists with little individual taste for moral invective or ethical instruction, who really followed a free narrative method, still assuming for form's sake the attitude of scourgers of vice and preachers of righteousness.¹²

I am not taking issue with Alden's claim that "the strong moral sense of the English people" made it "natural" for them to follow Juvenal. But Alden is concerned with classical influence in its broader sense while I am concerned specifically with the satyr persona. Alden rightly speaks

¹² Alden, The Rise of Formal Satire in England, p. 226.

of a convention which rapidly developed, but he traces its source no further than Juvenal. It is more likely that the convention of the bitter scourging satirist was implicit from the outset in the Elizabethan misunderstanding of the term. And since for them satire was derived from the utterances of a shaggy lascivious creature, half man, half goat, they found in the bitterness and gusto of Juvenal a more congenial model for imitation.

There is ample evidence for this position in the formal verse satire of the period. For instance in the induction of William Rankin's Seaven Satyres Applied to the Weeke the author makes it clear that the spleen vented in the seven succeeding poems is to be regarded as the utterances of satyrs who have emerged from their rustic retreats to condemn the folly and vice of the city:

Of Love, of Courtships and of fancies force
Some gilded Braggadochio may discourse:
My shaggy Satyres doe forsake the woods,
Their beddes of mosse, their unfrequented floodes,
Their marble cels, their quiet forrest life,
To view the manner of this humane strife.
Whose skin is toucht, and will in gall revert,
My Satyres vow to gall them at the heart.¹³

The Discontented Satyre by Thomas Lodge provides another excellent portrait of the Satyr's appearance and demeanor as imagined by the Elizabethans. In this poem the narrator, roaming the woods, himself in a gloomy mood, happens upon

¹³ William Rankin, Seaven Satyres Applied to the Weeke
(London: 1598), p. 1.

a satyr in his natural habitat:

In midst thereof, upon a bed of moss,
A Satyre did his restless body toss.

Stern were his looks, afflicting all the fields
That were in view; his bushy locks undressed
With terror hang, his haviour horror yields,
And with the sight my sorrows were suppressed;¹⁴

And Henry Parrot speaks to his satyrs as individuals in the second satire of The Mastive. Here he urges them to "howle on" while he takes a rest. Because some of these poems are very difficult of access I have quoted from Alden's transcriptions:

Howle on yee Satyrs, whilst I sit and marke
How Wolvish Envie at my Muse doth barke,
Backbite, detract, rayle, slander and revile,
With words of hatred, and uncivill stile.¹⁵

But perhaps the most vivid description of all appears in The Scourge by George Wither, whose 1617 edition of the poem was introduced by a notable picture. It was a satyr, shaggy and naked, bearing a scourge in his right hand and a shepherd's pipe in his left. Nothing is left to the imagination. Wither's satyr is crude, lewd, quick-eyed, and very interested in vice:

Though in shape I seeme a Man
Yet a Satyr wilde I am;
Bred in Woods and Desert places,
Where men seldome shew their faces;
Rough and hayrie like a Goate,
Clothed with Dame Natures coate;
Eagle-sighted, quick of hearing,¹⁶
Spying Vice at first appearing;

(1-8).

¹⁴ Thomas Lodge, The Discontented Satyre, in Tudor Verse Satire, ed. K.W. Gransden (London: 1970), p. 87.

¹⁵ Alden, The Rise of Formal Satire in England, p. 190.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 179.

Later in this poem the satyr admits to the fact that he is himself not untainted, but I shall deal with this characteristic of the persona later.

From the passages quoted above there can be little wonder why the Elizabethans preferred the savage indignation of Juvenal to the urbanity and mild pessimism of Horace, or why it is to Juvenal they refer when their own satires come under criticism for being too harsh. If anything, the satirist's chief worry was that he be not crude or rough enough to suit the savage satyr. There are a number of references to just this problem in the satiric works of the period but the most notable is Bishop Hall's advance apology in the prologue to Book I of Virgidemiarum. Fearing that he has used a *loftier* style than proper decorum called for, he addressed his satiric muse thus:

Goe daring Muse on with thy thanklesse taske,
And do the vgly face of vice vnmaske:
And if thou canst not thine high flight remit,
So as it mought a lowly Satyre fit,
Let lowly Satyres rise aloft to thee:
Truth be thy speed, and Truth thy Patron bee.¹⁷ (19-24).

Before leaving this brief summary of the origin of the satiric mode in Elizabethan England and passing on to a discussion of the relationship between satire and melancholy, I would like to develop one further point. From the time Alexander Barclay launched The Ship of Fools in

¹⁷ Joseph Hall, Virgidemiarum in The Collected Poems of Joseph Hall, ed. A. Davenport (Liverpool: 1949), p. 11. Subsequent quotations from Hall will be taken from this edition and references will be included in the text.

1509 and used the word satire for the first time in the English language to mean "the reprehencion of foulysshnes" the mission or purpose of satire was seen to be just that.¹⁸ Consider, for instance, Joseph Hall's description in Book V of Vergidemiarius:

The Satyre should be like the Porcupine,
That shoots sharpe quills out in each angry line,
And wounds the blushing cheeke, and fiery eye,
Of him that heares, and readeth guiltily.
(III.1-4).

or Braithwaite's similar description:

Satyres though rough, are plaine and must revile
Vice with a Cynicke Bluntnesse, as long since
Those grace judicious Satyrists did use,
Who did not tax the time, but times abuse.¹⁹

Finally, Marston implies a comparison between the satirist and the surgeon in Satire V of Book II of The Scourge of Villainy:

Infectious blood, ye gouty humours, quake²⁰
Whilst my sharp razor doth incision make.

The mission of satire was more consciously presented in the Renaissance than in any other literary period. Mistaken or confused etymologies aside, for the Elizabethans the purpose of satire was to rebuke vice and folly: hence, its implied moral stance.

The origin of the relationship between satire and

¹⁸ Alexander Barclay, trans., The Ship Fools (Edinburgh: 1874), I, 18.

¹⁹ Richard Braithwaite, Nature's Embassy (1621: rpt., Boston, England: 1877), p. 9.

²⁰ John Marston, The Scourge of Villainy, in The Works of John Marston, ed. Arthur Henry Bullen (1877: rpt., New York: 1970), III, 339. Subsequent quotations from the poems of Marston will be taken from this edition and references will be included in the text.

melancholy is a more elusive problem to deal with because it cannot be so easily documented. Nonetheless, there is enough evidence in the plays, poems, and critical writings of the period to show that the character of the raging satirist was definitely associated with the melancholic humour.

As early as 1566 Thomas Drant identified Horace as a melancholic in his prefatory poem to his translation of that poet's work. Lily Herman Freedman objects to that identification as follows:

Even Horace had been identified as a melancholic, although at best in an ambiguous sense. As we have seen, Drant gratuitously assigned the description of melancholy to Horace where his text did not warrant such a translation, and still on his own authority rather than on that of the Latin, he also identified melancholy with the²¹ satiric tradition represented by Lucilius.

It may be true that "Drant gratuitously assigned the description of melancholy to Horace," but at the time Drant was writing his preface he was not associating the satirist with the familiar melancholic that became fashionable at the latter part of the century. And whether or not he "acted on his own authority," his labelling of Horace as a melancholic may have influenced Elizabethan thinking on the relationship between satire and melancholy.

²¹ Lily Herman Freedman, "Satiric Persona: A Study of Point of View in Formal Verse Satire in the English Renaissance from Wyatt to Marston" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1955), p. 327.

But not only did Drant label Horace as a melancholic, he also, as was mentioned earlier, suggested four alternate derivations for the word, and one of these was that satire might have taken its name from the planet Saturn:

*Satyre of writhled waspyshe Saturne may be namde,
The satyryst must be a waspe in moode.*

Now it was well known that persons born under the influence of Saturn tended to be cold, angry, and vengeful, and therefore well suited to the role of satirist. It is not difficult to see the imaginative leap which easily could have occurred. Satirists were hostile angry characters: satire might possibly be derived from the planet Saturn: people born under the influence of Saturn tended toward melancholia. Therefore satirists were melancholics. Of course, there is an error in the syllogism, but people think as often by association as they do by syllogism, and there is a reasonable case to be made for Kernan's suggestion that Drant's identification of Horace as a melancholic, together with his suggestion that satire was derived from the planet Saturn "provided the basis for the later use of melancholia as a motivation for the satirist."²²

However, we need not rely solely on Drant to find evidence for the association between satire and melancholy in the Renaissance. Puttenham, discussing the most commended

²² Kernan, "John Marston's Concept and Use of Satire," p. 96.

and most censured poets of English in The Art of English Poesy has this to say:

He that wrote the Satyr of Piers Ploughman seemed to have bene a malcontent of that time, and therefore bent himselfe wholly to taxe the disorders of that age, . . . his verse is but loose meeter, and his termes hard and obscure,²³ so as in them is little pleasure to be taken.

Puttenham's reference to the author of Piers Ploughman as a "malcontent of that time" suggests that by 1589 the association was complete, and melancholy had come to be regarded as a characteristic of satire.

And Thomas Nashe, writing in the same year, attributes the composition of The Anatomie of Absurditie to

. . . the process of a pensiveness which two Summers since overtook mee: whose obscured cause, best knowne to everie name of curse, hath compelled my wit to wander abroad unregarded in this satyricall disguise & counsaile my content to dislodge his delight from Traytors eyes.²⁴

Similarly in Christ's Tears Over Jerusalem Nashe draws on what Theodore Spencer calls the "great reservoir of gloomy commonplace" which could be used by anyone "stricken with misfortune or whose ambition had received a rebuff."²⁵

Possibly the clearest example of this satiric-melancholic

²³ Puttenham, The Art of English Poesy, pp. 64-65.

²⁴ Thomas Nashe, The Anatomie of Absurditie in The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (Oxford: 1966), I, 5

²⁵ Theodore Spencer, "The Elizabethan Malcontent," Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies, ed. James G. McManaway, Giles E. Dawson, Edwin E. Willoughby (Washington: 1948), p. 525.

fusion, however, is found in Greene's Planetomachia. Here Venus, reproving Saturn for his bitterness says, "It is thy accustomed melancholy that driveth thee into these bitter invectyves."²⁶ Here the circle is complete. Saturn, the cold dry planet, is being reprimanded for the satiric habit of bitter invective which is directly caused, according to Venus, by melancholy.

Freedman's discussion of melancholy in Marston is probably the best treatment of the subject. She asks, "why, beyond his penchant for dramatizing the role of the satirist," did Marston choose "the doctrine of Melancholy through which to work out, as a rhetorical device, the presiding temper of the satirist."²⁷ After citing a number of authorities who associated a venomous or brooding temperament with satire, e.g., Drant, Democritus, Horace, and Hake, she concludes:

. . . , before Marston's Scourge of Villanie, there had been a variety of reasons offered to rationalize an association of melancholy and satire. Recent students of the vogue of melancholy which swept English literature, if not English society, in the '90's, have emphasized the existence of the malcontented satirist, the man who vents his spleen on his contemporaries because of personal spite. He has been displaced from society, either through a set of particular circumstances or through his own disaffected, i.e. melancholic, temperament, and he seeks revenge if not restitution for his personal deprivation. His motivation corresponds to that of the envious man described by Aristotle and Aquinas, the man who rails against those whose good fortune he covets;

²⁶ Freedman, "Satiric Persona," p. 330.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 328- 29.

his anger is personal, injudicious, inconstant.²⁸

Freedman's description of the malcontented satirist is an accurate if not attractive portrait. Here is the satirist of George Wither's poem who frankly admits his own vice even while he freely reviles the vice of others,

I've sent abroad the World, to purge
Mans vile Abuses with my scourge;
Oft I make my Master sport,
When man sinne to lash them for't.
An Execut'oner am I,
Of Lust, and wanton Venery.
Thus are vices scourg'd by me,
Yet my selfe from vice not free;²⁹

Here also is the satirist of Marston's plays who, though much more complex, is tarred with the same brush. Here is the conventional character type arising out of the Elizabethan notion that the mission of satire is to rebuke and their misconception of the origin of the word.

In The Anatomy of Melancholy we find an interesting variation on the usual cause-effect notion of the relationship between satire and melancholy. In Subsection 4 entitled "Scoffs, Calumnies, bitter Jests, and how they cause Melancholy" Burton first laments:

. . .Princes & Potentates that are otherwise happy, & have all at command, secure and free, are grievously vexed with these pasquilling libels & satires: they fear a railing Aretine more than an enemy in the field,³⁰

²⁸ Freedman, "Satiric Persona," p. 328.

²⁹ Alden, The Rise of Formal Verse Satire in England, p. 180.

³⁰ Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, ed. Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: 1927), p. 289.

He then goes on to describe the motivation of these, for him, vicious men who cause misery and melancholy in others:

. . .many are of so petulant a spleen, and have that figure sarcasmus so often in their mouths, so bitter, so foolish, as Balthasar Castilio notes of them, that they cannot speak, but they must bite; they had rather lose a friend than a jest.

.

. . .they have no greater felicity than to scoff & deride others; they must sacrifice to the god of laughter, with them in Apuleius, once a day, or else they shall be melancholy themselves; they care not how they grind and misuse others, so they may exhilarate their own persons.³¹

Burton, despite the fact that he derides satirists for their bitter attacks on others in this passage, seems to think that a man does not become a raging satirist because he is a melancholic. Rather, he becomes a raging satirist in order to stave off melancholy. It is a fine point. Certainly a man of sanguine temperament would not feel the need to become a satirist. It is also a fine analysis of the satirist's psyche, but certainly not completely original. Puttenham, describing "The Forme of Poeticall Lamentations" in The Arte of English Poesie, said something very similar:

Lamenting is altogether contrary to reioising; every man saith so, and yet is it a peece of ioy to be able to lament with ease, and freely to poure forth a mans inward sorrowes and the greiefs wherewith his minde is surcharged. This was a very necessary deuise of the Poet and a fine, besides his poetrie to play also the

Phisitian, and not onely by applying a
 medicine to the ordinary sicknes of mankind,
 but by making the very Greefe it selfe (in part)
 cure of the disease.³²

And later in the section tracing the origin of the Epigram he strikes the same note:

But all the world could not keepe, nor any
 ciuill ordinance to the contrary to preuaile,
 but that men would and must needs vtter their
 splenes in all ordinarie matters also, or else
 it seemed their bowels would burst.³³

It is clear that for Puttenham grief and spite must be directed outward if they are not to fester and cause a worse condition for the sufferer; and Burton, although not at all sympathetic with the satirist's condition, is saying the same thing of his need to dissipate melancholy.

Now it is obvious that Marston's satirists exhibit all the unpleasant characteristics of the discontented melancholic, i.e., envy, rage, and spite, but it is just as obvious that Marston was aware of the melancholic condition being associated with man's superior qualities, particularly intelligence. The Scourge of Villainy is supposed to be the mark of a serious, sincere critic, and as such it is dedicated to a melancholic of the latter type. This type has been discussed at length by Freedman and I include these pertinent remarks from her analysis:

³² Puttenham, Elizabethan Critical Essays, p. 49.

³³ Ibid., p. 56.

If categorize we must, it would be closer to that disputed Saturnian melancholy that renders men wise and solemn. Derived ultimately from the Aristotelean discussion in Problemata xxx of the high incidence of atrabilious temperament among prominent men, there developed, concurrent with the traditional Galenic explanation of the disease, an alternate emphasis on the potentially benign characteristics of melancholy as a disorder.³⁴

In the Proemium to Book I of The Scourge the narrator bearing "the scourge of just Rhamnusia" seeks inspiration thus:

Thou nursing mother of fair Wisdom's lore,
 Ingenuous Melancholy I implore
 Thy grave assistance: take thy gloomy seat,
 Enthroned thee in my blood; let me entreat,
 Stay his quick jocund skips, and force him run
 A sad-paced course, until my whips be done.

(9-15).

This invocation with its emphasis on justice, wisdom, gravity, and innocence certainly appears to stress the "benign characteristics of melancholy" that render "men wise and solemn." Yet as we read on in The Scourge we are not convinced that the motivation is so wholly objective or so pure in its desire for reform. Indeed there is a strong suggestion that a perverted pleasure is taken in the recitation of the many and varied sins. And again as we read on it becomes evident that in Marston, more than any other satirist of the period, there is a synthesis of the wise, just melancholic; the spiteful, envious melancholic; and the crude, forthright, lascivious satyr, with the satyr characteristics predominating.

³⁴ Freedman, "Satiric Persona," p. 332.

I have already cited the Proemium to Book I of The Scourge of Villainy as evidence that Marston attempted to infuse in his narrator some of the benign qualities of melancholia. However, the evidence is not confined to the Proemiums. Throughout the poem there are passages to suggest that the narrator is genuinely horror-stricken at the vice he sees prevalent in the world, and that his greatest desire is to see a purgation or reform of this vice. Here are some typical examples:

Sure, grace is infused
By Divine favour, not by actions used,
Which is as permanent as heaven's bliss,
To them that have it; then no habit is.
Tomorrow, nay, today, it may be got,
So please that gracious power cleanse thy spot.
(IV.117-22).

.

O frantic, fond, pathetic passion!
Is't possible such sensual action
Should clip the wings of contemplation?
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 a vile control?
(VIII.110-17).

.

Reason, by prudence in her function,
Had wont to tutor all our action,
Aiding, with precepts of philosophy,
Our feebled natures' imbecility;
But now affection, will, concupiscence,
Have got o'er reason chief pre-eminence.
(VIII.173-78).

.

Our adverse body, being earthly, cold,
Heavy, dull, mortal, would not long enfold
A stranger inmate, that was backward still
To all his dungy, 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;
 (VIII.185-92).

.

O take compassion
 Even on your souls! Make not Religion
 A bawd to lewdness. Civil Socrates,
 Clip not the youth of Alcibiades
 With unchaste arms.

(IX.117-21).

There is nothing even faintly lewd, spiteful, or envious in these passages. The appeal is to reason, to grace, and to God. All of them, particularly the last bear the mark of a critic passionately and honestly desiring reform for the sake of man's dignity and his eternal soul.

However, this same narrator is not always so persuasive or objective in his reproach. There are many other passages in which the attack is of so vicious and personal a nature that the only possible explanation for their motivation is envy, spite, or personal disillusionment — in short, the baser qualities or effects of melancholia. I include here some of the more striking examples:

As for Stadius, I think he hath a soul;
 And if he were but free from sharp control
 Of his sour host, and from his tailor's bill,
 He would not thus abuse his rhyming skill;
 Jading our tirèd ears with fooleries,
 (IV.9-14).

Think'st thou that I, which was create to whip
 Incarnate fiends, will once vouchsafe to trip
 A pavin's traverse, or will lisp "Sweet love,"
 Or pule "Aye me," some female soul to move?

Think'st thou that I in melting poesy
Will pamper itching sensuality

(VI.15-20).

.

Alas! her soul struts round about her neck;
Her seat of sense is her rebato set;
Her intellectual is a feignèd niceness,
Nothing but clothes and simpering preciseness.

(VII.176-79).

.

There is a crew which I too plain could name,
If so I might without th'Aquinians' blame
That lick the tail of greatness with their lips —
Labouring with third-hand jests and apish skips,
Retailing others' wit, long barrellèd,
To glib some great man's ears till paunch be fed —

(IV.57-62).

These passages are so malicious and spiteful, and the objects of attack so relatively innocent, that the reader is forced to ask if the vice be in the attacked or the attacker. Why, for instance, should he be so outraged at Stadius who writes to pay his landlord and his tailor? This "sin" is not of such gravity that it should merit so sneering a castigation. Stadius may be using his talent cheaply, but he is at least paying his bills. Would the narrator have him a railer also? Why, too, is he so determined not to dance? Why does he dismiss so scornfully the intimate endearments of lovers? And, is the only purpose of "melting poesy" to "pamper itching sensuality," or is this only the view of the speaker? All of these suggest some deep personal disillusionment on the part of the narrator as does the next passage in which he accuses a lady of being "nothing but clothes and simpering preciseness." The context in which this sneering remark occurs

indicates that he had never seen the lady until that very moment, and since she was travelling by carriage, he had no opportunity to speak to her. Why then the willingness to condemn her for a "feigned intellectual" which he could not possibly know? Finally, the last passage, with its bitter tirade against the poor foolish souls who survive by being politic, while probably justifiable to an extent, is more interesting in what it indicates about the narrator. It is the spiteful tirade of a man of too small a mind to understand and appreciate desperation or fear in others. It is the speech of a man who feels diminished by another person's undeserved good fortune.

Of course, the narrator himself supplies the key to this part of his personality. Several passages in the poem clearly state his motivation and are so evident as to be self-explanatory:

My soul is vex'd; what power will resist,
Or dares to stop a sharp-fang'd satirist?
Who'll cool my rage, who'll stay my itching fist?
But I will plague and torture whom I list.
(II.7-10).

.

I am not sapless, old, or rheumatic,
No Hipponax, misshapen stigmatic,
That I should thus inveigh 'gainst amorous sprite
Of him whose soul doth turn hermaphrodite;
But I do sadly grieve, and inly vex,
To view the base dishonour of our sex.
(VIII.143-48).

.

From out the sadness of my discontent,
Hating my wonted jocund merriment
(Only to give dull time a swifter wing),
Thus scorning scorn, of idiot fools I sing.
(X.1-4).

.

Out of this humour! From a sickly bed,
 And from a moody mind distemperèd,
 I vomit forth my love, now turn'd to hate,
 Scorning the honour of a poet's state.

(X.69-72).

It is evident then that melancholia, whether malicious or benign, played an important role in the development of Marston's unique narrator character. However, at no time is the satyr nature obscured. It is omnipresent, lurking behind every sublime statement or envious utterance, and bursting out in forthright lewd attacks which are admirable for their energy and revolting in their imagery and directness. These qualities permeate the attacks on every vice but are most striking when sexual abuse is under scrutiny.

In both The Scourge of Villainy and the Satires the narrator categorizes every kind of perversity from male and exotic female masturbation to incestuous rape and sexual intercourse with monkeys. In most cases the language is vile and the imagery loathesome as the following selections will show:

Shall Lucia scorn her husband's lukewarm bed
 (Because her pleasure, being hurrièd
 In jolting coach, with glassy instrument,
 Doth far exceed the Paphian blandishment),
 Whilst I (like to some mute pythagoran)
 Halter my hate, and cease to curse and ban
 Such brutish filth?

(III.121-27).

.

How, then, shall his smug wench,
 How shall her bawd (fit time) assist her quench
 Her sanguine heat? Lynceus, canst thou scent?
 She hath her monkey and her instrument

*Smooth fram'd at Vitrio. O grievous misery!
Luscus hath left his female luxury;*

(III.29-34).

.

*At Hogson now his monstrous love he feasts,
For there he keeps a bawdy-house of beasts.
Paphus, let Luscus have his courtesan,
Or we shall have a monster of a man.*

(III.41-44).

.

*Curio, aye me! thy mistress' monkey's dead;
Alas, alas, her pleasure's buried!
Go, woman's slave, perform his exequies,
Condole his death in mournful elegies.
Tut, rather paeans sing, hermaphrodite;
For that sad death gives life to thy delight.*

(VIII.1-6).

.

*Themis, his second wife,
Hath turn'd away, that his unbridled life
Might have more scope; yet, last, his sister's love
Must satiate the lustful thoughts of Jove.
Now doth the lecher in a cuckold's shape,
Commit a monstrous and incestuous rape.*

(VIII.157-62).

.

*When the husband gapes that his stale wife would die
That he might once be in by courtesy;
The big-paunch'd wife longs for her loath'd mate's death,
That she might have more jointures here on earth;*

(II.130-33).

.

*He hath no soul, the which the Staggyrite
Term'd rational: for beastly appetite,
Base dunghill thoughts, and sensual action
Hath made him lose that fair creation
And now no man, since Circe's magic charm
Hath turn'd him to a maggot that doth swarm
In tainted flesh whose foul corruption
Is his fair food whose generation
Another ruin.*

(VII.66-74).

.

*Look smug, smell sweet, take up commodities
Keep whores, fee bawds, belch impious blasphemies,*

Wallow along in swaggering disguise,
 Snuff up smoke-whiffs, and each morn, 'fore she rise
 Visit thy bawd?

(IX.74-78).

I have included here only eight examples from the dozens available, but in these the narrator has been so explicit as to preclude any necessity for further commentary or explanation. Suffice it to say that here is evidence of that excessive preoccupation with lust that is as characteristic of the satyr as his lewdness and directness. It would be well to recall here Lodge's description of satire as a drama in which "monsters. . . with pleasure reprehended abuse," and the fact that this could mean pleasure was taken in the attack itself, or pleasure was taken in the description of the vice. There is evidence in both the Satires and The Scourge to show that the narrator took morbid delight in his own castigation of vice:

Ha, Ha! nay, then I'll never rail at those
 That wear a codpis, thereby to disclose
 What sex they are, since strumpets breeches use,
 And all men's eyes save Lynceus can abuse.
 Nay, stead of shadow, lay the substance out,
 Or else, fair Briscus, I shall stand in doubt
 What sex thou art, since such hermaphrodites,
 Such Protean shadows so delude our sights.

(Satire II.119-26).

.

When strong back'd Hercules, in one poor night,
 With great, great ease, and wond[er]ous delight,
 In strength of lust and Venus' surquedry,
 Robb'd fifty wenches of virginity —
 Far more than lusty Laurence

(Satire V.47-51).

.

Shall Cossus make his well-faced wife a stale,
 To yield his braided ware a quicker sale?

Shall cock-horse, fat-paunch'd Milo stain whole stocks
Of well-born souls with his adultering spots?
Shall broking panders suck nobility,
Soiling fair stems with foul impurity?

((The Scourge I.iii.185-90)).

.

Touch it not (by the Lord! sir), 'tis divine!
It once beheld her radiant eye's bright shine!
Her hair embraced it. O thrice-happy prick,
That there was throned, and in her hair didst stick!"
Kiss, bless, adore it, Publius, never lin;
Some sacred virtue lurketh in the pin.

((The Scourge III.viii.104-09)).

But there is also evidence to show that the characteristic
fascination with lust does not go unnoticed by the narrator
himself:

Cannot some lewd immodest beastliness
Lurk and lie hid in just forgetfulness,
But Grillus' subtile-smelling swinish snout
Must scent and grunt, and needs will find it out?
Come, dance, ye stumbling satyrs by his side,
If he list once the Sion Muse deride; . . .

((Satire IV.29-34)).

.

Must straight some shameless satirist,
With odious and opprobrious terms insist
To blast so high resolv'd intention
With a malignant vile detraction?
So have I seen a cur dog in the street
Piss 'gainst the fairest posts he still could meet; . . .

((Satire IV.115-20)).

.

If that Silenus' ass do chance to bray
And so the satyrs' lewdness doth bewray,
Let him for ever be a sacrifice;
Prick, spur, beat, load, for ever tyrannise
Over the fool.

((Satire V.87-91)).

Such recognition supports the position that the narrator's
outbursts are an integral part of a complex persona, and not

thoughtless intrusions by the author indicating a lack of artistic control. However, neither the fascination with lust nor the morbid delight in attack should obscure the fact that the narrator genuinely sees himself as a scourge and, as such, he intends to purge the world of vice.

The study of Marston's formal verse satire is a valuable tool for the later study of his plays. Here in the poems, still in embryo form, is the complex satirist of his best plays. However, in the poems the synthesis is incomplete and it is therefore much easier to isolate and study the various component parts and influences which were later completely fused into a character of great complexity and depth.

I will refer frequently to the public and private faces of the persona. The public face, as the name suggests, implies those aspects of the personality that are virtuous. In many cases these public virtues are expressed in terms of Stoicism. Usually, the speaker refers to Solon, Epictetus, Seneca, or some other classical Stoic philosopher. He often urges a faith in reason. With regard to suffering and pain, he encourages a philosophy of detachment, yet he is an active and zealous reformer, very much like the preacher. There is a simple way of accounting for this didacticism. The Elizabethans saw the purpose of satire (more specifically formal verse satire) as corrective. And the satirist was often viewed as a surgeon who cauterized the infections of society. The public side of the persona can be seen, then, as containing

some important Stoic characteristics although it in no way represents the total philosophy.

The private face is the antithesis of the public one. Whereas the latter is righteous, angry, corrective, hopeful, detached, tolerant, and restrained, the former is self-righteous, envious, and hateful, gloats over vice, is pessimistic, sees man as depraved, and is intolerant. In the context of this paper, the private face is usually thought of as the real nature and the public face as a mask.

Although it is necessary to discuss some of the central ideas of the Stoic philosophy in order to understand Marston's dramaturgical use of what might be called the Stoic posture, it is not the purpose of this dissertation to examine the metaphysics of that philosophy or the part it played in forming the ethical attitudes of the Elizabethans.³⁵ I am concerned with Stoicism only insofar as it prompted the development of the Stoic posture of Elizabethan drama, and this posture is admittedly a distortion of a sophisticated philosophy which had undergone many changes over the centuries. Nevertheless, the posture itself was derived from the fundamental Stoic belief that the strong emotions should be suppressed because they interfere with the operation of man's reason, or the means by which man discovers and puts himself

³⁵ For a full discussion of this topic see Anthony Caputi, John Marston, Satirist (Ithaca: 1961).

in tune with the Divine which is embodied in nature. This Divinity, according to the Stoics, was all good and its goodness was synonymous with rationality; and since it was embodied in nature it followed, or should have followed, that there was no such thing as evil in the universe.

However, even the most ardent Stoic was forced to admit that this idea seemed contradictory to the experience of the everyday world. Hicks has caustically pointed out that "In handling this question they displayed the utmost acumen, and it may be doubted if any subsequent attempt to justify the ways of God to man will ever be more successful than theirs." ³⁶

Their "handling" of the problem involved two different approaches, the first being a straight forward denial that certain kinds of evil existed. Death, physical suffering, and disaster were not evils for the Stoics; they were instead indifferent events which were erroneously called evil in that they hindered man from putting himself in tune with the Divine and therefore prevented freedom. This identification with the Divine is the basis of stoic self-sufficiency and endurance. Moses Hadas in his introduction to The Stoic Philosophy of Seneca discusses the relationship between stoic patience and benevolent providence. And although his remarks are necessarily somewhat generalized he nevertheless stresses those

³⁶ R.D. Hicks, Stoic and Epicurean (New York: 1962), p. 42.

aspects of Stoicism that lie at the heart of the Stoic sage as he was conceived by Elizabethan playwrights:

Like Epicureanism, then, Stoicism sought to give man self-sufficient freedom, but the Stoic achieved his freedom not by rejecting the divine but by identifying himself with it. This is the source of his patience under suffering. The body itself is a mere encumbrance to the divine part of him, and therefore also a thing indifferent. Under a benevolent providence all that happens must be good for the whole; since the sufferer's body is part of the whole, the pain that afflicts it must be good for him. The leg or tooth that hurts is not really or merely his own. Nor, if he is to cultivate reason, must he allow emotions, not only fear and envy and vengefulness but even love and grief for loved ones, to impinge upon his soul. This is Stoic apathy, which means not listlessness but imperviousness to perturbations. A man must keep his soul free, and cleaving to reason will help him do so; but when he has done all that a man can for the ideal, when his pains are intolerable and hopeless, the door is always open and he is invited to step out of life. With this alternative always available, a man can never be enslaved.³⁷

The second approach to the question of evil involved explaining the nature of what might be called evil acts. For the Stoic this kind of evil was necessary because it could be contrasted with virtue. In this sense it may be said to define virtue. Hicks, in his discussion of the Stoic position on the nature of evil, quotes at length from the commentary of Chrysippus who saw in vice a necessity which could not and should not be removed:

³⁷ Moses Hadas, The Stoic Philosophy of Seneca (New York: 1958), p. 24.

It is the height of absurdity to suppose that goods could have existed without evils. For since goods are the contraries of evils, both must of necessity coexist without the other. How could justice be known apart from injustice? What is justice, in fact, but the negation of injustice? Or how could courage be understood except by its opposition to cowardice? Or temperance apart from intemperance? Or wisdom apart from folly? Nay, why do not these foolish people go on to wish for truth to exist apart from falsehood? Goods and evils, good fortune and evil fortune, pain and pleasure are just as inseparable from one another as are truth and falsehood. For these are pairs, in which each member is bound to the other with opposing fronts, in Plato's phrase; if you take away the one, you take away both.³⁸

This explanation must have been both intellectually and emotionally satisfying, because not only did the attitude itself prevail, it also produced a curiously superior attitude of tolerance with evil-doers. The Stoic who had suffered injustice at the hands of another could comfortably believe that his own loss was not as great as that of his enemy because his enemy's failure to control his passions could only result in a loss of self-esteem. This lofty attitude towards evil in others is amply illustrated by Marcus Aurelius:

The soul of man does violence to itself, first of all, when it becomes an abscess and, as it were, a tumor on the universe, as far as it can. For to be vexed at anything that happens is a separation of ourselves from nature, in some part of which the natures of all other things are contained. Secondly, the soul does violence

³⁸ Hicks, Stoic and Epicurean, pp. 44-45.

to itself when it turns away from any man, or moves against him with the intention of harming him, as do the souls of the angry. In the third place, the soul does violence to itself when it succumbs to pleasure or pain. Fourthly, when it plays a part, and acts or speaks insincerely or untruly. Fifthly, when it performs any act or any movement aimlessly, and does anything thoughtlessly and without considering what it is, whereas even the smallest things ought to be designed for an end; and the end of rational beings is to follow the reason and the law of the most ancient city and commonwealth.³⁹

In Elizabethan drama most of the sententious Stoic set speeches express the doctrine of detached self-sufficiency, and many of the direct references to the Stoics as moral exemplars stress the fact that they were praised for their sagacious detachment from the material world. In The Scourge of Villainy Marston lauds the Stoic position thus: "O Epictetus, I do honour thee./ To think how rich thou wert in poverty!" (Proemium Bk. II, 23-24).

Seneca and Epictetus were constantly held up as models of a way of life believed to be diametrically opposed to that led by the fools that the satirists scourged. Henry Peacham writing in 1634 expresses the popular view in The Compleat Gentleman:

For Morality and rules of well living, delivered with such sententious gravity, weight of reason, so sweetned with lively and apt similitudes, entertaine Plutarch; whom according to the opinion

³⁹ Marcus Aurelius, The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius in Marcus Aurelius and his Times, trans. George Long (New York: 1945), p. 23.

of Gaza the world would preserve, should it be put to the choice to receive one onely Author (the Sacred Scriptures excepted) and to burne all the rest: especially his Lives and Morals. After him, the vertuous and divine Seneca, who for that he lived so neere the times of the Apostles, and had familiar acquaintaince with S. Paul (as it is supposed by those Epistles that passe under either names) is thought in heart to have beene a Christian; and certes so it seemeth to me, by that Spirit wherewith so many rules of Patience, Humility, Contempt of the world, are refined and exempt from the degrees of Paganisme. Some say that about the beginning of Neroes raigne, he came over hither into Britaine: but most certaine it is, he had divers lands bestowed on him here in England, and those supposed to have laine in Essex neere to Camalodunum, now Maldon.⁴⁰

Lodge expresses a similar view in his eloquent preface to The Workes of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Both Morrall and Naturall:

It was well donne by Nature (gentle Reader) to giue time, but ill donne by men not to apprehend the same: How much thou hast lost in life in begetting vanities and nourishing them, in applauding follies, and intending them, read heare; and begin now to apprehend this, that it is but lost life, that men liue in entertaining vaine things, & that no time is better spent, then in studying how to liue, and how to die wel. This shalt thou learne in our Seneca, whose diuine sentences, wholsome counsailes, serious exclamations against vices, in being but a Heathen, may make vs ashamed being Christians; when wee consider how backward a course wee haue runne from the right scope, by being buried in vaine readings, besotted with selfe opinion, by apprehending vertue no more, but in a shadow,

⁴⁰ Henry Peacham, The Compleat Gentleman; 1634, ed. G.S. Gordon (Oxford:1906), p. 52.

which serves for a vaile to couer many vices.⁴¹

Few characters in Elizabethan drama can be labeled as mere Stoic types, but many characters frequently adopt the stance of detached impassivity and almost as frequently express it in the sententious sayings of Seneca. These postures are so frequently adopted after the persons have failed to achieve some worldly goal that they necessarily raise the question of real motivation. The paradox of the belated Stoic's profession of faith has been accurately and humourously described by Baker, whose analysis I feel obliged to quote somewhat at length so as not to detract from its delightful phrasing:

It is in the sphere of practical worldly conduct, nevertheless, that stoicism flourishes. Be passive, be lowly, be in connection with the world untouched and untouching; thus you may manifest your handful of divinity, thus, in a proud apartness. As tinged with degeneracy as this attitude is, the next step in the scheme — the step which we are obliged to think was most important to Seneca — is actively perverse. Be passive, be lowly — and thus you will attain worldly power; be humble and rule others. When, in a characteristic passage which was forced on our attention earlier, Agamemnon urges Phryhus not to sacrifice Polyxena, what is Agamemnon's argument? In the version of Jasper Heywood it is this:

The proude estate of tyrannÿ
may never long endure.
The King that rules with modest meane
of safety may be sure.

⁴¹ Thomas Lodge, "To the Courteous Reader," prefatory to The Workes of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Both Morrall and Naturall (London: 1614) rpt. Hunterian Club, Miscellaneous Pieces, ed. Edmund Gosse (Glasgow: 1875-88), p. 39.

In other words the stoic conceals himself from Fortune by keeping his head bent very low. He works towards prosperity by scorning prosperity. If he enjoys high place, he counts it so much won; if he slips from high place, he changes his system of accounting and writes down no loss.

This is a slippery philosophy, full of pride and timidity, of desperate craft and pitiful self-delusion. Viewed in the most favorable light, it equips one always to be prepared for the worst; like the boxer's technique of riding back and away from blows, it is valuable on occasion but is only a defensive device. It has its sad place in the world when men are kept on the defensive, either because of the onslaughts of a chaotic society, like Seneca's, or because of personal difficulties. One may be sympathetic with Seneca and yet say, as one must say, that his is Greek philosophy reborn and deformed.⁴²

Baker is certainly emphatic in his condemnation of the ethical and logical flaws in Seneca's brand of Stoicism, but evidently some of the Elizabethans noticed these flaws as well. Marston, despite his eloquent praise for the rich poverty of Epictetus in the Proemium to Book I of The Scourge of Villainy, evidently had some serious reservations about the logical soundness of Stoicism as well as its practical application. In Satire IV of Book I the narrator scornfully denounces a variety of sinners for daring to reject opportunities for God's grace today so that they can postpone reform for tomorrow or some other more convenient time. He then turns roundly on the Scholastics whose

⁴² Howard Baker, Induction to Tragedy: A Study in a Development of Form in Gorboduc, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus (New York: 1965), pp. 182- 83.

teaching, he evidently feels, too closely resembles that of the Stoics:

"Habits, that intellectual termèd be,
Are got or else infused from Deity."
Dull Sorbonist, fly contradiction!
Fie! thou oppugn'st the definition;
If one should say, "Of things term'd rational,
Some reason have, others mere sensual,"
Would not some freshman, reading Porphyry,
Hiss and deride such blockish foolery?
"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."
(IV.133-44).

Here the narrator is reasoning from Scholastic teaching when he claims that if grace is a free gift from God man cannot be held responsible for his evil acts nor given credit for his virtuous ones save as he chooses to accept or reject the gift of grace. But he is quite correct in pointing out the contradiction implicit in the first two lines. If something is "infused from Deity" in much the same manner as stature or colouring it cannot properly be called a habit intellectual or otherwise. Further the use of the word habit is presumptuous and dangerous because it implies that the human will has some control over the divine will in the matter of grace.

But the narrator saves the force of his invective for the Stoics, whom he obviously sees as the worst offenders in contradictory teaching and presumption upon the strength of man's will. This violent attack in which he accuses

Seneca of both "blasphemy" and "lunacy" follows directly upon his criticism of the Scholastics, and since the two are related I must quote the entire passage:

I will cried Zeno. O presumption!
 I can. Thou mayst, dogged opinion
 Of thwarting cynics. Today vicious;
 List to their precepts, next day virtuous.
 Peace, Seneca, thou belchest blasphemy!
 "To live from God, but to live happily"
 (I hear thee boast) "from thy philosophy,
 And from thyself." O Ravening Lunacy!
 Cynics, ye wound yourselves; for destiny,
 Inevitable fate, necessity,
 You hold, doth sway the acts spiritual,
 As well as parts of that we mortal call.
 Where's then I will? Where's that strong deity
 You do ascribe to your philosophy?
 Confounded Nature's brats! can will and fate
 Have both their seat and office in your pate?
 O hidden depth of that dread secrecy,
 Which I do trembling touch in poetry!
 To-day, to-day, implore obsequiously;
 Trust not to-morrow's will, lest utterly
 Ye be attach'd with sad confusion,
 In your grace-tempting lewd presumption.
 (145-66).

This passage is most interesting. The narrator seems quite prepared to accept the Scholastic and Stoic notion that an omnipotent Deity controls both the spiritual and mortal in man. But if he accepts this he will not allow man's ability to say "I will" or "I can," and he certainly will not accept that man can change from being vicious to virtuous simply by ascribing to the Stoic philosophy. Indeed the Stoics are much worse than the Scholastics because they do not even pay lip service to the idea of grace. For the narrator the omnipotent deity of the Stoics necessarily implied that man

is a creature fated to play out his role, be it good or evil, until that deity sees fit to end his life, and all that man can do is endure his fate; he can have no power of free will. For the narrator, however, not only are the teachings of Stoicism useless and contradictory in that they preach a self-control that cannot exist; they are also pernicious in that they foster a conceit in man which hinders him from accepting the free gift of God's grace the moment it is offered.

Before ending my discussion of this passage, I would like to make several comments on the use of the word "happily" as it appears in Seneca's "boast." Although the word itself is not responsible for the contradiction in the terms of the Stoic philosophy, its use may explain the outrage with which that philosophy was attacked. The narrator's worldly experience had taught him that men, particularly sinful men, were always searching for happiness in one form or another and were nearly always frustrated in their quest. The suggestion that worldly happiness could be achieved through adherence to a basically contradictory philosophy would be outrageous by any standard. But it would be particularly outrageous to the narrator because it held out the hope of happiness to men who would be only further frustrated by their attempts to achieve it. For the narrator it would be far better to teach from the outset

that this world is a valley of tears made endurable only by the hope of heavenly happiness and co-operation with God's grace than to raise false hopes about earthly happiness or false faith in a non-existent human ability to will virtuous actions without God's help.

Marston was one of the first Elizabethan dramatists to use the paradox of Stoicism in the creation of a character type whose contradictory nature expressed a psychological complexity that was true to human experience. Robert Ornstein, in his discussion of Pandulpho in Antonio's Revenge, concludes that

Despite the quotation from De Providentia Marston's concern with Stoic philosophy never rises above the stale libel of Seneca's voluptuousness, repeated in The Malcontent. Indeed, Marston's "unconventional" rejection of Stoic rationality is quite conventional; he is the first Jacobean to exploit dramatically the skepticism about Stoic self-sufficiency expressed by Erasmus and Montaigne and implicit in the moral philosophy of the Elizabethan age.⁴³

The Stoic-sage stance was a double-barrelled one. The satirist could contrast Stoic self-control with the unbridled lust and passion of the sinner being scourged. But when it suited him he could, with the precedent of Montaigne, accuse the Stoic of foolishly denying a very real and vital part of man's nature.

⁴³ Robert Ornstein, The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy (Madison: 1960), pp. 157- 58.

The Stoic posture of impassivity and detachment is the means by which Marston presents the public face of the persona as he appears in the plays. This idealism that is frequently expressed by this public face owed much to the Stoic belief that man's rationality would enable him to achieve a union with God.

This study is concerned primarily with the part played by Marston's conventional character type in nine of his plays; however, to a lesser degree it is developmental in that The Malcontent is viewed as a pivotal play.⁴⁴ In The Malcontent, for the first time, Marston reverses the usual relationship between the public and private face with the result that there is change and growth in the principal character. The plays then fall into two groups, the first consisting of Histrion-Mastix, Jacke Drum, Antonio and Mellida, Antonio's Revenge, and What you Will; and the second, beginning with The Malcontent and including The Dutch Courtezan, The Fawn, and Sophonisba. The important point is that The Malcontent is the first of the later plays. Aside from this, changes within the groupings would have little bearing on my analysis.

I am aware that there is some contention as to

⁴⁴ I have omitted Eastward Ho and The Insatiate Countess, the former being a collaboration and the latter having been completed by another playwright.

the date of The Malcontent, some critics putting it as late as 1604 and others as early as 1600.⁴⁵ But the issue here is the placement of the plays not the exact date. Stoll, for instance, who was concerned with proving that The Malcontent preceded and had some influence on Hamlet, argues for 1600 as the date of the composition.⁴⁶ However, he arranged the plays with The Malcontent preceding The Dutch Courtezan and directly following Antonio's Revenge. Stoll's argument is based primarily on the allusion in Act I to the woman with the horn on her head "which appeared some twelve years since" (iii-20). He took this to be a direct reference to a pamphlet which appeared in 1588, entitled A Miraculous and monstrous, but yet most true and certayne Discourse of a woman three score years or thereabouts, in the midst of whose forehead there groweth out a crooked Horne of four ynches long.⁴⁷ "Twelve years since" interpreted literally would mean that the date of

⁴⁵ Some of the key works in this controversy are E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford: 1923), III, 427- 29; F.L. Lucas, ed., The Complete Works of John Webster, III (London: 1928), 294- 95; E.E. Stoll, John Webster (Cambridge, Mass.: 1905), pp. 58-60; Anthony Caputi, John Marston; Satirist (Ithaca, New York: 1961), pp. 251- 55; E.E. Stoll, "The Date of The Malcontent Once More: A Rejoinder," RES, 2 (1935), 42-50; Harold R. Walley, "The Date of Hamlet and Marston's The Malcontent," RES, 9 (1923), 397-409; Gustav Cross, "The Date of The Malcontent Once More" PQ, 39 (1960), 104- 13.

⁴⁶ Stoll, "The Date of The Malcontent Once More."

⁴⁷ Bullen, ed., The Works of John Marston, I, 233, n.1.

composition was 1600, provided Marston was referring to the publication date of the pamphlet. Gustav Cross in "The Date of The Malcontent Once More" supports Stoll's contention by using a reference to the death of Duke Pietro which appears in The Fawn, and on the rather dubious basis of Marston's use of neologisms.⁴⁸ I say dubious because Pymalion's Image and Certain Satyres which were certainly the first fruits of Marston's pen are so naughty as to defy his theory by having relatively few neologisms.

In spite of Stoll and Cross the majority of scholars accept c. 1604 as the date of composition for The Malcontent. F.L. Lucas' skepticism about the lady with the horn is typical:

Add twelve to 1588 and you have 1600. How simple! But can we really be sure that "twelve" is so precise? May it not mean "a dozen"? Nor do I see why the said horn should be supposed to have modestly vanished the moment it was written about. It may have flourished between the brows of dame Margaret Griffith for years afterwards. No doubt this allusion is rather more likely to refer to the date of its first becoming a subject of literature: but one cannot base arguments on anything so flimsy.⁴⁹

Caputi argues that "by far the more persuasive body of evidence points to 1603 for the composition of the short version."⁵⁰ And the editor of The Malcontent in the

⁴⁸ Cross, "The Date of The Malcontent Once More," 104- 13.

⁴⁹ Lucas, ed., The Complete Works of John Webster, pp. 294- 95.

⁵⁰ Caputi, John Marston Satirist, p. 251.

Regents Renaissance Drama Series while granting the plausibility of Cross's claim concludes that "Caputi's implied designation of 1602-1603 may be the most judicious."⁵¹

In this study I have chosen to follow Wood's chronology which is as follows:⁵²

<u>Histrion-mastix</u>	- Old play-revised 1599
<u>Jacke Drum's Entertainment</u>	- Registered 1600 Published 1601 Written before or after the Antonio plays.
<u>Antonio and Mellida</u> <u>Antonio's Revenge</u>	- Registered 1601 Published 1602 Written between 1599 and 1601.
<u>What You Will</u>	- Registered 1607 Published 1607 Written 1601 and later revised.
<u>The Malcontent</u>	- Registered 1604 Published 1604 Written between 1600- 1604.
<u>The Dutch Courtezan</u>	- Registered 1605 Published 1605 Written 1603
<u>The Fawn</u>	- Registered 1606 Published 1606 Written 1604-1606
<u>Sophonisba</u>	- Registered 1606 Published 1606 Written 1605-1606

⁵¹ M.L. Wine, ed., The Malcontent (Lincoln: 1964), p. xvi.

⁵² H. Harvey Wood, ed., The Plays of John Marston, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: 1934-39).

Caputi's arrangement of the plays also places The Malcontent before The Fawn, The Dutch Courtezan, and Sophonisba and after Histrion-Mastix, Jacke Drum, the Antonio plays, and What you Will. The only change he makes is to reverse the order of The Fawn and The Dutch Courtezan.⁵³ But as was pointed out already, changes within the groupings do not affect the developmental aspects of this study.

The conventional character type that is the focus of the following study is uniquely Marston's. At times characteristics that are peculiar to melancholia appear and at times the stance of the Stoic sage is adopted, but the most notable characteristic, the unifying thread as it were, is the character's constant duality which is expressed by the use of a public and private face and is best described in terms of the satyr. Specifically then, I am concerned with Marston's dramatic conventional character type; and, although his duality can be accounted for by Renaissance literary theory, my understanding is derived primarily from a reading of the plays themselves supplemented by a reading of the poems. I am concerned with how it operates and develops from its use to portray a relatively simple hypocrite to its use in tragedy where it contains and explores the many complex problems on the nature of life and ethical

⁵³ Caputi, John Marston Satirist, pp. 251- 55.

behaviour that have troubled man since he began to reason and question the nature of the universe and his own role in it. I have been concerned only secondarily with outside influences that explain its origin.

The presence of this character type in formal verse satire and the nature of his role as a scourge was the most important reason for calling this type of poetry satire, but the same cannot be said for the plays. Here the focus is eventually more on the inner conflict, change, and growth of the character himself and less on his role as a scourge of villainy. There are indeed satiric elements in the plays inasmuch as there are present in them attacks based on a moral position. But to call any of Marston's plays, particularly his later plays, simply satires would be extremely misleading, for once we recognize in the central character inner conflict, struggle, suffering, and awareness we are leaving the realm of the purely satiric and beginning to approach that of the comic and tragic.

Campbell speaks of Jacke Drum and What You Will as "Comicall Satyres", a term that was invented by Jonson.⁵⁴ This is certainly a more accurate label for these plays and could even be applied to some of his more sophisticated ones. Nevertheless, the term is more appropriate for

⁵⁴ Campbell, Comicall Satyre, p. vii.

Jonson's plays than for Marston's. In this study I have avoided categorizing the plays for fear that a blanket label would prejudice my analysis. Yet I realize that it is impossible to discuss the plays without speaking of the satiric, the comic, and the tragic.

The term satire, as has been stated already, means an attack based on a stated or implied moral position. The tone is usually antagonistic, and although it does not necessarily involve humour, it may utilize humour for effect or appeal. Satire should not be viewed as a record of the author's personal impressions of the world in which he lived any more than should comedy or tragedy. To treat satire thus implies that it is only valid for the age in which it was written and necessitates the study of that age to decide whether or not it be an accurate historical document. It further necessitates a study of the author's personality to decide whether he were in fact a passionately honest critic denouncing the horrors of his time or a maladjusted idiot who delighted in painting a bleak picture. I am not denying that these studies add to our knowledge and appreciation of literature, but I must affirm my opinion that they are secondary to a study of the works themselves. Kernan's comments on the confusion created by the biographical and historical approaches to satire seem appropriate here:

This dilemma has been created by the biographical and historical methods of criticism, and to solve it we need to approach satire in

the way we do other poetry — as an art; that is, not a direct report of the poet's feelings and the literal incidents which aroused those feelings, but a construct of symbols — situations, scenes, characters, language — put together to express some particular vision of the world. The individual parts must be seen in terms of their function in the total poem and not judged by reference to things outside the poem such as the medical history of the author or the social scene in which he wrote.⁵⁵

Comedy on the other hand not only lacks the antagonism and bitter invective of satire; it also involves what Frye calls a comic resolution that is the result of a special kind of reconciliation. In his discussion of *New Comedy* and the law of comic form Frye points out:

In all good *New Comedy* there is a social as well as individual theme which must be sought in the general atmosphere of reconciliation that makes the final marriage possible. As the hero gets closer to the heroine and opposition is overcome, all the right-thinking people come over to his side. Thus a new social unit is formed on the stage, and the moment that this social unit crystallizes is the moment of the comic resolution. In the last scene, when the dramatist usually tries to get all his characters on the stage at once, the audience witnesses the birth of a renewed sense of social integration. In comedy as in life the regular expression of this is a festival, whether a marriage, a dance, or a feast. Old Comedy has, besides a marriage, a *komos*, the processional dance from which comedy derives its name; and the masque, which is a by-form of comedy, also ends in a dance.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Kernan, *The Cankered Muse*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Northrop Frye, "The Argument of Comedy" in *Shakespeare's Comedies: an Anthology of Modern Criticism*, ed. Lawrence Lerner (London: 1967), pp. 316-17.

On another level it might be claimed that this is what all good humour does. It is a creative act that rearranges reality and, like a pun, reconciles things and concepts that were previously thought dissimilar or incongruous and thus delivers us from a stereotyped way of looking at life.

Tragedy is perhaps the most difficult and elusive term to define, and I will say more about it in the final chapter which deals with Sophonisba. For the present, however, it may be useful to recall Jean Anouilh's analogy between tragedy and a well oiled spring as quoted by Clifford Leech in The Critical Idiom: Tragedy:

The spring is wound up tight. It will uncoil of itself. That is what is so convenient in tragedy. The least little turn of the wrist will do the job. . . .
The rest is automatic. You don't need to lift a finger. The machine is in perfect order; it has been oiled ever since time began, and it runs without friction. Death, treason and sorrow are on the march; and they move in the wake of storm, of tears, of stillness. Every kind of stillness. The hush when the executioner's axe goes up at the end of the last act. The unbreathable silence when, at the beginning of the play, the two lovers, their hearts bared, their bodies naked, stand for the first time face to face in the darkened room, afraid to stir. . . .⁵⁵

In Marston's plays the tragic spring seldom snaps, but we are forever aware of its fearful energy. Its energy

⁵⁵ Clifford Leech, The Critical Idiom: Tragedy (London: 1969), p. 8.

permeates the world of his characters and lends an awesome quality to even those plays which end happily.

But possibly even more appropriate for concluding this discussion is Hunter's association of Antonio and Mellida with the modern theatre in that the tragic and the absurd are somehow related.

Antonio and Mellida asks us to see the matter of court intrigue as at once passionately serious and absurdly pointless; and there is no good ground for supposing that Marston thought one of these viewpoints more basic than the other. A modern play like Waiting for Godot should remind us that the tragic and the absurd may belong together. Indeed Marston showed a taste for these bizarre conjunctions, even from his earliest writings. The double vision of his Metamorphosis of Pigmalion's Image, at once erotic and anti-erotic, and the mode of his satires—fascinated by what they attack—demonstrate a characteristic ambivalence of outlook which makes Marston one of the strangest as well as ⁵⁶one of the most modern of the Elizabethans.

What Hunter says of Antonio and Mellida is applicable to all of Marston's plays, and the "double vision" he speaks of is expressed mainly in terms of the satyr persona—a character "fascinated by what [he] attack[s]." Usually we only associate the absurd with comedy, but once we sense the tragic that lies just beneath the surface, the distinction between absurdity and tragedy becomes blurred.

Finally a word on terminology and chapter arrangement: In the context of this work, when the word "satire"

⁵⁶ G.K. Hunter ed., John Marston: Antonio and Mellida, (Lincoln: 1965), p. xvii.

is used, I mean the genre, whereas by "satyr" or "satyrist" I mean either the narrator in formal verse satire or that person in a play who criticizes and rails at the parade of fops and fools while at the same time exhibiting to a greater or lesser degree many of these faults himself. However, quotations from primary sources will retain the original spelling of "satire" which is usually "satyr." The play Antonio's Revenge is dealt with in a separate chapter because of the special relationship between the satyr and the revenge theme.

CHAPTER I

THE SATYR IN A DRAMATIC CONTEXT

HISTRIO-MASTIX

Much of my discussion of Histrio-Mastix is indebted to an article by Kernan in which he attempts, I believe successfully, to show by internal evidence that the play was written by Marston alone, and not with a collaborator or as a revision of an older play.¹ However, there are certain points seminal to my thesis which Kernan only alludes to, whereas they constitute the main thrust of my analysis. As was stated earlier, my concern is with the adaptation of the satyr convention into Marston's dramatic context.

Throughout this analysis and subsequent chapters, I will be emphasizing two key points: first, that the satyr, with his dual personality or dual face, does appear in every play; second, that although the satyr does appear in every play, the persona is significantly modified so as to fit into the dramatic surroundings.

In his discussion of Juvenal's influence on Elizabethan satire, Kernan points out that the Stoic stance of impassivity is constantly at odds with those other aspects

¹ Alvin B. Kernan, "John Marston's Play Histrio-Mastix," MLQ, 19 (1958), 134-40.

of the philosophy which demanded a vigorous and zealous condemnation of vice. In Juvenal the condemnation is invariably carried to an extreme which results in a "schizophrenic tendency in the satirist." Kernan says that this tendency

. . . does not, however, seriously disturb the balance of the satires because they move with such speed and the focus is so unwaveringly on the abnormalities being castigated that a reader scarcely notices the speaker at all. But the dim figure who remains outside of the lights in Juvenalian satire came squarely into the limelight in Elizabethan drama, and his curious nature produced some strange effects when he was bodied forth on a stage.²

Chrisogonus, the central figure in Histrion-Mastix, is one of the first of these satirists to be "bodied forth" in Elizabethan drama, and the effects produced are perhaps strange, but they are also an integral part of a skillful and conscious dramatic design.

Histrion-Mastix is an unusual play. It is a combination of the masque and conventional drama. There are six acts and the first part of each act is introduced by either one or several personifications. These are more than simply prologues; sometimes they take up half the act. The structure of the play is cyclic. The world at the end is the same as it was in the beginning. In that sense it is static. But it is also evident that the cycle

² Kernan, "John Marston's Concept and Use of Satire," p. 59.

is going to continue.³ The actors have accepted Chrisoganus only temporarily; they will tire of him as did the nobles in Act II. They will see him for what he is—a pompous, ridiculous, pedantic bore. In this section it is my purpose to show that Chrisoganus, Marston's first attempt to incorporate the railing satyr into a dramatic context, is successful only in a technical sense. Chrisoganus does not grow. Indeed, the cyclical nature of the plot would seem to indicate that Marston did not intend growth or development.⁴

When the play opens, "Peace, . . . (like the aged Nurses) Growne proud to see her Children flourish thus,"⁵ introduces her daughters, Grammar, Logick, Rhetorick, Arithmatick, Geometrie, Musick, and Astronomie, who in turn pay

³ The appearance of Astraea, the goddess of Justice, who represents Queen Elizabeth, does not mean that the cycle has stopped. This is clearly a second ending meant for court performances. See Philip J. Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in His Social Setting (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1969), p. 122.

⁴ In his article on Histrion-Mastix, Kernan traces the etymology of the name Chrisoganus: "The unusual name 'Chrisoganus' i.e., 'golden-born' was probably borrowed from Cicero's oration Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino, where 'Chrisogonus,' a sinister and greedy freedman of Sulla, is attacked. The choice of the name for the satirist suggests that Marston was fully aware of creating a repulsive character." p. 134.

⁵ John Marston, Histrion-Mastix, in The Plays of John Marston, ed., H. Harvey Wood, III (Edinburgh: 1939), p. 247. All quotations from Histrion-Mastix and Jacke Drum, are taken from this edition. Since Wood includes neither the line numbers nor scene divisions, I have cited only the page from which the quotations are taken, and have included the references in the text.

homage to her. Immediately after these paeons, Chrisoganus enters with the nobles, Mavoritius, Philarchus, Larius, and Helitus. These too pay homage to her, but Peace asks: "But wherefore looke you so askaunce on these, [her daughters]/ As if they were not worthy your salutes?" (p. 248). They reply in unison: "Because wee knew them not." (p. 248), but Chrisoganus separates himself rather smugly from those who did not recognize the various Arts with the admonition: "The more your blame." (p. 248).

This chastisement of the nobles seems to indicate that, unlike them, he has been a constant and faithful student of the Arts. Peace then goes on to pity them for their ignorance and commands each one of them to choose a mate:

O pittied state! most weake, where nobles want
The love and knowledge of the liberall Arts;
Are you the men (for birth and place) admir'd?

.

Make then your mindes illustrious in your deedes
And each choose (in this troupe) a spowsall mate.

(p. 248).

The nobles obey and choose as follows: Philarchus, Geometrie; Hiletus, Rhetorick; and Larius, Astronomie. Chrisoganus' reply reiterates his special position: "And I to be a servant unto all." (p. 249). What can easily be overlooked here is that in spite of Peace's acknowledgement that Chrisoganus is a servant of the Arts, he is too concerned with separating himself from the others. This is further

demonstrated in his reply to Morvatius' objection on how difficult it is to know anything:

But if (by Art) as all our Artists say,
There is no reall truth to be attain'd,
Why should wee labour in their loves bestow?
The wisest said: I know I nothing know.
(p. 249)

Chrisoganus' pedantic reply no doubt only further confused Mavortius:

The wisest was a foole for saying soe:
That Oracle pronounc'd wise Socrates:
For doe I know I see you, or the light?
Or do you know you heere mee, or I touch you?
(p. 249).

And he leaps at the opportunity granted him by Philarchus' ready agreement to further display his erudition, but he only obscures an honest observation in scholastic jargon:

If this bee certaine then which comes from sence,
The knowledg proper to the soule is truer;
For that pure knowledg by the which wee know
A thing to bee, with true cause how it is,
Is more exact then that which knowes it is,
And reacheth not to knowledge of the cause.
Besides; that knowledge (that considers things
Abjunct from sencie matter) is exacter
Then that which joynes it selfe with elements;
Arithmetick ever considers numbers
Abstract from sencie matter: Musick still
Considers it with sence, as mixt with sound:
Therefore Arithmetique is more exact,
And more exact then is Geometrie:
Since unitas is still simplicior puncto,
And number simpler then is magnitude.
For Unitas may still be sine puncto.
But Punctus never without Unitie,
Nor; Magnitudo sine Numero,
Dum (enim) punctus ponitur, ponitur (ex necessitate)
Unitas.

(p. 249)

Chrisoganus shows himself to be a fool by not admitting,

like Socrates, that "I know I nothing know," and by trying to hide his ignorance in technical language. Morvatus' simple reply, "But all this proves not wee may know a truth" (p. 249), leads the undaunted Chrisoganus on to another flight of nonsense:

If wee have this wee call Scientia,
 We must have truth of meere necessity,
 For Acriveia doth not signifie,
 Onely a certainty in that wee know,
 But certainty with all perfection.
(p. 250).

Philarchus' concluding observation sums up Chrisoganus and the attitude that the others have toward him: "Although I am not satisfied in this,/ It doth me good to heare him thus discourse," (p. 250). They see him as a puzzling sage, and although they do not understand him, they feel that he has something to offer and their own inadequacies are preventing them from grasping it.

With Philarchus' departure the would-be actors enter with their leader Post-hast. Incle declares that trades are no longer necessary in these times of peace and plenty. This prompts Post-hast to suggest that they form a company of players. His suggestion is readily accepted and Sir Oliver Owlets is granted the dubious distinction of being named their patron. Of course as the title *Histrion-Mastix* implies, the players are to be the chief butt of the satire.⁶

⁶ Historians of the period have attempted to identify Post-

In the next scene, the merchants and lawyers are discussing the advantages of the new peace. What Fourcher says of the lawyers here is also applicable to Chrisoganus, the scholar; ". . . Peace gives Lawyers leave to play." (p. 252). It also gives scholars like Chrisoganus time to play. In this same conversation Lyon-rash asks: "how shall wee spend this after-noone?" (p. 252). When Fourcher suggests a play, Velure disdainfully replies: "See a Play, a proper pastime indeed: to heere a deale of prating to so little purpose." (p. 252). Boucher objects that theatre-going is in fashion; and although he is supported by Lyon-rash, who wants to listen to music, both are dismissed in favour of the more worthwhile endeavour of listening to Chrisoganus discourse on "Mathematicks." This is indeed an ironic decision; for what they hear surpasses the "prating to so little purpose" found in the theatre. Chrisoganus is only concerned with displaying knowledge; he is not concerned with teaching.

hast and his company. Two of the suggested possibilities have been Shakespeare and Anthony Munday. As I stated earlier in my introduction historical identifications, as useful and interesting as they are, are not the concern of this paper. R.A. Small in The Stage Quarrel between Ben Jonson and the So-called Poetasters (Breslau: 1899), believes that Post-hast is meant to represent Anthony Monday; he also believes that in creating Chrisoganus "Marston consciously or unconsciously drew a fairly correct picture of Jonson." p, 89. As other scholars have pointed out, Jonson took this portrait as an insult and retaliated; thus began the stage quarrel.

His first long speech to the assembled audience is of the same ilk as his earlier ones:

This sir; the naturall Philosopher
 Considers things as meerely sensible;
 The Mathematician; ut mente abiunctas a materia
sensibili,
 But this requireth time to satisfy;
 For 'tis an Axiome with all men of Art,
Mathematicum abstrahentem non comittere mendacium:
 And (for the beauty of it,) what can be
 Urg'd (more extractive) then the face of heaven?
 The misteries that Art hath found therein:
 It is distinguisht into Regions,
 Those Regions fil'd with sundry sorts of starres:
 They (likewise) christned with peculiar names,
 To see a dayly use wrought out of them,
 With demonstrations so infallible,
 The pleasure cannot bee, but ravishing
 (p. 252-53).

At the conclusion of his harangue, he describes the whirling of the heavenly orbs and the influence that they have on man's fate, which is clearly a foreshadowing of the changes that are going to affect the lives of everyone in the play, including Chrisoganus. Later, however, Chrisoganus shows no ability to apply his abstract notions to concrete situations.

In terms of the satyr convention the public face of the persona has been established in this first act. Chrisoganus is a scholar who pretends to be the guardian of the arts; and not, as Philip J. Finkelpearl suggests "a totally admirable figure."⁷ intent on helping and teaching others. But a close analysis of his character at this point

⁷ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 121.

makes it apparent that these are affectations.

After the introductory speech by Plenty in Act II, Mavortius, the ingenuous burr, expresses his distrust of, and disillusionment with the Arts:

What dullards thus, would dote in rusty Arte?
 Plodding upon a booke to dull the sence,
 And see the world become a treasure-house,
 Where Angells swarme like Bees in Plenties streets,
 And every Peasant surfets on their sweetes?
 (p. 256).

If his understanding of the Arts comes from his little contact with the pedant Chrisoganus, there can be little wonder that he speaks of them as "dulling" to the "sence." When he desires some "pleasing sportes" Chrisoganus is quick to recommend "sacred knowledge in divinest thinges." (p. 257); Philarchus' stark reply: "Your bookes are Adamants and you the Iron / That cleaves to them till you confound your-selfe," (p. 257), indicates that he no longer feels "It doth me good to hear him thus discourse." It has become evident to everyone that Chrisoganus is confounded by his own distorted notions of knowledge and its purpose. And as his fortunes begin to turn, the private, envious face of the persona begins to intrude on the public scholarly face. This results in the characteristic tension found in the satyr-- a tension that is a result of the struggle between the two faces. It is as if the staid public face refuses to yield to the private face without a fight. This tension is always most evident when the righteous indignation of the satyr

gives way to an outburst of spiteful envy.

The earlier description of the satyr as he exists in the formal verse satires showed that the satyr type was composed of two paradoxical elements; on the one hand he was a detached Stoic, and on the other a railing envious voyeur. As a Stoic his language was lofty, reserved, sententious, and self-controlled. But as a railing, envious voyeur his language was vulgar, choppy, energetic, and compulsive. It is obvious that such contradictory characteristics cannot be harmoniously contained within one character. The constant struggle between these opposing faces bound together in the same character sets up a tension that is seen in the satyr's language and accounts for his bizarre schizophrenic personality.⁸

With Mavortius' outright rejection of Chrisogonus and what he has to offer, it is evident that Chrisogonus is associated with the Stoics:

I cannot feed my appetite with Ayre,
I must pursue my pleasures royally,
That spung'd in sweat, I may returne from sport,
Mount mee on horse-back, keepe the Hounds and
Haukes,
And leave this Idle contemplation,
To the rugged Stoicall Morosophists.
(p. 257).

His allusion to "Idle contemplation" and "Stoicall

8 My use of the word tension should not be confused with its more technical use to describe the unity in a poem that occurs when the conflict between the general and particular is resolved.

Morosophists" touches on a theme that becomes central to most of Marston's plays. It is a theme that stresses Stoic detachment as an unrealistic retreat from the world. Most of the characters in Marston's plays who espouse the stoic philosophy eventually admit that it was only a pose.

That Chrisoganus is now a conventional satyr is beyond dispute, for Mavortius accuses him of falsely thinking that he is worthy to". . . carry just Ramnusia's whippe / To lash the patient;" (p. 258). Chrisoganus' final lines in Act II complete the satyr character:

Proud Lord, poore Art shall weare a glorious crowne,
When her depisers die to all renowne.

(p. 258).

As the self-appointed guardian of the Arts, he will be the one to wear the crown. What Chrisoganus wants is recognition and renown; to see it given to other people only fans the fires of envy that are now developing.

The rest of Act II deals simply with the activities of Post-hast and the actors, the various classes of people and the different ways they indulge themselves and find entertainment. Though not significant to the convention itself, it is in these scenes and characters that the satyr finds material for his railing.

In Act III, dominated by Pryde, Chrisoganus appears with the makeshift acting company. He is trying to sell one of his plays for ten pounds, but no one is interested. When he tells the price, Gulch, speaking for the entire

troupe, says: "Our Companie's hard of hearing of that side." (p. 273). Outraged, Chrisoganus cries: "I hope to see you starve and storme for bookes," (p. 273). to which Gut queries insultingly: "Will not our owne stuffe serve the multitude?" (p. 273). This dismissal by a crude tradesman is the ultimate snub. Chrisoganus' reply is a textbook example of the ranting satyr:

Write on, crie on, yawle to the common sort
 Of thickskin'd auditours: such rotten stuffs,
 More fit to fill the paunch of Esquiline,
 Then feed the hearings of judiciable eares,
 Yee shades tryumphe, while foggy Ignorance
 Clouds bright Apollos beauty: Time will cleere,
 The misty dullnesse of Spectators Eeys.
 Then wofull hisses to your fopperies,
 O age when every Scriveners boy shall dippe
 Prophaning quills into Thessaliaes Spring,
 When every artist prentice that hath read
 The pleasant pantry of conceipts, shall dare,
 To write as confident as Hercules.
 When every Ballad-monger boldly writes:
 And windy froth of bottle-ale doth fill
 Their purest organ of invention:
 Yet all applauded and puft up with pryde,
 Swell in conceit, and load the Stage with stuffe,
 Rakt from the rotten imbers of stall jests:
 Which basest lines best please the vulgar sence
 Make truest rapture lose preheminance.

(pp. 273-74).

Chrisoganus is ready to fly apart at the centre. The satyr's ambivalence and tension are both apparent here as the public and private faces seem to be struggling with each other. The players are ignorant and incompetent and deserve to be scourged, but they are being scourged by a man whose motives are not entirely corrective. He accuses them of "foggy Ignorance" and of being ". . . puft up with Pryde." Certainly

no one is more guilty of this vice than Chrisoganus himself. Moreover, the immediate motivation for the outburst was pique (a form of pride) caused by their refusal to buy his play.

Envy presides over Act IV. Chrisoganus has only one speech toward the end. He asks: ". . . who'le envy thee, / Whose dusky fortune hath no shining glosse / That Envies breath can blast?" (p. 281). This is the quintessence of envy for he is envious because no one envies him. For this reason, he ". . . could curse / This ideot world!" (p. 281), and blames everything on ". . . Peace, / That foster[ed] all save vertue;" and crowns ". . . dull clodds of earth with honours, / Wreath guilding the rotten face of barbarisme / With the unworthy shine of Eminence." (p. 281). Yet only in Act II he spoke of the "glorious crowne" that he would wear. There is now not even the slightest hint of Stoical fortitude. He wants eminence and dignity; he has learned nothing from his scholastic training, for he insists on fame and honour as a just reward for virtue. This may be an understandable human position, but it is hardly a scholarly one, and it is certainly not a Stoical one.

I spoke earlier of the cyclical nature of this play. The cycle begins with Peace, moves through Plenty, Pryde, Envy, War and Poverty, and returns again to Peace. All of the characters are affected directly and immediately by the presiding personification except for Chrisoganus. The fact

that he is a satyr enables Marston to use the duality of the satyr persona to present a character who is slightly more complex although by no means fully drawn. The rest of Chrisoganus' complexity is his shocking hypocrisy.

Act V is presided over by Warre, Ambition, Fury, Horror and Ruine; and it is here that Chrisoganus' hypocrisy is most appallingly evident. Everyone else is either fearful like Post-hast, who tremulously cries ". . . I have no stomacke to these warres." (p. 286), or ambitious like Mavortius who boasts:

If either sword, or fire, or strength of men,
Or any other steeled violence,
Can bring to swift confusion what is thine,
Upon this gratefull soyle; it shall be done.
(p. 287).

Both of these reactions are direct and understandable. Not so with Chrisoganus. He blossoms in the carnage; again he becomes the scholar and seer declaiming upon the ills of man. In the light of his previous envious speeches, it can only be concluded that he views this horror as an opportunity to appear superior to his fellows. Indeed, this adversity might bring him the recognition that he sought and did not receive in the previous acts. He is less envious now because he feels that other people are suffering with him, and he returns to his Stoic position. In no way, however, do we feel there has been a purgation of his envy.

In a glaring contradiction to his previous speech on envy, he urges: "Have patience worthy Lords, and calme

your spirits," and later, "Let not Ambition captivate your blood," (p. 287). The private face of the persona has again receded, but not totally. His previous actions and speeches, motivated by envy of those very people, cast a pall over his calmly Stoical outlook. One cannot help feeling that he takes a certain smug satisfaction from their discomfiture, and his advice is almost of the "I told you so" variety. Certainly he does not associate himself or his sins with those of weaker men, as this speech would indicate:

See, see, this common beast the multitude,
 (Transported thus with fury) how it raves;
 Threatning all states with ruine, to englut
 Their bestiall and more brutish appetites.
 O you auspicious, and divinest powers,
 (That in your wisdomes suffer such dread plagues
 To flowe and cover a rebellious land)
 Give end unto their furies! and drive back
 The roaring torrent on the Authors heads,
 That (in their pride of Rage) all eyes may see,
 Justice hath whips to scourge impiety.
 (p. 289)

Buttressed by the spectacle of other people's suffering, he becomes filled with the milk of human kindness and asks that the war be stopped and that the authors of it be punished.

The metamorphosis is complete. Chrisogonus is the totally righteous critic, and there is no evidence whatsoever that he is motivated by envy. Indeed, his soliloquy on "Ambition" contains none of the tension or imagery of corruption found in Acts II, III, and IV.

O how this vulture, (vile Ambition)
 Tyers on the heart of greatnesse, and devoures,

Their bleeding honours, whil'st their empty names,
 Lye chain'd unto the hill of infamie:
 Now is the time wherein a melting eye
 May spend it selfe in teares, and with salt drops,
 Write woe, and desolation in the dust,
 Upon the frightened bosome of our land,
 Pitty and Piety are both exilde,
Religion buried with our Fathers bones,
 In the cold earth; and nothing but her face,
 Left to adorne these grosse and impious times.
 (p. 288).

And after he luckily escapes from an encounter between the nobles, peasants, and citizens, he ostentatiously thanks God for treating him in the special way that his "pure" and "virtuous" soul deserves, and carries on in the same vein as his previous soliloquy:

Thus Heaven (in spite of fury) can preserve,
 The trustfull innocent, and guiltlesse Soule;
 O, what a thing is man, that thus forgets
 The end of his creation; and each houre
 Strikes at the glory of his maker thus?
 What brazen vizage, or black yron soule
 Hath strength to justifie so Godlesse deeds?
 (pp. 291- 92).

Throughout Act VI Chrisoganus continues to give wise and Stoic advice. He cites Solon and counsels smiling at adversity:

Thou want's a Solon to consort with thee,
 To prove affliction is the perfect way
 That leads to Joves tribunall dignity;
 Ill hast thou govern'd thy prosperity,
 That canst not smile in meere adversity.
 Looke uppon me (the poorest slave in shew,
 That ever fortune buried in mishappe:)
 Yet this is Natures richest Jewell-house
 And teacheth me to weepe at all your wants.
 (p. 295).

Although this speech might convince a new listener that Chrisoganus is full of wisdom and sympathy, it can scarcely

be expected to convince the reader who has witnessed his activities through six acts. Chrisoganus is up to his old tricks of separating himself from the rest of humanity. The reader must question his statement about misfortunes and ask what prompted them. Is having one's plays rejected by an ignorant tradesman tragic? Granted, it is hard on the ego-- but the ego is very much intact. Chrisoganus has a new bevy of listeners who, in their innocence, accept him as a sage. He will annoy them with his superficiality as he annoyed the nobles. He will return then to the private face of the satyr because they no longer feed his ego. There is no evidence, here or anywhere else in the play, to suggest that Chrisoganus has come to an awareness of his own failings.

What is most remarkable about the play is Marston's skill in incorporating the satyr Chrisoganus into the plot. He does not grow; rather, he parallels the cyclic movement, he is not outside of the action in spite of his railing; he is the biggest fool in the play. The others may momentarily recognize their faults, but not Chrisoganus. He will continue to think that the world does not appreciate or understand his true value.

Admittedly, Histrion-Mastix is not one of Marston's great plays; but by seeing the changes in the character of Chrisoganus as part of the satyr convention, the play can be viewed as the first step in Marston's development as a dramatist. Marston is able to present Chrisoganus as a hypocrite

by contrasting the public face of the persona with the private envious face. The contrast is the first and perhaps simplest change that Marston rings on the tension inherent in the convention. His use of it in subsequent plays continues to exploit the uniqueness of the relationship that exists between the public and private faces of the persona.

JACKE DRUM'S ENTERTAINMENT

For the most part Jacke Drum is a light comedy with several plots only vaguely connected. The two major plot lines concern the courtship of Sir Edward Fortune's daughters, Katherine and Camelia. Katherine is beautiful, virtuous, modest, and honourable, the ideal Marstonian woman. Pasquill, the ideal suitor and gentleman, falls in love with her and describes her in these terms:

Unequald Katherine
I bring no Musick to prepare thy thoughts
To entertaine an amorous discourse:
More Musick's in thy name, and sweet dispose,
Then in Apollos Lyre or Orpheus close.
I'll chaunt thy name, and so inchaunt each eare,
That Katherinas happie name shall heare.
My Katherine, my life, my Katherine.
(p. 198).

This passage is typical of the passionate lyrical tribute paid by the honourable lover to the ideal lady, and Katherine, the ideal lady, returns his love. As is to be expected, there is a cad called Mamon, a usurer, who attempts to thwart the romance. But in spite of his machinations and some nearly disastrous misunderstandings, Katherine and her faithful lover are eventually united in marriage.

The courtship of Camelia is a more interesting story, besides being generally naughtier. It is through Camelia's

affairs that we are introduced to the Brabant brothers, junior and senior, and their relationship with Ned Planet, the Satyr figure. Brabant senior is a fool who considers himself a wit; he is one of those abrasive thigh-slapping idiots whose practical jokes are crass and whose conversation is inane. When he is cuckolded at the end of the play as a result of his own attempted jest, we delight with Planet in his downfall.

Brabant junior is the antithesis of his brother. He is handsome, lovable, witty, and intelligent. Unfortunately, he impetuously falls in love with Camelia, who is very different from her sister Katherine. Camelia is a vain, shallow flirt who is easily influenced by Winifride, her lady-in-waiting. Winifride accepts bribes from each one of Camelia's suitors. In return, she convinces Camelia to accept each one as her lover. Eventually, of course, the deception catches up with her, and Camelia ends up with nobody while her younger sister marries before her. The satyr figure, Ned Planet, loyal friend and confidant of Brabant junior, plays a major role in the resolution of this affair; and although his more vitriolic outbursts do not occur until the end of the play, he displays the characteristic traits of sullenness and critical speech throughout.

Planet, the satyrist in Jacke Drum, is not the key figure that the satyrist is in Marston's other plays. However, he is very important in that we are able to see growth

in Marston's dramatic technique. My discussion of Histrion-Mastix showed how the satyr was transformed into a blatant hypocrite which is the simplest and most manageable way of utilizing the duality of his nature.

In this play an attempt is made to have the satyr-ist act as a legitimate critic without appearing either hypocritical, pompous, and self-righteous or lecherous, envious, and abrasive. To have him rail like the satyrists of verse satire might prove entertaining, but such undiluted railing is not drama. At the same time, the critic must not be emasculated. In the incorporation of Ned Planet into the plot and action of Jacke Drum, we see for the first time that delicate balance and use of the satyr's duality which Marston was to maintain and develop throughout his later works.

Planet is first introduced near the end of Act I, when Brabant junior rather too joyfully announces that he has spent the last few days at court with Camelia, where he has ". . . lane in my Ladies lap, eate, drink, & sleep." (p. 189). Planet disdainfully replies in satyr character: "So hath thy Ladies Dog done, . . ." (p. 189). This lewd innuendo, with its implication that the dog has received the same favours as the man, could have been taken directly from the poems. In "Satire VIII" of The Scourge of Villainy, the narrator castigates Phrigio for lowering himself to the level of an animal. "But out on Phrigio, / That wish'd he

were his mistress' dog, and go / And lick her milk white fist!" (pp. 122-24).⁷

Planet's opinion of Camelia is made evident in his speech in reply to Brabant junior's praise of her. For Planet, she is not only physically unattractive, she is mentally dead, and every comment he makes to Brabant junior is designed to awaken him from his infatuation:

The divel she is: Hart her lips looke
like a dride Neats-tongue: her face as
richly yeallow, as the skin of a cold Cus-
tard, and her mind as settled as the feet
of bald pated time.

(p. 190).

But the acidity of this opinion of Camelia is completely lost on Brabant junior, who affectionately curses the "hatefull humor" of his friend and accuses him of being "buried in Philosophie" and "dead to native pleasures life."

Plague on your hatefull humor, out uppont,
Why should your stomacke be so queasie now,
As to bespawle the pleasures of the world?
Why should you run an Idle counter-course
Thwart to the path of fashion? Come your reason?
O you are buried in Philosophie,
And there intombd in supernaturalls,
You are dead to native pleasures life.

(p. 190).⁸

⁷ John Marston, The Scourge of Villainy, in The Works of John Marston, ed. Arthur Henry Bullen (1887; rpt., Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970), III. All quotations from the poems and subsequent plays will be taken from this edition, and references will be included in the text unless otherwise specified.

⁸ In The Anatomy of Melancholy, Burton gives an explanation of why scholars are more prone to this malady:

The one is, they live a sedentary, solitary life,
to themselves and letters, free from bodily exercise,

Planet is disarmed by Brabant's candid and affectionate demand for an explanation of why he vomits up the pleasures of the world, and although he answers in a tone of pleasant self-condemnation, his speech touches on some key satyr qualities. He claims to have once loved three things, "Philosophy, Thrift, and my self." How he has become disillusioned with all three and as a result is "perfect hate."

Let me busse thy cheeke sweete Pugge, Now
I am perfect hate, I lov'd but three things in
the world, Philosophy, Thrift, and my self.
Thou hast made me hate Philosophy. A Usurers
greasie Codpeece made me loath Thrift: but if
all the Brewers Jades in the town can drug me
from love of my selfe, they shall doo more than
e're the seven wise men of Greece could: Come,
come, now I'le be as sociable as Timon of
Athens.

(p. 190).

There is an implication in this speech that envy of Brabant junior's vitality is a partial cause for Planet's disenchantment with philosophy, for he realizes that the strict discipline demanded by the subject has made him dead to native pleasures. His present hatred of thrift would seem to support this observation. Because he was a scholar,

Their familiar attendants are,
Grief, labour, care, pale sickness, miseries,
Fear, filthy poverty, hunger that cries,
Terrible monsters to be seen with eyes (Virgil)

If there were nothing else to trouble them,
the conceit of this alone were enough to make
them all melancholy.

See Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy, pp. 260-63.

thrift was forced upon him, and he could perceive it as a virtue only as long as he loved the scholarly life. Having realized, however, that study has stifled a great part of his personality, he immediately began to see the pernicious side of thrift and, in his disenchantment, equated it with the usurer's corruption. The obscene allusion to the "Usurers greasie Codpeece" is as typical of the satyr as are envy and disillusionment. Finally his admission of self-love, also an occupational hazard for a scholar, restates in a more general way the reasons for his hatred of the world. It is appropriate that he should end his speech by comparing himself with the arch cynic and satyr, Timon of Athens.

A paraphrase of what Planet has said or even an explanation, however, is insufficient. The lightness of tone here is not found in the speeches of formal verse satire or in the railing of Chrisogonus. It is abundantly clear that Marston went to some pains in his presentation of Planet as a satyr and that he was careful to show that Planet was capable of deep friendship and affection. Brabant addresses him as "my good sweete Planet," and Planet returns the pleasantry with "sweete Pugge." They are in full agreement that Brabant senior is a fool of the first order, which indicates that Brabant junior prefers the company of his melancholic scholar to that of his own brother.

Planet's affection for Brabant junior and his

self-mockery, which implies a degree of self-awareness, are as much a part of his personality as are his less attractive melancholic traits. These two aspects of his personality can be viewed as the public and private faces of the persona.

Now the problem that Marston faced in this play (a problem which was to recur again and again in his dramatic career) was how to incorporate the railer of formal verse satire into a dramatic context without having him look out of place. Part of the answer lay in using him as a choral figure, but that was not enough; the play would still appear disjointed if the audience were forever conscious of a railing misfit lurking on the periphery of the main action. Shakespeare solved the problem nicely in Timon of Athens by making him the central figure and focusing the action on the psychological factors that caused him to become a satyr personality. Thersites, of course, was another problem, but it appears that the atmosphere in Troilus and Cressida was the only kind in which such a character could exist.

In this early play, Marston cleverly managed the plot, utilizing a disguise type situation and a pseudo-satyr, so as to allow Planet ample opportunity to give full vent to his satyr nature while still remaining credible. I shall deal with the latter variation of the convention first.

In both Jacke Drum and What You Will, Marston experiments with what might be called a pseudo-satyr. He is a satyr in that he is a vain critic and enjoys ridiculing everyone else. Of course, he lacks the violent intensity of the true satyr. Brabant senior fits this type. However, the pseudo-satyr's raison d'être is to act as a straw man for the real critic satyr, in this instance Planet. Brabant senior is a despicable fool, but he serves a very practical dramatic purpose; he takes the focus off the envious and self-righteous side of Planet and makes him a more credible critic.

As a satirist, Marston wanted to use the satyr so that he could point to the folly and corruption of the world. As a skillful artist, he knew that a pathological railer would destroy dramatic unity, but, on the other hand, too staid a critic would lack dramatic potential. Marston, by making Planet the loyal friend and confidant of Brabant junior, managed to mute some of the satyr unpleasantness, but the loyal friend is a difficult role for the satyr to assimilate, and something else was needed; to fill this need, the pseudo-satyr was created.

The pseudo-satyr, the shallow, insincere critic who operates for effect or out of sheer egotism, is such a noticeable character on the stage that the real critic or satyr passes as a model of truth and sincerity. In this play Brabant senior, the fool, operates in such a way that

Planet's virtues are emphasized and his vices are blurred. In his analysis of the true critics in Jacke Drum, O.J. Campbell observes that "against the false attitude of Brabant senior the critical virtues of Ned Planet shine."⁹ This is very true; but Campbell neglects to mention that the tendency of the satyr to attack other critics is actually a part of the satyr nature. This is clearly expressed in Marston's "Satire II," where the narrator or satyrist attacks other critics first in order to clear the air for his own diatribe:

I, that even now lisp'd like an amorist,
Am turned into a snaphance satirist.
O title, which my judgment doth adore!
But I, dull-spirited fat Boeotian boor,
Do far off honour that censorian seat;
But if I could in milk-white robes entreat
Plebeians' favour, I would show to be
Tribunis plebis, 'gainst the villany
Of these same Proteans, whose hypocrisy
Doth still abuse our fond credulity.

But since myself am not immaculate,
But many spots my mind doth vitiate,
I'll leave the white robe and the biting rhymes
Unto our modern Satire's sharpest lines,
Whose hungry fangs snarl at some secret sin,
And in such pitchy clouds enwrappèd been
His Sphinxian riddles, that old Oedipus
Would be amazed, and take it in foul snuffs
That such Cymerian darkness should involve
A quaint conceit that he could not resolve.

O darkness palpable! Egypt's black night!
My wit is stricken blind, hath lost his sight;
My shins are broke with groping for some sense
To know to what his words have reference.
Certes, sunt but non videntur that I know;
Reach me some poets' index that will show.

⁹ Oscar James Campbell, Comical Satyr, p. 166.

*Imagines Deorum, Book of Epithets,
 Natalis Comes, thou I know recites,
 And makest anatomy of poesy;
 Help me to unmask the satire's secrecy;
 Delphic Apollo, aid me to unrip
 These intricate deep oracles of wit--
 These dark enigmas, and strange riddling sense,
 Which pass my dullard brain's intelligence.
 Fie on my senseless pate! Now I can show
 Thou writest that which I nor thou dost know.
 Who would imagine that such squint-eyed sight
 Could strike the world's deformities so right?
 (1-38).*

In this passage the narrator-railer manages to present himself as a superior person by admitting his faults which mirror almost perfectly those of the persons he attacks. Having diminished his own culpability by laying his cards on the table, he feels more at liberty than ever to rail.

A similar, if not exactly parallel, technique is used in *Jacke Drum*. Here, Marston chooses the subtler method of juxtaposing Brabant senior, the posturer and false critic, against Planet, the genuine satyr. The two are obviously meant to be contrasted, and the result is that Planet's vices are diminished and his railing and criticism are made more credible.

In the scene which follows the conversation between Brabant junior and Planet, Brabant senior enters and introduces the foppish Puffe. He mockingly assures those present that "he is a man of a well growne spirit, richly worth your —I assure you, ha, ha, ha." (p. 191). The fact that he does not even finish the introduction and breaks into laughter at the end indicates that Puffe is not "a man of a well

growne spirit," and when Puffe turns to Planet and begs that they "incorporate [their] affections," Planet snubs him and calls him a fool: "Sir, I pray you let me beg you for a foole." (p. 192). The fact that Brabant senior and Planet concur in their evaluation of Puffe leaves the immediate and false impression that these two men are alike in manner, but any such notion is quickly dispelled. At the end of the Act, Brabant senior brags about the delight he takes in ridiculing and making fools of the silly people he meets in society:

Why tis the recreation of my Intellect,
I thinke I speake as significant, ha, ha,
these are my zanyes, I fill their paunches,
they feed my pleasures, I use them as my
fooles faith, ha, ha.

(p. 193).

The speech clearly states that Brabant's only reason for being gracious to people is a desire to be amused by their foolishness. Yet he goes on obliviously to invite Planet to sup with him, claiming to love the company of clever wits because he is such a clever witty fellow himself.

Planet's acid reply shatters any notion that the two men are alike: "Ile give God thankes sir, that hath sent a foole to feed me." (p. 194). It must be noted that Planet gives no boisterous laugh to soften the remark. Both men may be critics, but Planet includes Brabant senior with the fools, and rightly so. The giggling idiot does not even recognize that he has been insulted. It is appro-

priate that Planet, having failed to get any reaction at all from his pointed thrust, should immediately afterwards exhibit the private face of the persona in a brief soliloquy:

I will eate his meate, and spend's money,
thats all the spight I can do him: but if I
can get a Pattent for concealed Sots, that Dawe
shall troupe among my Ideots.

(p. 194).

The malicious side of Planet is thinly veiled here, and we are reminded of Brabant junior's comment on his "hatefull humor." For the remainder of the play Planet continues to ridicule Puffe and Brabant senior, and both fail to realize what he is doing.

Bra. Sig. You shall see M. Puffe and me tosse it,
Ifaith marke with what grace I encounter
him.

Pla. Hart thy brother's like the Instrument
the Merchants sent over to the great
Turke: you need not play upon him, heele
make musicke of himselfe, and hee bee
once set going.

Bra. Sig. M. Puffe. I long to do faire service to
your love.

Puffe. Most accomlisht wit, exquisitly accout-
red, (Puffe) Judgement, I could wish my
abilitie worthie your service, and my
service worthie your abilitie.

Pla. By the Lord fustian, now I understand it:
complement is as much as fustian.

Bra. Sig. I protest your abilities are infinite,
your perfections matchlesse, your matchlesse
perfection infinite in abilitie, and your
infinite abilitie, matchlesse in perfection.

Pla. Good againe, rejoyce Brabant, thy brother
will not live long, he talkes Idlely
alreadie.

(p. 209).

The exchange here is ironic. Brabant senior thinks he has found a kindred spirit, another soul who takes perverse pleasure in the silliness and stupidity of others. Little does he realize that Planet is not amused at all and that his own inane jesting and laughter are as repugnant to him as is Puffe's fawning.

Eventually, of course, Brabant senior's coarse humour spins the rope that hangs him, and we delight with Planet in the poetic justice of his downfall. Brabant, who has complete faith in his wife's fidelity, decides to humiliate a neophyte to court circles by sending him to her ". . . As to a loose lascivious Curtezan:" (p. 222). This he calls ". . . the strongest Jest / That e're was builded by Invention." (p. 222). Planet, disgusted by his egotism and cruelty, prays to God that "The wicked Jest be turnde on his owne head," (p. 222). His prayer is answered, for Brabant's wife accepts Monsieur John fo de King as her lover, and the subsequent humiliation and outrage of Brabant senior is a pleasure to behold. Later, Planet, in a speech characteristic of the satyr persona, but perfectly justifiable in the context of the situation, denounces

. . . bumbaste wits,
That are puft up with arrogant conceit
Of their owne worth, as if Omnipotence
Had hoysed them to such unequald height,
That they survaide our spirits with an eye
Only create to censure from above,
When good soules they do nothing but reprove.
(p. 229).

The presence of Brabant senior, the ridiculous false critic, can be seen as one modification of the convention whereby the satyr is restrained and prevented from disrupting the unity of the play.

The second modification consists in casting the satyr figure in the role of helpful friend. This further allows Planet opportunities to vent his spleen while remaining a plausible or even attractive character. Brabant junior's success with Camelia is predictably short-lived. On Winifride's advice she rejects him in favour of John Ellis who naturally has paid Winifride for the favour. Because Brabant is so downcast and because Planet considers Camelia so unworthy of his devotion, Planet decides to enter the field himself and cure his young friend of infatuation. To this end, he bribes Winifride, and in no time at all Camelia is in hot pursuit. But Planet spurns her and swears to remain loyal to his friend.

Unfortunately Brabant junior overhears his passionate protestations of affection and mistakenly believes that Planet has betrayed him. Outraged and hurt, he orders a servant to kill Planet; but, luckily for both men, the servant realizes that Brabant is distraught and does not obey the command. After all the confusion has been cleared away Brabant junior comes to agree with Planet's evaluation of Camelia and is grateful to his friend for intervening.

Now the main purpose for Planet's intervention

was to expose Camelia for a shallow flirt and so give the death blow to Brabant junior's grief over losing her. But the pose that he adopts also gives him a chance to rant and rail in satyr character. His condemnation of Camelia is violent beyond the deserts of her light-hearted sins. To be a flirt who is easily swayed by a greedy lady-in-waiting is not to be a "Syren," "scritch-owle," or "chattering Pye" as he so mercilessly calls her. Significantly, he claims for himself the role of "scourge," thus placing himself squarely in the conventional role of satyr-scourge who "whips" the follies of mankind:

Out Syren, peace scritch-owle, hence chattering Pye,
 The blackt beakt night Crow, or the howling Dog,
 Shall be more gracious then thy squeaking voice:
 Go sing to M. John. I shall be blunt
 If thou depart not, hence, go mourne and die,
 I am the scourge of light inconstancie.

(p. 228-229).

After Planet succeeds in driving Camelia from his sight, rather a feat in itself since that lady required some rather abusive persuading, he reveals himself in another brief soliloquy. He intends to wreak vengeance on Camelia for her "scorn" of Brabant junior:

Thus my deare Brabant, am I thy revenge,
 And whip her for the peevish scorne she bare
 To thy weake yonger birth: ô that the soules of men
 Were temperate like mine, then Natures painte
 Should not triumph o're our infirmities.
 I do adore with infinit respect,
 Weomen whose merit issues from their worth
 Of inward graces, but these rotten poasts
 That are but guilt with outward garnishment
 O how my sould abhorres them. Yons my friend.

(p. 229).

This speech is important for three reasons. Planet privately sees himself as a "whip" or scourge of vice; he considers himself a superior person as is indicated by the lines "O that the soules of men / Were temperate like mine," and finally, his too keen desire for vengeance against so light-headed a creature as Camelia implies a fascination with her particular brand of vice. All three of these are characteristic of the conventional satyr or persona of verse satire; and were it not for the fact that we know his love for Brabant junior is genuine, we might question the excessive zeal with which he punishes Camelia for her "peevish scorne." In this context, however, any possible abrasive effect is muted by the realization that his primary motive is concern for his young friend.

Moreover, his action in exposing Camelia emphasizes the special role that Planet plays in Jacke Drum's Entertainment. He is not an expendable character; he not only rails at vice, he does something to eradicate it. He gives Brabant junior "ocular proof" of the foolishness and danger of his mindless infatuation which is, as Finkelpearl states, a form of "romantic idealization [that] has blinded him to the unworthiness of the object he dotes upon, and nothing but near disaster can bring him to his senses."¹⁰

It is true that we cannot speak of any character

¹⁰ *Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 134.*

in Jacke Drum in terms of growth, nor can we claim for it any sophisticated dramatic action. Nevertheless, Marston achieves real success in combining the satyr and the loyal friend by having Planet play a definite part in the resolution of one of the key plots in the play. He further mutes the railing by legitimizing the situation in which the explosions occur.

However, Marston's use of the convention in this play suggests that he is still experimenting, for in Jacke Drum, unlike his later plays, he attempts to conceal the satyr rather than *to integrate* him into the plot where his duality could serve as a structural device that would contain the paradoxical aspects of Marston's special dramatic vision. In What You will, Marston continues to use the pseudo-satyr as a foil for the authentic critic, but he also capitalizes on the dual nature of the satyr as a unifying principle throughout the play.

CHAPTER II

SATYR TENSION IN TRANSITION PLAYS

ANTONIO AND MELLIDA

Antonio and Mellida is a comic parody of the trials of true love. Antonio and his father, Andrugio, are defeated at sea by the evil Duke of Venice, Piero. Antonio and Andrugio both believe the other has died. Piero, uncertain of their fate, offers a reward of 20,000 pistolets for the heads of Antonio and/or Andrugio.

When the play opens, Antonio arrives at Piero's palace disguised as a woman. He becomes lady-in-waiting to his beloved Mellida, daughter of Piero. Eventually they flee the court, but Mellida is recaptured. Andrugio discovers his son in a state of utter despair wandering on the marshes. After a joyful reunion, they devise an extraordinarily preposterous plan.

Andrugio goes to Piero's court dressed in armour, and announces that he has the head of Andrugio. When he reveals himself, Piero is "amazed, our royal spirit's numb'd / In stiff astonish'd wonder at thy prowess." (V.i.281-82). Immediately following Piero's exclamation of amazement, Antonio is brought in, apparently dead, and in a coffin. Piero sheds a few tears and laments that his "dearest blood, / Would but redeem one minute of his [Antonio's] breath!"

(V.i.323-24). Predictably, on cue, Antonio pops up. "I seize that breath." (V.i.325), he confidently cries. The lovers are joyfully united, but the play ends on a disquieting note. More will be said of this ending in the discussion that follows.

Feliche, the satyr character, appears in the love story as the faithful friend of Antonio, and he dominates that part of the play which deals with the court fops and fools. Both functions are of such importance that he must be considered a major character; indeed, he is the only character to give the play depth and cohesiveness.

The Satyr in Antonio and Mellida

Marston's use of the satyr convention in this play can best be studied by an examination of the character of Feliche. In the induction, Alberto asks Feliche about Forobosco, "Why, what plays he?" and Feliche replies:

The wolf that eats into the breasts of princes;
that breeds the lethargy and falling sickness
in honour; makes justice look askint; and
blinds the eye of merited reward from viewing
desertful virtue.

(Induction, 47-51).

Similar to this is his reply to Matzagente's grandiloquent praise of women, "Rampum, scrampum, mount tufty Tamburlaine! What rattling thunderclap breaks from his lips?" (Induction, 94-95). Two things are worth noticing here. The first is the intense, scurrilous, obscure, and

Juvenalian language—certainly the language of attack. Matzagente may be a fool, but it is not evident to anyone at this point; yet Feliche lashes out. The second noticeable feature of these few exchanges is that Feliche has a bad word for everyone. He willingly offers to abuse people.

The character of Feliche becomes more complex when he describes his part in the play proper. As his name indicates, he is to be the happy man, envying no one. But he confesses that he has neither the understanding nor the ability for such a part, although he does reply to Galeatzo's request to "show us a draught of thy spirit." (Induction, 111).

'Tis steady and must seem so impregnably fortress'd with his own content that no envious thought could ever invade his spirit; never surveying any man so unmeasuredly happy, whom I thought not justly hateful for some true impoverishment; never beholding any favour of Madam Felicity gracing another, which his well-bounded content persuaded not to hang in the front of his own fortune; and therefore as far from envying any man, as he valued all men infinitely distant from accomplished beatitude. These native adjuncts appropriate to me the name of Feliche.

(Induction, 113-24).

This is an interesting speech, for it is a description of a happy man, told by someone who has just admitted that his knowledge of the subject is extremely limited. From his limited perspective, he sees happiness as freedom from envy and nothing more. We suspect, then, that he is inwardly tainted with envy, and secretly aware of it. In fact,

this might provide partial motivation for his ruthless quickness in pointing out the vices of other people.

Kernan believes that the exchange between Feliche and Antonio which follows this speech in the induction indicates that Marston was aware that he had given Feliche insufficient occasion for railing criticism. His discussion of Feliche's curious lines and the promise for a fuller development of this character is as follows:

Feliche comments, "I fear it is not possible to limn so many persons in so small a tablet as the compass of our plays afford" (lines 145-7). Antonio answers, "Right! therefore I have heard that those persons, as . . . you, Feliche, that are but slightly drawn in this comedy, should receive more exact accomplishment in a second part; which, if this obtain gracious acceptance, means to try his fortune." But Feliche is even more unfortunate in the promised second part of Antonio and Mellida. In the interests of the blood-revenge plot he is hanged at the outset of the play, and the satiric work is taken over by his venerable father, Pandulpho, a more judicious but less interesting character.⁷

This may be an admission of failure, not necessarily because Feliche did not have sufficient opportunity to rail, but rather because Marston was trying to add a new dimension to the convention. In a footnote to the passage quoted above Kernan makes the point that Marston was not terribly concerned with the Aristotelian idea of unity of action. He was, however, much concerned with the notion of drama as entertainment. Thus, while he might not be concerned that Feliche was imperfectly developed as a character, he would

⁷ Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 210.

be concerned that "he was not getting the fullest theatrical advantage from his satirist."⁸ According to Kernan, Marston's answer was to free the satirist for "unlimited railing" by fitting him into the action of the plot. However, "theatrical advantage" does not necessarily mean freedom to rail. Railing, of itself, is more apt to prove a theatrical disadvantage. And while Kernan's comment that Pandulpho is a "less interesting" character than Feliche may be true, inasmuch as Marston is making a statement about a fallen world and its relationship to moral values, Pandulpho's role is very important. Moreover, Marston gets the maximum dramatic effect out of Pandulpho's rejection of Stoicism. Finally, there is no need of any admission of failure whatsoever in the creation of Feliche if we accept Hunter's gloss on Antonio's promise that Feliche "receive more exact accomplishment in the second part."⁹ He takes this to mean that the same actor played Feliche in Antonio's Revenge.

For all his limitations, Feliche is the one character in the induction who gives the impression of verisimilitude. Inasmuch as he is a satyr type, his character is restricted. There are certain things we expect him to say and expect him to do. Yet he does possess a kind of faithfulness to reality. He is the envious man, and, because of

⁸ Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 210.

⁹ G.K. Hunter, ed., Antonio and Mellida (Lincoln: 1965), p. 9.

this sickness, he perceives the world as a monstrosity.

Thus we have the satiric scene that Kernan speaks of.

However, this Bosch-like nightmare is not tossed out randomly for the inspection of the reader. Rather, it is seen through the eyes of a man who wants to see it that way and is incapable of seeing it differently. This is perhaps reading too much into the few speeches of the induction. But before continuing our examination of Feliche in the play proper, one more observation is in order. Both Feliche and Antonio recognize that the part Antonio has to play is not one role but two. Antonio moves from one extreme to the other and there is little plausible motivation. Could it be, then, that Antonio's promise that there will be another play where Feliche will be more fully drawn is meant to imply that certain features of Feliche will be more fully drawn in the character of Antonio and that there will be more to the second play than the simple characters representing extreme states of passion?

Feliche

Feliche appears very early in the play. His first speech is a reply to Piero's victory speech and has a strange ring to it, tending slightly to the strident tone of the satyr, the "rampum, scrampum" kind of language used in the induction; but, for the most part, it is controlled and stoically staid. This must be the voice of the wise and

happy man described in the induction —the public face. But we already know that Feliche is uncomfortable in this role and his language shows it. It has a latent explosive quality, and he is struggling to keep it under control. There is a tension within every line. He seems to be saying to himself, "I must be reasonable; I must not rail." The speech is homiletic; except for the straining quality, it could be from Everyman. Yet this tension gives strength and power to each line. There is nothing bland or banal about the poetry; it is worthy of Marlowe. The speech, however, falls on deaf ears. Piero dismisses it with the Senecan aphorism "Dimitto superos, summa votorum attigi." (I.i.60). He hardly notices Feliche. His next speech is a criticism of the sycophantic flatterer, Forobosco:

Confusion to these limber sycophants!
 No sooner mischief's born in regency,
 But flattery christens it with policy.
 ((I.i.75-77)).

The speech is not an outburst, but the bitterness of it indicates a movement in that direction. It is significant that this is an aside, and perhaps more than just an aside, since it is not meant to be heard by those people who surround him. He seems to be stepping out of character as the happy man and returning to his real self—the self of the induction—the man who did not understand or have the ability to utter the thoughts of the contented man. In short, he

has reverted to the private self of the persona, and Marston uses the tension inherent in the convention to make this dramatic shift.

After the aside, Feliche openly criticizes Piero in the language of the good and wise Stoic. He advises him against using his powerful position to wreak personal vengeance with the words: "Ill, when public power strength'neth private wrong." (I.i.85). But Piero argues: "'Tis horse-like not for man to know his force." (I.i.86), and Feliche answers him in the manner of a tolerant, kind friend: "'Tis god-like for a man to feel remorse." (I.i.87). This advice might as well have been cast to the winds. Piero becomes adamant in his determination to seek revenge, and he dismisses Feliche abruptly with:

Pish! I prosecute my family's revenge,
Which I'll pursue with such a burning chase,
Till I have dried up all Andrugio's blood;
Weak rage, that with slight pity is withstood.
(I.i.88-91).

Feliche does not appear again until Act II where we find him acting as commentator in the midst of all the court parasites and flatterers. The quality and tone of his speeches differ markedly from those to Piero in Act I, Scene I, as does his apparent attitude towards the people around him. One thing remains unchanged, however; these people pay him no more heed than did Piero.

Rossaline, disgusted at a remark by Balurdo, spits; the spit lands on Castilio's shoe and she tells him to clean

it up. He fawningly answers,

By my wealthiest thought, you grace my shoe
with an unmeasured honour: I will preserve the
sole of it, as a most sacred relic for this
service.

(II.i.90-92).

and she mocks his lavish, insincere compliment with: "I'll
spit in thy mouth, and thou wilt, to grace thee." (II.i.93).
Hardly a ladylike comment!

It is at this point that Feliche is unable to re-
strain himself further. The mask is dropped, and the lan-
guage is that of the "whipping" satyr in high gear:

O that the stomach of this queasy age
Digests, or brooks such raw unseasoned gobs,
And vomits not them forth! O! slavish sots!
Servant, quoth you? faugh! if a dog should crave
And beg her service, he should have it straight:
She'd give him favours too, to lick her feet,
Or fetch her fan, or some such drudgery:
A good dog's office, which these amorists
Triumph of: 'tis rare, well give her more ass,
More sot, as long as dropping of her nose
Is sworn rich pearl by such low slaves as those.

(II.i.94-104).

One might expect this outburst or submission to
his natural inclinations would elicit some reaction, but it
does not. Rossaline exits, and Balurdo and Forobosco carry
on a conversation together. Now Feliche pours out venom at
every opportunity,

O how I hate that same Egyptian louse,
A rotten maggot, that lives by stinking filth
Of tainted spirits! vengeance to such dogs,
That sprout by gnawing senseless carrion!

(II.i.131-34).

Why man, cry out for lanthorn and candle-light:
for 'tis your only way, to find your bright-
flaming wench with your light-burning torch:
for most commonly, these light creatures live
in darkness.

(II.i.151-54).

until eventually Alberto cries "Away, you heretic, you'll
be burnt for—" (II.i.155). But before he can finish,
Feliche interrupts and tells him, "Go, you amorous hound,
follow the scent of your mistress' shoe; away!" (II.i.156).

Clearly then, Feliche is no more effective as a railer than he was when he was playing at being the wise Stoic. In either case, no one pays any attention to him. The most he seems capable of doing is railing at the fools he sees around him, and to a large extent he seems to be outside the action of the play. He functions as a watered-down chorus. However, later in the scene, we see him in a slightly different context which sheds a bit more light on his character.

Act III, Scene ii, opens with a soliloquy by
Feliche:

Castilio, Alberto, Balurdo! none up?
Forobosco! Flattery, nor thou up yet?
Then there's no courtier stirring: that's firm
truth?
I cannot sleep: Feliche seldom rests
In these court lodgings. I have walk'd all
night,
To see if the nocturnal court delights
Could force me envy their felicity:
And by plain troth, I will confess plain troth,
I envy nothing but the travense light.
O, had it eyes, and ears, and tongues, it might
See sport, hear speech of most strange surquedries.

O, if that candle-light were made a poet,
 He would prove a rare firking satirist,
 And draw the core forth of imposthum'd sin.

.

Well, here I'll sleep till that the scene of up
 Is pass'd at court. O calm hush'd rich Content,
 Is there a being blessedness without thee?
 How soft thou down'st the couch where thou dost
rest,
 Nectar to life, thou sweet Ambrosian feast!
(III.ii.1-24).

This speech tells us several things about Feliche's state. First of all, he cannot sleep in court lodgings; he walks all night to see if the nocturnal court delights could force him to envy them. He is, as it were, searching out vice and perversion on the pretext that he is trying to find something to envy. He concludes that the only thing he could envy is the traverse light, because the light sees everything that goes on behind the closed doors; and so, if he were light, he would be able to spy on all forms of iniquity. This would be the ideal state for the whipping satirist. Like the light, he would be able to draw forth the core from corruption and sin. This is the fundamental satyr paradox. In spite of his insistence that his intention is to punish vice, there is the distinct impression that he is fascinated with the very vice he is attacking. The speeches are permeated with a kind of peeping-tom imagery and excitement, as is Feliche's soliloquy in this instance.

As in his first speech early in Act I, there is

a tension here. We are led to expect a kind of stoic resignation and contentment. But his actions and the central metaphor belie his insistence that he is a contented man. If he is a man at peace with himself, what is he doing skulking around at night, looking for people to spy on? Why is he unable to sleep? His reason for envying the light is indeed strange.

His next long speech is in the same vein. Again he declares his superiority. He has been "borne upon the spirit's wings," from which height he has "viewed the feeble joints men totter on." Significantly, he repeats an exact phrase from his previous speech. He views with hate or pity these poor creatures. This, together with his admitted desire to view constantly their vices, leads one to suspect that Feliche is doing his utmost to convince himself of his own position.

I wonder it doth not envy me. Why, man,
 I have been borne upon the spirit's wings,
 The soul's swift Pegasus, the fantasy:
 And from the height of contemplation,
 Have view'd the feeble joints men totter on.
 I envy none; but hate, or pity all.
 For when I view, with an intentive thought,
 That creature fair but proud; him rich, but sot;
 Th'other witty, but unmeasured arrogant;
 Him great, yet boundless in ambition;
 Him high-born, but of base life; t'other fear'd,
 Yet fear'd fears, and fears most to be loved;
 Him wise, but made a fool for public use;
 The other learned, but self-opinionate:
 When I discourse all these, and see myself
 Nor fair, nor rich, nor witty, great, nor fear'd,
 Yet amply suited with all full content,
 Lord, how I clap my hands, and smooth my brow,
 Rubbing my quiet bosom, tossing up
 A grateful spirit to Omnipotence!

(III.ii.42-61).

This speech is couched in the disinterested, aphoristic language of the stoic. But Feliche "protests too much," and again the vulnerability of his pose is underscored in the exchange that follows with Castilio. Castilio taunts Feliche with information about his lascivious life:

Hah, Hah! but if thou knew'st my happiness,
 Thou would'st even grate away thy soul to dust,
 In envy of my sweet beatitude.
 I cannot sleep for kisses; I cannot rest
 For ladies' letters, that importune me
 With such unused vehemence of love,
 Straight to solicit them, that---.

(III.ii.62-68).

But Feliche does not let him finish. He breaks in with protestations that Castilio is lying and women are *not* so easily won. Feliche, swept from "the heights of contemplation" by the taunting braggart, Castilio, has only one defence. He accuses Castilio of lying. Surely, if Castilio were telling the truth, he, Feliche, would be sought out as well:

Confusion seize me, but I think thou liest.
 Why should I not be sought to then as well?
 Fut! methinks I am as like a man.
 Troth, I have a good head of hair, a cheek
 Not as yet wan'd, a leg, 'faith, in the full.
 I ha' not a red beard, take not tobacco much:
 And 'slid, for other parts of manliness---

(III.ii.69-75).

The language here is very different from the dispassionate exalted kind used in the previous speech on envy. There are no Stoic platitudes—a raw nerve has been exposed. His Stoic armour useless, he is confused, hurt, and reacting personally to a personal insult; "you all do lie, you all

do lie." (III.ii.83) is the anguished cry of a disillusioned man, not a contented sage.

Let me make it clear that these changes are not pointed out for the purpose of developing a case for subtle motivation. I am simply interested in examining a conventional type. So far, Feliche has been seen as the traditional railer, possessed of an unusual delight and attraction for the vice that he scourges. And, in the context of this play, he also makes evident a self-conscious awareness of the role that he is supposed to be playing: that is, the role of a happy man. This self-consciousness is most noticeable in the tension that exists in the language he uses. There is a third facet to his character that is brought to light in Act III, Scene ii, when he helps Antonio to escape:

Antonio,
Be not affright, sweet Prince; appease thy fear,
Buckle thy spirits up, put all thy wits
In wimble action, or thou art surprised.
(III.ii.194-97).

He becomes, in this instance, another conventional type--the faithful friend. He could be Hamlet's Horatio, Lear's Kent or fool, Othello's Cassio, Leontes' Camillio, or Andrugio's Lucio. In one way it is not surprising that he should play this role since he is the only person who is dramatically available. On the other hand, it would be utterly surprising if a satyr type such as Thersites ever befriended anyone. Thus, we have in Feliche, a satyr type,

one significant modification of the convention in that when he befriends and expresses his love for Antonio he moves outside the satyr convention. This may have been done for dramatic expediency or for purposes of character development, but one might still cautiously suggest that he does come to an understanding of that happy man he could not conceive in the induction now that he has ceased to lash out at folly and has concentrated on the more positive action of helping a friend. It must be admitted, of course, that although this new role is a significant modification of the convention, no evidence to foreshadow or hint at the metamorphosis was provided. Nevertheless, disjointed and unmotivated as the shift appears, there is definitely some sort of movement and progression.

What then is the significance of Feliche? One would be in error to claim that his actions are motivated in the same realistic way that Horatio's are motivated. Nevertheless, the convention of the satyr and his speeches in the induction do give his character a completeness and integrity that no one else in the play possesses. When Feliche moves from one extreme to the other, there is no surprise because the tension that exists in his stoic speeches continually suggests that he is about to revert to the satirist. His attempts to play the contented man are stymied by the ugliness of the world he sees.

Before concluding my discussion of Feliche, I should like to comment on O.J. Campbell's analysis of Antonio and Mellida. I will quote Campbell at length for several reasons: Campbell is an astute and thorough scholar, and the extent of his research is monumental, and while I agree in part with his analysis I must take issue with him on several points that relate to the satyr persona. Campbell sees no unity in the play itself or in the character of Feliche. It is my position that while Antonio and Mellida is not a great play, its most interesting character is Feliche because he is the only one who achieves some complexity. It is further my position that this complexity arises from the duality within the satyr persona.

In his poems Marston had announced that the proper ingredients of the authentic satiric mood were impatience, cynicism, and melancholy. In the proem to The Scourge of Villainy he has invoked melancholy as the emotion essential to a man bent upon plowing up "the hidden entrails of rank villainy." At other times he boasts that his spirit is cynic, and thus at the opposite pole from stoicism. He shouts:

Preach not the Stoic's patience to me;

.

My soul is vex'd; what power will resist,
Or dares to stop a sharp-fang'd satirist?
Who'll cool my rage? Who'll stay my itching fist?

But Marston apparently realized that such an attitude would destroy at its source the mirth which should be one of the constituents of a successful dramatic satire. Hence he called his commentator Feliche, "the happy man." Morse Allen believes that Marston intended him to represent the spirit of "true stoic content." The dramatist may thus have shown his realization

O, if that candle-light were made a poet,
 He would prove a rare firking satirist,
 And draw the core forth of imposthum'd sin.
 Well, I thank heaven yet, that my content
 Can envy nothing, but poor candle-light.

In such lines as these Feliche almost ostentatiously announces that he envies no courtier his immorality, even though it be disguised under gorgeous trappings. He envies only those who possess the power of exposing its foulness. And the office that he undertakes, in his set soliloquies and in his biting asides to the audience, is that of exposure. He thus stands almost as completely apart from the action as did the author of formal satire from his creatures.

His critical aloofness should co-operate with his stoical spirit to give all his comments ethical seriousness. This is true even of the criticism which he directs against creatures whose humours are scarcely more than forms of ineptitude. These gulls are all suitors of the free-spoken, witty lady of the court, Rossaline. She fleers at them in the tone and in the similitudes of detraction which, we have seen, characterized the typical buffoon. By using both her and Feliche as agents of satire, Marston contrives to direct two sorts of derision against his fools, just as Jonson did by enlisting both Carlo and Macilente in that service.

Feliche, then, is the stern moral mentor. He regards even harmless affectation as a sign of moral delinquency. He detects sin everywhere and constantly denounces it. In so doing, he loses his spirit of professed calm and rich content. He becomes a thinly disguised personification of "grim Reproof, stern hate of villainy," or of

Fair Detestation of foul odious sin,
 In which our swinish times lie wallowing.

Thus Feliche, in spite of his name, is led by his moral fervor to express the saeva indignatio that his author had worked up while writing his satires. The result is direct contradiction of Marston's expressed belief that the satiric attitude toward fops and pseudo gallants¹⁰ should be permeated by laughter and merriment.

¹⁰ Campbell, Comicall Satyre, pp. 141-43.

"In his poems, Marston had announced that the proper ingredients of the authentic satiric mood were impatience" In the poems it is not Marston who announces the proper ingredients for the authentic satiric spirit—it is the satyr persona, a character in his own right. Campbell assumes that the shifts from cynicism to Stoicism are a manifestation of the author's confusion rather than aspects of the narrator persona.

He also assumes that Marston was fearful of destroying at its source "the mirth which should be one of the constituents of a successful dramatic satire." This is an unwarranted assumption for the evidence of his early plays suggests that Marston was not really concerned with mirth. It is hard to label Marston's brand of humour—but it is certainly not mirthful, nor was it intended to be. In all of his plays, Marston seems more concerned with presenting, beneath a thin veneer of comedy, a deep undercurrent of pessimism.

Campbell is rightly concerned with examining Feliche as a commentator but he neglects to see that Marston was attempting to create a character of some complexity. There is a reason for Feliche's shifting roles. Marston was fully aware that an "effective critic" should at times stand at a "psychic distance from the objects of his derision," but as a dramatist he was also aware that this kind of dis-

tance could destroy the unity of his play. The previous chapters on Histrion-Mastix and Jacke Drum show that Marston was concerned with incorporating the railing satyr into the fabric of the play.

The most surprising of Campbell's statements is that the knowledge of the plays does not charm. Charm was not Marston's trump suit, and I doubt if he ever wanted it to be. Mirth and charm have a not too significant place in Marston's dramatic world.

Campbell is right in associating Feliche with the formal verse satires, but at the risk of straining what has now become obvious, the author and narrator in formal verse satire are not the same. Moreover, the private face of the persona keeps the public face from becoming totally aloof. Marston clearly did not want the totally righteous critic.

With regard to Marston's expressed belief in The Satires, the same mistake is made. There are many ideas about satire expressed in Marston's poems and they are frequently contradictory, which is only natural. They are made, not by the author, but by the author's persona which is intentionally contradictory.

The extreme states of Antonio and Andrugio lack the kind of completeness found in Feliche. Marston, aware of this, was content to play their abrupt reversals for humour. Antonio and Andrugio are ridiculous figures. It

should be made clear that the purpose of this paper is not to prove that every character in Marston's plays is a satyr, or that those who are not, should have been. Just because a character uses lewd language or rejects Stoicism does not mean that he is a satyr, nor is he necessarily a satyr if he happens to criticize some person or vice.

The satyr is a clearly defined type. To repeat his main characteristics: he is a self-appointed scourge; he is a melancholic, and his attacks on lust are overly realistic and detailed. But his criticism is always valid up to a point. That is, the people he attacks are usually guilty, but not to the same degree that the satyr claims. The satyr always uses over-kill.

Like many of Marston's satyr critics, Andrugio vacillates between Stoicism and extreme states of passion: unlike the satyr types, he lacks psychological depth; but this was obviously Marston's intention. Andrugio is continually urging Stoic detachment; and, after every sententious utterance, he falls into a state of despair. Antonio, the hero, is yet another "amorist who spends the first two acts in women's clothing, and much of the play lying on the ground weeping helplessly."¹¹

There is no question that Marston was aware of the ridiculousness of these two one-dimensional characters—

¹¹ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 142.

the ineffectual Stoic and the ineffectual passionate lover. The actions of Antonio and Andrugio are not meant to suggest subtle motivation. The suddenness and abruptness of their changes from one state to another create an atmosphere of absurdity, an absurdity that is an essential element in Marston's humour and links him with the modern Theatre of the Absurd. In his introduction to the Regents edition of Antonio and Mellida, Hunter suggests:

Antonio and Mellida asks us to see the matter of court intrigue as at once passionately serious and absurdly pointless; and there is no good ground for supposing that Marston thought one of these viewpoints more basic than the other. A modern play like Waiting for Godot should remind us that the tragic and the absurd may belong together. Indeed Marston showed a taste for these bizarre conjunctions, even from his earliest writing. The double vision of his Metamorphosis of Pigmalion's Image, at once erotic and anti-erotic, and the mode of his satires—fascinated by what they attack—demonstrate a characteristic ambivalence of outlook which makes Marston one of the strangest as well as one of the most modern of the Elizabethans.¹²

Antonio and Andrugio are not critics or scourges. Their language is noticeably free from the lewdness usually found in the satyr's speeches.

In Antonio's Revenge, I hope to show that the revenge theme forces Antonio to become a scourge and thus a satyr. No longer does he remain a flat stick-man capable only of limited emotional range. This new level of character

¹² Hunter, ed., Antonio and Mellida, p. xvii.

complexity is achieved by means of the satyr convention.

In Antonio and Mellida, the actions of Antonio and Andrugio are based on an assumed Christian ethic that permeates most of the play. Piero is a fiend; those who oppose him are on the side of virtue; but, unlike Feliche, they appear to be inexperienced in the corruption of the world. They have never experienced guilt; and perhaps because of this innocence, they have failed to grow or correct their extreme humourous condition.

The ending of the play presents the external characteristics of classical comedy as described by Northrop Frye:

The action of comedy moves toward a deliverance from something which, if absurd, is by no means invariably harmless. We notice too how frequently a comic dramatist tries to bring his action as close to a catastrophic overthrow of the hero as he can get it, and then reverses the action as quickly as possible. The evading or breaking of a cruel law is often a very narrow squeeze. . . . Any reader can think of many comedies in which the fear of death, sometimes a hideous death, hangs over the central character to the end, and is dispelled so quickly that one has almost the sense of awakening from the nightmare.

Sometimes the redeeming agent actually is divine, like Diana in Pericles; in Tartuffe it is the king, who is conceived as a part of the audience and the incarnation of its will. An extraordinary number of comic stories, both in drama and fiction, seem to approach a potentially tragic crisis near the end, a feature that I may call the "point of ritual death"—¹³

The mock beheading and the mock death and return

¹³ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, New Jersey: 1957), pp. 178-79 .

to life by Antonio might suggest the re-structuring of the old society; certainly there is a sense of harmony in Piero's closing speech:

Then here I give her to Antonio.
 Royal, valiant, most respected prince,
 Let's clip our hands, I'll thus observe my vow:
 I promised twenty thousand double pistolets,
 With the endearing to my dearest love,
 To him that brought thy head; thine be the gold,
 To solemnise our houses' unity;
 My love be thine, the all I have, be thine.
 Fill us fresh wine, the form we'll take by this;
 We'll drink a health, while they two sip a kiss.
 Now there remains no discord that can sound
 Harsh accents to the ear of our accord:
 So please you, niece, to match.

(V.i.357-69).

However, the mood of harmony, slender and questionable in itself, by virtue of Piero's adamant desire for revenge in the opening scene, is further strained by Rossaline's frankly sexual speech which re-focuses the depravity and folly of the court:

Troth, uncle, when my sweet-faced coz hath
 told me how she likes the thing called wed-
 lock, may be I'll take a survey of the check-
 roll of my servants; and he that hath the
 best parts of—I'll prick him down for my
 husband.

(V.i.370-74).

But the chief reason for our dislike of the ending is that we feel we have been given no reason to believe that major problems have changed. Piero's conversion and acceptance of Antonio and Andrugio are hardly convincing:

We are amazed, our royal spirits' numb'd
 In stiff astonish'd wonder at thy prowess.
 Most mighty, valiant, and high-tow'ring heart,
 We blush, and turn our hate upon ourselves,

For hating such an unpeer'd excellence.
 I joy my state: him whom I loath'd before,
 That now I honour, love, nay more, adore.
 (V.i.281-87).

This speech from the man who was intent on using his power to extract blood vengeance from Andrugio and his family, the man who placed a reward of 20,000 pistolets on their heads, the man who was fiercely vitriolic in the face of all advice to the contrary, is very difficult to accept with equanimity. Indeed, the whole exchange is laughable.

What I am suggesting is that Marston is more the satirist than the comic writer; but, in actuality, neither of these categories contains him. He is groping towards a powerful dramatic vision, and it is his experimenting with and understanding of the dramatic possibilities of the satyr type that enable him even to transcend the limitations of satire.

Rossaline

It is significant that it is Rossaline's remark which introduces the strident chord into the attempted harmonious ending. Rossaline can be seen as the female counterpart of Feliche. Rossaline is the cousin of Mellida. In the first part of the play she is Mellida's constant companion. The true side of Feliche's character has contempt for the world he sees. In a similar manner Rossaline views the world in a contemptuous and sceptical way. It is true as a

character she is less intense and less compulsive than Feliche; but, nevertheless, she is the only other person in the play whose attitude towards the court is one of disdain. Again, like Feliche, she is the only person who, while being critical of the court, continues to move in that circle. Moreover, she perversely enjoys it even as she hates it.

Rossaline and Mellida each represents one of the two aspects of Feliche. They are almost allegorical in this sense. Mellida is motivated by a pure and abiding love; she is innocent, good, and uncritical; she has not been tainted by the vileness of the world; she loves and is loved. She looks at the world and sees its beauty, not its hideousness. She is by nature happy and contented; she is the kind of person Feliche tries to be.

Rossaline, on the other hand, sees the world from Feliche's satyric perspective. Both are satirists; both are victims of that which they ridicule. There are numerous examples of her contempt for the court. She says of Matzagente in Act I, Scene i:

Matzagente! now, by my pleasure's hope,
He is made like a tilting-staff; and looks
For all the world like an o'er-roasted pig:
A great tobacco-taker too, that's flat;
For his eyes look as if they had been hung
In the smoke of his nose.

(122-27).

But there are as many examples of her delight in court vices. For instance, when Alberto accuses her of

being "too too firm fixèd in unmovèd scorn," (II.i.227), she parries: "Pish, pish; I fixed in unmovèd scorn! / Why, I'll love thee to-night." (II.i.225). It is hardly the answer to assure a young gallant of her constancy, but she is not yet finished. When pressed to say who her lover will be on the following night, she replies with flippancy: "Faith, as the toy puts me in the head." (II.i.228). Another example of her attitude toward love and constancy occurs in her attempted consolation of Mellida:

Nay, good sweet coz, raise up your drooping eyes;
and I were at the point of To have and to hold
from this day forward, I would be asham'd to
look thus lumpish. What, my pretty coz, 'tis
but the loss of an odd maidenhead. Shall's
dance? thou art so sad, hark in thine ear: I
was about to say, but I'll forbear.
(V.129-33).

These are the words of a worldly-wise, amusing, but contemptuous woman. She loves no one but Mellida; she deems no one else worthy of her love. Out of consideration for Mellida's sorrow and innocence she halts in her advice and promises to say no more. It is rare for Rossaline to take such consideration. Her usual tone is that of scoffing contempt with a sense of keen enjoyment in the thrust and parry of facile insincere court conversation.

In what You will, the dark side of Quadratus' satyr personality was channelled into a special kind of libertinism. Campbell aptly describes the impression that aspect of Rossaline makes. He refers to her as a

derisive commentator . . . [who] sometimes . . . adopts the methods of a buffoon . . . and it is the extravagant abandon of her speech that provokes laughter . . . One form of her wit is libertine speech . . . yet her wildness never escapes from words into deeds.¹⁴

Her libertine speech, frankness about sex, and realistic outlook, coupled with her refusal to become a wanton, are other ways in which Marston controls the ugly side of the satyr.

This modification of the persona differentiates her from Feliche. The cynical disillusioned side of Feliche is nearly always present. Rossaline's knowledge of depravity is not gained from experience like Feliche's. Caputi's description of her as a mimic accurately describes her and the way in which she differs from Feliche, although he is concerned with stressing their similarity:

Instead of taking them [her suitors] seriously she delights in drawing them out to scathe them with a wit that Castilio says "stings, blisters, galls off the skin with the tart acrimony of her quickness." (II.64-65). Consequently she is like Feliche, a critic in the line of action at the centre of which she stands, a critic, moreover, who is particularly interesting because her humor sometimes runs to mimicking the folly that she ridicules. In Act III, scene ii, where, like Balurdo, she acts her face before a mirror, she would be indistinguishable from the fashionable Martia of The Scourge, Satire VII, if her character had not already prepared the audience for the extra dimension of self-conscious mockery.¹⁵

Rossaline possesses the satyric duality, but, as

¹⁴ Campbell, Comical Satyre, pp. 148-49.

¹⁵ Caputi, John Marston, Satirist, p. 133.

was pointed out earlier, she lacks the intensity of Feliche. This, of course, is to be expected, since the private side of her personality is an affectation—an affectation which does not mar her attractiveness and accounts for the absence of compulsive railing. She could be viewed as a pseudo-satyr; however, she is not used as a foil as were Brabant senior and Lampatho Doria. Of her similarities to Feliche, one of the most striking is her devotion to Mellida. It parallels Feliche's devotion to Antonio. In effect, both are critics of the court, both are coloured by the court, and both recognize and assist Antonio and Mellida, the overly idealized lovers.

The satiric scene can be grouped into two major classifications: there are the court fools and villains, and there are the idealists and lovers. It is Feliche and Rossaline, the satyr types, who unify and relate these two. They are of the court, but they reject it, and as companions of Antonio and Mellida, they recognize the existence and worth of another set of values that are centered around the idealized quality of their love. They are the catalysts and the agents that fuse these disparate positions. Because of this, the satiric scenes have several dimensions. First, there is the multiplicity and sameness of the court fools; superimposed on this is the Stoic Andrugio and the idealized lovers, Antonio and Mellida. Moving between these two

groups, we have Feliche and Rossaline, who are detached from them and therefore able to laugh, criticize, and help; at the same time, because of their participation in court life, they cannot be completely detached.

Antonio and Mellida is a satire in that both groups are ridiculed, and it achieves its depth because those people who laugh at the fools recognize the same qualities in themselves. The quality of self-awareness has always been implicitly contained in the satyr convention. In this play, Marston has not fully developed its dramatic potential; nevertheless, it is evident that he recognizes it. This play need not necessarily be viewed as a mélange of implausible reversals. There is a sense of movement and development, and it stems from the unifying principle of the satyr embodied in the person of Feliche. This sense of development, however, does not permeate the whole play; it is limited to those scenes in which Feliche appears. The satyr convention provides plausible motivation for Feliche's actions, and although, as was stated earlier, his transition from the ineffectual Stoic to the devoted friend is awkward, it is, nevertheless, a form of development that becomes central to his later plays. In these later plays Marston obviously evidences a fuller understanding of the dramatic potential of this concept. In Antonio's Revenge, the sequel to Antonio and Mellida, the development and expansion of

*this convention begin to dominate the direction of the plot
and the overall dramatic vision.*

WHAT YOU WILL

Albano, a Venetian merchant, is reported lost at sea. His wife, Celia, plans to marry a foppish clothes-horse, Laverdure. Albano's brothers, incensed at her hasty intention to marry such a fool, spread the rumour that Albano is alive and has returned to Venice, thus hoping to prevent the marriage. To give credibility to the rumour, they disguise the perfumer, Francisco, as Albano. Celia and Laverdure find out about the ruse through a servant who has overheard the brothers, Andrea and Randolfo, making their plans. But in the meantime, the real Albano, alive and healthy, arrives in Venice, a state which ". . . is young, loose, and unknit," (II.ii.225).

The humour in the play turns on Albano's attempts to prove his identity to his wife and his relatives. In the final scene the Duke of Venice is called upon to hear the case of two Albanos in order to discover the imposter. The mystery is quickly solved, and the play ends as the Duke asks, "How shall we spend this night?" (V.i.362) and Quadratus replies, "Gulp Rhenish wine, my liege; let our paunch rent; / Suck merry jellies; preview, but not prevent, /

No mortal can, the miseries of life." (V.i.363-65). On this not so humorous note the play ends.

Although Quadratus does not figure into the summary of the main plot, he is, nevertheless, a major figure. Quadratus is a satyr, and in one sense he is the focal point of the play. He has more to say than anyone else, and he says it in a variety of ways. But, in spite of his multiplicity of styles, ranging from mock praise to frenzied indignation, he is most easily understood in terms of what Caputi calls the *Epicurean-critic*.¹

Like all of Marston's satyrs, he is a participant in many of the things he ridicules; but unlike Chrisogonus and Planet, he manages to reconcile these seemingly paradoxical points of view. Moreover, he exhibits an awareness of this contradiction in his position. It is true that as the play progresses his railing against Lampatho Doria seems to become compulsive. Nevertheless, before Act II is half over, he is seen in a different light. Quadratus is a cynic, and his brand of cynicism is all-encompassing. It lacks the personal and bitter quality of Chrisogonus' disillusionment. Marston is able to present this philosophy of enlightened cynicism by expressing the lascivious side of the satyr in terms of Epicureanism. Indeed, everyone in this play is, or becomes, an Epicurean; and it is Quadratus who is the

¹ Caputi, John Marston, Satirist, p. 170.

focal point for these transformations.

The private, unattractive side of the satyr is thus expressed in terms of Epicureanism. Chameleon-like, the satyr has adapted to the hedonistic environment. The ever-present tension in the satyr is contained and balanced by Epicureanism. Epicureanism has, in a sense, absorbed both faces of the persona.

In the induction to What You Will, Doricus, speaking of the author of the play, says: ". . . the author, the composer, the What You Will, seems so fair in his own glass, so straight in his own measure, that he talks once of squinting critics, drunken censure, splay-footed opinion, juiceless husks, I ha' done with him," (Induction, 77-82). On the surface it might appear that the satyrist in this play is nothing more than a mouthpiece for the author's personal outrage. But we must remember that Doricus is also a creation of this same author, and it can only be concluded that Marston is using Doricus to prepare his reader for the unattractive, self-righteous side of the satyr persona. Again in the prologue the reader is prepared for the outraged railing satyr who does not attempt to ". . . silence [the] . . . viperous tongues; . . . [of the] . . . Stygian dog." (2-3). His disdain for the "nice critics of this squeamish age," (6) only emphasizes the difference between the facile moralizing critic and the frenzied, out-

raged satyr. The displeasure with the "squeamish age" implies that the satyr's language is going to be not only forceful but vile as well.

However, Quadratus' opening speech in Act I only partially fulfils the promise of the prologue:

For love? Nay, and he be not mad for hate,
'Tis amiable fortune. I tell thee, youth,
Right rare and geason. Strange? Mad for love!
O show me him; I'll give him reasons straight—
So forcible, so all invincible,
That it shall drag love out. Run mad for love?
What mortally exists, on which our hearts
Should be enamoured with such passion?
For love! Come, Philus; come, I'll change his fate;
Instead of love, I'll make him mad for hate.
But, troth, say what strain's his madness of?
(I.i.3-13).

This speech can be called forceful and cynical, but it is neither vile nor vitriolic. However, it does have a very serious undertone in that Quadratus contemptuously mocks Jacomo for his lover's "madness" and continues scoffingly to say that he will ". . . change his fate; / Instead of love, I'll make him mad for hate." Quadratus may be playing with words here, but he is also speaking the truth, and his satyr nature becomes more evident in his next speech which qualifies him as an expert on hate who is also expert in "drag[ging] love out."

The recommendation is to "Immure him; sconce him; barricado him in't," (I.i.15). Jacomo convinces Quadratus that he is indeed mad from love's melancholy when he enters carelessly dressed and "unbraced" and Quadratus, in exag-

gerated mock concern, says, "Fetch cords; he's irrecoverable; mad, rank mad." (I.i.44). The reader is left to question whether the cords are for Jacomo's pants or his hands and feet, so effective is Quadratus' mockery. But when Jacomo cries out against blind fortune Quadratus, in his speech on fortune, reveals a depth of cynicism that links him firmly with the satyr:

None but a madman would term fortune blind.
 How can she see to wound desert so right,
 Just in the speeding-place? to girt lewd brows
 With honor'd wreath? Ha! Fortune blind? Away!
 How can she, hood-wink'd, then so rightly see
 To starve rich worth and glut iniquity?
 (I.i.53-58).

The outburst that follows after Jacomo pines, "O love!" (I.i.58) is indisputably satyric in every sense of the term:

Love! Hang love.
 It is the abject outcast of the world.
 Hate all things; hate the world, thyself,
 all men;
 Hate knowledge; strive not to be over-wise:
 It drew destruction into Paradise.
 Hate honour, virtue; they are baits
 That 'tice men's hopes to sadder fates.
 Hate beauty: every ballad-monger
 Can cry his idle foppish humour.
 Hate riches: wealth's a flattering Jack;
 Adores to face, mews 'hind thy back.
 He that is poor is firmly sped;
 He never shall be flatterèd.
 All things are error, dirt and nothing,
 Or pant with want, or gorged to loathing.
 Love only hate, affect no higher
 Than praise of Heaven, wine, a fire.
 Suck up thy days in silent breath,
 When their snuff's out, come Signior Death.
 Now, sir, adieu, run mad and wilt;
 The worst is this, my rhyme's but spilt.
 (I.i.59-78).

This speech is very different from anything found in the verse satires. It is as bitter and righteous as any verbal assault found in The Scourge, but the most notable feature of this speech is its sustained irony. It is a panegyric to hate and an attack on love, but we are forever conscious of the hate, envy, and despair that are gnawing at his own soul, and it is in keeping with the spirit of the speech that he dismisses himself in the final two lines. And following this, he exhibits the characteristic satyr delight in lewd taunting remarks when he replies to Jacomo's complaint that Celia will be married:

Qua. Why, man, I saw my dog even kiss thy
 Celia's lips.

Jaco. To-morrow morn they go to wed.

Qua. Well then I know
 Whither to-morrow night they go.

Jaco. Say quick.

Qua. To bed.

(I.i.83-88).

In Act II, as in Act I, Quadratus initially shows some of the typical satyr characteristics. Bidet describes him as ". . . fair, gallant, rich, neat as a bridegroom, fresh as a new-minted sixpence." (II.i.9-10), and he gives the appearance of a young wag as he natters on at Laverdure: "Phoebus, Phoebe, sun, moon, and seven stars, make thee the dilling of fortune, my sweet Laverdure, my rich French blood." (II.i.24-26). But again, as in Act I, it is not long before he exhibits his darker face.

The actions of *Quadratus* and *Lampatho Doria* take up the greater part of the play. *Lampatho Doria* is the disillusioned scholar who has affected the post of the fashionable railer and desires to be initiated into court society by *Quadratus*, the man of the world. *Simplicius Faber's* description of *Lampatho Doria* is only one of many that point to the stock traits of the man who adopts the pose of critic and railer:

Monsieur Laverdure, do you see that gentleman?
He goes but in black satin, as you see, but, by
Helicon! he hath a cloth of tissue wit. He
breaks a jest; ha, he'll rail against the court
till the gallants—O God! he is very nectar; if
you but sip of his love, you were immortal. I
must needs make you known to him; I'll induce
your love with dear regard. Signior *Lampatho*,
here is a French gentleman, Monsieur Laverdure,
a traveller, a beloved of Heaven, courts your
acquaintance.

(II.i.29-37).

From *Simplicius's* remarks it is evident that *Lampatho Doria's* pose is de rigueur; but when *Lampatho Doria* attempts to ingratiate himself with the silly Laverdure in order to make a fool of him, *Quadratus* beats him with his own ship:

I protest, believe him not; I'll beg thee,
Laverdure,
For a conceal'd idiot, if thou credit him;
He's a hyena, and with civet scent
Of perfumed words, draws to make a prey
For laughter of thy credit. O this hot
crackling love,
That blazeth on an instant, flames me out
On the least puff of kindness, with "protest,
protest!"
Catzo, I dread these hot protests, that press,
Come on so fast. No, no! away, away!

You are a common friend, or will betray.
 Let me clip amity that's got with suit;
 I hate this whorish love that's prostitute.
 (II.i.72-83).

The relationship between these two strange people is extremely germane to any study of the satyr type. Lampatho Doria is the fashionable satyrist "directly descended from W. Kinsayder, to whom he is specifically compared."² He is a pseudo-satyr. Campbell spoke of him as belonging "to the same school of unworthy satirists as Brabant senior—that is, he is a kind of buffoon."³

The pyrotechnical repartee that takes place between Lampatho Doria and Quadratus could almost be called a satyrists' duel. Of course, what makes the struggle bizarre is the fact that it is Lampatho Doria's posture of the snarling satirist that most enrages Quadratus and compels him to attack. The difference between the two becomes clear enough when Lampatho Doria attempts to bait Laverdure with flattery in order to make him the butt of a joke: "I protest I shall be proud to give you proof I hold a most religious affiance with your love." (II.i.65). Quadratus, unable to restrain himself, explodes: "I protest, believe him not; . . ." The general reaction to this outburst is similar to the reactions experienced by Planet and Chrisoganus after one of their explosions. Quadratus is ignored. Laverdure makes no comment whatsoever to Quadratus and falls to examining

² Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 152.

³ Campbell, Comicall Satyre, p. 168.

his clothing:

Horn on my tailor! could he not bring home
My satin taffeta or tissue suit,
But I must needs be cloth'd in woollen thus?
Bidet, what says he for my silver hose,
And primrose satin doublet? God's my life!
Gives he no more observance to my body?
(II.i.84-89).

Lampatho Doria is thus given an opportunity to continue
with his flattery:

O, in that last suit, gentle Laverdure,
Visit my lodging. By Apollo's front,
Do but inquire my name. O straight they'll say,
Lampatho suits himself in such a hose.
(II.i.90-94).

And Quadratus, piqued by the fact that his more reasonable
warning was ignored, forces the issue further with abusive,
vindictive language:

Why, thou pole-head! thou Janus! thou
poltroon! thou protest! thou earwig that
wrigglest into men's brains! thou dirty cur,
that bemirest with thy fawning! thou——
(II.i.111-113).

Quadratus, in this instance, exhibits the satyr characteristics of vile language and attacking that which he is guilty of himself; and Lampatho Doria's reply: "Obscure me!" is in accordance with Renaissance critical theory which demands that all satire should be obscure. Marston, however, as early as First Certain Satire, indicated his disapproval of this dictum; the fact that Lampatho Doria seems to subscribe to it makes him suspect.

After Quadratus slings another string of insults

at Lampatho Doria, not the least of which is calling him
a Jebusite, Lampatho Doria takes up the challenge:

So Phoebus warm my brain, I'll rhyme thee dead.
Look for the satire: if all the sour juice
Of a tart brain can souse thy estimate,
I'll pickle thee.

(II.i.121-24).

This seems to be the prelude to some grand, violent, incisive, vitriolic attack. But it never comes.

Quadratus thrusts again:

Ha! he mount Chirall on the wings of fame!
A horse! a horse! My kingdom for a horse!
Look thee, I speak play-scraps. Bidet, I'll down,
Sing, sing, or stay, we'll quaff, or anything.
Rivo, Saint Mark, let's talk as loose as air;
Unwind youth's colours, display ourselves,
So that yon envy-starvèd cur may yelp
And spend his chaps at our fantasticness.

(II.i.126-32).

And for the remainder of the scene he pours forth his wrath
on Lampatho Doria.

Away, idolator! Why, you Don Kynsader!
Thou canker-eaten rusty cur! thou snaffle
To freer spirits!
Think'st thou, a libertine, an ungyved breast,
Scorns not the shackles of thy envious clogs?
You will traduce us unto public scorn?

(II.i.134-39).

A foutra for thy hand, thy heart, thy brain!
Thy hate, thy malice, envy, grinning spite!
Shall a free-born, that holds antipathy—

(II.i.141- 43).

Ay, antipathy, a native hate
Unto the curse of man, bare-pated servitude,
Quake at the frowns of a ragg'd satirist —
A scrubbing railer, whose coarse, harden'd fortune,
Grating his hide, galling his starvèd ribs,
Sits howling at desert's more battle fate —

Who out of dungeon of his black despairs,
 Scowls at the fortune of the fairer merit.
 (II.i.145-51).

Uds fut! He coggs and cheats your simpler thoughts,
 My spleen's a-fire in the heat of hate;
 I bear these gnats that hum about our ears,
 And blister our credits in obscured shades.
 (II.i.153-56).

Now, by thy lady's cheek, I honour thee,
 My rich free blood. O my dear libertine!
 I could suck the juice, the sirrup of thy lip,
 For thy most generous thought! — my Elysium!
 (II.i.164-67).

I cannot tell; 'tis now grown fashion,
 What's out of railing's out of fashion.
 A man can scarce put on a tuck'd-up cap,
 A button'd frizado suit, scarce eat good meat,
 Anchovies, caviare, but he's satired
 And term'd fantastical by the muddy spawn
 Of slimy newts, when, troth, fantasticness—
 That which the natural sophisters term
Phantasia incomplexa—is a function
 Even of the bright immortal part of man.
 (II.i.183-92).

Nay, leave protests; pluck out your snarling
 fangs. When thou hast means, be fantastical
 and sociable. Go to: here's my hand; and
 you want forty shillings, I am your Mecaenas,
 though not atavis edite regibus.
 (II.i.229-33).

Lampatho Doria is completely overwhelmed by this onslaught,
 and the most he is able to interject are weak replies, such
 as:

By this hand I will. (II.i.140).

Antipathy! (II.i.144).

O, sir, you are so square, you scorn reproof.
 (II.i.168).

I rail at none, you well-squared signior.
 (II.i.182).

I protest —

(II.i.228).

This is indeed one of the strangest exchanges in any of Marston's plays. But what emerges from it is a concept seminal to Marston's use of the convention; here he distinguishes between the merely fashionable, theatrical, posturer and the satyr who is concerned with effecting a change, and whose impassioned language is more than fantastical entertainment. It is true that the satyric types appearing in his other plays will at times retain the vestiges of the fashionable poseur; but for the most part, like Quadratus, their criticism possesses an added dimension of seriousness. Here Marston is making it very clear that Quadratus is not like Lampatho Doria, and what could be a more effective way of making this point than to have a war of the satyrs.

The victor, of course, is Quadratus, but Lampatho Doria is not really a loser; he is simply converted; and it is ironic that Quadratus should chastize Lampatho Doria for railing. Finkelpearl gives the following analysis of the duel between Quadratus and Lampatho Doria, but he does not stress the irony inherent in a situation where one railing satyr attacks another railing satyr for being a railing satyr:

. . . his main purpose is to steer Lampatho away from the fruitless habit of raillery: "Pluck out your snarling fangs. When thou hast means be

Phantasticall and sociable: go to, heres my hand:
 and you want fortie shillings I am your Maecenas."
 (II.251) Quadratus can detect foolishness and absurdity as clearly as Lampatho, but to him it does not seem worth the trouble to rail against it. It is more important to satisfy one's physical needs, as he says in the song which summarizes his brand of Epicureanism: "Musick, Tobacco, Sack, and Sleepe, / The tide of Sorrow Backward keepe."
 (II.252) The wise man should drink deeply, ignore the claims ⁴ of glory, fame and honor, and satisfy his senses.

Yet it is important to remember the means used to steer Lampatho Doria away from the fruitless habit of raillery was raillery itself. Needless to say, it was not fruitless but skillfully managed so as to overpower Lampatho Doria.

As a pseudo-satyr Lampatho Doria possesses all the satyr qualities, but he lacks the intensity of Quadratus. Whenever Lampatho Doria affects railing, Quadratus castigates him for his insincerity in language that outrails Lampatho Doria. Because Lampatho Doria is so obviously insincere, it never occurs to us to question Quadratus' motives, yet he is a confirmed sensualist. Moreover, his railing in this special context seems perfectly appropriate. So, as the shallowness of Brabant senior served to take the edge off the darker side of Planet, the posturing of Lampatho Doria by contrast emphasizes the solidness of Quadratus. Lampatho Doria however—unlike Brabant senior—is not

⁴ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 170.

the object of ridicule. On the contrary by the end of the play *Lampatho Doria* under the tutelage of *Quadratus* eventually recognizes the folly of his previous pose.

When the duel is finished and *Quadratus* emerges the undisputed victor, the snarling private face, which would have destroyed the dramatic unity of the play, recedes, and the song that he sings to "close the stomach of the scene" is in praise of sensual pleasure:

Music, tobacco, sack, and sleep,
The tide of sorrow backward keep.
If thou art sad at others' fate,
Rivo, drink deep, give care the mate.
On us the end of time is come,
Fond fear of that we cannot shun;
Whilst quickest sense doth freshly last,
Clip time about, hug pleasure fast.
The sisters ravel out our twine,
He that knows little's most divine.
Error deludes; who'll beat this hence—
Naught's known but by exterior sense?
Let glory blazon others' deed,
My blood than breath craves better meed.
Let *Twattling* fame cheat others' rest,
I am no dish for rumour's feast.
Let honour others' hope abuse,
I'll nothing have, so nought will lose.
I'll strive to be nor great nor small,
To live nor die; fate helmeth all.
When I can breathe no longer, then
Heaven take all: there but Amen.

(II.i.273-93).

The ruthless satyrist was often compared by the Elizabethans to a barber-surgeon who must inflict pain before a cure could be achieved.⁵ *Quadratus*, the satyr, has

⁵ In "Satire V" of *The Scourge of Villainy* Marston says: "Infections bleed, ye gouty humours quake, / Whilst my sharp razor doth incision make." (117-18).

viciously opened the stomach of his opponent, and now that the infection has been driven out, he closes the wound with the Epicurean balm expressed in his song.

The next scene more explicitly associates Quadratus with Epicureanism. Lampatho Doria temporarily relapses into his scholar's melancholy and he addresses his speech (the most well known in the play) to Quadratus, the "Honest epicure."

Honest epicure.--Nay, mark, list. Delight,
 Delight, my spaniel slept, whilst I baus'd leaves,
 Toss'd o'er the dunces, pored on the old print
 Of titled words, and still my spaniel slept.
 Whilst I wasted lamp-oil, bated my flesh,
 Shrunk up my veins; and still my spaniel slept.
 And still I held converse with Zabarell,
 Aquinas, Scotus, and the musty saw
 Of antic Donate; still my spaniel slept.
 Still went on went I; first an sit anima,
 Then, and it were mortal. Oh hold, hold! at that
 They're at brain-buffets, fell by the ears amain
 Pell-mell together; still my spaniel slept.
 Then whether 'twere corporeal, local, fix'd,
 Extraduce; but whether 't had free will
 Or no, ho philosophers
 Stood banding factions all so strongly propp'd,
 I stagger'd, knew not which was firmer part;
 But thought, quoted, read, observ'd, and pried,
 Stuff'd noting-books; and still my spaniel slept.
 At length he waked and yawn'd and by yon sky,
 For aught I know he knew as much as I.

(II.ii.159-80).

Perhaps no other speech in Elizabethan drama expresses so well the reason for the scholar's susceptibility to melancholy. But more interesting, it can be considered as satyr introspection, in that it isolates the two conflicting faces of the persona. It contains, on the one hand, the

concepts of reason, stoicism, and learning, and on the other, the arguments for following the dictates of the senses, summed up neatly in the phrase "and still my spaniel slept."

Lampatho Doria's next speech, in which he describes his aimless pursuits as a scholar, is actually a fine cataloguing of the pedant's follies and as such reminds us forcibly of Chrisogonus. Had Chrisogonus been more honest with himself, he could as accurately have said "Finding my numbness in this nimble age, / I fell a-railing;" (II.ii.191-92), but therein lies the difference between the two men. Lampatho Doria clearly recognizes that it was envy, hate, and feelings of inadequacy that prompted him to become a scourge. Moreover, it was Quadratus, the genuine scourge, who forced him to acknowledge his posturing. Now as he concludes his confession, he humbly asks Quadratus for advice and admits what Chrisogonus would never have admitted: "I know I know naught but I naught do know." (II.ii.193).

Quadratus' answer, unlike Lampatho Doria's free admission, cannot be taken at face value. He advises him to turn temporist in a speech that, like his earlier speeches, is filled with ironic cynicism and barely concealed anguish:

Why, turn a temporist, row with the tide,
Pursue the cut, the fashion of the age.
Well, here's my scholar's course: first get a school,

And then a ten-pound cure; keep both. Then buy
(Stay, marry, ay, marry) then a farm, or so:
Serve God and mammon—to the devil go.
Affect some sect—ay, 'tis the sect is it,
So thou canst seem, 'tis held the precious wit.
And O, if thou canst get some higher seat,
Where thou mayest sell your holy portion
(Which uncharitable Providence ordained,
In sacred bounty, for a blessèd use),
Alien the glebe, entail it to thy loins,
Entomb it in thy grave,
Past resurrection to his native use!
Now, if there be a hell, and such swine saved,
Heaven take all—that's all my hopes have craved,
(II.ii.195-210).

Now it may be evident from this speech that the excessive compulsiveness of the satyr persona is contained by Epicureanism, but it should also be evident that Quadratus is aware that his hedonistic advice is shallow and worthless. Indeed, the last two lines contain an explicit warning for Lampatho Doria, as well as the hope that he will not be taken seriously.

Quadratus' dilemma and anxiety are made more evident a few lines later when he says to those assembled:

We come, sweet gallants; and grumbling hate
lie still,
And turn fantastic! He that climbs a hill
Must wheel about; the ladder to account
Is sly dissemblance: he that means to mount
Must lie all level in the prospective
Of eager-sighted greatness. Thou wouldst thrive:
The Venice state is young, loose, and unknit,
Can relish naught but luscious vanities.
Go, fit his tooth. O glavering flattery!
How potent art thou! Front, look brisk and sleek.—
That such base dirt as you should dare to reek
In princes' nostrils!—Well, my scene is long.
(II.ii.219-30).

The irony and cynicism of this kind of Epicureanism, expressed in "fantastic" language, is only the means by which he manages to sublimate his smouldering venom; nevertheless, the last speech reveals that the private, disdainful side of the satyr is barely held below the surface:

I come, hot bloods. Those that their state
would swell,
 Must bear a counter-face. The devil and hell
 Confound them all! That's all my prayers exact:
 So ends our chat;—sound music for the act!
(I.ii.232-35).

Throughout What You Will the tension that is always restrained and re-expressed by Epicureanism, fantastic language, and mockery is never resolved. Quadratus' loathing of "glavering flattery," "sly dissemblance," and the "luscious vanities" of the Venice court remains. Epicureanism does enable him to live and survive in such a society. But Quadratus is also a satyr, and the satyr tension is always present. However, from a dramaturgical point of view it is used effectively in that his railing is always relevant.

In What You Will the satyr ambivalence remains to the end and is integrated with the main theme of the play. However, it is not until The Malcontent that Marston is able to effect a successful resolution of the tension which involves a growth or change in the satyr himself.

In Act IV, Celia's sister Meletza gives a description of Quadratus which is ample proof that he manages

to practice the Epicurean philosophy that he preaches:

"He is a fine courtier, flatters admirable, kisses 'fair madam,' smells surpassing sweet; wears and holds up the arras, supports the tapestry, when I pass into the presence, very gracefully;" (IV.i.37-40). Meletza has obviously been taken in by his urbanity, and were it not for his previous explosions into vicious raillery the reader might be taken in as well. He appears to be everything the satyr is not. In the Verse Satires, the narrator who describes himself as a literal satyr frequently refers to his rough, uncouth appearance and his bad manners. Obviously, Quadratus leaves no such impression, for Meletza's next reference to him implies that he has been welcomed into her circle as a delightful Falstaffian figure: "Then there's my chub, my epicure, Quadratus, that rubs his guts, claps his paunch, and cries Rivo! entertaining my ears perpetually with a most strong discourse of the praise of bottle-ale and red-herrings." (IV.i.83-87). For the remainder of the play Quadratus' Epicureanism contains both the public and private faces of the satyr, and although we frequently sense that he is about to lash out at vice or dwell upon some lustful activity, the vitriol never pours out. It may be argued that his advice to Lampatho Doria that he should scorn Meletza is too cynical, or that his description of Meletza is almost voyeuristic, but the evidence is insuf-

ficient. Quadratus maintains his position of Epicureanism quite adequately until the end of the play. So successful is he that his remaining satyr thrusts are muted into mere witticisms; and were it not for the fact that we witnessed his barbarous attack on Lampatho Doria and all the tension and anxiety contained therein, Quadratus could be neatly labelled a true Epicurean and dismissed.

But because Quadratus is wise enough to know that a reformer would be dismissed in Venetian society and because he is practical enough to want to survive, he never allows his disillusionment to break down his Epicurean defences. The viciousness of his attack on Lampatho Doria can be explained thus: he knew that Lampatho Doria was telling the truth; he was enraged that Lampatho Doria, a posturer, should speak the truth for fashionable reasons, and he had to stop him because he could not bear to have his own very real cynicism and disillusionment articulated by a fake. Having gulled Lampatho Doria and returned to the position of Epicure, he manages to keep the fangs of his discontent from showing, except in the occasional barbed remark which passes unnoticed in the shallowness of the society around him.

It is not until the very end of the play that he dares show the public face of the persona in a very special context that does not threaten his security or his cynicism

that fosters "ignoble ease and peaceful sloth."

To avoid a confusion in terminology, I will restate my distinction between the public and private faces of the persona. By itself the public face can be compared to a righteous—not self-righteous—minister whose language frequently expresses Stoical sentiments. By itself, the private face is depravity incarnate. The tension within the persona is a result of the pollution of the ministerial public face by the depraved private face. Thus we have a scourge who attacks vice that actually does exist, but he also tends to see dirt and corruption where it does not exist. What is most important is that the intensity with which he attacks vice suggests that he is unduly fascinated with it himself; and finally, what was righteousness becomes self-righteousness.

In What You Will, Epicureanism disguises these distinctive traits of the satyr persona. Now, what I have been emphasizing all along is that this perversity and self-righteousness which initially stem from the private face keep appearing in spite of Epicureanism. But in the scene with the duke we have the converse. Here, because Quadratus is play-acting, he is able to express the public face of the persona in classical Stoic language by offering to perform Cato's death scene. The recital of these Stoic

sentiments of Cato by Quadratus, the Épicurean, is a most striking example of the relationship between the public and private faces of the persona:

Then Cato holds a distinct notion
Of individual actions after death.
This being argued, his resolve maintains
A true magnanimous spirit should give up dirt
To dirt, and with his own flesh dead his flesh,
'Fore chance should force it crouch unto his foe;
To kill one's self, some ay, some hold it no.
O these are points would entice away one's soul
To break indenture of base prenticage,
And run away from's body in swift thoughts,
To melt in contemplation's luscious sweets!
Now, O my voluptuous duke, I'll feed thy sense
Worth his creation: give me audience.

(V.i.250-62).

By virtue of the fact that he is impersonating someone else, Quadratus is able to express the public face of his satyr nature without qualification. He is not troubled by doubts of inadequacy, self-righteousness, or envy; thus the tension between the two faces is momentarily suspended.

However, the presence of the duke who is the patron of pleasure and a man who will have nothing to do with temperance brings to mind the reality of Venetian decadence. And Quadratus' Stoic fight is destined to be short-lived, for he is interrupted by Albano and Francisco, who rush into the duke's palace and demand that their suits be heard. This interruption causes Quadratus to curse the perfumer, Francisco, in abusive language that contrasts strikingly with the eloquence and gravity of the preceding Stoic oration: "Now may thy breath ne'er smell sweet as long as thy lungs

can pant, for breaking my speech, thou Muscovite! thou stinking perfumer!" (V.i.264-66). This outburst is psychologically understandable, for his bitter language expresses the painful disappointment of a tormented man who has found a brief moment of peace and instantly lost it again. Quadratus must return to his Epicureanism which anesthetizes the satyr tension. His answer to the duke's question, ". . . how shall we spend this night?" (V.i.362), suggests that pleasure-seeking is only a temporary escape from, and not an answer for, life's miseries:

Gulp Rhenish wine, my liege; let our paunch rent;
Suck merry jellies; preview, but not prevent,
No mortal can, the miseries of life.
(V.i.363-65).

And his final speech, although a defence of the Carpe Diem attitude, leaves the impression that the satyr envy is not simply dispelled by giving it the "fico."

Live still in springing hopes, still in fresh
new joys!—
May your loves happy hit in fair-cheek'd wives,
Your flesh still plump with sapp'd restoratives.
That's all my honest frolic heart can wish.
A fico for the mew and envious pish!
Till night, I wish good food and pleasing day;
But then sound rest. So ends our slight-writ play.
(V.i.369-75).

There is an interesting parallel between Albano, Quadratus, and Lampatho Doria, for many of Albano's actions and speeches are also satyric in nature. On hearing that Celia is going to marry again, Albano bewails the degenerate state of man whose soul "is rotten, / Even to the core;"

and the rest of his speech is satyric in its vile opinions
of sexual love:

But O, 'tis grown a figment, love a jest,
A comic poesy! The soul of man is rotten,
Even to the core;—no sound affection.
Our love is hollow-vaulted—stands on props
Of circumstance, profit, or ambitious hopes!
The other tissue gown, or chain of pearl,
Makes my coy minx to nuzzle 'twixt the breasts
Of her lull'd husband; t'other carkanet
Deflowers that lady's bed. One hundred more
Marries that loathèd blowze;—one ten-pound odds,
In promised jointure, makes the hard-palm'd sire
Enforce his daughter's tender lips to start
At the sharp touch of some loath'd stubbèd beard;
The first pure time, the golden age, is fled.
(III.ii.52-65).

Albano even stutters--a trait which was often associated
with the satyr--and his cry, "Whip, whip! . . . You are all
rank drunk / Rats, ra-ra-ra-rats, knights of the be-be-be-
bell! be-be-bell!" (III.ii.265-68), is similar to the
invective found in almost every page of The Scourge of
Villainy. In despair, he begins his last speech in Act
III, Scene ii, by cursing opinion. Again a glance at the
formal verse satires shows that the opinion of the masses
was a constant source of irritation to the satyr.

However, as soon as he proves his identity, he
forgives all, and, like Lampatho Doria, he embraces the lux-
urious pleasure-seeking society of Venice, a state whose
hedonism is symbolized by its Epicurean ruler, the duke,
and whose chief spokesman is Quadratus.

The self-righteous speeches of Lampatho Doria and

Albano which express primarily the public face of the persona give way to the private face when they submit to the decadence of Venetian court society. Their acceptance of this decadence is unqualified, whereas with *Quadratus* the satyr tension, although coloured by Epicureanism, remains.

Quadratus, the satyr and Epicurean critic, is the key figure around whom Marston constructs this play.

Quadratus enables him to express a peculiar and depressing world view which is accurately described by Finkelpearl in his discussion of the narrow, corrupt Venetian society:

But it is not really a tolerant, open society. You must join it on its terms; no plays on Temperance will be allowed. Although the tone of the play is farcical and amused, the implications for the young men in the audience should have been as depressing as anything in the Parnassus plays. When in Venice, you must act like the Venetians: "the ladder to account / Is slie dissemblance." (II.259).⁶

It is in the ending of What You Will that we have the first indication of the direction that Marston's dramatic vision is taking and the way in which he is going to express it. For Marston the yearning for an ideal or absolute must be somehow tempered with recognition that man is a creature of passion. The satyr convention in this play enables Marston to juxtapose these two concepts, but they are still in conflict; i.e., *Quadratus*' attempts to

⁶ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 177.

suppress the ideal by immersing himself in the sensual are never successful. It is not until The Malcontent that Marston successfully contains his idea of the absolute with the ballast of man's natural passion within the satyr convention. The synthesis achieved is a much more optimistic and realistic picture of the world.

001210/2

*THE EVOLUTION OF SATYR DUALITY IN
JOHN MARSTON'S DRAMA*

by

James Omer Taylor

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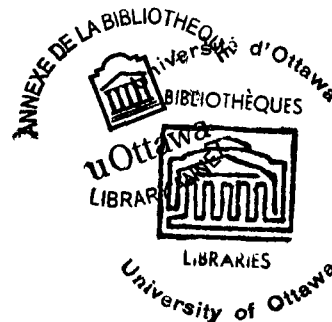
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CHAPTER III

THE SATYR IN THE REVENGE PLAY

ANTONIO'S REVENGE

When Antonio's Revenge opens it becomes immediately apparent that Piero's forgiveness and amazement at the end of Antonio and Mellida were feigned.¹ With his henchman Strotzo, he has just killed Feliche and placed the body in Mellida's bedroom to make it appear that she was unfaithful to Antonio. It is also disclosed in his second speech that Andrugio has been poisoned. His motivation is revenge; although it was never mentioned in Antonio and Mellida, it is now revealed that Piero and Andrugio were both suitors for the hand of Maria, and Piero lost out. By killing Andrugio, he soothes his "inward swelt'ring hate," (I.i.28) and also hopes to have a second chance with Maria.

From this point on, a summary of the plot sounds much like a summary of Hamlet—a play to which Antonio's Revenge is often compared. Andrugio only appears in the play as a ghost. He tells his son Antonio that Piero has murdered him and demands revenge. In spite of some fiendish machinations on the part of Piero; Antonio, Maria,

¹ The nature of the two-part Elizabethan play is dealt with by Hunter in his introduction to Antonio's Revenge (Lincoln: 1965), pp. ix-xii.

Pandulfo (Feliche's father), and the fool bind Piero, pluck out his tongue, serve him a dish that contains his son Julio's dead limbs, and finally stab him to death. They freely and proudly confess their participation in the deed to approving senators who offer them "What satisfaction outward pomp can yield," (V.ii.139). But the revengers decide instead to enter a monastery.

Mellida has very little to say in Antonio's Revenge. Throughout most of the play she is imprisoned by her father on a trumped-up charge of fornication, and she dies of heartbreak in Act IV, Scene i, when she receives the false report that Antonio is dead. Ironically, this report was circulated by Antonio himself when he disguised himself as a fool in order to gain access to Piero's court.

The characters in this play do not vacillate between extremes without motivation as they did in Antonio and Mellida. Their actions are much more plausible, given the world of the play. Antonio is the happy bridegroom at the beginning; he has an ominous dream which proves to be true; and, from there on, he is in a state of despair. At the end he exults in the killing and then rejects the world. Piero is the stock Machiavellian villain and maintains his fiendishness throughout. Pandulfo, reminiscent of his son, tries to play the stoic but by Act III confesses it was merely an act. So, as in Antonio and Mellida, the satyr

convention is tied up with the attempts of certain characters to play the Stoic.

Maria's actions, although not as subtle as Gertrude's in Hamlet, essentially follow the same pattern. Maria's husband is murdered by Piero because he is in love with her. Her conscience is dulled and she exists in a kind of bovine contentment until her world is shattered. Mellida hardly appears. She is imprisoned early in the play and dies before the revenge is perpetrated.

The major point that I wish to develop in this chapter is that the revengers exhibit all the external characteristics of the satyr. In addition, and central to my thesis, is the fact that the satyr's tendency to become contaminated by the vice which he attacks is also present and becomes the structural principle or device which is used to express the main theme in the play. However, since it is my belief that the satyr convention plays a significant part in the creation of Marston's more complex characters, it is necessary to make a relevant digression on Marston's technique of character development and description.

Hunter's position that Marston is interested only in presenting "extreme states" of passion is a gross oversimplification. He insists that there is never any psychological relationship between these extreme states.

But it does not seem probable that Marston or his contemporaries were much worried by this

lack of inner articulation. What the age was most impressed by (see Foxe's Acts and Monuments for ample documentation) was the exhibition of extreme states of virtue and vice. The process by which these were arrived at, or (in terms of the Revenge Play) the transition between virtuous action, patience and revenge, seems to have been much less interesting.²

Marston's art cannot be explained in these terms. A fundamental motivation can be attributed to his characters, and this motivation springs from the uniqueness of the satyr convention together with Marston's belief that the Stoic position is always untenable. Stoicism is never presented as a viable alternative; rather, it is always a straw man set up to be clobbered. Pandulfo's Stoic sentiments are intended to ring hollow right from the beginning of this play, and his rejection of these values at the end of the play should come as no surprise, just as Feliche's announcement in the induction of Antonio and Mellida serves as a constant reminder that he would eventually break out of the Stoic mould. And, even if there were no induction, the tension within the language itself would prepare the audience for Feliche's return to the satyr. In short, there is a relationship between the satyr duality and these extreme states.

Similarly, the position that the characters of Marston's plays are mere vehicles for the presentation of philosophical and theological systems is held, at least

² Hunter, ed., Antonio's Revenge, p. xiv.

partially, by Professor Michael Higgins. He maintains that Marston is unable to present a convincing picture of goodness:

Marston lacks that union of poetic fantasy and human wisdom whereby the poets create characters which are the true images of life. In these two plays, disgust at human frailty, the confidence of a divine election and a sense of the remorseless action of Providence send us back to the "Sacred Seneca" and forward again to the Atheist's Tragedy and the Revenger's Tragedy. Pandulpho suggests at times the contemporary puritan moralist; he sees the confidence and the ready assurance in his authority, the utterance larded with texts, though these are classical in origin, not scriptural; he has a stoic and a puritan arrogance which is the reverse of Christian humility. If he were human, he would be priggish as Aurelius is sometimes priggish. The character of Pandulpho is the symbol and proof of a weakness evident in every page which Marston wrote. This man could summon the shapes of villainy and folly and corruption and vice with a remarkable imaginative power; called on to create a figure of positive virtue and living active beauty, he can conjure up only an empty phantom imagined from dry texts and the unilluminated wisdom of antiquity.³

Both of these judgments of Marston's ability are unfair, and in this particular case both critics seem to be unwilling to consider the Stoic type in a dramatic context.

To begin with, this play is about suffering, not imagined but real suffering. Antonio has lost his father and his position; his mother seems to have forgotten her former vows to her late husband and is about to marry the

³ Michael Higgins, "The Convention of the Stoic Hero as Handled by Marston," MLR, 29 (1944), 346.

man who made her a widow; his beloved Mellida has been
 'falsely accused of infidelity on the eve of her wedding;
 and Pandulfo's son, Feliche, has been murdered by Piero
 and refused proper burial because he was supposed to have
 violated Mellida. Antonio knows that Piero is a villain,
 yet he is not prepared to take revenge until he is command-
 ed by his father's ghost to do so. This command can be
 viewed as both a psychological release and an added burden.
 Antonio must steel himself to kill Julio. The burden of
 revenge weighs heavily on him and eventually contaminates
 him as it does Maria and Pandulfo. Only after the bloody
 death of Piero does his frenzy pass.

In this play, to my mind, Marston is concerned
 with communicating one powerful message: this is, the power
 of evil and the inevitability of suffering in the world.
 Nothing can escape its influence, and no one moral system
 can successfully cope with it. It is this truth that Hig-
 gins seems to be unaware of when he remarks that Pandulfo
 and Piero

. . . are simple philosophical principles, em-
 bodied in a not very convincing humanity, and
 brought into dramatic opposition in order to
 illustrate Marston's religious and philosophi-
 cal conviction about the contemporary world.

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Pandulpho's conquest over passion is so complete
 that he suffers from a bloodless quality as dra-
 matically unmanageable as his opposite, the
 expressionist hero of passion and unruly emotion.

Such is his propriety of conduct, his self-control and his unfailing aptitude for apposite Senecan quotation, that it is a little surprising to find him engaging, with considerable refinement of technique,⁴ in the melodramatic hero's game of vengeance.

The charge that the arch-fiend Piero, like Pandulfo, is nothing more than the embodiment of a philosophical principle is difficult to square with Higgins' concluding comments that Marston "could summon the shapes of villainy and folly and corruption and vice with a remarkable imaginative power." Furthermore, his description of the final scene as a "melodramatic hero's game of vengeance" seems singularly inappropriate. It might be vile and bloody, but in no way do we feel that it is a game. It is rather another example of the pernicious force of evil which radiates from Piero and pervades the entire play.

If one is perplexed, as Higgins is, at Pandulfo's participation in the killing of Piero, then he has missed one of the major points of the play. Stoicism in its simple Senecan form does not work. It is no good. It will not protect anyone from "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." This very same truth is not only made evident in the final scene of the play, but throughout we are able to see the cracks in Pandulfo's armour. He is not a convincing Stoic. He is forever trying to cheer himself up, and his laughter

⁴ Higgins, "The Convention of the Stoic Hero," 341-45.

is not the steely laughter of the impassive Stoic; rather, it reminds us of the nervous laugh of a psychotic on the brink of a breakdown. This breakdown, in fact, does occur for Pandulfo in Act IV, Scene ii, when he confesses:

Ha, dost ask me why? ha, ha!
Good coz, look here!

[He shows him his son's breast.]

Man will break out, despite philosophy.
Why, all this while I ha' but played a part,
Like to some boy that acts a tragedy,
Speaks burly words, and raves out passion;
But, when he thinks upon his infant weakness,
He droops his eye. I spake more than a god,
Yet am less than a man.
I am the miserablest soul that breathes.
(IV.ii.67-76).

Marston clearly recognized the inadequacies of the Stoic philosophy, and for this reason he makes Pandulfo a Stoic, places upon him a terrific burden, and allows him to break under it.⁵ As was mentioned earlier, Ornstein sees "Marston's 'unconventional' rejection of Stoic rationality" as being "quite conventional," and further claims Marston to be the first Jacobean dramatist to "exploit dramatically"

⁵ F.L. Lucas particularized these inadequacies in his book Seneca and Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge: 1922). "It is not his 'ego' that the Stoic hates, it is the emotions that make personality. Seneca cares about his 'ego' extremely, but it is a bottle-imp, glass-walled, mopping and mowing in a colourless void, hermetically sealed from the dust and colour of life. Only because that self is so maimed and docked, because he has severed hands and plucked out eyes to enter this bottled paradise, his individuality is so colourless and unapparent, like a live shrimp, that it may be overlooked and mistaken for impersonality. But really the Stoic is a lofty egotist, preserving himself in ice; such temperaments may be moral, they are hardly poetic." pp. 59-60.

the possibilities contained in this rejection. More will be said of this topic later.

The Revenge Theme

The main point of the discussion which follows is to show that the revengers are affected by their participation in the deed. They come to know the world and its dirt, and, because of this, they want to reject the world. The language of the avengers is satyric when they are killing Piero. The intensity of the language resembles the intensity of the satyr when he is attacking vice or Feliche when he is attacking court folly. Piero is almost an allegorical representation of vice. Antonio gloats over his dead body and calls him Beelzebub. Pandulfo, like Feliche, tries to play the Stoic and, failing, resorts not only to verbal violence but also to physical violence. But for Pandulfo and all the avengers this release into violence is accompanied by the knowledge that they are somehow infected or changed by their very contact with the evil that they are destroying. They know that they are rejecting the Christian virtues of piety and remorse.

They are possessed by the "grim fire-ey'd rage" (V.ii.91). As Feliche was infected by the lust that he attacked, so they are infected by the evil they attack.

The ghost approves of the revenge. There is no question that they did what had to be done, but nevertheless, because of their deed, they will never be the same. The world is "dirt's corruption," and living in it necessarily infects one.

What is being suggested here is that the convention of the satyr has been expanded to contain this concept. Any contact with evil leaves its mark. The final speeches of Antonio are curious; they are more than just anomalies:

First let's cleanse our hands,
 Purge hearts of hatred, and entomb my love,
 Over whose hearse I'll weep away my brain
 In true affection's tears.
 For her sake here I vow a virgin bed:
 She lives in me, with her my love is dead.
 (V.ii.153-58).

The killing of Piero has taken all our attention, and we are almost surprised when Antonio mentions his love. Antonio also feels that it is necessary to purge hearts of hatred before entombing Mellida. The following speech is stranger still:

Sound doleful tunes, a solemn hymn advance,
 To close the last act of my vengeance;
 And when the subject of your passion's spent,
 Sing Mellida is dead; all hearts will relent,
 In sad condolences at that heavy sound.
 Never more woe in lesser plot was found!
 And, O, if ever time create a muse,
 That to th'immortal fame of virgin faith
 Dares once engage his pen to write her death,
 Presenting it in some black tragedy,
 May it prove gracious; may his style be deck'd
 With freshest blooms of purest elegance;
 May it have gentle presence, and the scenes
 suck'd up

By calm attention of choice audience;
 And when the closing Epilogue appears,
 Instead of claps, may it obtain but tears.
 (V.ii.169-83).

He asks that future writers who speak of her death present it as some black tragedy with a gracious style. What is striking here is that Marston's style is neither "gracious" nor "purest elegance," nor does it have a "gentle presence." The implication here, whether conscious or not, is that she did not belong, or had no place in the world of the play, with the added implication that it was this ugly world that destroyed her. Pure goodness cannot, or is not allowed to exist in a world that compels one to become involved in its corruption.

In Marston's later plays, such as The Malcontent and The Dutch Courtezan, a virtuous woman is often presented as a symbol of the ideal good. In Antonio's Revenge, Mellida, who does represent such an ideal, is destroyed, and it is obvious that the death of Piero does not mean that the forces of good have entirely conquered evil. Evil has left its mark; Antonio, Pandulfo, and Maria are changed. They have experienced the "dirt and corruption of this world."

We know the world, and did we know no more,
 We would not live to know; but since constraint
 Of holy hands forceth us keep this lodge
 Of dirt's corruption, till dread power calls
 Our soul's appearance, we will live enclosed
 In holy verge of some religious order,
 Most constant votaries.

(V.ii.146-52).

This speech is one of terrible resignation and despair. There is no reason to live; they find the world so corrupted that they must withdraw from it; however, they are not allowed to die; "holy bands" forbid suicide. Trapped by fate into befouling their hands with the revenge they have perpetrated, they can take no satisfaction in the deed. Indeed, the tone of the speech implies that the primary reason for sealing themselves into a monastery is to escape being trapped a second time.

At the beginning of the play Piero, the fiendish duke, dominates the action. His speeches are filled with an obsession for revenge expressed in bloody and vile language:

*We both were rivals in our may of blood,
Unto Maria, fair Ferrara's heir.
He won the lady, to my honour's death,
And from her sweets cropp'd this Antonio;
For which I burnt in inward swelt'ring hate,
And fester'd rankling malice in my breast,
Till I might belk revenge upon his eyes:
(I.i.24-30).*

*Nay, calm this storm. I ever held thy breast
More secret, and more firm in league of blood,
Then to be struck in heat with each slight puff.
(I.i.49-51).*

*Say, faith, didst thou e'er hear, or read, or see
Such happy vengeance, unsuspected death?
That I should drop strong poison in the bowl,
Which I myself caroused unto his health
(I.i.66-69).*

*Nay, but weigh it. Then Feliche stabb'd
(Whose sinking thought frightened my conscious heart),
And laid by Mellida, to stop the match,
And hale on mischief. This all in one night!
(I.i.75-78).*

Will I not blast my own blood for revenge,
 Must not thou straight be perjur'd for revenge,
 And yet no creature dream 'tis my revenge?
 (I.i.86-88).

These lines need little comment; there can be no doubt that Piero's desire for revenge has taken over his soul, and he gloats over deeds done and deeds planned. However, at the end of the play Antonio, Maria, Andrugio, and Pandulfo are using this kind of language as well and becoming more like the villain Piero:

Resolved hearts, time curtails night, opportunity
 shakes us his foretop. Steel your thoughts,
 sharp your resolve, embolden your spirit, grasp
 your swords; alarum mischief, and with an undaunt-
 ed brow, out'scout the grim opposition of most
 menacing peril.

Hark! hear proud pomp shoots mounting triumph up,
 Borne in loud accents to the front of Jove.
 (V.i.81-87).

O now, he that wants soul to kill a slave,
 Let him die slave, and rot in peasant's grave.
 (V.i.88-89).

Murder and torture! no prayers, no entreats!
 (V.ii.63).

. . . the veins panting bleed,
 Trickling fresh gore about my fist. Bind fast—
 so, so!
 (V.ii.65-66).

He weeps; now do I glorify my hands;
 I had no vengeance, if I had no tears.
 (V.ii.76-77).

Murder for murder, blood for blood, doth yell!
 (V.ii.113).

Again these lines need little comment. It is obvious that the avengers have whipped themselves into a state of frenzy

so complete that only the torture and bloody death of Piero will dissipate it.

The fool's participation in the revenge only further underlines the fact that everyone has degenerated to this state. "Then am I for you, most pathetically, and unvulgarly, law!" (V.i.79), indicates Balurdo's initial willingness to accompany them on their mission. However, when Piero has been bound and his tongue plucked out, Balurdo's abuse is as vicious as that of anyone in the scene. "Down to the dungeon with him!" (V.ii.69) and later, "Thou most retort and obtuse rascal!" (V.ii.99).

There is, then, in Antonio's Revenge, an implied censure of the revenge motif; although, indeed, it is not an outright condemnation as in The Atheist's Tragedy. Characteristically Marston produces a satyr ambivalence by allowing conflicting impressions to co-exist. Unlike Hamlet, there is no question of the origin of the ghost. It is Andrugio; and his urging of vengeance appears to have divine sanction.

Now down looks Providence,
T'attend the last act of my son's revenge.
Be gracious, observation, to our scene,
For now the plot unites his scatter'd limbs
Close in contracted bands. The Florence Prince
(Drawn by firm notice of the Duke's black deeds)
Is made a partner in conspiracy.
The states of Venice are so swoll'n in hate
Against the Duke for his accursèd deeds
(Of which they are confirm'd by some odd letters
Found in dead Strotzo's study, which had past
Betwixt Piero and the murd'ring slave)

*That they can scarce retain from bursting forth
In plain revolt. O, now triumphs my ghost,
Exclaiming, Heaven's just, for I shall see
The scourge of murder and impiety!*

(V.i.22-25).

Antonio, like Hamlet, fled from the action of revenge, but unlike Hamlet, he had little reason for believing that what his father wanted done was inspired by an evil spirit. Antonio accepted his father's ghost without question as a good spirit who demanded a just requital of his wrongs, but what he shrank from was the evil implicit in the murder itself. But the ghost was adamant, and Antonio was forced to act. When the torture finally begins, the ghost of Andrugio is heard to say:

*Bless'd be thy hand! I taste the joys of heaven,
Viewing my son triumph in his black blood.*

(V.ii.67-68).

It is not until Piero is finally slain that his soul seems to find peace, and it is significant that he blesses Antonio for his actions because this implies a sanction of the revenge concept:

*'Tis done, and now my soul shall sleep in rest:
Sons that revenge their father's blood are blest.*

(V.ii.114-15).

The avengers, however, appear to view their participation in the deed somewhat differently. This is characterized by their attempts to anesthetize their sensibilities by whipping themselves into a frenzy and convincing themselves that the murder of Piero is the best thing for the

state. Pandulfo, in the opening scene of Act V, gives a lengthy speech in which he describes the reaction of the citizens to Piero's atrocious, bloody rule. It must not be forgotten, however, that Pandulfo is masked and prepared already for the deed. What he is doing in this speech is convincing himself that the deed is just, and not wicked:

And I do find the citizens grown sick
 With swallowing the bloody crudities
 Of black Piero's acts; they fain would cast
 And vomit him from off their government.
 Now is the plot of mischief ript wide ope;
 Letters are found 'twixt Strotzo and the Duke,
 So clear apparent, yet more firmly strong
 By suiting circumstance, that, as I walk'd,
 Muffled, to eavesdrop speech, I might observe
 The graver statesmen whispering fearfully.
 Here one gives nods and hums what he would speak;
 The rumour's got 'mong troop of citizens,
 Making loud murmur, with confused din;
 One shakes his head and sighs, "O ill-used power!"
 Another frets, and sets his grinding teeth,
 Foaming with rage, and swears this must not be;
 Here one complots, and on a sudden starts,
 And cries, O monstrous, O deep villainy!
 All knit their nerves, and from beneath swell'n brows
 Appears a gloating eye of much mislike;
 Whilst swart Piero's lips reek steam of wine,
 Swallows lust-thoughts, devours all pleasing hopes,
 With strong imagination of—what not?
 O now Vindicta! that's the word we have,
 A royal vengeance, or a royal grave!

(V.i.32-56).

Although Pandulfo's speech gives ample reason for desiring vengeance on Piero, it ends on a curious note. "O, now, Vindicta! that's the word we have, / A royal vengeance, or a royal grave!" It is as though Pandulfo were a sergeant rallying the troops for the final onslaught where the violence and bloodshed will be so appalling that no thought

may be given to anything save the charge.

Antonio is more explicit in his intent. He frankly prays that any gentler human emotion be replaced by "rage."

Now therefore pity, piety, remorse,
Be aliens to our thoughts; grim fire-ey'd rage
Possess us wholly.

(V.ii.90-92).

But earlier it appeared that he had already achieved this state of being possessed "wholly," because when he entered the room and learned from his mother that the preparation of Julio's body for Piero's "feast" was complete, he said:

Then will I dance and whirl about the air:
Methinks I am all soul, all heart, all spirit.
Now murder shall receive his ample merit.

(V.ii.47-49).

Finally, having bound Piero, plucked out his tongue, and served him his dead son's limbs on a platter, Antonio, speaking for all the revengers, sentences Piero to death:

Thus charge we death at thee; remember hell,
And let the howling murmurs of black spirits,
The horrid torments of the damnèd ghosts,
Affright thy soul as it descendeth down
Into the entrails of the ugly deep.

(V.ii.100-104).

This speech implies that Antonio feels absolutely justified in what he has done and what he is about to do. He appears to be playing God as he sentences Piero to death and eternal torture after death. There is no hint here that he is not confident of divine approval, and shortly afterwards, the vengeful frenzy abated, the revengers announce their

intention to give up the world and enter a monastery.

But just as Feliche, Planet, Quadratus, and Chrisoganus were somehow tainted by that which they reviled, so these people are tainted by their contact with evil in the person of Piero. In order to destroy him, they had to destroy that part of themselves which pities human frailty. In short, they had to become like him. To the best of my knowledge, Finkelpearl is the only critic who mentions this obvious transformation.

Antonio becomes a bloody conscienceless killer. He has come to resemble Piero, who thinks that Heaven approves his actions. . . . For the sensitive Antonio to think that this murder is heaven-approved demonstrates his degeneration into madness. The sensitive, poetic young lover has become a remorseless, bloodthirsty murderer. The "new" Antonio, the dedicated revenger, takes (or pretends to take) the same devilish mentor that has inspired Piero.⁶

Finkelpearl's observations about the revengers and particularly Antonio are very true, but what is most striking about this play is its ending. The revengers are not killed, nor do they kill themselves. Thus the reader is left with the same sense of ongoing corruption and suffering that he is left with in Histrion-Mastix, which is clearly a cyclical play. Moreover, the reason that the revengers give for not ending the terrible burden of their lives is that the church forbids suicide. Now this has two immediate effects: first,

⁶ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 153.

the assumed Christian ethic which lurked continually in the background is brought sharply into focus; and second, the fact that these people who have just perpetrated an atrocious act of vengeance choose to remain alive in a world they despise because of their faith forces the reader to face the moral problem of blood revenge. In the world of Titus Andronicus or Old Hieronimo, this problem is glossed over for two reasons: these men did not pretend to live by the Christian ethic and they died at the end, thus tying the whole situation up into a neat acceptable bundle. There is nothing as final or acceptable as death for ending problems. But Marston is not content with easy answers. Life goes on in Marston's plays for the protagonists; they return from the short-lived intoxication of revenge with only one certainty—there is no positive sustaining satisfaction to be gained from revenge.

The argument may be advanced that although there is nothing positive about revenge, it is still unfair to insist that they were in some way tainted by the experience. Central to any reply to this charge is a key speech of Antonio in Act III, Scene i. Antonio has just seen his father's ghost and is now engaged in a conversation with his mother. When she leaves he delivers the following soliloquy:

Ay, so you must, before we touch the shore
 Of wish'd revenge. O, you departed souls,
 That lodge in coffin'd trunks, which my feet press,
 (If Pythagorean Axioms be true,
 Of spirits' transmigration) fleet no more
 To human bodies, rather live in swine,
 Inhabit wolves' flesh, scorpions, dogs, and toads,
 Rather than man. The curse of Heaven rains
 In plagues unlimited through all his days:
 His mature age grows only mature vice,
 And ripens only to corrupt and rot
 The budding hopes of infant modesty.
 Still striving to be more than man, he proves
 More than a devil. Devilish suspect,
 Devilish cruelty,
 All hell-strain'd juice is pourèd to his veins,
 Making him drunk with fuming surquedries;
 Contempt of Heaven, untam'd arrogance,
 Lust, state, pride, murder.

(III.i.106-23).

This speech of Antonio's is so vital that it must be given full examination. What does he mean when he says, "The curse of Heaven rains / In plagues unlimited through all his days"? In this strange line is compressed the kernel of the Marstonian vision. The curse is heaven's, not hell's. Yet, striving to be more than man, man proves more than a devil. Grappling with any moral problem drags man down, and the greater the moral problem, the greater will be man's fall. Finkelpearl gives the following defence of Antonio's action:

But action is ultimately necessary; not to act would be to acquiesce in the villainous folly. Merely to rail (as Antonio did in the first play) is to cast serious doubts on one's sensib^leness. When the most subhuman of fools is impelled to make a protest, mere railing would make a sensible person look foolish. With a ruler like Piero, even a "chub fac't fop" cannot remain silent forever.

⁷ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 157.

Antonio has despairingly recognized his situation, and immediately following his satyr-like soliloquy the cry for murder is heard from above and below the stage as Pandulfo and the ghosts of Andrugio and Feliche echo each other with "Murder!" "Murder!" "Murder!"⁸ For Antonio there is no way out of the dilemma, and his reply indicates that he has completely succumbed to the "curse of heaven."

Ay, I will murder: graves and ghosts
Fright me no more, I'll suck red vengeance
Out of Piero's wounds, Piero's wounds!
(III.i.125-27).

The skillful dramatic effect created here by the allusion to "suck[ing] red vengeance" is intended to produce one overriding impression: Antonio has become a hideous satyr who, as a satyr scourge, not only opens wounds, but sucks the blood. We are expected to associate Antonio's resolve to murder with the preceding speech on the corruption of man; a speech typical of the private face of the satyr and coloured by another kind of satyr language. The final word of that speech was "murder," and Pandulfo and the ghosts immediately take up the chant for murder. When Antonio assents to their command, we know that for him murder is just one crime that is symbolic of many others.

⁸ Bullen is puzzled at Pandulfo's inclusion with the ghosts when they cry for murder. Marston's decision to include him may be explained as a device to foreshadow Pandulfo's rejection of Stoicism which comes in his next appearance in Act IV, Scene ii.

The curse of heaven is seen in the avengers in the same way that it is seen in the satyrs of other plays. They are all marked by their contact with evil. The curse of heaven, however, has a more specific meaning in the context of the scene. The curse is equated with the command for vengeance, which frightens Antonio. He is intimidated by the ghosts and the graves; and, when he is about to let Julio go free, the curse of heaven comes again in the person of Andrugio, who spurs his son on with one word: "Revenge." (III.ii.171), and again Antonio steels himself for the carnage he knows will follow.'

Stay, stay, dear father, fright mine eyes no more.
 Revenge as swift as lightning bursteth forth,
 And cleaves his heart.—Come, pretty tender child,
 It is not thee I hate, not thee I kill.
 Thy father's blood that flows within thy veins,
 Is it I loathe; is that revenge must suck.
 I love thy soul: and were thy heart lapp'd up
 In any flesh but in Piero's blood,
 I would thus kiss it; but being his, thus, thus,
 And thus I'll punch it. Abandon fears:
 Whilst thy wounds bleed, my brows shall gush out
 tears.

(III.i.172-82).

With the killing of Julio and his weird rationalization which attempts to separate in Julio that which is Julio's and that which is his father's, Antonio is guilty of most of the sins described in his speech: "fuming surquedries, untam'd arrogance, lust, pride, and murder."

When Antonio stabs Julio there is a groan from beneath the stage; the graves themselves recoil at the

hideousness of this deed. Again we are faced with the paradox that springs from the curse of heaven. Heaven commands vengeance, and yet heaven or nature groans when vengeance is wreaked.

In their attempts to follow the Christian ethic the revengers sink deeper and deeper into the ugly morass of sin. However, it is only when this happens, when they grapple with this paradox, contained within the satyr persona, that they become aware of the duality implicit in their satyr natures; they epitomize the paradox of the satyr concept; that is, that attacking evil necessarily contaminates. This satyr state enables them to arrive at a new level of awareness, albeit a pessimistic one, that is expressed in Maria's speech:

Leave us to meditate on misery,
To sad our thought with contemplation
Of past calamities. If any ask
Where lives the widow of the poison'd lord?
Where lies the orphant of a murder'd father?
Where lies the father of a butcher'd son?
Where lives all woe?—conduct him to us three,
The down-cast ruins of calamity.

(V.ii.161-68).

The message here is clear. The meaning is simple, and powerful in its simplicity. In short, neither Stoicism nor Machiavellianism nor Christianity can act as a bulwark to hold back the corruption and pain of this world.

The retreat to a monastery must indicate a concern for their spiritual salvation, but there is no indica-

tion whatsoever that they have come to terms with the problems of earthly pain, suffering, and corruption; in fact, the play's ending implies that they have given up trying. It is this fact that separates Antonio's Revenge from the high tragedy of Hamlet.

Shakespeare's great men—Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth—suffer and die; and usually, in their death, some universal human value is affirmed. When they die we are left with the feeling that no matter how miserable the world may be, there are things worth dying for. Paradoxically, this implies that there are things worth living for. Life has some significant and worthwhile meanings. However, the end of Antonio's Revenge leaves us with a very different feeling—one much less positive. The avengers did not die as they do in other revenge plays such as Kyd's Spanish Tragedy. They are bound by the law of the church which forbids suicide. The great irony here is that this un-Senecan decision to continue living does not leave the reader with a feeling of hope. Suffering and death lead to new insights about the nature of love and of man. Hamlet dies, but the kingdom has been saved, and the implication is that it is worth saving. In Antonio's Revenge evil has been destroyed, but the world is still "dirt's corruption."

Marston, as a satirist, was primarily concerned with attacking vice. But in this play, once he destroys it,

there is left only a strange vacuum: the most positive thing that can be said about the world of the play, in Act V, is that it is a valley of tears. The final speech in praise of Mellida does not relieve this depressing ending at all. Pandulfo, Maria, and Antonio are going to spend the rest of their lives in misery, which is hardly a conception of man as having a worthwhile destiny to fulfil in this world. As a result, the basic tone of Antonio's Revenge is pessimistic.

As in What You Will, this pessimistic tone is caused by the satyr paradox and its unhappy resolution which the revengers faced with the dilemma of tolerating evil or degrading themselves by trying to eradicate it. The ending of Antonio's Revenge implies that all men, and particularly the avengers, are victims of this dilemma. Their only choice is to withdraw to a monastery where sad contemplation replaces the necessity for moral action.

In his next play, The Malcontent, Marston uses the convention so that the tension is resolved in such a way that moral action is possible. The effect of this new treatment of the convention is that Marston's dramatic vision, while retaining its satiric stance, presents a more optimistic view of man's moral struggle.

CHAPTER IV

THE SATYR MASK

THE MALCONTENT

The general discussion of The Malcontent which follows is based primarily on Kernan's interpretation of the play.¹ My principal concern in this section is with showing where the play stands in relation to those that precede and follow it.

In all of Marston's plays before The Malcontent the tension between the two faces of the persona remained unresolved. In The Malcontent, Marston achieved a resolution of this tension by means of the malcontent mask. In effect, the public face of the persona is represented by the disguise. Altofronto is a good man who has fallen victim to machiavels simply because he is virtuous. The disillusionment resulting from this, which might otherwise have changed him into a Chrisoganus or a Feliche, is purged by the public persona because it is a mask or disguise which can be used and discarded.

Altofronto is able to rant and rail and gloat

¹ For a more detailed discussion of the play, see the chapter in his dissertation, "John Marston's Concept and Use of Satire," and book, The Cankered Muse.

lasciviously, but because he is acting, the virtue of the private face (in previous plays it was the public face) is strengthened and tempered rather than infected and destroyed. In effect, this acting is a therapy that not only alleviates some of his suffering, but also teaches him to recognize and live with the evil that caused his suffering.

In the next two plays Marston exploits this new relationship between the faces of the satyr persona as a structural device that fuses the concept of man's desire for the absolute and his recognition that he is a creature subject to passion.

Because Altofronto, Duke of Genoa, is unaware of political realities, Pietro Jacomo usurps his dukedom. Altofronto disguises himself as a malcontent and returns to Pietro's court in Genoa. The main action of the play centers on Altofronto's successful attempt to outwit and outmaneuver Pietro and an arch-Machiavellian fiend, Mendoza.

Before the play is over, Altofronto, or Malevole (his name as malcontent), exposes all the court fools, villains, fops, and adulterers. Pietro and his unfaithful wife, Aurelia, repent; Mendoza is let off lightly with banishment; and Altofronto regains his dukedom. In spite of the close affinity of The Malcontent with the standard revenge play, no one dies.

The Malcontent is the most important Renaissance

play using the satyr type. Before the writing of this work, a case could have been made for the position that the compulsive railer in dramatic satire was simply an extension of the author's personality. However, in The Malcontent we see in Altofronto a man who knowingly puts on the mask of a malcontent, and although this mask does manifest one part of his character, it is easily recognized that Altofronto himself clearly perceives the excessiveness of this viewpoint. The disguise of the malcontent can be equated with the public face of the persona. In short, the usual relationship between the two faces has been reversed, and instead of having a righteous critic who is secretly a self-righteous, envious, lascivious railer, we have a self-righteous, lascivious railer who is secretly a righteous man.

Altofronto comes to know that all the world is not evil; paradoxically, while the role of malcontent (public persona) afforded him an opportunity to release his viler, but no doubt real, emotions, it also became the vehicle by which he could recognize true goodness and eventually achieve a balanced view of reality.

As a satyr, in Antonio and Mellida, Feliche has a built-in motivation and for a large part of the play functions as the catalyst who fuses the world of idealists, fools, and villains. However, Marston's attempt to break the boundaries of the convention and present Feliche as a

person who exhibits growth and an understanding of the vision of the happy man fails, although not completely. The appearance of Feliche as Antonio's loyal friend is dramatically too abrupt and unexpected; it lacks sufficient motivation. The convention seems to have a stranglehold on the character.

In Antonio's Revenge, Marston uses the convention in a less confining manner. The revengers lash out at vice, but are tainted themselves when they participate in the revenge. The same can be said of Antonio. So, whereas in Antonio and Mellida Feliche's transition from the satyr type to the devoted wise friend can be called clumsy, the Stoic characters in Antonio's Revenge move convincingly to a state where they become infected by the sin which they attack—the sin of vengeance.

This structure, which evolves from the satyr convention, enables Marston to pose subtle moral and ethical questions about the existence of evil in the world. Since none of the questions is answered, the ending in no way suggests a positive affirmation of some value. We feel obliged by providence to take up the challenge against evil but feel we must hesitate lest we become sullied ourselves.

In The Malcontent, Marston deals with the same problems: that is, the confrontation with evil and its effects upon us. Again the satyr convention determines the

manner in which these problems are handled, and this time it becomes the vehicle for his presentation of a more positive world view.

In this play, he used the convention in such a way that, rather than restricting him, it liberated him. This unique adaptation enabled him to present a more positive world view while at the same time retaining that feature of the satyr convention that was so congenial to him—man's tendency to become tainted by and delighted with the very evil he attacks.

In this play we have the reverse of the situation in Antonio and Mellida. Altofronto was, and for the most part remained, a happy, contented man. He has chosen to play the malcontent, a role completely contrary to his original open, free nature. Having lost his kingdom and having discovered the treachery of those people he had formerly trusted, he disguises himself as a malcontent and returns to court. However, because of his disillusionment, the role of the malcontent is more than just a simple disguise; it becomes a very real part of his being, albeit not the only part.

There exists in his character a tension similar to that found in Feliche's, but the satyr's perverse quality does not finally dominate. In Feliche, the real nature was represented by the envious, railing, private face of

the satyr and the mask was Stoic. Here the real nature is more like the person Feliche wanted to be: "'Tis steady and must seem so impregnably fortified with his own content that no envious thought could ever invade his spirit."

(Antonio and Mellida, Induction, 111-13), and the mask of the malcontent, the lewd scourge, becomes the public face.

The eventual discarding of the mask comes as no surprise. The tension is resolved. Altofronto has passed through the purging fires of the satyr attitude and emerged with a broader, more practical world view. It is a view which acknowledges the evil seen by the satyr but also acknowledges the existence of goodness. This goodness must never be taken for granted; it is frail and must be protected always. And, in order to protect it, an awareness of political and worldly realities must be achieved. It is because Altofronto is a successful fusion of the happy man and the malcontent that he is able to see the world as it really is, neither completely sordid nor completely beautiful. It is hardly surprising, then, to see him begin to manipulate other people in the play. His new and deeper understanding gives him a wisdom that is almost supernatural. Marston uses the satyr duality, in this instance, to enable his major character to face and grapple with evil; but, because of the new relationship between the faces of the persona, Altofronto is not subject to the curse of heaven, and the fusion that results purges his perverse satyr

qualities. Yet there remains even to the end the sense that Altofronto must be forever on guard, because the message of the play is not that every problem in the court will be solved with the expulsion of Mendoza; rather, it is that Altofronto has to become, to use Finkelpearl's phrase, "a virtuous Machiavelli."² He wanted "those old instruments of state." (I.i.221). At the end of the play he realizes that "a steady quickness is the soul of state." (III.ii.78).

For Altofronto, there will always be Mendozas and Fernezes; they will never change, but at least he will be able to recognize them and deal with them on their own terms. T.S. Eliot's censure of Marston's careless handling of Ferneze and Bianca become irrelevant once emphasis is placed on the recognition of evil, rather than its expulsion. In his essay on Marston Eliot says of Ferneze: ". . . not a very satisfying character, as after his pardon in Act IV he lets the play down badly in Act V, scene iii, by his unseemly levity with Bianca."³ Malevole had saved Ferneze after he had been caught in Aurelia's bedroom and subsequently wounded in his attempt to escape. Eliot assumes that he should have learned his lesson, and he accuses Marston of inconstancy in the final scene when, during the masque, Ferneze with "unseemly levity" says to Bianca:

² Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 178.

³ T.S. Eliot, Elizabethan Dramatists (London: 1963), p. 160.

Believe it, lady; shall I swear?
let me enjoy you in private, and I'll
marry you, by my soul.

Bianca:

I had rather you would swear by your body:
I think that would prove the more regarded
oath with you.

Ferneze:

I'll swear by them both, to please you.

Bianca:

O, damn them not both to please me, for
God's sake!

Ferneze:

Faith, sweet creature, let me enjoy you
to-night, and I'll marry you to-morrow
fortnight, by my troth, la.

(V.iii.129-38).

However, the point that Eliot overlooks is that Malevole's new and more optimistic outlook must always be tempered with realism. Malevole will hope for the permanent conversion of Pietro and Aurelia, but if they revert to their old ways, he need be no more shocked than he was at Ferneze, "whose regeneration was not a conspicuous success."⁴ The excessively disillusioned quality of the satyr cast of mind is successfully kept at bay.

Eliot makes a similar comment on the character of Bilioso. He accuses Marston of

. . .the grossest carelessness in confusing his own characters. Even in The Malcontent there appears to be one such lapse. Several of the earlier scenes seem to depend for their point upon Bianca being the wife of Bilioso (a sort of prototype of the country wife); but she is not so named in the list of characters and the

⁴ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 191.

words of Ferneze to her in the last scene seem to indicate that Marston had forgotten this relationship.⁵

There is no need to see this as carelessness on Marston's part. Bilioso is an empty-headed fool, a typical representative of the court, who almost asks to be cuckolded by his young wife; and Bianca is a shameless hussy who hops from bed to bed. It is not at all unnatural, then, that the characters in the play, and particularly a cad like Ferneze, should view her as a woman having commitments to no one person. Her relationship to Bilioso is intentionally fuzzy because it reflects the corruption and lack of morals that existed in the court.

But let us return to Altofronto and look more closely at his relationship to the corruption and lack of morals in the court. Act I, Scene i, introduces him to the reader in a Shakespearian fashion in that we hear about him through a conversation before we see him. Shortly before he appears Pietro describes him:

This Malevole is one of the most prodigious affections that ever conversed with nature: a man, or rather a monster; more discontent than Lucifer when he was thrust out of the presence. His appetite is unsatiabable as the grave; as far from any content as from heaven: his highest delight is to procure others vexation, and therein he thinks he truly serves heaven; for 'tis his position, whosoever in this earth can be contented is a slave and damned; therefore does he afflict

⁵ Eliot, Elizabethan Dramatists, p. 159.

all in that to which they are most affected.
 The elements struggle within him; his own soul
 is at variance within herself; his speech is
 halter-worthy at all hours. I like him, faith:
 he gives good intelligence to my spirit, makes
 me understand those weaknesses which others'
 flattery palliates.—Hark! they sing.

(I.i.26-40).

Pietro's description isolates the two faces of the persona. The public face of the ministerial scourge who "truly serves heaven" has been sullied by the private face that delights in "procur[ing] others' vexation." The struggle of the two faces is almost allegorically described in the last part of the speech, where Pietro refers to his soul as being "at variance within herself."

This is almost a textbook definition of the satyr type. The explosive tension characteristic of the type is clearly recognized, and it does not take Malevole long to live up to Pietro's description of him. He savagely attacks anyone and everyone who crosses his path:

Common news! why, common words are, God save ye,
 Fare ye well; common actions, flattery and
 cozenage; common things, women and cuckolds.—
 And how does my little Ferrard? Ah, ye lecher-
 ous animal!—my little ferret, he goes sucking
 up and down the palace into every hen's nest,
 like a weasel:—and to what dost thou addict
 thy time to now more than to those antique
 painted drabs that are still effected of young
 courtiers,—flattery, pride, and venerly?

(I.i.60-68).

This attack is aimed at Ferrard, and his description of him as a "lecherous animal" that smells out lust with relish mirrors Malevole's own fascination. The satyr's attractions

and resemblance to that which he attacks are even more explicit in his ridicule of Bilioso. It is indeed ironic for he attributes to him the physical characteristics of the satyr in his mocking thrusts:

And how does my old muckhill, overspread
with fresh snow? thou half a man, half a goat,
all a beast! how does thy young wife, old
huddle?

(I.i.76-79).

Later, when Malevole tells Pietro in private that his wife is unfaithful, we see the characteristic satyr delight in his description of lust. Every detail is savoured, and he is in ecstasy when he witnesses Pietro's anguish:

Nay, to select among ten thousand fairs
A lady far inferior to the most,
In fair proportion both of limb and soul;
To take her from austerer check of parents,
To make her his by most devoutful rites
Than is the gorgeous world, even of a man;
To hug her with as rais'd an appetite
As usurers do their delv'd-up treasury
(Thinking none tells it but his private self);
To meet her spirit in a nimble kiss,
Distilling panting ardour to her heart;
True to her sheets, nay, diets strong his blood,
To give her height of hymeneal sweets.—

(I.i.146-59).

And when Pietro satisfies him by groaning, "O God."

(I.i.160), Malevole's description becomes even more graphic and lascivious:

Whilst she lisps, and gives him some court-
quelquechose,
Made only to provoke, not satiate:
And yet even then the thaw of her delight
Flows from lewd heat of apprehension,
Only from strange imagination's rankness,
That forms the adulterer's presence in her soul,
And makes her think she clips the foul knave's
loins.

(I.i.161-67).

But Malevole's satyr characteristics are seen in a totally new light when he reveals in Act I, Scene i, that he is only disguised as a malcontent. What must be noticed about this disclosure, however, is that the first four lines of the soliloquy are still in satyr character even though he is by himself. The malcontent mask is a disguise, but only in part, for it also represents that part of his original free and open nature that was disillusioned when his dukedom was usurped.

The soliloquy of Act I, Scene i, reveals that Malevole is not a true malcontent but is disguised as one:

Farewell.

Lean thoughtfulness, a sallow meditation,
Suck thy veins dry, distemperance rob thy sleep!
The heart's disquiet is revenge most deep:
He that gets blood, the life of flesh but spills,
But he that breaks heart's peace, the dear soul
kills.

Well, this disguise doth yet afford me that
Which kings do seldom hear, or great men use,—
Free speech: and though my state's usurp'd,
Yet this affected strain gives me a tongue
As fetterless as in an emperor's.
I may speak foolishly, ay, knavishly,
Always carelessly, yet no one thinks it fashion
To poise my breath; for he that laughs and strikes
Is lightly felt, or seldom struck again.
Duke, I'll torment thee now; my just revenge
From thee than crown a richer gem shall part:
Beneath God, naught's so dear as a calm heart.

(I.i.195-212).

The disguise, as he says, allows him to do several things. It affords him free speech which enables him to get his just revenge and eventually regain his crown. He concludes the soliloquy with the observation: "Beneath God, naught's

so dear as a calm heart." This is the kind of sentiment that Feliche was forever espousing, but here it has a more genuine ring. There is also another significant difference in this malcontent. In spite of his protests to the contrary, people do listen to Malevole, and because they listen he is able to manipulate them.

Immediately following this scene, Celso enters and greets Malevole. Malevole's response sheds new light on his character:

Peace, speak low, peace! O Celso, constant lord,
 (Thou to whose faith I only rest discover'd,
 Thou, one of full ten millions of men,
 That lovest virtue only for itself;
 Thou in whose hands old Ops may put her soul)
 Behold forever-banish'd Altofront,
 This Genoa's last year's duke. O truly noble!
 I wanted those old instruments of state,
 Dissemblance and suspect: I could not time it,
Celso;
 My throne stood like a point midst of a circle,
 To all of equal nearness; bore with none;
 Rein'd all alike; so slept in fearless virtue,
 Suspectless, too suspectless; till the crowd,
 (Still lickorous of untried novelties)
 Impatient with severer government
 Made strong with Florence, banish'd Altofront.
(I.i.214-29).

He will become "the virtuous Machiavel." He must meet evil on its own terms. But there is more to this speech. The image of the circle does not only suggest an inability to recognize evils, it also implies that he was unable to recognize goodness. This seems to be the point of the excessive praise of Celso. In this play, the mask of the satyr is not simply going to teach Altofronto how to deal

with evil; it will also enable him to come to a deeper understanding of virtue.

Traditionally, the satyr is concerned with attacking vice, not with defining virtue. Altofronto, in the disguise of the malcontent, is not only able to ferret out evil; he is able to observe virtue and test it. Maria, Celso, and the captain remained loyal to Altofronto at great personal risk. "Under the impact of repeated demonstrations of virtue he arrives slowly at a more balanced view of the world."⁶ Altofronto's recognition and acceptance of the goodness of these three is much more credible than Feliche's sudden devotion to Antonio. This is possible when it is realized that Altofronto is more than a malcontent. The satyr convention has become much more flexible and effective. Altofronto's moral viewpoint accepts the world and its imperfections. As he says after witnessing his wife's faithfulness:

Now, the fear of the devil forever go with thee!—
Maquerelle, I tell thee, I have found an honest
woman: faith, I perceive, when all is done, there
is of women, as of all other things, some good,
most bad; some saints, some sinners: for as
nowadays no courtier but has his mistress, no
captain but has his cockatrice, no cuckold but
has his horns, and no fool but has his feather;
even so, no woman but has her weakness and feather
too, no sex but has his—I can hunt the letter no
farther.—O God, how loathsome this toying is to
me! that a duke should be forced to fool it! well,

⁶ Kernan, The Cankered Muse, p. 218.

stultorum plena sunt omnia: better play the fool
lord than be the fool lord.--Now, where's your
sleights, Madam Maquerelle?

(V.ii.130-43).

The satyr vision of the world is rejected; not everything is ugly. If perhaps there was a chance that the mask might become the man, this display of virtue tips the scale in favour of a more optimistic outlook. Nevertheless, he realizes that in spite of this newly-discovered truth, he must continue to play the malcontent—at least for a while. The next part of this speech is meant to obscure and contradict his initial non-satyrical reaction. Before he is able to complete this euphemistic smoke-screen, his weariness with the satyr role is evidenced in his aside: "O God, how loathsome this toying is to me! That a duke should be forc'd to fool it! Well, better play the fool lord than be the fool lord."

The fusion of Altofronto-Malevole permits him to act as the typical scourge, but what is more important, it puts the dramatic focus on his new awareness. His function in the play is not, as Caputi claims, "primarily choral."⁷ It is true that Altofronto-Malevole still retains the choral features of the early satyrs, and as a choral figure he is effective; but by reversing the usual relationship of the public and private faces, Marston is able to use the con-

⁷ Caputi, John Marston, Satirist, p. 190.

vention as a structural device that allows Altofronto to arrive at a new level of awareness that was unattainable in previous satyr characters. The growth of this satyr determines the overall movement and structure of the play.

THE DUTCH COURTEZAN

Probably no other Elizabethan dramatist borrowed from Montaigne as frequently as did John Marston. In The Dutch Courtezan alone, there are some forty-five passages which have an important bearing on the theme of the play. The majority of these passages have been taken from the essay entitled "Upon Some Verses of Virgil." In this work Montaigne, in his intimate, rambling, confessional, and frank style, considers the relationship between the young man's sensual desires — more specifically, the sexual drive — and the older man's so-called temperance. Although he contradicts himself on some particulars, a habit he was not unaware of himself, certain fundamental ideas, opinions, or ways of looking at life (I hesitate to use the term "philosophy") can be clearly discerned. His view of human behaviour is grounded on a firm conviction that anything that can be considered natural or in accord with human nature is good; and, if it is not good, at least it is not harmful. Honesty with oneself and reason are the tools that he feels will lead man to a recognition and understanding of his own human nature. The traditional Christian ethic is not his concern; he does not deny its validity, and, on occasion, he makes

reference to it; but for the most part it seems to have receded into the background. Much of his advice could be considered practical and at times even Machiavellian; certainly it is seldom spiritual.

It is the naturalism as expressed in this essay which seems to be the framework over which Marston built The Dutch Courtezan. There is scarcely a scene in the play that does not contain at least one important speech lifted almost word for word from Montaigne.

It would seem, therefore, that this wholesale plundering should prompt two questions with regard to Marston's dramatic ability; first, can this kind of borrowing, which actually borders on plagiarism, be incorporated into a play so that it is something more than a public recitation of the ideas contained in the essays: second, even if it is allowed that many of the central ideas of Montaigne were successfully woven into the play, is it not possible that there might be an inherent lack of dramatic tension in the overly reasonable Frenchman that makes his work unsuitable as a major source of poetic inspiration for a play, no matter how competent the dramatist? Indeed, if a character mouths off the precepts of Montaigne at great length, he is apt to run the risk of sounding arrogant and smug, and, ironically, the total impression he would leave on his audience or reader would be one of greater self-righteousness than

many of the moralists he attacks.

It is these two questions, and their relationship to the satyr convention, that will be the focus of this section. Since there is an obvious change and growth in Malheureux's ethical outlook and a less obvious but equally important change in Freeville's, a description of the action is in order. For the present, the summary and comments will be limited to the central story; later, some mention will be made of the significance of the sub-plot, or rather, the parallel plot.

After a visit to the local inn, Malheureux insists on accompanying his friend Freeville to his home lest "the warmth of wine and youth will draw you to some common house of lascivious entertainment." (I.i.66-67). Freeville replies that since his decision to marry, he has prayed for the continuance of brothels since "youth and appetite are above the club of Hercules." (I.i.77-78). For him it is desirable that young men should have easy access to such houses, otherwise, every husband would run the risk of cuckoldry. Malheureux makes several futile attempts to convince his friend of the evils of this practice, but they are to no avail; and, on Freeville's request, he decides to go with him to the courtesan's house to "make her loath the shame she's in;" (I.i.169).

When they meet the courtesan, Franceschina, Malheureux immediately, and to his own shame, falls in love

with her. He consoles himself with the thought, "No love's without some lust, no life without some love." (I.ii.253). Freeville is delighted with Malheureux's fall and gleefully suggests that his "cast garment must be let out in the seams for you when all is done. Of all the fools that would all man out-thrust,/ He that 'gainst Nature would seem wise is worst." (I.ii.268-72).

On discovering that she has been rejected by Freeville, Franceschina plans her revenge. She tells Malheureux that she will yield to him if he will kill Freeville. He consents; but once he is away from her, he loathes himself and reveals everything to his friend, and together they devise a plan. A mock quarrel is staged between the two men and it appears that Freeville has been slain. Malheureux returns to Franceschina with Freeville's ring, which was a gift from his betrothed, the virtuous Beatrice. In accordance with their pact, Malheureux presents this ring as proof that the murder had been committed. But instead of jumping into his arms, as he expected, she turns him over to the police. His insistence that it was only a joke and that Freeville is still alive falls on deaf ears when it is discovered that Freeville is missing. He is nowhere to be found because he has disguised himself as a pander and is in the employ of Franceschina. Like the Duke in Measure for Measure, Freeville has taken it upon himself to be the

moral guardian of his friend; and moreover, it gives him an opportunity to witness the steadfastness and loyalty of his beloved Beatrice, a tactic reminiscent of Malevole in The Malcontent. In the final scenes of the play, he reveals himself to Beatrice, begs her forgiveness for testing her, and manages to save Malheureux from the gallows at the eleventh hour. Beatrice readily forgives Freeville; Malheureux declares that "he that lust rules cannot be virtuous." (V.iii.67); and everyone is forgiven except Franceschina who is sent to prison.

The conversion of Malheureux is not a major concern of this study, since it is rather evident that his brand of morality was out of touch with reality and has been dealt with by other critics, notably Finkelpearl. Freeville, on the other hand, recognizes passion for what it is and like Montaigne, realizes that:

It is a natural force which none can escape; it can only be conquered by accepting it: "Belike we must be incontinent that we may be Continent, burning is quenched by fire." After reading this essay, Marston could even view whoring as a natural if regrettable response to a very human need.⁸

This is essentially the interpretation that Finkelpearl arrives at in his chapter on The Dutch Courtezan. In his conclusion he states that,

⁸ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 199.

Marston would seem to be advocating two contradictory attitudes toward illicit sexual activity. With the help of Montaigne, he shows that whoring is not as harmful to a young man as denying his humanity is. It is the mark of his passions; it is the sign of wisdom to accept the alloy in man's make-up. At the same time he makes it clear that whoring is a dirty, dangerous business and that the love of a whore differs from that of a wife. Freeville's course is not the best, but since "Nothing extremely best with us endures" the path from Franceschina to Beatrice, from "heart" to "soule" (II.78) is at least natural. It is this realistic view of man's development which justifies the ⁹revels morality" of the gallants in the audience.

Of course, what Finkelpearl overlooks is that any viewpoint which claims to be realistic must not disregard man's yearning for an absolute, and this yearning is particularly noticeable in both The Dutch Courtezan and The Malcontent. Indeed, it is this yearning, so definitely at odds with the naturalism of Montaigne, that gives the play dramatic tension and prevents it from becoming a didactic lecture. Again the yearning is expressed by means of the satyr convention.

In the first scene, Freeville is presented as a young gallant who cavalierly defends the brothels: "Most necessary buildings, Malheureux; ever since my intention of marriage, I do pray for their continuance." (I.i.68). That this speech is taken from "Some Verses upon Virgil" is indisputable. The parallel passage and the one that follows in the essay, as pointed out by M.L. Wine, read:

⁹ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 218.

Whereupon some say, that to forbid and remove the common brothel-houses, is not only to spread whoredom everywhere, which only was allotted to those places, but also to incite idle and vagabond men to that vice, by reason of the difficultie.¹⁰

At this early stage in the play the above statement quickly delineates the character of Freeville. Up to this point he has neither said nor done anything that would give the reader any information about the kind of person he is or professes to be. But here in the first exchange with Malheureux, Marston wastes no time. With little regard for gradual character development, he quickly polarizes Malheureux and Freeville. Freeville is the practical rationalist, keenly aware of nature's laws; Malheureux is the Puritan moralist, as the following speech indicates:

Know, sir, the strongest argument that speaks
Against the soul's eternity is lust,
That wise man's folly, and the fool's wisdom:
But to grow wild in loose lasciviousness,
Given up to heat and sensual appetite,
Nay, to expose your health and strength and name,
Your precious time, and with that time the hope
Of due preferment, advantageous means,
Of any worthy end, to the stale use,
The common bosom of a money creature,
One that sells human flesh — a mangonist!
(I.i.94-104).

This advice to his hedonistic friend is an objection to sex which is a straw man that Montaigne sets up in order to knock down with the club of human nature. Marston

¹⁰ The Essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne done into English
by John Florio, ed. Thomas Seccombe (London: 1908), II,
374.

*gives the club to Freeville who uses it skillfully if not
sophistically in his defence of prostitution:*

*Alas, good creatures! what would you have
them do? Would you have them get their living
by the curse of man, the sweat of their brows?
So they do:*

. ;

*A poor decayed mechanical man's wife, her
husband is laid up, may not she lawfully be
laid down, when her husband's only rising is
by his wife's falling?*

.

*For this I hold to be denied of no man, All
things are made for man, and man for woman.
(I.i.105-42).*

*The broad-minded humourous attitude that Freeville
displays in this speech further marks him as a man of the
world. But more interesting is Marston's curious rendering
of Montaigne's comment from Aristippus in fashioning Mal-
heureux's reply:*

*For, as Aristippus (speaking to some young man
who blushed to see him go to a bawdy house)
said, the fault was not in entring, but in not
coming out again.¹¹*

*This passage is a good example of Montaigne's
urbane and sophisticated wit. But Marston takes the line
and twists it around when he put it into the mouth of Mal-
heureux. It loses its light cynical edge and comes out as
'Tis no such sin to err, but to persever." (I.i.146), a rather*

¹¹ *The Essays of Montaigne, III, 136.*

straightforward and bland Christian maxim. Evidently, then, Marston takes some pains to portray Malheureux as a humourless Puritan type, and the audience is prepared from the outset for his downfall.

The first scene ends with Malheureux's claim that he will show the courtesan the error of her ways:

Well, I'll go to make her loath the shame she's in;
The sight of vice augments the hate of sin.
(I.i.169-70).

"The sight of vice augments the hate of sin." It is around this concept that the entire play turns. Only in Malheureux's case, the opposite is true. The sight of vice, in this instance embodied in a beautiful woman, simply whets his latent appetite, and he sinks deeper and deeper into a morass of evil and corruption that completely shatters his Puritan confidence in his virtue.

Freeville preaches an entirely different philosophy which is succinctly expressed in one of his speeches:

Incontinence will force a continence;
Heat wasteth heat, light defaceth light,
Nothing is spoiled but by his proper might.
This is something too weighty for thy floor.
(II.i.126-29).

For him, both the sight of vice and indulgence in it are necessary evils by which man comes eventually to a stable and moderate position on how to conduct his life. However, when Freeville witnesses what happens to his friend, a dramatic change occurs in his outlook. But more will be said

on this point shortly.

To return to the question of Malheureux and his Puritanism: with the completion of this scene, the reader is prepared for Malheureux's humiliation. His self-righteous attitude is almost conventional; it can be compared to Malvolio's in Twelfth Night or Angelo's in Measure for Measure (a play which may have had some influence on The Dutch Courtezan). However, it would be an over-simplification to dismiss him as a conventional pompous bore; in spite of all his moralizing, he is genuinely concerned about his friend. There is no reason to doubt that his desire to accompany Freeville home lest he fall by the wayside is prompted by anything save the highest motives.

In this short space Marston also manages to show a certain ambiguity in the character of Freeville. Our initial reaction is to accept him as a broad-minded, humorous Falstaffian figure who sees life as it is. But he is too cool, too detached, and too glib; and what is more perplexing, this man who so vigorously defends the brothels and who plans to visit his courtezan has already announced his intention to marry. Moreover, his blasé, braggadocio attitude toward the Dutch "Tanakin," which suggests that he treats her as a thing rather than a human being, is just as reprehensible as Malheureux's hot-blooded passion which develops in the second scene. Indeed, in one sense it is worse,

because Freeville, as his name implies, has free will, whereas Malheureux is unable to control himself.

By the beginning of the third act, a noticeable change takes place in Freeville. He is more reluctant to accept the notion that the passion of a young man is something that is necessary and impossible to control. The conversation that takes place between the two after Malheureux confesses that he had intended to murder him illustrates the change that has taken place in both men. Again the emphasis is on both, although most critics focus only on Malheureux's decline. Malheureux contritely and rather pathetically confesses to Freeville that he must bring proof to the Dutch courtesan of having slain his friend before he will be granted the privilege of enjoying her. It is significant that he does not speak of her lightly or cynically. Rather, he refers to her body touchingly and euphemistically, as "her sweetness."

Ay, and this heart; and in true proof you were slain, I should bring her this ring, from which she was assured you would not part until from life you parted; for which deed, and only for which deed, I should possess her sweetness.

(III.i.246-51).

Freeville's outraged reply betrays no such gentleness. Instead he displays only anger toward the courtesan he used and cast aside, and indignation for the friend that he led into temptation:

O! bloody villains! Nothing is defamed but
by his proper self. Physicians abuse remedies;
lawyers spoil the law; and women only shame
women. You ha' vow'd my death?

(III.i.252-55).

Again Malheureux is contrite as he answers Freeville's question. It was his lust, not his heart, which vowed the death of his friend. The second part of his speech is that of a man in agony. He insists that he must possess her, but, in the same breath, bewails the fact that he can "conceive endless pleasure" in a person he considers the vilest of sinners:

My lust, not I, before my reason would; yet I
must use her. That I, a man of sense, should
conceive endless pleasure in a body whose soul
I know to be so hideously black!

(III.i.256-59).

In Freeville's closing speech to his friend we see the beginning of his metamorphosis:

That a man at twenty-three should cry, O
sweet pleasure! and at forty-three should
sigh, O sharp pox! But consider man fur-
nished with omnipotence, and you overthrow
him; thou must cool thy impatient appetite.
'Tis fate, 'tis fate!

(III.i.260-65).

Show her this ring, enjoy her, and, blood cold,
We'll laugh at folly.

(III.i.280-81).

The advice "cool thy impatient appetite" is certainly very different from that which he was so freely offering in the first act. No longer is he the gallant champion of prostitutes; now he considers them to be a blight on

womanhood; and no longer does he see Malheureux's passion as a source of "laughter eternal." (I.ii.247).

It is at this point that Freeville learns that the practical morality of Montaigne can be just as inadequate as the naive idealism of Malheureux. Marston still recognizes the importance of contact with evil, but he is not submitting that such contact should be a prescribed formula. Man may fall because of his weakness; but this still does not justify lust. The whole tone of the second part of the play has a more serious note because of this. Marston is dealing here with the same paradox that he examined in Antonio's Revenge. Contact with evil is dangerous; yet, if one can survive, a new awareness is gained; but it can just as easily destroy.

Whenever Marston uses any philosophical system in his plays, it is always used dramatically. Any neat system is a mask behind which people may hide. Marston recognizes this, and, ironically, it is always a satyr who exposes the worthlessness of the philosophies used as crutches by other characters.

Perhaps from the reader's point of view Malheureux is a sophist.

The picture of a man's realizing that his code of life is failing him and that he is actually "passion's slave" is one of Marston's finest achievements. The sophistry of Malheureux's early soliloquies, especially the one in the first scene of the second act where he lashes out against "custom" for not giving man the same liberty that animals enjoy while

he fails to realize that he is in danger of becoming as bestial as the birds that he envies, gives way in the second half of the play to greater raving and despair. What he comes to fear most is the loss of his identity as a human being: "I am not now myself, no man." (IV.ii.29). The intrigues of Freeville, however, prevent tragedy.¹²

But does not the same observation hold true for Freeville? Was there no sophistry in his pose as the man of the world? Was the laughter totally at Malheureux's expense?

There is much evidence to suggest that Freeville also recognizes the smugness of his own position. Characteristically, at the moment of recognition that Malheureux's passion has become an uncontrollable monster, he is forced to reconsider his previous advice about freely acknowledging and giving in to lust. Freeville is now giving advice to Malheureux that echoes Malheureux's earlier speeches. In the exchange in Act IV, Scene iii, after Malheureux confesses that he must enjoy Franceschina, their respective roles seem to be reversed. Malheureux says in a cavalier fashion: "Ay, rest yourself;/ Each man hath follies," (IV. ii.26-27), and Freeville replies: "But those worst of all,/ Who, with a willing eye, do seeing fall." (IV. ii.28-29).

The concluding soliloquy of Act IV, Scene ii, is reminiscent of Marston's use of the convention in The Malcontent:

¹² M.L. Wine, ed., The Dutch Courtesan (Lincoln: 1965), p. xvii.

which assimilates Montaigne's attitudes, but for the first time it successfully incorporates a type of idealism that was muted but always present in his earlier works. In this play the catalyst for the fusion is Castiglione's brand of neo-Platonism which held that the virtue of a beautiful woman could turn a man's desire from earthly to heavenly pursuits.

Finkelpearl maintains that there is something perverted about Malheureux's passion. "It is now clear," he says, "that Malheureux's long pent up lust has assumed a depraved and unnatural character."¹³ But the point is that all lust, even the common everyday brand such as Freeville had for Franceschina, is depraved and unnatural and does not have to assume these qualities. It is this truth that Freeville begins to realize. Man may be weak, and consequently he fails, but there is still no justification for vice. Freeville is no longer content to allow Malheureux to find out about virtue and vice by means of a fortunate fall. Instead he takes it upon himself to show that sin breeds sin. His parting remark in Scene i, "Virtue, let sleep thy passions; / What old times held as crimes, are now but fashions." (III.i.283-85), was more than a simple observation about the times; it was charged with satirical bitterness and regret that true virtue was no longer con-

¹³ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 207.

sidered a thing of value in itself. So he becomes a scourge, and it is significant that he disguises himself as a pander. The pander's disguise is equivalent to Altofronto's disguise as a malcontent, and it permits Freeville to indulge in the usual satyr voyeurism. To put it another way, the satyr-pander disguise operates on several levels. Freeville becomes a satyr when he recognizes the inadequacies and errors of libertinism. When he decides to teach his friend a lesson, he becomes a satyr, inasmuch as he is a scourge. In addition, the pander disguise represents the lascivious side of the satyr; but it, in turn, also represents a real aspect of Freeville's nature, that is, his libertinism. Insofar as it represents this aspect of his nature, it also acts as a cathartic device, because by it he is eventually purged of his self-indulgent attitude.

The rational libertinism of Freeville and the self-righteousness of Malheureux are synthesized in the satyr. Freeville obviously recognizes the glibness of his former outlook. In short, two apparently contradictory viewpoints—summed up in the two maxims: "The sight of vice augments the hate of sin," and "Incontinence will force a continence,"—are fused by means of the satyr convention. Incontinence may force continence but this slick adage does not absolve one from trying to resist temptation.

The testing of Beatrice is very much like Altofronto's testing of Maria. Freeville has seen Malheureux,

a man of principle, suddenly turned into a lustful animal. Such a revelation might give him second thoughts about the faithfulness of Beatrice. Like Altofronto, Freeville, disguised as the satyr, learns that although the virtuous life is difficult, it is not impossible.

The relationship between Beatrice and Crispinella is a commentary on the theme of the natural man. Crispinella, like Rossaline in Antonio and Mellida, uses libertine speech, and her chastity is never called to question. She is a charming, outspoken little spitfire. She delights in quick sharp repartee and prides herself on her frankness and her ability to call a spade a spade—a trait that Beatrice finds somewhat embarrassing. She chides Beatrice when she overhears her reading a love letter:

Pish! sister Beatrice, prithee read no more;
my stomach o' late stands against kissing extremely.
(III.i.7-8)

.

Marry, if a nobleman or a knight with one
lock visit us, though his unclean goose-turd-
green teeth ha' the palsy, his nostrils smell
worse than a putrified marrowbone,, and his
loose beard drops into our bosom, yet we must
kiss him with a cursy, a curse! for my part,
I had as lieve they would break wind in my
lips.

(III.i.19-25).

Now undoubtedly such a woman is refreshing and likeable, but she is not the sort who is apt to inspire a man to a contemplation of eternal verities. The majority of her speeches are sprinkled with sayings from Montaigne,

such as her retort to her sister when she was reminded that she should pay more heed to "severe modesty."

Fie, Fie! virtue is a free, pleasant, buxom quality. I love a constant countenance well; but this froward ignorant coyness, sour austere lumpish uncivil privateness, that promises nothing but rough skins and hard stools; ha! fie on't, good for nothing but for nothing.

(III.i.51-56)

Modesty is a sham for Crispinella; it is nothing but affectation; she is unable and unwilling to grant that there might be another kind of modesty that is more genuine. Crispinella, more than any other person in the play, is used by Marston as a mouthpiece for the views of Montaigne; yet, when she is compared with Beatrice, she pales. Crispinella's suitor may love her, and she might even prove an agreeable wife, but by no stretch of the imagination could it be said that she purified his soul when he came under the influence of her virtue, as might be said of Beatrice.

Since the disguise of pander represents a particular aspect of Freeville, he will only be able to discard the mask when it has served the purpose of proving the existence of virtue. In this play Beatrice represents an absolute. The recognition and synthesis of this absolute with the naturalism of Montaigne by means of the satyr mask bring about the cure and enable Freeville to come to a new awareness. They also contribute to the comic resolution.

Crispinella, though obviously better suited for survival in the everyday world, is not the symbol of absolute perfection that almost all of Marston's protagonists craved as a source of inspiration. As a source of inspiration, the Marstonian "Wonder of Women" type is always passive. Once the focus of the action is turned on her, the whole nature of the play is changed and this is precisely what happens in *Sophonisba*. But more on that topic later.

The sub-plot prevents the actions of Freeville and Malheureux from becoming too heavy and serious; whenever there is a danger that the tone of the play may become blatantly didactic, the focus shifts to the shenanigans of Cocledemoy. However, the antics of Cocledemoy function as more than simple comic relief. He is a skillful fusion of the flatterer (faun) and satyr, yet it is all done with a light touch. His language is unquestionably that of the satyr, and he also appears to exhibit the typical fascination with lust. Indeed, his companion in crime is a bawd who works for Franceschina, and he recognizes her for what she is. However, there is a noticeable difference in the character of this railer. He is a fun-loving rascal with a Falstaffian spirit. Cocledemoy is Marston's satyric tour de force: the satyr who is so much of the world that, paradoxically, he is free of envy. In spite of the world he lives and delights in, he can never be thought of as

perverse.

He is a completely elusive creature, escaping chameleon-like from even the tightest situation in any one of his multifarious disguises. His language is the most obscene in the play, but its very naturalness is intended to shock us into a recognition of what is natural. For, in his own way, Cocledemoy is himself something of a moralist.¹⁴

Cocledemoy's theft of Mulligrub's goblets is announced in Act I, Scene i, but he is not introduced until Scene ii, where he is bickering with Mary Faugh over their recently acquired spoils. "Come, my worshipful, rotten, rough-bellied bawd! ha! my blue-tooth'd patroness of natural wickedness, give me the goblets." (I.ii.3-5). The kind of language used in his description of Mary Faugh is indeed insulting:

Hang toasts! I rail at thee, my worshipful organ-bellows that fills the pipes, my fine rattling fleamy cough o' the lungs, and cold with a pox? I rail at thee? what, my right precious pandress, supportress of barber-surgeons, and enhanceress of lotium and diet-drink? I rail at thee, necessary damnation? I'll make an oration, I, in praise of thy most courtly in-fashion and most pleasureable function, I.

(I.ii.20-26).

Yet, for all its vileness, it is apparent that the tone is also one of affection and playful banter, for the victim of his diatribe is not the least offended and heartily enters into the name-calling duel. Mary Faugh's

¹⁴ Wine, ed., The Dutch Courtezan, p. xxii.

description of Cocledemoy puts him squarely in the satyr convention, "In very good truthness, you are the foulest-mouth'd, profane, railing brother! call a woman the most ungodly names." (I.ii.14-16).

Following this description, Cocledemoy gives his oration in praise of bawds:

List then:— a bawd; first for her profession or vocation, it is most worshipful of all the twelve companies; for, as that trade is most honourable that sells the best commodities—as the draper is more worshipful than the point-maker, the silkman more worshipful than the draper, and the goldsmith more honourable than both, little Mary, so the bawd above all: her shop has the best ware; for where these sell but cloth, satins, and jewels, she sells divine virtues, as virginity, modesty, and such rare gems; and those not like a petty chapman, by retail, but like a great merchant, by wholesale; wa, ha, ho! And who are her customers? Not base corn-cutters or sowgelders, but most rare wealthy knights, and most rare bountiful lords, are her customers. Again, whereas no trade or vocation profiteth but by the loss and displeasure of another—as the merchant thrives not but by the licentiousness of giddy and unsettled youth; the lawyer, but by the vexation of his client; the physician, but by the maladies of his patient—only my smooth-gumm'd bawd lives by others' pleasure, and only grows rich by others' rising. O merciful gain, O righteous in-come! So much for her vocation, trade, and life. As for their death, how can it be bad, since their wickedness is always before their eyes, and a death's head most commonly on their middle-finger? To conclude, 'tis most certain they must needs both live well and die well, since most commonly they live in Clerkenwell, and die in Bride-well. Dixi, Mary.

(I.ii.31-55).

Cocledemoy's actions and speeches are obviously meant to parallel Freeville's. This speech in praise of bawds

follows closely on Freeville's speech in praise of courtezans:

Alas, good creatures! what would you have them do? Would you have them get their living by the curse of a man, the sweat of their brows? So they do: every man must follow his trade, and every woman her occupation. A poor decayed mechanical man's wife, her husband is laid up, may not she lawfully be laid down, when her husband's only rising is by his wife's falling? A captain's wife wants means; her commander lies in open fields abroad, may not she lie in civil arms at home? A waiting gentlewoman, that had wont to take say to her lady, miscarries or so; the court misfortune throws her down; may not the city courtesy take her up? Do you know no alderman would pity such a woman's case? Why, is charity grown a sin, or relieving the poor and impotent an offense? You will say beasts take no money for their fleshly entertainment: true, because they are beasts, therefore beastly; only men give to loose, because they are men, therefore manly: and indeed, wherein should they bestow their money better? In land, the title may be crack'd; in houses, they may be burnt; in apparel, 'twill wear; in wine, alas for our pity! our throat is but short: but employ your money upon women, and a thousand to nothing, some one of them will bestow that on you which shall stick by you as long as you live; they are no ungrateful persons, they will give quid for quo: do ye protest, they'll swear; do you rise, they'll fall; do you fall, they'll rise; do you give them the French crown, they'll give you the French—O justus justa justum! They sell their bodies: do not better persons sell their souls? nay, since all things have been sold, honour, justice, faith, nay, even God Himself,

Aye me, what base ignobleness is it
To sell the pleasure of a wanton bed!
Why do men scrape, why heap to full heaps join?
But for his mistress, who would care for coin?
For this I hold to be denied of no man,
All things are made for man, and man for woman.
Give me my fee.

(I.i.105-43).

Structurally, these speeches are identical and this is only one of several parallels. Both deal with bawds and prostitution in a cynical and worldly fashion. Both defend the houses of ill-fame and the women sheltered there on very reasonable and practical grounds. Both speeches are evidently delivered as much for the speaker's delight in his own wit as for the purpose of argument. Oddly, however, it is the rogue's words that raise the more serious questions and strike the more chilling note. It is Cocledemoy who makes the point that no one gains save at another person's expense, thus levelling everyone as far as virtue and vice are concerned. It is he who points to the preciousness of the wares of prostitution. Virginity and modesty are lost forever to the woman by virtue of the fact that they are sold "wholesale." And finally, it is the rogue who defends the prostitute's right to live well while she can because most of her life will be painful and her death will most likely be a horror of degradation. No speech that ends on death, particularly a death in prison, can be considered totally mocking, no matter how it is delivered. Cocledemoy has seen much of the seamy side of life, and underneath his levity there is an abiding sympathy for the woman he describes and defends.

Freeville's analysis of their situation is essentially the same, but it lacks the depth and solidity of

Cocledemoy's. The first part of his speech is filled with witticisms such as: "A poor decayed mechanical man's wife, her husband is laid up, may not she be lawfully laid down when her husband's only rising is by his wife's falling?" The number and tone of these remarks leave the reader with the impression that Freeville is far more concerned with his witty rhetoric than with the women he is cavalierly defending. Indeed, their lot appears to touch him not at all, save as an opportunity to display his urbanity, worldly wisdom, and expansive humanity in defending them.

But there is another more discordant note in his speech. Referring to these fallen women, he says: "They sell their bodies," and asks, "Do not better persons sell their souls?" On what basis does he make his classification of better persons? He has chosen to marry a better person because she is virtuous; she has not sold her body; it would seem, therefore, that her soul is intact. But Freeville does not seem to be making his classification on the basis of virtue; indeed, he is defending prostitutes on the grounds that they do the only thing possible for them to do. It would seem that Freeville is not willing to think of prostitutes in terms of human beings; he prefers to allow them in his consciousness only as a species of sub-human, to be used and discarded when "better" activities for "better persons" appear to interest him.

Finally and ironically, the fact that he breaks into blank verse at the end and asks a fee for his advice puts him squarely into that class of persons who would, according to Cocledemoy, gain from another person's loss. There is another definite parallel between the action of the main plot and that of the sub-plot. Mulligrub, the tavernkeeper, can be compared to Malheureux, while the scampish Cocledemoy, who constantly tricks him, has much in common with Freeville. This close relationship between the two plots has been dealt with in some details by Finkelpearl.¹⁵

Cocledemoy is indeed a critic and the parallel plot suggests that his function as scourge is similar to Freeville's. Like Malheureux, Mulligrub comes under the satyr's whip, but Cocledemoy is never shocked by the imperfect world that he moves in. One feels that he has already been through the fires of cynicism, and although his language is vile and he associates with bawds and prostitutes, his energy is directed at exposing and reforming the hypocrisy of the Mulligrubs. At times he even ridicules Freeville.

Free. Yes, my capricious rascal.

Coc. Thou wilt look like a fool then, by and by.

Free. Look like a fool, why?

Coc. Why, according to the old saying: a beggar when he is lousing of himself, looks like a philosopher; a hard-bound philosopher, when he is on

¹⁵ See Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, pp. 215-16.

the stool, looks like a tyrant; and a wise man,
 when he is in his belly act, looks like a fool.
 God give your worship good rest! grace and mercy
 keep your syringe straight, and your lotium
 unspilt.

(I.ii.171-80).

He obviously does not steal from Mulligrub because he is hungry or in need, but rather for the fun of it. Freeville describes him well in Act I, Scene i, as a ". . . man of much money, some wit, but less honesty, cogging Cocledemoy."
 (I.i.14-15).

As was already mentioned, the parallel plot directs our attention to his role as scourge and reformer, but as he says at the end of the play, "know that whatsoever he [Cocledemoy] has done, has been only euphoniae gratia—for wit's sake. I acquit this vintner, as he has acquitted me; all has been done for emphasis of wit, my fine boy, my worshipful friends." (V.iii.138-42). His delight in the tricks that he plays on Mulligrub has nothing of the malice of either Freeville or Altofronto. As M.L. Wine says,

In this play about the natural man, Cocledemoy is the most completely natural man, free as the birds that Malheureux envies (indeed, bird images prevail in Cocledemoy's dialogue). He acts by one law only, that of his own nature.¹⁶

Cocledemoy, the "completely natural man," is a product of the satyr convention with one important change. His motivation is not envy or disillusionment, yet he still goes through the satyr motions of railing and using vile language.

In the conversation between Cocledemoy and Freeville

¹⁶ Wine, ed., The Dutch Courtesan, p. xxii.

in Act I, Scene ii, Cocledemoy exhibits the same distrust of Stoicism that was exhibited by Antonio, Pandulfo, Feliche, Altofronto, and Freeville himself. When warned by Freeville that Mulligrub is lying in wait for him, Cocledemoy scoffs:

The more fool he; I can lie for myself, worshipful friend. Hang toasts! I vanish. Ha! my fine boy, thou art a scholar, and hast read Tully's Offices, my fine knave. Hang toasts!

(I.ii.163-66).

A few lines later, Cocledemoy warns Freeville that he will eventually look like a fool as he goes to his "recreation." When asked for an explanation, Cocledemoy says:

Why, according to the old saying: a beggar when he is lousing of himself, looks like a philosopher; a hard-bound philosopher, when he is on the stool, looks like a tyrant; and a wise man, when he is in his belly act, looks like a fool. God give your worship good rest! grace and mercy keep your syringe straight, and your lotium unsplit.

(I.ii.174-80).

Several things are worth noting here besides the ridicule commented on previously. The language is crude and cynical, although it is softened by a comic tone. Obviously, Cocledemoy enjoys treating anal and sexual matters in lewd language. But most important, his knowledge of moral writers is made evident and Tully's Offices is particularly significant, because the Offices is

a work in which Cicero declares the Stoic sage to be an impossibility for the generality of men and, therefore, sets out to provide a practical, workaday, yet honest, morality. Roguish

though he may be, Cocledemoy exposes pretension and hypocrisy and reminds us that between the natural and the moral there need be no conflict. His "conscience does not repine!" (III.ii.33), for in exposing the Mulligrubs he is ultimately on society's side."

The rigid dependence on any philosophical system, and in particular Stoicism, is one of the constant targets of Marston's satyr types.

In this same conversation, Freeville calls Cocledemoy a "capricious rascal." (I.ii.171). The adjective "capricious" is a very telling one. Wine glosses it as "witty, but also alluding to Latin capra, or 'goat,' the animal traditionally denoting lechery."¹⁸ The allusion to Capra clearly links him with the satyr convention, but what is just as important is the other meaning of witty. "Capricious," then, with its two connotations, expresses aptly the fusion of the truly humorous with the viciousness of the traditional satyr. Cocledemoy does more than just attack in the usual satyric manner; in this play, he is the key person responsible for a comic resolution.

For Kernan the plot of satire is static; the satyr, who is frequently the protagonist, continues to rail at the end of the play in the same way as he did in the beginning, and the world that he rails at remains the

¹⁷ Wine, ed., The Dutch Courtesan, p. xxii.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 17.

same. Cocledemoy undoubtedly has much in common with this type, but he belongs as much to the world of comedy as to that of satire, primarily because of his humour—a humour which is indebted to the satyr convention—and becomes the instrument for the establishing of a new social norm. Mulligrub has learned his lesson; the world at the end of the play is free of Mulligrub. As in the classical comedies, there will be a wedding and dance in a way symbolic of the new order. It is fitting that it is Cocledemoy who announces this wedding and the jigga-jogging dance which is symbolic of the processional dance—komos—from which comedy derives its name. Significantly, the words "jigga joggies" (V.iii.162) suggest to the ear the rough goatish quality of the satyr.

A closer examination of the main story reveals the way in which the satyr contributes to the structure of the play. Hercules has sent his cold-blooded son, Tiberio, as Ambassador to the court of Urbin, on the pretence that he plans to marry the beautiful Dulcimet, daughter of Gonzago, duke of Urbin. Tiberio's mission is to court Dulcimet on his father's behalf. Later it is revealed that Hercules plans to go to Urbin himself in disguise. The reasons he gives for the disguise are threefold: a) to demonstrate to his son the folly of his decision not to marry; b) to prove to himself the dangers involved in just this kind of "love by attorney;" c) finally, not to make "election out of tongues," by which he means not to make decisions on hearsay.

. . .my son, as you can well witness with me,
 could I never persuade to marriage, although my-
 self was then an ever-resolved widower, and tho'
 I proposed to him this very lady, to whom he is
 gone in my right to negotiate; now, how cooler
 blood will behave itself in this business, would
 I have an only testimony; other contents shall I
 give myself, as not to take love by attorney, or
 make my election out of tongues; other suffic-
 ings there are which my regard would fain make
 sound to me: something of much you know; that,
 and what else you must not know, bids you ex-
 cuse this kind of my departure.

(I.i.22-33).

The conclusion in this speech is intentionally vague, and when Renaldo leaves, Hercules discloses his real reasons in a soliloquy:

And now, thou ceremonious sovereignty--
 Ye proud, severer, stateful compliments,
 The secret arts of rule—I put you off;

Nor ever shall those manacles of form
 Once more lock up the appetite of blood.
 'Tis now an age of man whilst we, all strict,
 Have lived in awe of carriage regular,
 Apted unto my place; nor hath my life
 Once tasted of exorbitant affects,
 Wild longings, or the least of disrank'd shapes.
 But we must once be wild; 'tis ancient truth,—
 O fortunate, whose madness falls in youth!
 Well, this is text, who ever keeps his place
 In servile station, is all low and base.
 Shall I, because some few may cry, "Light! vain!"
 Beat down affection from desired rule?
 He that doth strive to please the world's a fool.
 To have that fellow cry, "O mark him, grave,
 See how austere he doth give example
 Of repressed heat and steady life!"
 Whilst my forced life against the stream of blood
 Is tugg'd along, and all to keep the god
 Of fools and women, nice Opinion,
 Whose strict preserving makes oft great men fools,
 And fools oft great men. No, thou world, know thus,
 There's nothing free but it is generous.

(I.i.40-65).

The duke is evidently weary of the "ceremonious sovereignty" and "stateful compliments" which have interfered with his natural desires. He is eager to put aside the pomp of state for a time and to enjoy the free life. More important, he is aware that his stifling of his appetites will win him no accolades from the fickle world which would as readily scoff, "O mark him, grave,/ See how austere he doth give example / Of repressed heat and steady life!" as praise him for his sense of responsibility. In short, he feels a night on the town would be therapeutic and would prevent him from becoming too stiff and pompous.

Scene ii takes place in Urbino; here we are intro-

duced to what Kernan would call the satiric scene. Herod and Nymphadoro have just told of the celebrations to solemnize the princess's birthday. Twenty lines later Dondolo, the fool, runs in and announces the arrival of Tiberio: "he is come to solicit a marriage betwixt his father, the Duke of Ferrara, and our Duke of Urbin's daughter, Dulcimet." (I.ii.49-50). The purpose of this part of the scene is to introduce some of the fools, suggest their particular folly, and present the tone of court life in Urbin.

Gonzago's first speech shows him as the type of person Hercules was afraid of becoming if he did not taste "exorbitance" and "wild longings." When his speech is finished, Hercules appears for the first time, disguised. He is with Tiberio's entourage, and as such, he is obliged to witness the jocose, disrespectful conversation between Dulcimet and Tiberio as they discuss his person and his suit. Dulcimet produces a picture of Hercules and asks: "Is'this your father's true proportion?" (I.ii.107). Tiberio answers: "No, lady; but the perfect counterfeit." (I.ii.108). Dulcimet attempts to interject a graceful compliment, "And the best graced—" (I.ii.109), but Tiberio interrupts her with "The painter's art could yield," (I.ii.110), thus opening the door for her more honest appraisal of her suitor.

She asks: "But is your father's age thus fresh—hath yet his head so many hairs?" (I.ii.128- 29). Tiberio

answers lightly: "More, more, by many a one." (I.ii.130), to which she scoffingly replies: "Right, sir, for this hath none. . . ." (I.ii.133). Tiberio is cruelly honest when questioned about his father's eyes: "The courtesy of art hath given more life to that part than the sad cares of state would grant my father." (I.ii.135-36). But Dulcimet digs deeper: "This model speaks about forty." (I.ii.137), and Tiberio drops all pretence at wit and boldly states: "Then doth it somewhat flatter, for our father hath seen more years, and is a little shrunk from the full strength of time." (I.ii.138-40). But it is left for Dulcimet to sum up the situation in a speech that includes her own opinion and the probable opinion of the world:

Your father hath a fair solicitor,
And be it spoke with virgin modesty,
I would he were no elder; not that I do fly
His side for years, or other hopes of youth,
But in regard the malice of lewd tongues,
Quick to deprave on possibilities
(Almost impossibilities), will spread
Rumours to honour dangerous.

(I.ii.142-49).

The scene is fraught with dramatic tension. Act I is not yet half finished, and already Hercules has seen and heard much more than he had anticipated. His own son has spoken scornfully of his years and appearance, and the princess whose hand he had pretended to seek has stated that she would prefer the son to the father. He has heard the dry and pompous speeches of Gonzago and, no doubt, sees

in him the reflection of himself, or what he feared he would become. It is one thing to be aware that one is growing old and ugly; it is quite another to hear other people say so.

In modern parlance, Hercules wanted to become a swinger, but the conversation between Dulcimet and Tiberio turned his dream to ashes in his mouth. Although he is prepared to say goodbye to all his plans for the wild life, the other option is not very attractive, "strict preserving makes oft great men fools." (I.i.63). The closing soliloquy of Act I expresses his anger, disillusionment, and solution:

I never knew till now how old I was.
 By Him by whom we are, I think a prince,
 Whose tender sufferance never felt a gust
 Of bolder breathings, but still lived gently fann'd
 With the soft gales of his own flatterers' lips,
 Shall never know his own complexion.
 Dear sleep and lust, I thank you; but for you,
 Mortal till now I scarce had known myself.
 Thou grateful poison, sleek mischief, flattery,
 Thou dreamful slumber (that doth fall on kings
 As soft and soon as their first holy oil),
 Be thou for ever damn'd; I now repent
 Severe indictments to some sharp styles;
 Freeness, so't grow not to licentiousness,
 Is grateful to just states. Most spotless kingdom,
 And men, O happy born under good stars,
 Where what is honest you may freely think,
 Speak what you think, and write what you do speak,
 Not bound to servile soothings! But since our rank
 Hath ever been afflicted with these flies
 (That blow corruption on the sweetest virtues),
 I will revenge us all upon you all
 With the same stratagem we still are caught,
 Flattery itself; and sure all know the sharpness
 Of reprehensive language is even blunted
 To full contempt. Since vice is now term'd fashion,
 And most are grown to ill, even with defense
 I vow to waste this most prodigious heat,

That falls into my age like scorching flames
 In depth of numb'd December, in flattering all
 In all of their extremest viciousness,
 Till in their own lov'd race they fall most lame,
 And meet full butt the close of Vice's shame.
 (I.ii.325-57).

His repentance of "Severe indications to some sharp styles," suggests that he sees the railing satyrist as an honest critic; and, clearly, he decides to become one. His previous comment, "Freeness . . . Is grateful to just states," suggests that his only interest was for the state, but "I will revenge" has a ring of deep, bitter, personal disappointment.

The soliloquy marks the beginning of a metamorphosis. Hercules, his self-assurance shaken, sees the world of the court from a new perspective and finds it contemptible. The intensity of his speech indicates the degree to which he has changed. The paradox here is that his disenchantment is the cause of his satyr cast of mind; yet, at the same time, he realizes that to be effective he must play the fawn—an appropriate choice of disguise, since the word suggests the mealy-mouthed, spineless flatterer and the Renaissance forest figure, the satyr.

The choice to use flattery as his weapon has several important implications. First, it is a most exquisite way to torture and punish those very people who deal in it—it is a Dantesque kind of punishment. Second, it is in

keeping with the lighter tone of the play; the paradoxical quality of his speeches is extremely effective. Here is a railing, wild satyr who claims he is going to whip his victims with flattery. But the most important significance of this speech is that it is intentionally misleading. For although Faunus does use blatant flattery, he just as frequently uses the conventional satyr technique of railing. He sets many of his opponents up with flattery but he knocks them down with railing. Dramatically, the fawn mask enables the satyr to rail while still remaining within the action of the play.

It is important to notice that initially Hercules calls himself Faunus and acts as a flatterer without being aware of the outcome. In Act I, Scene ii, the request to be allowed to "speak boldly" (262) is only a pretence; he knows what Herod wants to hear. But the soliloquy cited above indicates that Hercules has heard what he already knows to be true. Yet he seems shocked. The speech describes a very normal human reaction. We are all prepared to admit our own shortcomings in the abstract, but it is devastating to hear them from someone else. Hercules, here, is becoming a genuine satyr.

It must be emphasized that the tone of the play and Hercules' many flattering speeches never allow the railing satyr to dominate the action. Yet throughout, at criti-

cal moments, Hercules does exhibit all the signs of the typical scourge. Of course, it is very significant that he scourges with flattery.

The similarity of the structure of this play to formal verse satire is congenial to the convention. There are more than fools to lash out at, and plenty of lust and perversity to dwell on. Hercules' decision to disguise himself is indeed therapeutic, but not in the way he expected. By becoming a satyr, he seems to experience a satiric catharsis. His enthusiastic chastizement of the fools seem to cleanse his system of envy and bitterness. This notion of a satiric catharsis of envy was expressed by both Hall and Marston in their verse satires. In the prologue to Book II of *Virgidemiarum*, the narrator describes envy as a hungry beast that can be satisfied only when he devours his victim. "Envie belike incites his pining heart, / and bids it sate it selfe with others smart."²⁰

Marston, who dedicates *The Scourge of Villainy* to Detraction, "Envy's abhorrèd child,"²¹ states that in "spite of despite and rancour's villainy, / I am myself and so is my poesy," implying that it is only by submitting to "Envy'a

²⁰ Arnold Davenport, ed., *The Poems of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter and Norwich* (Liverpool: 1949), p. 20.

²¹ Arthur Henry Bullen, ed., *John Marston, The Works, III*, 229.

raging hate"²² that his "abject thoughts"²³ can be expelled.

The fawn mask, then, is really a satyr mask, and, like Altofronto's, it expresses a real part of his personality. Also, like Altofronto, at the end of the play, when he gets his revenge, Hercules is able to discard the mask.

The basic plot and structure of The Fawn have much in common with those of The Malcontent. In both plays there is a king who puts on a disguise in order to observe the folly and corruption of court life. In doing this he learns something of the nature of sin and gains a deeper understanding of himself and his own weaknesses. At the end of the play he exposes the fops to each other. Because Altofronto had had his kingdom usurped in The Malcontent and because there were many near deaths, the play has an atmosphere of urgency and bitterness. As was already pointed out, there are times when the mask almost becomes the man. Altofronto lashes out mercilessly at the shallowness of the courtiers but we never feel that he is uncomfortable in his malcontent guise. On the contrary, it would appear that he must struggle to prevent the satyr vision from dominating him.

This atmosphere of urgency and bitterness is absent

²² Arthur Henry Bullen, ed., John Marston, The Works, III, 300.

²³ Ibid.

from The Fawn. No one is ever in danger of death; Hercules has not lost his kingdom; indeed, his only real suffering arises from the realization that he has been a victim of court flattery. However, the disenchantment resulting from his realization seems to account for the presence of major satyr characteristics behind the mask of the flatterer. The mask-satyr element in The Fawn has several dimensions. The initial disguise of Hercules (after Act I) as a fawn was simply the attempt to discover truth with flattery. When the truth is discovered, the fawn mask is coloured by a kind of cynicism on the part of Hercules which turns him into a scourge. This cynicism keeps protruding through the flatterer's mask.

When Hercules (Faunus) first appears in Act II, he is indeed a fawn. He enters "freshly suited," and his manners are effeminate and fussy. His unabashed flattery begins with Herod when he tells him he loves him well since he is married, but better since he is unmarried. When Herod asks for reasons, Hercules replies:

'Fore heaven! you are blest with three rare
graces—fine linen, clean linings, a sanguine
complexion, and I am sure, an excellent wit,
for you are a gentleman born.

(II.i.57-60).

Evidently, these reasons are adequate for Herod, and Hercules is immediately taken into his confidence; indeed, so much so, that it is lightly suggested that it be Hercules'

hand that ". . . should minister that nectar to him [Tiberio] should make him immortal." (II.i.110-11). Hercules responds to the suggestion with further flattery:

Afore the light of my eyes, I think I shall
 admire, wonder at you. What! ha' ye plots,
 projects, correspondences, and stratagems?
 Why are not you in a better place?
 (II.i.114-17).

Hercules employs the same ruse with Sir Amoroso Debile-Dosso. First Hercules compliments him on the fact that he has many children; and when Sir Amoroso declares that he has none, Hercules praises him at length for his wisdom and good fortune.

O that's most excellent—a right special
 happiness. He shall not be a drudge to his
 cradle, a slave to his child; he shall be
 sure not to cherish another's blood, nor
 toil to advance, peradventure, some rascal's
 lust. Without children, a man is unclogg'd,
 his wife almost a maid. Messallina, thou
 criedst out, O blessed barrenness! Why,
 once with child, the very Venus of a lady's
 entertainment hath lost all pleasure.
 (II.i.136-43).

In the ensuing exchange between Hercules, Herod, and Sir Amoroso, no opportunity is lost by Hercules to praise their every plan, vice, or facet of personality. If his intent is ironic, his tone is not, because they embrace him readily and reveal much about themselves and the court life.

However, the exchange between Hercules and Don Zuccone is much more satyric in nature, for irony has given

way to an open taunting. Don Zuccone is shocked and outraged to hear that his wife is with child and proclaims to the world that it is not his. Hercules soothes him with "Why? my lord, 'tis nothing to wear a forker." (II.i.288). Zuccone grows more excited and Hercules prods him further:

All things under the moon are subject to their mistress' grace. Horns! Lend me your ring, my Don—I'll put it on my finger. Now 'tis on yours again. Why, is the gold now e'er the worse in lustre or fitness?

(II.i.290- 93).

The language in this passage is lewd and taunting and typical of the lascivious satyr. Don Zuccone is left with Hercules' words festering in his already injured pride.

But Hercules is imaginative in his approaches, and still in Act II, Scene i, we can see him use yet another mode of attack. This may be called flattery, but it is flattery of a very special kind:

As, indeed, why should any woman only love any one man, since it is reasonable women should affect all perfection, but all perfection never rests in one man. Many men have many virtues, but ladies should love many virtues, therefore ladies should love many men; for as in women, so in men; some women hath only a good eye,--one can discourse beautifully, if she do not laugh,—one's well-favoured to her nose,—another hath only a good brow,—t'other a plump lip,—a third only holds beauty to the teeth, and there the soil alters; some, peradventure, hold good to the breast, and then downward turn like the dreamt'of image, whose head was gold, breast silver, thighs iron, and all beneath clay and earth; one only winks eloquently,—another only kisses well,—t'other only talks well,—a fourth only lies well: so, in men, one gallant has only a good face,—another has only a grave methodical beard, and is a notable wise

fellow until he speaks,--a third only makes water well, and that's a good provoking quality, --one only swears well,--another only speaks well,--a third only does well. All in their kind good: goodness is to be best affected, therefore they; it is a base thing, and indeed an impossible, for a worthy mind to be contented with the whole world, but most vile and abject to be satisfied with one point or prick of the world.

(II.i.370-94).

The mock praise here is similar to many of *Quadratus'* speeches in What You Will. The mock encomium, however, is used more in this play. This speech is a mock praise of promiscuity. Implicitly, then, it is a defence of chastity. But Don Zuccone is too stupid to know the difference.

This shift in the method of attack has an important effect on the satyr character in this play and in The Dutch Courtezan. It enables the satyr to use his typical lewd language without becoming tarred by his own brush. The satyr can rail with impunity, and there is no loss of dramatic impact. He can dwell as much as he wants on lust without being considered psychopathic.

After this mock praise, Hercules again begins to bait Zuccone by urging him to sue his wife for a divorce. Zuccone agrees that this is a good course of action, and Hercules asks him where he will get the money. Zuccone replies: "True, wherefore is money?" (II.i.438). Hercules urges him on in a humorous and ironic manner that only a fool such as Zuccone could fail to understand.

What, though you shall pay for every quill,
 each drop of ink, each minim, letter, tittle,
 comma, prick, each breath, nay, not only for
 thine own orator's prating, but for some
 other orator's silence,—though thou must buy
 silence with a full hand,—'tis well known
 Demosthenes took above two thousand pound
 once only to hold his peace,—though thou a
 man of noble gentry, yet you must wait, and
 beseige his study door, which will prove more
 hard to be entered than old Troy, for that
 was gotten into by a wooden horse; but the
 entrance of this may chance cost thee a
 whole stock of cattle, oves et boves, et
caetra pecora campi; though then thou must
 sit there, thrust and contemned, bareheaded
 to a grograine scribe, ready to start up at
 the door creaking, press'd to get in, "with
 your leave, sir," to some surly groom, the
 third son of a rope-maker:—what of all
 this?

(II.i.439-54).

Zuccone complies readily with Hercules' rhetorical question,
 "To a resolute mind these torments are not felt." (II.i.455);
 and in the exchange which follows Hercules, in fact, calls
 Zuccone a dog, a fool, an ass, a ninny-hammer, and a calf;
 but Zuccone ironically embraces him as a friend in time of
 need. Thus the satyr convention has been modified so as
 to allow for unlimited dramatic irony and unlimited humour
 as was the case in What You Will.

But to return to the paradox of the satyr using
 flattery as a scourge or whip: Hercules is astounded by the
 number of people he has ensnared. In the soliloquy that
 concludes Act II, Scene i, he declares his intention to use

his new-found weapon to purge corruption from his world.

Amazed! even lost in wond'ring! I rest full
 Of covetous expectation. I am left
 As on a rock, from whence I may discern
 The giddy sea of humour flow beneath,
 Upon whose back the vainer bubbles float,
 And forthwith break. O mighty flattery!
 Thou easiest, common'st, and most grateful venom,
 That poisons courts and all societies,
 How grateful dost thou make me? Should one rail,
 And come to fear a vice, beware leg-rings
 And the turn'd key on thee, when, if softer hand
 Suppling a sore that itches (which should smart)--
 Free speech gains foes, base fawnings steal the heart.
 Swell, you imposthum'd members, till you burst,
 Since 'tis in vain to hinder, on I'll thrust;
 And when in shame you fall, I'll laugh from hence,
 And cry, "So end all desperate impudence!"
 Another's court shall show me where and how
 Vice may be cured, for now beside myself,
 Possess'd with almost frenzy, from strong fervour
 I know I shall produce things mere divine:
 Without immoderate heat, no virtues shine.
 For I speak strong, tho' strange,—the dews that steep
 Our souls in deepest thoughts are fury and sleep.
 (II.i.587-610).

The satyr has a new and more sophisticated weapon. The language in the soliloquy is that of the traditional satyr. It is intense, scurrilous, abusive, venomous, and phallic. Hercules himself is "Possess'd with almost frenzy." But what is unique is that all this energy will be contained within the fawn mask until the barbs are driven home.

This soliloquy expresses, undiluted, the satyr personality. Again we have the paradox of the railing satyr insisting that he will not rail. The foreshadowing of the eventual satiric catharsis is also seen here. "And when in shame you fall, I'll laugh from hence, . . ." Finally, the imagery and tone in this speech are typically satyric,

and as a scourge he admits that he is "Possess'd with almost frenzy."

In The Fawn we are always aware of the satyr behind the mask of the fawn. Nearly every major scene ends with a soliloquy by Hercules, and in each soliloquy his language becomes more violent and vitriolic. He begins to see and use flattery as a whip with which to scourge the corrupt court society. Again, of course, the tension exists on several levels. Sometimes, as in the soliloquy, the mask is dropped altogether; at others, it is so used as to allow for the pouring out of venomous language while still maintaining the pose of the fawn. He is able to do this by railing at his victim about the viciousness and vice of an absent member of the court. Coincidentally, the victim of his attack has vices that are very similar to those of his sympathetic listener. However, because the attack appears to be directed at someone else, the fawn receives the full attention of his victim, who is too stupid, blind, or egotistical to realize that the venom is meant for himself.

In Marston's earlier plays the satyr was ineffective because his attack was so direct that he was dismissed as a frenzied railer. However, Faunus' railing, abusive language receives full attention because the attack appears to be intended for someone else. This adaptation of the

satyr type creates unlimited possibilities for dramatic irony.

However, the devious mode of attack is not the only device used by Faunus to prick the court fops and flatterers. He tailors his language and tone to suit the particular folly of each individual. With the pompous Gonzago and his silent, empty-headed adviser Granuffo, he is able to mock them openly by plying their stupidity. Gonzago lavishly praises Faunus' ability to understand men and Granuffo's wise silence in the following speech:

Count Granuffo, as I live, this Faunus is
a rare understander of men—is a'not? Faunus,
this Granuffo is a right wise good lord, a
man of excellent discourse, and never speaks
his signs to me, and men of profound reach
instruct abundantly; he begs suits with signs,. . .
puts off his hat leisurely, maintains his
beard learnedly, keeps his lust privately,
makes a nodding leg courtly, and lives
happily.

(III.i.296-303).

Faunus' answer is charged with insults but neither Granuffo nor Gonzago appears to grasp the import of his words:

Silence is an excellent modest grace, but
especially before so instructing a wisdom
as that of your excellency's. As for his
advancement, you gave it most royally, be-
cause he deserves it least duly, since to
give to virtuous desert is rather a due re-
quital than a princely magnificence, when to
undeservingness it is merely all bounty and
free grace.

(III.i.304-10).

In this speech Faunus clearly states that Granuffo is a fool and unworthy of advancement, while he clearly implies

that Gonzago is a fool for advancing him, but Gonzago's reply gives no indication that he has understood the insults:

Well spoke, 'tis enough. Don Granuffo, this Faunus is a very worthy fellow, and an excellent courtier, and beloved of most of the princes of Christendom, I can tell you; for howsoever some severer dissembler grace him not when he affronts him in the full face, yet, if he comes behind or on the one side, he'll leer and put back his head upon him. Be sure, be you two precious to each other.
(III.i.311-18).

Different from this is his pose with Don Zuccone where he adopts the position of the outraged friend who unwittingly rubs salt into the wounds:

Ay, my lord, true. Nay, to be—(look ye, mark ye)—to be used like a dead ox—to have your own hide pluck'd on—to be drawn on with your own horn,—to have the lordship of your father, the honour of your ancestors, maugre your beard, to descend to the base lust of some groom of your stable, or the page of your chamber!
(II.i.295-301).

In this speech, however, Faunus exhibits one of the major characteristics of the satyr, inasmuch as he is lewdly fascinated with his description of the adulterous act, and in that he enjoys dwelling upon it for the supposedly betrayed husband. Faunus comes closest to the traditional flatterer in his dealings with Sir Amoroso Debile-Dosso, but his familiarity with aphrodisiac lore marks him as a satyr.

To sum up, then, the attitude of Faunus towards other characters in the play is not only that of a simpering

flatterer. What he says and the tone he uses are conditioned by the peculiar fault of each victim. More important, in each instance, the influence of the satyr convention is clearly visible.

Hercules' praise of Philocalia in Act III, Scene i, prepares the audience for a match between the two:

Philocalia! What! that renowned lady, whose ample report hath struck wonder into remotest strangers? and yet her worth above that wonder? She, whose noble industries hath made her breast rich in true glories and undying habilities? she, that whilst other ladies spend the life of earth, Time, in reading their glass, their jewels, and (the shame of poesy) lustful sonnets, gives her soul meditations—those meditations wings that cleave the air, fan bright celestial fires, whose true reflection makes her see herself and them? she whose pity is ever above her envy, loving nothing less than insolent prosperity, and pitying nothing more than virtue destitute of fortune?

(III.i.153-64).

But there is another reason for this description of Philocalia. Hercules, in spite of his disillusionment, is still able to recognize goodness and beauty. As a scourge, he is really only interested in people like Herod and Nymphodoro. In dealing with these people, he puts on the mask, but his praise of Philocalia reminds us that the real private face of the satyr (Faunus) is similar to that of Altofronto. It is of a free and open nature, capable of recognizing virtue. Indeed, his soliloquy which closes Act III is reminiscent of many of Altofronto's speeches:

Even so, He that with safety would well lurk
in courts
To best-elected ends, of force is wrung

To keep broad eyes, soft feet, long ears, and
most short tongue;
For 'tis of knowing creatures the main art
To use quick hams, wide arms, and most close heart.
(III.i.539-44).

Like the "virtuous Machiavel" he comes to know that there is some good in the world, although there is much more evil, and the way to survive in such a world, and guard against its ever-present evil, is by dissembling.

In Act IV, Don Zuccone, the jealous husband, realizes that Donna Zoya, his wife, only claimed to be pregnant so that she could be rid of him. He also sees Hercules for what he is:

Fawn, thou art a scurvy bitter knave, and
dost flout Dons to their faces; 'twas thou
flattered'st me to this, and now thou laugh'st
at me, dost? though indeed I had a certain
proclivity, but thou madest me resolute:
dost grin and gern? O you comforters of life,
helps in sickness, joys in death, and pre-
servers of us, in our children, after death,
women, have mercy on me!

(IV.i.563-70).

Hercules delights in Zuccone's suffering.

Herc. And never hope to be reconciled,
never dream to be reconciled—never!

Zuc. Never! Alas! good Fawn, what wouldst wish me to do now?

Herc. Faith, go hang yourself, my Don;
that's best, sure. (IV.i.522- 26).

Hercules, aware that Zuccone has finally recognized him for what he is, gives full vent to his desire and ability to rail:

No, sure, she will not have you. Why, do you think that a waiting-woman of three bastards, a strumpet nine times carted, or a hag whose

eyes shoot poison—that has been an old witch,
and is now turning into a gib-cat,—what! will
ha' you? Marry Don Zuccone, the contempt of
women and the shame of men, that has afflicted,
contemn'd so choice a perfection as Donna
Zoya's!

(IV.i.551-57).

His language is not only harsh, it is vile. When Zuccone asks Hercules for a description of the lady he has in mind for him, Hercules gives the following speech:

She has three hairs on her scalp and four
teeth in her head; a brow wrinkled and pucker'd
like old parchment half burnt. She has had
eyes. No woman's jawbones are more apparent;
her sometimes envious lips now shrink in, and
give her nose and chin leave to kiss each other
very moistly. As for her reverend mouth, it
seldom opens, but the very breath that flies
out of it infects the fowls of the air, and
makes them drop down dead. Her breasts hang
like cobwebs; her flesh will never make you
cuckold; her bones may.

(IV.i.537-47).

The lady is hardly a charming morsel, but the speech is significant. Hercules has broken out of his disguise into the full-fledged satyr. The language is vile and he enjoys it as much as he enjoys whipping the contemptible Zuccone. His enjoyment is similar to that of Hall's narrator, when he asks, in "His Defiance to Enuie" in Virgidemiarum, that envy "shade her tender Brows with Bay, / That now lye bare in careless wilfull rage: / And trance her selfe in that sweet Extasie."²⁴

However, the soliloquy that ends Act IV lacks the

²⁴ Davenport, ed., The Poems of Joseph Hall, p. 8.

intensity of the earlier ones:

Where are we now, Cyllenian Mercury?
 And thou, quick issue of Jove's broken pate,
 Aid and direct us; you better stars to knowledge,
 Sweet constellations, that affect pure oil,
 And holy vigil of the pale-cheek'd muses,
 Give your best influence, that with able spright
 We may correct and please, giving full light
 To every angle of this various sense:
 Works of strong birth and better than commence.
 (IV.i.717-25).

The tone of this soliloquy is clearly much softer than that of the earlier ones. The reasons for the abrupt shift are two: first, like the praise of Philocalia, it is designed to show that the scurvy railer pose was only a mask which expressed his disillusionment. Second, and more important, Hercules, having achieved a satiric catharsis through the mask of the fawn, finds that his desire to punish and correct is no longer coloured by vexation. Indeed, free of the least trace of bitterness, he benignly gives his blessing to Tiberio and Dulcimet when they are married at the beginning of Act V:

Thou mother of chaste dew, night's modest lamp,
 Thou by whose faint shine the blushing lovers
 Join glowing cheeks, and mix their trembling lips
 In vows well kiss'd, rise all as full of splendour
 As my breast is of joy! You genital,
 You fruitful well-mix't heats, O, bless the sheets
 Of yonder chamber, that Ferrara's dukedom,
 The race of princely issue, be not curs'd,
 And ended in abhorrèd barrenness!
 At length kill all my fears, nor let it rest
 Once more my tremblings that my too cold son
 (That ever-scorner of humaner loves)
 Will still contemn the sweets of marriage,
 Still kill our hope of name in his dull coldness.
 Let it be lawful to make use, ye powers,
 Of human weakness, that pursueth still

What is inhibited, and most affects
 What is most difficult to be obtain'd:
 So we may learn, that nicer love's a shade--
 It follows fled, pursued flies as afraid:
 And in the end close all the various errors
 Of passages most truly comical
 In moral learning with like confidence
 Of him that vow'd good fortune of the scene
 Shall neither make him fat, or bad make lean.
 (V.i.1-25).

The most striking characteristic of this speech is its maturity. This is not the Hercules who longed for "exorbitance" at the beginning of the play. No longer does he show any desire to play the gay young blade. On the other hand, no longer does he see age as a state which, of necessity, brings pomposity and austerity. His prayer for his son shows a genuine concern and sympathy for the young man's coldness. For Hercules now it is a weakness like the many other human weaknesses to be observed.

His prayer that ". . . it be lawful to make use, ye powers, / Of human weakness,. . ." prepares us for the masque scene in which he exposes all the fools, but even this has no aura of bitterness. Indeed, there is a strong implication that his own weakness, which caused him to don the railer's mask, was responsible for his new self-awareness of the members of the court. Thus the ending of this play is more in the spirit of true comedy than are any of the previous ones. All the fools are cured of their humorous conditions and their judgment scene coincides with the consummation of the wedding. Finkelpearl makes a very in-

cisive comment on Marston's use of the two-level stage here. Hercules and Tiberio enter, Tiberio climbs a tree where Dulcimet, Philocalia, and a priest await him. Hercules remains below to pronounce Judgment.

Thus we are to understand that the judgment scene is occurring at the same time the marriage is being consummated. In a very literal sense the spirit of healthy and natural love presides over the scene. Hercules makes this explicit in a long prayer to the "Genitall, / You fruitefull well mixt heates," (II.211). He conceives the union of Tiberio and Dulcimet in the most fundamental terms, connecting it to fertility and the future.²⁵

²⁵ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 235.

CHAPTER V

THE SATYR FACES IN TRAGEDY

SOPHONISBA

The Tragedy of Sophonisba occurs in Carthage at the time of the Roman invasion. Sophonisba, daughter of Asdrubal, an important Carthaginian nobleman, has been courted by two of Libya's powerful princes, Syphax and Massinissa. With the approval of the Carthaginian senate she chooses to marry Massinissa, and the wedding feast takes place. Meanwhile, Syphax, the rejected suitor, is filled with rancorous spite and avenges himself by joining his forces with those of Scipio who is rapidly advancing toward Carthage.

On the evening of the wedding Carthalon arrives with the news that "wrathful Syphax" has joined with the Romans (I.ii.125) and together they are sweeping toward Carthage. Massinissa, without waiting to consummate the marriage, prepares to face the joint armies of Syphax and Scipio with what is left of the Carthaginian army. Sophonisba, in language that marks her as a true and virtuous Stoic, lauds her husband's decision to go into the field.

While Massinissa is away from Carthage, engaged in battle for the protection of that state, the senate

treasonably negotiates with Syphax. They plan to entice the more powerful Syphax into betraying Scipio and overthrowing his army. In payment for this they plan to give him Sophonisba, and since two men cannot be married to one woman, particularly with senatorial sanction, they decide to poison Massinissa. Their plan aborts.

Massinissa hears of the plot through one good and faithful senator, Gelosso. By moving rapidly and taking advantage of surprise attack Massinissa manages to defeat the armies of Asdrubal and Syphax. Evidently discouraged with the corrupt state of Carthage, Massinissa hastens to join Scipio himself, and he too pledges allegiance to the Roman.

Sophonisba, in the meantime, has been using every means possible to prevent Syphax from making her his wife, and Syphax has been using every means that is suggested to his imagination to force or entice her to his bed. Finally in *desperation*, Syphax conjures up the witch Erictho and begs her to cast a spell over Sophonisba and thus force her to yield to his passion. Erictho appears to comply; but Syphax is tricked into thinking that he is making love to Sophonisba only to discover to his horror that his partner is the witch herself. In this most startling scene in the play Syphax attains a kind of grandeur as he calls down curses upon himself and the world.

Shortly afterwards he and Massinissa meet in single

combat and Syphax loses, but Massinissa spares his life and returns him as a prisoner to Scipio.

Sophonisba and Massinissa are re-united but their happiness is very short-lived. Scipio, convinced that Massinissa will turn against Rome if he is re-united with his Carthaginian bride, orders Massinissa to take her prisoner and turn her over to Rome. Massinissa must obey the order or accept the dishonour of breaking his oath of allegiance to Scipio. Sophonisba, however, will not allow herself to be taken prisoner, and to save her own honour and that of her beloved husband she takes poison. Massinissa returns to Scipio bearing the dead body of his wife, and Syphax cries out: "Burst, my vex'd heart: the torture that most racks / An enemy is his foe's royal acts." (V.iv.40-41). Scipio adorns Massinissa for his virtue and Massinissa proclaims Sophonisba "Women's right wonder, and just shame to men." (V.iv.59). And so ends the play.

Marston thought of Sophonisba as his magnum opus, his one great work in the high style. Finkelpearl suggests that Marston was able to indulge in a kind of stylized drama because he had a sympathetic audience at Blackfriars, and he further maintains that the "'Wonder of Women' is an attempt to embody in a character and action, Marston's vision of perfection."¹

¹ Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 241.

It is my position that Marston's fragmentation of the satyr persona in Sophonisba brings about a clash of opposites that is the direct antithesis of the fusion which occurred in the earlier plays, and that the nature of the unique tragic experience that results can only be understood in terms of this separation.

In almost every play, Marston presents a woman who stands apart from the other characters. She is never touched by the evil in the world that surrounds her. In The Malcontent, the faithfulness of Maria teaches Altofronto to see the world in a new way; there is some good, some bad. His suffering forces him to become a satyr and allows him to see the strength of simple goodness.

The focus in The Fawn is on the recognition and punishment of vice by the satyr-fawn. The tone of the play, however, is light; no one is ever in serious danger of death or tragic disillusionment and there is no necessity of affirming an absolute perfection as there is in The Malcontent; yet the presence of Philocalia serves to remind the reader and Hercules of an excellence that exists in spite of the depravity of the court.

The Dutch Courtezan, like The Fawn, is also a comedy, but a much more serious one. Franceschina is a fiend. Malheureux's lust for her becomes an obsession which could have destroyed both himself and Freeville. Freeville and Malheureux learn through experience that

contact with evil may eventually strengthen and steel virtue, but it is still a very "dangerous and dirty business."

The representation of Beatrice as an ideal seems to offset the ugliness of the world of Franceschina. Marston ties in the practical philosophy of Montaigne with the Platonic concept of Castiglione, that is, the ladder of perfection. The lover is inspired by his beloved's beauty to move from the sensual to the idealistic.

In these three plays the presentation of a woman as absolute perfection is always integrally related to man's experience of the real world, and in one way or another she enables the man, or gives him strength to continue living in that very imperfect world. But the action in these plays never focuses directly on the women who are symbols of perfection. They are seen obliquely in relation to some natural inclination, be it good or bad; and eventually the concept of the symbol of perfection is fused by means of the satyr convention with a less ethereal quality. All of Marston's plays centre on this theme that pure virtue cannot survive by itself; if it is to survive at all it must be tempered by the recognition that man is naturally weak. And as I have pointed out, the satyr convention is ideally suited for the expansion of this theme.

Antonio's Revenge and Sophonisba, Marston's two most serious works, have much in common. Like *Mellida*,

Sophonisba is symbolic of an absolute perfection that is incapable of surviving in the miasmic atmosphere of the Machiavellian world; and like *Mellida*, she dies. Indeed, Antonio's final eulogy to his dead love is often seen as a foreshadowing of the tragedy of *Sophonisba*:

Sound doleful tunes, a solemn hymn advance,
 To close the last act of my vengeance;
 And when the subject of your passion's spent,
 Sing Mellida is dead, all hearts will relent,
 In sad condolment at that heavy sound.
 Never more woe in lesser plot was found,
 And, O, if ever time create a muse,
 That to th'immortal fame of virgin faith
 Dares once engage his pen to write her death,
 Presenting it in some black tragedy,
 May it prove gracious, may his style be deck'd
 With freshest blooms of purest elegance;
 May it have gentle presence, and the scenes suck'd up
 By calm attention of choice audience;
 And when the closing Epilogue appears,
 Instead of claps may it obtain but tears.
 (V.ii .169-83).

The strange ending of the play seems to make a credible and honest observation about the world we live in. If the world is so ugly that good people are destroyed, then it is best not to live in it; in this instance, everyone goes off to a monastery. It is the quality of being forced to do something about the dirty world, and the inadequacies of the Stoic mask, that gives the play its particular kind of depth.

In *Sophonisba* the emphasis is changed. Instead of seeing confused fallible human beings trying to steer a course between the dictates of their hearts and the dictates of their consciences, we are presented with two

amazingly disparate groups; the one made up of people who perceive their personal paths of virtue so clearly that they do not appear to suffer internal conflict whatsoever, and the other, equally devoid of internal conflict, made up of people for whom the question of virtue does not exist at all. The first group includes Sophonisba, Massinissa, and Gelloso. These may loosely be called Stoics in that their speeches at one time or another imply an adherence to that philosophy. The other group is made up of Syphax, Asdrubal, Carthalon, Hanno, and Bytheas. Seemingly none of these people believes in anything beyond the immediate fulfillment of immediate desires, and although the greatest emphasis is placed on the villainy of Syphax, it seems to me that Asdrubal and the other senators present an even bleaker picture of fallen humanity than he does.

In the confused political and personal clashes which ensue, Gelloso, Asdrubal, Sophonisba, Syphax, and several minor characters are destroyed; the state of Carthage is utterly vanquished; and Scipio, aided by Massinissa, emerges victorious. As in most tragedies, the shifting political scene serves as a back-drop against which the personal fortunes of individuals are enacted. But in Sophonisba, because the state of Carthage is rotten, the political scene takes on a more important aspect in that it forces us to wonder why such a virtuous lady as Sophonisba should be so adamant in her loyalty to a corrupt state.

As was mentioned earlier, the key figures in this analysis are Sophonisba and Syphax because each represents a different face of the fragmented satyr persona. In the clash of these two lies the great tragedy of the play. However there are certain other characters whose functions in the action must be examined if we are to fully understand the particular and subtle tragic vision that Marston was attempting to bring to life. These are Massinissa, Gelo^osso, Asdrubal, and Carthalon, and each represents a particular shade of the two philosophical stands of Stoicism and Machiavellianism that dominate the play.

Massinissa is one of the most curiously unsatisfying characters ever to be bodied forth upon the stage. Here is a man supposedly passionately in love with his bride. Indeed, he never speaks of her but to praise her. But he is also so passionately in love with his country that he leaves his bridal chamber on the night of his wedding to take up arms against the Roman invasion, and on departure he makes a speech that can leave us in no doubt that his first loyalty is owed to Carthage and himself as an honourable man:

Ye Carthage lords, know Massinissa knows
Not only terms of honour, but his actions;
Nor must I now enlarge how much my cause
Hath danger'd Carthage, but how I may show
Myself most prest to satisfaction.
The loathsome stain of kings' ingratitude
From me O much be far! And since this torrent,
War's rage, admits no anchor—since the billow
Is risen so high we may not hull, but yield
This ample state to stroke of speedy swords;

What you with sober haste have well decreed,
 We'll put to sudden arms; no, not this night,
 These dainties, these firstfruits of nuptials,
 That well might give excuse for feeble lingerings,
 Shall hinder Massinissa. Appetite,
 Kisses, loves, dalliance, and what softer joys
 The Venus of the pleasing'st ease can minister,
 I quit you all.

(I.ii.195-202).

Here Massinissa impresses upon the audience his awareness that it was his own successful suit for the hand of Sophonisba that caused the wrathful Syphax to ally himself with Rome. And he further impresses his particular responsibility to defend Carthage in order to show gratitude for the favours bestowed upon him. No, he will not stay to enjoy the first fruits of matrimony; the danger to Carthage is too near; he must be off immediately to discharge his responsibility. And he so trusts the honourable lords of Carthage that he leaves all his treasure in their hands claiming that it is difficult "for great hearts to mistrust." (I.ii.207). Now this is all as it should be because Massinissa is a prince among princes and a man who "knows / Not only terms of honour, but his actions;" but as he rides away to battle we have a foreboding that his extreme generosity in leaving his wife and treasure behind has left him in a rather too vulnerable position.

When he next appears he is embroiled in battle, seriously wounded, bleeding badly, and refusing Jugurth's urgent pleas that he withdraw from the struggle for a rest. His response to Jugurth is an even more passionate declar-

ation of his love for Carthage and for Sophonisba:

O Jugurth, I cannot bleed too fast, too much,
 For that so great, so just, so royal Carthage!
 My wound smarts not, blood's loss makes me not faint,
 For that loved city. O nephew, let me tell thee,
 How good that Carthage is: it nourish'd me,
 And when full time gave me fit strength for love,
 The most adorèd creature of the city,
 To us before great Syphax did they yield,—
 Fair, noble, modest, and 'bove all, my [own],
 My Sophonisba! O Jugurth, my strength doubles:
 I know not how to turn a coward,—drop
 In feeble baseness I cannot. Give me horse!
 Know I'm Carthage's very creature, and am grac'd
 That I may bleed for them. Give me fresh horse!
 (II.ii.3-16).

Again Massinissa has placed his love for Carthage before his love for Sophonisba. Indeed the violence of his passion seems to draw strength from the ferocity of the battle, and he appears to delight in suffering honourable wounds for their sakes. Directly, when Asdrubal (intent on his murderous plot) enters and urges him to leave the field, he reiterates the joy with which he suffers for Carthage:

By light, my heart's not pale: O my loved
 father,
 We bleed for Carthage; balsam to my wounds,
 We bleed for Carthage; shall's restore the fight?
 (II.ii.28-30).

Nonetheless, Asdrubal is successful in getting him off the field and into the hands of the murderer-surgeon, Gisco. It is at this point that Gelasso, disguised as an old soldier, enters with a letter which discloses the plot on Massinissa's life and army. The action breaks rapidly. Massinissa turns on his murderer, accuses him of treachery, and then contemptuously spares his life; Jugurth runs in

with the news that Syphax has left for Cirta and his army appears to be joining forces with that of Asdrubal; Gelosso throws off his disguise and advises Massinissa to attack the army of Syphax before it can join with Asdrubal's forces and then to "Make through to Scipio;" who "yields safe abodes:" (II.ii.81). And Massinissa begins to beat his breast and bewail his fate.

Why wast thou born at Carthage! O my fate!
 Divinest Sophonisba! I am full
 Of much complaint, and many passions,
 The least of which express'd would sad the gods,
 And strike compassion in most ruthless hell.
 Up, unmaim'd heart, spend all thy grief and rage
 Upon thy foe! the field's a soldier's stage,
 On which his action shows. If you are just,
 And hate those that contemn you, O you gods,
 Revenge worthy your anger, your anger! O,
 Down man, up heart! stoop Jove, and bend thy chin
 To thy large breast; give sign th'art pleased, and just;
 Swear good men's foreheads must not print the dust.
(II.ii.83-95).

Gone is the passionate desire to defend the motherland. Massinissa, the noble, is faced with senatorial treachery, and the shock of that discovery completely dispels his prior love and loyalty for Carthage. His only mention of Sophonisba is to bewail the fact that she was born there. The rest of the speech is devoted to calling down the wrath of the gods on those who betrayed him and to boosting his own courage in the face of a gravely dangerous military situation. Now this is a very natural reaction to a most miserable betrayal. He had, after all, left his nuptial bed to defend the city, and he had fought courageously giving no thought to his personal safety. No one can

blame him for his decision to follow Gelosso's advice. But one cannot help wishing that he had not protested quite so much before the treachery, because the abruptness of his about face makes one wonder just how sincere and thoughtful were his initial protestations. Another man faced with a similar situation might have fallen on his sword and thus honourably extricated himself from the horns of the dilemma, or might have defeated the army of Syphax and somehow come to terms with Asdrubal and healed the breach between himself and Carthage.

However, that is too much speculation, and although we may feel some dissatisfaction or disappointment with Massinissa's sudden change of heart, we can level against him no accusation of dishonourable or disloyal behaviour in making his alliance with Rome. Nor is it fair to expect that he should have foreseen Sophonisba's reaction to a Roman invasion—even one assisted by himself. Nothing in their conversation had touched on how she would feel toward Rome in the event of a Carthaginian betrayal of her husband.

When Massinissa appears again he is in the company of Scipio defending in honourable and reasoned terms his decision to defect from Carthage. He presents his case so well that his appeal to our sympathy is complete:

Let not the virtue of the world suspect
Sad Massinissa's faith; nor once condemn
Our just revolt. Carthage first gave me life;
Her ground gave food, her air first lent me breath:

The earth was made for men, not men for earth.
 Scipio, I do not thank the gods for life,
 Much less vile men, or earth; know, best of lords,
 It is a happy being, breath well famed,
 For which Jove sees these thus. Men, be not fool'd
 With piety to place, tradition's fear;
 A just man's country Jove makes everywhere.
 (III.ii.1-11).

Scipio understandably agrees with him, and expresses astonishment that Massinissa does not show any desire for wrathful revenge against his enemies. This is indeed Massinissa's finest hour; because, as Scipio lists the injuries done by the unfaithful senate, the reader too is forced to admire his self-control and largeness of character. Only for the horrible death of loyal old Gelosso is Massinissa able to weep. He does not speak of revenge, only of "secret anguish" that "Shall waste — shall waste!" (III.ii.28-29). And as the speech ends he prays that the gods will permit him "To be a short time man." (III.ii.32). Then taking courage from Scipio's manly presence he makes a vow of complete and utter loyalty, binding himself to it by his honour and his gods:

Thy face makes Massinissa more than man,
 And here before your steady power a vow
 As firm as fate I make: when I desist
 To be commanded by thy virtue, Scipio,
 Or fall from friend of Rome, revenging gods
 Afflict me with your torture. I have given
 Of passion and of faith, my heart.
 (III.ii.33-39)

However, when Scipio refers to Sophonisba as belonging now to Syphax, Massinissa shakes off his melancholy lethargy and strikes a more disquieting note:

*With mine! no, Scipio;
 Libya hath poison, asps, knives, and too much earth
 To make one grave. With mine! Not; she can die.
 Scipio, with mine! Jove, say it, thou dost lie.
 (III.ii.46-49).*

Again the reaction of this much abused man is understandable. He has lost faith in all that he believed to be good in Carthage, but he is clinging desperately to his faith in Sophonisba as the one completely virtuous person left in his once beloved homeland. Perhaps this explains the hastiness and unqualified nature of his vow to Scipio. He seems to feel like the victim of a shipwreck who must clutch around in desperation for any handhold even a dangerous one. Nonetheless, he seems a bit harsh in so uncategorically stating that he would rather have Sophonisba commit suicide than break faith with him. But again the tone of his rejoinder is explained in a later speech where he admits that he is particularly sensitive on this question:

*You touch'd a string to which my sense was quick.
 Can you but think? Do, do; my grief--my grief--
 Would make a saint blaspheme! Give some relief;
 As thou art Scipio, forgive that I forget
 I am a soldier. Such woes Jove's ribs would burst:
 Few speak less ill that feel so much of worst.--
 (III.ii.65-70).*

As the scene ends Scipio and Massinissa begin their march toward Cirta where they intend to surprise and conquer Syphax, and it must be admitted at this point that any uneasiness one may feel about Massinissa cannot be substantiated by anything concrete other than the rather too loquacious quality of his speeches. He has neither said

nor done anything that can be used against him.

However, the evidence is not all in, and there is a very damning piece in store for us. En route Massinissa requests and is granted permission to meet Syphax in single combat. As the armies approach each other Massinissa leads the charge shouting "For Sophonisba" as his battle cry, and Syphax responds to the challenge with the same words. (V.ii.33). The two meet, agree to single combat, fight, and Syphax falls. Massinissa has the knife poised for execution and demands to know if Sophonisba is "yet unstain'd," (V.ii.48). And when he learns that she is indeed "unstain'd," the characteristic haughtiness with which he spared the life of Gisco emerges again as he contemptuously spares the life of his mortal enemy, and delivers him up to Scipio:

Rise, rise! Cease strife!
Hear a most deep revenge—from us take life!
To you all power of strength; and next to thee,
Thou spirit of triumph, born for victory,
I heave these hands. March we to Cirta straight,
My Sophonisba with swift haste to win,
In honour and in love all mean is sin.
(V.ii.52-58).

Now the final complications set in. Syphax, determined that if he is not to have Sophonisba, no one else should have her, convinces Scipio that it was she who caused his breach of faith with Rome, and urges that she will entice Massinissa in the same direction should he be permitted to stay with his bride. Scipio, a thoughtful and shrewd commander, sends a message that Sophonisba is to be taken

prisoner the moment she is found.

Meanwhile, a terrified Sophonisba kneels at the feet of an unrecognized Libyan soldier begging for protection or death in the face of dishonourable slavery. That soldier proves to be her beloved husband; and Massinissa, delighted with so dramatic a reunion and feeling a power that his unqualified oath to Scipio should not have permitted him, rather grandly reveals himself and promises her freedom: "Rarity! / By thee and this right hand, thou shalt live free!" (V.iii.28).

Their reunion is momentary. Immediately Laelius enters and demands that she be taken prisoner and delivered to Scipio. Massinissa turns pale and protests that he has just vowed her freedom. Laelius reminds him of his oath to Scipio, and again protesting the cruelty of his fate, Massinissa turns distractedly to Sophonisba and with bitter irony tells her to prepare herself for bondage. Shocked, she echoes, "Bondage" (V.iii.78), whereupon he asks "How then have I vow'd well to Scipio?" (V.iii.79). But when she protests that he has also vowed her freedom, he seems about to go mad, and begins to speak disjointedly: "Right which way? / Run mad! — impossible! — distraction." (V.iii.80-81).

It is at this point that Sophonisba, moved by the spectacle of her husband's suffering and determined that he should not lose his honour, offers a way out. The

exchange that follows contains in capsule form all that Massinissa is or ever was, and neither the most callous reader nor the most ardent Stoic could forgive or defend him:

So. Dear lord, thy patience; let it maze all power,
And list to her in whose sole heart it rests
To keep thy faith upright.

Mass. Wilt thou be slaved?

So. No, free.

Mass. How then keep I my faith?

So. My death
Gives help to all. From Rome so rest we free;
So brought to Scipio, faith is kept in thee.

Mass. Thou darest not die—some wine!—thou darest
not die!

(V.iii.81-89).

With what readiness does he ask, "Wilt thou be slaved?" and how petulant is his question, "How then keep I my faith?" when she says that she will be free. But how awful is the comment on his character contained in the last line. He cries out for the wine even while he "honourably" protests, "Thou darest not die!" How dare he consider himself an honourable man! Why, he even helps her prepare the potion, pouring in the poison from a store he evidently carried on his person for just such emergencies. It is interesting that in all his bitter grief and suffering he never once thought of preparing a potion for himself. That would have delivered her from her marriage vows and permitted her an honourable union with Syphax.

But that never occurred to him, and as she sinks to death he continues in the same vein as before:

Covetous,
 Fame-greedy lady, could no scope of glory,
 No reasonable proportion of goodness,
 Fill thy great breast, but thou must prove immense
 Incomprehensive in virtue! What, wouldst thou
 Not only be admired, but even adored?
 O glory ripe for heaven! Sirs, help, help, help!
 Let us to Scipio with what speed you can;
 For piety make haste, whilst yet we are man.
 (V.iii.108-15).

Indeed! Was he ever a man? No soul-elevating speech that he utters after this base act (and he does try a few more) can relieve the stark impression of his moral cowardice as it is created here. And suddenly everything about Massinissa comes into question. Why did he prate so much about his love of honour and his love for Carthage? When Carthage betrayed him, how sincere were his bitter protestations against his fate and about his love for Sophonisba? Why did he several times mention that he was being more Stoical about his fate than would be a lesser man suffering fewer wrongs? Why did he give such an unqualified vow to Scipio? He was not even asked to do it. It was a free act of will and he gave no thought to Sophonisba when he did it. And why did he fall down in such adoration at the feet of Scipio? He could not know Scipio well enough to make a rational judgment about whether he were such an honourable, just, merciful man as to be worthy of such admiration and such a vow. And finally, did he really mean that he would rather have

Sophonisba dead than wife to *Syphax*? How dare he make such a demand on another person? There was a loop^hole. The marriage was not consummated. He was not so averse to crawling out through loopholes himself.

After the deluge of outraged questions and objections abates and *Massinissa* is viewed in the more objective framework of the entire play, a rather pathetic picture emerges, and if one cannot admire *Massinissa*, one can certainly admire his creator for the subtlety of his handiwork. Marston makes us wonder about *Massinissa* very early in the play when he delivers all his treasure for safekeeping to the Carthaginian senate — a move that was certainly less than necessary — but he keeps us hoping that there is real depth in him by giving him wonderful speeches and opportunities for grand gestures. He saves the apocalypse for the end and reveals *Massinissa* for what he is only as the curtain falls.

Massinissa was a little boy in love with the notion of honour and he had a little boy's frankness and appeal. He gloried in battle because it gave him a chance to show off his courage, and he was indeed physically courageous giving no thought to his own danger. He could grasp the legalisms but not the subtleties of his own actions. He was given to hero worship, elevating to a pedestal first the ancient magnates of Carthage, then *Sophonisba*, and finally *Scipio*. He was impulsive, trusting, and naïve as is shown

in both his dealings with the senate and with Scipio. In peaceful times he would have been a charming, generous, and honourable friend, but he had to act in time of war when cool intelligence and a more mature honour were necessary. It was not all his fault that he did not have the requirements for the job. In this he was not very different from many other political blunderers sprinkled through our history.

Despite the moral cowardice implicit in Massinissa's behaviour during the final catastrophe, he was certainly not base. In fact there were times when he earned our genuine admiration: two such are his marvellous courage on the battlefield and his refusal to seek personal vengeance against those members of the senate who had betrayed him. Indeed he goes further, refusing even to speak ill of them other than to cite their treachery as his reason for making an alliance with Rome. His stand here is Stoical, but he cannot be called a true Stoic any more than he can be called a truly honorable man. The spirit of both had escaped him, and involved as he was with externals, he was capable of understanding only the legalisms of each. He left the real commitments to his wife Sophonisba and his friend Gelosso both of whom would not accept the convenience of a loophole. At the end of the play we recognize this, and as Massinissa bears away the dead body of his wife, sadly bewailing his fate and sorrow, we cannot take him seriously any more. We

know with certainty that he will survive the death of Sophonisba quite as well as he survived that of Gelloso.

When I loosely labelled Massinissa, Gelloso, and Sophonisba Stoics, I did so because all three speak in the Stoic vein at some time or another throughout the play. However, only Sophonisba can be accurately so described, because only she exhibits the intellectual commitment necessary to that philosophy. Gelloso, while acting and sometimes speaking in a Stoical fashion, too frequently acts and speaks with passion (although at no point is he irrational), to be considered a true Stoic. Nonetheless Gelloso is a thoroughly honourable man. It is not that I am saying a conflict exists between Stoicism and true honour; Sophonisba is active proof that this is not true. However, Stoicism requires a reasoned virtuous approach to life; it rejects the importance of the material world and calls for complete control of the passions, seeing them as hindrances to truly rational behaviour. It is on these points that Gelloso fails as a Stoic.

For him the material world is extremely important; he, an old man, is keenly desirous of a Roman defeat. And when he acts (as he does so very decisively at several junctures), he is primarily motivated by the passions of loyalty, affection, and righteous anger. In short I am saying that while it is impossible to be a true Stoic without being

honourable, it is quite possible to be honourable without being a Stoic.

Gelosso appears first in Act I, Scene ii, as messenger from the senate bearing the sealed commission which sends Massinissa away from his bride and out to lead his army against Rome. As such he is witness to Massinissa's willingness and generosity in leaving his nuptial bed to enter the field. He is also witness to Sophonisba's honourable and Stoical attitude in the face of disappointment and danger. Evidently the attractive young Carthaginean couple make a deep impression on him because when he next appears he is angrily refusing to put his hand to the paper which will seal Massinissa's fate.

"My hand? My hand? rot first; wither in aged shame."

(II.i.1). At this the other senators begin berating him for stubbornness and arguing that their plan is the only way to ensure Carthage's safety. But Gelosso seems more concerned for Massinissa than he is for Carthage:

And what decrees our very virtuous Senate
Of worthy Massinissa, that now fights,
And (leaving wife and bed) bleeds in good arms
For right old Carthage?

(II.i.15-18).

Gelosso is appalled at the treachery planned by the senate and his outrage is expressed in heavy sarcasm. But his words have no effect. Carthalon blandly outlines the military plans for the coming battle and with equal candour relates that Massinissa and his troops will be

killed and his treasure and kingdom given to Asdrubal and Sophonisba. At this Gelloso cries aghast, "So, first faith's breach, murder, adultery, theft!" (II.i.31). But again his angry protests fall on deaf ears, and the senators proceed to defend their decision and congratulate themselves in advance for their clever victory. After listening to Carthage's lengthy and Machiavellian speech concerning the necessity of dishonesty in politics, Gelloso counters with an equally lengthy speech that is somewhat Stoical, but primarily a passionate and outraged defense of one honourable man for another against a treacherous plot:

Although a stage-like passion, and weak heat,
 Full of an empty wording, might suit age,
 Know I'll speak strongly truth. Lords, ne'er mistrust,
 That he who'll not betray a private man
 For his country, will ne'er betray his country
 For private men; then give Gelloso faith.
 If treachery in state be serviceable,
 Let hangmen do it. I am bound to lose
 My life, but not mine honour, for my country.
 Our vows, our faith, our oaths, why they're ourselves,
 And he that's faithless to his proper self
 May be excus'd if he break faith with princes.
 The gods assist just hearts, and states that trust
 Plots before Providence are toss'd like dust.
 For Massinissa (O, let me slack a little
 Austere discourse and feel humanity!)
 Methinks I hear him cry, "O fight for Carthage!
 Charge home! wounds smart not for that so just, so great,
 So good a city." Methinks I see him yet
 Leave his fair bride, even on his nuptial night,
 To buckle on his arms for Carthage. Hark!
 Yet, yet, I hear him cry,—"Ingratitude,
 Vile stain of man, O ever be most far
 From Massinissa's breast! Up, march amain;
 Fame got by loss of breath is god-like gain!"
 And see, by this he bleeds in doubtful fight,
 And cries "For Carthage!" whilst Carthage—Memory,
 Forsake Gelloso! would I could not think,
 Nor hear, nor be, when Carthage is
 So infinitely vile! See, see! look here!

(II.i.75-104).

Initially Gelosso is playing the Stoic. He promises that he will "speak strongly truth" but will not be heated or "stagelike" in his delivery. He asks that he be given serious attention because he, a man who would not betray an individual, can be trusted not to betray his country. He speaks contemptuously of the necessity or serviceability of treachery in state matters, saying that only "hangmen" should have anything to do with it. He argues that the degree to which a man is faithful to his vows is the measure of the man and warns that the gods despise plots and destroy those states that trust to them. Then he mentions Massinissa; and, suddenly pleading exemption from his initial promise for calm, deliberate argument, he breaks into an impassioned defense. He seems to be able to hear Massinissa crying out in battle; he recalls his selfless willingness to go into the field; he reminds the senate that this man left his bride on the night of his wedding to defend Carthage. And in obvious pain he condemns the vileness to which Carthage has sunk.

Gellosso is absolutely right, but he is no longer attempting to maintain the Stoic stance, and we must admit that he is far more impressive as the passionate defender than the logical one. He did not carry his argument about honour very far. He seemed to have bogged down in the intellectual effort required. But on a straightforward, honest defense of his fellow man, his loyalty and human sympathy

come to the fore and he is magnificent.

This speech is typical of Marston's treatment of the Stoic position. Once again, recalling Pandulpho and Feliche, a character adopts a Stoic stance only to find that it cannot contain all he has to say. In Sophonisba, because the matter is so weighty and because Gelloso follows his speech with sincere and courageous action, the character is saved from looking even faintly ridiculous or hypocritical. Gelloso is more than a Stoic. He recognizes and deals with the reality of human emotion, and that recognition leads him boldly to an honourable death. Gelloso is not a satyr. He has nothing else in common with Marston's unique character and his duality. Gelloso has accepted ruefully that evil exists in the world, but for him there is no fascination, no tendency to voyeurism, no delight in description, and no internal struggle. The only thing he shares with the satyr is the tendency toward Stoicism which he must reject because he finds it insufficient to contain and express what he feels.

Gelloso witnesses the confrontation between Sophonisba and the senate first with apprehension and then with elation as he discovers that Sophonisba too intends to keep faith with her husband. As the scene ends we are made aware that Gelloso intends to do everything in his power to prevent Massinissa's downfall. He has decided that Carthage is too corrupt to be worthy of his loyalty any longer, and

he prays fervently to the gods that his city be destroyed
before it can sink lower into shame:

Leap nimble lightning from Jove's ample shield,
And make at length an end! The proud hot breath
Of thee-contemning greatness; the huge drought
Of sole self-loving vast ambition;
Th'unnatural scorching heat of all those lamps
Thou rear'dst to yield a temperate fruitful heat;
Relentless rage, whose heart hath no one drop
Of human pity;—all, all loudly cry,
Thy brand, O Jove, for now the world is dry!
O let a general end save Carthage fame!
When worlds do burn, unseen's a city's flame.
Phoebus in me is great; Carthage must fall;
Jove hates all vice, but vows' breach worst of all.
(II.i.160-72).

Gelosso makes only two more appearances after
this speech, but henceforth his actions determine Massinissa's
fate and that of Carthage. He warns Massinissa of the treach-
ery by donning a disguise and taking him a letter which
discloses the entire plot. After Massinissa dismisses his
would-be murderer, the extent to which Gelosso would carry
his revolt against corrupt Carthage becomes evident as he
cries:

Up, Massinissa! throw
The lot of battle upon Syphax' troops,
Before he join with Carthage; then amain
Make through to Scipio; he yields safe abodes:
Spare treachery, and strike the very gods.
(II.ii .78-82).

No doubt Gelosso could not have known Sophonisba's
reaction to a Roman invasion or he would never have given
Massinissa this advice. But that he meant it exactly as he
said it we can have no doubt, because we learn later from
Carthalon's report that he personally led Asdrubal's troops

into action against those of Syphax and thus secured Massinissa's safety and Rome's victory.

When he makes his last appearance, he is as jubilant as a child in spite of the fact that he knows he faces death. Carthalon relates to Asdrubal how dismally their plan has failed and how many Carthaginian soldiers "bled by his [Gelosso's] vile plot." (II.iii.80], to which Gelosso answers with unabated spirit, "Vile! Good Plot! my good plot, Asdrubal!" (II.iii.81). And when Asdrubal facing shame and ruin screams at him, "Die," he answers levelly, "Do what thou can, / Thou canst but kill a weak old honest man." (II.iii.87-89).

We learn the manner of his death much later from Scipio in conversation with Massinissa. He was tortured and "rent to death." (III.ii.24). Yet we rejoice for his end. He died as he probably expected he would; but in his death he affirmed what he believed in—loyalty, justice, and honour, all rooted firmly in human affection and respect for his fellow man. Was he a Stoic? No. He has outgrown that rather limiting philosophy if he had ever embraced it. He lived and died the best person in the play, and beside him the heroine, the true Stoic, looks pale.

There remain now only the senators whose functions in the play require analysis if the full depth and complexity of Marston's tragic vision is to be understood. These four, Asdrubal, Carthalon, Hanno, and Bytheas, can, for all pur-

poses, be treated as one, for although they perform different actions they are of one mind in corruption.

Asdrubal is Sophonisba's father; on the night of her wedding to Massinissa he commends and blesses both of them. Yet he does not show a shred of fatherly concern when he virtually sells her to Syphax for the safety of the state; nor does he have the least scruple in planning the murder of Massinissa and the theft of his property. Indeed, he congratulates himself on his wisdom and ambition. He coldly orders the murder of Gisco, and when he is faced with the catastrophe of his aborted plans, he flings about in despair unable to issue intelligible orders and trying to shift the burden of guilt to others. He is finally pursued by the wrathful citizens to the monument of his ancestors where he takes poison. But they, intent on avenging their betrayed army, fling his dead body out among the rocks refusing even a peaceful sleep for his bones.

Carthalon is a similar character. It is he who reports the advance of Roman legions and the defection of Syphax to the enemy's side. Evidently it was also he who devised the plot against Massinissa, seeing in Syphax a more powerful ally and confident that the weaker Massinissa could be quickly destroyed by a surprise attack. When he first breaks the plan to Sophonisba he is smugly assured. But his assuredness is short-lived. When the plan fails he too tries to exonerate himself by blaming Asdrubal for giving

approval. He is most despicable when he begins to utter sententious speeches about leaders who fail to accept their responsibility.

Hanno and Bytheas are far less important to the action. They serve more as echoes for the other two, but they also approve and defend the plot at the outset, only to disclaim responsibility after its failure. They serve to show the total depravity of the senate.

These four represent the Machiavellian position carried to its vilest conclusion. Their speeches are filled with corruption and guile, and each echoes the other's sentiments. In Act II, scene i, Carthalon says to Gelosso:

Conquest by blood is not so sweet as wit:
For howsoe'er nice virtue censures it,
He hath the grace of war that hath war's profit.

.

Th' only dew that makes men sprout in court is use.
Be't well or ill, his thrift is to be mute;
Such slaves must act commands, and not dispute.
Knowing foul deeds with danger do begin,
But with rewards do end: sin is no sin.

(II.i.37-48).

Bytheas defends the action of the senate in the same scene:

Hold such preposterous zeal as stand against
The full decree of Senate, all think fit?

(II.i.3-4).

And Hanno supports Carthalon's plan as well:

Syphax is Massinissa's greater, and his force
Shall give more side to Carthage: as for's queen,
And her wise father, they love Carthage fate;
Profit and honesty are not one in state.

(II.i.11-14).

Asdrubal anticipating the success of the plot in scene iii

of Act II says to Hanno:

Hanno, 'tis done. Syphax' revolt by this
Hath secured Carthage; and now his force come in,
And join'd with us, give Massinissa charge,
And assured slaughter. O ye powers! forgive,
Through rotten'st dung best plants both sprout and
live;
By blood vines grow.

(II.iii.31-36).

And Hanno craftily answers:

But yet think, Asdrubal,
'Tis fit at least you bear grief's outward show;
It is your kinsman bleeds. What need men know
Your hand is in his wounds? 'Tis well in state
To do close ill, but 'void a public hate.

(II.iii.36-40).

There can be no doubt that Marston intended us to condemn these characters. They are indefensible in their villainy. But there can be no doubt either that he intended a subtle contrast between their wily, diabolic, and well-planned treachery and the poor, blind, unreasoned passion of Syphax. Nor can there be doubt that he intended a similar contrast between the warmth and fullness of Gelloso's humanity and Sophonisba's strictly honourable fulfillment of vows.

What then of Sophonisba, the heroine of the play for whose death we feel a horror-stricken sorrow akin to that evoked by the carnage of the battlefield after the glory of the battle is over. It is a sorrow quite unrelieved by the exultation in human strength and courage that accompanied the death of Gelloso. Part of the explanation lies in Massinissa's willingness to trade her life for his honour,

but not all. There is something missing in Sophonisba herself in spite of her honour, loyalty, and courage; and this lack makes her death seem empty and makes us feel the sorrow of waste.

Marston was a clever dramatist and in the construction of this, his only tragedy, he forced us (at all times unobtrusively), to question the nature of a truly honourable life and death, and indeed the nature of the tragic experience itself.

In my initial discussion of the satyr persona I described the public face as being a reformer who was virtuous, detached, zealous, and righteous and said that these characteristics were frequently expressed in terms of Stoicism. I further described the other side of the character, the private face, as being lascivious, crude, violent, and fascinated particularly by lust. In this play Sophonisba can be seen as the purely public face, unqualified and unsullied by the lurking, fallible private one. That other face exists in the character of Syphax with the result that neither character is complete.

Sophonisba is the grand Stoic throughout. From the beginning she makes it clear that the joys and sorrows of this world are transitory and worthless when compared with the abiding virtues of honour, loyalty, integrity, and detachment. Her speech in answer to Carthalon is ample proof of her Stoic position:

I go: what power can make me wretched? what
 Is there in life to him that knows life's loss
 To be no evil? show, show thy ugliest brow,
 O most black chance; make me a wretched story;
 Without misfortune virtue hath no glory;
 Opposèd trees makes tempests show their power,
 And waves forced back by rocks makes Neptune tower,—
 Tearless O see a miracle of life,
 A maid, a widow, yet a hapless wife!

(II.i.147-55).

Sophonisba has just discovered that she has been virtually sold into dishonour and that her husband will be slain by a treacherous plot, but she remains steadfast in the face of disaster. Carthage may send her body where it wills; she will make no protest; she is a loyal daughter of her homeland. She will not weep or bewail her fate as "A maid, a widow, yet a hapless wife!" Indeed, she welcomes the misfortune as a test of her virtue. But there is no doubt in the reader's mind that she will not yield. She sees her position clearly. As loyal wife to Massinissa, she will not bed with Syphax; as loyal daughter to the state, she will obey its command and go to Cirta, and as a steadfast Stoic she will not weep. Few speeches in the play indicate more clearly her exact position.

Sophonisba does not waver in her Stoicism or her honour. Believing that Massinissa still lived and faced with the blind arrogant lust of Syphax on their first encounter in Cirta, she defies him thus: "Thou mayest enforce my body, but not me." (III.i.15). But when Syphax tells her that Massinissa is dead her tone changes and she appears

to yield:

Hold thy strong arm, and hear me. Syphax, know
I am thy servant now: I needs must love thee,
For (O, my sex, forgive!) I must confess
We not affect protesting feebleness,
Entreats, faint blushings, timorous modesty;
We think our lover is but little man,
Who is so full of woman. Know, fair Prince,
Love's strongest arm's not rude; for we still prove,
Without some fury there's no ardent love.
We love our love's impatience of delay;
Our noble sex was only born t'obey,
To him that dares command.

(III.i .27-38).

Possibly she saw in the report of Massinissa's death a release from her vow, and possibly that news suggested to her a means of escape; in any event, she continues in this altered tone:

As I do wish to live, I long t'enjoy
Your warm embrace; but, oh my vow, 'tis thus:
If ever my lord died, I vow'd to him
A most, most private sacrifice, before
I touch'd a second spouse.

(III.ii.52-56).

Here she gently pleads for time to make a sacrifice for Massinissa and we will never know the real intention of those words. As soon as the permission is granted she receives a letter which brings her other news of her husband. However, even if we take her admission of longing literally, it does not destroy her honour, her detachment, her Stoicism, or her virtue. Syphax was, after all, her other suitor, and she had been sent to Cirta by the senate as his wife. With Massinissa dead she would have no right to refuse her body to her new husband. No conflict would exist between her

vows to Massinissa and her obedience to the senate. It must be recalled here that early in Act I she said that if Massinissa were to "quit his virtue," she would cease to love him, "yet must honour him." (I.ii.171- 72). In the same detached fashion she could accept Syphax as her husband.

On the other hand she may have been using a ruse from the outset. Her later speeches to Syphax support this interpretation, as does the fact that she stresses the "most, most private" nature of her sacrifice. In this case, one hour would give her time to take her own life or make her escape. The senate's order had required that she go to Cirta, not that she stay there.

As I said we will never know the answer because she immediately learns that Massinissa is alive, and having received the permission she enters the bed-chamber accompanied by Zanthia and Vangue. She finds a tunnel leading underground to a grove one league from Cirta, whereupon she drugs Vangue and puts him into Syphax' bed. She then makes her escape through the tunnel, leaving Zanthia behind. Syphax enters, discovers the ruse, and kills Vangue. He sends Zanthia after her lady in the hope that she will lead him to Sophonisba's hiding-place. He is right in his evaluation of Zanthia, and when he overtakes Sophonisba he threatens to rape her in language that is lustful and crude. "Despite thy virtue, know / I'll thread thy richest pearl. This forest's deaf / As is my lust." (IV.i.46-48). It is in this

scene that Sophonisba's courage is most evident, for she threatens to kill herself should Syphax force her; and when Syphax further threatens to rape her dead body, her reply is the quintessence of honour, courage, and Stoicism:

I shame to make thee know
How vile thou speakest; corruption then as much
As thou shalt do; but frame unto thy lusts
Imagination's utmost sin: Syphax,
I speak all frightless, know I live or die
To Massinissa; nor the force of fate
Shall make me leave his love, or slake thy hate.
I will speak no more.

(IV. i. 62-69).

But Sophonisba is more than courageous and honourable; she is also tender and passionate, as can be seen in her speeches at the beginning of the play when she eagerly awaits Massinissa's approach to her bridal chamber:

What I dare think I boldly speak:
After my word my well-bold action rusheth.
In open flame then passion break!
Where virtue prompts, thought, word, act never
blusheth.
Revenging gods, whose marble hands
Crush faithless men with a confounding terror,
Give me no mercy if these bands
I covet not with an unfeignèd fervour;
(I.ii.46-53).

These are the words of a young and passionate woman who is glad that she has been chosen by the man she loves and is eager to be united with him.

Nor is Sophonisba ungenerous; at the end of the play, when she is finally faced with a dilemma from which she cannot extricate herself, she willingly takes the poison

in order to save her own and Massinissa's honour. Moreover, she comforts the man who has indirectly caused her death by his hasty vow of allegiance to Scipio. She tells him that she is glad to give up "abhorr'd life" and that her greatest happiness is to be able to die in her "husband's arms."

How near was I unto the curse of man. Joy!
How like was I yet once to have been glad!
He that ne'er laugh'd may with a constant face
Contemn Jove's frown: happiness makes us base.

[She takes the bowl, into which Massinissa puts poison.]

Behold me, Massinissa, like thyself,
A king and soldier; and I prithee keep
My last command.

.

Dear, do not weep.
And now with undismay'd resolve behold,
To save you—you (for honour and just faith
Are most true gods, which we should much adore),
With even disdainful vigour I give up
An abhorr'd life. You have been good to me,

[She drinks.]

And I do thank thee, heaven! O my stars,
I bless your goodness, that with breast unstain'd,
Faith pure, a virgin wife, tried to my glory,
I die, of female faith the long-lived story;
Secure from bondage and all servile harms,
But more—most happy in my husband's arms.

(V.iii.89-109).

As were her other speeches, the tone here is Stoical. Significantly, she refers to the curse of man as being joy. For Sophonisba, happiness is the most subtle of temptations for the true Stoic; it can lead one out of the path of virtue by fooling one into thinking that the world and its pleasures do, after all, have some value. This idea is directly opposed to her initial eagerness to wed Massinissa and taste the

pleasures of matrimony. Perhaps it is because she ends on this note that the reader is left with a sense of her emptiness as a human being. And because of this, we are forced to examine her character most carefully in order to explain or determine the source of her failing. When I say failing I do not mean that she fails as a character: she is marvelously true to herself in this respect. I refer rather to that failing which evokes our sympathy with her struggle in life and our sorrow at her death.

When we first see Sophonisba, she is in conversation with her maid preparing for Massinissa's entrance into her bridal chamber. Although she is eager for his embraces, she is coolly and logically criticizing the ritual that surrounds matrimony:

I wonder, Zanthia, why the custom is,
To use such ceremony, such strict shape,
About us women: forsooth the bride must steal
Before her lord to bed; and then delays,
Long expectations, all against known wishes.
I hate these figures in locution,
These about phases forced by ceremony;
We must still seem to fly what we most seek,
And hide ourselves from what we fain would find.
Let those that think and speak and do just acts,
Know form can give no virtue to their acts.

(I.ii.5-15).

Few women would protest so against ceremony just before the entrance of the bridegroom. And even here on her nuptial bed she cannot refrain from distinguishing between real and feigned virtue for the edification of her maid, Zanthia.

Zanthia strikes an ominous note in the conversa-

tion when she says, "Tis wonder, madam, you tread not awry."
(I.ii.30). And when Sophonisba questions, "Your reason,
Zanthia," the maid answers, "You go very high." (I.ii.31-32).
As with Massinissa, Marston quickly delineates the broad out-
lines of his character, and, very early in the play, he pre-
pares his reader for that character's downfall.

When the bridegroom is announced Sophonisba is shocked momentarily out of her composure for she cries "Haste, good Zanthia: help! keep yet the doors!" (I.ii.33). And when Massinissa enters praying to the gods for a happy marriage she answers:

A modest silence, though't be thought
A virgin's beauty and her highest honour;
Though bashful feignings nicely wrought,
Grace her that virtue takes not in, but on her;
What I dare think I boldly speak:
After my word my well-bold action rusheth.
In open flame then passion break!
Where virtue prompts, thought, word, act never
blusheth

(I.ii.41-48).

Sophonisba is most attractive in this speech, and it is a real pity that fate intervenes and makes her such a self-conscious and legalistic guardian of her virtue. Here, although she cannot help mentioning true virtue, she is unblushingly desirous of love - not love of the lofty intellectual type but union with another human being. Admittedly, she does not mention the possibility of weakness in that being, but acceptance of that might have come. Here she frankly and eagerly confesses her

passion.

How rudely does Carthalon, "wounded, his shield struck full of darts," interrupt her joy! Yet how calmly and Stoically does she accept his intrusion, and worse—Massinissa's commission to enter the field:

My lords, 'tis most unusual such sad haps
Of sudden horror should intrude 'mong beds
Of soft and private loves; but strange events
Excuse strange forms. O you that know our blood,
Revenge if I do feign. I here protest,
Though my lord leave his wife a very maid,
Even this night, instead of my soft arms
Clasping his well-strung limbs with glossful steel,
What's safe to Carthage shall be sweet to me.
I must not, nor am I once ignorant
My choice of love hath given this sudden danger
To yet strong Carthage: 'twas I lost the fight;
My choice vex'd Syphax, enraged Syphax struck
Arms' fate; yet Sophonisba not repents:
O we were gods if that we knew events.
But let my lord leave Carthage, quit his virtue,
I will not love him; yet must honour him,
As still good subjects must bad princes. Lords,
From the most ill-graced hymeneal bed
That ever Juno frown'd at, I entreat
That you'll collect from our loose-formèd speech
This firm resolve: that no low appetite
Of my sex' weakness can or shall o'ercome
Due grateful service unto you or virtue.

(I.ii.156-79).

This speech is interesting and damning. Her passion for her beloved husband is cold in the face of Carthage's danger. She is willing to have Massinissa leave her to go to war. Indeed, she goes further: she claims that should he refuse to go, she would cease to love him yet would "honour him / As still good subjects must bad princes." What a nice distinction! And, if she puts her love for

Carthage above her love for her husband, and would still honour that husband should he defect from Carthage, what heinous behaviour must Carthage be guilty of before she would defect from it. Sophonisba soon answers that question for us. But to return to the speech for a final comment: she regrets that she sits on the "most ill-graced hymeneal bed / That ever Juno frown'd at"; nonetheless she assures us that the passion she was praising only moments before is not only not strong enough to interfere with the defense of Carthage, it is now a "low appetite," a "sex' weakness", which can be easily dismissed. Gone is the touching girlish figure who cried out to her maid, "help! keep yet the doors!" In her place is a woman girding her loins for disaster and enjoying the exercise.

Massinissa had been forced to leave the chamber after he received his commission, and so had missed his wife's speech. On his return she attempts to assure him of her approval, but he silences what he thinks will be her protest against his decision. She surprises him with the following:

My Massinissa, Sophonisba speaks
 Worthy thy wife: go with as high a hand
 As worth can rear. I will not stay my lord.
 Fight for our country; vent thy youthful heat
 In field, not beds: the fruit of honour, Fame,
 Be rather gotten than the oft disgrace
 Of hapless parents, children. Go, best man,
 And make me proud to be a soldier's wife,
 That values his renown above faint pleasures:
 Think every honour that doth grace thy sword
 Trebles my love. By thee I have no lust
 But of thy glory. Best lights of heaven with thee!
 (I.ii.212-23).

It is clear here that she and Massinissa are in complete agreement on what should be done, because after this speech he praises her as a "wondrous creature! even fit for gods, not men:" (I.ii .226). She lauds his determination to go into the field and vent his "youthful heat / In field, not beds," and she makes a most curious statement about the surety of honourable fame at the risk of death in war being superior to the riskiness of having children whose lives might prove a disappointment to their parents. Is this not carrying concern with honour and virtue a bit too far?

I must comment here on a point which seems to have escaped Massinissa as his wife sent him out to face death saying, "By thee I have no lust / But of thy glory." It may be all well and good for a man to say as did Lucasta's lover in Richard Lovelace's poem, "I could not love thee, dear, so much, / Lov'd I not honour more;" he is going out to take the risk. But it is quite another matter for a woman, who expects to sit safely at home, to send her husband out saying in essence the same thing, and not even qualifying it with an expression of love and concern. This is what Sophonisba does here, and it is fortunate for her that Massinissa, himself in love with honour, sees it as a virtue in her.

We come now to another piece of nice legal manoeuvring and one of the most subtle instances of juxtaposition in all of Marston's work. It is her conduct during the confrontation with the senate. She is handed the paper which

Gelosso has refused to sign because it contains the plot against Massinissa and herself. She begins well enough with:

Who speaks? What, mute? Fair plot! What?
blush to break it?
How lewd to act when so shamed but to speak it.
Is this the Senate's firm decree?

(II.i.105-107).

We wait for her outrage but it does not come. She argues well enough that, "Gods prosper more a just than crafty state;" (II.i.115) and is brilliant in cutting down Carthalon's specious argument about the gods foreseeing their forced action:

Gods naught foresee, but see, for to their eyes
Naught is to come or past; nor are you vile
Because the gods foresee; for gods, not we,
See as things are; things are not as we see.
But since affected wisdom in us women
Is our sex' highest folly, I am silent;
I cannot speak less well, unless I were
More void of goodness. Lords of Carthage, thus:
The air and earth of Carthage owes my body;
It is their servant; what decree they of it?

(II.I.134-43).

But where is her wrath? It does not come in this coolly logical speech in which she eventually silences herself on the grounds that she is a woman and asks the senate what they want of her body. It does not come in the speech quoted earlier as the quintessence of Stoicism. It does not come at all. Only Gelosso is filled with wrath, and he has much less at stake than has Sophonisba. He is just an honourable old friend. She is Massinissa's wife, and by her own confession she is passionately in love with him. Why then is she not outraged?

The answer is almost as sad as the answer to the riddle of Massinissa. She too has become entangled in the legal niceties of honour and Stoicism. She too has failed to realize that an honour which is not rooted in loving concern and respect for other human beings is a rather meaningless exercise. She is better than Massinissa because she is more generous and because she is more ready to accept the logical consequences of her commitment. She is more attractive than he is because twice she almost breaks out of her Stoical shell. One instance occurs on the night of her wedding, and the other in her passionately courageous confrontation with Syphax. A third reason for our preference for her over Massinissa is that she is not in the least corrupt nor is she the least corruptible. We sense that Massinissa is, despite his protestations to the contrary. Perhaps this judgement is too harsh on Massinissa because he lacked Sophonisba's intelligence, but nothing could erase the uneasiness we feel about him at her death.

Sophonisba is all that she claims to be; she is just, noble, honourable, pure, loyal, and courageous. But, she is not complete. Because she lacks the least taint of corruption, she cannot fathom corruption in other people. It is not that she does not recognize it. The play is filled with characters whose corruption she condemns. Indeed it is here that she displays the final characteristic of the satyr's public face. She is a zealous reformer. When she first

appears she is teaching Zanthia the distinction between real and feigned virtue, and when Massinissa comes in, she strikes the same note. She is coolly logical with the senate but she is still teaching them; and faced with Syphax, she teaches him (in this case successfully) that "love's strongest arm's not rude." (III.i.34).

But in spite of all this, she simply cannot understand that frailty which drags another human being down from the angelic pedestal that she sees as man's proper place. Although she suffers constantly throughout the play and dies at the end, we do not feel that her suffering is of that confused human type which stems from fears of guilt and inadequacy. And in the end, oddly enough, it is her confidence, her virtue, and her strict Stoic code that drive away our sympathy and force us to look with greater compassion on that most bestial of Marston's creations — the villain Syphax.

Syphax is the other face of the persona; he is the private ugly face. Indeed, incorporated in the person of Syphax are the vices of all of Marston's satyrs. He has the pride of Chrisogonus, the cynicism of Quadratus, the envy of Feliche, the rage of Malevole, the despair of Antonio and Pandulfo, and the lasciviousness of all of them. Moreover, his vices are unqualified by any saving virtue except his poor suffering humanity.

In Syphax' opening speech he is railing to Vangue

about his lost reputation. Having been rejected by Sophonisba, he is in anguish with envy and hurt pride, and he swears to wreak vengeance on everyone for having thus humiliated him:

Syphax, Syphax! why wast thou cursed a king?
 What angry god made thee so great, so vile?
 Contemn'd, disgracèd! think, wert thou a slave,
 Though Sophonisba did reject thy love,
 Thy low neglected head, unpointed at,
 Thy shame unrumour'd, and thy suit unscoff'd,
 Might yet rest quiet. Reputation,
 Thou awe of fools and great men; thou that chok'st
 Freest addictions, and makest mortals sweat
 Blood and cold drops in fear to lose, or hope
 To gain, thy never-certain seldom-worthy gracings;
 Reputation,
 Were't not for thee, Syphax could bear this scorn,
 Not spouting up his gall among his blood
 In black vexations: Massinissa might
 Enjoy the sweets of his preferrèd graces
 Without my dangerous envy or revenge;
 Were't not for thy affliction, all might sleep
 In sweet oblivion: but (O greatness' scourge!)
 We cannot without envy keep high name,
 Nor yet disgraced can have a quiet shame.
 (I.i.1-21).

This speech borders on hysteria. Of course Syphax need not have taken Sophonisba's rejection of his suit quite so personally. Another man, certainly another prince, might have been able to console himself that she, a mere woman, had made the wrong choice. He, Syphax, was more powerful than Massinissa, and Sophonisba herself later calls him a "fair Prince," so he must have been physically attractive. Perhaps it is precisely because he senses a lack in himself and suspects that Sophonisba made the right choice that he is not able to find comfort. And rather than take comfort in his power and princely state, he sees in them a

cause for greater anguish.

The world's opinion, the bane of the satyr's private face, is Syphax' greatest worry. Though he rails against it, he is terrified that the rejection of his suit will make him an object of scorn in the eyes of the world; and because he is a prince there is no way for him to hide from its scoffing fingers. Were it not for what he considers the public nature of his humiliation, he could quietly slink away and lick his wounds; but because he is a public figure, he feels he must seek revenge. In this he reminds us of another great Elizabethan villain, Iago. Like Iago, he feels so diminished by another person's success that he must seek revenge. But the hot passion of Syphax is the antithesis of Iago's cold cunning. Iago is like a snake while Syphax is more a mad bull.

Again in the opening lines, Marston deftly sketches his character and provides him with human, if reprehensible, motivation. Syphax is a proud passionate man; a slight to that pride riles his envy and drives him to the brink of hysteria where he rails in true satyr fashion against the world and plans dangerous revenge.

His vengeance takes the form of defection from his homeland. He learns that Scipio has landed on the shores of Carthage, and, in a speech strangely laudatory of an honour which he can never, after treachery, share,

he plans to join the invader:

O then enlarge thy heart,
 Be thousand souls in one! let all the breath,
 The spirit of thy name and nation, be mix'd strong
 In thy great heart! O fall like thunder-shaft,
 The wingèd vengeance of incensèd Jove,
 Upon this Carthage! for Syphax here flies off
 From all allegiance, from all love or service,
 His (now free'd) sceptre once did yield this city.
 Ye universal gods, light, heat, and air,
 Prove all unblessing Syphax, if his hands
 Once rear themselves for Carthage but to curse it!
 It had been better they had changed their faith,
 Denied their gods, than slighted Syphax' love;
 So fearfully will I take vengeance.
 I'll interleague with Scipio.

(I.i.45-59).

Syphax is not faithful to his vow very long. As soon as the opportunity presents itself he "flies off" from Scipio and hastens to return to Carthage and Sophonisba. After this he sinks lower and lower into depravity, and his speeches take on a vileness unequalled in Elizabethan drama. He is a traitor to Carthage; he threatens violence and rape; and finally, he conjures up a witch to help with the seduction of Sophonisba. Throughout the play, as his suffering intensifies, a strange fact emerges which makes all his devilish activity forgivable—he is genuinely and pathetically in love with Sophonisba, the Stoic, the other side of the satyr persona.

His first encounter with her after she is sent to Cirta occurs in Act III, Scene i, where he drags her in and attempts to frighten her into submitting to him:

Must we entreat? sue to such squeamish ears?
 Know, Syphax has no knees, his eyes no tears;
 Enragèd love is senseless of remorse.
 Thou shalt, thou must: kings' glory is their force.
 Thou art in Cirta, in my palace, fool:
 Dost think he pitieth tears that knows to rule?
 For all thy scornful eyes, thy proud disdain,
 And late contempt of us, now we'll revenge,
 Break stubborn silence. Look, I'll tack thy head
 To the low earth, whilst strength of two black knaves
 Thy limbs all wide shall strain.

(III.i.1-11).

This speech is filled with his uncouth arrogance and lust, and the threat to rape her while *she* is held to the ground with her limbs stretched "all wide" is horrifying in its ugliness. Yet her defiance brings him somewhat to his senses, and when Sophonisba, after hearing of Massinissa's death, appears to soften and protests, "Love's strongest arm's not rude" (III.i.33), Syphax replies almost tenderly "wipe thy fair eyes, Our Queen, / Make proud thy head; now feel more friendly strength / Of thy lord's arm:" (III.i.39-41). . This reply to her entreaty suggests to the reader that Syphax is not all villain in spite of his speeches and his actions, and it is a credit to Marston's subtlety as an artist that he manages to keep this suggestion in the reader's mind even when Syphax has sunk to his lowest depths; for Syphax does sink lower.

Some of the finest passages of poetry in the play, and indeed in all of Marston's works, are found in Act IV, Scene i and Act V, Scene i. Here Syphax seeks the aid of the enchantress, Erictho, in his amorous pursuit of

Sophonisba:

A wasting flame feeds on my amorous blood,
 Which we must cool, or die. What way all power,
 All speech, full opportunity, can make,
 We have made fruitless trial. Infernal Jove,
 You resolute angels that delight in flames,
 To you, all-wonder-working spirits, I fly!
 Since heaven helps not, deepest hell we'll try!
 Here in this desert, the great soul of charms,
 Dreadful Erictho lives, whose dismal brow
 Contemns all roofs or civil coverture.
 Forsaken graves and tombs, the ghosts forced out,
 She joys to inhabit.
 A loathsome yellow leanness spreads her face,
 A heavy hell-like paleness loads her cheeks,
 Unknown to a clear heaven; but if dark winds
 Or thick black clouds drive back the blinded stars,
 When her deep magic makes forced heaven quake
 And thunder spite of Jove,—Erictho then
 From naked graves stalks out, heaves proud her head
 With long unkemb'd hair loaden, and strives to snatch
 The night's quick sulphur; then she bursts up tombs,
 From half-rot sear-cloths then she scrapes dry gums
 For her black rites; but when she finds a corpse
 But newly graved, whose entrails are not turn'd
 To slimy filth, with greedy havock then
 She makes fierce spoil, and swells with wicked triumph
 To bury her lean knuckles in his eyes;
 Then doth she gnaw the pale and o'ergrown nails
 From his dry hand; but if she find some life
 Yet lurking close, she bites his gelid lips,
 And, sticking her black tongue in his dry throat,
 She breathes dire murmurs, which enforce him bear
 Her baneful secrets to the spirits of horror.
 To her first sound the gods yield any harm,
 As trembling once to hear a second charm:

(IV.i.91-125).

As horrifying as these lines are, no one could deny their power, and it would be unfair to charge that they are merely included in order to give the Elizabethan audience a good scare, as some critics have suggested. From the beginning Syphax was driven by an overpowering perverse lust, and the imagery of death, corruption, and stench in this

passage emphasizes the actual depravity and agony of his desire.

On the discovery that he has been deceived by Erictho, Syphax cries, "Thou rotten scum of hell! / O my abhorred heat! O loath'd delusion!" (V.i.4-5), and when on her departure, she assures him that love cannot be bought, Syphax suffers with an intensity that deserves comparison with the great Shakespearian tragic figures:

Can we yet breathe? Is any plagued like me?
 Are we—let's think—O now contempt, my hate
 To thee, thy thunder, sulphur, and scorn'd name!
 He whose life's loath'd, and he who breathes to curse
 His very being, let him thus with me
 Fall 'fore an altar, sacred to black powers,
 And thus dare heavens! O thou whose blasting flames
 Hurl barren droughts upon the patient earth,
 And thou, gay god of riddles and strange tales,
 Hot-brained Phoebus, all add if you can
 Something unto my misery! if aught
 Of plagues lurk in your deep-trench'd brows,
 Which yet I know not,—let them fall like bolts,
 Which wrathful Jove drives strong into my bosom!
 If any chance of war, or news ill-voiced,
 Mischief unthought of lurk, come, give't us all,
 Heap curse on curse, we can no lower fall!

(V.i.24-40).

Syphax is right; he "can no lower fall," and indeed he regains some dignity immediately afterwards when he refuses to be frightened by the ghost of Asdrubal who appears over Erictho's altar and warns him ". . . fear to slight / Your gods and vows. Jove's arm is of dread might." (V.i.64). But Syphax refuses to understand this warning in terms of some absolute power or goodness. He remains steadfast in his loyalty to earthly things when he demands "Yet speak:

that once united with Sophonisba, Massinissa too will break his vow.

Scipio, my fortune is captived, not I,
 Therefore I'll speak bold truth; nor once mistrust
 What I shall say, for now, being wholly yours,
 I must not feign. Sophonisba, 'twas she,
 'Twas Sophonisba that solicited
 My forced revolt; 'twas her resistless suit,
 Her love to her dear Carthage, 'ticed me break
 All faith with men; 'twas she made Syphax false;
 She that loves Carthage with such violence,
 And hath such moving graces to allure,
 That she will turn a man that once hath sworn
 Himself on's father's bones her Carthage foe,
 To be that city's champion and high friend.
 Her hymeneal torch burnt down my house;
 Then I was captived, when her wanton arms
 Threw moving clasps about my neck. O charms,
 Able to turn even Fate! But this, in my true grief,
 Is some just joy, that my love-sotted foe
 Shall seize that plague; that Massinissa's breast
 Her hands shall arm, and that ere long you'll try
 She can force him your foe as well as I.

(V.ii.69-89).

Ironically there is some truth in this speech. Indeed, it was Sophonisba who caused him to break his vow to Rome, but it was his passion for her and the possibility of possessing her, a possibility held out by a treacherous senate acting for its own ends, that really caused his breach of faith, though at no time did he take faith very seriously. Syphax twists the truth convincingly for Scipio and warns him that Massinissa too will become unfaithful if allowed to remain with Sophonisba. Thus Scipio gives the order that Sophonisba be taken prisoner, and Syphax' last speech in this scene indicates that he is still the relentless, envious, malicious villain that he was in the beginning:

Good Malice, so, as liberty so dear,
 Prove my revenge. What I cannot possess
 Another shall not—that's some happiness.
 (V.ii.101-103).

It is evident, then, that Marston went to some pains in the creation of this unrelieved villain and that he never meant for anyone to become sympathetic with him because he was "more sinned against than sinning." Syphax is evil to the end. Why, then, do we look with such compassion on this ravenous beast of a man who has broken his promises, planned revenge, plotted against Massinissa, been in league with evil spirits, and, finally, caused the death of a most virtuous lady?

I suggest that Marston is pulling the strings of our sensibilities in an extremely subtle way. In the opening scene he provided Syphax with ample motivation for his later machinations, and this motivation is rooted squarely in two very understandable human failings—envy and pride. Later, in his pursuit of Sophonisba, Syphax drops to the very depths of depravity and mouths some of the vilest lines in Elizabethan drama, but again his motivation is rooted in a very understandable human failing—lust. Now the most important point; Syphax, despite his vile threats, never ravishes Sophonisba. Indeed, in a confrontation, she controls him with relative ease. The first example of this occurs in their initial meeting and the second after she deceives him and makes her escape to Belos' forest. In this instance

he again makes vile threats only to be stopped by her tremendous courage. She has, by his own admission, "amaz'd" him and he says:

Creature of most astonishing virtue,
If with fair usage, love, and passionate courtings,
We may obtain the heaven of thy bed,
We cease no suit; from other force be free:
We dote not on thy body, but love thee.
(IV.i.74-78).

This is his first avowal of love and his first attempt to come to grips with something beyond the physical and earthbound. Granted, he is not so admirable when he is so impatient as to conjure up a witch, but we sense that this action stemmed from a pathetic lack of comprehension, and in spite of it and his later degradation, it is abundantly evident that Syphax did not want to force Sophonisba. He wanted her to give herself to him freely, and he is most pitiable when Erictho tells him that love cannot be forced; he suffered her terrible degradation of him precisely because he had already recognized that truth. And Erictho, in tricking him into making love to her, might have driven the point home; but she also made Syphax the more base and devilish and further separated him from the lofty, angelic Sophonisba.

Syphax remains devilish, and his lie to Scipio causes the final tragic ending. But his speech near the end of the play, when he mistakenly thinks Sophonisba will be taken prisoner, is vital to an understanding of his

character:

To my soul's joy. Shall Sophonisba then
 With me go bound, and wait on Scipio's wheel?
 When th' whole world's giddy, one man cannot reel.
 (V.iv.32-34).

Gone are his pride and envy. Syphax wants Sophonisba at any cost. He has been a traitor to his allegiance; he has (quite literally) had intercourse with a witch; he has been taken prisoner and stripped of his crown and kingdom, all on her account. Nothing matters as long as he is to be with her. Such passionate dedication can hardly be called lust. Syphax, the bestial villain, can think of no other name for it, nor has it ever occurred to him to think of it as a spiritual love. Syphax' passion to possess Sophonisba physically is only symbolic of his desperate need to possess in her all virtue. But because he has never considered himself in terms of anything but his own law, he does not recognize what his passion for Sophonisba really means. In trying to attain her, he separates himself farther and farther from her, and he suffers immeasurably as a consequence. Syphax' need for Sophonisba is so agonizing, and her Stoic, honourable rebuffs so cold and self-confident, that the reader is forced to shift his sympathy, and instead of lauding Sophonisba for her courage and honour, we pity Syphax for his weakness and need, which are, after all, the common denominators of mankind. And, as Sophonisba rises to virtue beyond our comprehension or grasp, we wish to see her pulled down at least to

the level where she can understand and pity the kind of human being who errs and suffers as Syphax does.

Chametsky's discussion of The Tragedy of Sophonisba is in general agreement with mine, inasmuch as he sees Sophonisba as the embodiment of pure good, and Syphax as the embodiment of pure evil, and he makes a very good analysis of their antithesis, contrasting them point by point and ending with the opposition of Sophonisba's ethereal marriage scene with the Syphax-Erictho scene. However, he sees them as extremes in a kind of morality play in which "Marston needed consciously to simplify matters in order to make a clear demonstration of his case."³ I maintain that this is not the case at all. Sophonisba is no more a morality play than is The Dutch Courtesan, and if its characters are extreme in their virtues or vices, it is because Marston is striving for a much subtler moral vision than the mere clash of opposites, though this certainly occurs.

Commenting on what he calls Marston's one introduction of paradox into the play, Chametsky writes thus:

In one instance, however, Asdrubal, Sophonisba's father, introduces a paradox observed in nature: "Through rottenest dung best plants both sprout and live / By blood vines grow." (II.28). This observation, that good and evil are inextricably mixed in nature, is used by Asdrubal, however, to rationalize the most

³ Chametsky, "Reason and Desire," p. 2.

treacherous and villainous behaviour. If this paradoxical awareness may be used to justify such ends, it is pure sophistry and can only confuse the issue. Marston has apparently had enough of this kind of awareness in The Dutch Courtezan; what he is aiming for in Sophonisba, apparently, is a statement about morality and the nature of the world⁴ that is clear, straightforward, unmistakeable.

Chametsky's discussion of Asdrubal takes Marston's view of the mixing of good and evil out of context. In this instance, the argument is meant to be specious. Hercules, Altofronto, Freeville, and Malheureux obviously underwent some mental struggle and suffering before arriving at this conclusion. There was clearly a conflict between the yearning for an absolute and the recognition of man's baser nature, which found its resolution in the satyr persona. Nothing of this conflict is present in Asdrubal; he is simply an egotistical villain. But in a broader thematic sense, we are always aware that Marston is making a comment about the necessity of the "inextricable mixture" of good and evil in nature.

Sophonisba is indeed the embodiment of righteousness and Stoicism; as such she epitomizes the public face of the persona. But it must be remembered that throughout his works Marston always stressed the ineffectiveness of Stoicism untempered by a knowledge and understanding of man's frailty. This knowledge was always inherently con-

⁴ Chametsky, "Reason and Desire," p. 148.

tained in the ugly private face which had some familiarity with the evil it attacked. In this play, Syphax is the embodiment of that ugly private face, and just as Syphax desperately needs Sophonisba's virtue to balance his lascivious, envious nature, she desperately needs an understanding of his human weakness in order to soften her righteousness and make her aware that virtue is not a treasure to be hoarded by an exclusive elite who adhere to a legalistic code of honour. There is no duality whatsoever in Sophonisba or Syphax, and because of this they are incomplete or even wounded persons.

There is no other explanation that adequately explains these or the other characters in the play. Our first reaction to the ending is one of dissatisfaction with the protagonists. Are we to interpret this as the failure of a man whose work has lasted (albeit in the shadow of Shakespeare's), for nearly five hundred years? I rather think not, unless we are to be guilty of grave presumption. As with Shakespeare, Marston's first attempts at drama are rather crude. Histrion-Mastix is not a great play, and Jacke Drum, although better, is not great either. But once Marston masters his technique, his plays take on a depth that is at once thought-provoking and entertaining. Surely we cannot accuse him of unwittingly or indeliberately constructing a tragedy in which the hero and heroine are emotionally unsatisfactory, especially when they are at the same time

intellectually satisfactory.

It should be recalled here that Marston, in his note to the reader prefaced to the second quarto of The Fawn, promised to present us with a tragedy that would "abide the most curious perusal," and this is exactly what he did. There are beautiful thematic threads and subtle comparisons and contrasts interwoven in the fabric of this play.

Let us first examine Sophonisba as she relates to the other characters. Sophonisba shares with the senators her cool intelligence, her detachment, her love for Carthage, and her fear of Rome. Unlike them, she directs her intellect to virtue rather than low cunning; neither her fear of Syphax nor her fear of Rome can make her stoop to vileness in word or deed; she keeps to the letter her every promise, and she never attempts to deceive herself.

With Gelloso she shares her total commitment to virtue and honour, her defiance in the face of danger, and her willingness to accept death for what she believes in. But she lacks Gelloso's warm humanity, his passionate anger in the face of treachery, and his clarity of vision in choosing betrayal of a corrupt state over betrayal of an innocent and worthy fellow-man. Sophonisba is quiescent and detached in the face of treacherous authority, while Gelloso is actively angry, and later totally involved.

Finally, with Massinissa she shares her concern for virtue, her legalistic code of honour, her eagerness to

have that honour tested, and her willingness to make personal sacrifices for the safety of Carthage. And finally, like him, she has a tendency to "protest too much" that her every action is a virtuous one. Unlike Massinissa, however, her love for Carthage is complete; her commitment to Stoicism, honour, and virtue is complete; she would never trust Rome; she meets every test of her honour, and she carries personal sacrifice to its ultimate conclusion. There is yet another point of contrast between the two, and this one is most striking: faced with Zanthia's betrayal, Sophonisba coldly orders her maid's death, but Massinissa loftily dismisses Gisco, even though that man tried to murder him. Was Marston trying to suggest in this that a man who is easier on himself is also easier on other mortals? But I shall leave that question for later and go on to Syphax.

Surprisingly, there are equally as striking and equally as many points of comparison and contrast to be found between Syphax and the other characters. Like the senators, Syphax is corrupt; he admits no law but his own; he completely rejects the notion of fidelity to vows, and all his hopes are frustrated. But unlike them, he is passionate rather than cunning; he is motivated by hurt pride and envy rather than greed and cowardice; questionable as is their love for Carthage he does not share it; and faced with the destruction of his hopes he achieves some dignity rather than cringing in cowardice and despair.

With Massinissa he shares his defection from his homeland, his justification of that defection, his courage in battle, and his pursuit of Sophonisba. Unlike Massinissa, Syphax is not the least concerned with honour; he cares nothing for Carthage; he calls his love for Sophonisba lust, and his language is vile and crude.

Finally, with Gelloso, Syphax shares courage, passion, pride, and in the end a total commitment to a person he sees as virtuous and honourable. Gelloso is outraged with the senate for insulting his person by asking him to condone treachery, and he is jubilantly defiant after his coup. He gives up his life rather than betray Massinissa, and his courage is evident throughout. Syphax too is outraged at what he sees as an insult to his person, and he defiantly announces his decision to defect to Rome. Like Gelloso he is swift and courageous in making decisions, and in the end he loses everything in his commitment to another human being. Of course Syphax' motivation is never admirable except in his love for Sophonisba, and he lacks Gelloso's honour and respect for all humanity. But these two characters are far more alike than they appear at first glance.

Only Syphax and Sophonisba have nothing in common save the possible exception of courage. But that courage is so different in nature and aimed at such different ends that it hardly deserves mention. Each is the antithesis of

the other. She is lofty, angelic, virtuous, honourable, and coldly detached. He is passionate, diabolically proud, lustful, and vile in his language. She is an ardent reformer, and he, a lascivious railer.

What are we to make of all this? Are we to assume with Chametsky that the author of The Dutch Courtezan, who created two such different characters as Freeville and Cocledemoy both of whom defended prostitutes, was attempting to make "a statement about morality and the nature of the world that [was] clear, straightforward, unmistakeable"? The evidence of the play does not support such a view, nor does the evidence in any of the works preceding it.

It is my opinion that Marston very deliberately created Sophonisba as she was and subtly mirrored her virtues and failures in the characters around her. He did the same with Syphax. He then opposed these two characters in a violent struggle, and in so doing he constructed a tragedy at once unique and moving and one which does indeed "abide the most curious perusal."

Who has not seen some person, as committed to a principle as was Sophonisba to her own virtue, batter his head relentlessly and futilely against deception, stupidity, or injustice only to fail because his principle excluded the consideration of other points of view? Sophonisba's end was much cleaner than are many of theirs. Usually.

such people end in bitterness and despair. Or who has not seen some equally blinded person, this time motivated by envy, spite, or lust, destroy himself in his pursuit, as did Syphax?

On the other hand, who has not been thoroughly revolted by the wiliness of politicians who secure wealth and position by selling some innocent person down the river? And finally, who has not felt utter disgust for the person who lets another suffer the consequences of his impetuosity or stupidity, all the while protesting his own virtue?

The typical explanation of Renaissance tragedy in terms of Aristotelian theory is valid for much drama in both the Renaissance and the present day. But Aristotle wrote descriptively, not prescriptively, and a play is not necessarily undeserving of the name of tragedy because it does not square with his particular understanding of the term. Sophonisba is not tragic in the way that most of Shakespeare's plays are tragic. The cliché of the tragic flaw is not relevant here. Sophonisba and Syphax see the world from opposite viewpoints from beginning to end. Sophonisba does not come to realize that honour is a virtue that gives meaning and value to life; rather, she assumes from the start that honour is an absolute that is perpetually at odds with life. She finds human weakness repugnant, and her Stoic beliefs tend to diminish her suffering, while the most powerful expressions of anguish and pain are found in the character

of Syphax who takes for his law his own being and his own power.

Many theorists on tragedy attempt to explain its impact by stressing that the tragic hero achieves new or greater awareness through his suffering, and that we as readers or members of the audience partake of this awareness and are thus enabled to see meaning in our own existence. In many tragedies we learn because we are granted a fleeting glimpse of the hero's insight which was gained by his suffering. We are able to penetrate what Frye calls "the mystery of their communion with that something beyond which we can see only through them, and which is the source of their strength and their fate alike."⁵ Or as Clifford Leech explains it, we are inspired by the tragic figure's "power to endure and power to apprehend," and even though they are destroyed, "they show an increasing readiness to endure, an ever greater awareness."⁶ E.M.W. Tillyard, together with a number of other critics, goes further and holds that this new awareness is redemptive in nature. Karl Jaspers, for instance, believes that the hero "finds redemption and deliverance. . . in acting out his own personality in realizing

⁵ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 208.

⁶ Clifford Leech, "The Implications of Tragedy" in Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed., Laurence Michel and Richard B. Sewall (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: 1963), p. 170.

his selfhood even unto death."⁷ The extent to which he carries this argument is evident from the following passage:

A yearning for deliverance has always gone hand in hand with the knowledge of the tragic. When man encounters the hard fact of tragedy, he faces an inexorable limit. At this limit, he finds no guarantee of general salvation. Rather, it is in acting out his own personality, in realizing his selfhood even unto death, that he finds redemption and deliverance.

In Sophonisba, we do not see through the eyes of the protagonists because they do not achieve tragic knowledge or tragic self-awareness. They are not our mediators in the sense that Frye means when he writes:

The tragic hero is very great. . . but there is something else, something on the side of him opposite the audience against which he is small. This something else may be called God, gods, fate, accident, fortune, necessity, circumstances, or any combination of these, but whatever it is the tragic hero is our mediator with it.⁹

Syphax and Sophonisba are indeed very great, and they are subject to "that something against which [they are] small," but they are not our mediators with it except in this sense: by means of the striking contrast between the two, we, the audience, are made aware of the failure of each. We do not see through their eyes, we see through their blindness. In brief, we realize that it is because each

⁷ Karl Jaspers, "The Tragic: Awareness; Basic Characteristics; Fundamental Interpretations," in Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism, p. 15.

⁸ Ibid. p. 15.

⁹ Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism, p. 207.

represents an extreme and rigid point of view that each suffers and is destroyed. Yet for them it is destruction without meaning and suffering that does not ennoble. Only in the suffering and death of Gelloso do we find meaning and nobility.

But Sophonisba and Syphax certainly deserve our pity, and we are terrified by the picture of evil and blindness that is presented. But "as the shadows gather around them," they do not, as Leech suggests most tragic figures do, "see the human situation with clearer eyes."¹⁰ If anything they have become more blinded than they were before. There was a point where Sophonisba almost recognized her passion and Syphax almost recognized his love, but fate intervened, and the suffering they endured drove them further into their extreme positions, and therefore further away from an understanding of man's real nature. And rather than a movement towards man's proper essence we have its antithesis, a movement towards greater blindness and distortion which results in tragedy.

For Marston, man's essence consisted in a union of his spiritual and physical natures, and as we have seen, the proper balance between the two was expressed by means of the satyr convention. Here, in Sophonisba, there is no fusion or reconciliation between man's idealism and his natural appetites; the two are split asunder and polarized. The

¹⁰ Leech, "The Implications of Tragedy," p. 170.

characters in whom these two sides of man exist never change, but the contrast between the two brings home for the audience the unsatisfied yearning in each.

In this play we have a very powerful picture of suffering. But if one insists that only that suffering which brings awareness, transcendence, or redemption to the protagonists can be called truly tragic, then Sophonisba is not a tragedy. But it must be remembered that the tragic experience involves two kinds of recognition, the one which is achieved by the tragic figure himself, and the one which is granted to the audience. If The Tragedy of Sophonisba fails in the first, it succeeds in the second. We must admire the courage, honour, loyalty, and generosity of Sophonisba even as we condemn her coldly detached nature. Just so we must admire the courage, strength, and single-mindedness of Syphax even as we recognize his corrupt passions. If anything Syphax is the greater tragic figure because there is evidence that he senses his incompleteness, and his suffering is so violent and so unrelieved by the prop of virtuous intent that, like Macbeth, he achieves a diabolic kind of grandeur.

Sophonisba is no mere morality play. The presence of Gelosso, a fully drawn and totally good man who is destroyed by the corruption against which he struggles, together with the realism and intensity of the protagonist's suffering, makes it impossible to label it so. Marston was not striving

for a simple statement about the nature of good and evil, nor are the protagonists, although polarized, merely stick-men clothed by some generalized vice or virtue. The reasons for the suffering in this play are clear to the audience precisely because they are not clear to the characters themselves.

Altofronto, Freeville, and Hercules learn that pure virtue is like gold without alloy; it is weak and vulnerable. They come to realize that in handling moral problems there are no simple answers, and they eventually reject their simplistic notions about the nature of good and evil. They recognize man's inherent goodness as well as his weakness, and in all cases the suffering and pain which accompany their insight stems from the tension between the two faces of the satyr persona—a tension that expresses the anguished struggle which these characters must undergo before arriving at their new awareness.

Of course, I am not claiming that these plays are tragedies, but they do contain tragic elements in that suffering leads to a kind of awareness very like the tragic awareness with which critics concern themselves. These men, in the process of attempting to understand the motivation of others, come to a new understanding of themselves, and the process by which that understanding is achieved is contained and presented in terms of the tension within the satyr persona. In these plays suffering leads the protag-

onists to greater awareness but the resolution of the conflict between the two faces also results in a resolution of the conflict which was the cause of their suffering.

In Sophonisba the major characters, Sophonisba and Syphax, contain the two faces of the persona in isolation and opposition. Their extreme positions are never reconciled and the result is a powerful portrayal of unrelieved suffering that must be called tragic.

CONCLUSION

In Histrion-Mastix and Jacke Drum Marston clearly recognized the dramatic possibilities of the railing critic satyr with his dual personality. He was obviously aware that the satyr was capable of destroying dramatic unity. In these two plays he tailored the plot so that the satyr, while restrained, could also be used effectively. In Chrisoganus, the disparity between the two faces of the persona is used in the most basic dramatic context, and Chrisoganus emerges simply as a hypocrite. In Jacke Drum, Planet's disposition is sullen and pessimistic, but Marston takes the edge off these depressing aspects of his satyr personality by focusing on his friendship with Brabant junior. However, we are always conscious of his misanthropic viewpoint, and it is given plausible dramatic utterance when he exposes Camelia.

In Antonio and Mellida, and What You Will, Marston goes a step farther and integrates the satyr duality more fully into the plot so that it acts as a major structural device in determining the overall tone and direction of the plot. In Antonio and Mellida, Marston was well aware of the dramatic possibilities inherent in the tension of the persona. The use of Stoicism as a representation of the

public face of the persona is seen most clearly in Feliche. Unlike Planet, Feliche is not initially presented as the faithful friend. It seems that Marston intentionally played on the tension inherent in the satyr convention, that is, the tension between the sterility of Stoicism and the energy, albeit negative, in the malcontent railer. Feliche's sudden declaration of loyalty to Antonio in Act III suggests that Marston, after presenting a rather complex character, wanted to show some kind of growth; but the change is too abrupt. This is a problem inherent in the convention. Certain complexities can be easily developed in a character, but it is difficult to get him out of the satyr mould. Marston solved the problem in The Malcontent, The Fawn, and The Dutch Courtezan. In What You Will, Quadratus is a complex figure. The public persona this time is not Stoicism but Epicureanism. The private persona, that is, the pessimistic, critical, envious, railing side of the satyr erupts violently in his chastisement of Lampatho Doria, but for dramatic purposes is reconciled with Epicureanism. The result of this tenuous balance is a brooding, shifting atmosphere of decadence that underlies the surface comedy of the play.

In Antonio's Revenge, both Pandulfo and Antonio self-consciously play the Stoic. But, by the final act,

the pretense is dropped, and Antonio, Pandulfo, Maria, and the fool are fantastical revengers. They are now literal as well as verbal scourges of villainy. But the fascination with attacking evil taints them as it taints all satyrs. However, in this play, the fact that they have been corrupted with revenge, the very evil they attacked, serves as a means of censuring the blood code.

The Malcontent marks a new stage in Marston's development. His technique as regards the convention is reversed. In The Malcontent, The Dutch Courtezan, and The Fawn, the protagonists are by nature well-balanced, non-railing, sanguine types. For various reasons they consciously disguise themselves as envious railers, and the private self is no longer the pathological scourge. This side of the persona is the public face. But there is a very important aspect to this new relationship. The disguise enables the person wearing it to learn and grow.

In The Dutch Courtezan, Marston's technique is similar to that used in The Malcontent, but Freeville is not dependent on the disguise to the same extent that Altofronto was. Freeville is a man who appears to have a most sensible attitude toward life. The choice of disguise as a pander is appropriate because the pander and the satyr are both lascivious. The public face of Freeville becomes similar to the vile side of the satyr.

Much of my emphasis in the analysis of this play was aimed at stressing the point that Freeville, as well as Malheureux, has come to a new understanding of himself. My discussion of the sub-plot in the play dealt with Cocledemoy, Marston's most unusual and successful transformation of the satyr into a Falstaffian figure. My main point in this analysis is that Cocledemoy is a satyr who goes through the motions without the usual tension. The result is that his motives are never suspect, his criticism is always valid, and his sympathy with suffering humanity is ever-present.

In The Fawn, Marston uses the satyr convention to present Hercules' initial disillusionment; and, as the action progresses, the convention also provides the means whereby his envy, which was the cause of his bitterness, is purged. By contrasting what he actually did in the court of Urbin with what he originally intended to do, we can see the role that his satyr nature played in acting as a structural device.

In Sophonisba, the influence of the satyr convention is evident in two different ways. The major characters are tragic in that they are inflexible; they are unable to synthesize the opposing attitudes that are usually held, and eventually fused, by the satyr convention. The protagonists represent in isolation the two faces of the persona. Syphax' ultimate disgust with himself and his passion is

presented in terms of the private face of the persona whose self-hatred is so great that his energy is directed at scourging himself; whereas Sophonisba, the other face of the persona, is so virtuous that she fails to understand man's frailty. My discussion of the nature of this tragedy shows that there is a close relationship between Marston's understanding of tragedy and the satyr convention.

There is more to the satyr convention than a railing critic who is fascinated by the vices he attacks, but I have chosen to focus on this aspect because it gives a poetic meaning to otherwise sterile intellectual distractions. Anyone reading the Marston canon for the first time is struck by the polarization of ideas. Character and action cluster in varying degrees around either the notion of absolute virtue or that of evil incarnate. Marston's discovery of the cynical, worldly-wise wisdom of Montaigne was an important factor in the eventual successful dramatic presentation of this dichotomy. The convention of the satyr, however, is the key structural device that contains and fuses these disparate and conflicting concepts. When we examine Marston's plays in the light of this convention, the seeming chaotic nature of his dramatic world is no longer a hindrance to our understanding and appreciation of his art.

The persona of the satyr is not merely a literary

device that Marston includes arbitrarily. He eventually weaves it inextricably into the fabric of the dramatic action, and this determines the direction and resolution of his plays. Its presence makes it impossible to label Marston's vision as tragic, satiric, or comic. Marston was fully aware of the dramatic and poetic possibilities of the persona, and he used it to present a world view which involved a synthesis or fusion of the bestial and the angelic in man's nature. In his final play, Sophonisba, by separating the two faces of the persona, he was able to present a faithful and powerful picture of suffering humanity in all its grandeur and depravity.

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