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The Complaint of the Poet:

The Parnassus Plays

A critical study of the trilogy

performed at St. John's College, Cambridge,

1598/99--1601/02,

authors anonymous

by

PAULA GLATZER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1974

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Abstract

THE COMPLAINT OF THE POET: THE PARNASSUS PLAYS

by

Paula Glatzer

Adviser: Professor Sears Jayne

The Complaint of the Poet: The Parnassus Plays is a critical study of the trilogy performed at St. John's College, Cambridge in 1598/99--1601/02, authors anonymous.

The plays are collegiate satires on the low position of the scholar-poet in Elizabethan society. They follow the fortunes of Philomusus and Studioso, two naively idealistic Parnassians, as they make their way through the university and then out into the world, where they meet up with other disappointed scholar-poets, chief among them the satirist Ingenioso. But the materialistic worldlings of the plays, failing to appreciate the spiritual sustenance offered by the literary artists, reject them again and again, refusing to reward them with even the bare necessities of life. The poets, despite all apparent need for their public service, become alienated from society.

Scholars have paid some attention to the Parnassus Plays as unique primary source documents on the Elizabethan literary world, in particular for their revealing critical comments on contemporary literature and authors, including rare references

Shakespeare and Jonson. Yet these valuable plays, which F. S. Boas called "the most brilliant product of the Tudor university stage," have not received the critical attention they deserve--probably because they are not easily available in print.

In this study, two traditional critical assumptions about the Parnassus Plays are re-examined. The first is the belief that the plays form a trilogy. On the contrary, close analysis shows that the plays are three very different entities. The Pilgrimage to Parnassus is a short, simple and stylized comic allegory in the morality tradition. The First Part of The Return from Parnassus is a small, fine example of Tudor estates-satire. The much longer and more complex Second Part of The Return, an ambitious undertaking that was not entirely successful, found its inspiration in the satires of the contemporary professional stage--comical satire, humour comedy, city comedy and the plays of the Poetomachia.

These critical observations have implications for the historical problems of the authorship and title of The Second Return. First, I reject the tradition that a single author wrote the entire trilogy, and submit that the last Parnassus Play was the collaborative effort of several new authors. And since, as J. B. Leishman (editor of the only modern edition) points out, The Pilgrimage had a separate author, I am therefore proposing three separate authorships for the three plays. As for the title, I endorse Leishman's suggestion

that the last Parnassus Play--entitled The Returne From Pernassus: Or The Scourge of Simony in the 1606 quartos, but entitled "The Progresse to Parnassus" in the only existing manuscript--was originally called The Progress from Parnassus, the three plays being known as The Pilgrimage, The Return and The Progress.

The second tradition I examine is the pigeon-holing of the Parnassus Plays as academic drama. Much more than an academy work, the Parnassus Plays constitute a testament of the Elizabethan poet. I attempt to place the theme of "a schollers discontent" in its historical context--for example, by relating the central character of Ingenioso the satirist to the key background figure of Nashe. But beyond the particular complaint of these university wits lie timeless questions about the function of the poet. For their dilemma is, of course, an enduring one, and their creation an Elizabethan embodiment of the poet's complaint against an uncomprehending society.

For Sears Jayne,

scholar and teacher

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Poetry, in this latter Age, hath prov'd but a meane Mistresse, to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her, or given their names up to her family. They who have saluted her on the by, and now and then tendred their visits, shee hath done much for, and advanced in the way of their owne professions (both the Law, and the Gospel) beyond all they could have hoped, or done for themselves, without her favour. Wherein she doth emulate the judicious, but preposterous bounty of the times Grandes: who accumulate all they can upon the Parasite, or Fresh-man in their friendship; but thinke an old Client, or honest servant, bound by his place to write, and starve.

Ben Jonson, Timber

We . . . doe it to recreate owre selves, owre House, and the better parte of the Vniuersitye, with some learned Poëme or other; to practyse owre owne style eyther in prose or verse; to be well acquanted with Seneca or Plautus; honestly to embolden owre pathe; to trye their voyces and to conforme them to convenient action; to trye what mettell is in evrye one, and of what disposition thay are of; wherby never any one amongst vs, that I knowe was made the worse, many have byn muche the better; as I dare reporte me to all the Vniuersitye.

William Gager, letter to John Rainolds, 1592

Introduction

The three anonymous Parnassus Plays--The Pilgrimage to Parnassus and the First and Second Parts of The Return from Parnassus--were written and performed at St. John's College, Cambridge at the turn of the seventeenth century. The trilogy follows the fortunes of several young men, scholars and would-be professional poets, as they make their way through the university, and then out into the world to seek artistic and intellectual employment. But again and again they are unable to find viable positions in society. The world at large, with its materialistic values, fails to appreciate the spiritual sustenance offered by the literary artist and rejects him, refusing to reward him with even the bare necessities of life. The poet, despite all apparent need for his public service, becomes alienated from society. The Parnassus Plays are a satiric complaint on the theme of the scholar-poet's social dilemma.

The theme of artistic alienation is enormously important to us today as one of the central themes of modern literature. Its appearance in the Parnassus Plays is all the more valuable because it is so rarely articulated in Elizabethan literature. The presence of the poet as protagonist is definitely more of the twentieth century than it is of the sixteenth. There are a few Elizabethan works on literary themes in the elevated verse of poems such as Chapman's difficult Shadow of Night (1594) and Daniel's inspired

Musophilus (1599). But in all that outburst of dramatic energy at the turn of the seventeenth century, it is striking that very few plays deal directly with the subject of writing, as a profession or as an art. In the Shakespeare canon, for example, if we discount those plays from A Midsummer-Night's Dream to The Tempest which are sometimes interpreted as symbolic presentations of artistic themes, we can see that not one play is basically about writers or writing.

The only Elizabethan plays comparable to the Parnassus Plays are the directly contemporary Poetomachia plays, and it is not surprising to learn that the Cambridge trilogy--especially the Second Part of The Return from Parnassus--is related to these professional works. But none of the drama of Jonson, Marston and Dekker deals wholly or centrally with the matter of the poet, as the Parnassus Plays do.

For the only comprehensive dramatic treatment of artistic themes other than the Parnassus Plays, we have to move forward into the Jacobean period--to Beaumont's The Knight of the Burning Pestle (1607?). However, this brilliant multiple parody is not really about the writer but about his creation, a study of the play rather than the poet. Yet Beaumont's work makes an excellent companion piece to the Cambridge trilogy: The Knight of the Burning Pestle is the only play of the Elizabethan-Jacobean period that has as its subject the drama; the Parnassus Plays are the only works that deal directly and centrally with the poet.

For other fictionalized complaints of the poet we have

to go outside the drama and turn to two polar opposites of Elizabethan literature--the witty complaints of picaresque pamphleteers such as Nashe, the anti-hero of the Parnassus Plays, and the idealistic complaints of the Elizabethan poet's poet, Spenser, an artist whom the Parnassus playwrights, though they idolized, were unable to emulate.

Scholars have paid some attention to the Parnassus trilogy because of its considerable historical value. In their dramatic presentation of the Elizabethan literary scene, the plays constitute a unique primary source document. The material ranges from a survey of the economic opportunities open to a university educated professional writer, to some of the most revealing critical comments available to the student of the English Renaissance, including rare direct references to contemporary authors, Shakespeare included.

Yet the Parnassus Plays, which F. S. Boas has called "the most brilliant product of the Tudor university stage,"[1] have not received the scholarly attention they deserve. With the exception of J. B. Leishman's edition of The Three Parnassus Plays (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1949), the plays have been consigned to that critical limbo of Elizabethan works that are frequently mentioned in passing,

[1] University Drama in the Tudor Age (1914; rpt. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), p. 346.

but rarely discussed in depth. When they are mentioned at all, it is generally in the way of cursory reference to certain historically interesting material in the Second Part of The Return.[2]

This dissertation is a literary study of the Parnassus Plays. It examines in depth how the university playwrights dealt artistically with the dilemma of the poet. But it also attempts to place the subject in its Elizabethan context. To some extent this background material elaborates on the findings of Leishman, whose work other than the editing of the

[2] The critical neglect may result in part from the fact that the texts are not widely available. The plays are not now in print. The complete trilogy has been published only three times: W. D. Macray, the discoverer of the manuscript of The Pilgrimage and the First Part of The Return (Rawlinson D.398, Bodleian Library), published The Pilgrimage to Parnassus with the two parts of the Return from Parnassus; all three plays were issued in Farmer's Tudor Facsimile Texts in 1912; the only modern edition is Leishman's.

The more highly topical third play, The Return from Parnassus, or The Scourge of Simony, has fared somewhat better. The only one of the three plays to be printed in its own day (two quartos in 1606), it was included in a few early anthologies of Tudor drama, one of which, Hazlitt's revision of Dodsley's 1744 Select Collection of Old English Plays (15 vols. [London, 1874-76], Vol. IX [1874]), was recently reprinted in a limited edition (7 vols. [New York: Benjamin Blom, 1964], Vol. IV).

texts consisted almost entirely of historical criticism. But my study also shows how internal criticism can extend historical research.

Two major points are re-examined. The first is the traditional approach to the Parnassus Plays as a trilogy. Close critical analysis reveals that far from forming a unified creation, the plays are three very different entities. The Pilgrimage to Parnassus is a short, simple and stylized comic allegory. The First Part of The Return from Parnassus is a small, fine example of Tudor estates-satire. The Second Part of The Return, much longer and more complex than the first two plays, an ambitious undertaking that was not entirely successful, found its inspiration in the satires of the contemporary professional stage--plays that can be variously categorized as comical satire, humour comedy, city comedy and the plays of the Poetomachia. In my own work I found that the differences between the plays called for different critical approaches: The Pilgrimage and The First Return are examined in sequential detail, act by act; The Second Return is approached thematically, and largely with reference to the techniques of popular drama.

These critical observations have definite implications for two of the most interesting historical problems of the Parnassus Plays--the question of the authorship of The Second Return and the problem of its authentic title. On the matter of the author, I find The Second Return so very different from both The Pilgrimage and The First Return that I reject the

tradition--most recently reiterated by Leishman--that a single author wrote the entire trilogy or even both parts of The Return, and suggest instead that the last Parnassus Play was the work of a new author--or, as the analysis of this complex play suggests, the collaborative effort of several new authors. And since my analysis of the trilogy corroborates Leishman's conclusion that The Pilgrimage has a separate author, I am, as a result, proposing three different authors for the three Parnassus Plays.[5] In any event, the author or authors remain anonymous. Of the Elizabethan writers who have been proposed as the Parnassus author--John Day is prominent[6]--none has a convincing claim.

My conclusion about the title is somewhat more tentative. But the external evidence offers a solution to the critical problem posed by the quarto title, The Returne from Pernassus: Or The Scourge of Simony--the unlikelihood that playwrights so self-consciously bold would have adopted the title of a rather old-fashioned two-year-old play, distinguished only by an imprecise sub-title. On balance, I endorse Leishman's suggestion that the last Parnassus Play--whose only existing manuscript (Halliwell-Phillipps, Folger Shakespeare Library) is entitled "The Progresse to Parnassus"--was originally called The Progress from Parnassus, the three plays being known as The Pilgrimage, The Return and The Progress.[7]

[5] Leishman treats the topic fully in his Introduction, The Three Parnassus Plays, "Authorship," pp. 26-34.

[6] Day, among others, is rejected by Leishman, p. 32.

[7] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 27.

The second important tradition I examine is the pigeonholing of the Parnassus Plays as academic drama. Of course in specific, limited ways--in certain elements of content and style, and with regard to the basic data of performance[8]--the classification is accurate. But apart from our knowledge of the plays as St. John's productions, and the probable dates of 1598/99--1601/02,[9] we know nothing about the particular circumstances of performance. And while this sparsity of information is regrettable, we can still question how much the university context of the original productions contributes to an understanding of these plays. I believe that although it is important, it should not obscure the larger--and ultimately more important--implications.

Even the academic placement of the plays calls for careful distinction among them. The Pilgrimage is a positive statement of the poet's vocation. While it is satiric in its dramatic techniques, it is thematically didactic, with firmly held values stated unambiguously. Given the play's double morality theme of the difficulties of the academic experience and its ultimate rewards, and the distinctive confidence with which that point of view is presented, The Pilgrimage seems to me to be an exhortation to perseverance addressed to novitiates

[8] The Halliwell Phillipps manuscript of The Second Return refers to the play "as it was acted in St Iohns Colledge in Cambridge An^{o} 1601," and the title-pages of the 1606 quartos of this play both state, "Publiquely acted by the Students/ in Saint Iohns Colledge in/ Cambridge" (Leishman, pp. 9, 10).

[9] See Leishman's Introduction, "Dates of Performance," pp. 24-26.

--i.e., to undergraduates--written by one who had already attained Parnassus--i.e., from a vantage point securely within the academy, possibly the work of one of the university fellows, who apparently had active roles in the dramatic productions.[10]

The general impression given by the two Return plays is very different, for these are works which turn away from the academy and open out onto the world. While the vision in these last two plays is increasingly cynical, there is a kind of obstinate commitment, on the part of the playwrights, to life beyond the university. And although there is considerably more comic confidence in the satire of The First Return than in the Second, making the former closer in tone to The Pilgrimage, neither Return play exhibits that distance from its subject that suggests its creator was an academic observer of the worldly scene. On the contrary, the reader is impressed by an immediacy and a sense of involvement in the very real social dilemma of the poet.

My conjecture is that these strikingly worldly plays are the work of university wits--young men of limited social and economic means, but of superior intellect and education, who turned to literature as a profession--creating, toward the end

[10] G. C. Moore Smith, College Plays Performed in the University of Cambridge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 20.

We have the example of William Gager, the major Oxford dramatist during the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign, who proceeded B.A. in 1577, M.A. in 1580, and became a Doctor of Civil Law in 1589 (Boas, University Drama, pp. 165-67). Elsewhere Boas speaks of "the numerous civilians who distinguished themselves as academic dramatists at both universities" (p. 113).

of the sixteenth century, a new class of professional scholar-poets. This would mean students rather than faculty --advanced students to be sure, men on the verge of actually facing the harsh conditions they seem so well acquainted with, but definitely not professional academics. (In The Second Return there are even satiric jabs at "the hidebound brethren of Cambridge and Oxford" and "Stigmaticke masters of Artes," I.iv.430-32.) In the Returns, only the world outside the university is available to the educated poet. In The Second Return, the field is narrowed to the professional literary world, with a notable absence of alternatives--chief among them the academy itself. Even Academico, the type of scholar, seeks a church preferment rather than retirement to the university.

The Returns also seem to have been intended for a somewhat different audience. In the increasing disillusionment of these plays--seen in an absence of intent to reform and in an intolerant abuse of adversaries--the authors seem to be addressing not merely the sympathetic academic community at large, but, more specifically, those colleagues who were also about to find themselves out on the world's doorstep. As C. W. Previté-Orton, in a short but insightful early appreciation of the trilogy, wrote, "It was acted by students of themselves, to themselves, for themselves."[11a] And so,

[11a] "The Parnassus Trilogy," The Cambridge Review, 32 (1910-1911), 267. Previté-Orton, however, was referring to the complete trilogy.

much more than an academy work, the Parnassus Plays constitute a testament of the Elizabethan poet.

However, as we know from the popularity of the Poetomachia plays--documented by no less an authority than Shakespeare, in Rosencrantz' report to his prince on "the tragedians of the city" (Hamlet, II.ii.324-70)--the general subject matter had considerable popular appeal. The sophisticated Second Part of The Return was accorded the professional praise of being published in quarto (two editions, both 1606) --by the same enterprising printer and bookseller ("G. Eld,

for Iohn Wright"[11b]) who cashed in on another literary fad that had passed its heyday among the wits but then became salable to a wider reading audience, by publishing "SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS/ Neuer before Imprinted" in 1609 (By G. Eld for T. T. . . . to be solde by Iohn Wright"). The title page of the Second Return quartos also says that the play was "Publiquely acted by the Students/ in Saint Iohns Colledge in/ Cambridge."[11b] And while there is no evidence of a performance outside the university, given the play's considerable topical--and artistic--appeal, it is possible that this academic creation was also once enjoyed by a truly popular Elizabethan audience, in a public theater performance by a professional acting company.

Finally, beyond the historical interest of the particular Parnassus complaint lie implications for a whole complex of timeless philosophical questions about the artist's role in society. For in spite of the wits' conventional protestations against this niggardly age, the dilemma is, of course, an enduring one, and the Parnassus trilogy an Elizabethan embodiment of the eternal conflict between an artist and his society. For at their best, these plays grope toward the most profound questions that a writer can ask about his life and his work, which is, after all, why they are still so extraordinarily relevant.

[11b] The title page used for both editions is quoted by Leishman, p. 10.

The treatment of the poet's dilemma in the Parnassus Plays is, on the whole, practical rather than metaphysical, a satirical complaint about the low position of the artist in Elizabethan society. The simple plot line follows a few recent graduates, typical university men of more than common ability and less than noble means, as they go out into the world, first to the countryside and then to London, to seek their literary fortunes. Their experiences are disastrous: they encounter a materialistic society that is fundamentally hostile to artists and their creative works. In a descending series of attempts to gain a foothold on the social ladder, they fail to earn any material acknowledgment of their spiritual services. Finally they withdraw from society altogether--a breach that is all the more devastating because of its rarity in Elizabethan literature. The harsh but unavoidable conclusion of the Parnassus Plays is that there is no legitimate secular place for the artist in society.

While the complaint is an enduring one, students of the English Renaissance will be aware of its particular application in an age which generally did not treat the individual artist with the greatest seriousness or respect.[12] When the better sort indulged in poetry, they were expected to do so in an amateur spirit of courtly accomplishment. But although the professional writer often struck this amateur pose, his need

[12] See Edwin Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959), the most important monograph on this subject, especially Ch. i, "Authors in their Milieu."

to earn a living by his pen placed him in a vastly different social category[13]--where, as Miller observes, "many artists and creators felt themselves consigned to the periphery of their society."[14] Poetry for public consumption was expected to be ethical and utilitarian, with the poet, at best, cast in the mole of minor servant to society. Often, however, he was looked down upon as something rather less desirable. Miller describes the generally hostile cultural attitude toward art:

> "Use" was the byword of humanist, Puritan, critic, and courtier. Literature was scrutinized in terms of ethical presuppositions. Not one voice was raised in England during the century to defend art on aesthetic grounds; the only difference between the artist and nonartist was the former's vague defense of literary standards. No one of importance dared to defend recreation and simple pleasure. It seemed that everyone distrusted art: the humanist because of his concern for the social welfare, the Puritan because of his mania for God's work, the nobleman because of his devotion to the abstract ideal of the well-rounded courtier, the bourgeois because of his indifference to a useless, unprofitable activity. The public chorus, then, appeared to be unanimous.[15]

[13] On the important distinction between amateurs and professionals, see J. W. Saunders, The Profession of English Letters (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1964), Chs. iii-v: "For the professional the achievement of print ultimately became an econimic necessity; for the aspirant to courtly promotion the avoidance of print was a social desirability" (p. 56).
Also see Saunders, "The Stigma of Print: A Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry," Essays in Criticism, 1 (1951), 139-64.

[14] The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, p. 26.

[15] Ibid., pp. 25-26. However, Miller says that Elizabethan society was, fortunately, more receptive to the arts in practice than in theory.

For the breed of university wits involved in the Parnassus Plays, the problems of social alienation were often exacerbated by their academic achievement. Harbage, in a discussion of the phenomenon of the Elizabethan scholar's discontent, describes the particular impact that a university education had on sons of the lower classes:

> It is impossible to overestimate the effect of a university degree upon an individual's social attitudes in the period under scrutiny. In earlier times the universities had belonged to relatively humble folk destined for religious orders, and Chaucer's unassuming Clerk of Oxford was their ideal product; the aristocarcy had received their education in the manor house and in the saddle. But in the mid-sixteenth century the nobility and landed gentry had begun sending up their sons, creating at Oxford and Cambridge a privileged and glamorous class. Something like the "gold coast" of our modern universities was created, with its unsettling effect on the more susceptible of the students from families of lower rank. Confusion in values, and a certain amount of snobbery, are the inevitable products of such a situation. Elizabethan biography is rich in illustrations. A Marlowe or a Greene is a young man uprooted. He is detached from his class but without the means of becoming fully accredited in any higher class, yet with heightened aspirations; discontent and disillusion stalk him from the moment he steps out into the world.[16]

[16] Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (1952; rpt. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1970), p. 98; see all of Ch. IV on "The War of the Theatres" (pp. 90-119), which includes a survey of the neglected scholar in the turn-of-the-century drama. Harbage goes on to question the motives of the protagonists of the Parnassus Plays. His remarks are quoted and discussed below, Ch. 10, p. 432.

When we consider that this social dilemma was relevant to a large proportion of professional Elizabethan writers,[17] the significance of its articulation in the Parnassus Plays becomes enormous.

For the Parnassus poet, then, the conflict is between artistic pride and social **survival,** a dilemma created by the constant challenge that the physical reality of social rejection makes to the poet's knowledge of his own worth.[18] There is pride, but there is also self-doubt, and often, in time, self-abuse. At the conclusion of the trilogy, the Second Return playwrights carry this despair to an extreme, suggesting that the gifted, the dedicated, are not only unappreciated by the world but destroyed by it. It explains much that the hero of Parnassus is Spenser--Spenser martyred, in the role of the poet abandoned by an uncomprehending society. But in contrast to Spenser's Colin Clout, his pipe broken, left standing in lonely dignity on a high hill, the two Parnassian protagonists

[17] Miller includes the majority: "Children of tradesmen, then, from London and the provinces, from urban rather than agricultural backgrounds, constituted the majority of Elizabethan professional writers. Their parents were evidently ambitious for their children. For Elizabethan professionals, with such well-known exceptions as Shakespeare, Jonson, and Drayton, were generally graduates of universities" (The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, p. 8).

[18] Miller documents the professional Elizabethan writer's "middle-class origins and his uneasy, vacillating acceptance of the unformulated assumptions of his culture, which deemed authorship a vain and somewhat suspect activity" (p. x).

On the fascinating subject of the professional writer's ambivalence about his social role, also see all Saunders entries in the Bibliography and P. Thompson, "The Patronage of Letters under Elizabeth and James I," English, 7 (1948-1949), 278-82.

cannot escape the degrading effects of the world below Acidale. The hostility of society somehow taints their sense of pride, and in their satiric degeneration, they are transformed into the corrupt fox and ape of Mother Hubberds Tale. While the Parnassians worshipped Spenser, they were apparently unable to pick up on his option for heroism, philosophically or poetically, and found themselves instead on the low road, desperately afraid of becoming the other extreme type of professional Elizabethan writer--the highly compromised figure of Robert Greene. In the two parts of The Return, the playwrights, in self-defense, settle uneasily on a compromise role model in the person of Thomas Nashe--scholar, poet, wit and satirist.

The paradoxical role of the artist in a society that rejects aesthetic values is charged with painful ambiguity. If the society rejects artistic insights, are they thereby in some way diminished in real value? In any event, is it possible for the artist to maintain a social function without having any social power? The very accusation that society corrupts its artists is ambivalent: even if society does force its artistic impulses into dishonest channels, isn't it the individual artist who must ultimately bear the responsibility for his own loss of integrity?

Under such hostile conditions, the artist often turns against his own kind, partly in self-defense, partly out of self-guilt. The easiest line of resistance is to attack the corrupt artists, those guilty of the charges leveled at the

entire profession. Frequently, however, the artist turns against himself. Artistic, moral and intellectual pride are qualified by self-contempt. Exuberant self-assertion is countered by self-defense and argumentative apology. The artist maintains that his superiority places him beyond the reach of social rejection; but the agonizing discrepancy between what he believes his relationship with society should be and the antagonistic actuality finally leaves him stained.

The defensive posture of the poet is illustrated by two points that were made whenever an Elizabethan writer presented his own image on the stage--whether in the heroes of Parnassus, or in Jonson's self-portrait as Horace. The first point is the literary artist's insistence that he is a scholar--in the case of the Parnassus youths, university-trained and -degreed. As The Pilgrimage to Parnassus instructs, the university course of study was arduous, and though he might function in society primarily as a writer, the educated playwright insisted on the rights and honors due him as a scholar. And to be fair, this is more than a case of pride in past achievement; much of the popular writing of the university wits, like that of Jonson, is grounded in the style and matter of formal scholarship.

Having noted this intellectual prejudice, however, it is of the greatest importance to see that in the Parnassus Plays, where the protagonists are absolute academics, they undergo their scholarly trials in order to become poets--a goal that is explicit even in the highly academic Pilgrimage.

This double nature of the literary artist is reflected in the names chosen by the original playwright for the two Parnassus heroes--Philomusus, lover of the Muses, and Studioso, studious one. Figuring forth the two faces of a single personality, these characters are paired together throughout the trilogy. It is on the basis of this observation that I have chosen to refer to the Parnassus protagonists as "scholar-poets."

The educated dramatist further defended his stage poet by strictly disassociating him from the professional theater. The literary characters in Elizabethan plays are scholar-poets, and definitely not playwrights. This curious aspect of the Elizabethan writer's public stance, like his insistence on his scholarly qualifications, will be familiar to students of Jonson. The professional scholar-poet was forced to turn to the boards only out of economic desperation. In the Parnassus Plays, playwriting is "the basest trade" (SR IV.iv.1846), resorted to after all else has failed. Thus, with an irony which they must have been all too painfully aware of, we find the playwrights themselves indirectly adding to the barrage of social and literary prejudices that prevailed against the theater.[19]

A related point is the Elizabethan playwrights' antago-

[19] See Gerald Bentley, The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). Also Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions.

nism toward the professional players.[20] In The Second Return, after failing at some outrightly fraudulent schemes, the defeated protagonists can drop only one step lower; they hit bottom by becoming actors. In the Parnassus wits' treatment of the players, as in Jonson's and Marston's, we can observe the familiar mixture of pride and contempt, issuing here in an ironic combination of artistic superiority and economic rivalry.

It seems likely to me that the ambivalence experienced by the professional writer in part accounts for the phenomenon that notwithstanding their serious attempts at self-defense, whenever the Elizabethan-Jacobean playwrights presented literary material on stage, they did so satirically. Even the few scholars and poets who appear are satirized, in a series of comic characters from Holofernes, the "exceeding fantastical" pedant and poetaster (and playwright and player!) of Love's Labour's Lost, to the flattering knave of a poet in Timon of Athens.[21] Even in the plays of the Poetomachia

[20] See Muriel C. Bradbrook, The Rise of the Common Player (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), Ch. iii, "Attack and Defence, 1577-1615; and the Rise of the Player-Poets," pp. 67-95. Also Harbage.

[21] In an outline of conventional character types, Mary Hyde describes two types of university men: "The young men are shown either as wild gallants unaffected by learning, or else new-made pedants. They are usually self-centered, complacent and indolent, and they are almost always poor" (Playwriting for Elizabethans, 1600-1605 [New York: Columbia University Press, 1949], p. 74).

The most damning satiric portrait of a scholar on the Elizabethan stage is "that smooth-tongu'd scholar Baldock" in Marlowe's Edward II, a hypocritical opportunist and self-styled villain who boasts, "My name is Baldock, and my gentry/ I fetch from Oxford, not from heraldry" (ll. 1046-47).

and Beaumont's Knight of the Burning Pestle, the broadest treatments of poetry and scholarship in the professional drama, are these subjects approached satirically. Challenged by an antagonistic society, the playwright's public defense is comic. Plagued by self-doubts, it is comedy whose terms are negative--in which values are questioned, inverted and attacked--i.e., comedy that is satiric. The literary satire in the Parnassus Plays, then, belongs to a definite, though limited, dramatic tradition.

To express the complexities of their dilemma, the playwrights utilized multiple satiric techniques. The easiest line of attack is a direct condemnation of narrow bourgeois materialism. And in the Parnassus Plays, the bulk of the satire is "social"--an attack by an intellectual elite on powerful members of the great middle class. But for the true scholar-poet this can not suffice. Criticism made in the materialistic terms of society--e.g., that artists do not earn the money they deserve--is ultimately self-defeating; by using the enemy's own terms, the scholar-poet actually adopts the standards that he hopes to prove inferior. If an artist wants to argue that aesthetic values are superior to the values of society, he must ultimately make that point in aesthetic terms. As an artist's complaint, then, the most meaningful anti-bourgeois satire is aesthetic as well as social. At this level, the most offensive criminal is the Philistine, a man whose values are inferior because he lacks aesthetic judgment and appreciation. The interplay

of social and aesthetic satire is brilliantly achieved in The Knight of the Burning Pestle, where the various criticisms are so integrated and interdependent that making a clear distinction between them is misleading. In the Parnassus Plays it is an important element in the wits' satire of their social adversaries--the sinners along the route of the pilgrimage, the overbearing Patron and foolish Gullio of The First Return, and the powerful Sir Raderick-Recorder-Amoretto triumverate of The Second Return.

The Parnassus Plays are especially valuable for their more direct kinds of literary satire. The trilogy presents a gallery of literary types--not only the idealistic and cynical scholar-poet protagonists, but a variety of poet-asters and pseudo-litterateurs who undermine the profession from within. The Second Return features impersonations of contemporary literary personalities--most notably the ridiculed figures of Richard Burbage and Will Kempe--of particular interest because of the rarity in Elizabethan drama of this kind of personal abuse. Other means of literary satire are more purely stylistic in nature. These range from direct critical commentary to the indirections of imitation, parody and ironic quotation. Altogether, the literary satire in the Parnassus Plays offers a considerable amount of criticism of contemporary writing.

The Parnassus Plays tell us more about writers and their concerns than all the rest of Elizabethan drama. From the professional playwrights' gingerly handling of the subject matter, it is apparent that they somehow did not consider the public theater a good place for the serious discussion of literary matters. By comparison, the Parnassus authors treat these specialized interests with considerable artistic, intellectual and social license. After all, the university stage was not a public playhouse, and the dramatic liberties taken during the Christmas Revels, though by no means unlimited, were not subject to the seal of a public censor. We can guess that the most liberating influence on the Cambridge playwrights was their highly select audience, composed of colleagues who were almost certain to be interested, discerning and sympathetic. Yet while the special university audience may help to explain this authorial freedom, it can by no means fully account for the phenomenon of the Parnassus Plays. For not only did the St. John's playwrights dare something bolder than the stuff of the public theater; when the plays are placed in their more immediate context of academic drama, the most illuminating observation is that here, too, they are unique.

In the following chapters, the historical background against which I study the Parnassus Plays, in particular the important Second Return, is the contemporary professional theater--an approach that I believe throws new light on the material. But as a conclusion to this introduction, I would

like to briefly set the trilogy in its context of university drama.

The subject was surveyed more than fifty years ago by F. S. Boas in University Drama in the Tudor Age.[22] Describing it as a distinctly Tudor phenomenon, Boas documented a mixed heritage of recreation overlaid with pedagogical and religious aims of Renaissance and Reformation. His concluding chapter deals with the Parnassus Plays. Praising them as the high point of university drama, Boas emphasized their paradoxically close relationship to popular drama: "Thus the Parnassus trilogy is, in curious wise, both the most brilliant product of the Tudor university stage and a signal that academic drama would find it increasingly difficult to maintain its distinctive character in the days to come."[23] Academic drama, reaching its own heights by competing with a theater that excelled it, could only decline. For Boas, the rest was Jacobean anti-climax.

The significant historical point here about the Parnassus Plays--especially the two Returns--is that they are atypical. Most of the plays produced at Cambridge in the

[22] Also see G. C. Moore Smith's briefer survey of Cambridge drama, College Plays Performed in the University of Cambridge.

[23] University Drama in the Tudor Age, p. 346.

late sixteenth century were Italianate romances, written in Latin.[24] In Boas' chronological list, the three works directly preceding The Pilgrimage, all produced at St. John's, belong in this category.[25] Then, at the turn of the century, the St. John's dramatists deviated from this path of proven success in order to strike out in bold new directions. Their artistic awareness is evident in the Defensor's verse prologue to The Second Return:

> Frame[n] as well we might, with easie straine,
> With far more prayse, and with as little paine,
> Storyes of loue, where, forne the wondring bench,
> The lisping gallant might enioy his wench;
> Or make some Sire acknowledge his lost sonne,
> Found when the weary act is almost done:
> Nor vnto this, nor that is our scene bent,
> We onely shew a schollers discontent.
>
> (11. 62-69)

Spurning romantic entertainment, they offered a theme which, while distressing in the extreme, was at the same time of enormous seriousness and personal import--in a word, relevant.

With more self-deprecating awareness, Momus refers to The Second Return as "a scuruie English show" (Prologue, ll. 7-8). Part conventional comic apology, the description also reveals a consciousness, touched with pride, of the authors' audacious originality. It is also nicely precise criticism.

To begin with, the scholars' pejorative use of "English"

[24] Critics cite as exemplary the nouveau-Plautine Laelia (1595), which Leishman describes as "a metrical . . . version of a French prose translation of an Italian prose comedy" (p.35).

[25] 1596--1597: Silvanus, Hispanus and Machiavellus, authors unknown (University Drama, pp. 389-90).

is an apology for their use of the vernacular. The Second Return may have been contemporaneous with Hamlet--for us, one of the ultimate glories of the English language; but in 1601, by the banks of the Cam, this coincidence was no excuse for abandoning Latin on the academic stage. The fact is that English had not been used much at all in university drama since its auspicious beginnings in Gammer Gurton's Needle (first performed in 1559 at Christ's College, Cambridge).[26] The strength of this tradition is brought home to the modern student by a letter written in 1592 by Cambridge heads of houses in response to a request from the Court that the university players perform an English comedy during the Christmas season:

> . . . how fitt wee shalbe for this that is moued, havinge no practize in this Englishe vaine, and beinge (as we thinke) nothinge beseeminge our Students, specially oute of the Vniu'sity; wee much doubt; And do finde our principale Actors (whome wee haue of purpose called before vs very vnwillinge to playe in Englishe . . . Englishe Comedies for that wee neuer vsed any, wee presentlie haue none. To make or translate one in such shortnes of time, wee shall not be able; And therefore yf wee must needes vndertake the busines . . . These two thinges wee would gladly desire, some further limitacon of time for due preparacon, And liberty to play in latyn.[27]

The unabashed reluctance of the academics to play in English --in the same year that the Lord Strange's Men presented

[26] Boas, University Drama, pp. 323-24.

[27] Quoted by Boas, p. 323.

Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI and the Admiral's Men Marlowe's Edward II--offers striking documentation of the achievement of the Parnassus trilogy.

Considering the contemporary setting and realistic character types of the Parnassus trilogy, there were some obvious reasons for the playwrights writing in the vernacular.[28] But as the Return Prologues warned their audiences, these plays were also different in kind: Momus' "scuruie English show" nominates a satire. Cambridge audiences had previously seen other topical satire.[29] The most important extant play is Pedantius (1581, Trinity College, author unsure), featuring a caricature of Gabriel Harvey, who was then a fellow at Trinity. But Pedantius is in Latin, with a Plautine plot and character types, and a lot of strictly academic subject matter. Moreover, with its highly particular satire of Harvey, Pedantius amounts to a lampoon.[30]

[28] Though this is true of the two Returns, it is less convincing for the academic Pilgrimage.

[29] The evidence includes accounts of two situations in which authors were punished for their satire--first a titleless play at Pembroke (1582/83), for which author Thomas Mudde was jailed by the mayor (Boas refers to it as the first recorded English anti-town play, p. 324; also Leishman, p. 39), and second, Terminus & non terminus (c. 1586, St. John's), co-authored by Nashe, whose collaborator was expelled (Boas, p.322; Leishman, p. 38).

[30] See the surprisingly brutal details of Nashe's description of a performance of Pedantius in Have with you to Saffron-Walden (1596), The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. R. B. McKerrow (1904-1910; rpt. ed. F. P. Wilson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), III, 80.

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The only other extant English topical satire of the university stage is the contemporaneous Club Law, an anonymous production of Clare Hall, Cambridge, whose probable date of 1599/1600 places it later than The Pilgrimage and earlier than the two Returns.[31] It is a comedy of town and gown, in which the "gentle Athenians" (Cambridge scholars) triumph over the bourgeois Mayor Nicholas Niphle and other civic authorities. The victory of the academics is total--intellectual and moral, social and economic, and, in the central action, physical. The citizens are forced to capitulate, to apologize and to acknowledge the superiority of scholars.

The theme of antagonism between scholars and citizen mentality, and the satire against middle-class barbarism, obviously relate Club Law to the Parnassus Plays, particularly The Second Return. More specifically, Club Law features a trio of familiar academic types--a pair of serious and idealistic scholar-heroes named Philenius and Musonius, who are stage-managed by a witty academic Vice, one Cricket. Most important, the dramatic innovations introduced to the university stage in the almost simultaneous appearance of these English city comedies point to the influence of the professional theater. Given the history of university drama, the impact must have been considerable--especially

[31] Club Law was edited by G. C. Moore Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907). It is discussed critically, as a companion piece to the Parnassus Plays, in Boas' concluding chapter, "English Topical Comedies at Cambridge" (University Drama, Ch. xiii, pp. 322-51).

given the fact that with one exception, Club Law and the Parnassus Plays seem to have been the only major productions at Cambridge during those years.[32]

Club Law is a polished work, well-constructed and cleverly written--as in this Churchillian declamation by the newly-elected Mayor Niphle:

> I will rout out the whole generacion of them, and make the vagabonds seeke their dwellings, they shall not nestle with us in our streets, nor out brave us in our own dunghills, they shall trudg, they shall trudge, if Nicholas Niphle be head of this Citie, they shall packe with bag and baggage.
>
> (ll. 520-26)

In its own right, Club Law was a substantial contribution to the university wits' campaign against Italianate Latin romances. There is even some of that playful authorial awareness that is so important in the Poetomachia plays: when one of the students addresses a courtesan with uncommon rhetoric, she remarks, "ffaith, this fellow hath studied playes. well, well, didst ever see Orlando furioso [a play by Greene] sirra?" (ll. 1661-62). However, the Clare Hall play wears its London influence with a difference, making it more interesting here as a contrast to the St. John's trilogy.

In Part III of this study I suggest that The Second Return, in its episodic structure, character types and cynical spirit, is a comical satire. Club Law, while it contains a

[32] See the list in Boas, University Drama, pp. 389-90.

great deal of satiric material,[33] is *not* a comical satire. Compared to the Parnassus Plays, it is a comedy in the traditional style of the popular theater. It has a cohesive and complex plot, with Jonsonian structure of motivation, climax and denouement;[34] a cast of well-developed characters, including a couple of women, and a larger and more tangible sense of place. Finally, it has more physical stage action (the play ends in a whopping mock-heroic battle that is settled by the law of clubs), and it has genuine theatricality (*e.g.*, at one point Niphle is discovered hiding in a tub with a beggar wench).

With a plot line that follows the heroes' ribald adventures with two lively citizen wives, *Club Law* has a feeling not unlike that of the contemporary *Merry Wives of Windsor*.[35] Rather than Shakespearean, however, the spirit of *Club Law*, especially in comparison with the Parnassus *Returns*, seems positively Dekkerian--in the sense of Dekker's contemporary masterpiece, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. The contrast is extreme in the case of *The Second Return*, which is to *Club Law*

[33] Moore Smith believed that the satire was highly topical, and in the introduction to his edition identified most of the *Club Law* townsmen as specific contemporary citizens of Cambridge.

[34] However, the academic *Club Law*, like the Parnassus Plays, does *not* have the romance plot of young lovers that was a mandatory half of the double-plotted popular comedies --as in Dekker, Shakespeare, and even Jonson.

[35] The objects of satire are of course reversed. In *Club Law*, the merry wives do the wooing.

what, in 1599, Jonson's outrageously innovative Every Man Out of His Humour must have seemed to The Shoemaker's Holiday.

In Club Law there is, first, a Dekkerian robustness in the broad depiction of citizens and city life, that prevails despite the play's social prejudice toward an aristocracy of the learned. A second Dekkerian quality is sentiment, including considerable comic affection even for the objects of satire. Most important is Club Law's comic idealism--a basic sense that all's right with the world (or would be, if . . .). Such a vision, built on values that are stated positively and maintained unequivocally, is upheld by a system of poetic justice in which these values and their proponents triumph at the end. At the close of Club Law, Musonius lectures the defeated Niphle:

> Know thy selfe what thou art, thinke thy selfe no kinge because thou hast almost witt enough to be Mr Burgomaster. this arrogant humor ill befitts thy deserts, and learne to measure students, not by thy puffie apprehension, but according to their owne excellency, and know that learning and the Arts are divine, they fetch their pedigree from the high heavens. Jove himself had three of his offspringe Schollers, and great Monarchs have triumphed more in their knowledg, then in their empire, and have thought them selves happy in philosophers familiarity, And will you base drudges springing from dunghills contend for superioritie?
>
> (ll. 2750-62)

This is lively comic prose, and it enables the scholar to pull off his overbearing message with a sense of good humor. But the speech is also dignified by an imperious tone, ele-

vated diction, and the rythmically flowing phrases of the long periods. Underneath Club Law's collegiate high spirits, its high Parnassian values are asserted with eloquence and conviction.

There is a tradition that the Clare Hall producers invited town of Cambridge officials to a performance of Club Law to see themselves ridiculed, and that this is the reason Club Law was written in the vernacular.[36] Though this marvelous story may well be apocryphal,[37] it is certainly emblematic of the town-gown relationship.[38] Yet it is incon-

[36] The story is told by Thomas Fuller in his History of the University of Cambridge (1655): "The young Schollars . . . having gotten a discovery of some Town privacies from Miles Goldsborough (one of their own Corporation) composed a merry (but abusive) Comedy (which they call'd Club-Law) in English, as calculated for the capacities of such, whom they intended spectators thereof. Clare-Hall was the place wherein it was acted, and the Mayor, with his Brethren, and their Wives, were invited to behold it, or rather themselves abused therein. A convenient place was assigned to the Towns-folk (rivetted in with Schollars on all sides) where they might see and be seen. Here they did behold themselves in their own best cloathes (which the Schollars had borrowed) so livelily personated, their habits, gestures, language, lieger-jests and expressions, that it was hard to decide which was the true Townsman, whether he that sat by, or he who acted on the Stage. Sit still they could not from chafing, go out they could not for crowding, but impatiently patient were fain to attend till dismissed at the end of the Comedy" (quoted by Boas, pp. 330-31).

[37] Moore Smith, Club Law, p. lv; Boas, University Drama, p. 331.

[38] The town's side is seen in a document dating 1601 that is quoted by Moore Smith in his introduction to Club Law--a complaint made by civic officials to university administrators: "The scholers of the University, being in taverns, alehouses and diverse publick places, do grievously and very disorderly misuse in generall all free burgesses, and in particular the magistrates of the town. And also in the Plays in colleges and publick sermons, whereby great occasion of grudge is offered" (p. lv; my italics).

ceivable that the same legend could have grown up around the cynical Second Return. A satire without an intent to reform, The Second Return, rather than an appeal to the opposition, is a complaint to the sympathetic. Moreover, as a statement of the scholar-poet's condition that the university wits made for themselves, it is ambivalent.

It may be that the last two Parnassus Plays were conceived as a satiric response to Club Law. The Johnians were saying "No" to the kind of comedy represented by the Clare Hall play. Philosophically, they attacked comic idealism as a viable response to experience. And as artists, they rejected Club Law's essentially romantic form, with its pat and self-satisfied conclusion. The Club Law scholars triumph over the citizens; but Cambridge, after all, is not the world. The Return playwrights, by sending their protagonists out into the hostile world to seek their very sustenance, stand as a harsh rebuke to the Clare Hall comedians, whose delight in knocking the thick pates of the townies seems, by comparison, puerile undergraduate antics.

There are two other academic productions that can be mentioned in connection with the Parnassus Plays. The first, ironically, is the work of rivals of the Second Return playwrights, Inns of Court men--the Middle Temple's "Prince D'Amour" Revels, a collection of theatrical and sémi-theatrical pieces performed during a three-week period in 1597/98.[39]

[39] The revels are discussed by Philip Finkelpearl in John Marston of the Middle Temple (Cambridge,

While these revels are not structurally comparable to the Parnassus Plays, they were pervaded by a witty and self-consciously avant-garde spirit of satire, one which was frequently aimed at matters of poetry and rhetoric, including the authors' own. It is obviously not the work of a bunch of Amorettos, but of wits akin to the Parnassus playwrights--as Finkelpearl suggests they were.[40]

These sophisticatedly satiric revels are a fitting companion to the Parnassus Plays in that they both hark back to the ironic origins of university drama in Christmas revels and the comic inversion of academic order.[41] In 1545, St. John's codified a tradition by providing for a Lord of Misrule to preside over the Christmas entertainments. The man chosen to serve as the mock dignitary was thereby honored.[42] But when at the end of The Second Return Ingenioso goes out into "the worlds wide hall" as a Lord of Misrule (V.iv.2108-09), his inversion of status is a self-disciplined appointment; and it is not a poetic symbol of high comedy, but a bitter irony of life, signifying the very real failure of the scholar-poet to fulfill his ideal role in society.

Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), where a chapter is devoted to them.

[40] Finkelpearl identifies them as a group including John Davies, Thomas Bastard and John Hoskins, and possibly led by Donne--not especially wealthy young men from the middle class, who had already attended university and were to become lawyers (John Marston of the Middle Temple, pp. 46-47).

[41] Boas, University Drama, Ch. i, "From Medievalism to Humanism," pp. 1-25.

[42] Boas, University Drama, p. 4.

The one other relevant academic production was a miscellaneous entertainment performed at Oxford in 1602, entitled "A Twelfe Night Merriment" in manuscript, and retitled Narcissus by the first modern editor, Margaret Lee, in 1893. This show, presented at St. John's College, Oxford contemporaneously with the performances of The Second Return at St. John's, Cambridge, is no less than a literary burlesque on the contemporary professional theater. Narcissus, a low comedy dramatization of an Ovidian tale, belongs to a very different genre from any of the Parnassus Plays. But as Boas observes, the author's intimate acquaintance with popular drama establishes a common ground with the Parnassus playwrights.[43]

The Narcissus author has his play presented by illiterate "youths of the parish" (l. 8), likely candidates for Bottom's Men, and the play itself is filled with burlesque handling of popular stage conventions and parody of extravagances of style and diction--provoking comparison to the great professional parody, The Knight of the Burning Pestle.[44]

[43] Boas discusses Narcissus in University Drama, pp. 278-85.

[44] Some of Narcissus is very funny--e.g., the father of Narcissus introduces his wife and son in scene 1:

> Though with the dawbe of prayse I am loath to lome her,
> This Ile assure you, the blind poett Homer
> Saw not the like amongst his nimphes and goddesses,
> Nor in his Iliads, no, nor in his Odysses
> . . . . .
> The purple hew of this our iolly striplynge
> I would not have you thinke was gott with tiplinge
> Hee is our somne Narcisse, no common varlete,
> Nature in graine hath died his face in skarlete.

The imitation of the Pyramus and Thisbe play within A Midsummer-Night's Dream (which had been published in quarto in 1600) seems indisputable, as is the case with the lines lifted satirically from 1 Henry IV (quartos in 1598 and 1599). And like the Second Return playwrights, the Oxford Johnian could not resist quoting a bit of melodrama from the wits' favorite dramatic butt, The Spanish Tragedy--here, the popular epanorthosis, "O eyes no eyes" (l. 301). There is even a playful sideswipe at the professional players, when one of the country-bumpkin actors protests to his academic audience:

> Wee are no vagabones, wee are no arrant
> Rogues that doe runne with plaies about the
> country.
> Our play is good, & I dare farther warrant
> It will make you more sport then catt in plum tree.
> We are no saucye common playenge skipiackes,
> But towne borne lads, the kings owne loveing
> subiects.
>
> (Prologue, ll. 123-29)

At the conclusion of his discussion of the plays at Oxford, Boas observes how much had changed in university drama since William Gager, the foremost Oxford playwright, some twenty years earlier adapted another Ovidian tale "into a lyrical tragedy on neo-Senecan lines":

> The St. John's writer went to the same source for the story of Narcissus, but he burlesqued it in the vernacular, in a fashion probably inspired by, and certainly akin to, that of Shakespeare in the Pyramus and Thisbe interlude, which also is derived (through Golding)

> from the Metamorphoses. Though the University stage was to win some of its most notable triumphs under the first two Stewart kings, and though, almost contemporaneously with the production of Narcissus at Oxford, the author of the Parnassus trilogy was inveighing at Cambridge against the 'glorious vagabonds' of the popular theatres, the day was clearly gone by when academic drama could sit disdainfully apart, withdrawing her skirts from the unhallowed touch of her London sister, whom she had denounced as venal and base-born.[45]

I hope to show how the Parnassus Plays bear this out.

[45] Boas, University Drama, p. 285.

Part I. The Pilgrimage to Parnassus

Free Hellicon, & franke Pernassus hylles,
Are Helly hauntes, & ranke pernicious ylles.

A Myrrour for Magistrates (1563)
"Howe Collingbourne was cruelly
executed for making a foolishe rime"

Chapter 1. Poetic Psychomachia

The Pilgrimage to Parnassus presents a peculiar critical problem. On the one hand, it is the first play of the trilogy and the shortest, making it the one most likely to be read. On the other hand, almost all of the scattered critical remarks on the Parnassus Plays refer to the trilogy's unique contribution to Elizabethan drama--the realistic satire on the position of the literary artist in society; and these observations are relevant only to the two Return plays, particularly the Second Part of The Return from Parnassus, or The Scourge of Simony. The satire of various social and professional types is important in both parts of The Return. The material that has more particularly interested scholars, the topical literary allusions, is confined to the last play; the criticism of contemporary poets (including Shakespeare and Jonson) and the characters Burbage and Kempe and Danter the printer all belong to The Second Return. In other words, almost none of the familiar references to the Parnassus Plays applies to The Pilgrimage. Hence my insistence on critical distinctions which, in the past, scholars briefly mentioning the trilogy failed to make, rarely distinguishing between the two parts of The Return, no less individuating all three plays.

The Pilgrimage is an academic morality play, a kind of

intellectual psychomachia, or battle for the artist's soul.[1] And while the theme of the scholar-poet's salvation is a deadly serious one, as in the Christian moralities, the dramatic potential of the material is realized in comic terms. The allegory follows two youths as they successfully negotiate the difficult ascent to Parnassus. They progress by way of the trivium of the seven liberal arts--first logic, then rhetoric and, finally, philosophy.[2] In each region they encounter--and reject--a student who is satirized for his failure, moral or intellectual, to meet the demands of that discipline. At the end, after four years of university study, the protagonists proceed baccalaureate.[3]

With this university setting and content, The Pilgrimage is definitely an academic play. But even in this first Parnassus Play it is clear that we are dealing with artists: Philomusus and Studioso undergo their scholarly pilgrimage in order to become poets. At the end of Act I, as the youths set off on their journey to Parnassus, Philomusus, leaning hard upon Spenser, invokes Apollo:

[1] On the morality play, see David M. Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), basic description, pp. 9-10. Also Hardin Craig, English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages (1955; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 341-53.

[2] Mark Curtis, in Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558-1642 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), writes: "In his first year a Cambridge scholar was to hear lectures in rhetoric, his second and third years were to be devoted to logic. Finally in his fourth year he gave full time to the study of philosophy" (p. 87).

[3] "To secure the B.A. degree, sixteenth-century scholars were to be in residence for sixteen terms, or four years, to attend certain specified lectures, and to perform prescribed academic exercises" (Curtis, p. 86).

> Then Phoebus guide vs to thy Hellicon,
> And when oure ruder pipes are taught to singe
> The eccoinge wood with thy praise shall ringe.
>
> (I. 144-46)

The playwright bridges this double interest by splitting his scholar-poet protagonist in two, in the manner of the original Arcadian heroes, Sidney's Pyrocles and Mucedorus, a convention also utilized by the academic author of Club Law. In the Parnassus Plays, Philomusus, lover of the Muses--by Elizabethan standards, something of a romantic--and Studioso, a scholarly and stern youth, are complementary characters.[4]

The morality identification of The Pilgrimage is most apparent in the formal elements of the play--its simple, stylized structure, episodic and linear development, and single-function characters. A modern producer of the Parnassus Plays would do well to keep in mind the pageant staging of the late medieval street theater, whose drama depicted the hero's progress from one sub-stage of the world to another.

The Pilgrimage is also a morality in its idealist vision, and in its didactic presentation of positive principles. The achievement of Parnassus is the stated goal, with Philomusus and Studioso cast as initiates who must reach it

[4] The contrast is introduced at the end of Act I, when Philomusus' softer nature gives vent to doubts about the difficulties of their journey ("Thinks thou oure softe and tender feet canne bide/ To trace this roughe, this harsh, this craggie waye/ That leadeth vnto faire Parnassus hill?" ll. 118-20), and Studioso urges them on.

by overcoming difficult odds. The heart of the dramatic conflict here--as it is essentially in the old plays--is maintaining one's personal integrity in the face of the social (or worldly) ordeal. This positive vision--and the struggle to attain it--is virtually absent from the satiric Returns. The later plays focus their attack on a hostile bourgeois society. But society--either its treatment of the scholar-poet or his function in it--is not of concern to the author of The Pilgrimage. The scholar-poet himself is. Prominent members of the middle class, the satiric butts of the Returns, do not even appear in The Pilgrimage. Most of the characters are students, pilgrims under scrutiny. The play deals with the problem of the corruption of the scholar-poet, and it places the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the individual artist. Indeed, it is The Pilgrimage's attempt to present a positive statement about the moral and intellectual values of the artist that makes it a unique document in the Elizabethan canon.

This emphasis on the play's formal and thematic elements provides critical corroboration of Leishman's conclusion about the authorship--that The Pilgrimage was written by a separate author.[5] In his detailed treatment of the authorship problems,[6] Leishman noted the play's distinctive qualities:

[5] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 31.

[6] Ibid., "Authorship," pp. 26-34.

> . . . the Pilgrimage certainly has, in some respects, less in common with its two successors, and with the topical and satirical comedies . . . than with certain very popular academic plays, written by Dutch and German schoolmasters during the early sixteenth century, which treated, in the manner of Roman comedy, the story of the Prodigal Son . . . There is far less personal satire and allusion in the Pilgrimage than in its two successors, and . . . the characters are little more than symbols of the temptations that would allure the good scholar from the narrow path of learning and frugality. . . . the Pilgrimage is less than half the length of its immediate successor: it is concerned with a smaller world . . .[7]

Leishman did feel that these qualities could be attributed to "a difference in intention" in The Pilgrimage; but on balance, he could not reject the apparent evidence in the Return prologues indicating a separate author for the first play. The key reference is a long passage at the beginning of the prologue to The First Return.[8] The Stagekeeper interrupts the first prologue speaker:

> Howe, gentle saye youe, cringinge parasite?
> That scrapinge legg, that doppinge curtisie,
> That fawninge bowe, those sycophants smoothe tearmes
> Gained our stage muche fauoure, did they not?
> Surelie it made our poet a staide man,
> Kepte his proude necke from baser lambskins weare,
> Had like to haue made him senior sophister.
> He was faine to take his course by Germanie
> Ere he coulde gett a silie poore degree.
> Hee neuer since durst name a peece of cheese,
> Though Chessire seems to priuiledge his name.

[7] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 29.

[8] The evidence in the Second Return prologue for a separate Pilgrimage author is much less convincing (Leishman, pp. 26-28).

His looke was neuer sanguine since that daye,
Nere since he laughte to see a mimick playe.

(Prologue, 1-13)

While the allusions are frustratingly ambiguous, there is no question but that they are specific, giving the impression that the author of this speech is talking about another playwright. The problems of the Parnassus authorship are discussed further at the beginning of Part III, where I argue for a separate author for The Second Return, the most distinctive play of the trilogy--which then gives us three different authors for the three plays.

Yet in a sense Leishman is not wrong when he says that The Pilgrimage "may be regarded as a kind of prologue to the two succeeding plays."[9] In The Pilgrimage, Philomusus and Studioso successfully undergo the rites of passage into Parnassus. This positive presentation of the artist later provides perspective to the negative techniques of satire that predominate in the Returns. If the best of the neglected scholar-poets are as dedicated as the heroes of Parnassus, then the attack on an unappreciative society is warranted. The Pilgrimage thus serves as a base that the later Parnassus playwrights could build on--despite their considerable departures from it.

The principles of Parnassus are delivered to Philomusus and Studioso--and to the audience--by the wise old hermit

[9] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 29.

Consiliodorus. The essence of his gospel is that Parnassus is a heaven worth striving for, but that Parnassian achievement will not--and should not--result in material reward. Consiliodorus' words are presented as choric wisdom: he can claim, "Whatsoere I speake experience hath pend" (I.14); his advice is well-meaning ("from him that lous youe well"), and stated forthrightly, in "plaine dealing" terms (I.26-27). In short, we are meant to trust him. Throughout our study of the trilogy we will come back to his "gray bearded counsell" (I.10) as a touchstone.

To understand Consiliodorus' principles, one must begin with his assertion of the positive values of poetry. The scholar-poet's pilgrimage prepares him to receive artistic inspiration:

> You twoo are Pilgrims to Parnassus hill
> Where with sweet Nectar you youre vaines may fill,
> Wheare youe may bath youre drye and withered quills
> And teache them write some sweeter poetrie
> That may heareafter liue a longer daye.
>
> (I.36-40)

The Parnassian rewards are the pastoral joys of a life filled with natural beauty and peace, and charged with divinely inspired song:

> There may youre templs be adornd with bays,
> There may youe slumber in sweet extasies,
> There may youe sit in softe greene lauriate shade
> And heare the muses warble out a laye,
> And, mountinge, singe like larke in somers daye.
>
> (I.49-53)

The highest praise would be to sing so sweetly as to touch even the prince of poets, the Parnassian idol Spenser:

> There may youe bath youre lipps in Helicon
> And wash youre tounge in Aganippes well
> And teache them warble out some sweet sonnetes
> To rauishe all the fildes and neighboure groues,
> That aged Collin, leaninge on his staffe,
> Feedinge his milkie flocke vppon the downs,
> May wonder at youre sweete melodious pipe
> And be attentiue to youre harmonie.
>
> (I.41-48)

In other words, the laurels worn on Parnassus are not those distributed by men on earth. Worldly societies reward their heroes with material gain. Though the pilgrim who achieves Parnassus is like a god there, he will not be rewarded below. Consiliodorus does not argue his belief in the fundamental antagonism between society and its poets; it is a given premise of his philosophy--an eternal conflict arising from the opposition between spiritual and material values. For Consiliodorus, the hostility of society is a necessary obstacle for the scholar-poet, one of the occupational hazards of the journey to Parnassus. A tribulation to be stoically endured, it must not be misconstrued as a problem that can be solved--though the confrontation can call forth the best in a poet by demanding an assertion of his own worth. Consiliodorus even asserts that the attainment of artistic distance from an unappreciative world is one of the satisfactions of Parnassus:

> There may youe scorne each Mydas of this age,
> Eache earthlie peasant and each drossie clowne
> That knoweth not howe to weighe youre worthiness,
> But feedeth on beste corne, like a stall fedd ass
> Whose statelie mouth in scorne by wheate doth pass.
>
> (I.54-58)

The scholar-poet's scorn of worldlings who fail to value him is central to the entire trilogy. But the positive basis on which Consiliodorus builds his case for artistic integrity is not so clearly articulated in the Return plays. In this first play, Consiliodorus instructs Philomusus and Studioso that in the trials that lie ahead, it is essential that the scholar-poet know how to weigh his own "worthiness," for it will surely not be reflected in the world's treatment of him. Indeed, if artistic values are superior, then society and its material rewards are things that the true Parnassian must transcend. The Pilgrimage, then, is a statement of poetic pride. The satirical Returns, by contrast, do not ever really accept this stoical interpretation of societal antagonism. They are, instead, "complaints" on the theme. In the first Parnassus Play, Consiliodorus, the retired shepherd of Academe, plays Kalander to two youths wandering in Arcadia, maintaining that Parnassus, although a difficult height to attain, is a worthwhile place with its own rewards. In the next few years, other university playwrights spoke for a different age--a time to ask questions, a philosophical mood that called all in doubt. The Return authors could undoubtedly comprehend what the old man was saying; but they

could no longer accept it as a condition of their existence. Given the Pilgrimage premise that the scholar-poet is undervalued, the Return playwrights insisted on asking Why.

The motto of this opening section of The Pilgrimage is borrowed from an unlikely source. Consiliodorus uses as his text a proverb fictionalized by Marlowe in Hero and Leander. In one of the digressive tales of strife in love, the mythographer wittily explains, among other things, why scholars are poor. But the old hermit does not need the whole history of the quarrel between Cupid and the Destinies to comprehend the moral of the tale: "Learninge and pouertie will euer kiss" (H&L, I.76). For Consiliodorus this is a natural state, a truism learned by experience and accepted by wisdom. Indeed, it is a matter for pride, rather than regret. The old man commends the youths in their intended pilgrimage, and says that if he were young again he would choose to make the same Parnassian sacrifice:

> Though I foreknewe that gold runns to the boore,
> Ile be a scholler though I liue but poore.
>
> (I.63-64)

I have emphasized Consiliodorus' attitude toward the hostility of society because of its thematic importance in the complete trilogy. The remainder of the old hermit's opening speech, however, turns toward the main business of The Pilgrimage, the problem of the false scholar-poet. The literary profession is abused not only by an antagonistic

society. It is also subverted from within by pseudo-poets and poetasters, men of weak character and poor scholarship who are unable to negotiate the difficult climb to Parnassus. Consiliodorus warns Philomusus and Studioso against being influenced by such failures: "If youe will haue a ioyfull pilgrimage/ Youe muste be warie pilgrims in the waye" (ll. 65-66). The old man proceeds to catalogue the academic types they should avoid, and his list loosely outlines the episodic plan of the remainder of the play. For although Consiliodorus' Polonian advice is to "Associate youre selus with studious youthes" (l.96), Philomusus and Studioso meet only false scholars along their way.

The youths make their way through the allegorical lands of Logic, Rhetoric and Philosophy, and in each region they meet up with a former schoolfellow, now a university student, who fails to meet the demands of that discipline. The drunkard Madido has been defeated by the difficulties of logic (Act II). Consiliodorus had warned:

> Consorte not in the waye with graceless boys
> That feede the tauerne with theire idle coyne
> Till there leane purses starue at last for foode.
>
> (I.69-71)

The values of rhetoric are perverted at opposite extremes by the Puritanical Stupido (Act III) and the wanton Amoretto (Act IV). Consiliodorus does not refer specifically to Puritans, but he does forecast Amoretto:

> There is another sorte of smooth faced youthes,
> Those Amorettoes that doe spend theire time
> In cõminge of their smother dangled heyre.
> The[y] court a lookinge glass from morne till nighte.
> Theise woulde entise youe to some curtezan
> And tell youe tales of itchinge venerie.
>
> (I.85-90)

In the Land of Philosophy (Act V), they encounter a less obvious evil, the malcontent Ingenioso, perhaps a type Consiliodorus had in mind when he warned that "Crafte ofte in suche plaine cottages doth in" (l. 95).

Structurally, The Pilgrimage is a series of tableau-like confrontations between the two true academic pilgrims and various types of false scholar-poets. One didactic purpose of portraying the failures is obviously to condemn such poetasters for discrediting the profession. Like almost every Elizabethan defender of the literary craft--including, and very well exemplified by, Sidney--the Parnassus playwrights were conscientious in condemning the profession's own worst offenders. But the exposure of various pretenders to poetry is even more important as a warning against the poetastical potential in every artist. As in the morality plays, the evil characters are never simply external dangers, but dramatic representations of the protagonists' human weaknesses.

The unsuccessful pilgrims turn tempters. They urge the aspiring scholar-poets to forsake the difficult climb to Parnassus, and offer instead the evil ways that they have themselves succumbed to. The sin that Consiliodorus warns

against most emphatically is the failure to utilize time productively. Laziness is equated with baseness. The old hermit's admonition is Puritanically stern:

> Eschewe all lozell, lazie, loiteringe gromes,
> All foggie sleepers, and all idle lumps
> That doe burne out theire base inglorious days
> Without or frute or ioye of theire loste time.
> Let lazie grill snorte till the midst of the day,
> Be you industrious pilgrims in the way.
>
> (I.79-84)

The satyric roughness of these lines expresses a strong, almost visceral repulsion toward mental clods, people who merely fill up space bodily. And the context makes clear that the contempt of the true artist should be directed not only at the anti-intellectual middle class, but at those colleagues who challenge aesthetic values from within by failing to fulfill the demanding standards of artistic ideals. But though he borrows from the harsh last words of Spenser's Palmer (F.Q., II.xii.87), Consiliodorus' purpose is positive: he offers his advice lest Philomusus and Studioso abandon a way of life that will eventually yield them "frute" and "ioye."

Consiliodorus also warns, "Youe muste not truste eache glozinge flatteringe vaine" (l. 67). Such 'flattery' is meant figuratively; it is that quality in the life of the false pilgrim that tempts the initiate to abandon his goals for inferior, though more immediate, satisfactions. The romantic Philomusus is aroused by Madido's claims for liquid inspiration. The more serious Studioso is impressed by

Stupido's severity. Both would-be poets respond to the eloquent Amoretto. But the most profound temptation for the pilgrim to Parnassus is Ingenioso--even though the author of The Pilgrimage is apparently unaware of it.

Ingenioso is Despair. Like his Spenserian prototype he is a talented orator, though a wit rather than a sophist. The cynic weighs the intangible rewards of Parnassus against the enormous costs of living in a hostile world--and his temptation is to abandon the journey as impossible, roundly cursing the "cooseninge artes" (V.609). In The Pilgrimage, Ingenioso is rejected along with the other tempters--though, ironically, he is the only one who offers no real temptation to either protagonist. But it is as if this fascinating character had raised so many disturbing questions about the role of the artist in society that the authors of the later Parnassus Plays felt compelled to salvage him for better purpose. In the Returns, Ingenioso becomes central. In the final Parnassus Play, he has the last word.

The four false poets of The Pilgrimage undermine the profession from within by challenging the idea of the true poet that Consiliodorus has bequeathed to Philomusus and Studioso. Madido and Amoretto are poetasters who argue that arduous scholarship is not the only path to poetry. Madido suggests that alcohol is a more effective and less painful source of inspiration than Aristotelian logic. Amoretto falsifies poetry by limiting it to one genre, love poetry. The attacks made by Stupido and Ingenioso are more compre-

hensive, for they challenge the writing of poetry as a way of life--Stupido on moral grounds, Ingenioso for material reasons.

The questions raised in this play are disturbing. Is the road to Parnassus too arduous? Is it in any sense immoral? Is it possible to make an honest living along the way? But this is satire with a positive vision, and the Pilgrimage playwright asserts that for the truly dedicated scholar-poet, there are viable answers to these questions: the individual pilgrim's success is ultimately a matter of his own integrity.

Nevertheless, the challenges presented by the false poets also reflect objections to poetry that are made by society. Many of these external accusations are weak or unfair, and are met in the play by examining them from a more genuinely artistic perspective. Thus Ingenioso's complaint that the scholar-poet is inadequately rewarded by society is set in a different context, where "true contente" (V.647) consists of something other than gold, and poetry, therefore, has its own rewards. Stupido raises the issue of immorality; but he is exposed as a hypocrite who casts aspersions on the pilgrimage only because he is incapable of completing it himself. Some of society's criticisms, however, are valid. There are pretenders to poetry who debase the profession by using it to cloak their own weaknesses. In either event, there are challenges that must be met by the true poet--not only in the form of personal temptations, but as matters in

need of public defense.

The Pilgrimage attempts to make that defense. And it does so in ways that are related to the important formal defenses of poetry of the late sixteenth century. Like Sidney, and his followers Nashe and Harrington, the first Parnassus playwright is more defensive than offensive, his play as much a rebuttal against charges as it is any kind of positive statement.[10] It is also characteristic of the Elizabethan defenses that the serious content is overlaid with a gentlemanly veneer of good humor, a genteel apology that a vindication of scribblers is even being attempted. The satiric tone of The Pilgrimage is comparably light. And, like the most interesting prose defenders of Elizabethan poetry--here one would add Webbe, Puttenham and Daniel to the Sidney-Nashe-Harrington line--the Pilgrimage playwright was himself a poet, who directed what he had to say primarily to the poets themselves. In doing so he acknowledged what Sidney realized in writing the second half of The Defense of Poesy --that if the poets were ever going to be able to defend themselves before a hostile society, they could do so only by becoming better men, and poets, than they had been accused of being.

To present the perfect pattern of a poet on stage is something else again. In The Pilgrimage, as in many morali-

[10] On this point, and the following ones, see G. G. Smith's Introduction to Elizabethan Critical Essays (1904; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), Vol. I.

ties, the souls at stake in the play are less compelling dramatically than their tempters. Innocent and idealistic, Philomusus and Studioso serve as foils for the exposure of hypocrisy and folly. But this also opens them up to certain problems familiar in characters who represent innocent right-mindedness in a fallen world--first, dullness of execution, and second, an awkward self-righteousness; for in spite of their intended allegorical function, when the characters are up on stage, it is difficult for the audience to refrain from judging them as people.

What most distinguishes these Parnassian heroes throughout the trilogy is their manner of speaking. Their very first speeches are good examples of their characteristic style:

> Phil. Father, what ere youre louinge tounge shall vtter,
> Ile drincke youre wordes with an attentiue eare:
> Age in his speach a maiestie doth beare.
>
> Stud. I loue to heare loue play the oratoure.
> Younge mens aduise can beare but litell swaye,
> Counsell coms kindlie from a heade thats graye.
>
> (I.28-33)

Theirs is a dignified formal verse, with metrically regular end-stopped lines, frequently rhymed. But it is also simple and conventional poetry. It is familiar without being at all colloquial--the stiff but homely propriety of proverbial speech. As a rule, Philomusus and Studioso's lines are fair examples of what C. S. Lewis dubbed the "drab" style of Tudor

poetry.[11] The youths' use of language affects the audience much as their idealized behavior does: most of the time it comes off seriously; occasionally it is intentionally humorous; but frequently it is dull.

Throughout the Parnassus Plays, then, we are faced with the difficult question of whether or not Philomusus and Studioso are being satirized. This problem becomes much more pronounced as the trilogy progresses. However, in the case of The Pilgrimage, I think the answer is no. There is some problem in this play with the stylistic contrast between the protagonists' drab style and their tempters' more vivid speech. At their worst, Philomusus dismisses the intriguing Ingenioso with graceless self-righteousness:

> I thinke not worse of faire Parnassus hill
> For that it wantes that sommers golden clay,
> The idol of the foxfurd vsurer.
> Though it wantes coyne it wantes not true contente,
> True solace, or true hartie merrimente.
> If thou will weende with vs plucke up thy feete,
> If not, farewell till next time wee doe meete.
>
> (V.644-50)

And when Philomusus lectures Madido--

> The harder and the craggier is the waye,
> The ioye will be more full another day.
> Ofte pleasure got with paine wee dearlie deeme,
> Thinges dearlie boughte are had in great esteeme.
>
> (II.249-52)

[11] English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama, The Oxford History of English Literature, Vol. III (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1954), defined p. 64; surveyed, pp. 222-71.

--we are tempted to sympathize with Madido's "Come on, come on, Tullies' Sentences. Leaue youre pulinge of prouerbs . . . " (ll. 253-54). Fortunately, however, this awkwardness is not the rule in The Pilgrimage. In this play Philomusus and Studioso's dialogue is generally well-written, it is varied enough to retain interest, and perhaps most important, it is limited, contained; the playwright usually knows when to stop. The few times we laugh at the heroes outright, it is not because they are made ridiculous, but because the author is exploiting their naiveté--as in Studioso's comic allegory of the Land of Logic:

> I haue gotten Iacke Setons mapp to directe vs through this cuntrie. This Iland is, accordinge to his discription, muche like Wales, full of craggie mountaines and thornie vallies. There are twoo robbers in this cuntrie caled Genus and Species, that take captiue euerie true mans Inuention that come by them; Pacius in his returne from Parnassus hadd beene robt by these twoo forresters, but for one Carterus, a lustie clubman, much like the Pinder of Wakfield, that defended him.
>
> (I.131-39)

The comedy here is different from that in Club Law, for example, where the academic protagonists are ridiculed in part for their priggishness. The creators of Philenius and Musonius were having some fun laughing at themselves, even while they retained the audience's basic sympathies. There seems to be no such intention to directly satirize the protagonists of The Pilgrimage.

At the outset of the Parnassus trilogy, then, Philomusus and Studioso are rather likeable young heroes who retain audience sympathy in the serio-comic way that morality protagonists do. But the issue becomes more complicated in the two Return plays. By the end of The Second Return, Philomusus and Studioso, still nominally placed at the heart of the trilogy, are at the same time its weakest point, dramatically and thematically--putting them in an awkward position similar to that of the unbearably naive and put-upon cardboard young lovers of many a Renaissance play.

The Pilgrimage temptations are worth detailed examination. The first erring pilgrim is Madido, the Moist One, a taverner who tries to persuade the youths that "one pinte of wine shall inspire youe with more witt than all they [sic] nine muses" (II.258-59). This is the main theme of his argument against completing the prescribed journey, and some of his more frivolous points (such as, "there is scarce a good tauerne or ale house betwixte this and Parnassus; why, a poeticall spirit muste needes starue," II.190-91), are easily dismissed. But Madido also raises issues which demand more serious consideration. And the author puts some weight behind these points by placing them in the mouth of a man who clearly considers himself a poet. Madido enters reading from the Epistles of "sweet Horace," whose "liquid verses" he favors over the "drie rimes" of Dionysius Cato

(II.147-49). An academically trained writer, he promises to translate the "Romane coate into an Englishe gaberdine" (l. 174)--"for the benefite of the vnlearned" (153-54), and in order to improve the general state of English poetry. He is a type of braggart, a poetastical cousin of Pistol's: "Ile onlie rouse vp my muse out of her den with this liquid sacrifice, and then haue amongste youe, poetes and rimers. (He drinks)" (11.156-58). A literary name-dropper, he would "conferr with the ghostes of Homer, Ennius, Virgill & they [sic] rest that dwell in this watterie region" (160-61). The poetaster is captured for a perfect moment--desperately seeking an elusive word . . . in his pint pot:

> Zouns, I want a worde miserablely, I muste
> looke for another worde in my dictionarie:
> I shall noe sooner open this pinte pott,
> but the worde like a knaue tapster will
> crie anon anon S^{r}. (He drinks) Ey marye
> S^{r}, nowe I am fitt to write a book . . .
>
> (II.163-67)

Philomusus and Studioso meet up with Madido in the Land of Logic. He refuses to accompany them any further in their pilgrimage; he has already had too hard a time of it in his travels up from grammar school. His speech detailing that journey is one of several wonderful passages of allegorical description in The Pilgrimage:

> I tooke shippinge at Qui mihi discipulus, &
> sailed to Propria quae maribus, then came
> to As in praesenti, but with great danger,
> for there are certaine people in this cuntrie
> caled schoolmaisters that take passingers &

> sit all day whippinge pence out of there tayls; these men tooke mee prisoner, and put to death at least three hundred rodes vopn my backe. Hence traueled I into the land of Sintaxis, a land full of Ioyners, and from thenc came I to Prosodia, a litell Iland, where are men of 6 feete longe, which were neuer mentioned in Sr Iohn Mandefildes cronicle. Hence did I set vp my vnluckie feet in this Ile Dialectica, where I can see nothinge but Idees and phantasmes. As soone as I came hither I began to reade Ramus his mapp, Dialectica est, &c.; then the slouenlie knaue presented mee with such an vnsauorie worde that I dare not name it, vnless I had some frankensence readie to perfume youre noses with after. Vpon this I threw away the mapp in a chafe, and came home, cursing my witless head that woulde suffer my headless feete to take such a tedious journey.
>
> (II.229-48)

Madido's most significant charge here is that he can see nothing in logic but "idees and phantsmes." The accusation is so important because it can be extended to include all domains of learning and imagination. It is based on an insistence on tangible practicality, a middle-class value that is made more of an issue in the Returns. "This Parnassus and Hellicon are but the fables of the poetes" (l. 199), cries Madido. The charge is hard to deny on the face of it.

The next serious question raised by Madido is the possibility that scholarship and poetry are not compatible ways of life. His experience is that each discipline actually functions at the expense of the other. Parnassus is "not a Pilgrimage for good wites" (ll. 183-84), who are not inspired by academic material; rather, "let slowe brainde Athenians trauel thither, those drie sober youths, which can away to

reede dull lines, fustie Philosophers, dustie Logicians" (184-86). Madido's stereotype of the professional scholar is one of the few direct satiric jests at the academic community in the Parnassus Plays:

> O, the gen[i]us of xij^{d} a quart will indite manie liuelie lines in an houre, whils an ould drousie Academicke, an old Stigmaticke, an ould sober Dromeder toiles a whole month & often scratcheth his wittes head for the bringinge of one miserable Period into the worlde.
>
> (II.212-17)

This distinction between academic versifiers and inspired poets is important: scholars "reede dull lines," while poets create works that are appreciated by others. Madido's vision of future generations compiling his works caps his tipsy fantasies: "Ile turne home, and write that that others shall reade, posteritie shall make them large note books out of my writings" (ll. 186-88).

Madido's arguments are of course finally rejected by Philomusus and Studioso. But there is one element of tension that is not dissolved by the plot line--the effect of the tempter's lively speaking style, in contrast with the heroes' drab verse. Madido's dialogue consists of an inventive use of simple diction set in rhythmic prose; it flows, as in--

> Nay, if I drinke of that pudled water of Hellicon in the companie of leane lenton shadowes, let mee for a punishement conuerse with single beare soe longe as I liue. This Parnassus and Hellicon are but the fables of the poetes, there is noe true Parnassus but

> the third lofte in a wine tauerne, noe true Hellicon but a cup of browne bastard. Will youe trauell quicklie to Parnassus, doe but carie youre drie feet into some drie tauerne, and straight the drawer will bid youe goe into the Halfe Moone, or the Rose, that is, into Parnassus; then call for a cup of pure Hellicon, & he will bringe youe a cup of pure hypocrise, that will make youe speake leapinge lines and dauncinge periodes.
>
> (II.196-207)

Madido is a traditional comic Vice figure, updated by a healthy dose of Nashean prose style. Enlivening his speech with one of the comparatively few topical literary references in The Pilgrimage, Madido identifies himself professionally with the new satirists, flattering himself with a comparison to the comparatively respectable classical verse satirists:

> Why, giue mee but a quart of burnt sacke by mee, and if I doe not with a pennie worth of candles make a better poeme then Kinsaders Satyrs, Lodges fig for Momus, Bastardes Epigrams, Leichfildes trimming of Nash, Ile giue my heade to anie good felowe to make a memento mori of.
>
> (II.208-12)

While Madido's prose is much homelier than the frenetic verbal wit of Nashe's personae, it is still wonderfully alive--full of "leapinge lines and dauncinge periodes."

Madido invites Philomusus and Studioso to join "a merie companie" (ll. 259-60): " . . . we will hire our studies in a tauerne, & ere longe not a poste in Pauls church yarde but shall be acquainted with our writings" (220-22). The company and the drink may be good, but they do not offer a very prac-

tical solution to the problem of how the scholar-poet can live in this world. In fact, even the carefree Madido touches on this vital matter, which becomes the overriding concern in the later Parnassus Plays. In his opening monologue, Madido indirectly attacks the monied, middle-class patrons of the arts. It is bad enough that such patrons are usually ignorant and unappreciative; what is worse, even this unworthy audience is often unavailable. Madido's drinking makes him bold:

> . . . woulde anie leaden Mydas, anie mossie patron haue his asses eares deified, let him but come, and giue mee some prettie sprinkling to maintaine the expences of my throate, and Ile dropp out suche an Encomiũ on him, that shall imortalize him as longe as there is euer a booke binder in Englande.
>
> (II.167-72)

This ironic challenge epitomizes the social dilemma of the Elizabethan artist. The way to live is to praise a man who cannot appreciate your praise, but whose generosity depends on it. A paradoxical encomium indeed! The complaint against society, reiterated throughout the Parnassus trilogy, is hard to ignore--even when it is made by a fraud.

The problem of an antagonistic society does make some impression on the idealistic Philomusus. At the beginning of Act III, he confesses to Studioso that he found it the taverners' most persuasive argument against following Apollo. He was almost won over when they told him

> . . . howe schollers vnregarded walke
> Like threed bare impecunious animals,
> Whiles seruinge men doe swagger it in silks,
> And each earth creepinge peasant russet coate
> Is in requeste for his well lined pouche.
>
> (III.272-76)

Philomusus admits that he was daunted by the carousers' frightening descriptions of the risks involved in arduous scholarship,

> . . . howe this laborious pilgrimage
> Is wonte to eate mens marrowes, drye there bloude,
> And make them seeme leane shadowes and pale ghostes.
>
> (III.277-79)

The young man's response is at once humorous and human. But with the help of the more sober Studioso, Philomusus is able to comprehend the emptiness of Madido's revels, and to reject the temptation to join his "wet phantasticke crewe" (l. 268). The youths travel on, strengthened by their experience, to the "pleasante fertile soile" of the Land of Rhetoric (287).

When Philomusus and Studioso enter the Land of Rhetoric their praise is lavish. Studioso declares:

> Let idle tongues talke of our tedious waye,
> I neuer sawe a more delicious earth,
> A smoother pathwaye, or ayre
> Then here is in this lande of Rhetorique.
>
> (III.288-91)

The hyperbole is appropriate for the aspiring scholar-poet of the Renaissance. The formal study of rhetorical figures

and schemes of language was considered fundamental for the verbal artist, whether his delivery was oral or written.[12] Studioso's highest praise is for Cicero--author and orator, creator and critic. No distinction is made between oral and written creation or, more significantly, between "critical" and "creative" use of rhetoric. None of the rhetoricians singled out for praise by Studioso--" . . . Muretus, Bembus, Sadolet,/ Haddon and Ascham . . . " (III.297-98)--were poets in the narrow modern sense of versifiers. They were scholars (three were teachers, two of these university lecturers), and all were authors noted for their Ciceronian elegance of style. Ascham, once a fellow at St. John's, was both a stylist and a scholar of style. The Pilgrimage playwright indicates the importance of the discipline by extending the protagonists' adventures in the Land of Rhetoric over two acts--first with the Puritan Stupido in Act III, and then with Amoretto, a would-be Ovidian, in Act IV, where poetry is treated as a sub-division of rhetoric. Both characters are false pilgrims who pervert, or subvert, the idea of rhetoric--though they do so at different extremes.

Stupido is a familiar type in Elizabethan literature--the stage Puritan, verbose and tedious in style, self-righteous and hypocritical in substance.[13] But as Myers points

[12] Wilbur S. Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956).

[13] Aaron M. Myers, Representation and Misrepresentation of the Puritan in Elizabethan Drama (1931; rpt. [Folcroft, Pa.:] Folcroft Press, 1970), pp. 20-21. Also see William P. Holden,

out, this is the Puritan "seen through the eyes of a scholar," to whom "ignorance is, quite naturally, the paramount fault."[14] More specifically, the "Puritan problem" was an explosive issue at this time throughout the universities, and perhaps nowhere more so than at St. John's.[15]

In The Pilgrimage, the Puritan's arguments are reducible to the principle that all rhetoric is vanity. Out of 'charity,' he advises Philomusus and Studioso:

> . . . studie not these vaine artes of Rhetorique, Poetrie, and Philosophie: there is noe sounde edifying knowledg in them; why, the[y] are more vaine than a paire of organs, or a morrice daunce.
>
> (III.343-46)

The premise of this argument is as old and respectable as it is in Sidney's Defense--that "the ending end of all earthly learning [is] virtuous action."[16] If the ultimate goal of knowledge is moral perfection, then all studies should lead to God. But by extending his condemnation of rhetoric to include the higher discipline of philosophy, Stupido igno-

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Anti-Puritan Satire, 1572-1642 (1954; rpt. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1968), Ch. iii, "The Puritans and the Stage," pp. 94-144.

[14] Representation . . . of the Puritan in Elizabethan Drama, p. 121.

[15] Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 69.
Kenneth Charlton describes St. John's as "a notorious centre for Protestant dissension and faction, with fellow divided against fellow" (Education in Renaissance England [London: R. & K. Paul, 1965], p. 146).

[16] An Apology for Poetry, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (London: Nelson's Medieval and Renaissance Library, 1965), p. 104.

rantly rejects all secular paths to God as "these profane artes, that are the raggs and parings of learning" (l. 348).

Stupido's refusal to go on proves that he is incapable of higher learning. He is content to end his education with the study of logic, and with a peculiarly Puritanical version of it at that. He says that he has covered the subject according to the Protestant reformer Ramus--Stupido's "simple opinion" being that "Mr Peter maketh all things verie plaine and easie. As for Setons Logique [the traditional scholastic work of a Catholic Aristotelian], trulie I neuer looke on it but it makes my head ache" (ll. 324-26).[17] Stupido confesses to past errors: "I haue beene to vaine and forwarde this way, but now that I am come into this Rhetorique, and see the follie of theise vaine artes, I will not trauell a foot further" (335-38). In place of the traditional liberal arts curriculum, the Puritan recommends intellectual shortcuts. He advises the youths to trade in their books of rhetoric, poetry and philosophy, "and buye a good Martin [Marprelate tract], and twoo or three hundreth of chatechismes of Ieneuas [Geneva's] printe, and I warrant you will haue learning enoughe" (349-51). Stupido plans to exercise his own meager logical abilities on the analysis of sermons.

Stupido's charge of immorality is serious enough in substance. Indeed, it was fundamental to the Puritan attack on poetry that in late sixteenth-century England became the

[17] On Ramus vs. Seton, see Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700, passim.

most outspoken and articulate strain in the general social hostility toward the arts.[18] But the Pilgrimage playwright, like many of his professional colleagues, chose not to meet the issue head on, but to deflect it with a comic ad hominem attack on the Puritanical type.

In the Elizabethan vogue of satire on Puritanism, one of the dramatists' most effective weapons was linguistic satire. The stage Puritan acquired his own stylistic conventions, and in the hands of a genius of speech parody, the character can be as devastatingly comic--and immoral--as Jonson's Zeal-of-the-Land Busy (Bartholomew Fair), whom Jonas Barish praises as "perhaps the most complete linguistic imposter in Jonson."[19] The encounter with Stupido in The Pilgrimage is brief; but in only three speeches, the playwright manages to sketch a portrait of ridiculous ignorance and self-righteousness.

The stage Puritan rarely engages in dialogue; he preaches. His tedious sermons are forbiddingly formal, filled with pompous references to Scripture and inappropriately euphuistic diction. His subject matter, too, is repe-

[18] The Puritan detractors of poetry were certainly well published--resulting in the phenomenon that many of the critical discussions of literature in late Elizabethan England are also defenses of literature against Puritan attacks. See Smith's Introduction to Elizabethan Critical Essays, I, xiv-xxi.

[19] Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 203-04. Busy's Puritanical rhetoric is analyzed pp. 197-204.

titious; most of his declamations concern his own goodness, in contrast to the sinfulness of others. Everything is punctuated with parenthetical thanks to God. Finally, the character takes himself with unbearable seriousness. All these qualities are illustrated in Stupido's first speech:

> Welcome my welbeloued brethren, trulie (I thanke god for it) I haue spent this day to my great comfort; I haue (I pray god prosper my labours) analised a peece of an homelie according to Ramus . . . And now not hauing anie serious business to goe aboute, leaste the bad disposed people should corrupte and contaminate my pure thoughtes by there vngodlie conversations, I am goinge abroad to take the benefite of the aire, and contemplate, whiles they play the reprobates at home, some persecutinge poore creaturs cattes: others spendinge there moste precious time in card plaie.
>
> (III.320-33)

Stupido offers only one "proof" of artistic immorality--the tenuous charge that poets favor outlandish clothing:

> Artistes [are] fools, and that you may knowe by there vndecent apparell. Why, you shall not see a Rhetorician, a rimer, a poet (as you call it) but he wears such diabolicall ruffs, and wicked great breeches full of sin, that it would make a zelous professors harte bleed for grife.
>
> (III.357-61)

Stupido was not the only Elizabethan to assert that the French ruff was a creation of the Devil; but his marvelously suggestive reference to French breeches comically undercuts any legitimate appeal.

Ridiculous as Stupido is, the playwright still deals with the immorality charge, by having the serious Studioso respond to it. At the end of Act III, Studioso goes off to meet Stupido's "sober companie" (l. 371)--much as Philomusus had earlier accepted Madido's invitation. Afterward, at the beginning of Act IV, Studioso tries to explain his error with reference to one of the great moral dilemmas of The Faerie Queene: "Who can resist seeminge deuotion . . . ?" (l. 416). Philomusus, whose nature is less vulnerable to intellectual hypocrisy, describes the potential dangers of such as Stupido:

> Eye, these doe norishe a neglected bearde,
> Much like a grunting keeper of a hearde;
> Speake but fewe wordes because the[y] would seeme wise,
> Weare but a plaine coate after the wonted guise.
>
> (IV.422-25)

However, what is ultimately most abhorrent to the Pilgrimage playwright is Stupido's thoroughly anti-imaginative nature. Philomusus and Studioso consider themselves well rid of "dull Stupido" (l. 429), "a plaine puritane" (427). The poetic Philomusus understands that Stupido has abandoned the pilgrimage not for any elevated moral reasons, but because of his own poetic inadequacy:

> Fye Studioso, what nowe almost caught
> By Stupido that plodding puritane?
> That artless ass & that earthcreeping dolt,
> Who, for he cannot reach vnto the artes
> Makes showe as though he would neglect the artes
> And cared not for the springe of Hellicon.
>
> (IV.410-15)

A similar judgment of Stupido is made by Amoretto, the false pilgrim whom the youths encounter in Act IV, in the Land of Poetry. Amoretto mentions Stupido's religious hypocrisy, but he is more concerned with the Puritan's totally non-sensuous existence. He refers contemptuously to

> . . . stricte Stupido that pulinge puritane,
> A mouing peece of clay, a speaking ass,
> A walking image and a senceless stone.
>
> (IV.405-07)

Amoretto's description is apt; but of course he is himself suspect as a judge: in The Pilgrimage, Amoretto is the pseudo-Ovidian, a would-be poet who values only the sensuous nature of verbal ornament, and who uses it to praise and promote wanton love. Amoretto thus personifies what Sidney referred to as "the principal, if not the only, abuse . . . alleged" against poetry--"how much it abuseth men's wit, training it to wanton sinfulness and lustful love . . . ."[20]

Like Madido and Stupido, Amoretto is a comic Vice figure who also raises some serious questions about the nature of the pilgrimage. He is first presented for the fun of his poetastical pretensions. His long opening monologue is a mixed effusion of praise for his Corinna and homage to Ovid: "I loue thee Ouid for Corinnas sake,/ Thou loues Corinna as turtle loues her make" (IV.386-87). The humor is in the self-consciousness of the imitation, which only exaggerates

[20] An Apology for Poetry, ed. Shepherd, p. 125.

the distance between the original and the copy. It begins with a comic descent--from the studied borrowing of the Latin, to an affected awareness of self:

> Who takes a kiss, and leaues to doe the rest,
> Doth take the worse, and doth neglect the beste.
> Zouns, what an honest animal was I
> To part with my Corinna with a kiss.
>
> (IV.374-77)

In Amoretto's own verses, the playwright parodies certain conventions of love poetry. The nouveau Ovidian makes enormous claims for his Corinna, carrying his figures of speech beyond hyperbole to the ridiculous by presenting them as literal propositions:

> All books are dull which speake not of her praise:
> Hange ploddinge doultes and all there dulled race,
> True learninge dwels in her faire beautuous face.
>
> (IV.383-85)

He offers a comic catalogue of his lady's parts: a metaphor is tortured--the god of love "Daunses Leualtoes in her speaking eye" (l. 391); an audacious imperative is undercut by a bathetically awkward couplet line--"Touch not her mount of ioy, it is deuine,/ There Cupid grazes or els he would pine" (398-99). The blazon descends--graphically and stylistically --to a self-conscious, sensuous and delightfully ridiculous conclusion:

> Expect the world my poesie ere longe
> Where Ile comende her daintie quivering thighe,
> Sing of her foot in my sweet minstralsie.
>
> (IV.400-402)

Amoretto's Ovidian fallacy is twofold. His poetic error is the contention that the sole province of poetry is love. Any sound Elizabethan Art of Poesy could have taught him otherwise.[21] Puttenham, for instance, in a classic division of poetry according to its praise function, speaks of three kinds: "the chief and principall is: the laud honour & glory of the immortal gods," the second, "the worthy gests of noble Princes," and last, and least, is the recreative, "the common solace of mankind in all his trauails and cares of this transitorie life."[22] Love--or "the amorous affections and allurements"[23]--is only one of many recreative subjects of poetry.

Amoretto's scholarly error is the belief that all learning is in poetry. This is an obvious distortion of the course of study outlined in the pilgrimage, where poetry is only part of the larger province of rhetoric, and beyond rhetoric, lies the Land of Philosophy. Like Stupido, Amoretto exposes the inadequacy of his vision by tempting the pilgrims not to move on to the highest discipline. The Puritan had urged them to reject philosophy as another of "theise vaine artes." Amoretto, who is deeply committed to rhetorical vanity, makes the contrary mistake of completely

[21] The subject is treated in greater detail in the discussion of Gullio, the would-be Amoretto of The First Return (Chapter 5).

[22] The Arte of English Poesie, ed. Gladys Willcock and Alice Walker (1936; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), Book I, Chapter x, "The Subject or matter of Poesie," p. 24.

[23] Ibid., I.xxii, p. 44.

separating the matter of philosophy from the art of poetry:

> Tushe, talke not of your purposed pilgrimage,
> Nor doe forsake this poetes pleasant lande
> To tread vpon philosophers harshe grounde.
>
> (IV.468-70)

He tells the pilgrims that while philosophy may be a suitable discipline for their winter years, the springtime of their youth is meant for lighter pleasures. He puts it to them rhetorically:

> Why shoulde you vainelie spende your bloominge age
> In sadd dull plodding on philosophers
> Which was ordained for wantome merrimentes?
>
> (IV.445-47)

The premise of this argument is the old carpe diem theme, stated in a simple, proverbial couplet:

> Cropp you the ioyes of youth while that you maye,
> Sorowe and grife will come another daye.
>
> (IV.454-55)

For Amoretto, the joys of youth are the pleasures of love; and the world he offers--his own myopic vision of the Land of Poetry--is one of wanton lovemaking, where poetry is the verbal means to a physical end:

> Indeede this lande hath manie a wantome nymphe
> That knowes alwayes all sportfull dalliance.
> Here are soe manie pure brighte shininge starrs
> That Cynthiaes want theire faire Endimions
> Wherewith to pass away the loittring nighte.
> Here are Corinnaes, but here Ouids wante.
> Saye, will you staie with mee in Poetrie?
>
> (IV.438-44)

Amoretto's technique is good Spenserian imitation--logical argument reinforced with sensuous sound and imagery. But Spenser had taught his readers to be wary of verbal sensuousness; in The Faerie Queene it becomes suspect on the lips of anyone other than the narrator. At his most dazzling, Amoretto is dangerous because he abuses the powers of rhetoric in a directly poetic way. His long last speech is a slow, sensuous invitation to lust:

> Ile bringe you to sweet wantoninge yonge maides
> Wheare you shall all youre hungrie sences feaste,
> . . . . . .
> Nor are they puling maides, or curious Nuns
> That strictlie stande vpon virginitie:
> Theile freelie giue what ere youre luste shall craue
> And make you melte in Venus surque[d]rie.
> . . . . . .
> Come, to my sweet Corinna Ile you bringe
> And bless youe with a touch of her softe lipps.
> Then shall you haue the choice of earthlie starrs
> That shine on earth as Cynthia in her skye;
> There maie youe melte with solled sweet delighte
> And taste the ioyes of the darke gloomie night.
>
> (IV.473-89)

The Ovidian's invitation is the most poetic of the temptations in The Pilgrimage because the poetry is itself the temptation; to succumb to Amoretto's verbal sensuousness is to accept his physical proposition.

The functional test of Amoretto's rhetoric is that it works. The Ovidian is the only tempter who convinces both Philomusus and Studioso to waste some of their valuable time with him. At the close of Act IV, the rather priggish young men rush off with him "unto faire beauties beddes" (l. 506).

Their youthful ardor arouses the only sensuous lines spoken by either of them in the play--Philomusus' "Phoebus hath laid his golden tressed locks/ In the moist cabinet of Thetis lapp" (502-03)--a stylistic transformation so striking that it substantiates the dangers of Amoretto's kind of rhetorical abuse.

The youths are not entirely unaware of their compromising situation. Even as they accept Amoretto's invitation, Studioso observes wryly, "Well said the poet, that a wantom speache/ Like dallyinge fingers tickles vp the luste" (IV. 490-91). At the beginning of Act V, after a disappointing encounter with Amoretto's lady friends (Stud. "Howe sourelie sweete is meltinge venerie:/ It yealdeth honie, but it straighte doth stinge," ll. 510-11), Studioso believes himself wiser for the experience and rejects the entire realm of poetry as a temptation to lust:

> Here are entisinge Pandars, subtile baudes,
> Catullus, Ouid, wantome Martiall:
> Heare them whilest a lasciuious tale they tell,
> Theile make thee fitt in Shorditche for to dwell.
>
> (V.514-17)

But Studioso belies his noble calling by making the same basic error as Amoretto--believing that poetry is limited to love poetry--only reversing the conclusion.

It is left to the more poetic Philomusus to rectify Studioso's grave error, and his speech is one of the major defenses of poetry in the entire Parnassus trilogy. Philomusus' rebuttal to the charge of immorality is the Ascham-Milton ar-

gument that an impure mind will find impurities in whatever it reads; "But who reades poets with a chaster minde/ Shall nere infected be by poesie" (V.538-39). Poetry is one of man's loveliest achievements, and only the intellectually and aesthetically impoverished can fail to appreciate it:

> Are these the thankes thou giuest for her mirthe
> Wherewith shee did make shorte thy pilgrims waye,
> Made monthes seeme minutes spente in her faire soile?
> O doe not wronge this musicke of the soule,
> The fairest childe that ere the soule broughte foorthe,
> Which none contemne but some rude foggie squires
> That knowe not to esteeme of witt or arte.
>
> (V.525-31)

Philomusus dismisses this undeserving audience with a touch of the levity that Sidney used to end the Defense: "Noe Epitaphe adorne his baser hearse/ That in his life time cares not for a verse" (532-33). Like Sidney, the Pilgrimage author suggests that the greatest threat to poetry comes from the man who abuses it from within the profession. Philomusus admonishes Studioso:

> Noe soure reforminge enimye of arte
> Coulde doe delightfull poetrie more wronge
> Than thy vnwarie sliperie tongue hath done.
>
> (V.522-24)

The aberrant poet--whether poetaster, like Madido and Amoretto, or critic, like Stupido--does more harm to the cause of poetry than a society full of censurers. Sobered by their experience, the pilgrims move on, "To trauell in the roughe Philosophie" (l. 549).

The final false poet of *The Pilgrimage* is Ingenioso, a disappointed scholar-poet. In the academic scheme of the play, his function is to tempt Philomusus and Studioso to join him in rejecting the last and highest discipline, philosophy: "I haue beene guiltie of mispending some time in Philosophie, and nowe growinge wiser I begin to forsake this cuntrie as faste as I can, and can youe blame mee?" (V.562-64). But Ingenioso's objections to the discipline are vague and unconvincing, and it soon becomes clear that the playwright has other plans for him. The real issue raised by this poet *manqué* is the social dilemma of the Elizabethan artist. In this role he is something of a prophet, for the theme becomes paramount in the two *Return* plays. In *The Pilgrimage*, however, it is still only one of the false temptations to be recognized and rejected by the true scholar-poet.

The lesson Ingenioso teaches is one he has learned from authority *and* experience: the position of the scholar-poet is low, socially and economically. In making this point Ingenioso is returning to one of Consiliodorus' cardinal points, the elemental difference between poetry and gold. As Philomusus and Studioso were forewarned, poetic achievement is not necessarily rewarded with the material wealth valued by society. But, as Ingenioso observes, there's the rub: for all men--even poets--need the goods produced by society, or the gold that buys the goods, in order to survive. If there is no way for the scholar-poet to survive in society, then perhaps Parnassus is not worth its weight in gold. Thus the real

temptation that Ingenioso offers Philomusus and Studioso is to quit the pilgrimage because their efforts will go unrewarded: "Turne home againe, vnless youe meane to be vacui viatores, and to curse youre wittless heades in youre oulde age for takinge themselues to no better trades in there youthe" (V.634-37). Ingenioso's advice, always witty, is also crudely to the point: "If youe be wise, and meane to liue, come not there. Parnassus is out of siluer, pitifullie, pitifullie" (ll. 575-77). What was to Consiliodorus a matter for Stoic acceptance, is to Ingenioso a cause for bitter complaint. And what was to the old counselor the price paid for his poetic freedom, and a reason for artistic pride, is to the younger man an insoluble paradox of the poetic life.

Ingenioso specifically attacks the patronage system, society's scheme for providing the professional writer with the goods he needs in order to survive. The system, claims Ingenioso, is a failure.[24] He bitterly elaborates a point made earlier by Madido, the circular pattern of weaknesses that guarantees disaster: the professional writer depends on a wealthy patron for his material support; but Maecenas is often an ass, artistically speaking, and incapable of appreciating poetry, and so he fails to reward the poet. Ingenioso testifies from experience:

> I, after manie yeares studie, hauinge almoste broughte my braine into a consumption, look-

[24] The subject is treated in greater detail in Chapter 3.

> ing still, when I shoulde meete with some good Maecenas, that liberallie would rewarde my desertes, I fed so long vpon hope, till I had almoste starued.
>
> (V.610-14)

As a malcontent, Ingenioso is characteristically envious, though his complaint against society is as much an attack on artistic barbarism as it is an expression of jealousy of the material success of men he considers beneath him:

> Why, our emptie handed sattine sutes doe make more accounte of some foggie faulkner, than of a wittie scholler, had rather rewarde a man for setting of a hayre, than a man of wit for making of a poeme. Eache long eared ass rides on his trappinges and thinkes it sufficiente to giue a scholler a maiesticke nodd with his rude nodle. Goe to Parnassus? Alas, Apollo is banckroute, there is nothing but siluer wordes & golden phrases for a man; his followers wante the goulde, while tapsters, ostlers, carters, and cobblers haue a fominge pauch, a belchinge bagg that serues for a cheare of est[ate] for <u>regina pecunia</u>.
>
> (V.614-24)

In the patrons' failure to appreciate poetic achievement the playwright reiterates the principle of a basic conflict of values between society and its artists.

For all his cynicism, Ingenioso is in one sense the most compelling character in <u>The Pilgrimage</u>. He has that fatal attraction of most great tempters in literature: he is, as you would expect, ingenious--<u>i.e.</u>, clever. He is intelligent, and he is a wit; unlike the other tempters, the comic effects of <u>his</u> remarks are intentional.

The Ingenioso of the trilogy, but particularly the character portrayed in the Returns, is apparently modeled on Nashe.[25] In The Pilgrimage, where the portrait is too brief and general to be biographical, Ingenioso still resembles Nashe's literary personae--who are themselves usually considered semi-autobiographical.[26] Most noticeably, Ingenioso has been infected by the energetic verbal wit of Nashe's Pierce Penniless, one of Kernan's prime examples of the Renaissance satirist's impassioned concern for rhetoric, invective and vivid detail.[27] Leishman documents the direct parallels, such as Ingenioso's borrowing from the opening lines of Pierce Penilesse:[28]

> What, I trauell to Parnassus? Why I haue burnt my bookes, splitted my pen, rent my papers, and curste the cooseninge artes, that brought mee vp to noe better fortune. I, after manie years studie . . .
>
> (V.607-10)[29]

[25] See Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 71-79. The significance of Nashe as the most helpful Elizabethan background figure for the Parnassus Plays is discussed in Chapter 3.

[26] See G. R. Hibbard, Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), and McKerrow's Nashe, Vol. V.

[27] Alvin Kernan, The Cankered Muse, Yale Studies in English, Vol. 142 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 50-51.

[28] Pierce: "Hauing spent many yeeres in studying how to liue, and liu'de a long time without mony . . . I accused my fortune, raild on my patrones, bit my pen, rent my papers, and ragde in all points like a mad man" (McKerrow, I, 157).

[29] Lines 610-24, which complete this borrowing from Pierce, are quoted on pp. 78-79.

Ingenioso's allegorical descriptions are at once harsher and more vivid than Madido's:

> Whie I haue bene almoste stifled with the breath of three Barbarians, Tollet, Iauel, Tarterett. They stande fearfullie gapinge, and euerye one of them a fustie moulie worde in his mouthe thats able to breede a plague in a pure aire: they breede suche an ayre as is wonte to proceede from an euaporatinge dunghill in a summers daye. But what doe youe twoo here, in this griggie barbarous cuntrie?
>
> (V.565-71)

Ingenioso is also facile with terse ironic images, such as the rumor "that Apollo had sente to Pluto to borowe twentie nobles to paye his cõmons" (ll. 579-80), and with witty repartee, as in this exchange:

> Ing. Call youe gold and siluer the excrementes of earth? If those be excrementes, I am the cleanest man vpon the earth, for I seldome sweate goulde.
>
> Phil. Yes they are excrementes, and henc a man that wantes money is caled a cleane gentleman.
>
> Ing. If that be to be cleane, then the water of Hellicon will quicklie make youe cleane: it is an excellent good thinge, to make a man impecunious.
>
> (V.599-605)

Ingenioso's specialty, like Pierce's is brief satiric "characters"--of the lesser men he envies:

> Seest thou not my hoste Iohns of the Crowne, who latelie liued like a moule .6. yeare vnder the grounde in a cellar, and cried anon,

> anon S^r^, now is mounted vpon a horse of twentie marke, and thinkes the earth too base to beare the waighte of his refined bodie? Why, woulde it not greeue a man of good spirit to see Hobson finde more money in the tayles of 12 Iades, than a scholler in 200 bookes? Why, Newman the cobler will leaue large legacies to his haires, while the posteritie of humanissimi auditores and esse videatur must be faine to be kept by the parishe.
>
> (V.624-34)[30]

--and his description of the "ragged innocentes" (l. 575) of Parnassus,

> . . . a companie of ragged vicars and forlorne schoolemaisters, who as the[y] walked scrached there vnthriftie elbowes, and often putt there handes into there vnpeopled pocketes, that had not beene possessed with faces this manie a day. There one stoode diggінge for golde in a standishe; another looking for cockpence in the bottome of a pue: the third towling for siluer in a belfree: but they were neuer soe happie as Esopes cocke to finde a precious stone: nay they coulde scarse get enoughe to apparell there heade in an vnlined hatt, there bodie in a frize Ierkin, and there feet in [sic] clouted paire of shoes.
>
> (V.581-91)

From the vantage point of the complete trilogy, this lively character could be understood as the most serious threat to the success of the pilgrimage. Ingenioso is the disappointed scholar, one of the major types of Elizabethan satirist.[31] A bona fide rejected scholar-poet, a man who has

[30] Cf. Pierce, McKerrow's Nashe, I, 158.

[31] See Kernan, The Cankered Muse, a study of the satiric persona in English Renaissance satire; pp. 18, 148.

tried to live by his wits and failed, he testifies that he has essayed the road to Parnassus, and found it impassable. This is strong stuff; but Ingenioso is not met on this level in the first Parnassus Play. In The Pilgrimage, Ingenioso is met purely on the grounds of principle--which is, after all, the terms in which this psychomachia is conceived. On a theoretical level, Ingenioso's temptation presents little difficulty: it is a simple matter to show that his materialistic arguments against the pursuit of poetry are inherently non-poetic. Philomusus' rebuttal--"Thoughe I foreknewe that doultes possess the goulde/ Yet my intended pilgrimage Ile houlde" (V.595-96)--shows how well he has assimilated Consiliodorus' motto, "Though I foreknewe that gold runns to the boore,/ Ile be a scholler though I liue but poore" (I.63-64), while Studioso's rejection of Ingenioso is based on another Consiliodorus axiom, "Learninge and pouertie will euer kiss" (I.76):

> I know that schollers comonlie be poore
> And that the dull worlde there good partes neglecte.
> A schollers coate is plaine, lowlie his gate:
> Contente consists not in the highest degree.
>
> (V.640-43)

Remarkably, Ingenioso is the only false poet in The Pilgrimage who does not succeed in tempting Philomusus and Studioso to join him temporarily. It is also ironic, considering Ingenioso's later role in the trilogy--though at the same time the Pilgrimage playwright's ability to withstand Ingen-

ioso's attractions is an interesting internal argument against that writer having had a hand in the Return plays. Yet the cynic's final words in The Pilgrimage are prophetic. He warns Philomusus and Studioso:

> Farewell, and take heede I take youe not napping twentie yeares henc in a viccars seate, asking for the white cowe with the blacke foote, or els interpretinge Pueriles Confabulationes to a companie of seauen yeare olde apes.
>
> (V.651-54)

Unfortunately, it takes nowhere near twenty years for the youths' Parnassian visions to be so basely leveled: in The First Return Philomusus and Studioso unhappily undertake the roles of sexton and tutor.

One would expect the neatly structured Pilgrimage to come to an end at this point. The youths have traveled through the lands of logic, rhetoric, poetry and philosophy, and have successfully rejected the false scholar-poets who tempted them to forsake the pilgrimage along the way. They have been educated in the required academic disciplines, as well as in some of the ways of men. But before the formal conclusion, the author has inserted a brief comic interlude, a touch of anti-masque. Dromo, a stage manager, draws a Clown on stage with a rope, bidding him to perform: "Dost thou not knowe a playe cannot be without a ßlowne?" (V.664-65).

The sophisticated Cambridge audience might well have expected the Clown to introduce a grosser kind of comedy than that they had already seen in The Pilgrimage--something along the lines suggested by Dromo:

> Why if thou canst but drawe thy mouth awrye, laye thy legg ouer thy staffe, sawe a peece of cheese asunder with thy dagger, lape vp drinke on the earth, I warrant thee, theile laughe mightilie.
>
> (V.670-73)

But the joke here is literary, Dromo having lifted his notion of a clown from the pages of Sidney's Defense:[32]

> Clownes haue bene thrust into playes by head & shoulders, euer since Kempe could make a scuruey face, and therefore reason thou shouldst be drawne in with a cart rope.
>
> (V.665-68)

Moreover, at the very moment that the playwright echoes Sidney's witty censure of irrelevant slapstick, he is himself evoking laughter by means of it.

The Pilgrimage Clown, however, does not sink to Dromo's low expectations. His humor is verbal rather than physical, his Beckett-like wit almost metaphysical. Having been dragged on stage by an opportunist manager, the Clown asks why: "What

[32] Sidney (on the subject of "mongrel tragi-comedy"): "But besides these gross absurdities, how all their plays be neither right tragedies, nor right comedies, mingling kings and clowns, not because the matter so carrieth it, but thrust in clowns by head and shoulders, to play a part in majestical matters, with neither decency nor discretion . . . ," Apology, ed. Shepherd, p. 135.
Leishman also refers the reader to a passage in Hall's Virgidemiarum, Book I, Satire III (p. 129n.).

now, thrust a man into the comon wealth, whether hee will or noe? What the deuill should I doe here?" (ll. 662-63). When Dromo fails to give him a satisfactory answer, the Clown wittily suggests that he is there only to fill a time gap--which is, in a sense, true: "This is fine y faith: nowe, when they haue noe bodie to leaue on the stage, the[y] bringe mee vp, & which is worse, tell mee not what I shoulde saye" (675-77). Left alone on stage to say something for himself, he puts his case directly to the audience: "Gentles, I dare saie youe looke for a fitt of mirthe . . . " (677-78). And so finally he defends himself the only way a performer can: he puts on a dramatic mask.

The role that the Clown chooses to play is exactly what it should be: he, too, would be a scholar-poet. A comic false poet, he presents his audience with "a proper newe loue letter of mine to the tune of Put on the smock a mundaye" (ll. 679-80), a grossly rhetorical pastiche of inappropriate metaphors, colloquial diction and dethroned gods:

> O my louely Nigra, pitty the paine of my liuer: that litell gallowes Cupid hath latelie prickt mee in the breech with his great pin, and almoste kilde mee thy woodcocke with his birdbolte. Thou hast a prettie furrowed forheade, a fine lecherous eye, me thinkes I see the bawde Venus keeping a bawdie house in thy lookes, Cupid standing like a Pandar at the doore of thy lipps.
>
> (V.682-88)

A comic false scholar as well, he offers his love letter as a model of epistolary composition: "How like you maisters,

has anie yonge man a desire to copie this, that he may haue formâ epistolae conscribendae?" (ll. 688-90). Having achieved these Parnassian heights, the Clown waxes in ambition and announces that he would play a king: "Now if I could but make a fine scuruey face I were a kinge. O nature, why didest thou giue mee soe good a looke?" (689-92). But at this point Dromo returns to escort him off stage, and they exit, as unceremoniously as they entered.

Philomusus and Studioso re-enter for a brief conclusion according to the play's morality scheme. Philomusus announces:

> Nowe endes the trauell of on[e] tedious daye.
> In .4. years haue wee paste this wearie waye.
> Nowe are wee at the foote of this steepe hill
> Where straght our tired feet shall rest there fill.[33]
>
> (V.698-701)

Studioso then recapitulates the didactic structure of the play by recalling the four false poets:

> Nere let the pilgrims to this laurell mounte
> Fainte or retire in this theire pilgrimage
> Through the misleading of some amorous boye,
> Some swearinge vnthrifte, or some blockishe dolte,
> Or throughe the counsell of some wilie knaue.
>
> (V.708-10)

Philomusus and Studioso have met these temptations and, after some struggle, successfully rejected them, and they offer

[33] Leishman explicates: "Having resided four years from matriculation, and having performed the prescribed exercises, they have now proceeded Bachelor of Arts" (p. 131).

their experience to those who come after them--many members of the play's original audience. The Pilgrimage protagonists have shown the moral and intellectual strength needed to overcome the poetastical potential that threatens every artist, proving their "worthiness" (Consiliodorus, I.56) by maintaining their integrity despite the arduousness of the journey. Finally, they reaffirm Consiliodorus' judgment that the unique joys of Parnassus are not only worth suffering for, but are themselves adequate reward for the poet-pilgrim.

At the very end of The Pilgrimage--the only play of the trilogy that attempts a positive statement of the ideals of poetry--we are given but a glimpse of Parnassus: "yonder laurell shadie groue" (V.702), eternally green, and filled with "the Muses tunefull harmonie" (712). To the successful pilgrims, it is an elevated and distant Arcadia, where "all good wittes" (717) can function removed from the anti-artistic pressures of normal society. Philomusus' vision is idyllic:

> Let vulgar wittes admire the cõmon songes,
> Ile lie with Phoebus by the Muses springes
> Where wee will sit free fro' all enuies rage
> And scorne eache earthlie Gullio of this age.
>
> (V.713-16)

But with the hindsight knowledge of the complete Parnassus trilogy, we can see an ominous note in Philomusus' naive confidence. For the message of The Return from Parnassus is that although Gullio can be scorned, he cannot be ignored.

Part II. The First Part of *The Return from Parnassus*

. . . euery man, that writes in verse, is not a *Poet*; you haue of the *Wits*, that write verses, and yet are no *Poets*: they are *Poets* that liue by it, the poore fellowes that liue by it.

Jonson, *Epicoene* (II.iii.109-12)

Most other trades and professions, after some seven years' prenticeship, are enabled by their craft to live of themselves. . . . Only scholars methinks are most uncertain, unrespected, subject to all casualties and hazards. . . .

Let him happily escape all these hazards . . . with a body of brass, and is now consummate and ripe; he hath profited in his studies and proceeded with all applause; after many expenses, he is fit for preferment. Where shall he have it? He is as far to seek it as he was (after twenty years' standing) at the first day of his coming to the university. For what course shall he take, being now capable and ready? The most parable and easy, and about which many are employed, is to teach a school, turn lecturer or curate, and for that he shall have falconer's wages, ten pound per annum and his diet or some small stipend so long as he can please his patron or the parish. If they approve him not (for usually they do but a year or two, as inconstant as they that cried "Hosanna" one day and "Crucify Him" the other), servingman-like, he must go look a new master. If they do, what is his reward? . . .

To say truth, 'tis the common fortune of most scholars to be servile and poor, to complain pitifully, and lay open their wants to their respectless patrons . . . and--which is too common in those dedicatory epistles--for hope of gain to lie, flatter, and with hyperbolical elogiums and commendations to magnify and extol an illiterate unworthy idiot for his excellent virtues whom they should rather, as Machiavel observes, vilify and rail at downright for his most notorious villanies and vices.

Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*
"Love of Learning, or Overmuch Study: With a Digression of the Misery of Scholars and Why the Muses are Melancholy"
(I, II, iii, 15)

Chapter 2. Questioning Consiliodorus

The First Part of The Return from Parnassus is almost certainly a new play by a new author. The external evidence for a new author is in the Prologue, which speaks of the author of The Pilgrimage in a manner strongly indicating someone other than the author of the play being presented.[1] Spoken by the Stagekeeper, the Prologue describes the misfortunes suffered by the Pilgrimage author following the production of his play--certainly a compelling illustration of the central theme of the new play, the discontent of scholars.

As the play opens, a Prologue speaker appears, but after his first word, "Gentle--," the Stagekeeper rudely cuts him off and gives him a tongue-lashing on the vanity of the conventional social flattery of the audience,[2] sarcastically observing that the Pilgrimage author got no reward for his authorial humility:

> Howe, gentle saye youe, cringinge parasite?
> That scrapinge legg, that doppinge curtisie,
> That fawninge bowe, those sycophants smoothe tearmes
> Gained our stage muche fauoure, did they not?
>
> (ll. 1-4)

[1] This material is quoted and discussed above, pp. 42-3.

[2] Saunders, speaking of the customary flattery of Elizabethan literary audiences, says, "the audience was elevated, being addressed as 'all courteous gentlemen, readers, scholars and whosoever else affects the studie of poetrie', or in similar terms . . . These Renaissance writers would have liked to give the impression that their literature was written by gentry, for gentry, and about gentry" (The Profession of English Letters, p. 60).

The Stagekeeper's angry defiance strikes a new note in the trilogy. His dismissal of the Prologue speaker, in which he satirically defies an unappreciative audience, is an indirect assertion of artistic superiority:

> Sirra be gone, you play noe prologue here,
> Call noe rude hearer gentle, debonaire.
> Wele spende no flatteringe on this carpinge croude,
> Nor with gold tearmes make each rude dullard proude.
>
> (11. 14-17)

The implication of these lines is the decidedly un-Elizabethan notion that true gentility lies in the quality of a man's response to art--a theme that the Second Return playwrights come back to for the conclusion of the trilogy. The Stagekeeper's exit couplet--"A Christmas toy thou haste; carpe till thy deathe,/ Our muses praise depends not on thy breathe" (18-19)--daringly suggests that the play has its own artistic values that do not depend on audience response. And yet the defense of poetry here, as throughout the Return plays, is made only via indirection, the irony thus also exposing the raw wounded pride of the rejected scholar-poet.

The angry First Return Stagekeeper, however--not unlike Asper in Every Man Out of His Humour--is more bitter and self-righteous than the play he introduces. For The First Return is clearly a comedy--a comedy with a serious satiric moral to be sure, but a work that always retains its balanced sense of good humor. Steering clear of the programmatic didacticism of The Pilgrimage and the confused cynicism of The

Second Return, the extremely well-written and well-constructed First Return is in its own way the most successful Parnassus Play.

A more well-tempered indicator of The First Return's theme and tone is the play's conclusion:

> Ing. If schollers wants would end with our short scene,
> Than should our litell scene end more content.
>
> Stud. But schollers still must liue in discontent:
> What reason than our scene should end content?
>
> Phil. Till then our actes some happier fortuns see
> Wele banishe from our stage all mirth and glee.
>
> Ing. What euer schollers
> Stud. discontented be
> Phil. Lett none but them
> All. giue vs a Plaudite.
>
> Plaudite.
>
> (ll. 1564-72)

The St. John's players use the "Til then . . . " formula of native moral satire to explain that their play is a satiric complaint. As for their intended audience, though the reading of the final couplet is difficult, they seem to be re-articulating the self-directedness of the Prologue by saying that The First Return is a play presented by discontented scholar-poets for discontented scholar-poets.

In form The First Return can be very generally typed as a Tudor interlude. I do not intend to make much of this classification; it is only the generic identification of the Second Part of The Return with the professional comical sat-

ires that is worth extended analysis. Yet in turning from The Pilgrimage to The First Return, it is helpful to refer to the traditionally accepted historical development of Tudor drama from the allegorical representation of the conflict between good and evil, to the interludes that encompassed a variety of secular interests, often appealing to select audiences, the "essential requisites [of which] were brevity and wit."[3]

The most noticeable new feature of the interlude is the introduction of concrete characters, generally social or professional types. The structure still follows that of the progressive pageant, the protagonists encountering a series of worldly types instead of moral abstractions--the dramatic survey of social types sometimes referred to as Estates Moralities.[4] The antagonists of The First Return are marked by this social specificity--Ingenioso's wealthy but barbarous Patron; Gullio, the phony courtier, another of Ingenioso's patrons; the bourgeois family that abuses Studioso as tutor; William Perceval, the clownish churchwarden who hires and fires Philomusus as village sexton; and the draper, the tailor and the innkeeper, middle-class merchants of the town of Cambridge. While The First Return does not present the topically real London that is the setting of The Second Return,

[3] The description is C. F. Tucker Brooke's in The Tudor Drama (1911; rpt. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1964), pp.69-71.

[4] Brian Gibbons, Jacobean City Comedy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 21-24.

its social texture is clearly different from the allegorical fabric of The Pilgrimage.

The most interesting difference between the first two Parnassus Plays, however, is not formal, but thematic and tonal. In The Pilgrimage, the satire of the anti-Parnassians is set against a background of positive values, an attempt to articulate an ideal of the poetic function. The First Return brings the graduated scholar-poets into the post-pilgrimage world to test their Parnassian principles in realistic situations. Instead of confronting false poets, they must now face their societal antagonists--the employers and patrons of scholars and poets, and the merchants of the material goods men need in order to survive. By thus changing the milieu of the trilogy, the new playwright turns from the internal problem of individual artistic integrity to an attack on a hostile society. Instead of a moral allegory of the true scholar-poet, the new play is a satiric complaint about the compromised position of the artist in Elizabethan society. The First Return's epitaph could be Studioso's response to Ingenioso's railing against an unappreciative patron. Sounding uncharacteristically like Pierce Penniless, Studioso, the stern idealist of The Pilgrimage, says, "Well, Ingenioso, the worlde is badd, and wee schollers are ordayned to be beggars" (I.371-72).

[5] " . . . I tost my imagination a thousand waies, to see if I could finde any meanes to relieve my estate: But all my thoughts consorted to this conclusion, that the world was vncharitable, & I ordaind to be miserable" (McKerrow, I, 158).

The new tone of The First Return is embodied by Ingenioso, the prevailing spirit of the play. This is not to say that Ingenioso is the spokesman for The First Return playwright--as Tiresias is not Shakespeare's in Troilus and Cressida. The First Return as a whole retains a more positive vision of the poetic function, and its satire is generally wielded in a comic spirit of good humor. Ingenioso's cynicism does not prevail in the trilogy until The Second Return. Nevertheless, The First Return's departures from The Pilgrimage are considerable.

Whereas the Pilgrimage author dismissed Ingenioso with ease, the First Return playwright takes him--and his cynical view of the scholar-poet's social dilemma--seriously. Joining Philomusus and Studioso as their colleague and guide, Ingenioso becomes a third protagonist. The satirist's sour predictions at the end of The Pilgrimage become the plot of the new play. Philomusus and Studioso, now having proceeded Masters of Arts, go out into the world to try to earn a living. Begrudgingly, they assume typical positions offered by society: the scholarly poet becomes a menial sexton in a village church with a silly congregation, the poetical scholar a tutor to the spoiled son of a wealthy and ignorant middle-class family. Ingenioso pursues patronage. In the end, all of the scholar-poets' relationships with society fail.

In one important sense, The First Return confirms the Pilgrimage principle of a perpetual conflict of values between artist and society: the relationships fail because of

mutual dissatisfaction. But there is a shift at this point in the trilogy to an acknowledgment that societal antagonism does somehow affect the artist. Consiliodorus had preached a removal from society and its materialistic values. For him, choosing to be a scholar-poet meant opting for a wholly different set of values; if the poet can maintain his self-integrity in the face of social hostility, Parnassus will be its own reward. But the scholar-poets out in the world of The First Return find that they cannot--as Consiliodorus implied they could--remove themselves entirely from the existing social system. And while the rejection of the Pilgrimage principles is not fully explicit, The First Return introduces into the trilogy the uncomfortable feeling that the spiritual rewards of Parnassus are somehow not equivalent to the physical and psychological toll taken on the poet-pilgrim. Parnassus may, after all, not suffice.

The physical difficulties of living as a professional writer have to do with basic human needs--the realities of food and shelter and rest. In his entrance speech in The First Return, Studioso complains to the arts:

> Wee, foolish wee, haue sacrificed our youth
> At youre coulde Altars euerie winters morne;
> Our barckinge stomacks haue had slender fare,
> Our eyes haue bene deluded of there sleepe;
>
> (I.90-93)

The grievances--to be repeated throughout the Return plays--assert the impossibility of living by spirit alone, sans

bread. Indeed, in being denied bodily sustenance, the scholar-poet ironically winds up placing a great deal of emphasis on material acquisition; having nothing, he must devote too much of himself to getting something. Thus, while the Return protagonists scorn material wealth, they also want a share in that world that excludes them--at their boldest, a share proportionate to their own high evaluation of themselves.

The more disturbing perception of the new play is the realization that societal hostility also takes its psychological toll of the artist. The protagonists of The First Return, Ingenioso as well as Philomusus and Studioso, do retain the pride of the Parnassian ideal, Consiliodorus' principle that the artist know his own "worthiness" (Pilg., I.56). But the world fails to honor them, and they are left empty-handed, caught between a sense of their own worth and society's refusal to honor it. In The First Return the young men do not so much reject Consiliodorus as question him, fearing that a sense of their own worth is insufficient, not only to maintain them physically, but to bear them up spiritually. In a humanistic view of the arts, the question being raised is formidable: how can the artist know his own (human) worth in a social--i.e. human--vacuum? On a psychological level, too, isolation seems impossible.

Finding themselves unable to function within a hostile society, the scholar-poets re-direct their efforts to an attack on the materialistic society that excludes them. Indeed, at times their assertion of their own superiority seems to in-

crease in proportion to the discovery of just how little society does value them. But their pride is qualified by a new note of doubt--doubt about the validity of the artist's self-evaluation in an anti-artistic world. Their anger, directed primarily against the non-artistic world, sometimes turns inward, issuing in belligerent self-defense and, occasionally, even in self-abuse. The role the rejected Parnassian assumes in the world is an uneasy combination of proud isolation and satiric attack.

As Consiliodorus presents the principles of The Pilgrimage in one important speech at the beginning of that play (I. 34ff.), so Ingenioso delivers the logos of The First Return in the first act of the new play. But instead of a long set speech in formal verse--Consiliodorus' "tedious speache" (his own words, l. 103) goes on for 77 lines--Ingenioso is witty and terse:

> I see wit is but a phantasme and Idea, a quareling shadowe, that will seldome dwell in the same roome with a full purse, but comonly is the idle follower of a forlorne creature. Nay it is a deuill that will neuer leaue a man till it hath brought him to beggarie, a malicious spirit that delightes in a close libell or an open Satyre.
>
> (I.165-71)

Ingenioso's fanciful words do not at all contradict the Pilgrimage principle of a fundamental opposition between intellectual and material pursuits. Ingenioso's 'wit will seldom dwell with a full purse' is really a variation on the old axiom, "gold runns to the boore" (Pilg., I.63). What is so

radically different about Ingenioso's observation is the way he says it. He is a cynic, and his perspective is critical, skeptical and contemptuous; but he is also a wit, and his method of attack is indirect, via comedy. He is a satirist.

Ingenioso handles wit with one of the favorite techniques of Renaissance satire, the ironic blame of a praiseworthy object.[5a] Wit is fairly accused of being a shadow because it is unable to provide its owner with the basics of survival. Ingenioso concludes:

> Besides, it is an vnfortunate thinge: I haue obserued that that heade where it dwelleth hath seldome a good hatt, or the back it belonges vnto, a good sute of apparell.
>
> (I.171-74)

The charge here is reminiscent of Madido's suspicion that "This Parnassus and Hellicon are but the fables of the poetes" (Pilg., II.199). Ingenioso's immediate problem is poverty, and his hunger is no "phantasme," the cold no mere "Idea"; "As for my state," he reports, "I am not put to my shiftes; for I wante shiftes of shirtes, bandes, and all thinges els . . . " (I.150-52)

Sustaining Ingenioso's complex point of view is something of a rhetorician's juggling trick. For he manages to make a legitimate complaint about the ineffectuality of his mental abilities, without compromising his considerable intellectual pride. The immateriality of his wit is its downall . . . and its glory. The stylistic vehicle for Ingen-

[5a] Norman Knox, The Word Irony and its Context, 1500-1755 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1961).

ioso's ambivalence is irony. When Philomusus points out that Ingenioso does indeed live by his wit--"I am glad, y faith, thy father hath lefte thee suche a good stocke of witt to set vp withall; why, thou cariest store of landes and liuinges in thy heade" (I.161-63)--Ingenioso protests, " . . . I had rather haue more in my purse, and less in my heade" (164-65). The witty indirection allows the satirist to avoid saying "that which is not"--to retain his sense of ambiguity without compromising what he is sure of. This, after all, is one of the great moral and intellectual freedoms of satire--to maintain values not only in the face of external hostility, but also in the face of self-doubt.

Ingenioso's speech is also important as the play's central statement of what could be called the social psychology of satire--the observation that neglected or abused wit is ultimately channeled into satire. This is the literary moral of the Return plays: satire is the price a society must pay for disdaining its artists. Ingenioso is saying that like it or not, society does have its scholar-poets, and when they are rejected by the community at large, they will turn on it, like animals at bay. Such verbal defense is instinctive, and as necessary as the opposition between spiritual and material values. Studioso's response picks up on this idea--though the former idealist still holds out some hope for the achievements of wit:

> But husbande thy witt, if thou beest wise,
> its all the goodes and cattels thy father

> lefte thee. Nourishe it with oyles and waters; if that be gone onc, thers noe waye but thou muste either plaie the counterfeit criple, or else beare a parte in the consorte of Three blinde beggars.
>
> (I.180-84)

The grim alternative to artistic pride is that an unappreciative society will reduce its wittiest scholar-poets to beggars and balladeers.

The playwright's ambivalence between Consiliodorus' principles and Ingenioso's cynicism is evident in the altered characters of Philomusus and Studioso. The two heroes, once such absolute idealists, now have disturbing questions about the arts--as a livelihood, and as a spiritual ideal. They enter in Act I reading a letter from Consiliodorus in which he severs the parental ties and sends the youths out into the world--unprovided for, except by their university training. When Studioso first speaks, we are taken aback by his bitter renunciation of his chosen way of life. Beginning with a phrase borrowed from the Pilgrimage Ingenioso (l. 609), Studioso remonstrates:

> Fie coosninge artes, is this the meede you yelde
> To youre leane followers, youre palied ghostes?
> Hencfoorth your shrines be worshipt by noe knee,
> Noe foolish tongue adore youre deitie.
>
> (I.86-89)

Philomusus joins him for a passage of sharp stichomythia:

P. Thartes are vnkinde that doe theire sonns neglect.
S. Vnkinder frendes that schollers doe reiecte.
P. Dissemblinge artes lookt smoothlie on our youth.
S. But loade our age with discontent and ruthe.
P. Friendes foolishlie vs to this woe doe traine.
S. Ficke[l] Appollo promised future gaine.

(I.115-20)

But their anger about the unfulfilled hopes that Parnassus once seemed to hold for them is subdued by their great sense of loss, which transforms every satiric complaint into lamentation--as illustrated in Philomusus' opening speech:

The partiall heauens doe fauoure eche rude boore,
Mackes drouiers riche, and makes each scholler poore.
Well may my face weare sorowes liuerie
Whiles angry I do chide this luckless ayre
Where I am learninges outcast, fortuns scorne.
Nowe wandring I muste seeke my destinie,
And spende the remnante of my wretched life
Mongst russet coates and mossy idiottes.
Nere shall I heare the Muses sing againe,
Whose Musicke was like Nectar to my soule.

(I.100-109)

The stichomythia exchange similarly veers into Arcadian elegy:

P. Adew Parnassus, I must pack away.
S. Fountaines farewell, where beautuos nimphes do plaie.
P. In Hellicon noe more Ile dipp my quill.
S. Ile sing noe more vpon Parnassus hill.
P. Lets talke noe more, since noe relife wee finde.
S. In vaine to skore our losses on the winde.

(I.123-28)

Act I also concludes on an ambivalent note. In their anger and shame and new-found cynicism, Philomusus and Studioso have sought out Ingenioso for comfort and guidance. As they prepare for their melancholy departure from Parnassus,

the protagonists comment on their paradoxical position:

> Stud. Muses adewe, longe may youre groues growe greene,
> Though you to vs too, too vnkinde haue beene.
> Phil. Farewell Appollo, ere will I adore thee,
> Though thy poore handes not able to reliue mee.
> Ing. Youe beutuous nimphes of Hellicon adew:
> How euer poore, yet I will worship youe.
>
> (I.441-46)

But as they are about to set off into the wide world, suddenly they hear sweet music: Stage direction. "The Muses playe" (l. 451). As Ingenioso observes, the belated consolation is ironic:

> Peace, what musicke is this? Marrie I think
> the Muses bestowe a fitt of mirth vpon there
> poore attendantes at our departure.
>
> (I.451-53)

Yet here in the first act of The First Return the moment is also still truly moving:

> Stud. Thanks, gentle nimphes, for this sweet harmonie:
> Soe musick yealdes some ease to miserie.
> Phil. Thanks, sweet Apollo, for this smoother strayne;
> To dwell with thee is ioy, to parte is paine.
>
> (I.456-59)

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that in the midst of all this melancholy the playwright's overall commitment to comedy is preserved here by the presence of Luxurio, the First Return's updated Madido, who is given the last word on the poet's dilemma--"Hange sorow, care will kill a catt" (468). The ethereal musical interlude is a last note of Parnassian

idealism lingering from "the Muses tunefull harmonie" promised at the end of The Pilgrimage (l. 712). It tolls for Consiliodorus.

Consiliodorus himself does appear twice in The First Return--at the very beginning, and at the close of Act III. No longer the presiding spirit, his chief function seems to be to remove himself from the remainder of the trilogy. He has no direct contact with Philomusus and Studioso, and serves rather as a chorus. Consiliodorus first enters right after the Stagekeeper exits, and for a symbolic moment the stage portrays the ambivalence within the Parnassus Plays; for the stage is not really big enough for both of them: the arrogant self-defense of the young man is too different from the hermetic pride of the old one.

Of much greater importance, however, is the thematic transmutation of the character of Consiliodorus. The new playwright has made definite alterations, and some of them are drastic; essentially, they bring us back to the problem of the Return plays' subversion of the ideals of The Pilgrimage. In addition, the fundamental seriousness of this character is, in The First Return, somewhat undercut by the comedy of Leonard, Consiliodorus' clownish carrier, who shares the scenes with his employer . . . and repeatedly threatens to upstage him. Altogether, the reader gets an uncomfortable feeling that Consiliodorus' appearance is perfunctory--perhaps the playwright's attempt to respectably link his work to the

original Pilgrimage, and to explain the character's disappearance from the rest of the trilogy. For considering the new interests and point of view of The Return from Parnassus, it is clear that there will be no need for the old counselor in the Second Part of The Return.

Consiliodorus is utilized to set the plot in action. He tells us that seven years have passed, making Philomusus and Studioso Masters of Arts. But he is now unable to give them any further support, thereby forcing them to leave Parnassus and make their way in the world. He says that he had hoped to provide for the youths, but his plans have come to naught, and what little he has " . . . must serue to warme/ My liues December . . . " (I.70-71). Throughout his speech (ll. 59ff.) there is an unfamiliar note of discontent--the disturbing idea that Consiliodorus had expected some material reward for his Arcadian labors: "But nowe when I shoulde reape what I had sowne/ Thers nought but thornes and thistles to be mowne" (66-67). This point becomes explicit when he turns to the youths' future prospects:

> If they haue liued by a watchinge lampe,
> Prysinge each minute of a flying houre;
> If they haue spent there oyle, there strength, there store
> In artes quicke subtelties and learninges lore,
> Then will god Cynthius (if a god he be)
> Keepe these his sonns from baser pouertie.
>
> (I.74-79)

If they have been faithful scholars, then Apollo will reward them! Consiliodorus reiterates this anti-Parnassian sentiment

with the curse that if they have neglected their studies, "Then lett them liue in want perpetuallie" (82). His final line--"I knowe this well, artes seldome beg there breade" (85)--is a practical man's proverb that seriously undermines his motto in The Pilgrimage, "Ile be a scholler though I liue but poore" (I.64).

Leonard, whose plot function is to deliver these unhappy tidings to Philomusus and Studioso, combines the innocence of Shakespeare's Launce (Two Gentlemen of Verona) with Launcelot Gobbo's (The Merchant of Venice) sense of his own (inherited) dignity. The character is both a reflection of Consiliodorus and a foil to him: Leonard allies himself to his master in age and experience--"Ile tell them whats fit for men of there hauiour. By that time they haue seene as manie winters as I and youe haue done, thele be a litel wiser" (I.24-26); but his experience is practical and his concerns material. Thus even on this comic sub-plot level the First Return playwright returns to the central question of how a man can live in this world, and even here we sense the conflict between material and spiritual values.

For Leonard, wisdom means good common sense: it alone can provide you with warmth, clothing and food, and the know-how to care for your possessions. His father--the carrier before him, of course--taught him to live prudently, and he praises that counsel in some detail, concluding:

> Oh he was a wise man, he coulde giue such fine rules concerning the liquoring of bootes, for the houlding out of water (nay list you sir), he coulde haue tolde by a cowes water, how manie gallontes of milke shee woulde haue giuen, foretolde by the motion of his dun horse his taile the change of the weather, insomuche that he was supposed amonge his neighboures to haue gathered vp some art in the vniuersitie.
>
> (I.46-52)

The earthy quality of the "arts" that concern the carrier--the everyday touch and smell of boots and shoes, of breeches, points and jerkins, of loaves, of awls and hemp, of cow's milk and cow's urine--by their very commonplace substantiality indirectly challenge the spiritual values of the scholar-poet. Even Leonard's style of speaking--his colloquial expressions, repetitious phrases and disjointed sentence structure--constitute a critique of Arcadian eloquence:

> I thanke god M^r^ none of my kinred weere fooles, my father (god rest his soule) was wonte to tell mee (god rest his soule, he was as honest a carrier as euer whip horse) he tolde me, I saie (I remember at that time he sate vpon a stoole by the fire warminge his bootes) that these yonge schollers woulde spend Gods Abbies, if they had them, and then woulde sende there fathers hom false notaries.
>
> (I.29-35)

These lines also illustrate the carrier's anti-intellectual prejudices. He has been taught that scholars are wastrels, and that the worst of them would cheat their own fathers. Their greatest fault is an inability to cope with worldly needs, and a consequent need for homespun advice and chas-

tisement. Finally, Leonard informs us that the values held by his father enabled him to do what Consiliodorus is unable to--to hand down to the next generation a viable inheritance: Leonard memorializes his father, "Well, this bagg was his, and I meane for his sake to leaue it to my sonne" (11. 53-54). Thus while Leonard is essentially a comic character, at times becoming almost a parody of himself (he exits: "But I think by this time Tib and Cutt haue eaten the prouender I gaue them, Ile sadle them, and be iogging forwarde," 11.54-55), his entire lifestyle also stands as a naturalistic foil to that of the old shepherd-poet. They have lived according to different conceptions of wisdom, and they have reaped different rewards.

Consiliodorus reappears in the middle of the play (end of Act III, 11. 1041ff.), where Leonard brings him word of the youths' departure from Parnassus. The news, although expected, embitters the old counselor, and his last speech seriously undermines his Pilgrimage principles. He begins with an awful curse that echoes the cynicism of Studioso's opening speech, "Fie coosninge artes . . . " (I.86ff.):

> Hencforthe let none be sent by carefull syres,
> Nor sonns nor kinred, to Parnassus hill,
> Since waywarde fortune thus rewardes our coste
> With discontent, theire paines with pouertie.
>
> (III. 1066-69)

The "discontent" of poverty is now considered too keen a thorn for the pilgrim to bear. And though Consiliodorus

makes a clear distinction between the 'liberal' and the 'mechanic' arts (1070-71), he now views the discrepancy in the social conditions of those who practice these arts as cause for complaint.

Consiliodorus then makes the observation that " . . . noe Maecenas in this niggard age/ Guerdons they sonns of Muses and of skill" (1072-73). This niggard age! A conventional enough complaint--but not in the mouth of Consiliodorus, who in The Pilgrimage held the poet's dilemma to be eternal and universal. But for a moment, the First Return playwright, like Spenser in The Teares of the Muses, singles out England for blame. She is accused by its artists of being an island of ignorance in a world renewing itself with a love of learning. Too pessimistic at this point to consider the possibility of reform, Consiliodorus grimly prophesies the second coming of the Blattant Beast of poetry, "the tyrant of the northe,/ Rough Barbarisme" (1086-87):

> My ioyless minde foretells this sad event:
> That learning needs muste leaue this duller clime
> To be possest by rude simplicitie,
> And thither hasten with a nimble winge
> Where artes doe florishe like the gaudy springe.
>
> (III.1074-78)

In uncharacteristic choler, Consiliodorus curses English society for its disdain:

> Hencfoorth night Rauens nessle in our trees,
> And scrichinge owles dwell in those leauie cages
> Where erst did chaunt they springtimes pretty pages.
> Neuer dare anie boulde attemptinge pen

> Seeke to expell the Tyrant of the morthe,
> Rough Barbarisme, that in those ackhorns times
> Comanded our whole Ilande as his owne.
>
> (III.1082-88)

The English reading public deserves whatever non-poetry it gets!

Moments later, Consiliodorus seems to realize his own overreaction, and the scene closes with a dramatic reversal back to the principles of The Pilgrimage. Consiliodorus makes one last attempt to place the blame on the external situation: "Pray god the times be faultie of this ill" (1090). But in the very next line he admits, "I feare mee, I, the times be innocent" (1091). The only true measure of a poet is his own "worthiness"; if there is failure, the fault must lie in the man, not in "the times." True, at last, to his own philosophy, Consiliodorus wonders if Philomusus and Studioso have not been guilty "In trewantinge there time, wastinge whole yeares,/ Without or feedinge time, or haruest hope" (1093-94). Leaving this disturbing question unanswered, Consiliodorus removes himself from his protégés--and from the Parnassus trilogy--and Stoically prepares himself for "Deaths nighte" (1100).

Once more Leonard shares the scene with Consiliodorus, and although he is less important here than in Act I, he still serves as a comic reflection of his employer. The fatigue and disease in the carrier's naturalistic world echo the intellectual malaise experienced by the shepherd-poet.

Leonard reports: "Oh I haue had great affliction since I sawe you laste. Tib is fallen sore sicke of the Glanders, and Dun poore iade, I thinke he hath eaten a feather" (ll. 1044-46). Even at his dramatic point of exit, Consiliodorus' high seriousness is undercut by the commonplace and the comic.

Chapter 3. Ingenioso and Nashe: The New Professionals

The new tone in the trilogy is heralded by the entrance of Ingenioso, the symbolic and dramatic center of the two Return plays. Just before he appears, Studioso, sounding more like Ingenioso than Studioso, says, "I here that Ingenioso is in towne, folowinge a goutie patron by the smell, hoping to wringe some water frõ a flinte" (I.136-38). When Ingenioso appears, the youths greet him warmly, and in his own satiric prose style: "Phil. Giue mee that hande of thine thats not asquainted with the corrupting metall" (144-45). This radical change of heart toward a character who had been dismissed as a "wilie knaue" at the end of The Pilgrimage (V.710) should alert us to the changes that are to come.

Ingenioso is the type of disappointed scholar, enlivened by the topicality of Nashe--that is, a loose combination of the historical figure and his quasi-autobiographical literary personae.[1] Ingenioso's significance in the Return plays clearly makes Nashe the most important Elizabethan figure for an understanding of the background of the Parnassus Plays. As we have already seen in The Pilgrimage, Nashe's wittily satiric prose was an important stylistic influence on the Parnassus playwrights--a point Leishman helpfully documents

[1] Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 71-79. Nashe died in 1601--according to Leishman, "almost certainly" after the performances of The Pilgrimage and The First Return (p.79). In The Second Return there is a reference to his death (I.310-19).

throughout his commentary. Beyond this direct literary influence is the whole fascinating figure of Nashe as a professional Elizabethan writer--his talent and energy, his self-advertisement and his combativeness . . . and his numerous weaknesses and failures. Nashe, as Hibbard says, is "something of a paradox," and this is very much to the point in grasping his significance for the Parnassus trilogy. Hibbard explains:

> Yet this paradox also has a representative quality about it, for Nashe is in many ways the most Elizabethan of all our writers. . . . Nashe remains immersed in his own times and cannot detach himself from them. With the sharpest of eyes for the surface of life, he cannot see below the surface. He reflects the conflicts and contradictions of his age without fully realizing their nature. Filled with respect for the established order of things, he attacks society for failing to provide him with a suitable place and the means of livelihood; always ready to condemn ambition, he prides himself on his singularity and individualism; preaching the virtue of submission to authority, he repeatedly fell foul of authority and lived to see the publication of his works prohibited.[2]

If Nashe is the key background figure of the Parnassus Plays, his most relevant work is Pierce Penilesse his Supplication to the Diuell, Nashe's highly individual handling of "the old complaint of the scholar, that the world has no use for the things of the spirit and will gladly leave its artists and thinkers to starve."[3] In Pierce Penilesse, as

[2] Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction, pp. ix-x.

[3] Hibbard, Thomas Nashe, p. 69.

in the Return plays, there is the cynical documentation of the low social position of the professional poet, the angry complaint against an unappreciative society, the writer's refuge in witty satire, and, finally, his ambivalent presentation of the poet--an assertion of pride, checked by ironic self-deprecation. Hibbard comments:

> How Nashe managed to live at all during this lean time is something of a puzzle, but, characteristically, he contrived, nevertheless, to make literary capital out of his hardships. The very title of Pierce Penilesse, pronounced 'Purse Peniless' in Elizabethan English, is both an indication of the straits to which he was reduced and of the spirit in which he faced his difficulties. Feeling himself undeservedly neglected, he grumbles, but without losing his sense of humour. The opening words of the pamphlet establish the dominant tone in which complaint and self-mockery are mingled.[4]

Here is Pierce's opening, the lines that the Pilgrimage author saw fit to borrow for his Ingenioso:[5]

> Hauing spent many yeeres in studying how to liue, and liu'de a long time without mony: hauing tired my youth with follie, and surfetted my minde with vanitie, I began at length to looke backe to repentaunce, & addresse my endeuors to prosperitie: But all in vaine, I sate vp late, and rose earely, contended with the colde, and conuersed with scarcitie: for all my labours turned to losse, my vulgar Muse was despised & neglected, my paines not regarded, or slightly rewarded, and I my selfe (in prime of my best wit) laid open to pouertie. Wherevpon (in a malecontent humor) I accused my fortune, raild on my patrones, bit my pen, rent

[4] Thomas Nashe, p. 50.

[5] Quoted above, p. 79.

> my papers, and ragde in all points like a mad man.[6]

The First Return playwright uses Nashe as his model for the new professional writer. When Ingenioso first enters, we hear that he has already tried his fortunes, in print, in London. Apparently echoing Harvey on Nashe,[7] Ingenioso admits, "I remaine thrise humblie & most affectionately bounde to the right honorable printing house for my poore shiftes of apparell" (I.152-54). When (still imitating Harvey[7]) he adds that he has been "pasted to euerie poste in Paules churchyarde," and "like Dicke Pinner haue put out newe books of the maker" (11. 157-59), we know that we have left the heights of Parnassus for Grub Street.

In their affinity for Nashe--albeit reluctant--the Cambridge playwrights identify themselves with the group of writers (including Marlowe, Lyly, Peele, Lodge and Greene) who came to be known as the "university wits."[8] These young men, university-educated scholar-poets re-located in London, were members of a literary and intellectual elite who prided themselves on their intelligence, scholarship, talent and wit, and who were also known for their avant-garde attitudes and cavalier life styles. But what really distinguished

[6] McKerrow, I, 157.

[7] Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 143n.

[8] Harbage describes Nashe as "the chief linking figure between the scholar-playwrights of the eighties and those of the next decade" (Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p.100).

these men in the Elizabethan literary world was their economic status: they were writers by profession. The university wits--those in London, and those in training on the St. John's stage, were neither gentlemen amateurs nor unschooled ballad-peddlers; they were sons of the middle class who chose to utilize their formal educations for the purpose of supporting themselves within the existing social and economic system as poets.[9]

With the development of the printing and bookselling trades, and the growth of the reading (and purchasing) public,[10] the writers' steps toward professionalism were a means of breaking away from "the feudal system of literary patronage"[11]--or, at least, of supplementing a notoriously undependable source of income.[12] At its best, patronage

[9] On the new professionalism see Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England; also Saunders, The Profession of English Letters.

[10] See Henry Stanley Bennett, English Books and Readers, 1558-1603 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). Bennett, observing that literature comprised only a portion of the total production of Elizabethan books--about 25% in 1580-1603 (p. 269)--acknowledges that the professional literary authors had special economic problems, particularly in regard to patronage (p. 51).

[11] P. Thompson, "The Patronage of Letters under Elizabeth and James I," p. 281.

For a survey of kinds of patronage, see John F. Danby, Poets on Fortune's Hill (1952; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1966), Introduction.

[12] Miller says that by 1600 the printing press had made patronage obsolescent--though of course it still existed (p. 94).

offered the writer a select and appreciative audience under conditions that removed him from the taint of the public marketplace--a vision of Daniel creating his artistically and intellectually charged Musophilus for the deserving patron-poet Fulke Greville. Nashe conjures up the ideal in his tribute to Sidney at the beginning of Pierce Penilesse:

> Gentle Sir Phillip Sidney, thou knewst what belongd to a Scholler, thou knewst what paines, what toyle, what trauel, conduct to perfection: wel couldst thou giue euery Vertue his encouragement, euery Art his due, euery writer his desert: cause none more vertuous, witty, or learned than thy selfe.[13]

However, Nashe continues:

> But thou art dead in thy graue, and hast left too few successors of thy glory, too few to cherish the Sons of the Muses, or water those budding hopes with their plenty, which thy bounty erst planted.[13]

The great Maecenases are gone, and the few who aspire to replace them are the nouveaux riches, whose only claim to cultural influence lay in their fat purses, men like Ingenioso's "Signiour Barbarisme"--wealthy, conceited . . . and a cultural boor. Pierce complains:

> This is the lamentable condition of our Times, that men of Arte must seeke almes of Cormorantes, and those that deserue best, be kept vnder by Dunces, who count it a policie to keepe them bare, because they should follow their bookes the better: thinking belike,

[13] McKerrow, I, 159.

> that, as preferment hath made themselues idle, that were earst painefull in meaner places, so it would likewise slacken the endeuours of those Students that as yet striue to excell in hope of aduancement. A good policy to suppress superfluous liberalitie.[14]

The new professionals sought to remedy this situation by turning to the public marketplace. J. W. Saunders describes the circumstances:

> It was Tudor policy to recruit its nobility and gentility from loyal servants of lower- and middle-class origin. The registers of Oxford University reveal that of all those admitted between 1567 and 1622, 6635 or virtually half the total intake were the sons of plebeians. The sons of yeomen, whose golden age was now past, the sons of socially ambitious merchants and tradesmen, together with the younger sons of the country squires . . . made up a new middle class of intellectuals who thronged the Universities and Inns of Court, eager for social promotion. This class provided the Wits who made a career in the theatre and the poets who originated a literary profession. Earlier in the century their whole ambition was regular patronage, the key to social position, protection and financial security . . . But towards the end of the century patronage declined in volume, reliability and value, under the pressure of economic depression . . . More emphasis was therefore given to the actual cash rewards obtainable by writers. George Peele wrote the Honour of the Garter for the Earl of Northumberland, not to win patronage so much as the £3 dedication fee. Fuller tells a story of Spenser's expectation, not only of social promotion, but of a cash reward for the Faerie Queene. These first strivings towards an independent literary profession gave a new importance to the achievement of print.[15]

[14] McKerrow, I, 159-60.

[15] "The Stigma of Print," p. 141.

There were clearly advantages in the new system, the most obvious being the expanded market. A more complex aspect is the increased distance between the writer and his audience. Private patronage is a kind of sponsorship, implying approval and recommendation, and one can see how the patron's burden of responsibility could result in the encouragement of certain kinds of writing (e.g., works of high seriousness and morality) and the exclusion of others (low comedy or abusive satire). By contrast, the printers' and booksellers' interests are essentially financial, while the public purchaser need have no commitment to the book he buys other than an interest in it. Unlike the private patron, none of these parties need give his moral, intellectual or aesthetic approval to any work in which he shows an economic interest. As is well known, the Elizabethan book industry did have to show some concern for the moral qualities of the reading matter it offered the public.[16] Formal control was exercised by laws of state; more informal limitations were created by laws of public taste. A regular feature of published works was the printer's preface offering moral support --or apology--for his wares. Nevertheless, the observation remains valid that the new professionalism granted a degree of independence to the writer. To begin to comprehend this, one only has to realize that it was the daring capitalist enterprise of the public theater entrepreneurs, dependent on

[16] See Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England.

a broadly expanded public audience, that created the market (on stage, and later in print) for the plays of men like Shakespeare and Jonson. It seems highly unlikely, for example, that the outrageous plays of Christopher Marlowe ever would have been sponsored personally by a prominent member of the Queen's court or citizenry.

Yet from everything we know, the new system, too, was extremely hard on the professional writer of the 1590s. It was, of course, a time of transition, and as Thompson observes, "Certainly the desire to be free of the patron arose before the public could be relied upon, and for a long while patron and public went hand in hand."[17] A more comprehensive problem was that the professional writers were, in the long run, only trading a dependence on private wealth for more complex socio-economic relationships--first with middle-class artisans and merchants (the printers and booksellers), and, ultimately, with the tastes and values of the Elizabethan reading public. Miller observes that on an immediate economic level, the writers "were in effect servants of the stationers."[18]

> Publication was controlled by the Stationers' Company, which had safeguarded its own interests by laws but which had understandably (and profitably) neglected to provide protection for authors, who soon discovered that the profession provided not even minimal security. Other means of livelihood they had to find.[19]

[17] "The Patronage of Letters . . . ," p. 282.

[18] The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, p. ix.

McKerrow made a similar conjecture about Nashe's struggle to survive under the new system:

> The attempt to live by the pen alone was as the time quite a new thing, indeed I doubt if any yet had succeeded in doing it--unless perhaps Robert Greene for a few hard-worked years. Certainly Nashe could never have existed by the sale to the booksellers of those of his writings which are now known to us: by far the greater part of his income, small as it probably was, must have come to him from other sources.[20]

Beyond the writers' direct dependence on the stationers lay the whole quagmire of popular taste, which constantly raised the issue of forcing the scholar-poet to choose between compromising himself by obliging it, or maintaining his integrity at the risk of being rejected by his audience. Even for the new professional, then, the central problem of the old system persisted. As articulated in The Pilgrimage, the

[19] Miller, The Professional Writer . . ., pp. 10-11. A few pages later, Miller is even more negative: "With the notable exceptions of Shakespeare and Spenser, the lives of Elizabethan authors comprise case histories of poverty" (p.12).

[20] McKerrow, The Works of Thomas Nashe, V, 16.
The most extreme statement is made by Saunders: "These were no times to establish a literary profession through print. Only a cultural revolution, involving a complete revision of the relationship between writers and their audience, could effect any significant change. The printed-book audience was potentially the best of the day, ranging as it did from the courtiers at one end of the scale through the satellite gentry, the university and Inns-of-Court men, and the churchmen, to the solid mercantile public at the other. But in practice the printed word was circumscribed with so many non-literary considerations, of religious, political and economic kinds, that literature in our sense, remained, in all essential respects, confined to the Court and its environs" (The Profession of English Letters, p. 67).

non-artistic world has values that conflict with those of the scholar-poet. Regardless of whether the audience is patron or public, the writer who uses his art to earn a material living under any economic system is, literally, selling himself. Miller concludes his opening chapter by observing that while all Elizabethan England thrived, the professional writers "looked in vain to find their niche in a materialistic world. The audience for their books . . . consisted of clowns and louts without taste. Maecenases were rare; Maecenasses, to borrow Nashe's pun, were willing to pay hacks to immortalize their vulgarity. Meanwhile Spenser's Cuddie went in rags, unesteemed and unregarded."[21]

The university wits responded to these professional conditions with understandably mixed pride and resentment. It is easy to imagine how exciting and challenging the London literary world might have appeared to the bright young men studying along the Cam. On the other hand, we learn from the picture of this world that emerges from the Return plays that these were no bookish dreamers.[22] The Parnassus playwrights' knowledge of the contemporary literary scene includes a hardheaded appreciation of the seamier side of that sometimes glamorous world--the professional difficulties not

[21] The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, p. 26.

[22] It is worth noting that even as undergraduates many of them experienced a kind of patronage in the form of scholarships sponsored by parties outside the academy, such as the governing body of a town or guild, or an officer of church or state (Leishman, p. 136, note to l. 18).

only of their colleagues Spenser and Nashe, but of "uneducated" writers ranging from Shakespeare (who had to settle for acting and playwriting) to Elderton (actor and balladeer). The saga of the pilgrims from Parnassus is that while they idolized Spenser, the best they could hope to become was Nashe, and it was all too possible they would end up like Greene.

The Spenser-Nashe contrast is marvelously suggestive background material for the Parnassus Plays--Spenser, the poet's poet, cloudily enshrined high on Parnassus, Nashe the satirist, vividly presiding over the realistic world of the Returns.[23] The point to be made here is that the Parnassus wits are professionally oriented. Even their inimitable Spenser is a professional (and, as we learn in The Second Return, one they believed to have failed dismally, dying a martyred poet's death); it is difficult, by contrast, to imagine them identifying with the other great idealized poet of the Elizabethan Renaissance, Sir Philip Sidney, amateur supreme.[24] Spenser tried several different paths to literary recognition during this period of economic transition: he sought aristocratic patronage ranging from financial support by a Great House to a word of praise from the Queen, and he ended as a salaried civil servant to the state; at the same

[23] The Spenser-Nashe contrast is more explicit in The Second Return (see below, Chapter 9, pp. 345-48.

[24] See Danby's distinction between Spenser as a professional and Sidney as a "Great House" poet (Poets on Fortune's Hill, pp. 31-36).

time, however, he took great pains to bring The Shepheardes Calender and The Faerie Queene, among other works, to open publication.

A much more likely model for the Parnassus protagonists was Nashe, who does seem to have made a living almost entirely from his writing. Like Spenser, Nashe did seek his literary income from both private patrons and the public marketplace. But his bitter experiences under the old system gradually made him function more exclusively within the new professional structure which, although far from lucrative or dependable, still offered him some viable alternatives. Hibbard writes: "Seen from one point of view, his literary career appears as an unavailing search for a suitable patron, leading ultimately to the conviction that, so far as he was concerned, there was no such thing and that the only patron worth cultivating was the reading public."[25] And the theater audience, one must add, for it is Nashe's forays into the dramatic marketplace (about which we unfortunately know very little) that set him most distinctly apart from Spenser as a new professional; Spenser, ever the Great House aspirant, never stooped to the boards.

Nashe's double-edged attitude toward patron and public is apparent as early as Pierce Penilesse, where the high tribute to his patron "Amyntas" which concludes the work is undercut by a bitter--and extremely ppoud--satire on unappre-

[25] Thomas Nashe, p. 19.

ciative patrons, which directly precedes it--beginning with:

> Now, Pierce peniles, if for a parting blow thou hast ere a tricke in thy budget more than ordinarie, bee not daintie of it, for a good Patron will pay for all. I, where is he?[26]

and ending:

> Yes, now I remember me, I lie; for I know him that had thanks for three yeares worke, and a gentleman that bestowed much cost in refining of musicke, and had scarse Fidlers wages for his labor.[27]

Elsewhere Nashe remarks that his constant life alternatives are prostitution and poverty.[28] In a sense, Nashe seems to have chosen the latter. This is not to say that he opted for the stoic other-worldliness recommended by Consiliodorus; the bitterness displayed throughout Nashe's writings proves that he never won that kind of Parnassian peace. But it is likely that his repeated decision to write satire had a negative effect on his bids for private sponsorship. Nashe was as bold in his patron-courting as he was in most other literary affairs. But it is tempting to ask if his dedication of the marvelously audacious Unfortunate Traveler (1594) to the Earl of Southampton indicates good business sense or, rather, a touch of self-irony. At any rate, as Hibbard documents, "It was Nashe's last genuine dedication. At this

[26] McKerrow, I, 241.

[27] Ibid., I, 242.

[28] Have With You to Saffron Walden (1596), McKerrow, III, 30-31 (see Leishman, p. 76).

point in his career he seems to have decided that the system of patronage was of no help to him. He had already complained repeatedly in one work after another about the stinginess of patrons, now he proceeded to make fun of them."[29]

Beyond Nashe's importance as a new professional is the whole fascinating subject of his personal life style as an author. If we were to first characterize Spenser's role as poet, we might say that he maintains an aesthetic distance from his writing and his audience. With his literary subject matter, his narrative formality, and his elevated tone, he appears to us--and apparently did to his contemporaries--as a prophet-poet, Colin piping on a high hill, a visionary seer of the world before him because he stands apart from it.[30] Nashe, by contrast, was fiercely a man of his time and place. A Johnian, a London litterateur, a partisan of causes, and an intellectual, wit and author by profession, Nashe was then, and remains for us, the university wit supreme.[31]

[29] Thomas Nashe, p. 21.

[30] To be sure, Spenser's prophetic role contains its own endlessly rich ambivalences about the function of the artist in society--a topic touched on at the end of my discussion of The Second Return.

See, for example, J. W. Saunders, "The Facade of Morality," ELH, 19 (1952), 81-114.

[31] The Nashe-Spenser contrast is treated in a limited way by K. B. Harder in "Nashe and Spenser," Essays in Honor of Walter Clyde Curry, ed. Richmond Beatty and Edgar Duncan, Vanderbilt University Studies in the Humanities, 2 (Nashville, 1955), pp. 123-31: "In 1592, the date of the printing of Pierce Penniless, Thomas Nashe, at the age of twenty-five, a

For the Parnassus wits, there is pride in an alliance with a man like Nashe, but also a kind of defiant raciness. There can be no half-hearted responses, because everything Nashe did as a writer was characterized by boldness; the man was nothing if not bold. The most immediate reason for the wits' admiration of Nashe would have been a genuine respect for much of what he had written. We have talked about his innovative and audacious style. One can open to almost any page in the works of Nashe for an example of rhetoric that is as carefully wrought as Sidney's, but electrified with its own frenetic energy. If Nashe cannot be credited with creating the style of turn-of-the-century prose satire, he is its acknowledged popularizer. As a prose fiction writer, he also helped develop a new literary form--the realistic narrative tale that was one tributary to the eighteenth-century novel.

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graduate at St. John's, Cambridge, was struggling, none too successfully, to live in a literary atmosphere that offered little material reward and, unless subsidized by a patron, no prospect for glory. A large number of young men were attending the universities, from which they emerged completely useless as practical citizens in a materialistic, middle class culture. Having acquired aristocratic tastes, but possessing penniless purses, and finding church benefices filled and tightly controlled by genteel grafters, the intelligent young men became authors or, to use a more exact term, libellers. Leading hazardous, vivid lives, they died young. Nashe was one of the railers whose bitterness pervaded his vigorous prose and left a picture of the life of a potential artist at a time when 'tinne and pewter are more esteemed than Latin.'

Edmund Spenser, a generation earlier than Nashe, faced similar problems, though he was practical enough to solve them more successfully. But Spenser had his moments of doubt" (pp. 124-25).

The same boldness brought Nashe into the thick of many a literary controversy--beginning, appropriately, with his part in a troublesomely satiric play produced at St. John's in 1586,[32] including his probable contribution to the pro-establishment tracts written in response to Martin Marprelate, and concluding with his pamphlet war with the Harveys, an exchange so prolific and virulent that the works were singled out for special censure in the archbishop's injunction against satire in 1599.[33] Nashe's willingness to speak out in print in an age when a man could get his writing hand chopped off for doing so,[34] is striking. We might be better able to grasp the extent of his daring if we could see the lost play The Isle of Dogs (1597), for which the actors, including Ben Jonson, spent some months in Fleet Prison on a charge of sedition.[35]

[32] The reference is in the anonymous anti-Nashe pamphlet, The Trimming of Thomas Nashe (1597), which says that Nashe "had a hand in a Show called Terminus et non terminus, for which his partener in it was expelled the Colledge: but this foresaid Nashe played in it (as I suppose) the Varlet of Clubs; which he acted with such naturall affection, that all the spectators tooke him to be the verie same" (quoted by Hibbard, Thomas Nashe, p. 8).

[33] "That all NASSHES bookes and Doctor HARVYES bookes be taken wheresoeuer they may be found and that none of theire bookes be euer printed hereafter" (Hibbard, p. 232).

[34] The reference is to Philip Stubbes, who had his hand severed for criticizing the Queen's flirtation with the Duke of Alencon (Miller, The Professional Writer . . ., pp. 171-72.

[35] McKerrow, V, 29-31.

Above all, Nashe had in abundance the pride of the scholar-poet that the St. John's Parnassians display at their most confident moments. Throughout his writings he asserts himself as a man of learning, talent and taste. Nashe's two major concerns throughout his career, says his modern biographer, were his championing of poetry and the liberal arts, and his firm opposition to Philistinism and materialism[36]--the very themes of the Return plays. On several occasions, Nashe presented himself as an audaciously self-confident literary critic--his acid intellectuality and wit probably best displayed in his Preface to Greene's Menaphon (1589), written when the unknown critic was only twenty-two.[37] In retrospect, Nashe emerges as one of the great Elizabethan defenders of poetry and learning. In Pierce Penilesse he speaks of learning as too noble to warrant a refutation of its detractors.[38] And "Poetry is the hunny of all flowers, the quintessence of all Sciences, the Marrowe of Witte, and the very Phrase of Angels . . . ."[39] Nashe goes beyond the familiar ethical-utilitarian defense toward a more Sidneyan aesthetic of poetry's golden world, challenging the enemies of poetry, " . . . and you shall finde there goes more exquisite paines and puritie of witte, to the writing of one

[36] Hibbard, Thomas Nashe, p. 80.

[37] Also see Nashe's Anatomie of Absurditie (1589) and his preface to an unauthorized edition of Astrophil and Stella (1591).

[38] McKerrow, I, 191.

[39] Ibid., I, 194.

such rare Poem as Rosamond, than to a hundred of your dunsticall Sermons."[40]

While Nashe thus seems to exemplify Consiliodorus' principle that a poet know his own "worthiness," the literary Nashe, like the Parnassians, also has doubts about his role in a hostile society. His self-references are almost always ironic, hedged with self-defense and apology. A wonderful example is Pierce Penniless' offer of his services to a patron--at first filled with sarcastic humility, then, anticipating rejection, switching to hyperbolic pride:

> For my part, I do challenge no praise of learning to my selfe, yet haue I worne a gowne in the Vniuersitie . . . but this I dare presume, that, if any Mecoenas binde me to him by his bounty, or extend some round liberalitie to mee worth the speaking of, I will doo him as much honour as any Poet of my beardlesse yeeres shall in England. Not that I sm so confident what I can doe, but that I attribute so much to my thankfull minde aboue others, which I am perswaded would enable me to worke myracles.
>
> On the contrary side, if I bee euill intreated, or sent away with a Flea in mine eare, let him looke that I will raile on him soundly: not for an houre or a day, whiles the iniury is fresh in my memory, but in some elaborate, pollished Poem, which I will leaue to the world when I am dead, to be a liuing Image to all ages, of his beggerly parsimony and ignoble illiberaltie . . . I haue tearmes (if I be vext) laid in steepe in Aquafortis, & Gunpowder, that shall rattle through the Skyes, and make an Earthquake in a Pesants eares.[41]

[40] McKerrow, I, 192.

[41] Ibid., I. 195.

Certainly it is telling that the ambivalence felt by the Elizabethan scholar-poet about his role in society, which is so important in the Parnassus Plays, is evident in even the boldest of the university wits.

One last biographical note on Nashe is his continued association with Greene--apparently fortuitous in his early preface to Menaphon, but increasingly less so in his defense of his dead and disreputable friend in the anti-Harvey pieces. The sorry specter of Greene that always seems to haunt Nashe in a way symbolizes the taint of the profession itself--the stain borne by the public artist that Shakespeare speaks of in Sonnet 111 ("O for my sake do you with Fortune chide"). Curiously, however, Nashe became rather defiant about accepting his inescapable ties with Greene--much as the Parnassus playwrights embraced their identification with the imperfect Nashe, and the Philomusus and Studioso of the Return plays join hands with Ingenioso. For the university wits, the shade of Robert Greene made vivid the grim possibility that a poor scholar-poet might end his pilgrimage as a dissolute pamphleteer, apologizing, at his literary life's dismal end, for his very existence.

The first act of The First Return appropriately presents Ingenioso's impossible relationship with his patron. The basic situation, in which the artist faces a conflict of values with his patron, is repeated many times in the Returns. And the sober lesson of all three Parnassus Plays--despite

considerable differences in their attitudes toward that conflict--is that the true artist must finally choose his own values and reject the anti-aesthetic power wielded by his source of economic support. In his evolution from dependence to rejection, Ingenioso sets a pattern that is repeated by all the scholar-poets, including himself, throughout the Return plays.

Before Ingenioso confronts his patron, he has that unexpectedly friendly reunion with Philomusus and Studioso. There is a telling little anecdote here: Ingenioso confesses to a bit of Nashean roguery in which he wittily outflanked a sergeant whom he found lacking in generosity at a tavern, by drinking him down and stealing his silver nose. For a moment, Ingenioso had gotten the better of the worldlings he has such contempt for--"I was euen with one of them very latelie" (ll. 188-89). The crude but merry jest is indicative of the artist's only retaliatory power against an unappreciative world --the art of satire.

As for the Patron,[42] Ingenioso has only the coarsest disrespect for him, epitomizing him as "Signiour Barbarisme" (l. 360):

> Why hers Midas his grandchilde, one that will put him downe in a paire of long eares and a rude witt: bragge, when he comes abroade, of his liberalitie to schollers, & what a rewarder he is of wittie deuises:

[42] He has no proper name, and is not included in the list of Actors (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 135).

> but indeed he is a mere man of straw, a great lumpe of drousie earth.
>
> (I.220-25)

In answer to Studioso's encouraging request that if the satirist has any of his "dissolute papers" with him, he "drincke of a sentence to vs, to the healthe of mirth and the confusion of Melancholye" (206, 211-12), Ingenioso says:

> I haue indeed a pamphlet here, that none is priuie vnto but a pinte of wine & a pipe of Tobacco. It pleased my witt yesternighte to make water, and to vse this goutie patron in steed of an vrinall, whome I make the subject and content of my whole speache.
>
> (I.213-17)

The transformed Philomusus and Studioso are not put off by this vulgarity. The new trio of Parnassus protagonists then makes plans to meet again--the rendezvous is proposed by Studioso--and Ingenioso goes off to meet his patron ("Crowes flie to carion, and good wittes to dyeing churles," l. 233).

However, before Ingenioso is allowed to humble himself before Signiour Barbarisme, he must ingratiate himself with the patron's servant. For while the poet protests that he would not waste his enormous satiric talent on the uneducated clown, that is indeed all he can do:

> Why, what an vnmannerlie microcosme was this swine faced clowne? But that the Vassall is not capable of any infamie, I would bepainte him; but a verie goose quill scornes such a base subject, and there is noe inke fitt to write his seruill name but a scholeboyes,

> that hath bene made by the mixture of vrin and water. Yet must I forsooth sooth vpp this bearded pointtrusser, this cursie creator, this ingrosser of cringers, this ante ambulo of a clokbagge, this great hilted dagger.
>
> (I.271-80)

The Serving Man, like Leonard the carrier, is a low comic reflection of his master, and the scene between him and Ingenioso serves to parody the artist-patron relationship. He, too, would be a patron! He propositions the poet:

> Faith thou seems a mad greeke, & I haue loude such ladds of mettall as thou seems to be from mine infancie; & wheras thou proferest such fauours, I will but demaunde this onlie, that thou wilte make mee a loue letter in elegant tearmes to our chambermaide.
>
> (I.257-61)

Ingenioso's sales pitch to the would-be patron plays ironically with the fundamental praise function of poetry, using diction that ridicules in rhetoric that seems to praise:

> But frend, for thy better instruction, answerr not a man of art so churleshlye againe while thou liuest. Why man, I am able to make a pamphlet of thy blew coate and the button in thy capp, to rime thy bearde of thy face, to make thee a ridiculous blew sleeud creature, while thou liuest. I haue immortalitie in my pen, and bestowe it on whome I will. Well, helpe mee to the speache of thy maister quicklie, and Ile make that obscure name of thyne, which is knowne amongst none but hindes and milkmaides, ere longe to florishe in the press and the printers stall.
>
> (I.247-56)

Yet even as he ridicules his antagonist, Ingenioso does not spare himself, ironically glancing at his own poetic powers ("I haue immortalitie in my pen . . . "). This characteristic undertone of self-contempt becomes more explicit after the servant exits and Ingenioso is alone: "O fustie worlde, were there anie comendable passage to Styx and Acharon, I would goe liue with Tarleton, and neuer [b]less this dull age with a good line" (ll. 269-71).

If Ingenioso is humiliated by the meeting with the Serving Man, in which he is honest only by the grace of ironic indirection, he sinks even lower with the Patron, in whose presence he turns hypocritical. Later Ingenioso bitterly recalls "my litell speach, with a hundred damnable lies of his liberalitie" (I.364-65). The speech he is referring to is his formal suit--a grotesque parody of the literary dedication filled with fawning praise and self-debasing humility:

> Pardon S^r^ the presumpsion of a poore scholler, whose humble deuoted eares being familiar with the comendacons that vnpartiall fame bestoweth vpon youre worship, reporting what a free harted Maecenas you are vnto poore artistes . . . here vpon I, vnfurnished of all thinges but learninge, cast my selfe downe at your worships toose, resoluing that liberalitie soiourneth here with you, or else it hath cleane lefte our vntoward cuntrie.
>
> (I.283-87, 293-96)

When Ingenioso then presents an epistle dedicatory, the Patron gives him "a rewarde"--and some free advice:

> (He giues him twoo groates) I tell thee Homer had scarse soe much bestowed vpon him in all his life time; indeede our continuance is enough for a scholler, and the sunshine of our fauoure yealdes good heate of it selfe. Howesoeuer I am somwhat prodigall that waye, in ioyninge to my countenence, yet it is fitt, that all suche younge men as you are should knowe that all dutie is farr inferiour to our desertes, that in great humilitie doe vouchsake to reade youre labours.
>
> (I.322-30)

If Homer "had scarse soe much," what can Ingenioso expect!

The Patron--whom Ingenioso later describes as "a churle [who] thinkes it enough for his fauoure like a sunn to shine on the dunghill of learning" (ll. 353-54)--is consumed with (and literally consumed by) his own self-importance. He is concerned with his health, his wealth, his place in society. But while his conceit is appalling, it is not entirely unwarranted; the patronized poet is, after all, dependent for his very existence on the continued health, prosperity and good will of his patron. This vulgar stereotype of the new patron exits on a fittingly gross note. He has been ill (the scene takes place in front of his apothecary's house), and has been spedning his time and money on his rotting body, instead of on more spiritual things. He tells Ingenioso that he must leave him because "my Phisicke workes, I cannot stay to take a full sight of youre Pamphlet" (ll. 330-31).

Ingenioso then delivers a formal verse commentary on this basic Parnassian situation. The immediate problem is the inadequacy of the Patron:

> Goe in a poxe, and neere returne again,
> Thou laue eard ass that loues dross more than artes,
> Thinkest thy selfe liberall, if thy mules dull heade
> Giue a poore scholler a[n] vngratious nodd.
> Our liues are bounde vnto thy churlish eyes
> If thou bestowest on them a squintinge glanse.
>
> (I.334-39)

But Ingenioso also has the integrity to confess his own guilt:

> Foole I to angell in a misers mudd,
> But hope of gould did make mee guilde this woode.
>
> (I.344-45)

So once again we see a spokesman of the Parnassus Plays declaring the moral and artistic necessity of rejecting patrons and their material support:

> Farewell gross peece of earth, base braginge dunge,
> Soone maist thou grouell in the lowlie duste
> And nere be spoken of but in obloquie.
> And if I liue Ile make a poesie
> Shall loade thy futures yeares with infamie.
>
> (I.346-50)

At such moments, The First Return comes remarkably close to accepting Consiliodorus' principle of the natural opposition between art and gold. Ingenioso's cynicism, like Consiliodorus' stoicism, relies on the self-knowledge of spiritual superiority. What distinguishes Ingenioso's attitude is his determination to exact literary vengeance on his social opponent, to use his verse for the purpose of abusing the patron--i.e., to be a satirist.

At this low point, Philomusus and Studioso re-enter, and Ingenioso ironically recounts his unsuccessful interview.

It is in response to this speech--which ends, "and while I stoode by dreaminge of the goulde of India: he drew mee out twoo leane faces, gaue mee fidlers wages, and dismiste mee" (ll. 368-70)--that Studioso delivers the line suggested earlier as an epitaph for The First Return: "Well Ingenioso, the worlde is badd, and wee schollers are ordayned to be beggars" (371-72). Then, almost as if the scene could not bear any further depression, the play shifts gears into a more positive direction. Ingenioso, declaring that his recent experience has only re-taught him the old lesson of the impossibility of private patronage, pluckily announces his return to public professionalism: "To London Ile goe, Ile liue by the printinge house, as I haue done hitherto" (375-76). And at their request, Philomusus and Studioso go along with him, Ingenioso promising only, "if wee can get noe liuinge weele dye learned beggars" (379-80). He can be facetious, but never optimistic.

Before Act I closes with the strange music of the Muses,[43] the three protagonists meet up with Luxurio, The First Return's revision of The Pilgrimage's Madido, who makes a fourth in their journey to London. The pleasure-loving Luxurio is every whit the drunken poetaster that Madido was. But in this play the character does not function as an allegorical tempter to immorality. For one thing, he is more particular-

[43] See above, p. 103.

ized by topical references, as in:

> To London Ile goe, for there is a great nosde ballet-maker deceaste,[44] & I am promised to be the rimer of the citie. Ile fit them for a wittie In Creete when Daedalus. I haue alwaies more than naturallie affected that poeticall vocation.
>
> (I.412-15)

Luxurio's more significant distinction is the protagonists' attitude toward him. Instead of condemning him, they accept him with good humored indulgence. Luxurio's immorality is tolerated by the new breed of scholar-poets because they are able to identify with all rejected and debased poets. They have been learning that poverty levels poets, and that any scholar who chooses to sell his artistic soul for survival cannot claim moral superiority. Poetaster or not, Luxurio, in this bread and butter matter, is one of them. The tolerant morality of The First Return is seen in Philomusus and Studioso's enthusiastic appreciation of Luxurio's sense of humor. Studioso promises, "weele make more vse of youre merrie vaine in our iorney" (l. 430), and Philomusus declares: "Thy mirth helps to drowne that Melancholicke, that our departure from Parnassus doth create. Longe for a rewarde maye youre wittes be warmde with the Indian herbe" (431-34).

The chief artistic qualification in such an amoral atmosphere is, of course, wit--to which Luxurio offers his own

[44] Elderton? (Leishman, p. 155n.).

witty testimony:

> My waterie wit shall dwell in a waterie region. And yet thou doest abuse my witt to call it waterie: much haue I [s]pente in rare Aleumie, in brewinge of wine and burninge sackes, to make my witt a philosophers stone, when I shoulde make vse of it . . . .
>
> (I.402-406)

And yet Luxurio, like most of the other comic figures, also raises some serious questions. When Ingenioso asks him, "Wilt thou leaue Parnassus then?" (l. 416), Luxurio humorously rejects the academic life as fit preparation for a poet:

> Is it not time thinkest thou? I haue serued here an apprentisehood of some seauen yeares, and haue liued with the Pythagorean and Platonicall Δίαιτα [45] as they call it. Why, a good horse woulde not haue endured it. Adew single beare and three qus of breade, and if I conuerse with you anie longer, some Sexton must toll the bell for the Death of my witt. Here is nothinge but leuelinge of colons, squaringe of periods, by the monthe. My sanguin scorns all such base premeditation, Ile haue my pen run like a spigot & my inuention answerr it as quick as a drawer. Melancholick art, put downe thy hose, here is a suddaine wit, that will lashe thee in the time to come.
>
> (I.417-28)

The university has not only starved his body on the slender commons fare; much more drastic, it has threatened the death of his wit! When Luxurio abuses academic rhetoric for its sterility, his best argument is his own vivid prose style. Luxurio is a lively addition to the trilogy, though for all his sophistication of a basic type, he was apparently not exciting enough for the creators of the last Parnassus Play: he does not appear in The Second Return.

[45] "Way of life" (Leishman, p. 156n.).

Chapter 4. The Scholar-Poets in Society

Acts II and III of The First Return present the protagonists in their new social roles. In Act II, we see Philomusus and Studioso at work in their first post-graduate positions--Philomusus as a sexton, Studioso as a chaplain. Luxurio, now a professional balladeer, appears briefly at the end of the act. We meet up with Ingenioso in Act III. Somewhat unexpectedly, instead of 'living by the printing house' (I.515), he is fencing with another private patron, the marvelously comic Gullio--his only advantage here being that the new patron directly commissions the poet's authorial services. Acts IV and V follow each of the protagonists through to the inevitable failure of their professional experiences.

The Philomusus-Studioso plot and the Ingenioso plot are parallel but separate, each concentrating on a different aspect of the artist's dilemma. The emphasis in the Philomusus-Studioso plot is social--the scholar-poet's difficulty in finding a viable economic role within the system. Here the satiric attack is directed against the uneducated and the unartistic who have the material power to exclude artists from that system. And once again, the problem is rooted in the elemental conflict between material and spiritual values first enunciated by Consiliodorus.

In the Ingenioso-Gullio plot, however, the concerns are primarily poetic. Whereas the employers of Philomusus and Studioso are ridiculed for their materialistic values, Gullio

is abused for his poor taste and literary pretensions. And instead of challenging the values of the scholar-poet, Gullio diligently affects Ingenioso's scholarship and wit. Yet Gullio--fop, braggart, and would-be courtier--is also an object of social satire, for in spite of his poetic pretension, he pays primary allegiance to the non-artistic world. Moreover, he is a hypocrite. Gullio's boast of hobnobbing with aristocracy (e.g., "The Countess and my lorde entertayned mee verie honorablely. . . . , IV.1101-08), is echoed a few lines later by the clownish churchwarden, who is impressed by his townsmen calling him "noe more plaine Will nor William, nor goodman Perceuall, but Mr Warden at euery worde" (IV.1219-21). The affectations are comparable; Gullio is just less honest.

The different emphases in the two plots also reflect conflicting elements of the scholar-poet's ambivalence about his role. The trials of Philomusus and Studioso constitute the complaint component of the trilogy, the grievance against the low social position of the artist in Elizabethan society. Ingenioso's scenes, on the other hand, for all their cynicism, function as an affirmation of the superiority of the educated poet. Unlike the phony Gullio, the worldlings who oppose Philomusus and Studioso (the Cambridge merchants, Perceval and the bourgeois family) positively value their materialistic world, and the antagonism between them and the scholar-poets is open . . . and abiding. Ingenioso's immediate conflict is simpler and more one-sided. Between him and Gullio

there is no elemental opposition, but rather the difference between the genuine and the sham. And since these combatants are vying on the fields of poetry and wit, Ingenioso, unlike Philomusus and Studioso, wins handily. His response--not so much a solution to a problem as a remedy for an ill--is satire, a form of expression which affords the writer poetic justice, if not authorial peace of mind. Philomusus and Studioso's social battle with the worldlings is debilitating; the effect of Ingenioso's literary dueling with Gullio is exhilarating. Defensive as they may be, Philomusus and Studioso discover that their spiritual values are challenged by the worldly power of materialism. But Gullio's masked materialism ultimately serves to confirm Ingenioso's artistic self-confidence.

Finally, the two plots complement each other in their contrasting tones. The inevitability of the conflict faced by Philomusus and Studioso, and the rigorous toll it exacts on the scholar-poet, call for satire that is heavy--that is, serious and denunciatory, while the scenes between Ingenioso and Gullio are generally filled with high and light witticism. The two plots follow their separate courses through The First Return--the three main protagonists do not meet again until their brief reunion in the last scene of the play--and then continue, separately, on into the Second Part of The Return.

In the Philomusus-Studioso plot, the transition from Parnassus to worldly employment is bridged by the scene with the town of Cambridge merchants that opens Act II. A draper

and a tailor (and then a tapster) exchange complaints about university students--in particular, Philomusus and Studioso (and then Luxurio), whom the merchants accuse of having left town with their debts unpaid. Considering the values--and prejudices--of the Parnassus Plays, the tone of the scene is somewhat surprising. The merchants are satirized for their simplicity and naïvete, and their sin against Parnassus--as with all the other satiric butts--is their materialism. Nevertheless, the dramatic treatment of these characters is curiously sympathetic. The townsmen are given their moment alone on stage, a rare opportunity granted the opposition to explain its position in this mutually antagonistic conflict. Except for the partly sentimental treatment of Leonard the carrier, the playwright is not so gentle to any other of the satiric butts. One interesting effect is that the criticisms of the scholar-poets voiced by the merchants appear to be partly self-reflective on the part of the student playwright. As we have learned from Ingenioso, the payment the true satirist exacts of himself for ridiculing others is to ultimately turn that perceptive wit on himself.

The Cambridge merchants are not ignorantly anti-intellectual; we do not see that syndrome in the Parnassus trilogy until the advent of Sir Raderick in The Second Return. In fact, the merchants' position is strengthened by their expression of genuine respect for academic achievement. Their criticisms are, instead, basically moral, and based on a modest but firm sense of their own worth. Their attitude is

summed up by Draper's innocent question, "Why, who woulde thinke that men in such graue gounes and capps, & that can say soe braulye, woulde vse honest men soe badlie?" (II.470-72), and Tayler's response, "Fye neighboure, if the[y] had our wisdome ioyned to theire learninge, they woulde proue graue men" (480-81). The students have book learning, but they lack good sense and kind heart.

The material charge is that the students have defrauded the merchants by buying on credit. But the townspeople have also been affronted by the wits' bad manners, ranging from rude insults to sartorial foppishness. While it would be difficult to relate these charges to the decidedly refined characters we have come to know as Philomusus and Studioso, it is not really necessary. What is important here is the merchants' idea of the university student, stereotyped and exaggerated as it may be.

The tailor describes his unpleasant experience with a particularly obnoxious student he had the misfortune to confront during his search for Philomusus and Studioso:

> When I came to enquire for them, out steps a leane faced scholler (surlie I thinke he was well learned, for he was redinge a great booke with a smale printe), he stept out I saye, & told mee the[y] were not within; which answerr when I woulde not take (for it vrged my conscience somwhat, when I remembered my money), he cald me Pagan, Tartarian, heathen man, base Plebeian, (and which griued mee most of all) he caled mee simple animal. Well, saide I, simple may I be, but animal was I neuer, and I added that Philomusus and Studioso were rather animals to vse an honest, simple, plaine, man so as the[y] haue not been ashamed to doe.
>
> (II.505-16)

The merchant's naive respect for learning is severely undermined by the scholar's cruel arrogance. Momentarily shaken, Tayler stands his humble ground, his "simple may I be, but animal was I neuer" the essence of comic dignity. The merchant may be a simple man, but those who should know better sometimes lack all humanity. The draper then reports that he was treated to the same arrogant conceit by a

> scipiacke, that, when I knockt at the dore, asked what clothwritt was there, & said he was makinge an oration, which euerie scruey vulgar felowe, euerie measuringe pesante, must not interrupt. He said he was about a sentence that was worth all the cloth in my shopp.
>
> (II.517-22)

These lines seem clearly self-reflective on the part of the scholar playwright. Nothing about them works to satirize the speaker. Only the scholar's weakness for inflating his own self-importance is ridiculed.

What finally characterizes the merchants' complaints is a lack of vindictiveness. Tayler speaks for his fellows: "Well, god forgiue them; the[y] shoulde shewe good examples to others" (ll. 481-82). Neither are the townsmen guilty of simple materialistic prejudice. The draper says of Philomusus and Studioso, "for there sakes Ile truste but few vnless I knowe them well, & those shall be none of these fine youths . . . " (493-95). His social distinctions are, ultimately, based on moral judgments. He concludes: "if wee will needes be trustinge, let vs truste honest, simple, plaine

felowes such as our selus, that weare foure pennie garters & winter shoos that haue kept the coblers companie" (499-502). The playwright is obviously not condemning all scholars as immoral braggarts; but the effect of this scene is to suggest that the merchants' grievances against excessive scholarly pride are not entirely unwarranted. No such sympathetic hearing is given the opposition in The Second Return.

The good humor of the merchants scene is reinforced by its conclusion, in which Simson the Tapster joins Draper and Tayler in their complaints. Simson appears as a kind of comic coda to the scene, just as the student he accuses, Luxurio, appears in a comic coda to the trials of Philomusus and Studioso which comprise the remainder of Act II. Simson's charge against Luxurio is essentially the same as the ones made against other university wits: he is accused of the impudent abuse of simple honesty:

> My wife & I, twoo honest folkes, as the[y] saie, ment no harme, but euen as the ape wanteth a tale, as the[y] saye, euen so wee wanted all malice, as the[y] saye; but nowe I finde, I finde at length t[h]roughe much experience, that euen as wishers and woulders are neuer good housholders, soe trusters & lenders are neuer good housholders.
>
> (II.549-55)

What is distinctive about the tapster is the outrageous way he expresses himself. Simson is a linguistically impoverished Falstaff, his speech a simplistic popularization of Lyly's precious style. In his gross imitation of Euphuistic

prose, Simson uses--and abuses--its favorite rhetorical figures, including parallel phrases, analogies, antitheses, alliteration and repetition, as well as Lyly's ingenious multiplication of exemplary proverbs. The comic exaggeration of both the schemes of repetition and the proverbial phrasing is combined in this 23-line speech (ll. 537-60), in which Simson manages to round off thirteen phrases with the words, "as they say"--creating a broken-record effect without being literally monotonous. Elsewhere Simson is more melodramatic --as in his Marlovian entrance and Lylyesque internal catechism:

> O my frozen kilderkin of strong eale, well might I haue foretold by the burninge of a pot of youre liquor that some dry lucke hunge ouer my moiste heade. And is Luxurio gone? The answer is, he is gone. Ey, but some will object, and saie, Did not Luxurio strike of the score before he wente? I answer he did not.
>
> (II.527-33)

In the tapster's various stylistic parodies we have another fine example of the First Return playwright's interest in linguistic satire.

This very funny scene with Simson is followed immediately by a formal verse speech delivered by Philomusus (ll. 567 ff.). His lament on the loss of Parnassus is a long "sonnet" in the popular vein of English moralizations of Petrarchan conventions.[1] With the exception of the blank verse, which

[1] Examples are readily available in almost any of the miscellanies. The Paradise of Dainty Devices can be taken as a fair sampling because of its popularity: between 1576 and 1606

adds a touch of sophistication, the style is decidedly old-fashioned for university wits writing at the turn of the seventeenth century.[2] The iambic pentameter is regular enough to have satisfied Tottel, and the familiar subject matter, "Fortune my foe,"[3] is handled with the old dependable metaphors, and diction and syntax that is poetic in a plain, stylized way. At its drabbest it reads:

> I might haue learnde to see by risinge morne
> This cloudie daye that threatns now to poure
> Both storms and tempestes on my beaton barke
> That faine woulde a[n]chor vpon vertues shore,
> Where I might staye vntill some warblinge winde
> Might driue my shipp vnto my wished porte.
>
> (II.579-84)

These lines raise that difficult question of tone which has already been discussed in The Pilgrimage, but which becomes much more pronounced in the two Return plays. That is, in a play that is basically a satiric comedy, are these poetic passages, almost ostentatiously Arcadian in style--meant to be taken seriously? I think the answer is yes . . . for the most part. The trilogy is the saga of Parnassus, and the

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it went through at least ten editions.

On the miscellanies, see Franklin Dickey, "Collections of Songs and Sonnets," in Elizabethan Poetry, ed. John Russell Brown and Bernard Harris, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, No. 2 (London: Arnold, 1960), pp. 31-51.

[2] Tottel's Songs and Sonnets, which first appeared in 1557, is filled with examples of the genre.

[3] See Leishman's note on this phrase as the title of a popular ballad (p. 141n.).

point of view is basically sympathetic toward the two heroes, Philomusus and Studioso, who are responsible for virtually all of these passages. But it is also true that much of the seemingly serious sad verse in the satiric Returns plays with an undeniably comic effect. The critical difficulty lies in deciding to what extent the comedy is intentional.

At some points we feel uncomfortable about our laughter, as if the comic effect were accidental, possibly an unexpected side effect of juxtaposing conflicting dramatic modes. Sometimes, however, the humor is deliberate, and even self-conscious. At a very few points it is made clear that we are meant to laugh at Philomusus and Studioso. But most of the time we are dealing with a much subtler kind of self-criticism than the simple, direct attack. The First Return playwright, an apologist for Parnassus, is also a satirist, and he maintains a certain distance from his subject that is critical . . . and comic. Later we will see that the Second Return playwrights are not so successful at maintaining this difficult balance.

When we look closely at Philomusus' speech, we can see that parts of it do attain a humble elegance and work successfully as lament:

> My fortune that whileome did seeme to floate
> Is now at length brought to the lowest ebb,
> And I that lately in Parnassus sunge
> And consort kept in Muses melodye
> Do liue moste baselie now mongst russet coates
> And earns my liuinge here moste painfullie.
>
> (II.571-76)

But somewhat more exaggerated lines tip the precarious balance into melodrama, which in a satiric dramatic context means into comedy. Somewhat awkwardly for Philomusus' serious intentions, the passage that now seems most ludicrous is his opening quatrain. The young man addresses the trappings of his unhappy new role as village sexton:

> Come black frise coat, become my sable minde,
> Helpe me to painte forth blacke faced discontente;
> Come keyes and spade, the ensigns of my state
> That treads the ragged stepps of fortuns race.
>
> (II.567-70)

Our difficulty lies in knowing how much of the youth's somewhat incongruous imitation of Astrophil[4] is high poetry, and how much high burlesque. At one level, Philomusus, in his own maudlin way, is taking himself with as much comic self-seriousness as the scholar who told the draper "he was about a sentence that was worth all the cloth in [his] shopp" (l. 521). But this ambivalent quatrain is followed by the moving lines quoted just above ("My fortune . . . ," 571ff.), which manage to sober a sneering listener. Nevertheless, we cannot avoid the fact that Philomusus' apostrophe to his "black frise coat" makes us smile, especially coming, as it does, hard upon the literary parody of Simson's speeches. And when Philomusus uses some of the same rhetorical figures abused by

[4] See, for example, sonnet 39, "Come sleepe, ∂ sleepe, the certaine knot of peace" (The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney, ed. William A. Ringler, Jr. [1962; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967], p. 184).

the tapster, there is all the more temptation to laugh. This is most apparent in the closing lines, where Philomusus experiments with his own Parnassian versions of self-questioning, parallel construction, antithesis and alliteration:

> But why doe I prolonge my tedious speeche?
> What idler thinge than speake & not be harde?
> Yet harde it is to smarte, & not to speake.
>
> (II.585-87)

When the satirist works these figures into formal verse, he plays with the possibility of burlesque.

At the close of the soliloquy, when Philomusus is joined by Studioso, the combination of the serious and the satiric that exists somewhat uncomfortably in Philomusus' speech is made explicit by the author. The young men console each other, in formal rhymed verse and in stichomythia couplets:

> P. Banisht ame I from Phoebus louely bowrs?
> S. The Muses dwell as oft in woods as towres.
> P. The cuntrie moss noe true contente here yelds.
> S. Apollo once did dwell in cuntrie fildes.
> P. Noe fairies dance vpon this ruder greene.
> S. By ruder springes oft beutuous nymphes are seene.
>
> (II.608-13)

This stylistic reversion to <u>The Pilgrimage</u> intensifies until Philomusus, who set the maudlin tone to begin with, halts it abruptly with:

> I faith Studioso, this dull patience of
> thine angers mee. Why, can a man be galde
> by pouertie, free spirits subiected to base
> fortune, and put it vp like a Stoick?
>
> (II.614-16)

While the outburst comes as some surprise to the audience, it is hardly unwelcome. Philomusus' impatience with Studioso's naive idealism confirms the suspicion that some of the comic effect of these passages is intentional. And to have the humorous criticism come directly from one of the characters is a self-conscious reference to the play that suggests the playwright's awareness of its ambiguities.

The mixed tones of the Parnassus Plays should not come as a great surprise to us. We are familiar with the Elizabethan faith in unlikely dramatic juxtapositions, even though we occasionally wonder if some of their tragical-comical-historical-pastoral combinations did not work better for Renaissance audiences than for modern ones. In some plays the juxtaposition of modes works because it is an expression of the dramatist's point of view. In many romantic comedies, for instance, the experience of young love is presented as masque and anti-masque, poetic seriousness mixed with prosaic comedy. If the romance plot strains at the limits of the ridiculous, and even spills over its boundaries, it is still romance. Shakespeare's two great middle-period comedies, As You Like It and Twelfth Night, both of which are contemporaneous with The First Return, are good examples.

Sidney, too, was brilliant at creating a literary representation of youthful adventure in which the romantic and the ridiculous coalesce. In the romance world of the Old Arcadia, Pyrocles and Musidorus are characterized as heroes, lovers, poets--and fools. Philomusus, although not a lover,

is in other ways just such another Arcadian, whose earnestness is occasionally touched with the ludicrous. But in the Arcadia, we feel confident that the artistic point of view determines our mixed response, and we are generally able to discern when the high drama is serious, and when it intentionally breaks the bonds of decorum and moves into comic melodrama. For all its intellectual complexity, Arcadia is still a romance: the action is set in a context of positive values and deals with traditional themes such as love and honor (however re-examined by Sidney), and it all takes place at a comfortable remove from reality. Beyond the wit and adventure and the melodrama, we generally know where we stand. In the satirical view from Parnassus, we are not quite so sure.

In The Pilgrimage to Parnassus the playwright takes the serious side of the Arcadian hero and utilizes it in an allegory of moral and aesthetic values. In The Return from Parnassus that idealistic characterization of the two heroes is continued--but only in part. The prevailing mode of the later plays is satiric, and Philomusus and Studioso are two of the satiric spokesmen. The problem is that there is some awkwardness in this combination of roles; somehow, the satiric context of the whole makes the characters' partial idealism seem laughable.

To some extent, the problem consists of the author's attempt to make a positive statement in a satiric context. Satire is an art of negatives, censorious in substance and indirect in technique. There is no positive statement of

norms; at most, standards are implied. In fact, the satiric stance calls for a suspension of the audience's own value judgments, so that it can discover the satirist's values by deducing them from his negative criticism. Direct positive statement, on the contrary, elicits approval based on immediate audience response, a process which terminates the ongoing critical process of satire. The Return plays are basically complaint and abuse, with values expressed in negative terms: the audience is generally left to its own ironic deductions. When Philomusus and Studioso inject direct moral commentary into the satiric context, they ask the audience to suspend that irony and stand in immediate judgment. The alternative is to maintain the satiric stance and examine every element in negative terms--including the satiric spokesmen themselves--even at the risk of laughing at the wrong places.

Yet it is likely that the extremely competent First Return playwright was aware of the risks involved in his multiple characterization, and, at the price of some audience anxiety, opted to utilize the Arcadian-malcontent combination in order to preserve both elements of his paradoxical theme--the proud idealism and the bitter cynicism of the scholar-poet's experience. The best precedent for the mixture of elements is, as usual, the Parnassians' literary anti-bible, Pierce Penniless' Supplication, which, after opening with the wittily satiric paragraph quoted above (p. 114), shifts, with only a sentence of transition, into the perfectly respectable drab complaint, "Why ist damnation to dispaire and die,/ When life

is my true happiness disease?," whose second stanza clearly articulates the warring elements of the scholar-poet's discontent:

> Ah worthlesse Wit, to traine me to this woe,
> Deceitfull Artes, that nourish Discontent:
> Ill thriue the Follie that bewitcht me so;
> Vaine thoughts adieu, for now I will repent.
> And yet my wantes perswade me to proceede,
> Since none takes pitie of a Schollers neede.[5]

When Philomusus and Studioso turn from Parnassian complaint to accounts of their worldly experiences, their style changes accordingly to Nashean prose satire. Studioso reports first. The more scholarly of the two heroes, he has been hired as a household chaplain to a wealthy bourgeois family. Only the son, Studioso's pupil, appears on stage (later in Act II), but Studioso's sketch of the parents is, after the figure of Ingenioso's Patron, the harshest satiric description of The First Return. The family affects the trappings of genteel life without possessing any of its substance; and as we have seen, it is toward this segment of the middle class, the socially powerful but spiritually impoverished, that the playwright directs his greatest scorn. Like the Patron, Studioso's master has no saving graces.[6] But be-

[5] McKerrow, I, 157.

[6] Neither has Gullio anything morally positive to recommend him--as the Cambridge merchants do, for example; but the playwright's comic treatment of him is a different mode of satire, in which he is ridiculed with laughter, rather than condemned with scorn and indignation.

yond the gesture of hiring an educated chaplain for household decoration, and going through the motions of tutoring the spoiled son, the family has few intellectual pretensions, and is satirized mainly for its social affectation. And because these people do not consistently violate the scholar-poet's highest values, the playwright can afford a somewhat lighter tone with them than with the Patron; but although the satire here is less vicious, it is not in any sense tolerant.

The measure of the family's bourgeois meanness, according to Studioso, is that they fail to appreciate his worth. They have no comprehension of mental service, no less of its superior nature. Instead of valuing his intellect and his scholarship, they are interested in how he can serve them physically and socially. Studioso lists the conditions of his employment--apparently a familiarly satirized contract.[7] Item 1:

> That I shoulde faire no worse then there owne housholde seruants did, haue bredde and beare, & bacon enoughe, whils my m^ris mincinge Auaritia sayde there was not such a house within fortie miles.
>
> (II.630-33)

The educated chaplain is considered one of the servants, his security a guarantee to be treated no worse than they are! (Item 3 specifies that he "shoulde waite at meals," l. 636.)

[7] Leishman quotes from a similar contract satirized by Hall in Virgidemiarum (1597), Book II, Satire VI (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 165). See The Poems of Joseph Hall, ed. Arnold Davenport (1949; rpt. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1969), p. 29.

The anti-materialist scholar, however, is not above scorning his employers' middle-class stinginess. In item 6 he complains, "for all this, my wages muste be fiue marke a yeare, and some caste sutes of his forlorne wardropp, that his ploughmen would scarse accept of" (647-50). But Studioso's ridicule is primarily directed at their inability to acknowledge a person's worth in any terms other than bread and linen (item 2 guarantees him clean sheets and a good mattress). Beyond their grossly materialistic measure of life is their abominable pride in the power of their worldly position. The only item in Studioso's contract that deals with his academic duties is 5, "That I shoulde neuer teache my yonge m^r his lesson without doinge my dutie as becometh mee to the ofspringe of such a scholler" (643-45). Finally, Studioso's master and mistress are attacked for being moralistic in a hypocritically Puritanical manner, with much show and preaching, and little practice. Commenting on item 4, "That I shoulde worke all haruest time," Studioso says:

> vpon this pointe the olde churle gaue a signe with a hemm to the whole householde of silence, & began a solem sencless oration againste Idlenes, noddinge his head, knockinge his hande on his fatt breste, shakinge the hayrie attire of his chin, vsinge the verie grace of Dametas.
>
> (II.637-42)

Their outward behavior reflects their spiritual poverty. This is also the theme of Studioso's succinct first description of them:

> Mris Mincks, with a tonge as swifte as a swalowe, cride, The worlds nought, the worldes noughte, whiles her husbande like a Phisiognomer put on his spectacles & gasde me in the face as thoughe he woulde haue tolde my fortune.
>
> (II.621-25)

To speak ill, to look rudely, is to lack gentility of mind as well as manner.

Philomusus, as he says wryly, is "double benefisde" (l. 653) with a sextonship and a clerkship at a village church. His complaint against society is basically the same as Studioso's--that his worldly employers fail to appreciate his true value, and abuse him by misusing his accomplishments. Philomusus, now master of Ingenioso's satiric perspective, which exercises comic control over negative criticism, laments sardonically:

> A faire age, when a scholler must come to liue vpon carions, and a voice that was made to pronounce a poet or an oratour be imploied like a belman in the inquirie of a strayed beaste.
>
> (II.654-57)

Like the other satiric butts of the play, the villagers are materialistic, and they use the scholar-poet to serve their materialistic needs. But these are plainer people than Studioso's bourgeois family; Philomusus contrasts his "conditions" of employment with Studioso's six-item contract: "the hoydons, for want of further Rhetorique, made them but few

and contained them in these twoo, Digg well and ring well . . . " (660-62). The villagers' materialism is directed mainly toward their immediate physical needs, much as in the case of Leonard the carrier. And in the figure of Perceval, the character who represents them on stage, we see that they also have limited social pretensions. Finally, like the Cambridge merchants, they are blessed with a healthy naïvete that protects them from the sin of hypocrisy. And because the villagers are less guilty than the wealthier antagonists, they are portrayed with more good humor. Nevertheless, we also get the feeling that the villagers are treated with greater tolerance because they are less of a social threat to the scholar-poet. Perceval simply does not have the power to humiliate Philomusus in the way that Studioso's employer demeans him. Sometimes, even in spite of themselves, the Parnassians do adopt the standards of the world.

Philomusus appreciates the absurdity of his situation, and welcomes the maudlin comic relief offered by his parishioners:

> Yet the beste is I meete nowe and then with a clowns heade, that is as good to one as the poesie, vt hora sic vita, ready to putt mee in minde of the end of this my miserie.
>
> (II.657-59)

The particular village clown we are introduced to is Perceval, son of the recently deceased village constable, who appears in the following scene with Philomusus. Sounding rather like

Shakespeare's Bottom, Perceval runs on in long, choppy-phrased sentences about plans for his father's burial. Much of his speech is conceived in the pure good fun of his simplicity . . . and his verbosity:

> Nowe good man Sextan, I sende our maide Iohne to youe euen now to bid you toll for my good ould father, that god hath taken full sore againste my will, and I pray you goodman Sexton make him a good large graue, that he may lie easilie; he coulde neuer abide to be crouded in his life time, and therefore he was wonte to chide with a good oulde woman my mother for takinge soe muche roome in the bed, more than was fit for a woman of her condition & place.
>
> (II.672-79)

But much of the humor depends on the playwright's ironic suggestion of the more selfish motives behind Perceval's filial devotion, unwittingly revealed by the simpleton himself:

> Marie, I coulde be contente to be at coste to burie him in the churche, but that I will not bringe vp newe customs he shall lie with his posteritie in the churchyarde, and I that am the aire of the house may about twoo hundred years henc lie by him. But harke you Sexton, I pray you burie him quicklie, for he was a good man, and I knowe he is in a better place, thats fitter for him than this scruuey worlde, and I woulde not haue him aliue againe to his hindrance. It will be better for him, & mee too, for thers a greate change with mee within this two hours, for the ignorant people that before calde mee Will nowe call mee William, and you of the finer sorte call mee goodman Perceuall.
>
> (II.693-705)

The old pride of social place triumphs, even in the limited aspirations of this simple man! --though, like the Cambridge merchants, Perceval retains a naive respect for the learned. Philomusus, showing more of Ingenioso's cynicism than we have seen in him yet, picks up on these sordid implications:

> Well goodman Perceuall, you speake like a wise yonge man. Why, if death shoulde repente him, & giue youre father his life againe, then were youe but plaine Will. Dispache him man, dispache him quicklie, bringe him to the graue, and for thy sake Ile make him sure.
>
> (II.706-10)

Finally, Perceval, despite his bit of social deference to the scholar, is guilty of misusing his academic abilities:

> But harke you goodman Sexton, the[y] saie you can write & reade: Ile please youe for youre paines, if youe will write out my fathers will, thers as good matter in it as ere youe sawe, howe he is well in minde & sicke in bodie, and a hundreth such prettie thinges.
>
> (II.713-17)

While Perceval's commission does not ask Philomusus to pervert the arts of language as directly as the Patron's Serving Man does when he asks Ingenioso to write "a loue letter in elegant terms to our chambermaide" (I.260-61), the posthumous will is still a task unworthy of the scholar-poet.

The Perceval-Philomusus scene is followed by a parallel meeting between Studioso and his pupil. This latter encounter

proves to be of a more serious nature, for the scholarly Studioso does more direct harm to the Parnassian cause by countenancing his employers' disrespect for learning, than Philomusus does with his physical labor of digging and ringing. Studioso is directly falsifying his own highest values for the sake of material support. There is some acknowledgment of his culpability, and it comes in Ingenioso's best form, in which the satirist's wit is directed toward himself. Studioso enters with a sarcastic description of the hypocritical role he has assumed:

> Ey, hers a true Pedantius, and yet no truculent Orbilius: one that can heare a boy speake false Latin without stampinge of his feete, can looke on a false verse without wrincklinge of his browe, one that will giue his scholler leaue to proue as verie a Dunce as his father, & nere commande the vntrussinge of his pointes.
>
> (II.737-42)

With bitter humor, Studioso boasts that he is a veritable Machiavel of the schoolroom.

However, most of Studioso's abuse is directed outward, in stern condemnation of the spoiled youth and his wrongheaded parents. And unlike the previous scene, in which Perceval, the satiric butt, is allowed to comically expose himself, in this scene, Studioso, the satirist, is given many lines of direct critical commentary in a formal denunciatory vein, a combination of the Elizabethan version of formal Roman verse satire, and the native tradition of moral satire in

in ballad form, delivered in rhymed iambic pentameter.

When the boy enters, Studioso maintains his ironic perspective by matching rhymed, punning verses of satiric comment against the rude words of the young "dandipratt" (l. 747), who is naughtily trying to make a bet with his tutor; for example:

> Boy I muste haue 4 counters of youe.
> Stud. Full manie a time fortune encounters mee;
> More happie they that in the Counter be.
>
> (II.754-56)

Studioso caps these witty riddles with a sterner brand of denunciation from popular moral satire, the ballad refrain that sings of reform promised "When . . . ." Studioso says that he will pay the debt the boy claims

> . . . when learninge florisheth,
> When schollers are esteemde by cuntrie churles,
> When ragged Pedantes haue there pasportes sealde
> To whip fonde wagges for all there knauerie;
> When schollers weare noe baser liuorie,
> Nor spend there dayes in seruile slauerie.
>
> (II.761-66)

The boy finally sits down to his Latin grammar lesson--but only with Studioso's witty hint of a bribe, "A resin, or an aple, or a rod if I had authoritie" (l. 772):

> Boy Quanquam to Marce fili, &c.[8]
> Stud. Quae pars orationis Athenis?

[8] The first sentence of Cicero's De Officiis, a common school text (Leishman, p. 171n.).

Boy Ile speake English to daye.
Stud. What parte of speache is it then?
Boy A nowne Adiectiue.
Stud. Noe, its a noune substantiue.
Boy I say its a noune adiectiue, and if I feche my mother to youe Ile make you confess as muche.

(II.774-81)

As the scene concludes, stern Studioso turns moralist again. In a series of couplets, he damns the boy--

Doe what thou wilte, starue thou thy minde for mee,
Ile neuer frett to see thy vanitie.

blames the parents--

If thou proue sottish in the after time,
Thy parents beare the shame, theirs is the crime.

and prophesies ruin for both generations--

For my base vsage, this is tolde by mee:
The sire a clowne, the sonne a foole shall bee.

(II.788-91, 796-97)

The message of the scene seems clear enough. But there is just a touch of ambiguity in Studioso's prophecy, which ironically curses the bourgeois family to <u>mental</u> ruin, a state in which they have always existed, and, what is more, without regret. What is the point of threatening the non-intellectual with the loss of what he does not have and does not even care to? The solution to this dilemma is not so easy as having the scholar withhold from the worldlings what <u>he</u> is master of, as they withhold from him the goods they possess.

Act II closes on a note of light comedy with Luxurio, who, with his boy, is preparing for his new trade of balladeering. The scene is filled with high spirits. Luxurio, although perverting the art mercilessly, still manages to stay closer to poetry than Philomusus and Studioso have been able to in their jobs. What is more, he is even enjoying himself. As in his first appearance, his poetastical aberrations are tolerated, and we are encouraged to laugh at him instead of denouncing his false art.

Still, there is no question but that Luxurio is composing--or plagiarizing--garbage. The act closes with the boy's rendition of one of his "prettie sonnets" (l. 820)--a patchwork parody of familiar ballad lines. The tiresome rhythm and rhyme of the poulter's measure is comically exaggerated, and the narrative simplicity is ridiculed by combining a pointedly plotless tale with a jingoistic refrain:

> Nowe listen all good people
> Vnto a strange event
> That did befall to two yonge men
> As they to market went.
> The one of them height Richarde,
> The truthe for to saye,
> The other they cald Robert
> Vpon a holiday.
> And are not the Spaniards knaues
> To put vs to this paine?
> They woulde haue conquered Englande once,
> But nowe wele conquerr Spaine.
>
> (II.822-33)

As in much of the stylistic satire of the Parnassus Plays, the comedy of the mock ballad is in the validity of the stereotype.

There is even more linguistic energy in Luxurio's own speaking style--as in his enthusiastic testimony for his profession, in which he again brings topicality to The First Return:

> I am sure I haue done my parte, for I am sure my pen hath sweated through a quire of paper this laste weeke; and they are noe small verses like Captaine couragious whome death coulde not daunte, but verses full of a poeticall spirit, such that if Elderton were aliue to heare--happie is he that is not aliue to heare them, els his blacke potts shoulde put on mourninge apparell, and his nose for verie enuie departe out of the worlde.
>
> (II.802-09)

Luxurio's good humor is confirmed in his cheerful relationship with his boy, whom he encourages with the tangible promise: "I will put thee into a new sute of apparell, and thy nose into that sanguin complexion which it hath lost for wante of good companie and good dyet" (ll. 799-801). The boy returns this warmth with loyal support, at the same time revealing a shrewd understanding of the audience/psychology of his master's art:

> I warrante youe Ile purchase suche an auditorie of clowns that shall gape, nodd, and laughe: one shall crye, A goodlie matter, another, Brauely wantom, and a thirde, Comende the sweet master. Ile make euery hoydon bestowe a fairinge on his dore, his wall, his windowe.
>
> (II.810-14)

Then, in keeping with The First Return's sense of integrity, Luxurio wittily suggests that even he, the play's professional poetaster, grasps the crude essentials of the scholar-poet's social dilemma:

> Take heede youe clowns, here coms a iuggling rimster, that will pull you by the rude ears with a ballet. My fathers sonne might haue had a better trade, if it had pleased fortune, but shee is a drabb, & Luxurio will drinke to her confusion.
>
> (II.816-19)

The difference between Luxurio and his Arcadian colleagues is his devil-may-care attitude: though he shares their worldly misfortune, he dismisses it with a drink and a curse: "Then ficus pro diabolo, Kinge Harrie loued a man" (l. 815).

This scene, although brief, bears much of the special flavor of the Return plays--the witty satire, the energetic prose style, the fascination with literary style and subject matter, and the sense of contemporaneity given by topical references. Characters like Luxurio function to show the comic underbelly of the Parnassian tragicomedy, and to ground the adventures of the would-be Arcadian heroes in reality. The second half of The First Return is dominated by such another comic character, Ingenioso's new patron, Gullio.

Chapter 5. Gullio and Literary Satire

a. Shakespeare

The satire of The First Return is least ambiguous in the scenes between Ingenioso and Gullio.[1] For here the playwright suspends much of his anxiety over the socio-economic position of the artist and deals with more directly literary matters. The affectations of Gullio, a man obsessed with the external manifestations of style, culminate in his false notion of the poetic. And the gull's poetic fancies serve to mirror the opposing tastes of the university wits--although, in the indirect manner of satire, we learn more about the poetry they scorned than about that which they esteemed. Specifically, these scenes contain The First Return's most extensive topical satire of contemporary authors and their works, including one of the rare references in Elizabethan drama to Shakespeare.

With these literary topics, the scholar-poet is on his own ground. Gullio, an imposter poet, critic and patron, offers no real challenge to Parnassian values; with him as antagonist, the true poet can feel confident of his own superior worth. Thus there is no need for the playwright to argue his position--to state his point of view in positive argument, or to condemn the satiric butt with moral indignation. Knowing that wit is the best weapon for the discovery

[1] There are three Ingenioso-Gullio scenes. This chapter discusses the first two--one at the beginning of Act III, and one at the beginning of Act IV. The third scene, which opens Act V, is discussed below, Chapter 6.

of a fool, Ingenioso wields his satiric attack with the light hand of comic self-assurance.

The major satiric technique is the self-exposure of the gull, with Ingenioso serving as satiric presenter of the fool to a knowledgeable audience, a body whose presence he repeatedly acknowledges by addressing it directly, in asides. Leishman notes that the opening line of Act III--Ingenioso's "Nowe gentlemen you may laughe if you will, for here comes a gull" (ll. 834-35)--is in the manner of Jonson's exhibitors.[2] Ingenioso's final line in this scene also illustrates the technique: "Take heede my maisters, hele kill you with tediousness ere I can ridd him of the stage" (1034-35). Ingenioso furnishes some direct critical commentary on Gullio, but mostly plays the straightman, urging him on with leading questions and flattering encouragement.

The main target of satire here is the gull, and the infinite variety of his affectations. Yet the scenes also make comment on Ingenioso. The First Return never loses sight of the artist's social dilemma, and so even these funny scenes are not without their painful ironies--beginning with the fundamental one that the poet is in the keep of this ignoble patron. Ingenioso, all too well aware of these problems, maintains an ironic perspective on the moral and artistic ambivalence of his position. But at this point in the play, the satirist's critical self-reference is still an

[2] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 52.

undertone; the mounting tension does not come to a head until Act V, when even the fragile possibility of a profitable relationship with Gullio is shattered.

Gullio himself is a stock comic figure come delightfully to life. His particular function in the Parnassus Plays is worth extensive analysis for what it reveals about the creators of the trilogy. As a character type of comic drama, he is obviously Frye's alazon--"imposter, boaster or hypocrite, a man who pretends to be something more than he is." More specifically, he is what Frye considers the commonest type of alazon, the braggart or miles gloriosus.[3] In the Elizabethan First Return, that dramatic archetype is localized as a satiric type familiar in contemporary literature: Gullio is the would-be Renaissance man, a fool clownishly aspiring to be soldier, courtier, poet and patron of the arts.

For modern students of the Renaissance, who sometimes demand more precise genre distinctions of the literature than the poets did themselves, it is interesting that the authors of the Parnassus Plays did not reserve the use of stock dramatic types for the set allegory of The Pilgrimage, but also considered them appropriate for the more sophisticated satire of the Returns. As we have seen, the plays retain the old personified character names--Consiliodorus, Philomusus and Studioso, Stupido and Amoretto, Luxurio and

[3] "Characterization in Shakespearian Comedy," Shakespeare Quarterly, 4 (1953), 272-73.

Ingenioso, and the technique is still essential in the Second Part of The Return, with its Furor Poeticus, Academico, Judicio and Immerito. In The Pilgrimage, the name "Gullio" is used in its generic meaning of "fool." For Philomusus, who vows to "scorne eache earthlie Gullio of this age" (V. 716), Gullio is the Philistine, the worldling who does not appreciate art and intellect. In The First Return the name is used more specifically: in the fashionable satire of turn-of-the-century London, Gullio is the stock name for the would-be wit around town, the type that Dekker later characterized definitively in The Guls Hornebooke (1609).

The type was popular in all the late Elizabethan satiric genres, and Gullio is only one of many stage versions of a favorite character sketch of the contemporary verse satires. Hallett Smith, writing about late sixteenth century formal satire on the classical model, notes: "The spectacle of the English boor assuming the refinements of the Italian Renaissance, of the fantastic effects of the artificialities of court life, of the extravagance of manners and lack of manners, became a major subject for writers of the nineties."[4] The verse analogues of Gullio were considered sophisticated literary creations. The genre of formal verse satire required of the satirist a mask of superior wit and wisdom: the form was revived by educated poets in conscious imitation

[4] Elizabethan Poetry (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 223. See all of Smith's chapter on satire (IV, pp. 216-56).

of the Roman satirists; and the subject matter of corrupt and foolish men called for a point of view that was morally superior. Smith cites Donne, Marston and Hall as the most important authors.[5] Each in his own very different way illustrates the writer's confidence in a sophisticated adaptation of an old device--the stock character--that is also apparent in the work of the Parnassus playwrights. With the exception of the sinner within their own ranks, i.e., the false scholar-poet, the fool aspiring to be a Renaissance gentleman provoked the greatest scorn on the part of the university wits.

Gullio's very Renaissance aspiration is "to proue a complet gentleman, to be tam Marti quàm Mercurio" (III.928-29), skilled in arms and arts. The comic audacity of his self-esteem is revealed when he compares himself to the man Spenser, dedicating his Shepheardes Calender, called "the noble and vertuous Gentleman most worthy of all titles both of learning and chevalrie." Gullio boasts:

> I had in my dayes not vnfitly bene likned to Sr Phillip Sidney, only with this difference, that I had the better legg, and more amiable face. His Arcadia was prittie, soe are my sonnetes; he had bene at Paris, I at Padua; he fought, and so dare I; he dyed in the lowe cuntries, and soe I thinke shall I; he loued a scholler, I maintaine them . . .
>
> (III.934-39)

[5] Elizabethan Poetry, p. 233.

Gullio would be just such another "complet gentleman"; but as we learn from Ingenioso's constant undercutting of his boasts, the gull is a complete imposter. He has no claim at all to gentility, Ingenioso observing that he "scapt knightinge verie hardly" (III.862). Thus Gullio is satirized for his social vanity, the false apprehension and superficial imitation of the manners of those he considers his social superiors. Gullio's affectations of military and courtly behavior cannot be taken as a condemnation of specific class behavior because he falsifies it. The social satire here is directed not at the false sports of gentlemen, but at the sports of false gentlemen.[6]

In his Act III scene Gullio displays both sides of the Renaissance braggart--first the miles gloriosus, then the court gallant. A gull in the Jonsonian manner, he suffers the humours of both Captain Bobadillo and Matheo the poetaster, characters in the near-contemporary Every Man in His Humour (1598). Ingenioso later reviles Gullio as "this post put into a sattin sute, this haberdasher of lyes, this Bracchidochio, this Ladye munger, this meere rapier and dagger, this cringer, this foretopp" (IV.1211-14). The common denominator of all Gullio's boasts is their emptiness. Unlike Signiour Barbarisme, whose diseased body and mind taint with grossness everything he touches, Gullio is comic-

[6] Cf. Nashe's character of an "upstart" in Pierce Penilesse, McKerrow, I, 168-69.

ally transparent, his foolishness turning back only on his own ridiculous self.

Gullio's boasted military exploits are familiar enough satirical fare:

> This rapier I boughte when I soiourned in the vniuersitie of Padua; by the heauens its a pure tolledo, it was the death of a Pollonian, a Germaine, & a Ducheman, because the[y] woulde not pledge the health of Englande.
>
> (III.836-39)

(Ingenioso assures the audience that Gullio "was neuer anie further than Flushinge, and then he came home sicke of the scurueys," ll. 840-41). What is more interesting in this play about poets is Gullio's desire for fame, which he considers the necessary complement to brave deeds. He measures his success at proving himself a complete gentleman " . . . insomuche that I am pointed at for a poet in Pauls church yarde, and in the tilte yarde for a champion,--nay, euery man enquires after my abode" (ll. 929-31). The clever Ingenioso knows all too well how to mine the patron's concern for reputation, baiting the gull by asking him if his continental adventure--which Ingenioso falsely calls "a notable exploite worthy to be cronicled" (841-42)--had any witness. Gullio replies:

> Why, I coulde neuer abide to fighte priuatelie, bycause I woulde not haue obscuritie soe familiar with my vertues: since my arriuall in Englande (which is nowe 6 months I take sithens) I had bene the death of one of our

> pulinge Liteltonians for passinge by mee in
> the Moore fildes vnsaluted, but that there
> was noe historiographer by to haue recorded it.
>
> (III.844-50)

The comedy here lies in Gullio's inversion of the classic praise function of poetry,[7] in which he twists the noble principle that great deeds deserve fame into the ignoble notion that a man performs those deeds for the sake of fame.

Gullio is also comically hypocritical. The complement to his boasting is a feigned disregard for reputation: "I faith I care not for fame, but valoure & vertue will be spoken of in spite of obliuion" (ll. 855-56). He is just as hypocritical about his social climbing. When Ingenioso remarks that Gullio has "scapt knightinge verie hardly" (862), Gullio responds with a blustery dismissal of social appurtenances such as titles: "Thats but a pettie requitall to good desertes, he that esteemes mee of less worth than a knight is a peasande & a gull" (864-65). With pseudo-modesty, he claims to be content with the humble salutation, "Good morow captaine, my sworde is at youre seruice" (870).

Throughout this section Gullio is ridiculed by means of comic reduction. The outcome of all his boasted military exploits is to expose him as the little man he really is. Ingenioso concludes his satirical commentary on the subject:

[7] See O. B. Hardison, The Enduring Monument (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1962).

> Why, this is the life of a man, to comãnde a quick rapier in a tauerne, to blowe two or three simple felowes out of a roome with a valiant othe, to bestowe more smoke on the worlde with the draught of a pipe of Tobacco than proceeds from the chimnie of a solitarie hall.
>
> (III.871-76)

The joke is the bathetic gap between the gull's grandiose rhetoric and his debased actuality. In the portrait of Gullio as would-be courtier, he suffers the same comic diminution.

In ridiculing Gullio's courtly pretensions, the First Return playwright gets into his best literary satire. As a gallant, Gullio aspires to be a ladies' man--well-dressed, debonair, sexually virile, and, of course, a composer of love poetry. In this last role he becomes not only a comic poetaster, but false critic, pseudo-patron and flickering light in the fashionable literary world. But Gullio's practice of poetry only abuses it, first as a lover, using it as a tool to seduce women, then as a patron, using it to satisfy his social vanity. These non-Parnassian functions come together in Gullio's commission to Ingenioso to write verses for his mistress.

Gullio affects a passionate concern for style. A poor man's Osric, his every word is a self-conscious gesture to the gallant's notion of the poetic. For the authors of the Parnassus Plays, geared to the sophisticated satirical taste of the late 1590s, the style to be ridiculed was that of the

"golden"[8] or "sweet"[9] poetry popular earlier in the decade--a style, moreover, whose songlike qualities were best suited for the minor subject of love. For Gullio, poetry means love poetry. Pressing Ingenioso for a favorable critique of his style, Gullio limits the domain of poetry as perversely as Amoretto did: "Report thou vpon thy credit, is not my vayne in courtinge gallant and honorable?" (IV.1008-09). And as expected, Gullio's favorite models are sugared sonnets and lush Ovidian narratives, with a dash of melodrama thrown in to give a theatrical flourish to his style of delivery. As Leishman observes, for the literary wits of the universities, the Inns of Court, and the professional world of London publishing, "about the turn of the century, 'sugared' sonnets and 'conceited' erotic poems in the manner of Ovid, such as Venus and Adonis, suddenly ceased to be fashionable, and became, like the gallants who admired them, subjects for satires and epigrams."[10]

At the heart of this criticism is the immensely complicated question of the distinctive literary Weltanschauung of the late 1590s, commonly characterized as a darkening and deepening of the high Elizabethan vision, which at the level of poetic practice comes down to specific issues of form and

[8] C. S. Lewis' term in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century.

[9] J. V. Cunningham's term in "Lyric Style in the 1590s," in The Problem of Style (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1966).

[10] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 50.

content. Leishman speaks of "a reaction against the earlier romanticism and idealism: a disenchanted resolve to be at all costs realistic, to see things and show things as they really are, and to describe them (as Jonson put it) in 'language such as men do use.'"[11] Stylistically, there was a reaction against the copious rhetoric, sonorous sounds and songlike rhythms of the Elizabethan lyric, and to the tropical richness of the Ovidian narratives. Nashe's bold, new prose, though it definitely should not be misunderstood as a platform for a plain, or non-rhetorical, style, cries out against the excesses of the golden age:

> . . . giue me the man whose extemporall veine in any humour will excell our greatest Art-maisters deliberate thoughts: whose inuentions, quicker then his eye, will challenge the prowdest Rhetoritian to the contention of like perfection with like expedition.[12]

The wits also objected to the predominant subject matter of this poetry, which as Gullio makes painfully clear, is love--be it courtly and gallant, pastoral and idealistic, romantic and passionate, or Ovidian and sensuous. The scholar-poet generally considered love an unworthy subject on which to expend his wit, intellect and learning. The academic authors of The Second Return are contemptuous of

[11] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 50.

[12] Preface to Menaphon, McKerrow, III, 312.

the poet who fails to treat "a grauer subiect" than "loues foolish lazy languishment" (I.303-04). As already noted in the commentary on the Pilgrimage Amoretto, a proper critic such as Puttenham taught Renaissance poets that love was not the most worthy of subjects.[13] Even the eloquent author of The Defense of Poesy offers no serious apology for love poetry, but instead relies on wit to deflect charges made against it. Sidney explains that the detractors of poetry accuse love of indecorously intruding itself everywhere, even into genres of nobler function:

> They say the Comedies rather teach than reprehend amorous conceits. They say the Lyric is larded with passionate sonnets, the Elegiac weeps the want of his mistress, and that even to the Heroical Cupid hath ambitiously climbed.

The essayist's only defense is a mock complaint:

> Alas, Love, I would thou couldst as well defend thyself as thou canst offend others. I would those on whom thou dost attend could either put thee away or yield good reason why they keep thee.[14]

[13] See above, p. 72.

[14] An Apology for Poetry, ed. Shepherd, p. 125.
Sidney, of course, really answered the challenge to love poetry by creating his own superb examples of the genre--the sonnets of Astrophil and Stella and portions of The Arcadia. We know that even Nashe appreciated Astrophil (see his introductory epistle to the 1591 edition); but curiously faithful to Sidney's spirit, Nashe regards Astrophil's "tragicommody of loue" with some levity--though he takes Sidney himself seriously enough, calling him "so excellent a Poet, (the least sillable of whose name, sounded in the eares of iudgement, is able to giue the meanest line he writes a dowry of immortality,)" (McKerrow, III, 329).

The satirists of the late nineties were much more direct, humorless and moralistic in their criticisms. Leishman quotes a long passage from Hall's Virgidemiarum that rankles with disgust at what he considers the licentiousness of popular love poetry--e.g.:

> What if some Shordich furie should incite
> Some lust-stung letcher, must he needs indite
> The beastly rites of hyred Venerie,
> The whole worlds vniuersall baud to bee?
>
> (Book I, Satire IX)[15]

The accusation of lewdness, again linked to perverted generic function and abuses of the sweet style, is also made by Guilpin, whose attack introduces still another charge against love poetry, that it is effeminately decadent:

> Fie on these Lydian tunes which blunt our sprights
> And turne our gallants to Hermaphrodites . . .
> Hence with these fidlers, whose oyle-buttred lines,
> Are Panders vnto lusts, and food to sinnes,
> Their whimpring Sonnets, puling Elegies
> Slaunder the Muses; make the world despise
> Admired poesie, marre Resolutions ruffe,
> And melt true valour with lewd ballad stuffe.[16]

Love poetry, the satirists argued, slanders the very name of poetry; it is only "lewd ballad stuffe," and as such, should stay in its place in the streets and in the stews.[17]

[15] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 57. Leishman says that these lines probably refer to Nashe and his Choice of Valentines. See The Poems of Joseph Hall, ed. Davenport, p. 20.

[16] Satyre Preludium in Skialetheia (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 58).

[17] One wonders that the fact that the Parnassian hero

In condemning the expense of poetic spirit on such paltry matters as love, the satirists were in a sense asking for greater moral substance in poetry. Their own satyr-like style was harsh, and their form of expression negative; but their poetry had the redeeming didactic purpose of castigating folly. As Leishman points out, in making these rather conservative demands for instructive literature, the young wits were, to an extent, only returning to native, medieval traditions of satire which endured unobtrusively but steadily throughout the sixteenth century.[18]

Finally, bridging the attacks on the sweet style and the unworthy subject matter of Elizabethan love poetry, was the more subtle criticism that this kind of writing lacked a sense of proportion. The critics were not asking that all poetry be elevated in style and noble in subject; their own satire was, after all, distinguished by its roughness. What they were insisting on was a sense of decorum, the principle that the style fit the subject--as, for example, their harsh

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Spenser obviously considered love a legitimate topic for serious poetry--as in the Amoretti--did not soften the playwrights' attitude toward love poetry. This oversight is more understandable in the case of The Faerie Queene, where the scholarly prejudice against intruding "loues foolish lazy languishment" (SR, I.304) into heroic poetry may have prevented them from recognizing the extensive treatment of love in the Elizabethan epic.

[18] The argument that the outburst of satire in the late nineties was not simply a classical revival, but also "one more example of the Middle Ages re-acting and re-asserting themselves against the Renaissance" (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 49), is endorsed by Hallett Smith, among others.

style of invective fit their low subject of folly.[19] Their criticism of love poetry was that despite the lowly matter, the poets were employing fantastically ornate styles. As Cunningham points out, the sweet style--"fluent, and copious, with bright conceits and sounding phrases"--was the style of epideictic oratory;[20] and because the scholars ranked the subject of love low on that formal scale, they considered the use of the sweet style for love indecorous.[21] And that, really, is the trouble with Gullio--a comic lack of decorum.

Thus of all Ingenioso's false flattery of the gull, the most outrageous is his praise of Gullio's style: "Amonge other of youre vertues I doe obserue youre stile to be most pure, youre English tonge comes as neere Tullies as anie mans liuinge" (III.925-27). But sarcasm is wasted on a man with no sense of rhetorical fitness. Gullio's style is generally limited to a single key--an outlandish elegance concocted from his mistaken notions of the poetic and the oratorical, a grotesque grandiosity that he manages to sustain

[19] Kernan specifically emphasizes the satirists' great concern for decorum, going so far as to call it their "guiding critical principle" (The Cankered Muse, p. 62).

[20] "Lyric Style in the 1590s," p. 161.

[21] This line of reasoning is cleverly answered by Puttenham: "And because loue is of all the other humane affections the most puissant and passionate, and most generall to all sortes and ages of men and women . . . it requireth a forme of Poesie variable, inconstant, affected, curious and most witty of any others, whereof the ioyes were to be uttered in one sorte, the sorrowes in an other, and by the many formes of poesie, the many moodes and pangs of lovers, throughly to discouered . . . " (The Arte of English Poesie, ed. Willcock and Walker, Book I, Chapter xx, p. 45).

with few lapses.[22] Like the poetic offenders of rhetoric, Gullio's extravagant style is not only exaggerated, but misplaced: his fine diction and stylized syntax are used inappropriately. The most common pitfall of this misused rhetoric is a descent into the bathetic, and Gullio, unwittingly, is a master of this art--for example:

> But seest thou this? O touche it not, it is diuine; why man, it was a humble retainer to her buske. And here is another fauoure which I snached from her, as I was in a gentlemanlike curtesie tyinge of her shooe stringes . . .
>
> (III.919-22)

As with many another successful Elizabethan stage character, Gullio's speech bespeaks the whole man, his indecorous use of language reflecting his failure to discriminate in all questions of value. For example, pretending to the gallant's accomplishments in such varied areas as wit and women, poetry and fine apparell, he fails ludicrously to distinguish amongst them. In one marvelous speech he manages to confound them all:

> And for matters of witt, oft haue I sonnetted it in the commendacons of her sqirill, and very latelie (I remember that time I had a muske ierkin layd all with golde lace, and the rest of my furniture answerable, pretty sleightie apparell, stood mee not [long] paste in twoo hundred pounds) they frowarde fates cut her munkeys threed asunder, & I in

[22] The only time Gullio changes style is when he brags about his suits of fine apparel--"Tushe man, at the courte I thinke I shoulde growe lousie if I wore less than 2 a daye" (III.905-06)--a materialistic concern he documents with mercantile precision (ll. 909-14).

> the aboundance of poetrie bestowed an Epitaphe vpon the deceased litel creature.
>
> (III.889-96)

Ingenioso's response, a witty piece of blame by praise that itself plays with the idea of the paradoxical encomium, points to this failure of discrimination:

> I faith an excellent witt, that can poetize vpon such meane subiectes: euerie Iohn Dringle can make a booke in the cõmendacons of temperance, againste the seuen deadlie sinns, but thats a rare wit that can make somthinke of nothinge, that can make an Epigram of a mouse, and an Epitaphe on a Munkey.
>
> (III.897-902)

The gallant's infatuation with style carries him beyond words and into the manner of oratorical delivery. In a passage that would still tempt a good comic actor today, Gullio announces that he will re-enact for Ingenioso

> an enthusiasticall oration, wherwith my new Mris ears were made happie. The carriage of my body, by the reporte of my mistriss, was excellent: I stood stroking vp my haire, which became me very admirably, gaue a low congey at the beginninge of each period, made euery sentence end sweetly with an othe. It is the part of an Oratoure to perswade, & I know not how better, than to conclude with such earnest protestations. Suppose also that thou wert my Mris, as sometime woodden statues represent the goddesses, thus I woulde looke amorously, thus I would pace, thus I woulde salute thee.
>
> (III.969-79)

As for the style of this oration, the poetaster is exposed as a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles of his favorite poets. Caught red-handed by Ingenioso, a well-read wit who has little difficulty identifying the borrowed passages ("Faith gentleman, youre reading is wonderfull in our English poetts," III.1004-05), Gullio feigns a scholar-poet's excuse for plagiarism: "I vouchsafe to take some of there wordes and applie them to mine owne matters by a scholasticall imitation" (ll. 1006-07).

Plagiarism, however, is not the only joke here. The greatest ridicule is aimed at Gullio's poetic models, the authors that this foolish poetaster with his outlandish style so proudly believes he is imitating. Indeed, the principal object of Gullio's idolatry comes as no surprise at all to the canny Ingenioso. After Gullio delivers the opening line of his oration--

> Pardon faire lady, thoughe sicke thoughted
> Gullio maks a maine vnto thee, & like a
> bould faced sutore gins to woo thee.
>
> (III.983-85)

--whose fine-filed phrases were obviously supposed to sound familiar to the well-read audience, Ingenioso declares:

> We shall haue nothinge but pure Shakspeare,
> and shreds of poetrie that he hath gathered
> at the theators.
>
> (III.986-87)

The satirist's gibe epitomizes the Parnassian critical viewpoint: the gull's taste is limited to the sensationalist romantic love poetry of the mid-nineties which, although still extremely popular at the turn of the century--Venus and Adonis went through at least six editions before 1600[23]--was strictly out of date in avant-garde literary circles like the universities. Gullio's particular models are the well-known opening lines of Venus and Adonis (the opening line of his "oration" uses ll. 5-6 of the first canto,[24] and is followed by his version of the second stanza, ll. 995-1000), spiced by a line of love poetry cribbed from The Spanish Tragedy, made comic by his awkward addition of an opening phrase ("As I am a scholler, these arms of mine are long and strong withall:/ Thus elms by vines are compast ere they falle," 1002-03).[25]

[23] E. K. Chambers, William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966), I, 543-44.

[24] Gullio quotes the first two lines of Venus and Adonis at the end of this scene, III.1030-31.

[25] Cf. The Spanish Tragedy, II.iv.44-45 (Leishman, p.184n.).
The Parnassian disdain for the public theater is discussed below. in Chapter 9 on The Second Return. In regard to Kyd, however, it would be helpful to keep in mind Nashe's derogatory comments on "our triuiall translators" in his Preface to Greene's Menaphon: " . . . yet English Seneca read by Candlelight yeelds many good sentences, as Blood is a begger, and so forth; and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, hee will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say handfuls of Tragical speeches. But O grief! Tempus edax rerum, whats that will last alwayes? The Sea exhaled by droppes will in continuance bee dryie, and Seneca, let blood line by line and page by page, at length must needes die to our Stage" (McKerrow, III, 315-16).

This passage of The First Return is invaluable as one of the all too infrequent references to Shakespeare by his contemporaries. But it is also rather disturbing. What does it mean that it is the literary gull of the play who worships Shakespeare, that the humor of two of Gullio's comic exit lines turns on his adoration of the man we now consider the greatest English poet? (At the end of this first scene Gullio pledges, "O sweet Mr Shakspeare, Ile haue his picture in my study at the courte," III.1032-33.[26]) Leishman's advice to regard Gullio's admiration for Shakespeare as "a very equivocal compliment,"[27] is an understatement. Gullio honors Shakespeare on that side idolatry, and he is ridiculed for it. As Leishman points out, the best internal evidence for this conclusion comes in Act IV, when Gullio states his dislike not only of Chaucer, the revered poet of the past, but more importantly, of the contemporary Parnassian idol, Spenser.[27] As we have seen, the university wits scorned the kind of poetry that is so well represented by Venus and Adonis and satirized it by means of parody and direct critical condemnation. In The First Return, Shakespeare has the dubious honor of being crowned laureate of the genre.

The references to Shakespeare get us into the whole fascinating--and difficult--question of what the Bard's con-

[26] For the other, see below, p. 205, (IV.1199-1205).

[27] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 55.

temporaries, particularly other writers, thought of him. Schoenbaum's survey of Shakespeare's contemporary reputation concludes:

> Mention of Shakespeare's works . . . are far from numerous in the last decade of the sixteenth century, and for the most part are tucked away in obscure publications put out by the lesser literati. They show that Shakespeare had early begun to make his mark, but they do not permit us to generalize safely about the scope of his appeal or to project upon times past our own idolatry.[28]

Scarcity of allusion is one thing; the Parnassus wits' ridicule is something more provocative.

The turn-of-the-century dating of the Parnassus Plays (1598-1601) is important here, for in the matter of the playwrights' attitude toward Shakespeare, we must keep in mind that we are talking about a period before the death of

[28] Samuel Schoenbaum, Shakespeare's Lives (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 53. Schoenbaum omits the Parnassus Plays from his survey, and mentions the trilogy only once briefly (p. 179).

The allusions and their data are collected by E. K. Chambers in William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems, Vol. II, Appendix B, "Contemporary Allusions," p. 186ff.

Also see Marchette Chute's informal essay, "The Bubble, Reputation," Virginia Quarterly Review, 25 (1949), 575-84, which begins: "If you had asked a well-read Elizabethan what contemporary poet had the best chance of immortality he would have answered without hesitation: Sir Philip Sidney. His second choice would probably have been Edmund Spenser and after that either Samuel Daniel or William Warner . . . If the well-read Elizabethan put Shakespeare on his list he would not have been thinking of his plays; cheap reprints of popular playhouse productions did not entitle a man to the honored name of poet. Shakespeare was a candidate for poetic honors only because of his two narrative poems, 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece'" (pp. 575-76).

Elizabeth--i.e., before the great tragedies and late romances; dealing more specifically with the First Return author--the creator of the Shakespeare-worshiping Gullio--we must go back before 1599/1600, and also exclude Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida, and probably Julius Caesar from the repertory.

Everyone is familiar with the enthusiastic praise of Shakespeare given by Francis Meres in his Palladis Tamia (1598). In "A Comparative Discourse of our English Poets with the Greeke, Latin, and Italian Poets," Meres ranks Shakespeare with the best native poets--and whatever the critic's deficiencies, one cannot help but marvel at the catholicity of his list: " . . . so the English tongue is mightily enriched, and gorgeouslie inuested in rare ornaments and resplendent abilliments by Sir Philip Sidney, Spenser, Daniel, Drayton, Warner, Shakespeare, Marlow and Chapman.[29] Meres distinctly praises first Shakespeare's poetry--" . . . so the sweete wittie soule of Ouid liues in mellifluous & hony-tongued Shakespeare, witnes his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugred Sonnets among his priuate friends, &c,[30] and then his plays--"As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latines: so Shakespeare among ye English is the most excellent in both kinds for the

[29] Francis Meres's Treatise "Poetrie," ed. Don C. Allen, (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1933) [rpt. from The University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, 16 (1933)], p. 73.

[30] Ibid., p. 76.

stage . . . ,"[31] concluding: "As Epius Stolo said, that the Muses would speake with Plautus tongue, if they would speak Latin: so I say that the Muses would speak with Shakespeares fine filed phrase, if they would speake English."[31] But the significance of this testimony cuts two ways. Though Meres was a Cambridge man himself, his criticism is an indiscriminate collection of hyperbolic commonplaces and cannot be considered a source of authority for the poetic and scholarly avant-garde.[32] On the other hand, from the very nature of his work, we can be reasonably certain that Meres' judgment was current, and as "safe" as all his other commonplaces.

There is other scattered praise of Shakespeare: Leishman, in his helpful introductory discussion of the problem, quotes from Weever's Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion (1599) and Barnfield's "A Remembrance of Some English Poets" in Poems in divers humors (1598).[33] But search as we may, there is little evidence that during that early period Shakespeare's genius was recognized in any way comparable to the judgment of the centuries, best stated by Jonson in the First Folio: "He was not of an age, but for all time!" In the jaundiced eyes of the satirical wits of the late 1590s--

[31] "Poetrie," ed. Allen, p. 76.

[32] See Allen's Introduction, pp. 9-60.("it may be said abruptly that whenever [Meres'] statement about an Englishman exceeds the mere mention of his name the statement is borrowed," p. 50).

[33] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 55-56.

Leishman quotes from Marston's Scourge of Villanie (1598) and John Davies of Hereford's Papers Complaint in The Scourge of Folly (late nineties, though not published until 1611)[34] --Shakespeare's early successes had not even passed the test of time of half a decade!

The university wits dismissed Shakespeare as a serious poet because he was known as a writer of love poetry and of plays. The scholar-poets' hostility toward the public theater, both as a medium for poetry and as a business enterprise, will be discussed later, when the protagonists of The Second Return are forced to stoop to acting in plays--and where they hear "Will Kempe" declare his colleague Shakespeare a playwright superior not only to Ben Jonson, but to the university wits (IV.1766-73). As for Shakespeare and the scholar-poets' low opinion of love poetry, it so happens that the poet accused in The Second Return of wasting his talent on "loues foolish lazy languishment" (I.304) is none other than the Bard himself. This characterization is confirmed in The First Return by Ingenioso's association of Shakespeare with Daniel; upon hearing Gullio quote from Romeo and Juliet, Ingenioso says: "Marke Romeo and Iuliet: o monstrous theft, I thinke he will runn throughe a whole booke of Samuell Daniells" (III.992-93). "Sweete hony dropping Daniell," who is ridiculed in The Second Return for his "sugred sonetting" (I.235-37) in Delia (1591, 1592), was also

[34] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 56-58.

the author of the decidedly romantic long narrative poem, The Complaint of Rosamond (1592).[35]

The identification of Shakespeare as a love poet is not peculiar to the Parnassus Plays; in contemporary references it is the rule rather than the exception--in works that praise him as well as in those that blame. Shakespeare was apparently best known as the author of Venus and Adonis, The Rape of Lucrece, and sometimes, as is the case with Gullio, Romeo and Juliet. To a considerable extent, this situation was of Shakespeare's own choosing--as evidenced by his careful publication and dedication of the two long poems. What is striking in these contemporary references, favorable and contemptuous alike, is the omission of so much of Shakespeare's best love poetry--not only in the as yet unpublished sonnets, but in the early plays.[36]

The reasons for the contemporary characterization of Shakespeare as a poet of romantic love probably have their basis in what were originally hard facts of publishing and performance. The two narrative poems, Venus and Adonis in particular, were well published and enormously popular.

[35] Hallett Smith, in his discussion of Rosamond's popularity, quotes William Covell, who praises Shakespeare's two long poems alongside his praise of Daniel in Polimanteia (see Chambers, William Shakespeare, II, 193).

[36] Meres, a notable exception, praises Shakespeare's "sugred Sonnets," as well as "his Gẽtlemẽ of Verona, his Errors, his Loue labors lost, . . . his Midsummers-night dreame & his Merchant of Venice" ("Poetrie," ed. Allen, p. 76).

The reputation of the plays is a more complicated problem. Romeo and Juliet, for example, seems to have been a popular play on the stage;[37] but it was already four or five years old at the time of the second Parnassus Play. As to information provided by the published text,[38] the first quarto (1597) is only a fair memorial construction, a historical fact which raises the question of the adverse effect that a bad quarto may have had on the contemporary critical reception of a play.[39] And Q^2--although it is the basis of modern texts, it, too, is filled with problems--was not printed until 1599, the same year that The First Return was probably written. As for the Parnassus student-playwrights, it is probable that they did not get to London to attend the theaters or to read Shakespeare's sonnets "among his priuate friends." It is also likely that they had not been at Cambridge long enough to witness the only recorded visit of the Chamberlain's Men in 1594-95.[40] Before their Cambridge

[37] See the allusions to Romeo and Juliet in Chambers, William Shakespeare, Vol. II, Appendix B. The title page of Q^2 (1599) states: "As it hath bene sundry times publiquely acted, by the right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine his Seruants."

[38] Surveyed by Chambers, William Shakespeare, I, 338-45.

[39] Shakespeare's reputation may also have been influenced by apocrypha such as the non-Shakespearean poems in The Passionate Pilgrim, printed by William Jaggard in 1599 as "By W. Shakespeare."

[40] Leishman's note, based on Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, Vol. II (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 336).

careers, in the time of Shakespeare's chronicle plays, they would have been rather young for attendance at the theater; and of course many of them did not even grow up in London. What we finally get down to in this research problem is the somewhat consoling probability that the unappreciative Parnassus playwrights never even saw a Shakespeare play.

The basic factors in the scholar-poets' rejection of Shakespeare were undoubtedly the literary ones--their reactions against the abuses of the sweet style and the ignoble function of love poetry. The satirists, as we have seen, particularly harped on the issue of the lewd content of the popular Ovidian narratives: Marston attacks the "foule impurities" of Lucrece, Davies the "Venerian speculation" of Venus and Adonis.[41] These practicing poets, along with the Parnassus wits, failed to make a distinction made by another academic critic, Gabriel Harvey, who, in a marginal note in his own copy of Speght's 1598 edition of Chaucer, almost makes up for his notorious obtuseness toward The Faerie Queene by observing: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeares Venus, & Adonis: but his Lucrece, & his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, haue it in them, to please the wiser sort."[42]

[41] Quoted by Leishman, pp. 56, 58.

[42] Chambers, William Shakespeare, II, 196-98. Serious appreciation of Hamlet is extremely rare.

There is still another moralistic objection to Shakespeare's poems and plays--one that is more subtle than the blunt charge of pornography. Ironically, this negative criticism can be explained most easily by quoting an admirer. Leisman quotes Weever's emotional tribute in his Epigrammes:

> Honie-tong'd Shakespeare when I saw thine issue
> I swore Apollo got them and none other,
> Their rosie-tainted features cloth'd in tissue,
> Some heauen born goddesse said to be their mother:
> Rose-checkt Adonis with his amber tresses,
> Faire fire-hot Venus charming him to loue her,
> Chaste Lucretia virgine-like her dresses,
> Prowd lust-stung Tarquine seeking still to proue her:
> Romeo, Richard; more whose names I know not,
> Their sugred tongues, and power attractiue beuty
> Say they are Saints althogh that Sts they shew not,
> For thousands vowes to them subiectiue dutie:
> They burn in loue; thy childrē, Shakespear, het thē:
> Go, wo thy Muse more Nymphish brood beget them.[43]

What Weever's eloquent admiration comes down to is a passionately romantic concern with character! His outrageously mixed cast of characters has in common the capacity to "burn in love." These are gigantic personalities of tragic dimensions; they are sensuous and passionate, and possessed with great physical beauty and verbal power. Weever's inclusion of Richard III in this panoply of Olympian saints erases any doubt that his poetic judgment is amoral. Along with many other Elizabethans of similar tastes, Weever's testimony argues that the paying London theatergoers and bookbuyers were not circumscribed by the artistic restraints imposed by the classical modes that were current--at least in theory--in

[43] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 55-56.

more academic circles.

This leads to a final point in the wits' censure of Shakespeare--that many of their negative critical comments are colored by hostility toward his acknowledged popularity (Weever's "For thousands vowes to them subiectiue dutie"). The First Return playwright is damning with faint praise when he designates Shakespeare as the favorite author of the most foolish gull--his work so well known that the playwright can take for granted the audience's recognition of lines from Venus and Adonis. But the satirists were often as interested in attacking the popularity of an undeserving work as they were in ridiculing the work itself. Davies' negative comments about Venus and Adonis, for example, are not so much a direct condemnation of the poem--about which he concedes, "Fine wit is shew'n therein"--but a castigation of those who like it for the wrong reasons, that is, those who savor its lewd content (" . . . the coyest Dames,/ In priuate read it for their Closset-games").[44]

Following this line of reasoning, we look for evidence that the First Return playwright ridiculed Gullio, as an entity separate from Shakespeare, for his misplaced idolatry of Shakespeare. There is one line that argues that the playwright was more interested in ridiculing the abuse of praise in Shakespeare's admirers than in ridiculing the Bard himself. For his oration to his mistress, Gullio borrows from Romeo

[44] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 58.

and Juliet what he believes to be lines of amorous intent:

> Pardon mee moy mittressa, ast am a gentleman the moone in comparison of thy bright hue a meere slutt, Anthonies Cleopatra a blacke browde milkmaide, Hellen a dowdie.
>
> (III.988-90)

But these comical analogies are taken from Mercutio's ridicule of the overly romantic Romeo, delivered in much the same spirit of witty satire that informs Ingenioso's attitude toward Gullio. Indeed, Ingenioso's response seems to sympathize with Shakespeare: "Marke Romeo and Iuliet: o monstrous theft" (l. 992); but nothing else is made of this flimsy possibility of the only kind words for Shakespeare in The First Return.

There is one other literary role that Gullio affects to play: he would be a patron of poets. Comparing himself favorably to Sidney ("he loued a scholler, I maintaine them," III.939), he obnoxiously tries to lord it over the impoverished Ingenioso:

> . . . witnes thy selfe, nowe, because I sawe thee haue the wit to acknowledge those vertus to be mine, which indeede are, I haue restored thy dylaniated back & ruinous estate to those prettie clothes wherin thou now walkest.
>
> (III.939-43)

But Gullio's boasting is essentially comic because, as Ingenioso's caustic comments make clear, this would-be patron

has neither the financial nor the social means to wield power over the patronized artist. As for the "pretty clothes," Ingenioso says, "Oh it is a moste lousie caste sute of his, that he before bought of an Irish souldier" (III.944-45).[45] And when Gullio boasts about the honorable entertainment given him by a countess and a lord (IV.1101-08), Ingenioso comments: "I thinkes he meanes to poyson mee with a lie: why, he is acquainted with nere a lord Coulton [a Cambridge personality, tailor by trade and comedian by avocation[46]], and for countesses, he neuer came in the cuntrie where a countess dwells" (1109-12). Gullio is in this way reduced to a parody of Signiour Barbarisme, an empty cartoon of the archetypal patron's conceit and self-interest. As with his military exploits, Gullio is here exposed as an ignoble seeker after fame for its own sake; and comparable to his social climbing after the aristocracy is his naive pleasure in mingling with poor but literarily fashionable poets:

> Nay I haue not onlie recreated thy could state with the warmth of my bountie, but also maintaine other poetical spirites, that liue vpon my trenchers; in so muche that I cannot come to my Inn at Oxforde without a dozen congratulorie orations, made by Genus and Species and his ragged companions. I reward the poor ergoes moste bountifullie, and send them away. I am verie latelie registered in the roules of fame, in an Epigram made by a Cambridge man, one Weauer

[45] A few lines earlier, when Gullio is bragging about his wardrobe (III.905-06, quoted above, p. 184), Ingenioso remarks: "The diuell of the sute hath he, but this, & thats not payd for yet" (907-08).

[46] Leishman's note, p. 188.

> --fellow, I warrant him, els coulde he neuer haue had such a quick sight into my vertues, howsoeuer I merit his praise: if I meet with him I will vouchsafe to giue him condigne thankes.
>
> (III.951-62)

The playwright exposes Gullio in that one broad stroke, ignorantly mistaking an epigram satirizing a type of "Gullio" as praise of himself.[47]

Still, the very potential of patronage creates tension in the Ingenioso-Gullio relationship, and this is the only issue that taints these comic scenes with bitterness. For the most part, Ingenioso is master satirist over the fool; but with the gull as pseudo-patron, Ingenioso once again falls to playing the false flatterer. Using Gullio's own ridiculously inflated style, Ingenioso first praises his non-existent heroism--

> Please you now S^r^ to lay the rayns on the necke of youre vertuous disposition, you haue gotten a suppliant poet that will teach mossy posteritie to knowe howe that this earthe in suche a raigne was blest with a yonge Iupiter.
>
> (III.851-54)

then his gross poetic style--

> Admirable sanes compare, neuer was soe mellifluous a witt ioynet to so pure a phrase, such comly gesture, suche gentleman like behauiour.
>
> (III.1010-12)

[47] Leishman quotes from Weever's Epigrammes (1599), II.21 (p. 182n.).

and finally his extremely doubtful power of patronage--

> If I liue, I will lime out your vertues in such rude colours as I haue, that youre late nephwes may knowe what good witts were youre worshipps most bounden.
>
> (III.947-50)

Ingenioso, like Gullio, is a hypocrite--though his sin is mitigated by his material necessity . . . and by his intellectual awareness of the situation. Moreover, much of Ingenioso's false flattery is for the satirical entertainment of the sympathetic audience, whose presence he repeatedly acknowledges.

At the end of the Act IV scene with Gullio, Ingenioso half-rationalizes, half-explains his technique. Exclaiming that no one could endure such a fool "but a man thats ordayned to miserie," he vows:

> Well madame Pecunia, onc more for thy sake will I waite on this truncke, and with soothinge him vpp in time will leaue him a greater foole than I founde him.
>
> (IV.1214-17)

Ingenioso does admit to being bought. But these words also recall Ingenioso's Act I analysis of the social psychology of satire--the phenomenon that the scholar-poet's wit is channeled into satire by the very members of society he attacks.[48] And that paradoxical revenge of the satirist, as

[48] I.165-71. See above, pp. 98-101.

Ingenioso should have known, is the only satisfaction he will ever have of his gull. But that does not come until the Act V denouement. At this point there is, perhaps, only an ironic allusion to it in Ingenioso's seeming flattery, "I will lime out your vertues in such rude colours as I haue" (l. 948).

But honor, as another wit once observed, is insensible, and Ingenioso, hard-pressed for a living, accepts a commission to write some love poetry for Gullio to present to his mistress--as his own creations, of course.[49] Gullio's commission is among the best of his many marvelous speeches:

> new years day approcheth, and wheras other gallants bestowe Iewells vpon there Mistrisses (as I haue done whilome), I now count it base to do as the cõmon people doe; I will bestow vpon them the precious stons of my witt, a diamonde of Inuention, that shall be aboue all value & esteeme; therfore, sithens I am employed in some weightie affayrs of the courte, I will haue thee, Ingenioso, to make them, and when thou hast done, I will pervse, pollish, and correcte them.
>
> (III.1015-23)

As he has already made abundantly clear, Gullio favors the style of Venus and Adonis; in his request, he even quotes the famous opening lines, declaring:

> Marry, I thinke I shall entertaine those verses which run like these:

[49] Referring to this passage in The First Return, Hibbard suggests that Nashe may have picked up extra money by similarly ghostwriting for gentlemen-poets (Thomas Nashe, p. 55).

> Euen as the sunn with purple coloured face
> Had tane his laste leaue on the weeping morne, etc.
>
> (III.1028-31)

Nevertheless, he showily asks Ingenioso to write "in two or three diuers vayns, in Chaucers, Gowers and Spencers, and Mr Shakspeares" (1027-28). Ingenioso's poetic imitations and Gullio's critical responses come in the first scene of Act IV, which is notable as the most concentrated section of topical literary satire in The First Return.

The scene is prefaced by a passage which ridicules Gullio's pretensions to learning and poetry, so that it becomes impossible to do anything but laugh at his critical taste. First showing off his scraps of learning, Gullio strings together an awkwardly related series of proverbial Latin phrases. He quotes--and misquotes--familiar lines; but his 'Homeric' saying is really Ovidian, his 'Tully' is lifted from Lyly's Grammar, and his 'Ronsard' turns out to be Italian.[50] He winds up this virtuoso display of ignorance by translating the Latin into an uninspired English couplet. Gullio then boasts that he is as academically well-read as any professional scholar-poet:

> It is my custome in my comon talke to make
> vse of my readinge in the Greeke, Latin,
> French, Italian, Spanishe poetts, and to

[50] See Leishman's notes, pp. 188-89.
Gullio again parades his little Latin in Act V, ll. 1390-92 and 1447-48.

> adorne my oratorye with some prettie choise extraordinarie sayinges.
>
> (IV.1134-37)

Later Gullio flaunts his knowledge of various topics of invention: "Ile haue thee make an elegant description of my M^ris; liken the worste part of her to Cynthia, make also a familiar Dialogue betwixt her and my selfe" (IV.1207-10). But the complement to this false scholar's pseudo-learning is a philistine anti-academicism: Gullio insists that while he is educated, he is no plodding pedant. He says of his couplet, "A dull vniuersities heade woulde haue bene a month aboute thus muche" (IV.1129-30). His wit--as the love poets claimed in endless imitation of Sidney's Astrophil--is extemporal: "As I am a gentleman and a scholler, it was but a suddaine flash of my Inuention" (1133-34). The anti-intellectual prejudice rears its head again in the next scene, when Gullio maintains the superiority of poetry based on experience:

> Youe schollers are simple felowes, men that neuer came where Ladies growe; I that haue spente my life amonge them knowes best what becometh my pen, and theire Ladishipps ears.
>
> (IV.1186-89)

These are familiar words of abuse heaped on scholar-poets, but they are ridiculed in the mouth of one whose claims to both authority and experience are false.

Ingenioso's imitations of Chaucer, Spenser and Shakespeare--Gower is omitted--are included for the literary enjoyment of the cognoscenti, the Cambridge audience of scholar-poets. Gullio, in even asking for a selection, has only been showing off again; his heart set on the "Ambrosiall veyne" (IV.1138), he chooses Ingenioso's run-of-the-mill imitation of Venus and Adonis, declaring:

> Ey marry S^r^, these haue some life in them: let this duncified worlde esteeme of Spẽcer and Chaucer, Ile worshipp sweet Mr Shakspeare, and to honoure him will lay his Venus and Adonis vnder my pillowe, as wee reade of one (I do not well remember his name, but I am sure he was a kinge) slept with Homer vnder his beds heade.
>
> (III.1199-1205)

Gullio's preference for Shakespeare at the expense of Chaucer and Spenser is satirized in Ingenioso's ironic manner. Here there is no direct praise of Spenser, who in The Second Return is pronounced a Homer, or of the older poet, in whose company Spenser is memorialized in the later play.[51] The verses Gullio rejects are not simply quotations from Troilus and Criseyde and The Faerie Queene, but Ingenioso's pointed imitations. Maintaining the basically light satiric spirit of the Gullio passages, Ingenioso's imitations are comic, even burlesque; in both cases, the humor involves crude puns. Instead of treating Gullio's critical aberrations seriously,

[51] In the censuring of the poets, Ingenioso, with uncharacteristic seriousness, says about Spenser, "But softly may our Homers ashes rest,/ That lie by mery Chaucers noble chest" (SR, I.ii.227-28).

the playwright ridicules them indirectly: not only is Gullio incapable of appreciating good poetry, he is unable to distinguish Ingenioso's witty deviations from it.

Ingenioso's Chaucerian imitation works closely with the original Troilus, his first descriptive stanza an only slightly awkward copy. But in the second stanza Ingenioso makes his poetic speaker ridiculous by having him include in his love letter some of Pandarus' canny advice on how to write a successful one:

> Nor scriuenly nor craftilie I write;
> Blott I a litell the paper with my teares,
> Nought might mee gladden while I [did] endite
> But this poore scroule, that thy name y bears.
> Go blessed scroule, a blisfull destinie
> Is shapen thee, my lady shalt thou see.
>
> (IV.1153-58)

(Ingenioso even drops a line from the famous seven-line stanza form without Gullio taking objection.) The joke explodes in stanza three, where Ingenioso's speaker addresses to his mistress a few particularly indecorous lines that Pandarus gives only as an example of what kind of writing to avoid, in illustration of his advice, "Ne jompre ek no discordant thyng yfeere" (T&C, II.1037):

> Nought fitteth mee in this sad thinge I feare
> To vsen iolly tearmes of meriment;
> Solemne tearmes better fitten this mattere
> Then to vsen tearmes of good content:
> For if a painter a pike woulde painte
> With asses feet, and headed like an ape,
> It cordeth not, soe were it but a iape.
>
> (IV.1159-65)

Gullio, however, doesn't get Ingenioso's joke because he didn't get Chaucer's in the first place. The literary sophistication of parody is beyond him. He had affectedly claimed to "loue antiquitie"--but only with the gallant's proviso, "if it be not harsh" (IV.1144-45). Gullio knows what he likes, and all he likes is the sweet style. And so he declares Ingenioso's imitation of Chaucer--and the original--"dull, harshe, and spiritless; my M^ris will soone finde them not to sauoure of my sweet vayne" (1167-68). "Besides," he adds, naughtily reading an Elizabethan double entendre into Chaucer's use of the word "jape,"[52] "thers a worde in the laste canto, which my chaste Ladye will neuer endure the readinge of"--though his real complaint is, "thou shouldest haue insinuated soe much, and not toulde it plainlye" (1169-71). When Ingenioso claims innocence for himself and his model by offering the inoffensive definition, Gullio dismisses them both with, "Tush, Chaucer is a foole, and you are another for defendinge of him" (1178-79).

Ingenioso's imitation of Spenser is brief, but wittily to the point--a sonneteer's take-off on the famous opening lines of The Faerie Queene:

> A gentle pen rides prickinge on the plaine,
> This paper plaine, to resalute my loue.
>
> (IV.1181-82)

[52] Chaucer means "joke," but in the sixteenth century, due to its secondary meaning of sexual seduction, the word was considered impolite (Leishman, p. 191n.).

The lines are burlesque because they treat in a pseudo-heroic manner the trivial subject of love--in particular, the overused Petrarchan conceit of writing about the writing of love poetry. But Gullio, unable to see the absurdity of misused rhetoric, fails to discern the parody. Again, all he does get is the dirty pun:

> Stay man, why thou haste a very lecherous witt, what wordes are these? Though thou comes somwhat neare my meaninge, yet it doth not become my gentle witt to sett it downe soe plainlye.
>
> (IV.1183-86)

Clearly the First Return playwright considers Spenser beyond the need of serious defense, and the gull's failure to appreciate the maker of The Faerie Queene is used as material for a light joke. It is only later, in the darkening prospects of The Second Return, that the need arises for a stronger statement about the Parnassian idol.

Chapter 6. Discontented Denouement

All that remains of the plot of The First Return is the disintegration of the fragile professional connections that the four protagonists have made with society. All are dismissed from their jobs for failing to perform assigned duties--work, it turns out, they considered incommensurate with their ability and training. In other words, the scholar-poets lose their jobs because they are too proud for them. In the end, almost reluctantly, the play comes back to Consiliodorus' principle of a perpetual stand-off between artist and society: the world at large does not appreciate the scholar-poet on his own terms, and the true scholar-poet will not be so false to his own values as to prostitute himself to the demands of a materialistic society.

The conclusion of Act IV disposes of Philomusus and Studioso. First Philomusus' superior, the bumpkin Perceval newly advanced to warden, appears in order to chastise his "moste vnnegligent Sexton" (l. 1228). Puffed up with pride of place, Perceval tells the audience:

> Mass maisters, the case is alterd with mee
> since I was here laste: they call mee noe
> more plaine Will nor William, nor goodman
> Perceuall, but Mr Warden at euerye worde.
>
> (IV. 1218-21)

For Perceval and his countrymen, this position puts him a good cut above the working scholar. The warden's dismissal

speech, circumscribed by his humorous self-importance and the extremely narrow limits of his mundane world, is a robust comic expression of one aspect of the artist's social dilemma, the common man's lack of comprehension of the scholar-poet's abilities . . . and sensibilities:

> Now good Sexton, I am as tirde as anye of my pluge iades with enquiringe youe. You shoulde haue pearde for Mr Maior his maistership, for wott you what? The parish haue put vp a subligation against you, & say you are the moste vnnegligent Sexton that euer came these years and vpwarde; for in Ienkins dayes (well may the bons rest of the good ould Sexton) the chauncell was kept in order, the church swept, and the bords rubde, that thou might haue seene youre face in them, and for my parte I neuer vsed other lookinge glass. Well he woulde haue gott our prelate hudle vp seruice. Moreouer they saye the bells are neuer tunge [sic], and they complaine youe are too proude to whipp they doggs out, as youre predecessours haue done. Thus much can I saye of mine owne knowledge, that since you were Sexton, the parish doggs haue not bene ashamed to beraye mine owne pue.
>
> (IV.1224-39)

As a final fillip of affrontery, Perceval--who assures Philomusus, "I was readie to crye to heare the sentence pronounced" --tells him that out of "frenshipp" he has obtained a pauper's passport for the scholar, "least the clarigols att some towns ende catch you" (ll. 1243-46). But even while we are laughing at Perceval's simplistic pride, Leishman reminds us that the reference to the civil control of unemployed and impoverished university men is literal.[1]

[1] See below, Second Return, Chapter 8, p. 281.

When Studioso joins Philomusus, he announces that he has also been fired for refusing to do what was expected of him--not, as Philomusus guesses, "for whippinge thy yonge M^r" (l. 1300), but

> for a matter of less importance--marry, because I would not suffer one of the blew coates to pearch aboue mee at the latter dinner. My yonge maister whome I taughte was verie forwarde to haue mee gone, and toulde his mother he neuer learned in a greate booke since I came: my M^ris with a shrill voice cride, These schollers are proude, these schollers are proude, and sent mee packinge awaye.
>
> (IV.1301-08)

Studioso has been abused; but the charge is also ironically valid: these scholars are proud. And while pride may be a legitimate benefit of the scholar-poet's labors, it can also prove ruinous. The tension is created when the artist, pressured from within by self-doubt and by materialistic need without, tries to translate the pride he has in his artistic worth into the non-artistic values of the society in which he lives. Philomusus' response to the humiliation Studioso has suffered is more a social complaint than an intellectual one: the world holds scholars "Of less repute than is each whislinge groome,/ Each vnrefined hinde, each start vpp clowne" (ll. 1315-16). Adding insult to injury in this case, the scholar has been so demeaned even by a woman:

> Yea euery tawnye trull, each mincinge dame,
> Each ambling minion may cõmande the artes,

> Kill a poore scholler with a suddaine frowne,
> Place or displace him as her humor goes.
> Minuerua see, and shame to see, thy sonns
> Made seruile druges to the female sex . . .
>
> (IV.1309-14)

Again and again the youths' uneasy longing for tangible recognition of their intangible achievements sets up an uncomfortable conflict with the Parnassian principle of anti-worldliness. This is the unresolved ambivalence of the Parnassus trilogy--not only between The Pilgrimage and the two Return plays, but within each part of The Return.

As we have seen, the complaints of Philomusus and Studioso raise other serious questions. While the dominant technique of The First Return is comically abusive satire--as illustrated by the Ingenioso-Gullio scenes--the bulk of the Philomusus-Studioso dialogue consists of bittersweet complaint--dreary, generalized and, in contrast to the satire, unconstructive. And it is at the peculiarly inconclusive ending of this middle Parnassus Play--with Philomusus and Studioso going into exile abroad, and Ingenioso committing his satiric wit to the press--that the contrast between the two modes is most conspicuous.

The First Return author has taken the two idealistic heroes of The Pilgrimage and, for the most part, has continued to treat them with great seriousness. Most of the Philomusus-Studioso dialogue consists of sober, plaintive speeches, delivered in that highly stylized, slightly archaic, formal rhetorical verse that can best be described as Arcadian drab.

Instead of the witty abuse of specific evils, we hear elegies of general discontent. At one point Studioso, outraged by Philomusus' experience as a sexton, is roused to condemn an unappreciative world:

> It griues my sprites to see thy great desertes
> Soe litel guerdond by this thankless age.
> The gapinge graue, they could dead carcasses,
> Of more humanitie than liuing men,
> Seem[e]d alate to paye to thy poore state
> Some tribute pence for meaner mantenance:
> Soe learning is of senceless things regarded,
> Thoughe scarse of anie liuing wight rewarded.
>
> (IV.1319-26)

But for the most part, the youths ring dull changes on the Wheel of Fortune, as in Philomusus'

> Long since my fortuns sun shines bene eclypst
> With foggie clouds, and made as black as piche,
> Soe that I see my mournfull funerall
> Of all good happs and faire felicitie:
> My thoughtes like mourners follow this my hearse,
> My sobbs resounde like to a passinge bell,
> And drearie sighes ring out my dolefull knell.
>
> (IV.1261-67)[2]

In the larger context of satiric abuse, the Arcadians' retreat into a condemnation of Fortune seems merely to avoid confrontation with society. They do not even retain the option of the poet's satiric revenge against the world, as postulated by Ingenioso.

[2] Similarly, see Studioso's speech, "And is it soe, will fortune nere haue done?" (IV.1268-79).

Beyond the problem of defining social responsibility is the issue of the responsibility of the individual artist. Unlike Ingenioso, Philomusus and Studioso rarely turn a critical eye inward. With one brief exception, they fail to consider their own responsibility for their unsatisfactory condition--either for how they got there in the first place, or for confronting it now that it is a reality. The one touch of self-reflection comes in Philomusus' reply to Perceval's demand that he return the church keys. Philomusus, with some recognition that he is ultimately accountable for the consequences of his own actions, says: "Take them, for the[y] are better lost than founde:/ That day I tooke them, dyd my fortune froune" (ll. 1248-49). But this glimpse inward is then drowned out by his long lament on Fortune's changes (1250-67).

Too often Philomusus and Studioso come across as victims of a perversely glum fatalism that is devoid of the spiritually uplifting qualities potential in Stoicism. At the end of the play they do activate themselves to try their fortunes abroad rather than suffer rejection at home:

> S. Come let vs caste our cards before wee goe,
> Summon our losses if wee nere returne,
> Cross our oulde cares, and turne the leafe anew,
> And after giue our soyle a longe adewe.
>
> (IV.1349-52)

But even this action is taken in a spirit of resignation to chance events:

P. . . . Onc againe
I must goe wander nowe from place to place
Till it please fortune take mee to her grace.

S. Art thou to seeke thy fortuns newe againe?
And soe am I, Ile keepe thee companie
Till fortune giue vs onc a restinge place.
I thinke it is ordayned by destinie
That wee shoulde still match in aduersitie.

(IV.1284-91)

His only comfort, Philomusus explains, will be his friendship with Studioso: "Alter I will my soyle, but not my minde/ That liues with thee, soe soules liue where the[y] loue" (ll. 1331-32). What we have here is another of those apparently serious Philomusus-Studioso scenes that teeter on the edge of the ridiculous. The youths' adversity is disturbing and their friendship touching; but underneath their stylized simplicity is an uncomfortable emptiness. They seem to be resigning themselves not so much to chance events, as to the literary conception of the Goddess Fortuna; and their devotion to each other seems the emblem of a Platonic friendship. Both poetic postures are struck by Studioso in his decision to join Philomusus:

Nay, where thy happs be nipt, my hopes must wither,
The ayre that not rewards thee scorneth mee:
Then lett vs flye together with a winge
Whither good starrs and happie fates vs bringe.

(IV.1338-41)

Philomusus and Studioso are characters who function more in accordance with literary ideals than with life. The effect of the stylization here is not so much to make them laughable,

as to question the validity of their ideals against the basically satiric ground of the play. The reader of The First Return is left with an uneasy feeling that Philomusus and Studioso, in their Arcadian dimensions, will be inadequate to confront the world that lies before them--a fear that is borne out in the exacerbated world of The Second Return.

Much more revealing of the Parnassian theme is Ingenioso's break with Gullio in Act V. It is important to see that the breakdown between scholar-poet and society occurs here for the same basic reason--the head-on collision between the materialistic values of society and the spiritual pride of the artist. But Ingenioso's conflict is more informative because he is more self-conscious about his condition than Philomusus and Studioso are, and he is a more perceptive critic of it. Ingenioso's dilemma is also more authentic because his defiance emerges from a genuinely artistic impulse. Instead of the social pride of Philomusus' refusal to perform menial chores, and Studioso's objections to being seated beneath his rank, what Ingenioso finally balks at is society's demand that he prostitute his poetry. And long before Philomusus and Studioso comprehend that a choice must be made between opposing systems of value, Ingenioso chooses: "Nowe had I rather liue in pouertie" (V. 1.1458).[3] Ingenioso's last speech in this section, which

[3] Act V is the only act of The First Return that is divided into scenes.

begins in the Nashean vein and builds to an uncharacteristic verse lament in parallel phrases and repeated words, is a powerful restatement of his satiric philosophy:

> Farewell base carle clothed in a sattin sute,
> Farewell guilte ass, farewell base brokers poste.
> Too ofte haue I rubd ore thy mules dull head,
> Fedd like a flie on thy corruption:
> Nowe had I rather liue in pouertie
> Than be tormented with the tedious tales
> Of Gullios wench and of his luxuries,
> To heare a thousand lies in one short day
> Of his false warrs at Portingale or Calls.
> My freer spirit did lie in tedious woe
> Whiles it applauded bragging Gullio,
> Applide my veyne to sottishe Gullio,
> Made wanton lines to please lewd Gullio.
> Attend hencforth on Gulls for mee who liste,
> For Gullios sake Ile proue a Satyrist
>
> (V.i.1454-68)[4]

In response to Gullio's rejection of him, Ingenioso now becomes his own best illustration of the social theory of satire he first expounded in Act I.

The Act V meeting between Ingenioso and Gullio also completes the undressing of the gull. That he is now to be exposed entirely is clear from the beginning, where Ingenioso provokes their fragile relationship with a direct insult. Having been sent by Gullio to deliver letters of love to "faire Lesbia, mistris of thoughtes" (ll. 1356-57), Ingenioso

[4] Cf. Nashe, Pierce Penilesse: "But cap and thankes is all our Courtiers payment: wherefore, I would counsell my frends to be more considerate in their Dedications, and not cast away so many months labour on a clown that knowes not how to vse a Scholer: for what reason haue I to bestow any of my wit upon him, that wil bestow none of his wealth vpon me?" (McKerrow, I, 241).

reports to his patron, "she gaue youe a nescio and youre letter a scornefull smile" (1388-89). Gullio's response is still another marvelous example of his rhetorical style, a pseudo-grandiosity of tortured usage and diction:

> Not knowe mee? You are a verie Iacke to mistake my M^ris in that sorte, suche an inhumane worde coulde not proceede from the mouthe of my sweete M^ris. Noe less than a million of times haue I participated vnto her both Mercuriall and Martiall discourses, in the actiue and chiualrous vaunt of Don Bellerephon. How often of yore haue I sunge my sonnetes vnder her windowe to a consorte of Musicke, I my selfe playinge vpon my Iuorie lute moste enchantinglie.
>
> (V.i.1363-71)

And when Ingenioso touches his assault with crudeness by relating that the lady delivered her rejection while a 'young gallant' "stood dallyinge with her" (ll. 1376-77), Gullio's defense is a mock heroic flourish:

> Haue I a riuall? By Bellona my goddess, hee shoulde dye: coulde I meete with anie such audacious puny longe cloke I woulde make him not refuse the humblest vassalage to the soale of my bootes.
>
> (V.i.1378-81)

Fittingly, the final dispute between the poet and the patron turns on a question of scholarship. Gullio blames Ingenioso for the failure of the amorous mission: "Ha, ha, see thee nowe, I smell it: It was youre duncerie wrought mee this disgrace, and yet I adornd thy seely Inuention with a prettie wittie Latin sentence" (ll. 1394-97). He is moved

to reject all scholar-poets, renouncing even the academic associations which formerly were cause for boasting: "Hencforthe I will not norishe any such vnlearned Pedantes--these vniuersities send not foorth a good witt in an age" (1397-99). The fool outrageously vows to be his own scholar, spurning the company of native wits by escaping to a foreign--and Catholic--university:

> Ile trauell to Paris my selfe, and there comence for filius nobilis, and conuerse noe more with anie of oure base English wittes, which haue somwhat corrupted the generous spirit of my poetrie.
>
> (V.i.1399-1403)

Wielding the patron's only real power over the poet, Gullio dismisses Ingenioso and sends him begging: "As for the sute thy wittie lines haue thus dishonoured mee, thy Maecenas here cassceeres thee, and dothe bequeath thee to the trauellinge trade" (1403-15).

Ingenioso is quick to point out that it was Gullio's own flamboyant but false Latin that "spoyled [his] loue market" (l. 1407), and provokes him further by quoting the lady's caustic response:

> To say the truthe, I deliuerd youre letter and was rewarded with the tearmes of, What youe saucye groome, are you bringinge mee such paper wisps? From what sattin sute I pray youe comes this? What foretopp bewrayed this paper? And when I named you, What? Gullio that knowne foole, sayde shee.
>
> . . . . . .

> But interrupt mee not:[5] If it be his (sayd shee) I am sure not a worde of it proceedes from his pen, but a sentence of Lattin, (which I was toulde is false). Well, warne him, that hee looke to his Rheumeticke witt, that he bespitt paper pages noe more to mee; if he doe, Ile haue some porter or bearewoode to cudgell the vayne Braggadochio.
>
> (V.i.1407-12, 1416-21)

Gullio makes only a feeble attempt to defend his scholarship. Again relying on questionable--i.e., foreign and Catholic--authority, he exposes his anti-intellectual prejudice against studied creation:

> Why, it is not the custome in Padua to obserue such base ruls as Lilie, Priscian, and such base companions haue sett downe; wee of the better sorte haue a priueledge to create Lattin, like knightes, and to saye, Rise upp S^r^ phrase.
>
> (V.i.1433-37)

But he prefers to disguise his intellectual poverty with military bluster, and his cowardice with social pretension:

> Were it not that I will not file my handes vpon suche a contemptible rascalde, and that I will not haue my name in the time to come, where my selfe shall be cronicled, disgraced with the base victorie of such an earth worme, I woulde proue it vpon that carrion of thy witt, that my Lattin was pure Lattin, and such as they speake in Rhems and Padua.
>
> (V.i.1426-32)

[5] Gullio, once again mistaking blame for praise, has replied, "Why thats verie true, my fame is spread farr and neare" (l. 1413).

Othello-like, he bids Ingenioso farewell: "But Sirra begone, thou haste moued my chollar; report of my clemencie, that in mine anger, contrarie to my custome, suffer thy contemptible carcass to possess thy cowa[r]dly ghoste" (ll. 1437-40). The burlesque dramatic grandeur of Gullio's exit speech, at the end more Lear than Othello, is worthy of him:

> Sirra, Alexander did neuer striue with anie but kinges, and Gullio will fight with none but gallantes. Fare well base peasante, and thanke god thy fathers were noe gentlemen, els thou shouldest not liue an howre longer. Base, base, base, peasant, peasant: Soe hares may pull deade lions by the bearde.
>
> (V.i.1448-53)

Ingenioso, at last, will have none of it, and in his proudest moment marks Gullio for the braggart, coward and false wit that he is:

> What youe whorsonne tintunabulũ, thou that art the scorne of all good wittes, the ague of all souldiers, that neuer spokest wittie thinge but out of a play, neuer hardest the reporte of a gun without tremblinge,--why Monsier Mingo, is youre asses head growne proude with scratchinge, thinkest thou a man of art can endure thy base vsage?
>
> (V.i.1441-46)

That last proud challenge is a wit's restatement of Consiliodorus' principle that the poet know his own worth. Rejected by society again, but purged of the guilt of a com-

promised association, Ingenioso goes to meet Philomusus and Studioso, "that our fortuns may shake handes before they parte: then," concludes the newly re-dedicated satirist, "Ile goe to the press, they to the seas" (ll. 1473-74). In the last Parnassus Play Ingenioso is found in Grub Street.

The conclusion of the neat four-protagonist structure of The First Return would not be complete without Luxurio, who reappears in V.ii. Taking leave of the trilogy--he is not in the Second Part of The Return--Luxurio bids a characteristically straightforward and good-humored farewell to the audience, and to his art: "Farewell daintie poetrie, I kiss my hande, and humblie take my leaue of thee; thou art but a ragged patroness, and soe I leaue thee" (ll. 1522-24). Luxurio's Boy, still the wry commentator, protests, "Shee makes her followers ragged, and soe shee leaus them" (1525). But either way, the point is that Luxurio's ballads and the boy's performances of them have failed to secure these artists a place in society. Like Philomusus and Studioso, the balladeer and his boy determine to leave this "impecunious clyme" to 'prove beggars elsewhere' (1530-31); and echoing a recurrent fear expressed in the Return plays, Luxurio plans to "trauell towards our frends, to be kept like honeste oulde beggars by the parishe"--"leaste the clarigoles catch vs" (1520, 1521). The poetaster, however, plans his own special revenge for society's neglect of him: "I meane to drincke the worlde drye before I leaue it, and not leaue soe muche

as the Element of water for generation" (1517-19).

If the ironic character of Ingenioso casts a serious critical eye on such as Philomusus and Studioso, in the comic Luxurio, the playwright allows the scholar-poets to laugh at themselves. The balladeer functions not as a stern condemnation of poetasters, but as good-humored commentary on the vulnerable self-importance of all artists. Luxurio says that although he has too jolly a soul to have grown 'Melancholicke' (in contrast to Philomusus, for example, who "caries the oulde characters of Melancholy in his face" [Stud., IV.1280-81]), "I am in some choller with this assheaded age, where the honorable trade of ballet makinge is of such base reckoninge" (ll. 1482-86). And the wonders of this 'honorable trade' are catalogued by Luxurio's Boy in a marvelous mock elegy to the lost art:

> Indeed S^{r}, noe doubt, but that cuntries will miss youe when youe are gone: when they shall haue a calfe with 5 feet, see a hare at a cross lande, here a Pye chatter, or a rauen sitt vppon the top of a new kitchen, they shall want there oulde poet to emparte it to the worlde, and there younge Ismenias to singe it at a stall. They [sic] maidens shall want sonnetes at there pales and they cuntrie striplings ditties to sing at the maydes windowes, the cart horses will goe discontented for want of there wonted Musicke, and the cowes lowe for the want of theire Luxurio.
>
> (V.ii.1503-12)

Luxurio's condemnation of this niggard age is familiar enough. What is remarkable is his reference to Homer: "But soe it hath bene in ancient time, when Homer first sett vp his rim-

inge shopp, one of the firste that euer was of my trade" (1486-88). So it has always been with poets--rejection, poverty and abuse. Here is still another example of the Pilgrimage principles trying to hold their own in the changing world of the Return plays. In this case, however, the note of tension is subordinate to the comic purpose of the speech, Luxurio's comparison of himself to Homer (whom, it should be recalled, Ingenioso's first patron considered fortunate to have had "scarse soe much [as two groats] bestowed upon him in all his life time," I.323):

> He was poore in his life, I was as verie a beggar as hee for his soule; no man carde for him in his life time, I am sure I am in as litell a reckoninge as he for his life; seauen cuntries stroue about him when he was deade, and I doubt not, when I am made tapster of the lower cuntries and the workes of my witt left behinde mee here vpon earthe, manie a towne will chalenge vnto it selfe the creditt of my birthe, howsoeuer now I am a plaine Si nihil attuleris ibis Homere foras, noe pennie, noe pott of ale.
>
> (V.ii.1494-1502)[6]

The only difference between them, Luxurio explains, is that Homer was blind, and to remedy that, the modern balladeer promises, "ere long Ile drincke out mine eyes" (l. 1492). Luxurio finally exits in the same cavalier humor: "Farewell thou Mustie worlde, I meane to beare no coals,/ And therefore will I straight drincke out these seeinge holes" (1528-29).

[6] Cf. Tucca's comments on Homer in Jonson's Poetaster: "Mary, I'le tell thee, old swaggrer; He was a poore, blind, riming rascall, that liv'd obscurely up and downe in boothes, and tap-houses, and scarce euer made a good meale in his sleepe, the whoorson hungrie beggar" (I.ii.84-87).

The First Return does not close on this light comic note. The final scene, the reunion of the three major protagonists (V.iii),[7] recapitulates the basic Parnassian themes and again reveals the conflicts inherent in them. In this play the scholars learn from experience Consiliodorus' principle of eternal opposition between the poet and the world and the inevitable social consequences:

> Ing. Rayle wee for eare, asses will folowe kinde,
> A fox may change his heyre, but not his minde.
>
> Stud. Yea, Midas brood fore eare must honored be,
> Whils Phoebus followers liue in miserie.
>
> (V.iii.1552-55)

With material deprivation a given of the poet's position, his only salvation is a knowledge of his own worth as a value separate from and superior to worldly honor. Ingenioso opens the scene declaring:

> Nay sighe not men, laughe at the foolish worlde:
> They haue the shame, though wee the miserie.
>
> (V.iii.1532-33)

If the scholar-poet must suffer rejection, he should do so with pride. Echoing Consiliodorus' primal vow ("Though I foreknewe that gold runns to the boore,/ Ile be a scholler though I liue but poore," Pilg., I.63-64), Philomusus, with considerably greater disdain, states:

[7] Discussed in part above, Chapter 2, p. 92.

> Nor enuie I each painted dunghill store:
> A schollers alwayes better than a bore.
>
> (V.iii.1556-57)

However, although the Parnassus poets seem to acknowledge the truth of Consiliodorus' principle, they do not accept it with resignation; instead, as we have seen, they struggle against it with complaint. In this scene they articulate two thoughts that more specifically undercut Consiliodorus' philosophy; but these are also conventional elements of the scholar-poet's complaint which, I believe, indirectly reflect his ambivalence about his social role. The more disturbing material has to do with the conflict within the scholar-poets themselves, the self-doubt bared in complaints about the very values by which they have opted to live:

> S. Schollers cride longe agoe the world was naught,
> And yet like Marius Mules they laboure still
> To gett these artes, these poore contemned artes,
> As though they studied with a wakefull eye
> To goe the nearest way to pouertie.
>
> P. Ile spende noe treuan[t] breath in this stale theame.
> Full ofte haue I chid this vnkinder worlde,
> Toulde groues & murmuringe brookes of this sad tale,
> Rated my luck, my thwartinge destinie,
> That traind mee vpp in learninges vanitie.
>
> (V.iii.1542-51)

Is the world's unkindness toward scholars capable of transforming learning into a vain pursuit, or does it have its own distinct Parnassian rewards, as Consiliodorus argues at the beginning of The Pilgrimage?

The second problematic point is the poet's particular

blame of this age, this place--a complaint that runs through the play. Here it is in Ingenioso's opening speech:

> Strange regions well may scoff at our rude clyme,
> And other schoôls laugh at Parnassus hill,
> That better doe rewarde each scriueners pen,
> Each tapsters cringe, each rubbinge ost[e]ller,
> Than those that liue like anchors in a mue
> And spend there youthe in contemplation,
> By cause they woulde refine the ruder worlde
> And rouse the souls in clayie cottages.
>
> (V.iii.1534-41)

At this late point in The First Return, the reader, having followed the movement back and forth between particular and general blame, may well want to demand that the playwright clarify his position: either the antagonism between artist and society is a fundamental and eternal opposition which the artist must learn to live with, or it is a particular abuse of this society and therefore remediable. But the tensions inherent in this convention (The Teares of the Muses, Spenser's Parnassian complaint, is a good example of the particular complaint against a general abuse . . . and of its philosophical difficulties) are never really resolved in The Return from Parnassus. On the contrary, as with the theme of the poet's self-doubt, the ambivalence is rooted in the very fabric of the Parnassus trilogy. The problems underlying this scene give some indication of the greater thematic complexities to come in the Second Part of The Return.

The end of The First Return, then, offers a gloomy assessment of the artist's social dilemma, and an inconclusive

one. Ingenioso, cynical but practical, shows himself best prepared for the darkening world of The Second Return: "Well, fawne the worlde, or frowne, my wit mantaine mee:/ The press shall keepe mee from base beggarie" (ll. 1558-59). In contrast, the essentially idealistic Philomusus and Studioso are never really ready for the world outside Arcadia. They bid this "heard hearted clyme farewell" (1562), to seek their fortunes elsewhere. But in a last ironic twist, the playwright sends them heading "To Rome or Rhems" (1560).[8] In the case of a fool like Gullio, such a destination is satirically apt; but the departure of the Parnassian heroes for foreign academies of papistry and sedition is disturbing. Philomusus and Studioso, while sympathetic in their recoil from an unresponsive society, are not especially admirable for their efforts to come to terms with the poetic dilemma. As the trilogy progresses, the philosophical weaknesses in their characterization must be increasingly compensated for by the satiric power of Ingenioso. In the last Parnassus Play, our mixed response to them becomes so pronounced a problem as to raise the question of thematic incoherence.

[8] See Leishman's note on Rome and Reims, p. 213.

Part III. The Second Part of *The Return from Parnassus*, or *The Scourge of Simony*

A Gentleman to give us somewhat new,
Hath brought up Oxford with him to show you;
Pray be not frightened--Tho the Scaene and Gown's
The Universities, the Wit's the Town's;
The lines, each honest Englishman may speake;
Yet not mistake his Mother-tongue for Greeke,
For still 'twas part of his vow'd Liturgy,
From learned Comedies deliver me!
Wishing all those that lov'd 'em here asleep,
Promising Scholars, but no Scholarship.

Prologue for Court performance of
Richard Lovelace's lost play,
The Scholars, c. 1636

But our patrons of learning are so far nowadays from respecting the Muses and giving that honor to scholars, or reward which they deserve and are allowed by those indulgent privileges of many noble princes, that after all their pains taken in the universities, cost and charge, expenses, irksome hours, laborious tasks, wearisome days, dangers, hazards (barred interim from all pleasures which other men have, mewed up like hawks all their lives), if they chance to wade through them, they shall in the end be rejected, contemned, and--which is their greatest misery--driven to their shifts, exposed to want, poverty, and beggary . . .

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

Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*
"Love of Learning, or Overmuch
Study: With a Digression of
the Misery of Scholars and
Why the Muses are Melancholy"
(I, II, iii, 15)

Chapter 7. Comical Satire[1]

It has been a scholarly tradition to treat the two parts of The Return from Parnassus as a dramatic pair. The general continuity of character and plot make it clear that The Second Return was intended as a loose sequel to the First. Following the declining worldly fortunes of Philomusus, Studioso and Ingenioso, The Second Return reiterates the central Parnassus theme of "a schollers discontent" (Prologue, l. 69). The modern reader's first impression of the trilogy tends to corroborate this relationship between the last two plays: the short, stylized and idealistic allegory of The Pilgrimage stands apart from the longer and more complex Return plays, which are dramatic complaints characterized by increased realism, contemporary social satire and topical allusions, and by their negative conclusions. Leishman's theory of authorship offered further support; he concluded, "the balance of evidence seems to be in favor of two authors, one of whom wrote the Pilgrimage, while the other wrote the First and Second Returnes."[2] Finally, there is the common title.

[1] Herford and Simpson: "So Jonson described the three early plays of Euery Man out of his Humour, Cynthia's Revels, and Poetaster. The term is on the title-pages in the Folio text, and it heads the actor-list and notice of date which Jonson appended to his plays in this edition; 'The Comical [l] Satyre of Euery Man out of his Humour' is also on the title-page of the Quartos. The term is not found elsewhere" (IX, 396).

[2] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 31.

I reject that tradition. Close analysis of the Parnassus Plays indicates that The Second Return is so different from The First Return that it must be dealt with as a separate entity.

The argument presented here is essentially literary. However, the internal evidence of difference is so strong that it forces a re-examination of the apparent external evidence of common origin--opening up partial solutions to the problems of the author and title of The Second Return. My principal contribution here is the idea that the Second Part of The Return is so different a work from the First Part--in kind and in quality--that we must speak of a separate author--or, as the complexity of the work suggests, a collaboration of several authors. The only evidence for common authorship consists of two inconclusive allusions in the Second Return Prologue.[3]

Secondly, I endorse Leishman's suggestion that we consider a new title for the third play: The Progress from Parnassus. The source is the only manuscript version of the play, which is entitled "The Progresse to Parnassus" (the imprecise preposition is explained as a scribal error), with some additional support in the Prologue couplet, "Now we present vnto each pittying eye/ The schollers progresse in their miserye" (ll. 74-75). As Leishman notes, this gives

[3] The detailed arguments are presented below in an appendix.

us a Parnassus trilogy that was originally known as The Pilgrimage, The Return and The Progress.[4] However, in the interests of common usage, I retain the traditional title of the last Parnassus Play, the Second Part of The Return from Parnassus, or, for short, The Second Return.[5]

The major concern here is the new light shed on the Parnassus trilogy by internal analysis. For as I stated at the outset of this study, the plays have been neglected critically. This is the case even with The Second Return, which has been cited more frequently than the others because of its greater historical significance. And it is relevant even to Leishman, the only major modern scholar of the trilogy, for he never really dealt with the plays critically. In fact, he failed to observe any significant internal differences among them, stating,

> apart from the difference in intention between the Pilgrimage and its successors, the general resemblance in style and presentation between all three plays is very striking, and proves, if it be really true that more than one author was concerned [one for the Pilgrimage, one for the Returns], what a surprising unity could, in that age, be achieved by collaborators, or by writers deliberately conforming to a tradition already prescribed.[6]

[4] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 27.

[5] The full history of the titles is given in the appendix.

[6] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 29-30.

In his thorough presentation of the authorship problem Leishman does discuss the one piece of external evidence in support of a separate author for The Second Return:

> The only remarkable difference is one of orthography rather than of vocabulary or style--those peculiar spellings noticed in the description of the Rawlinson MS. [of the Pilgrimage and the First Return][7] . . . for all of which it might seem, perhaps, a little difficult to assume that a scribe alone was responsible--a difference which, if pressed, would lead to an hypothesis precisely opposite to that apparently required by the prologues to the Second Returne: namely, that the author of the First Returne was also the author of the Pilgrimage,[8] and that the author of the Second Returne wrote neither of the two preceding plays.[9]

But Leishman goes on to reject the hypothesis because of what he considers a lack of internal support:

> It seems, though, hardly conceivable that, had there been no suggestions of double authorship in the prologues, any intelligent reader would ever have been inclined to press this mere difference in orthography so far, and to attach more importance to it than to the many general and particular resemblances between all three plays.[9]

He concludes, "For my own part, I must admit that internal

[7] Detailed by Leishman, pp. 29-30.

[8] That the author of The First Return was not the author of The Pilgrimage is fairly well established by the second play's prologue discussion of the misfortunes of the author of the first play (see above, pp. 42-43 and 90).

[9] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 30.

evidence alone would never have led me to doubt that all three plays were by a single author."[9]

However, Leishman was not basically concerned with literary analysis. As a pioneer, his primary task was the considerable one of editing the text, followed by dealing with the problems of authorship and date. Considering the special nature of the plays, it is understandable that he concentrated next on the identification of topical allusions and a presentation of the historical background. These demands for attention to external matters are especially heavy in The Second Return, with its two contemporary texts and its wealth of historical material. As a result, Leishman's notes to the play are almost exclusively textual and historical; he offers virtually no critical commentary on The Second Return.

When we turn from The First Return to the Second, the contrast between the plays seems to span the development of Elizabethan dramatic form. The First Return, although a realistic satire compared to the allegorical Pilgrimage, is essentially a Tudor interlude. An academic estates morality, the play's simple, stylized and balanced presentation of the protagonists as they encounter a series of representative social types, programmatically articulates the theme of society's rejection of the scholar-poet. In other words, the second Parnassus Play was decidedly old-fashioned dramatic fare for the late 1590s. Indeed, in many of its formal aspects, The First Return is not so much of a departure from The Pilgrimage as it first seems to be.

The Second Return, probably written only two years later, in one bold production brought the parochial Cambridge theater into the experimental world of the London professional stage. The St. John's playwrights seem to have met the same Waterloo as had the young Marston, then writing Jack Drum's Entertainment and What You Will for Paul's Boys; the rapidly changing literary and theatrical scene made it no longer sufficient to enliven the old-fashioned machinery of a Histriomastix with satiric wit, contemporary allusions, and self-conscious references to the drama;[11] it was necessary to write a whole new kind of play.

[11] On the important transitional character of Histriomastix see Antony Caputi, John Marston, Satirist (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1961), Ch. 4, "Playwright

The matter of the final Parnassus Play is once again the failure of the scholar-poet to find a place in society--"the vnpleasing fortunes of discontented schollers" (Prologue, ll. 49-50). But it is presented in the dramatic forms and themes of the most innovative work of the contemporary public theater, the satiric comedies that flourished at the turn of the century--the comical satires, the humour comedies, the early city comedies, and the plays of the Poetomachia.[12] This is the thesis governing Part III of this study.[13]

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for the Child Actors," pp. 80-116. Caputi suggests that the genre of comical satire was inspired by the institution of boy actors, and "their talent for virtuoso mimicry" of adult behavior" (p. 104).

[12] These headings, of course, do not indicate three separate groups of plays, but heavily overlapping groups divided for various critical purposes. The comical satirists studied by O. J. Campbell in Comicall Satyre and Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida (1938; rpt. San Marino, Calif. [: C. F. Braun], 1965) are Jonson--Every Man Out of His Humour (1599), Cynthia's Revels (1601) and The Poetaster (1601), and Marston--Jack Drum's Entertainment (1600) and What You Will (1601). When Dekker's (and Marston's?) Satiromastix (1601) is added to this list, we then have the group known as the plays of the Poetomachia--the comical satires viewed from a different perspective, and with emphasis on different works (e.g., Jonson's most exemplary comical satire is Every Man Out, but his major contribution to the War of the Theaters is Poetaster.

Jonson is the master of the comedy of humours, although most of his contemporaries borrowed the device, and the first humour comedy is generally acknowledged to be Chapman's An Humourous Day's Mirth (1597).

The group of early city comedies also concentrates on Jonson and Marston, and loosely includes any comical satire localized in London. (Gibbons describes city comedy as an outgrowth of comical satire [Jacobean City Comedy, Ch. 4]. Interestingly, he cites An Humourous Day's Mirth as "the first experiment in satire-dramatised which concerns the rise of city comedy" [p. 66].) Of the plays listed above, a strict interpretation of city comedy would have to exclude Cynthia's Revels, The Poetaster and What You Will.

The Second Return exhibits major characteristics of these professional genres: it has the darkened philosophical vision and utilizes the structural patterns of verse satire dramatized that distinguish the comical satires; its personae include humour characters; it has the realistic London setting and the anti-nouveau gentry social prejudices of city comedy. And, like the Poetomachia plays, The Second Return deals with the matter of poets and poetry, including specific allusions to the contemporary literary scene.

Yet The Second Return, for all its striving after theatrical fashion, is not merely imitative. The St. John's comical satire is not a general whipping of worldly follies, but the highly particular complaint of scholar-poets vis-a-vis a society that fails to appreciate them. The students' satire on the familiar targets--the city, the new gentry, popular literature--is energized by their special vision as artists and intellectuals. Moreover, the amateur playwrights apparently felt freer about presenting literary matters to a university audience than their professional counterparts did in writing for the public stage. For the academic play very nearly bristles with artistic self-consciousness. Altogether, The Second Return is the Elizabethan play about poets and poetry.

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[13] M. C. Bradbrook made two of these connections in The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy (London: Chatto & Windus, 1955): "The War [of the Theaters] ends where it had begun [with Hall's Virgidemiarum, 1597], in Cambridge. The Return from Parnassus . . . is a Comical Satire on a distinctly local topic, its main theme being the urgent question of graduate employment" (p. 102).

The subject matter clearly makes the last Parnassus Play a key primary source for the study of the writer in Elizabethan England. Fortunately, the authors' bold dramatic handling of their important material makes the play highly enjoyable "required reading." More than a document, The Second Return offers its audience a lot of good theater --the cynical wit of Ingenioso and the Pages, the gross barbarism of Sir Raderick and the Recorder, the sophisticated literary criticism of Judicio, and the burlesque comic antics of Burbage Kempe.

Yet the job of criticizing The Second Return is complicated. The close analysis of The First Return in Part II revealed a small dramatic gem of a limited and stylized genre; the final Parnassus Play, though a much more ambitious work, is something of a problem play. The Second Return is almost twice as long as the First, it has more than twice as many characters, and this multiplicity of parts is treated with more stylistic variety and greater theatrical complexity. Most of these innovations are intentional stylistic differences that I believe are illuminated by placing the play in the context of the professional dramatic satires. But in the last analysis we must carry the problematic copia of The Second Return beyond examination of intention, to evaluation. And while the last Parnassus Play was a daring dramatic experiment, it was, I believe, not entirely successful.

The major problems must be indicated at this introductory point because they have influenced my critical approach to

The Second Return, which departs considerably from the method of straightforward exposition used for the first two plays. Such a well-written and carefully structured work as The First Return seems to require a close scene-by-scene analysis that respects the play's internal coherence. In writing about the problematic Second Return, where there is less aesthetic need to adhere to chronological structure, the play can be approached more selectively--first, thematically, and second, to illuminate the historically valuable material.

There are two major problem areas in The Second Return. The first is related to the playwrights' bold designs--a case of artistic overreaching, as it were. The play's multiplicity of parts and episodic development generally function as intended; but there is also a certain amount of unwieldiness in The Second Return that results in the repetition or irrelevance of parts and in thematic incoherence. Examples of elements that would have benefitted from more rigorous editing include the two scenes in which Philomusus masquerades as a physician treating a patient (I.iv, in which the Patient speaks only two words, and II.i), the two similar scenes between Amoretto and his Page (II.vi and III.iii), and the placement of Studioso's attack on the professional players at the beginning of the scene with the fiddlers (V.i.1914), some seventy lines after the exit of Burbage and Kempe (IV.iv.1845). The most egregious repetition comes in the cumulative effect of the half-dozen long verse complaints of Philomusus and Studioso (I.iv, II.i, III.v, IV.iv, V.i and V.ii).

Interestingly enough, it is Philomusus and Studioso who are also primarily responsible for the most serious casualty of the play's multiplicity, the inconsistent point of view. Cast in The Second Return not only as disappointed idealists, but doubling as cynical rogues, Philomusus and Studioso transgress the fragile boundary between sympathy and satire that is barely maintained in The First Return. The scholar-poet's ambivalence about his own worth--an important satiric tension in The First Return--is, in The Second Return, so filled with contradictions as to lead the play into philosophical incoherence rather than complicated irony. This charge is substantiated in the conclusion to Part III.

The second problem area of The Second Return, in that it is not related to the play's stylistic intentions, constitutes a more straightforward weakness. This is the playwrights' failure to maintain the high level of linguistic characterization that marks The First Return, that Jonsonian function of comic mimetic prose in which character is portrayed as much by speaking style as by action.[14] In The Second Return, language seems to function more mechanically. There are exceptions--notably, Ingenioso's witty cynicism and the robust comic prose of Sir Raderick. But much of the play's dialogue consists of neutral dramatic rhetoric (a standard speaking style used interchangeably for several characters), and relies on literary formulae, technical material and external references to identify character.

[14] See Barish, Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy.

The best example of ineffectually neutral prose is the dialogue of the gallant Amoretto. His prosaic lines, dependent on content rather than on style, pale in comparison to the rhetorical bravado of Gullio, Amoretto's counterpart in The First Return. A second case in point is the characterization of Stercutio and Immerito, the rich farmer and his ignorant son, whose respective simplicity and falseness are not generally expressed rhetorically--which seems to me to have thrown away a good opportunity for stylistic satire. The literary formulae in The Second Return range from the poetic convention of Academico's Echo scene (II.ii), to various stylistic imitations--of verse satire (Ingenioso's opening speech, I.i), epigrammatic literary criticism (the censuring of Bodenham's Belvedere, I.ii), prose characters, and the drab Arcadian verse complaints of Philomusus and Studioso. The utilization of external and technical material is most extensive in Amoretto's long description of the hunt (II.v), about 100 lines based on a popular hunting treatise; Phantasma's Latin tags (about 50 lines), all of which are quotations from the poets, and the Littletonian legal jargon bandied about by the Recorder, Amoretto and Sir Raderick (IV.i and ii). What all of this adds up to is that sizeable portions of The Second Return are singularly unoriginal dialogue.

Finally, I return to the authorship question, for it is the problems of this play, perhaps even more than its intentional differences, that invite a reconsideration of the traditional scholarship on this point. The loss of linguistic characterization from The First Return to the Second is probably the most convincing argument that a single author did not write both plays. It is just too difficult to believe that the writer who had created the marvelous figure of Gullio would settle for a characterization as undistinguished as that of Amoretto. It is possible, of course, that the First Return author had a hand in The Second Return. But even if he did, there clearly remains an unevenness in the quality of the Second Return dialogue. It is this inconsistency, coupled with the unwieldiness of parts and the thematic incoherence, that strongly suggests that the

final Parnassus Play was a work of collaboration, produced by the combined efforts of variously talented wits, and suffering from the absence of a single, firm, editorial hand.

The major element that unites the new comedies of 1600 is the satire, which is both the informing spirit and chief literary means. These are comedies, but they are, above all, critical comedies. There are ominous touches, in these late Elizabethan satires, of a bitterness and cynicism commonly associated with Jacobean works. The tone is weighted with a grim seriousness: the playwright indicates that he is dealing with evil rather than folly. The satiric method is an exaggeration of life's evils, but it is still meant to be a representation of the world as it essentially is; that is, the satirist suggests that his satiric picture of the world is the way of the world. Such a projection of reality necessarily has tragic overtones; but if it does not present the loss of any positive values, it must be labeled cynical rather than tragic. It is different in method from the comic reversals of comic satire, as illustrated in As You Like It, for example, a play which presents the world's wrongs, but with positive implications of the way the world should be. A classic description of the mood of the times is Harry Levin's, written in commentary on Ben Jonson, one of the model playwrights of the Second Return authors:

> Step by step, through the literature of these crucial years, we can watch the sentiment of expectation change to a sense of wariness, depression, and disillusionment. With increasing introspection, everything is anatomized. Newer and more analytic forms, such as the character and the essay, are devised; ancient modes, like satire and epigram, are borrowed to fit modern instances. The native hue of Elizabethan resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of Jacobean melancholy. Nature, it is felt, is in decay; the times are out of joint; difficile est satyram non scribere.[15]

Levin, like Ingenioso, cannot help but quote Juvenal.[16]

Cynical satire has a twofold moral purpose. Within the play, the satirist attacks and exposes the fools and knaves, without necessarily reforming them. But the author also reaches out beyond the stage to prod and provoke the audience into moral and intellectual indignation at the evils they are witness to. O. J. Campbell writes of the usually disturbing effect of the endings of the comical satires; unlike traditional comedy, there is no satisfaction or catharsis, no real audience release: "Almost without exception, they leave audience and reader in an aroused state of scorn at human folly and futility."[17] At the level of audience response, the comical satires are more Swift than Pope.

[15] "An Introduction to Ben Jonson" in Selected Works of Ben Jonson (1938), reprinted in Ben Jonson: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Jonas A. Barish, Twentieth Century Views, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 46.

[16] SR, I.i.84. See below, p. 254.

[17] Comicall Satyre, p. 80.

This disturbing bitterness is very much the spirit of the last Parnassus Play. Replacing the didactic message of reform implied in The First Return is a negativeness born of despair. Once again the scholar-poets try to find positions in society, this time in the professional literary milieu of London. But the new satiric vision entails as much cynicism as self-righteousness, and the protagonists now confront the world with diminishing regard for both the artistic pride articulated in The First Return and the artistic integrity that is the principle of The Pilgrimage.

The Second Return presents various scholar-poets pleading their suits to members of the monied middle class to provide them with material livings. Ingenioso, the new professional, appeals first to a prurient printer, then with the humourous Furor Poeticus and Phantasma in tow, to a trio of ignorant private patrons. Academico, the scholar, sues for pastoral preferment from a simony-committing landowner and his snobbish son. Philomusus and Studioso, once idealistic pilgrims from Parnassus, now undertake a series of increasingly desperate schemes: having returned empty-handed from their adventures abroad, they stoop to posing as a physician and French tutor, then to acting with a professional theater company and, finally, to leading a consort of begging fiddlers. The outcome of all these dubious enterprises is negative: the scholar-poets fail, absolutely, in their last bids to be integrated into society. Steadily descending the social ladder, they finally remove themselves from the mate-

rialistic world altogether--Philomusus and Studioso to the downs of Kent and the pastoral retreat of "A shepheards poore secure contented life" (V.ii.2037), Academico back to the ivory tower of his "Cambridge cell" (V.iv.2165), and Ingenioso and his cronies to play "Lords of misrule" on "the Isle of Dogges,/ There where the blattant beast doth rule and raigne" (V.iv.2108-10).

Since there is no hope for the scholar-poets, this angry play is, in a sense, an artistic act of revenge on an unappreciative world. The Second Return itself thus exemplifies the social psychology of satire as analyzed by Ingenioso in The First Return, the thesis that a society which spurns its artists and their powers only forces them to use their art to attack that society.[18]

There is an insistent seriousness in this play that deals harshly with those who fail to appreciate the protagonists. There is no comic indulgence in the follies of satiric butts such as The First Return's Perceval. The antagonists of The Second Return are depicted as fundamentally evil, and the play is a stern attack on their vicious practices. While The First Return's Gullio is, above all, funny, Amoretto, his counterpart in The Second Return, is noxious. The satiric butts of The Second Return are also treated with little of the complexity of perspective that we saw in The First Return's Cambridge merchants. And there is certainly

[18] See above, Chapter 2, pp. 98-101 on FR, I.165-71.

none of the sympathy that is most notable in the treatment of The First Return's Leonard. Most important is The Second Return's grim insistence on the reality of its satiric portraits. Sir Raderick may be an exaggeration, but he symbolizes society and its values as they really are.

The level of audience provocation in the final Parnassus Play is intense. The Second Return carries Campbell's principle of the disturbing ending of comical satire to an extreme. And while it is a far cry from modern black comedy, it certainly has one of the darkest denouements in all Elizabethan comedy. In a disturbing reversal of conventional comic structure, it is the play's protagonists who are banished from society.

There is a minimal plot against the antagonists--Ingenioso's "project," with Furor Poeticus and Phantasma, to win over Sir Raderick, Amoretto and the Recorder with powerful rhetoric used persuasively--and if that fails, to beat them soundly with the same verbal weapon, used abusively (III.iv). This "plot" is certainly meant to have metaphorical significance, very much in the vein of the poetical sub-plots of the Poetomachia plays, Horace's purge of Crispinus and Demetrius in The Poetaster being the most successful example. In the big confrontation scene of The Second Return (IV.ii), the poets do assault their enemies, who finally exit under the rhetorical pressure. But there is no real satisfaction: the butts are not humiliated and their evils not exposed; they exit every bit as socially powerful--and intellectually

unaware--as they were when they first entered.

The sorry outcome of this plot is, of course, largely intentional. The scholar-poets <u>are</u> defeated, and that is the whole point of the play. (In the Prologue, the critically aware Defensor warns the learned audience of the impending comic reversal: "If the Catastrophe please you not, impute it to the vnpleasing fortunes of discontented schollers," ll. 49-50.) But the audience feeling of irresolution at the end of IV.ii is also due, in part, to a dramatic failure: the device does not come off successfully as verbal chastisement, and the satirists fail to win even the poetic victory that was undoubtedly intended. The awkward final effect of this scene is that Sir Raderick's party actually exits with a modicum of dignity--

> Amoretto. Father, shall I draw?
> Sir Raderick. No sonne, keepe the peace, and holde thy peace.
>
> (IV.ii.1690-91)

--while the poets are left on stage alone and impotent, with only the infuriating consolation of their satiric function in the world, as bitterly expressed by Ingenioso, "this is our share in happinesse, to torment the happy" (ll. 1746-47).[19]

[19] The whole frustrating experience is echoed in V.ii, when Philomusus and Studioso fiddle for a pittance at Sir Raderick's house, only to be turned away with impudent jests by the two Pages, who, in bitter actuality, have more worldly power only playing at being the knight and his son, than Philomusus and Studioso can ever attain as academics and artists (discussed below, Chapter 10).

Ironically, however, this creative weakness in the play only serves to confirm in dramatic terms Sir Raderick's control of the social situation. In the end, it is enough that he exists, his very physical presence an expression of his triumphant power.

Another new element of the contemporary satires was their intellectuality, a quality that is observable both in the subject matter and the means of expression. Here again the dramatists are in the tradition of verse satirists such as Donne, Hall and Marston, who were capable of displaying the mental self-consciousness and pride of a Chapman. Of special significance here is the treatment of literary and academic subjects by Hall, a Cambridge man, in his pioneering Virgidemiarum (first three books, 1597), about which Hallett Smith observes: "Hall has the self-importance of the literary undergraduate and is especially concerned to impress the reader with what he can do. . . . This is the first body of English satire in which literary criticism is a major element, and it is usually considered that the best of Hall's satires are those on literary subjects."[20]

This intellectuality must have been toned down in the plays written for the public stage. Nevertheless, it is an an increasingly significant characteristic of the works of Marston and Jonson at this time--more distinctive in What

[20] Elizabethan Poetry, p. 229.

You Will than in the earlier Jack Drum's Entertainment, and in Cynthia's Revels and The Poetaster than in the pioneering Every Man Out of His Humour. Of great historical importance here was the relatively sophisticated atmosphere of the "private" theaters where most of these plays were produced. Harbage observes that "among the distinguishing features of the 'private' theatres none . . . had a fraction of the influence, in giving the plays their peculiar quality, of the fact that the audience was a coterie."[21]

> The coterie audience was an amalgam of fashionable and academic elements, socially and intellectually self-conscious. Of the "publics" available in England at the time, it was the most avant-garde, the most sophisticated, the most interested in art as art. One can picture the young Elizabethan intellectuals fingering the newer things in the bookstalls before dropping into the nearby theatre: many of them must have come from the direction of Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, the Middle and Inner Temples, and the lodging houses in Westminster, or along Fleet Street and the Strand.[22]

These same types undoubtedly also belonged to the avant-garde reading audience that paid to keep the nondramatic satires in vogue at the turn of the century--and, a few years later, to make it worth the bookseller's while to publish a second quarto of the Second Part of The Return from Parnassus.

[21] Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 42.

[22] Ibid., p. 56.

Some of the intellectuality of the comical satires is merely superficial, fashionable gestures to an audience self-consciously aware of its own wit. But there is also a deeper strain of intellectual awareness in these plays that seems to reflect the authors' deepest convictions and concerns. At this level we encounter the proposition that intellectuality is integrally related to moral superiority--a shocking premise in the face of a cultural tradition that featured the devil as its foremost intellectual, a stereotype reflected in popular Tudor drama from the clever Vices of the moralities to the rationalistic villains of Shakespeare. The morally superior intellectual is seen in most of the leading figures of the comical satires--in Marston's Planet and Quadratus, and Jonson's Macilente, Crites and Horace. Conversely, in certain of the satiric butts, there is something approaching intellectual sin, sins of the mind. Such mental corruption is attacked by Marston in Brabant Sr. and Lampatho Doria, and by Jonson, most notably in Ovid and his circle, but also in certain courtiers of Cynthia's Revels and various poetasters.

In the university theater, with its guaranteed audience of intelligentsia, there was clearly less need for a playwright to tone down his intellectuality--and the Second Return authors seem to have done nothing of the kind. One important aspect of the play's intellectuality is its distinctly literary material, ranging from the superficial academicism of Phantasma's quotations from Latin authors, to Judicio's

opinionated criticism of the poets of Bodenham's Belvedere. This literary material is discussed in Chapters 9 and 10 on the play's relation to the Poetomachia plays.

More generally, the intellectual bias of the play is an ingredient compounded with its social and moral perspective: the scholar-poets are superior to the worldlings by reason of their intelligence and scholarship. Philomusus and Studioso are the chief exponents of this view; but their expressions of pride are often tainted with ambivalence and cynicism. Their fondest memories of academe only cause them to turn on it with curses:

> P. Band be those houres when mongst the learned throng
> By Grantaes muddy bancke we whilome song.
> S. Band be that hill which learned witts adore,
> Where earst we spent our stock and little store.
> P. Band be those musty mewes, where we haue spent
> Our youthfull daies in paled languishment.
> S. Band be those cosening arts that wrought our woe,
> Making vs wandring Pilgrimes to and fro.
>
> (II.i.569-76)

This self-doubt is more explicit in the case of the self-satirizing Ingenioso. And it is presented with great comic control in the figure of Furor Poeticus, whose bombastic advertisements for himself serve to parody the other scholar-poets' pride.

Since The Second Return is more consistently satiric than didactic, more energetic in its negative attacks than in its positive pronouncements, the authors' intellectuality comes through most vigorously in the characterizations of

the worldly antagonists. The social immorality of the satiric butts is integrally related to their intellectual deficiencies --Sir Raderick's stupidity, Amoretto's superficial education, the Recorder's perversion of learning. Immerito, "one that hath taken all his learning on his owne head, without sending to the vniuersitye" (II.iv.731-32), does not deserve the preferment because of his ignorance. Burbage and Kempe are ridiculed for their unwarranted artistic pride. The two Pages, on the other hand, are pardoned their social impudence on the merit of their wit.

The scholar-poet's intellectual pride, the world's failure to appreciate mental ability, and the resulting conflicts within the scholar-poet are, as we have seen, major issues throughout the Parnassus Plays. The Second Return's particular application of this perpetual opposition between two different value systems--the academic in the professional marketplace of London--is discussed in the following chapter, on the play's relation to city comedy.

Beyond their cynical, and frequently intellectual tone, the comical satires have in common specific stylistic techniques. Campbell emphasizes the dramatic adaptations of literary techniques used in the satire that flourished in the late 1590s. The most important models were the formal verse satires and epigrams, most notably their witty vignettes

of types of fools and knaves around the town. Since these types are essential to comical satire, we should include as nondramatic sources the early prose "characters" nuggetted in the narrative satires of writers like Nashe and Lodge.[23]

In The Second Return, this closeness to the literary satire of the day is most apparent in a number of set satiric passages. The most blatant example is the very first scene of the play, Ingenioso's formal verse homage to Juvenal, which begins:

> Difficile est, Satyram non scribere, nam quis iniquae
> Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut teneat se?
> I, Iuuenall: thy ierking hand is good,
> Not gently laying on, but fetching bloud;
> So, surgean-like, thou dost with cutting heale,
> Where nought but lanching can the wound auayle.
> O suffer me, among so many men,
> To tread aright the traces of thy pen,
> And light my linke at thy eternall flame,
> Till with it I brand euerlasting shame
> On the world's forhead, and with thine owne spirit
> Pay home the world according to his merit.
>
> (I.i.84-95)

This passage can be fairly accused of indulgence in literary fashion because it has such limited reference to the play that follows. In particular, although Ingenioso begins with general enough Marstonian railing against a morally decaying world, he then goes on to focus on a specific type of sinner:

> Stale sinnes are stale: now doth the world begin
> To take sole pleasure in a witty sinne.

[23] On nondramatic satire, see Hallett Smith's Elizabethan Poetry, Ch. 4, pp. 194-256, especially pp. 216ff. on classical verse satire.

> Vnpleasant is the lawlesse sinne has bin [sic]
> At midnight rest, when darknesse couers sin:
> It's Clownish, vnbeseeming a young Knight,
> Vnlesse it dare out-face the glaring light;
> Nor can it mongst our gallants prayses reape
> Vnlesse it be [y]done in staring Cheape,
> In a sinne-guilty Coach, not cloasely pent,
> Iogging along the harder pauement.
>
> (I.i.104-13)

Such London gallants were the favorite butts of satirists such as Donne and Davies; but except for possible reference to Amoretto, Ingenioso's diatribe on "witty sinne" is a poor introductory commentary on The Second Return.

A much longer and more valuable satiric passage is Judicio's censuring of the poets (I.ii). The scene is most important for what it tells us about the critical taste of the Parnassus playwrights; but its stylistic significance is that it is verse in the vein of the epigrammatic literary criticism typified by Weever's Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion (1599), which includes comments on Drayton, Shakespeare, Daniel, Marston, Jonson and Spenser. But perhaps the play's most sophisticated acknowledgment of the fashion for satire is in the lines of Furor Poeticus, a humourous poetaster whose rhetoric is a self-conscious parody of the stylistic rage for satire--a fad that had obviously swept along with it the sophisticated authors of this very play.

The Second Return's most extensive use of fashionable satire is its collection of Nashean prose characters.[24] The

[24] See Hibbard, Thomas Nashe, pp. 73-75.

master of this satiric vein is Amoretto's Page, whose witty portraits of his gallant master are similar to a number of contemporary sketches:

> I wonder what is become of that Ouid de arte amandi my maister, he that for the practise of his discourse is wonte to court his hobby abroad, and at home in his chamber makes a sett speech to his greyhound, desiring that most fayre and amiable dog to grace his company in a stately galliard, and if the dog, seeing him practise his loftye points, as his crospoint [& his] backcaper, chance to beray the roome, he presently doffes his Cap most solemnly and makes a low-leg to her Ladyshippe, taking it for the greatest favour in the world, that shee would vouchsafe to leaue her Ciuet box or her sweete gloue behind her.
>
> (II.vi.910-20)

The Page's other typical character sketches of Amoretto describe him at his genteel sports (II.vi.980-92--"And is not my maister an absolute villaine, that loues his Hawke, his Hobby, and his Grey-hound more then any mortall creature?" ll. 982-84), and in a display of his false learning--the familiar vignette of affected ignorance bluffing at the bookstalls at Paul's:

> My maisters, I could wish your presence at an admirable jest. Why, presently this great linguist my master will march through Paules Church-yard, come to a booke binders shop, and with a big Italian looke and a Spanish face aske for these bookes in Spanish and Italian; then turning, through his ignorance, the wrong end of the booke vpward, vse action on this vnknowne tong after this sort: first looke on the title and wrinckle his browe; next make as though he red the first page and

> bite the lippe; then with his nayle score the margent, as though there were some notable conceit; and lastly, when he thinkes hee hath gulld the standers by sufficiently, throwe the booke away in a rage, swearing that hee could neuer finde bookes of a true printe since he was last in Padua, enquire after the next marte, and so departe.
>
> (III.iii.1276-90)

Finally, there is the Page's nasty description of "a meere Scholler . . . that is, a liuing creature that is troubled with the itch" (II.vi.930-32ff.); but the satiric thrust of the Page's recitation of a "courtier's" definition of a scholar is ironically aimed at Amoretto's own foppish prejudices--"He is one that cannot make a good legge, one that cannot eate a messe of broth cleanly, one that cannot ride a horse without spur-galling, one that cannot salute a woman, and looke on her directly, one that cannot--" (938-41).

Ingenioso is also a superb character painter, his most familiar passage likewise a sketch of Amoretto as a false courtier--although Ingenioso's special academic interests give the lines a certain individuality:

> He is one that wil draw out his pocket glasse thrise in a walke; one that dreames in the night of nothing but muske and ciuet, and talke[s] of nothing all day long but his hauke, his hound, and his mistres; one that more admires the good wrinckle of a boote, [or] the curious crinkling of a silke stocking, then all the witt in the world; one that loues no scholler but him whose tyred eares can endure halfe a day togither his fliblowne sonnettes of his mistres, and her louing pretty creatures, her munckey and her puppet.
>
> (III.iv.1363-72)

Somewhat more original are Ingenioso's socio-economic characters--his crude description of "That old Sir Raderick, that new printed compendium of all iniquity" (III.iv.1324-34), and his scathing attack on the Recorder as representative of the breed of common lawyers, both discussed below in Chapter 8.

Campbell's study of the comical satires is most useful for his analysis of specific devices used by the playwrights for adapting the nondramatic satires to the stage. For in contrast to the tight balance and economy of scenes and characters in The First Return, the longer Second Return is a much more loosely and asymmetrically organized composite of dissimilar parts and multiple characters. Indeed, the play's distinctive structural qualities call to mind Cordatus' observation on the pioneering Every Man Out of His Humour: "Faith sir, I must refraine to iudge, only this I can say of it, 'tis strange, and of a particular kind by it selfe . . . how it will answere the generall expectation, I know not" (Prologue, ll. 230-34).

The Second Return is marked by multiplicity, a busyness of texture that constantly verges on the unwieldy. Almost twice as long as The First Return,[25] the Second is the only Parnassus Play that the Cambridge authors saw fit to divide

[25] The First Return, in turn, is twice as long as The Pilgrimage.

into scenes. The large cast of The Second Return has about twice as many speaking parts as the First--25 as opposed to 13. There are now six scholar-poets instead of four, and a correspondingly larger number of antagonists. Some important characters are extraneous to the main narrative lines: the two Pages function primarily as satiric commentators, while Judicio stars in a very long and important scene (the critique of Bodenham's Belvedere, I.ii) that has no narrative function whatsoever. Then there are a number of minimal roles and short, peripheral scenes. Prodigo, in that he is another university man bilked by Sir Raderick, functions as an echo of the major actions, but like Judicio, he appears only once (IV.i). In Studioso's nine-line French lesson (I. v), the pupil Richardetto has his only two lines. Philomusus' First Patient (I.iv) has only one. There are even some "walk-on" crowds in The Second Return--the Physician's "staffe" in the stage direction to II.i, and Philomusus' and Studioso's "consort" of fiddlers in V.i.[26]

[26] A likely reason for this large cast is the old convention of dramatic plenitude--the playwright's filling in his social canvas in order to fully mirror the world. But considering the multiple, near-duplicate and irrelevant nature of some of the Second Return material, one cannot help wondering if the playwrights weren't simply trying to accommodate more than thirty amateur thespians that year (in contrast to only ten young men needed to perform The Pilgrimage a few years earlier) in response to an increasingly popular extra-curricular activity at St. John's. It is also possible that students doubled up on roles, a common enough practice in the professional acting companies. In any event, the academic amateurs were only part-time players, and regardless of the length of the list of "The names of the Actors" (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 217), only half the characters had roles requiring more than a few lines of memorization, and only the still smaller number that appeared in more than one scene would have been needed for frequent rehearsal.

Campbell has helped to put this copia into perspective. He describes the basic structure of the comical satires developed by Jonson and Marston as an episodic parade of grouped humour characters whose actions are presided over by satiric commentators.[27] The Second Return does not have a cast of Jonsonian humour characters, but it does have the other basic structural characteristics of the comical satires.

The most easily identifiable element is the satiric commentator. Campbell, commenting on Marston's creation of Planet as the satiric spirit of Jack Drum's Entertainment, writes: "Only when writers of comical satire created such a figure to serve as commentator, did they succeed in imposing upon the new form aesthetic unity and logical coherence."[28] In The Second Return, the chief satiric commentator is Ingenioso. Here Ingenioso plays the same role of rejected artist turned satirist that he played in The First Return, but in this final Parnassus Play, he is indisputably central--not only the dominant spirit of the play, but the structural unifier. It is Ingenioso who establishes the tone and setting of the entire play in the opening sequence--first alone, then with Judicio, and then with Danter; at the end of the play, he pulls together the three separate groups of protag-

[27] Comicall Satyre, p. 79.
While the structure of The Second Return is unusual in some ways, it is, interestingly, also representative of Madeline Doran's extremely valuable formal analysis of the "multiple unity" of Elizabethan drama, the two distinguishing characteristics of which are multiplicity and sequential action (Endeavors of Art [Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1954]).

[28] Comicall Satyre, p. 166.

onists for their Act V reunion. During the course of the play, in the minimal plot of the poets against Sir Raderick's party, Ingenioso serves another function of the satiric commentator, that of wit-intriguer, a sophistication of the old comic role of the Vice as stage manager. Ingenioso's skill at character-painting has already been mentioned. He is assisted here by the Pages to Sir Raderick and Amoretto, witty observers of the scene who, unlike the poet, stand aloof from the action . . . and from the problems of the Parnassus Plays. Philomusus and Studioso, like Ingenioso, types of disappointed scholars, offer some satiric commentary on their own situation, but their satire is of the older school of moral condemnation, rather than the witty ironies of the turn-of-the-century satirists.

Of the structural development of a comical satire, Campbell says that there is no real plot, only groups of characters functioning in related but episodic units, moving toward the climax of a mass confrontation scene: "This group movement of the characters serves as a more or less effective substitute for the coherent plot of a traditional comedy."[29] He describes how the characters at first appear in groups of twos and threes, then in larger and larger groups, moving suspensefully toward the point "when they finally fill the stage in large ensemble scenes. There, at last, their humours assume so extravagant a form that the spectators begin

[29] Comicall Satyre, p. 79.

to anticipate the catastrophe . . . ."[30]

The Second Return makes its own variation on this structure. It is, to begin with, a thesis play--the scholar-poet vs. society--and the major characters can be neatly divided into protagonists and antagonists. There are three separate sets of protagonists: Ingenioso's group (first Judicio, then Furor Poeticus and Phantasma); Philomusus and Studioso, and Academico, alone. The major antagonists--Sir Raderick, the Recorder and Amoretto--form a group of their own.

The linear development of the play proceeds episodically, in character units. The first unit features Ingenioso--alone (I.i), with Judicio (I.ii), with Danter, an antagonist (I.iii), with Furor Poeticus and Phantasma (I.vi). A second, partially overlapping unit, introduces Philomusus and Studioso (I.iv, v and II.i). The next major unit, the Academico-Amoretto-Immerito triangle, pits a protagonist against an antagonist. Composed of five contiguous scenes of Act II (ii-vi, plus one additional scene in III.iii), this nearly self-contained unit offers the clearest example of episodic development. The last character group to be introduced, the antagonistic pair of Sir Raderick and the Recorder, does not appear until Act III, and remains in the play only through IV.ii.

Though the plot lines of the three protagonist groups are separate, they have loosely parallel developments. Most

[30] Comicall Satyre, p. 80.

significantly, they are joined by the powerful figure of the common enemy, Sir Raderick. Each group of disappointed scholars makes one last attempt to function in society, in the form of an appeal to the symbolic embodiment of the society in the play, Sir Raderick: Academico sues for the pastorate he controls, Ingenioso's group appeals for his poetic patronage, and Philomusus and Studioso fiddle for a handout at his doorstep. But Sir Raderick--or one of his party--rejects them all, each action climaxing in a confrontation scene between the petitioning scholar-poets and their social antagonists. The explosive ensemble scene described by Campbell is The Second Return's IV.ii, the long scene of the visitation of Ingenioso's angry poets upon their improbable patrons. And while Academico is rebuffed by Amoretto in II.v, this unit climaxes in a secondary ensemble scene, the examination of Immerito by Sir Raderick and the Recorder (III.i).

The denouement of The Second Return consists of the major Philomusus-Studioso unit of the play (four contiguous scenes, IV.iii-V.ii). Their immediate antagonists in Act IV are Burbage and Kempe, but for their final social rejection they, too, confront the party of Sir Raderick--in the ironic guise of the Pages. The Second Return ends with the only meeting of the six scholar-poets, an ensemble of defeated protagonists, before the groups separate once more, each one headed for its distinct place of social exile.

The special dramatic requirements of the comical satires inspired the use of a number of sophisticated theatrical devices. Essentially, these innovations worked to enhance the basic structure according to character groupings by bringing a new complexity of interplay and contrast between characters. The self-conscious excitement of these devices is captured in the Cordatus-Mitis commentary on the action of Every Man Out of His Humour. Directly to the point is the dialogue at the close of II.iii, in which Mitis, questioning the need for the length and complexity of the scene, suggests that the author "might haue altered the shape of his argument, and explicated [the humours] better in single Scenes." Cordatus explains Jonson's critical purpose:

> That had beene single indeed: why? be they not the same persons in this, as they would haue beene in those? and is it not an object of more state, to behold the Scene full, and relieu'd with varietie of speakers to the end, then to see a vast emptie stage, and the actors come in (one by one) as if they were dropt downe with a feather, into the eye of the spectators?
>
> (II.iii.295-301)

It is very much these qualities of greater length and complexity that distinguish The Second Return from the First. The comical satirists' chief means of controlling this complexity is in the choreography of the various character groups. In The Second Return, where the didactic theme sets the major groups in strong opposition to each other, much of choreography has a distinct counterpoint movement. The two

key stylistic developments since The First Return are an increased use of dialogue and a new complexity of staging.

The dialogue of The Second Return is generally more conversational than that in the First. I do not mean that it is colloquial, but that characters have conversations with each other. By contrast, The First Return seems composed of longer set speeches delivered by individual characters, not so much in conversation, but in the older formal style of semi-direct address to the audience--as Kempe says of a Cambridge comedy he once attended, "at the end of the stage" (IV.iii.1758-59). However, the purpose of much of The Second Return's new-style dialogue is to set the opposing forces one against the other, in quarrelsome counterpoint. This may be a head-on confrontation--a comic example is the collision of humours during the first meeting of Furor Poeticus and Phantasma (I.iv), or an indirect one--the satiric commentary that the Pages interject into dialogues as asides, e.g., the observations of Sir Raderick's Page on the mock-examination of Immerito (III.i). The Academico-Amoretto unit illustrates several variations on this contrapuntal dialogue: Academico "solus," with Echo (II.ii); Academico as satiric commentator (in asides) on Amoretto in soliloquy (II.iii); Amoretto in conversation with Immerito and Stercutio, again with satiric commentary by Academico (II.iv); and Academico in direct conversation with Amoretto, where Academico's lines also function as satiric commentary (II.v).

This counterpointing obviously necessitates more com-

plicated staging. In a few places this is noted right in the stage directions, as in the functional "They walke aside from their fellowes" that allows Philomusus and Studioso private conversation apart from the fiddlers (V.ii.2023), or the more expressive setting for the lack of communication between Furor Poeticus and Phantasma in that first meeting: "Furor Poeticus: and presently after enters Phantasma. Furor Poeticus rapt within contemplation" (I.vi). The most explicit stage direction is for VI.i, a scene that has two separate groups in conversations, with a third group offering satiric commentary: "Sir Radericke and Prodigo, at one corner of the Stage. Recorder and Amoretto at the other. Two Pages scouring of Tobacco pipes."

There is some important directional help for the reader in the big ensemble scene (IV.ii), which consists of overlapping conversations, a series of confrontations, and a stream of satirical asides. The scene begins with the poets, with Ingenioso, as satiric stage manager, addressing his companions. Then, according to their plan of III.iv, Furor speaks--as indicated in the script--"to Sir Raderick" (l. 1521), Phantasma "to Amoretto" (l. 1530), and Ingenioso, with a "God saue you good maister Recorder" (l. 1533), boards his man. Thus three separate groups are set in motion. But, as might have been expected, there is little direct communication. The poets' rhetorically charged assaults rebound off the recipients, who then set the dialogue going in completely different directions. Sir Raderick at first talks only to

himself, armored by his decision not to answer Furor ("I will not seeme to regard him," l. 1529). The Recorder and Amoretto manage to carry on their legal discussion from the previous scene. The Pages ostensibly take their masters' parts, all the while snidely offering encouragement to the abusive poets (Amoretto's Page [to Phantasma]: "Let him alone I pray thee.--To him again, tickle him there," ll. 1541-42). Throughout, Ingenioso, the chief satiric commentator, indulges in asides to the audience, and in abusive "characters" of the antagonists. The individual lines of dialogue follow each other rapidly and in cross-purpose counterpoint, the separate speeches bursting like verbal explosions from different parts of the stage. At one point the three antagonists briefly acknowledge the existence of the poets by addressing them directly, although contemptuously. But in the end the worldlings ignore the scholar-poets, only talking about them among themselves. When Sir Raderick's party finally leaves, and after a few last jibes from the Pages, the poets are once again alone on stage.

This isolation of the protagonists from society is the play's own variation on contemporary comical satire; The Second Return, for all its satiric irony, is a thesis play, a class complaint, its theme the world's rejection of the scholar-poet. Yet we have seen how the au courant playwrights, academics though they were, utilized the stuff of the public theater's comical satire--the cynical, intellec-

tual satire, the subject matter and rhetorical style adapted from the verse satires, and the innovative structure of an episodic interplay of character groups unified by a satiric commentator--toward their own very special scholarly and artistic ends. In the following chapters we will see the scholar-poets' particular use of other forms of contemporary professional theater--the London setting, social prejudices and realism of city comedy, and the overt concern with literary matters that marks the plays of the Poetomachia.

Chapter 8. City Comedy

The comical satire is the most inclusive contemporary genre relevant to The Second Return. A second, overlapping genre is the city comedy, urban satires that focus on the appetitive and aggressive evils loosed by the power of new money.[1]

The Second Return's historical ties with this group of plays are looser than those with the comical satires, mainly because of the dates involved. The key comical satires were all produced before The Second Return was, and while the specific reference in it to The Poetaster proves that the academic authors were at least familiar with Jonson's work, other more general features of The Second Return--the satiric commentators, the episodic structure, the humour characters (particularly the humourous poets)--strongly suggest that the comical satires had a broader direct influence on the last Parnassus Play. It is possible that one or more of the Cambridge collaborators had seen Jonson performed on the London stage. Certainly they had read him in quarto.

This is not the case with city comedy, a genre which had its beginnings in these turn-of-the-century years, but which flowered fully as a Jacobean phenomenon. Though the early city comedies--those plays that coincide with the com-

[1] See Gibbons, Jacobean City Comedy.
A classic background study is L. C. Knights, Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson (1937; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton, 1968).

ical satires--are contemporaneous with The Second Return, the major works--the mature Jonson, mature Marston, and all of Middleton--date later than The Second Return. And it is these later plays which are closer in spirit to The Second Return--making the academic work, in this instance, something of a precursor.

To describe briefly the differences between early and mature city comedy, it can be said that the early works, Jonson's Every Man Out of His Humour and Marston's Jack Drum's Entertainment, follow the pattern set by Chapman in An Humourous Day's Mirth. In dealing wittily with a relatively polite segment of city society, and in concentrating on the display of humourous manners, these plays are close in kind to the contemporary verse satires, with their epigrammatic "characters" of fools and knaves around town. Later city comedy--epitomized by the typical and parodic Eastward Ho (1604) of Chapman, Marston and Jonson[2]--paints a broader canvas of city life, one that digs beneath polite society and reaches beyond social manners. And it replaces satiric wit with a tougher criticism of contemporary life. In these respects, later city comedy seems to reach back to an older genre of city satire, the realistic prose narrative of the early 1590s. The Second Return, which has a fundamental interest in the socio-economic realities of city life, and little concern for the manners of gentility, is in this sense closer to later city comedy. Thus while there is the

[2] Gibbons makes this point in describing Eastward Ho as a moral exemplum and a mock-exemplum (Jacobean City Comedy, p.22).

possibility of direct influence by the early city comedies on The Second Return, the play's more interesting relationship is as a forerunner of the full-blown creations of the genre.

All the city comedies, however, do have certain important characteristics in common. The most tangible aspect is the realistic and contemporary London setting. But the driving force of the drama is the new money, and the dominant theme the consequences of that money for social power and individual morality. The point of view is critical of the new money and its subversion of the old social order, and the criticism is satirical, via comic indirection. The plays feature a repertory of satirical social types drawn from the monied middle class--characters depicted with a degree of contemporary realism, and placed in plot situations in which the machinery of capitalistic enterprise is the means to their comic exposure. The Second Return, produced though it was by academics in the relative seclusion of a university town, has all of these urban characteristics--although tailored to meet the very special requirements of the scholar-poet authors.

The most easily identifiable element of a city comedy is its realistic city setting--the placement of the action within the streets, buildings, institutions and customs of contemporary London. By this standard, The Second Return is not a full-blown city comedy: the surface of the play is not quite bristling with the wealth and detail of local color

that give the later city comedies of Jonson, Marston and Middleton their realistic texture. But the final Parnassus Play, unlike its predecessors, is still unmistakably placed in turn-of-the-century London society and culture.

Many of the favorite haunts of the satirists are referred to in The Second Return--from St. Paul's Churchyard (e.g., III.iii.1268, 1278), the Inns of Court (e.g., IV.i. 1497 and IV.ii.1550), the taverns (e.g., the Pegasus in Cheapside, I.ii.333) and the theater (IV.iii and iv), to Newgate (III.v.1384) and the Isle of Dogs (V.iii.2066; V.i passim)--and a few scenes are even localized: Ingenioso meets Danter at Paul's (I.iii; reference made at I.ii.332); in III.iv Furor Poeticus and Phantasma meet with Ingenioso "in Cheapside, at the signe of the Nagges head" (reference at I.vi.496-97), and Sir Raderick deals with Prodigo in IV.i at Moorfields (reference at III.i.1146 and III.ii.1237).

In addition to its London place names, the play's surface realism is enlivened with many other culturally topical references. Appropriately, most of these belong to the contemporary world of literary London--the censuring of the poets of Bodenham's Belvedere and the appearance of Burbage and Kempe are the most significant--and help place The Second Return in the context of the artistically self-conscious plays of the Poetomachia.

Three other groups of topical references demand attention because they involve so many lines: the technical jargon of common law (mostly in Act IV conversations between

the Recorder and Amoretto), Amoretto's description of the hunt (II.v), and Phantasma's quotations from the Latin authors. These allusions to external institutions--the second and third references are, respectively, aristocratic and academic rather than urban--are used to place the characters socially. But perhaps the most interesting point to be made about these topical references is that they are taken not from life, but from books.[3] This is not realistic dialogue fresh from observation on the London streets, but technical material lifted from literary sources. Despite the city setting, the bookish and academic bias of the play is clear.

The socio-economic prejudices of city comedy are summed up by L. C. Knights in his description of Jonson's ethical attitude as "anti-acquisitiveness."[4] This basic theme is dramatized by means of a satiric attack on acquisitive individuals, the so-called "new men" of the late Elizabethan-early Jacobean period.[5] In socio-economic terms, the preju-

[3] See Leishman's commentary for documentation of the legal passages in Littleton (pp. 315, 318-20, notes), the hunt in the Book of St. Albans (pp. 272-83), and the variety of classical quotations (p. 397 and passim).

[4] Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson, pp. 190-92.

[5] I find myself having to use this term despite its well-known inadequacies. The enormous problems of this particular historical terminology--known in scholarly circles as "the gentry controversy"--are surveyed by Lawrence Stone in his excellent introduction to Social Change and Revolution in England, 1540-1640 (1965; rpt. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968). The difficulty of dispensing with such terms is suggested by the continuing usefulness of such a generalized study as Knights's Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson.

dice is anti-capitalist; citizen bourgeois or new gentry, the targets of this satire are the nouveaux riches who have attained social power solely by means of money. The most straightforward prejudice against them was the belief that many had amassed their sums by immoral methods. A more complex criticism involved both the ethic that money alone does not merit social power, and the medieval-Tudor faith in an innate aristocracy--so that the new men, even if not directly guilty of immoral or illegal activity, were still held responsible for upsetting the traditional social order.

Yet, as in any work of literature that can be distinguished from political tract, the author's social criticism is ultimately to be understood in a larger moral perspective;[6] but also as in any literary fiction, that moral vision must be presented in specific social terms.[7] The interdependence of the moral and economic analyses is illustrated by what Knights and others have identified as the two dominant sins of the new men--greed and lust,[8] two facets of acquisitive-

[6] Knights argues that Jonson's criticism is moral rather than economic, and that this explains why the satire is directed against individuals, and not against the economic system: "attacks on the new order took the form of attacks on individuals . . . the diagnosis was moral rather than economic. Or, to put it another way, the dramatic treatment of economic problems showed them as moral and individual problems--which in the last analysis they are" (p. 176).

[7] Gibbons applies this maxim to the question of the "realism" of city comedy: "the critical realist is primarily concerned to shape character and incident in order to bring alive the underlying social and moral issues through the specific and local experience" (Jacobean City Comedy, p. 17).

[8] Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson, p. 207.

ness, one manifested economically and publicly, the other socially and privately, but both expressions of the same impulse toward excessive physical possession.

The particular social focus of city comedy morality is on the social and professional types who oiled the machinery of the capitalistic economy--the urban figures of the merchant, the lawyer and the moneylender, and from the country, the wealthy, landed and frequently titled new gentry. The plots present these monied members of the middle class wielding their new economic power in a number of typical situations, the satiric purpose being to expose them as morally and intellectually undeserving of their influence. Frequently, the comic villain operates at the expense of an inexperienced young man who is the true gentle standard of the play. And, finally, the conventionally notorious realities of city life are used as the appropriately unromantic setting.

The Second Return has these basic social prejudices, and they are presented in this general dramatic outline; but the university authors worked the material from their own particular point of view, and with their own very special emphasis. As in all of these comparisons of the last Parnassus Play to the contemporary professional drama, we must keep in mind that The Second Return is a play of special pleading. As city comedy, The Second Return differs from the professional plays in that the attack on the new gentry is made not only from the point of view of traditional moral and social codes, but from a very distinct ethic, the aesthetic and intellec-

tual values of the scholar-poet. And the young protagonists are not economically independent amateurs like Jonson's Knowell Jr. (Every Man Out of His Humour) and Ovid (Poetaster), but struggling professionals. The conflicts in this last play are ultimately based on the old Parnassian opposition between the scholar-poet and society--in this case, between the university graduate and the Tudor socio-economic structure. But the immediate theme is the scholar-poet's complaint that there is no viable place in this world for him. More than a criticism of the new social order, The Second Return is a complaint that scholar-poets are excluded from it.

The social point of view of the Cambridge play is similar to that of the professional city comedies--critical of the new acquisitiveness for destroying traditional moral values. But the satire of The Second Return is distinctly negative in that it offers no alternatives. The play contains no suggestions of righting the wronged social order--either back to the traditional leadership of the aristocracy, or, more Platonically, to a new spiritual aristocracy of scholar-poets. The conventional satiric attack on acquisitiveness was made from the vantage point of Tudor faith in a social hierarchy according to rank, based on an acceptance of a natural nobility of birth, power, wealth and, consequently, of merit. But the Parnassus playwrights are curiously unconcerned with the aristocracy: there is no character of noble birth in the entire trilogy. This fact is surprising when one considers the social, economic and artistic importance of the aristocracy to

a Parnassian idol such as Spenser.[9] But in these plays, the unprovided-for university wits are at war only with their immediate economic antagonists, the financial powerhouses of the middle class. As for their faith in their own superiority, the scholar-poets never treat it as a practical social substitute for the false leadership of the new men. They have neither the idealism nor the self-confidence necessary to offer themselves as an aristocracy of spiritual merit.[10]

In either case, there is no vision of social justice in The Second Return, no Jonsonian fair trial or Marstonian satiric settlement at the end of the play. There is absolutely no hope for reform, only the despair of accepting the new social order as a reality. The playwrights present the power of the new men as a fait accompli, an undeniable fact of their own social and economic existence. This is the social premise of the play. For the professional scholar-poet, opportunity was largely controlled by the new men--hence the playwrights' special complaint, not from philosophical ideals but from economic necessity, that the scholar-poet is rejected from the world. This is the play's special pleading; yet to project the reality of their social situation, the academic authors turned to the conventional terms of city comedy, a satiric attack on the new men.

[9]And to other poets admired by the playwrights, such as "Sweete hony dropping Daniell" (SR, I.ii.235).

[10]By way of contrast, consider Jonson's audacious placement of Poetry next to the throne of the idealized state, in the final act of The Poetaster.

The satiric butts of The Second Return are all drawn from the ranks of the monied middle class--a large and various body to be sure, but limited when compared to the antagonists of The First Return, who cover a broader social spectrum--from the servant Leonard to the village freeman Goodman Perceval, from the bourgeois Cambridge merchants to the wealthy Patron. In the antagonists of The Second Return, the playwrights are more exclusively concerned with economic power: the knighted Raderick, the bourgeois businessman Danter, and the professional players Burbage and Kempe all have in common immediate economic control over the scholar-poet. In the Return plays' selection of targets of social satire, The First Return looks back to the Tudor estates moralities, while The Second Return points ahead to Jacobean city comedy.

Before looking closely at the social butts of The Second Return, we should note that this last Parnassus Play makes some interesting reference to the apparent hostility toward the scholar-poet on the part of the official Tudor power structure--though, as is the case with the professional satires, overt political criticism is minimal.

Three of the play's antagonists hold official positions: Sir Raderick, who is a Justice of the Peace (IV.i.1447), the Recorder, and Philomusus' patient the Burgess, "a public magistrate" (II.i.526). All three are petty local officials, and in the strictest sense they represent only the new men, and not the statesmen of the Queen. Their special brand of meanness is exposed by the pleasure they take even in their

trivial powers, by their appalling self-importance and, always, by their acquisitiveness, the materialistic bias that operates against everything spiritual, intellectual and artistic. But however antithetical to traditional authority the new men were, they were also gaining real political power, and had become, for better or worse, a force in the Tudor "establishment." And from the point of view of the social likes of the Parnassus scholar-poets--sans rank, sans money, sans influence--the hostility of these petty local authorities could be seen as extensions of official anti-academicism in higher government places.

In The Second Return, almost certain allusions are made to two official actions of the Tudor state against poets and scholars—the key references occurring in the important scene of the denunciation of scholars by Sir Raderick and the Recorder (III.ii). In the eyes of the university wits, these actions must have been not only outrageous insults, but formidable social and economic obstacles to their attempts to function within the established society. Leishman's notes on these historical events document the existence of official hostility as a very real problem--an important reminder that the anti-establishment bias of The Second Return cannot be dismissed as youthful or academic rebellion because it has its foundation in hard facts of Tudor social life.

The better known of these actions is the bishops' injunction of 1599 which condemned and ordered burned a selection

of allegedly libelous books, singling out satiric literature for special censure, by ordering "That noe Satyres or Epigrams be printed hereafter."[11] The decree was directed against writers rather than against academics, but the list of condemned works[12] makes it clear that the key authors were the university-bred poets of the avant-garde. That this was a common understanding is suggested by the probable reference to the injunction in the Recorder's sinister lines,

> Well, remember another day what I say: schollers are pryed into of late, and are found to bee busye fellowes, disturbers of the peace, Ile say no more, gesse at my meaning, I smel a ratt.
>
> (III.ii.1228-31)

and by Sir Raderick's more transparent--and familiar[13]--rejoinder,

> [Well,] I hope at length England will be wise enough, I hope so, I faith, then an old knight may haue his wench in a corner without any Satyres or Epigrams.
>
> (III.ii.1232-34)

[11]See Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, pp. 196-97.

[12]Including Hall's Virgidemiae, Marston's Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image, Guilpin's Skialetheia, Marlowe's Elegies and Davies' Epigrams, as well as the pieces of the Nashe-Harvey controversy.

[13]Leishman compares this line with Satiromastix: Tucca. "A Gentleman, or an honest Cittizen, shall not Sit in your pennie-bench Theaters, with his Squirrell by his side cracking nuttes; nor sneake into a Tauerne with his Mermaid; but he shall be Satyr'd, and Epigram'd vpon, and his humour must run vpo'th Stage: you'll ha Euery Gentleman in's humour, and Euery Gentleman out on's humour . . . (IV.ii.52-57). All citations of Dekker are from The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Fredson Bowers, 4 vols. (orig. 1953-61); rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), Satiromastix, Vol. I.

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The other official action, not having been directed exclusively against writers, is less well known to literary scholars.

When Sir Raderick says, "Well, tis a shame indeede there should be any such priuiledged places for proud beggars as Cambridge and Oxford are" (III.ii.1206-08), he is probably referring to certain Elizabethan statutes against begging that specifically included scholars. The current Acte for Punyshment of Rogues, Vagabondes and Sturdy Beggars (1597), which prescribed a bloody whipping for offenders, categorically included "all persons calling themselves schollers going about begging."[14] That this description did not refer merely to pretenders to learning but to graduates as well is made painfully clear by the more pointed wording of a comparable act of 1572, which included in its definition of rogues, vagabonds and beggars, "all Scollers of the Universityes of Oxford or Cambridge that goe about begginge, not beinge aucthorysed under the Seale of the said Universities by the Comyssarye Chauncelour or Vicechancelour of the same."[15]

This historical information is fascinating and important, but it must be regarded strictly as background material. The Second Return, like virtually all other Elizabethan satire,

[14] 39 Elizabeth, Cap. iv. See Leishman's note on Amoretto's reference to "a statute come out against begging" (IV.ii. 1643), p. 326.

[15] An Acte for the Punishment of Vacabondes, and for Relief of the Poore and Impotent, 14 Elizabeth, Cap. v (Leishman, p. 326n.).

presents its social criticism in predominantly moral terms; and while there was some authorial leeway in attacking economic practices, political specifics were never more than hinted at. Thus the three Second Return characters who hold government positions are not presented in their official capacities. Sir Raderick leans on his power as a Justice of the Peace only once (with Prodigo, IV.i.1441-51), and nothing at all is made of the Recorder's public function. Instead, the capability of the new men to inflict wider social harm is suggested by the extent of their personal failings.

A good example of this reflection of political criticism in the moral is the brief portrait of the Burgess, a petty official whose public malfeasance, although never made explicit, is assured by the enormity of his private sins. Leaving the economic expression of acquisitiveness to Sir Raderick, the playwrights painted in the Burgess a miniature of the related sins of pride and lust. Philomusus, as Theodore the physician, tells him that his urinalysis proves "your worship to be as lecherous as a bull" (II.i.508-09), a diagnosis which the patient accepts readily enough--"Truely maister Doctor we are all men, [all men]" (1.510). After all, he has sought out a French doctor, the satirist's broad hint that he is suffering from the French disease. But the Burgess is more obnoxious in his overbearing self-importance:

> Good maister Doctor vse mee gently, for marke you Sir, there is a double consideration to be had of me: first as I am a publike magistrate, [&] secondly as I am a priuate butcher: and but for the worshipfull credit of the

> place and office wherein I now stand and liue, I would not [so] hazard my worshipfull apparell with a suppositor or a glister: but for the countenancing of the place I must go oftener to [the] stoole, for as a great gentleman told me of good experience, it was the chiefe note of a magistrate, not to go to the stoole without a phisition.
>
> (II.i.524-33)[16]

In his pride, the Burgess is soul sinner to Ingenioso's Patron in The First Return; but in his lower rank and economic position, his identification with citizen government, and his clumsy social-climbing, he is clearly one of the new men. The thoroughly vulgar tenor of this scene--expressed not only in the grossness of the Burgess, but in the chicanery of Philomusus and Studioso with their medical quackery and phony Frenchification, and in the very crudeness of the subject matter (Philomusus, the Parnassian poet-scholar, is given the line, "I haue considered of the crasis and symptoma of your disease, and here is vne fort gentille purgation per euacuationem excrementorum, as we Phisitions vse to parlee," ll. 539-41)--is an appropriate expression of the disease in the body social . . . and the body politic.

The principal group of antagonists in The Second Return, Sir Raderick's party, follows some favorite patterns of city comedy. A gross country squire comes to town to transact his unscrupulous business and pleasure dealings, and does so

[16]He later adds: "I hope maister Doctor you haue a care of the countryes officer, I tell you I durst not haue trusted my selfe with euery phisition, and yet I am not afraide for my selfe, but [that] I would not depriue the towne of so carefull a magistrate" (ll.542-46).

at the expense of able--though not, as in the professional plays, gentle--young men who have come to the city to seek their fortunes. The country gentleman is accompanied by two other satiric types on the London scene--the rich man's son, Amoretto, an Ovidian fop who, after a spell at the university, is passing time at the Inns of Court (and in the byways of Paul's), and the squire's legal adviser and articulate spokesman, the Recorder, local magistrate and common lawyer.

The leader of the triumvirate is Sir Raderick, and one of the most striking features of The Second Return is the way in which this character, the satiric villain, seems to dominate the work. We have already noted Sir Raderick's dramatic function as the structural center of the play: although he appears only in Acts III and IV, he unifies the three separate scholar-poet plots by serving as the common antagonist. The key structural role of this character directly reflects his social dominance. Physically and spiritually, Sir Raderick embodies the world that opposes the scholar-poet; and because the satiric point of the play is that the world eventually triumphs, his gross sins and perverted values must, ironically, be the most powerful stuff of the play. This effect is achieved by presenting the character in the comparatively realistic manner used for the socio-economic butts of satiric city comedy. In The Second Return, if Ingenioso is the satiric-artistic spirit that informs the whole, it is Sir Raderick's presence which anchors the complaint at its material center.

For the scholar-poet, Sir Raderick embodies the

materialistic world both as a public figure and as a private personality. His most important external attribute, of course, is his wealth, by means of which he wields economic, political, social and even artistic control of the world of the play.

It is the economic power of this "new man" that is felt most keenly by the protagonists of The Second Return. With the key resources of landed property and ready cash, Sir Raderick commits the two archetypal economic sins of the new money--simony and usury. In each case, the victim of his immoral financial dealings is a university man--first Academico, who loses the church living he apparently deserves to an uneducated youth whose father, a farmer with cash, is able to buy it for him, and then Prodigo, a scholar of wealthier stock who has over-borrowed money on the credit of his land. The capitalist as usurer was the most typical economic villain of city comedy,[17] and the gallant wastrel his favorite victim --a relationship that had been popularized by the city prose satires of the 1590s, and antedated by Lodge's An Alarum against Usurers (1584). The simonist, a primary villain of medieval literature is, at the turn of the seventeenth century, clearly a figure of more parochial interest to the university graduate of limited social and economic means.[18]

In the formal social hierarchy, Sir Raderick's money has

[17]Gibbons, Jacobean City Comedy, p. 30

[18]The simony issue in The Second Return is discussed more fully below, pp. 314ff.

bought him a title: he is a knight; in the sphere of official power, it has granted him a piece of civil authority: he is a Justice of the Peace--title and office marking him as one of "these mushrompe gentlemen,/ That shoot vp in a night to place, and worship."[19] Undermining the old social fabric by obtaining the first of these honors, he utilizes the second to solidify his position, allying himself with the burgeoning power of the common law, champion of relatively new, man-made laws of society, in place of what traditionalists maintained were natural and eternal ones. Addressing the hapless Prodigo, Sir Raderick outdoes himself in borrowing the Recorder's legalistic jargon and doubletalk to justify the new man's reinterpretation of a traditional social concept:

> M. Prodigo, M. Recorder hath told you lawe: your land is forfeited, and for me not to take the forfeiture were to breake the Queenes law; for marke you, its law to take the forfeiture: therfore not to take it is to breake the Queenes law, and to breake the Queenes law is not to bee a good subiect. Besides, I am a Iustice of the peace, and being [a] Iustice of the peace I must do iustice, that is, law, that is, to take the forfeiture, especially hauing taken notice of it.
>
> (IV.i.1441-49)

Finally, the new man wields cultural power. His materialistic values are ultimately responsible for the creation of Amoretto, the false scholar-poet of the play, and his money empowers Amoretto's social antagonism toward scholars,

[19]Macilente, Every Man Out of His Humour, I.ii.162-63.

in the form of the rejection of the worthy Academico. And for all of the scholar-poets of The Second Return, Sir Raderick is the figure of the false patron--materially endowed, but aesthetically impoverished.

As a private personality, Sir Raderick is a material presence that opposes the spirit of the scholar-poet. All of his spiritual sins loom large and tangible--his greed, his lust, his ignorance. He is, to be sure, no Volpone: he is gross without magnificence, successful without genius; his power is a social fact, not a tribute to his ability. Moreover, for all his villainous attributes, Raderick is still a predominantly comic figure. With him--unlike the case of the Recorder--The Second Return maintains its comic perspective by attacking the satiric butt primarily with ridicule. Ingenioso's character sketch reduces the powerful knight to a dirty old man:

> That old Sir Raderick, that new printed compendium of all iniquity, that hath not ayred his countrey Chimney once in 3. winters: he that loues to liue in an od corner here in London, and affect an odde wench in a nooke; one that loues to liue in a narrow roome, that he may with more facility in the darke light vpon his wifes waiting maide; one that loues alife a short sermon and a long play; one that goes to a play, to a whore, to his bedde in [a] Circle; good for nothing in the world but to sweate nightcaps & foule faire lawne shirtes, feede a few foggy seruing men, and preferre dunces to liuings . . . .
>
> (III.iv.1323-34)

This lighter, lustier side of the play's social villain is best revealed in one of his own monologues:

> It's a foule ouer-sight, that a man of worship cannot keepe a wench in his house, but there must be muttering and surmising. It was the wisest saying that my father euer vttered, that a wife was a name of necessitie, not of pleasure: for what do men marry for, but to stocke their ground, and to haue one to looke to the linnen, sit at the vpper end of the table, and carue vp a Capon: one that can weare a hood like a Hawke, and couer her foule face with a Fanne? But there's no pleasure alwayes to be tyed to a piece of Mutton . . . ; sometimes a messe of stewd broth will do well, and an vnlac'd Rabbet is best of all. Well, for mine owne part, I haue no great cause to complaine, for I am well prouided of three bounsing wenches, that are mine owne fee-simple: one of them I am presently to visit, if I can rid my selfe cleanly of this company . . . .
>
> (IV.i.1476-90)

Sir Raderick's thematic dominance is reinforced by the realistic manner in which he is presented. In a play filled with stereotypes and humour characters, he is the most vividly drawn individual on stage. His most revealing characteristic is his speaking style, forcefully blunt despite its extremely limited vocabulary and rhetorical variation. A good example is his central complaint against scholars:

> Faith maister Recorder, if it went by wishing, there should neuer an one of them all haue aboue twentie a yeare: a good stipend, a good stipend, maister Recorder. In the meane time, howsoeuer I hate them all deadly, yet I am fayne to giue them good words. Oh they are pestilent fellowes, they speake nothing but bodkins, and pisse vinegar. Well, do what I can in outward kindnesse to them, yet they doe nothing but beray my house: as there was one that made a couple of knauish verses on my country Chimney now in the time of my soiourning here in London . . . . And an other made a couple of verses on my Daughter that learnes to play on the violl de gambo:

> Her violl de gambo is her best content,
> For twixt her legges she holds her instrument.
> Very knauish, very knauish, if you looke into't, maister Recorder. Nay they haue playd many a knauish tricke beside with me. Well, tis a shame indeede there should be any such priuiledgd places for proud beggars as Cambridge and Oxford are. But let them go, and if euer they light in my handes, if I do not plague them, let me neuer returne home againe to see my wifes wayting mayde.
>
> (III.ii.1187-1210)

Scholars are nasty young men, and he would punish them all by severely limiting their incomes. The gross simplicity of Sir Raderick's expression projects a complete lifestyle. The overall impression is humorous, though the comedy is always touched by the dark shadow of very real power embodied by this character.

There is something ironic about the fact that the most despised person in the play emerges as the most real. But this realism is a basic element of the satiric characterization of social types in city comedy. It is easy to see that the satirized social types of The Second Return are much more specifically placed, socially and economically, than the unnamed Patron, the bourgeois householder (Studioso's master) and Gullio of The First Return.[20] Sir Raderick is particularized as a country gentleman with land, money to lend, and a church living for sale; he is a master of a

[20]Danter the printer, and the actors Burbage and Kempe, characters from the real world of contemporary London, have a different kind of specificity--that of topical caricatures. Their primary function is to make reference to the professional literary world, and they are discussed below, in Chapter 9, on The Second Return's relation to the plays of the Poetomachia.

country house and a city place; a J.P. himself, he has both the local magistrate and the parson in his hire, and is attended by liveried pages; his family consists of a son who has paid his way at the university and the Inns of Court, a wife who has the means, including a waiting maid, of being a proper middle-class lady, and a daughter who takes music lessons. He also keeps a full complement of hunting dogs (II.v.840-41), and last, but not least, those "three bounsing wenches."

In a word, the dramatic substance of Sir Raderick's power is reducible to his corporeal existence. This is borne out by the obdurate fact of his ultimate triumph: in the great confrontation scene (IV.ii), the poets unleash their rhetorical fury at him, but he exits virtually unscathed. And while it is true that his own obtuseness helps shield him from their barbs, the more forceful thrust of the play is that Sir Raderick is too powerful, materially, to register the effects of a satiric attack.

While the characterization of Sir Raderick bears more detail than the other major antagonists, it is still too generalized a caricature to warrant historical identification.[21]

[21]Leishman concludes: "Parallels for each detail in this description could be cited from a hundred places, and it seems doubtful whether the audience were expected to recognize a particular person. . . . In fact, the character of Sir Raderick must, I think, be regarded rather as the personification of a number of related vices than as the satirical portrait of an individual" (The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 66, 67).

The Recorder presents a rather different case. While we are given almost no personal details about this character, his official position has invited speculation. In the town of Cambridge, the recorder, in his role as chief magistrate, was an important figure in town-gown relations, and in that frequently abrasive relationship, a likely target of academic abuse. Thus scholars have jumped at the chance to identify the Second Return Recorder as a satirical portrait of a contemporary Cambridge officeholder, the most likely candidate being one Francis Brackyn, deputy Recorder of Cambridge from 1590 to 1609.[22] But there is no case at all for this specific identification. Even more important is the point that the Second Return Recorder is never portrayed in his official capacity. Again, the identification is chiefly valuable for providing suggestive historical background.

The Recorder is, however, strongly satirized in his role as the professional type of common lawyer. Leishman's background discussion specifies two issues behind the playwrights' vigorous hostility to the common law: one, related to town-gown antagonisms, was the identification of common law with town law; the second was the professional rivalry between the practitioners of the common law and the university-degreed

[22]Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 61-2.

doctors of the academic civil law.[23] These issues are only briefly alluded to in the play, however. Instead, the lawyer is attacked on the broader grounds typical of city comedy, in which moral and socio-economic satire coalesce, and the individual sin of acquisitiveness exposes a man as a sinner against society.

In the poets' assault upon the patrons in IV.ii, Ingenioso chooses the lawyer as his special target. When the Recorder dismisses Ingenioso's first, civil appeal with, "I am retained already on the contrary part, I haue taken my fee, be gon, be gon" (ll.1598-99), Ingenioso counters with a caustic portrait of the type:

> It's his meaning I should come off: why heer's the true stile of a villaine, the true faith of a Lawyer: its vsuall with them to be bribed on the one side, and then to take a fee of the other to plead weakely; then to be bribed and rebribed on the one side, then to be feed and refeed of the other, till at length, per varios casus, by putting the case so often, they make their clients so lanke, that they may case them vp in a combe case, and pack them home from the tearme, as though they had trauelled to London to sell their horses onely, and hauing lost their fleeces, liue afterward like poore shorne sheepe.
>
> (IV.ii.1600-10)

[23] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 62-66. Leishman summarizes: the play's satire on common lawyers "is in the main a local phenomenon, to be explained chiefly by the fact that the law of the Townsmen and their advocates, with whom the University was in continual conflict, was the Common Law, while the law administered in the Vice-Chancellor's Court and studied in the University was the Civil Law--in a word, by the fact that, to our author and his audience, Common Law was Town Law and Civil Law was Gown Law" (p. 66).

A few lines later, Ingenioso complements this witty character of an urban professional type with a denunciation of him in the older satiric style of vehement moral exhortation, with the lawyer cast as the devil's disciple:

> So ho maister Recorder, you that are one of the Diuels fellow commoners, one that sizeth [in] the Deuils butterye sinns and periuries very lauishly, one that art so deare to Lucifer, that he neuer puts you out of commons for non paiment; you that liue like a summer vpon the sinnes of the people; you whose vocation serues to enlarge the territories of Hell, that (but for you) had beene no bigger than a paire of Stockes or a Pillorie; you that hate a scholler, because he descries your Asses eares; you that are a plagie stuffed Cloake-bagge of all iniquitie, which the grand Seruing-man of Hell will one day trusse vp behind him, and carry to his smokie Warde-robe.
>
> (IV.ii.1648-59)

Ingenioso's virulence here, notable even in this bitter play, gives a good indication of the vehemence of the play's attack against the Recorder. Sir Raderick is the central target of The Second Return, but he is treated with considerable humor. This is not the case with the Recorder, about whom the playwrights obviously found nothing funny. In one sense, it is as if the authorial hostility toward the principal social power were deflected to his deputy, in order to maintain the comic perspective. On the other hand, there was a good reason for the Recorder to merit special academic hostility. Here was an educated professional--a social type of uncomfortably similar background to the scholar-poet--but one who utilized his particular academic training for the acquisition of worldly power.

The special edge of hostility toward the lawyer is revealed in still another of Ingenioso's outbursts against him in this scene:

> I pray you Monsieur Ploidon, of what Vniuersitie was the first common lawyer? Of none forsooth, for your Lawe is ruled by reason, and not by Arte: great reason indeed that a Ploydenist should bee mounted on a trapt Palfrey, with a round Veluet dish on his head, to keepe warme the broth of his witte, and a long Gowne, that makes him looke like a Cedant arma togae, whilest the poore Aristotelians walke in a shorte cloake and a close Venetian hoase, hard by the Oyster-wife, and the silly Poet goes muffled in his Cloake to escape the Counter.
>
> (IV.ii.1672-81)

Ingenioso is, of course, declaring the intellectual and artistic superiority of the scholar and the poet; but the competitiveness of the direct comparison between the Plowdenist and the Aristotelian betrays a hint of jealousy, on the scholar's part, of the lawyer's material splendor. The speech continues with Ingenioso turning on Amoretto with a similar assault:

> And you Maister Amoretto, that are the chiefe Carpenter of Sonets, a priuileged Vicar for the lawlesse marriage of Inke and Paper; you that are good for nothing but to commend in a sette speech the coulour & quantity of your Mistresses stoole, and sweare it is most sweete Ciuet: it's fine when that Puppet-player Fortune must put such a Birchen-lane post in so good a suite, [& suite] such an Asse in so good a fortune.
>
> (11.1681-88)

The expression of such direct material jealousy of worldlings

is unusual in The Second Return. Yet there is one other important place where it occurs that helps account for it. This is Studioso's tirade against the material success of the players, "Faire fall good Orpheus . . ." (V.i.1914-28), whose theme is: "Vile world, that lifts them vp to hye degree,/ And treads vs downe in groueling misery"(11.1920-21). In each of these cases the irritant seems to be the scholar-poet's partial identification--and consequent rivalry--with the person he is attacking. The actors are pseudo-artists, as the Recorder is a false scholar, and Amoretto a false poet. In a situation where the Parnassians never directly covet the greatest wealth in the world of the play, that of Sir Raderick, they are nevertheless inflamed by the material success of those with whom they identify competitively on more essential grounds.[24]

Of all the characters in the play, the Recorder is the most guilty of conscious intellectual sin, and his service to the new social order is a perversion of intelligence, learning, and the power of articulation, the values of the genuine scholar. The Recorder's disregard for education allows him to conduct the pseudo-examination of Immerito on behalf of Sir Raderick, the sole point of which is to test

[24]One exception is Studioso's classic complaint, which he directs against the totally unaesthetic Burgess:

> Oh how it greeues my vexed soule to see
> Each painted asse in chayre of dignitye:
> And yet we grouell on the ground alone,
> Running through euery trade, yet thriue by none.
> (II.1.557-60)

the candidate's willingness to cooperate with his employer, e.g.:

> Rec. In the next place, some art is requisite for the perfection of nature: for the tryall wherof, at the request of my worshipfull friend, I will in some sort propound questions fitt to be resolued by one of your profession. Say what is a parson that was neuer at the vniuersity?
> Imm. A parson that was neuer at the vniuersity, is a liuing creature that can eate a tithe pigge.
> Rec. Very well answerd; but you should haue added, and must be officious to his patrone. Write downe that answer to shew his learning in logick.
>
> (III.1.1029-38)

The Recorder's abuse of reason and the law is illustrated several times, most succinctly in the specious legal argument he offers Amoretto for placing material self-interest before morality in his own legal affairs:

> Very well, and for his oath I will giue a distinction: there is a materiall oath, and a formall oath; the formall oath may be broken, the materiall may not be broken; for marke you sir, the law is to take place before the conscience, and therfore you may, vsing me your counseller, cast him in the sute: there wants nothing to the full meaning of this place.
>
> (IV.ii.1564-70)

The Recorder's skill with such tactics is, of course, one of his main sources of usefulness to Sir Raderick--as in seconding the squire's choice of Immerito (III.ii.1153-59), and in the bilking of Prodigo, where Raderick, sounding more like

the Recorder than himself, relies on the lawyer as his specious authority (IV.i.1441-49).[25]

Most serious of all, the Recorder abuses his own considerable powers of articulation by being the anti-academic spokesman of The Second Return. In III.ii, the key scene, he speaks, at first, to shore up Sir Raderick's instinctive prejudices:

> You doe well Sir Raderick, to bestowe your liuing vpon such an one as will be content to share, and on Sunday to say nothing, whereas your proud uniuersity princox thinkes he is a man of such merit the world cannot sufficiently endow him with preferment, an vnthankfull viper, an vnthankefull Viper that will sting the man that reuiued him.
>
> (11.1153-59)

But in fact he is not only more articulate than his employer, but much more intensely anti-academic. Despite his intellectual and even artistic affinities to the scholar, the Recorder's primary loyalties lie elsewhere: his motivating force, like that of Sir Raderick and all the other new men, is material acquisition: he is one of them. Thus, while his two major speeches against scholars are passages of forceful satiric verse, it is important to see that neither poses a substantive challenge to academic values. The Recorder's first outburst is a viciously witty character of the social-climbing scholar--a type of university-trained employee whom the lawyer assures Sir Raderick he is better off without:

[25]Quoted above, p. 286.

> Why ist not strange to see a ragged clarke,
> Some stamell weauer or some butchers sonne,
> That scrubd a late within a sleeueles gowne,
> When the Commencement, like a morice dance,
> Hath put a bell or two about his legges,
> Created him a sweet cleane gentleman:
> How then he gins to follow fashions?
> He whose thin sire dwell[s] in a smokye roufe,
> Must take Tobacco and must weare a locke.
> His thirsty Dad drinkes in a wooden bowle,
> But his sweet selfe is seru'd in siluer plate.
> His hungry sire will scrape you twenty legges
> For one good Christmas meale on New-yeares day,
> But his mawe must be Capon crambd each day.
> He must ere long be triple beneficed,
> Els with his tongue hee'l thunderbolt the world,
> And shake each pesant by his deafe-mans eare.
>
> (11.1160-76)

This is a clever and powerful attack on a species of social affectation, and undoubtedly casts deserved scorn on certain graduates. But for the academic heroes of this play, who can barely scrape together the wherewithal to survive, the accusation has little relevance, and serves mostly as a revelation of the Recorder's worldly prejudices.

The Recorder's second speech is a personal grievance--directed against the too-frequent academic satire of common lawyers. It is interesting that he blames faculty as well as students, indicating that his anti-academic prejudices are more deeply rooted than a common impatience with college youths:

> But how should these young coltes proue amblers,
> When the old heauy gated iades do trot?
> There shall you see a puny boy start vp,
> And make a theame gainst common lawyers:
> Then th' old vnweldy Camels gin to dance,
> This fiddling boy playing a fit of mirth:
> The gray beards scrubbe and laugh and cry, Good, good,
> To them againe, boy, scurdge th' barbarians.
>
> (III.ii.1212-19)

He is outraged; but as a thoroughgoing materialist, he realizes that satire is mere words . . . that only sticks and stones can break his bones . . . and consoles himself with:

> But we may giue the loosers leaue to talke,
> We haue the coyne, then lett them laugh for mee
>
> (III.ii.1220-21)

--a worldling's vindictive inversion of a Parnassian maxim, Studioso's "We haue the wordes, they the possession haue" (I.iv.403). The speech continues with a vengeance:

> Yet knights and lawyers hope to see the day
> When we may share their large possessions,
> And make Indentures of their chaffred skins,
> Dice of their bones, to throw in meriment.
>
> (11.1222-25)

The Recorder, for all his seeming abilities, is finally capable of attacking scholars only in his own acquisitive terms. His punishment of the satirists, like Sir Raderick's, would consist entirely of economic sanctions:

> But had the world no wiser men then I,
> Weede pen the prating parates in a cage:
> A chayre, a candle and a Tinderbox,
> A thacked chamber and a ragged gowne
> Should be their landes and whole possessions;
> Knights, Lords, & lawyers should be log'd & dwel
> Within those ouer stately heapes of stone
> Which doting syres in old age did erect.
>
> (11.1177-84)

Thus even this character, who in certain ways is the most formidable antagonist of The Second Return, offers no

meaningful challenge to the scholar-poets in terms of their own values and, like the other antagonists, is ultimately reduced to the level of a satiric butt, though by means of vehement condemnation rather than comic ridicule.

Of the three major antagonists, Amoretto is the most familiar satiric type--the gallant of the verse satires of the nineties, the genre's favorite butt. Ladies' man and poetaster, enthusiast of gentlemanly sports and fashionable satire, he is the urban sophistication of Gullio's would-be courtier--though Amoretto, unlike the braggart of The First Return, has the ready cash to finance his pretensions.

As a dramatic portrait of affectation, however, Amoretto is a less successful comic creation than Gullio, stereotypes though they both are. In his role as gallant, Amoretto is best described by his Page (and Ingenioso), in the satiric commentaries discussed above;[26] in fact these prose characters are so familiar that Amoretto's presence on stage adds little to our knowledge of this aspect of him.

Amoretto's weakness lies primarily in his creator's failure to characterize him linguistically. Instead of revealing Amoretto's false gallantry in his speaking style, the author has given him lines of undistinguished neutral prose. To characterize the Second Return gallant, the playwright depends on such external material as subject references (to his mistress, his poetry, his hawk and his horse), and technical borrowings from hunting and the law. The characterization

[26] Pp. 256-57.

of the phony gallant in The First Return, by contrast, is largely successful because of his distinctive speech: Gullio always speaks with style--indeed, usually too much of it--as in:

> I had in my dayes not vnfitly bene likned to Sr Phillip Sidney, only with this difference, that I had the better legg, and more amiable face. His Arcadia was prittie, soe are my sonnetes; he had bene at Paris, I at Padua; he fought, and so dare I; he dyed in the lowe cuntries, and soe I thinke shall I; he loued a scholler, I maintaine them . . .
>
> (11.934-39)

By contrast, Amoretto's "gallant" speeches--on love, poetry and sport--account for some of the dullest writing in the play. His typical prose is identifiable not by style, but by the denotative use of words:

> Sirrha boy remember me when I come in[to] Paules Churchyard to buy a Ronzard & Dubartas in French & Aretine in Italian, and our hardest writers in Spanish, they wil sharpen my witt gallantly. I doe Rellish these tongues in some sort. Oh now I do remember I heard a report of a Poet newly come out in Hebrew, it is a pretty harsh tongue, and [doth] rellish a gentleman traueller.
>
> (III.iii.1267-73)

Amoretto's attempts at versifying, though obviously parodic, are equally unexciting (II.iii.640ff. and III.iii.1251ff.).

The lack of rhetorical interest in the characterization of Amoretto accounts for what is undoubtedly the most boring scene in the play, II.v. The scene contains a long, technically

detailed description of the hunt, which Amoretto uses to scare off the petitioning Academico ("I knewe this was the readiest way to chase away the Scholler, by getting him into a subiect he cannot talke of for his life," ll. 869-71)--a seemingly interminable passage (actually some 100 lines, ll. 792-907, relieved only by Academico's extremely dry puns), about sixty-five lines of which Leishman documents as closely modeled on a popular hunting treatise, the Book of St. Albans, or "The Book of Sir Tristram" (probably the edition of 1596).[27] Here is just one of Amoretto's speeches:

> It was my pleasure two dayes ago to take a gallant leash of Grey-hounds, and into my fathers Parke I went, accompanied with two or three Noble men of my neere acquaintance. Desiring to show them some sport, I caused the Keeper to seuer the rascall Deere from the Bucks of the first head. Now sir, a Bucke the first yeare is a Fawne, the second yeare a Pricket, the third yeare a Sorell, the fourth yeare a Soare, the fift [yeare] a Buck of the first head, the sixt yeare a compleat Buck: as likewise your Hart is the first yeare a Calfe, the second yeare a Brockett, the third yeare a Spade, the fourth yeare a Stagge, the fift yeare a great Stag, the sixt yeare a Hart: as likewise the Roa-bucke is the first yeare a Kid, the second yeare a Girle, the third yeare a Hemuse: and these are your speciall beasts for chase, or as wee Huntsmen terme it, for venery.
>
> (II.v.851-65)

Certainly the writer has been excessive . . . even in this

[27] The Three Parnassus Plays, note to l. 766, pp. 272ff. Leishman's extensive commentary on this scene provides a good example of his essentially historical interests.

single speech! The technical jargon does not get any funnier as it piles up, for there is no variation, no changing context --as there is, for example, with Phantasma's Latin tags. The writer does not play with his raw material, but presents it directly, obviously expecting to provoke laughter in an understanding audience simply by putting the words into Amoretto's mouth.

University Wits, particularly those sons of the middle class who were concerned about earning a living in the bourgeois world, would undoubtedly have rejected the sport of hunting as an aristocratic foppery, and a treatise on it as an overrefinement of an irrelevant art. They would be especially scornful of Amoretto's attempt to use "the mysteries of our Arte" (1.895) as a weapon of social snobbery. There is some authorial comment to this effect in Academico's asides, as in: "Sir I haue loued this kinde of sporte [well], but now I begin to hate it, for it hath beene my luck alwayes to beat the bush, while another kild the Hare" (11.796-99). But most of these verbal parries are obvious to the point of tediousness;

> Amor. Now sir, when you come to your stately gate, as you sounded the recheat before, so now you must sound the releefe three times.
> Acad. Releefe call you it? it were good euery patron would wind that horne.
> Amor. O sir, but your veline is your [chiefest &] sweetest note . . . .
> Acad. True sir, it is a very good trade now adayes to be a villaine: I am the hound that hunts after a game vnknowne, and [hee] blowes the villaine.

> Amor. Sir, I will blesse your eares with
> a very pretty story: my father out
> of his owne cost and charges keepes
> an open table for all kinde of dogges.
> Acad. And he keepes one more by thee.
>
> (II.v.826-42)

Indeed, the sheer weight of the raw material almost ends up undermining the satiric point of view for the reader, who begins to wonder if the playwright wasn't rather taken with the hunting treatise, instead of being repelled by it. Perhaps he was simply undisciplined about cutting it down to size; certainly the same effect could have been accomplished by means of a few good selections. In any event, Amoretto's hunting scene is a prime example of The Second Return's need for a good general editor.

Some of the dramatic weakness of Amoretto as gallant may be attributable to limited authorial interest in the subject. This possibility is suggested by the omission of one popularly satirized activity of the London gallant--which, considering the context, is rather surprising--that is, his showy attendance at the theater.[28] The gallant at the playhouse is a character that the professional satirist could not resist.[29] But the

[28]Only Sir Raderick's attendance at the plays is mentioned, and that briefly. See Ingenioso's character sketch of the knight, III.iv.1323-34, quoted above, p. 287.

[29]The prototype actually dates later--Dekker's The Guls Hornebooke (1609).

For a Jonsonian example, see Albius in The Poetaster, who says: "At your ladyship's service.--I got that speech by seeing a play last day, and it did me some grace now: I see, 'tis good to collect sometimes; I'le frequent these plaies more than I have done, now I come to be familiar with courtiers" (II.ii.90-94).

Parnassus playwrights, apparently more concerned with bread and butter issues, may have had little artistic patience with the gallant's superficial fopperies,[30] and, settling for a conventional rendering of the basic type, turned to elaborate on Amoretto's distinctive qualities.

What does differentiate Amoretto from the contemporary gallery of gallants is his socio-economic loyalties, his stake in the new money. He is as gross a materialist as his father, and as shrewd a business executive as his lawyer. And in these issues the Second Return playwrights are intensely interested.

Amoretto is thus the familiar type of would-be gentleman and wit, but one marked by the acquisitiveness that defines the new men of city comedy. This combination of roles obviously entails basic conflicts of value, and in a satiric context, the contradictions between a man's material drives and his spiritual pretensions have considerable comic potential. Academico alludes to the irony of the situation by calling Amoretto "a gallant young drouer of liuings" (II.iv.708), and again after observing Amoretto doing business with Immerito and Stercutio: "Why, wold it not gal a man to see a spruse gartered youth, of our Colledge a while ago, be a broker for a liuing, & an old Baude for a benefice?" (II.v.741-43). Amoretto himself plays on it unknowingly when, just after

30 By contrast, compare Jonson's enthusiastic detailing of Fastidious Brisk's fopperies of dress, tobacco-snuffing and duelling (Every Man Out).

settling with Immerito, he has difficulty composing poetry:

> A pox on't, my muse is not so witty as shee
> was wont to bee: Her nose is like--not yet.
> Plague on these mathematikes, they haue
> spoyled my vaine in making a verse.
>
> (III.iii.1251-54)

The conflict is presented succinctly in Amoretto's first speech:

> Enter Amoretto with an Ouid in his hand.
>
> Take it on the word of a gentleman, you cannot
> haue it a penny vnder, thinke ont, thinke ont,
> while I meditate on my fayre mistres.
> Nunc sequor imperium magne Cupido tuum.
> What ere become of this dull thredbare clearke,
> I must be costly in my mistresse eye:
> Ladyes regard not ragged company.
> Ile with th' reuenewes of my chafred church
> First buy an ambling hobby for my fayre,
> Whose measured pace may teach the world to dance,
> Proud of his burden when he gins to praunce:
> Then must I buy a iewell for her eare,
> A Kirtle of some hundred crownes or more:
> With these fayre giftes when I accompanied goe,
> Sheele giue Loues breakfast, Sidny tearmes it so.
> I am her needle, she's my Adamant:
> She's my fayre Rose, I her vnworthy pricke.
>
> (II.iii.621-37)

The opening prose sentence, as blunt as anything Sir Raderick ever utters, is strict city comedy. In the verse lines, however, Amoretto tries to veer off into a romanticized vein of materialism that is elsewhere plumbed more successfully by more poetic men than he from Faustus to Volpone; but the new man corrupts even that tainted tradition with his bourgeois emphasis on purchasing power.

A generation younger than the reigning new men of the

play, Sir Raderick and the Recorder, Amoretto is heir to them both, combining their very different capabilities for power--and immorality. In his instinctive acquisitiveness, and in his acquired ability to satisfy that lust, Amoretto is his father's son. While Philomusus and Studioso "run through many trades, yet thriue by none" (V.iv.2095), Amoretto handles the selling of the preferment like an old pro. He is at his strongest driving a hard (though superficially courteous) bargain:

> Why then Stercutio, I would be very willing to be the instrument to my father, that this liuing might be conferred vpon your sonne: mary I would haue you know, that I haue bene importuned by two or three seueral Lordes, my Kinde cozins, in the behalfe of some Cambridge man, and haue almost engaged my word. Mary, if I shall see your disposition to be more thankfull then other men[s], I shalbe very ready to respect kind natur'd men . . . I tell thee fellow, I neuer opened my mouth in this kind so cheape before in my life. I tel thee, few young Gentlemen are found, that would deale so kindely with thee as I doe.
>
> (II.iv.699-706; 726-29)

After all, Amoretto was to the manner born: the instinctive greed and the practical training are complementary parts of Sir Raderick's inheritance. The squire considers such business transactions as the simony deal valuable experience for his wealthy heir, lest Amoretto prove as improvident as the unfortunate Prodigo. Having proved Immerito satisfactorily ignorant in a mock examination, Sir Raderick turns him over to Amoretto's disposal ("Lead Immerito in to my sonne, and let him dispatch him," III.i.1144-45), and then congratulates himself on his apprenticeship program: "Harke you Maister

Recorder, I haue flesht my prodigall boy notably, notablie in letting him deale for this liuing; it hath done him much [good], much good I assure you" (III.ii.1149-52).

Amoretto's ties with the Recorder constitute a more particular case of social satire. The young Templar, as Ingenioso observes, is the lawyer's professional protégé:

> . . . see how the old Fox teacheth the
> yong Cub to wurry a sheepe, or rather
> sits himselfe like an old Goose, hatching
> the addle braine of maister Amoretto.
> There is no foole to the Sattin foole,
> the Veluet foole, the perfumde foole . . . .
> And ther's no knaue to the barbarous knaue,
> the mooting knaue, the pleading knaue.
>
> (IV.ii.1572-81)

This charge that Amoretto plays the fool to the Recorder's knave comes directly after the lawyer delivers his specious justification for placing the law above conscience,[31] counsel that will enable Amoretto to triumph over an opponent in a legal action. Their professional relationship and personal affinity are developed in their Act IV dialogues--comic exchanges of exaggerated jargon on moot points of law, all on a subject of great interest to them, the inheritance of landed estates. The Recorder's false tutorial of the law student is still another example of the perversion of learning by the new men.

Amoretto's role as Templar obviously enlarges the play's

[31]IV.i.1564-70, quoted in full above, pp. 64-65.

attack on the legal profession. But the Second Return authors are also hostile toward Amoretto as a student of the Inns of Court. This antagonism may seem surprising; after all, the university wits had important things in common with Inns of Court men--from being students in residence of an intellectually elite community, to an involvement in the avant-garde literary activities of the day.[32] Moreover, it is estimated that about half of the students at the Inns had previously attended one of the universities for some period.[33]

Yet the hostility is there strong and clear in The Second Return. The most obvious explanation lies in the typical social origins of the law students; for "the Inns of Court were largely populated by the sons of the landed gentry."[34] For young men like Amoretto, a stay

[32] For an account of the Inns of Court during this period, with an emphasis on literary activity, see Philip J. Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).

Also Kenneth Charlton, Education in Renaissance England (London: R. & K. Paul, 1965), Ch. VI, "The Inns of Court," pp. 169-98).

[33] Finkelpearl, John Marston, p. 7.

[34] "From 1550 until 1700 (at least), a period of residence at one of the Inns of Court was a normal stage in the education of the sons of the gentry and would-be gentry. The reasons for this custom are various and interlocking. With the triumph of the common law and the vast increase in litigation during the Tudor Reformation, the legal profession became one of the surest paths to wealth. . . . Even if one did not intend a legal career, it was practical for anyone with property to have some acquaintance with the law. As one contemporary said, the gentry did not feel 'their sons duly educated till they have passed some time in some of the houses of Law, tho they never design them to practice it . . .'" (Finkelpearl, pp. 7-8).

Also Charlton, Education in Renaissance England, p. 186.

at one of the London Inns--residential societies that had not yet developed into formal law schools--offered a solid and comfortable niche somewhere in between the stern academic demands of the out-of-the-way universities, and the unattainable social prestige of the near-by Court. Finkelpearl describes the Inns as a kind of urban finishing school for sons of the wealthy middle class.[35] The social advancement provided by the niceties of a "higher education," plus the smattering of practical legal training that was available, uniquely prepared the younger gentry to assume the financial responsibilities they were to inherit.[36] One scholar's generalizations about the members of the Inns fit Amoretto pointedly: " . . . they were the sons and heirs of the Justices of the Peace, successors in that Irenarchy which was the groundwork and framework of Tudor administration: patrons not only of plays and poetry, but of Church livings, and the mainstay of that London book-market which Walsingham's agents watched so carefully."[37]

All of this good living apparently cost a healthy sum, and it is this factor that probably drove the firmest wedge between the Amorettoes and the social likes of the Parnassus

[35] John Marston, p. 11.

[36] Charlton, p. 192.

[37] G. M. Young, "Shakespeare and the Termers," Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy (1943), v. 33, p. 7.

playwrights.[38] I have suggested that the latter were middle-class sons without patrimonies who undoubtedly depended on the comparatively large number of scholarships available at the university. What is more, the university wits needed that professional training and the academic degree to help them secure an economic position in society. The education that the gentry fell heir to as an accidental luxury was, for less well-endowed young men, a necessity, but one that was granted to them only by the grace of charity.

Although Leishman says that there was no traditional rivalry between university men and members of the Inns, he quotes from a satiric sketch of an Inns man which, while it dates much later than The Second Return, is relevant to the characterization of Amoretto--A Fantasticke Innes of Court Man from the Overburian Characters (1615). The interesting point for us is that the basic conceit is the Templar's snobbish evaluation of himself in contrast to a scholar:

> He is distinguished from a Scholler by a paire of silke stockings, and a Beaver Hatte, which makes him contemne a Scholler as much as a scholler doth a schoolmaister. By that he hath heard one mooting, and seene two playes, he thinks as basely of the Universitie, as a young Sophister doth of the Grammer-schoole.

[38]Adwin Wigfall Green, The Inns of Court and Early English Drama (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), p. 33. Green observed: "Perhaps nowhere in England could more urbane and complaisant young men be found than at the Inns of Court; certainly the great universities, which were at this time somewhat democratic, offered little competition" (p. 17).

> . . . He will talk ends of Latin, though it be false, with a great confidence, as ever Cicero could pronounce an Oration, though his best authors for't, be Taverns & Ordinaries. He is as farre behind a Courtier in his fashion, as a scholler is behind him: & the best grace in his behavior, is to forget his acquaintance.[39]

The general relationship is reminiscent of the Amoretto-Academico opposition in The Second Return. And that last stroke, the rejection, is specifically illustrated in the play.

For the university wits, this disdain could be the cruelest blow; for many of the younger gentry, unlike their countrified and uneducated fathers, had had some direct contact with scholars at the university, only to reject them in the world outside because of differences in social rank and economic power. This is the context of Amoretto's rejection of Academico in II.v, in which the scholar, seeking Sir Raderick's benefice, approaches the squire's son, his former university colleague:

> Acad. Sir, a poore old friend of yours,
> [Sir], of St Iohns Colledge in Cambridge.
> Amor. Good fayth Sir you must pardon me,
> I haue forgotten you.
> Acad. My name is Academico Sir, one that
> made an oration for you once on the
> Queenes day, and a show that you got
> some credit by.
> Amor. It may be so, it may bee so, but [indeed]
> I haue forgotten it: marry, yet I remember
> there was such a fellow that I was very
> beneficiall vnto in my time. But howsoeuer
> Sir, I haue the curtesie of the towne for
> you. I am sory you did not take me at my
> fathers house: but now I am in exceding

[39] The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 64-65. For other examples of the Inns man satirized, see Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple, p. 12ff.

> great hast, for I haue vowed the death of a hare that wee found this morning musing on her Maze.
>
> (II.v.753-66)

Since the reminder of real obligations fails to move Amoretto, Academico tries flattery--

> Sir I am imboldned, by that great acquaintance that heretofore I had with you, as likewise it hath pleased you heretofore-- . . . --to make me some [kind] promises: I am to request your good mediation to the Worshipfull your father, in my behalfe; and I will dedicate to your selfe, in the way of thankes, those dayes I haue to liue.
>
> (II.v.767-69, 772-75)

and some satiric wit--

> Nay, me thinkes [Immerito] hath very good utterance for his grauitie, for hee came hether very graue, but I thinke he will returne light enough, when he is ridde of the heauy element he carries about him.
>
> (II.v.785-88)

But experienced Amoretto, knowing "the readiest way to chase away the Scholler, by getting him into a subject he cannot talke of for his life" (11.869-71), launches into his tedious account of the hunt. Later Amoretto proudly recounts to his Page this "most witty jest of mine" (II.vi.923-24):

> Sirrha, this praedicable, this saucy groome, because when I was in Cambridge, and lay in a Trundlebed vnder my Tutor, I was content in discreet humilitie to giue him some [meane] place at my Table, and because I inuited the hungrie slaue sometimes to my Chamber, to the canuasing of a Turkie Pye, or a piece of Venison, which my Lady Grand-mother sent me,

> he thought himselfe therefore eternally possest of my loue, and came hither to take acquaintance of me, and thought his old familiaritie did continue, and would beare him out in a matter of weight. I could not tell how to rid my selfe better of the troublesome Burre, then by getting him into the discourse of Hunting, and then, tormenting him awhile with our wordes of Arte, the poore Scorpion became speechelesse, and suddenly vanisht. These Clearkes are simple fellowes, simple fellowes.
>
> (II.vi.943-58)

The Page responds with ironic blame of scholars--"Simple indeed they are, for they want your courtly composition of a foole and of a knaue" (11.959-60)--an observation borne out by Academico who, understanding only too well Amoretto's ruse "to make sport with mee in their Hunters termes, which we schollers are not acquainted with" (II.v.795-96), finally salvages some poetic dignity by leaving, declaring, "Naye, I will not dye of a discourse yet, if I can choose" (897-98).[40]

Amoretto, the Recorder and Sir Raderick, the three principal antagonists of The Second Return, together form the opposition in the central illustration of the play's socio-economic thesis: the charge of simony, or trafficking in sacred things. The victim in this plot line is Academico, a Parnassus protagonist who appears only in The Second Return. The character is distinct as the only scholar-hero in the

[40]Cf. Pierce Penilesse: "Alas, it is easie for a goodlie tall fellow that shineth in his silkes, to come and face a poore simple Pedant in a thred bare cloake, and tell him his booke is prety, but at this time he is not prouided for him: marrie, about twoe or three daies hence if he come that waie, his Page shall say he is not within, or else he is so busie with my L. How-call-ye-him, and my L. What-call-ye-him, that he may not be spoken withal" (McKerrow, I, 241).

play--and in the trilogy--who is not also a poet. Instead, Academico's bid to find a place in Tudor society recalls the traditional function of the university, the preparation of young men for the church. In this one important case, then, The Second Return isolates the social dilemma of the scholar from all the complicating factors that are involved when the scholar is also an artist.

Apart from the professional fields of direct academic endeavor--a position within the university itself, or as a schoolmaster or private tutor--the most likely social institution for the job-hunting graduate to turn to was the church. But the ecclesiastical positions available to the social type of university man in the Parnassus Plays--the financially unendowed sons of the lower middle class--were, by and large, pastorates controlled by local landowners. And in the shifting balance of economic power at the beginning of the seventeenth century, many of these positions had fallen into the hands of the new money.

The land-rich Sir Raderick has control of such a church living; and he embodies all the aggressive immorality charged to the new men by selling it. The Recorder is the legal arm and articulate spokesman for Sir Raderick's ungodly dealings. And Amoretto, a product of his father's instinctive acquisitiveness and the Recorder's educated connivings, is the "instrument" to the squire's simony (II.iv.700).

The crass, common and undisguised nature of this transaction is spelled out in Academico's echo scene:

Acad. Faine would I haue a liuing, if I could tel
how to come by it.
Eccho. Buy it.
Acad. Buy it fond Eccho? Why thou dost greatly
mistake it.
Eccho. Stake it.
Acad. Stake it? What should I stake at this game
of simony?
Eccho. Mony.
Acad. What, is the world a game, are liuings gotten
by playing?
Eccho. Paying.
Acad. Paying? but say what's the nearest way to
come by a liuing?
Eccho. Giuing.

(II.ii.583-92)[41]

In other words, the office will be sold to the highest bidder --in this case, to a rich farmer who buys it for his uneducated son. For this is the way of the new economics, where profit is the operating principle--even in the disposal of so spiritual a matter as a parsonage. Sir Roderick's Page, commenting sardonically on the squire's proposal that the Recorder "make tryall of [Immerito's] gifts" (III.i.1011), wittily details the profits of simony accumulated by all the members of the household:

> Tryal of his gifts? Neuer had any gifts a better tryal: why Immerito his gifts haue appeared in as many coloures as the Raynbowe: first to maister Amoretto, in [the] colour of the sattine suite he weares; to my Lady, in the similitude of a loose gowne; to my maister, in the likenesse of a siluer basen and ewer; to vs Pages, in the semblance of new suites and poyntes. So [that] maister

[41]Cf. Nashe: "Learning now adaies gets no liuing if it come empty handed" (Anatomy of Absurditie, McKerrow, I, 37).

> Amoretto playes the gul in a piece of a parsonage; my maister adornes his cuppoord with a piece of a parsonage; my mistress, vpon good dayes, puts on a piece of parsonage; and we Pages playe at blowe pointe for a piece of a parsonage. I thinke heer's tryall inough for one mans gifts.
>
> (III.i.1013-24)

The profit motive means that money will be chosen over merit. But another issue is the worldlings' direct prejudice against the academic candidate, also touched on in Academico's frustrating dialogue with Echo:

> Acad. Ile make it my lone request, that he wold be good to a scholler.
> Eccho. Choller.
> Acad. Yea, will hee be cholerike, to heare of an art or a science?
> Eccho. Hence.
> Acad. Hence with liberal arts, what then wil he do with his chancel?
> Eccho. Sell.
>
> (II.ii.603-08)[42]

In fact, the candidate who is clearly unqualified for the position--intellectually and morally--offers positive advantages to his employer. Only such a man would comply with Sir Raderick's unholy requirements, delivered as

> . . . a fewe exhortations, considering that the greatest Clarkes are not the wisest men. This is therefore first to exhort you to abstaine from Controuersies; secondly, not to gird at men of worship, such as my selfe, but to vse your

[42]Cf. Pierce Penilesse: "it is inough in [some men] that they can pare their nailes well, to get them a liuing, when as the seauen liberall sciences and a good leg, will scarse get a scholler a paire of shoos and a Canuas-dublet" (McKerrow, I, 174).

> witt discreetly; thirdly, not to speake when any man or woman coughs: doe so, and in so doing I will perseuer to bee your worshipfull friend and louing patron.
>
> (III.i.1135-41)

The response of Immerito, an ignorant man but not a stupid one, shows how well indeed he understands: "I thanke your worship, you haue beene the deficient cause of my preferment" (11.1142-43).

On the socio-economic level of the play, Immerito, the uneducated son of a farmer with money, is a lower-level new man--as Nashe would have it, one of "these whelpes of the first Litter of Gentilitie, these Exhalations, drawne vp to the heaven of honor from the dunghill of abiect fortune."[43] He was born into no greater gentility than the average university wit; and his father, in contrast to Amoretto's, lacks title, political position, lands and great wealth; but the farmer is in possession of a crucial factor in the new economics, the cash necessary to generate the social mobility of his son--something obviously lacking to all of the Parnassus protagonists in their attempts to function within society.

Immerito and Stercutio are satirized because they are participants in the challenge to the traditional social order. But the farmer and his son are less powerful, and therefore less potentially destructive, than the knight and his son, and so there is more latitude in the characterizations for humorous ridicule. There is even some sympathy for the country

[43] Pierce Penilesse (McKerrow, I, 174).

people as dupes of more malevolent powers.

Immerito, though uneducated in any formal sense, has learned the new ways of the world, and must tutor his old-fashioned father:

> Ster. Sonne, is this the gentleman that sells vs the liuing?
> Imm. Fy father, thou must not call it selling, thou must say is this the gentleman that must haue the gratuito?
> . . . . . .
> Ster. O is this the grating gentleman, and howe many pounds must I pay?
> Imm. O thou must not call them pounds, but thanks; and harke thou father, thou must tell of nothing that is done, for I must seeme to come clearly to it.
>
> (II.iv.651-53; 661-65)

The father, the type of honest farmer corrupted by new money (the playwright plays on both his humble origins and the rottenness by using the name root stercus, Latin for manure), is, as Academico observes, naive, but not innocent:

> What haue we heere, old trupenny come to towne, to fetch away the liuing in his old greasy slops? Then Ile none: the time hath beene when such a fellowe medled with nothing but his plowshare, his spade, and his hobnayles, and so to a peece of bread and cheese, and went his way: but now these [scuruy] fellowes are growne the onely factors for preferment.
>
> (II.iv.654-60)

A major factor in the simony, Stercutio is partially redeemed by his comic simplicity--he introduces himself to Amoretto, "God bee at your worke Sir: my Sonne told me you were the grating gentleman, I am Stercutio his father Sir, simple as I

stand here" (11.684-86), and by his plain-dealing--portrayed in the three-way dialogue that concludes this transaction scene:

> Amor. . . . for as the Italian prouerbe speaketh [very] wel, Chi ha haura.
> Acad. Why heers a gallant young drouer of liuings.
> Ster. I beseech you sir speake English, for it is naturall to me & to my sonne, and all our kindred, to vnderstand but one language.
> Amor. Why [then] thus in plaine English: I must be respected with thanks.
> Acad. This is a subtle tactiue, when thanks may be felt and seene.
> Ster. And I pray you Sir, what is the lowest thanks you will take?
> Acad. The verye same Method that he vseth at the buying of an oxe.
> Amor. I must haue some odd sprinckling of an hundred pounds or so, so I shall thinke you thankfull, and commend your sonne as a man of good giftes to my father.
> Acad. A sweete world, giue an hundred poundes, and this is but counted thankfullnesse.
> Ster. Harke thou Sir, you shall haue four score thankes.
> . . . . . .
> Ster. Well Sir, because I knowe my sonne to be a [good] toward thing, and one that hath taken all his learning on his owne head, without sending to the vniuersitye, I am content to giue you as many thankes as you aske, so you will promise me to bring it to passe.
>
> (II.iv.706-34)

However, as I have already suggested, the dialogue here is not as rich in linguistic characterization as it could be. Stercutio and Immerito are revealed mainly through the content of their speech; their simple-minded and false-hearted social-climbing is not expressed stylistically. We have only to remember the self-revelatory dialogue of the similarly simple and social-climbing Perceval of The First Return to consider

the satire of the country clowns in The Second Return somewhat lacking.

The climax of the simony plot is the mock examination of Immerito (III.i)--in my opinion the funniest scene in The Second Return, and certainly the outstanding passage of sustained light comedy in this bitterly satiric play. Devised by Sir Raderick and conducted by the Recorder, the examination is of course a farce. The squire suggests that his Page, acting as secretary, "make two heads" to record Immerito's merits, "one for his learning, another for his vertues" (ll. 1052-53). The candidate's "virtue" is disposed of in two strokes:

> Rec. What vniuersity are you of?
> Imm. Of none [sir].
> Rad. He tells trueth, to tell trueth is an excellent vertue . . . referre this to the head of his vertues . . .
>
> (III.i.1049-53)

> Rad. What day of the month lights the Queenes day on?
> Imm. The 17. of Nouember.
> Rad. Boy, referre this to his vertues, and write him down a good subiect.
>
> (III.i.1102-06)

Testing Immerito's "learning" requires a few more challenging questions, such as:

> Rad. How call you him that is cunning in 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. and the Cipher?
> Imm. A good Arithmetician.
> Rad. Write downe that answeare of his, to show his learning in Arithmetick.
> . . . . . .

Rad. When is the new moone?
Imm. The last quarter the 5. day, at 2. of the clock and 38. minuts in the morning.
Rad. Write him downe--how cal you him, that is weather-wise?
Rec. A good Astronomer.
Rad. Sirrha boy, write him downe for a good Astronomer.

(III.i.1086-1100)

Then there is the absurd proof of Immerito's artistic abilities:

Rad. How many daies hath September?
Imm. [Thirty dayes hath September] Aprill, Iune and Nouember, Februaryhath eight & twentye alone, and all the rest hath thirty and one.
Rad. Very learnedly in good faith, he hath also a smacke in poetry. Write downe that boy, to shew his learning in poetry.

(III.i.1073-79)

But on stage the most comically effective passage would be Sir Raderick's test of "good vtterance,"[44]

Rad. . . . that is, whether you can aske for the strayed Heifer with the white face, as also chide the boyes in the belfrie, and bid the Sexton whippe out the dogges. Let mee heare your voyce.
Imm. If any man or woman.
Rad. Thats too high.
Imm. If any man or woman.
Rad. Thats too lowe.
Imm. If any man or woman can tell any tydings of a Horse with fowre feete, two eares, that did straye about the seuenth howre, three minutes in the forenoone the fift day.
. . . . . .

[44]Even though it is uncomfortably reminiscent of Philomusus' experience as a sexton in The First Return (II. 653-64 and IV.1224-39).

> Rad. Boy, wryte him downe for a good vtterance. Maister Recorder, I thinke he hath beene examined sufficiently.
>
> (III.i.1111-27)

The Recorder, who should know better, sanctimoniously concurs: "I, Sir Radericke, tis so, wee haue tride him very throughly" (1128-29). After Sir Raderick delivers his last "fewe exhortations," he turns Immerito over to Amoretto, a sheep sent to slaughter--"Lead Immerito in to my sonne, and let him dispatch him" (1144-45)--and delivers a final admonition about the only pastoral service he ever really required, to "remember my tithes to bee reserued, paying twelue pence a yeare" (1145-46)--a neat parallel to Sir Raderick's opening line of the scene, "Signior Immerito, you remember my caution for the tithes, & my promise for farming my tithes at such a rate?" (993-95). Where money is at stake, the squire succeeds by dint of his persistent acquisitiveness.

These satirized social types of city comedy are the raw material of The Second Return's social thesis--an attack on the new men for their usurpation of power--particularly as it affected the professional scholar-poet. This socio-economic focus is the most tangible theme of the play, and the least ambiguous. The final two chapters, on the play's relationship to the Poetomachia, deals with its more purely artistic concerns, and with the problems raised by these more difficult issues.

Chapter 9. The Literary Material and the Poetomachia

a. The Censuring of the Poets

b. Burbage and Kempe

The remaining two chapters deal with the material of The Second Return that is explicitly literary--characters, dialogue and themes that comment directly on poets and poetry. In the context of the contemporary professional theater, this material relates the last Parnassus Play to the plays of the Poetomachia.

The term "Poetomachia" has been used to refer to several related stage quarrels. The background is surveyed by Harbage in Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions: "The Poetomachia or 'war of the theatres' has been viewed as a picturesque spite-combat between Jonson, Marston, Dekker, and a variable number of additional contenders, and sometimes as an amusing little furore cleverly designed to stimulate theatrical attendance."[1] The major contributions to this battle of personalities were Satiromastix, Dekker-Marston's lampoon on Jonson, pointedly subtitled The Untrussing of the Humourous Poet, and Jonson's

[1] P. 90. Harbage's sources are R. A. Small, The Stage Quarrel Between Jonson and the So-called Poetasters (1899), J. H. Penniman's Introduction to the Belles Lettres edition of Poetaster and Satiromastix (1913), and E. K. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, III (1923).

There are a number of adequate summaries of the events--e.g., Una Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama: An Interpretation (London: Methuen, 1936), Appendix I, "The Theatre War," and G. B. Harrison, Elizabethan Plays and Players (London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1940), Ch. xv, "The Stage War," pp. 248-81.

Leishman's introductory material ("Furor Poeticus" and Marston, pp. 82-92) is thorough.

near-simultaneous rebuttal, The Poetaster: or, His Arraignment. Harbage continues: "The episode has even been brushed aside, and the 'real' war of the theatres pictured as the commercial and political rivalry of the Burbage and Henslowe interests."[2] Harbage's particular interest introduces still another angle--the contrast between the "popular" drama of the adult acting troupes and the "coterie" drama performed by the boys' companies, as well as the implications of the related rivalry between the playwrights and the actors, a conflict "symptomatic of deep-seated tensions, involving class antagonisms, rival moral philosophies, and, in a fashion, even the issue of ancients versus moderns."[3]

This multiplicity can be confusing; but in this case, where the Poetomachia plays are being suggested as general background for The Second Return, the most inclusive definition is the most useful--that is, those turn-of-the-century works, most of them comical satires by Jonson and Marston, which to some extent deal with the matter of poets and poetry, much of it of a topical nature. The coverage of literary material ranges from the presentation of poets as characters, often with reference to specific personalities, styles and contemporary institutions, to large social and philosophical

[2]Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 90. This reference is to R. B. Sharpe, The Real War of the Theatres (1935).

[3]Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 90.

questions about art and artists and their place in the Tudor scheme of things.

M. C. Bradbrook has summarized the issues of the Poetomachia plays as "an attempt to define the Poet." In this broadest sense of the term, the complete Cambridge trilogy is related to the Poetomachia plays, for the Parnassus Plays are, above all, statements about the literary artist in society. Bradbrook is more specific when she says: "Such are the general themes of the War of the Theatres: the status of the Poet, with special reference to his rate of pay, the opposition of learning to the vulgar craftsmen and their vulgar poets, and the power of Envy."[4] The Second Return, with its emphasis on the theme of the place of the scholar-poet in Elizabethan society, is in this sense the ultimate Poetomachia play.[5]

This identification is important because of the rarity of these topics in Elizabethan drama, and because of the limited way in which Elizabethan playwrights treated them. To begin with, there are really only seven Poetomachia plays--in probable chronological order of performance:

[4]The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy, p. 98.

[5]See Bradbrook's description of The Second Return as the last Poetomachia play, quoted above, p. 237, a point she reiterates in The Rise of the Common Player: "the Parnassus Plays derive their interest from the London stages; they are a contribution to the War of the Theatres on the side of Ben Jonson and the Poets against the Common Players, but they represent primarily the local scene and the audience's own dilemma" (p. 272).

Marston (rev.)--Histriomastix (1599)

Jonson--Every Man Out of His Humour (1599)

Marston--Jack Drum's Entertainment (1600)

Jonson--Cynthia's Revels (1601)

Marston--What You Will (1601)

Jonson--The Poetaster (1601)

Dekker (and Marston)--Satiromastix (1601)

Apart from the special case of Histriomastix,[6] only The Poetaster and Satiromastix are substantially devoted to poetical matter, and even then, it is relegated to a comic sub-plot, the poets playing clowns in a satiric anti-masque to a traditionally romantic main plot--a structural division also used by Marston in Jack Drum's Entertainment and What You Will.

Much of the key Poetomachia material is confined to prologues and inductions, prefatory sections that the comical satirists, in appeal to the sophisticated private theater audiences, often appropriated for critical purposes. The most notable examples are the Cordatus-Asper-Mitis dialogue of Every Man Out of His Humour, Jonson's locus classicus on the genre, which Marston later parodied in What You Will, and Jonson's more playful use of three boy actors to transact the critical business of the Induction to Cynthia's Revels.

[6]The central character of Histriomastix is a scholar-poet; but as a probable comic-satiric revision of an old Tudor interlude-estates morality play, this first Poetomachia play (Jonson is thought to have seen in Chrisoganus Marston's ridicule of him) presents a special problem. It is discussed below.

The most important qualification is that these artistic topics appear only in comedies, and in comedies that are strongly satiric. The matter of poets and poetry is treated ironically--Dekker, in the preface to Satiromastix, with tongue in cheek presenting his contribution to "this lamentable merry murdering of Innocent Poetry"--"that terrible Poetomachia, lately commenc'd betweene Horace the second, and a band of leane-witted Poetasters."[7] The combination of a playwright's awareness of the poetic function and a certain embarrassment with it, can result in passages that are artistically self-conscious--Marston's malcontent scholar-poet Lampatho Doria (What You Will), who is himself satirized as a railing "Don Kynsayder"[8] (a pseudonym that Marston coined for himself in The Scourge of Villainy),[9] criticizing the popularity of the comical satires, even while the very play Lampatho is in is one of them:

> This is the straine that chokes the theatres,
> That makes them crack with full-stufft audience,
> This is your humour onely in request
> Forsooth to raile . . .
> (Act III)[10]

That is, the playwrights were self-defensive about handling these matters even in a satiric vein. In the major case of Poetaster vs. Satiromastix, each play blames the author of

[7]The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Bowers, I, 309.

[8]The Plays of John Marston, ed. H. Harvey Wood, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1934-1939), Vol. II, p. 248.

[9]Marston signed the preface to the second edition (1599) "W. Kinsayder" (The Poems of John Marston, ed. Arnold Davenport [Liverpool: University Press, 1961], p. 101).

[10]Wood, The Plays of John Marston, II, 266.

the other for indulging in satire--although the mode of attack in both works is of course satire. The circumstantial evidence suggests that the playwrights felt ambivalent about their own role--that despite the obvious audience appeal of the topical material, the public stage was still somehow not considered a proper place for a serious poet to air his most profound artistic concerns.

Even among the Poetomachia plays, then, there is no serious and sustained work on the subject of the literary artist. This leaves the Parnassus Plays as the only Elizabethan plays that deal wholly and centrally with the topic of the artist in society. It is true that the academic amateurs are not free of artistic embarrassment over their subject; they, too, turned to ironic satire to express their cynical view of society and their ambivalence about their own place in it. Nevertheless, the comparatively unpressured atmosphere of a university community, and the guarantee of a sympathetic audience, allowed them to deal with themes of the utmost importance to them as poets, and to expand upon them in a way that Jonson and Marston--and Shakespeare[11]--could only dream of.

The artistic sophistication of the last Parnassus Play is immediately apparent in the Prologue, a self-consciously witty skit that takes its conceit of a quasi-critical introduction to the play from the professional stage satires. Bradbrook observes:

[11]Shakespeare, of course, cashed in on the Poetomachia in Hamlet, especially II.ii.335-70 (see below, p. 380).

> The Parnassus Plays coincided with the reopening of the choristers' theatres in London, and echo the tone of the critical prologues and epilogues that became fashionable there, when actors came on to discuss their parts, and sometimes the tireman put in a word. They established a greenroom atmosphere of sophistication and familiarity, invited the audience to act like connoisseurs, and undercut sneering by putting it in the mouths of fools.[12]

The Second Return Prologue opens with a brief altercation between the Stagekeeper and a Boy Actor:[13]

> Boy. Spectators we will act a Comedy (non plus).
> Stage. A pox on't, this booke hath it not in't, you would be whipt, you raskall: you must be sitting vp all night at cards, when you should be conning your part.
> Boy. Its all long of you, I could not get my part a night or two before that I might sleepe on't.

The passage is a sophistication of the opening of The First Return, where the Stagekeeper simply replaces the Prologue as the play's presenter. But the similarity stops there. The

[12] The Rise of the Common Player, p. 268.

As with many of the comical satire elements, the root work is Every Man Out of His Humour. The bulk of Jonson's extensive Prologue is the Cordatus-Asper-Mitis dialogue on particular dramatic techniques (including the playwright's locus statement on humours), and the larger moral function of satiric comedy--a discourse whose presumptuous critical aspirations were parodied by Marston in What You Will. The Every Man Out Induction concludes with a comic altercation over who will deliver the prologue: a Prologue character appears, but he is replaced by a character from the body of the play, Carlo Buffone.

[13] The utilization of the boy actors playing themselves as presenters is full-blown in the Induction to Cynthia's Revels, where Jonson wittily uses "three of the Children" to transact the serious critical business of the play's argument, and the author's satire on contemporary plays and their audiences. Here, too, there is an altercation over who will recite the formal prologue.

Second Return's playful, elaborated induction is very different from the straightforward First Return Prologue, the Stagekeeper's stern, denunciatory complaint in the name of the Pilgrimage poet.

In discussing the Second Return Prologue, we must take into account Leishman's theory that the bulk of the Prologue (through l. 69) is not original to the play, but was written for a second performance two years later.[14] In fact, the new material is much bolder than the "original" verse prologue (ll.70-83), fourteen lines of heroic couplets which begin by discussing the progress of the trilogy, and conclude with a conventionally polite address to the "Refined wits" of the audience. Nevertheless, the additional prologue material is valuable as the critical commentary of a contemporary university wit on this unique academic production.

In the body of the Prologue, the play is introduced by its comic Defensor and by Momus, its carping critic. This is the old comic tradition of an apologetic prologue, but as revised for the sophisticated audiences of the private theaters. It is undoubtedly fashionable imitation that explains why the Prologue is addressed to wealthy, card-playing wits (e.g., Def. "Gentlemen, you that knowe what it is to play at primero or passage, you that haue beene [deepe] student[s] at post and payre, saint and Loadam: you that haue spent all your quarters reueneues in riding post one night in Chrismas . . . , ll. 10-

[14] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 223n. See below, Appendix.

14; also ll. 16-17)--quips which would have been more appropriate for an audience at the Inns of Court.

Momus documents the progress of the trilogy:

> . . . These same Philomusus and Studioso haue beene followed with a whip and a verse like a Couple of Vagabonds through England and Italy. The Pilgrimage to Pernassus, and the return from Pernassus, haue stood the honest Stagekeepers in many a Crownes expence for linckes and vizardes: purchas'd [many] a Sophister a knock with a clubbe, hindred the buttlers box, and emptied the Colledge barrells; and now, vnlesse you haue heard the former, you may returne home [againe] as wise as you came, for this last is the last parte of the returne from Pernassus . . .
>
> (ll. 36-45)

What is significant here beyond the factual information is the point of view--the playwright's sophisticated satiric posture of artistic self-awareness checked by ironic self-deprecation --an attitude already noted in Momus' ironically precise "heer's such a sturre about a scuruie English show" (ll. 7-8). The playwrights' critical consciousness is seen in references to the author (l. 46) and "the shewe" (l. 55), in the use of terms such as "Critick" (l. 10), "conceite" (l. 30) and "scene" (l. 47), and in the discussion of the problem of the play's sad "Catastrophe" ("If the Catastrophe please you not, impute it to the vnpleasing fortunes of discontented schollers," ll. 49-50)--all of which evidence a vivid awareness of the play as "invention" (the word appears three times, ll. 21, 25, 48). The note of authorial assertion peaks in Defensor's formal verse prologue ("Frame[n] as well we might with easie straine,"

ll. 62-69), which defends the choice of the play's difficult theme as opposed to the easy "Storyes of loue" then prevalent on the university stage.[15]

However, as in the professional prologues, authorial pride is undermined by self-deprecation. The Second Return presenters, like the First Return Stagekeeper, use the traditional academic excuse for a play: it is but a Christmas toy (ll. 28, 30), a Christmas jest (l. 58). Even Defensor apologizes, "What we present I must needs confesse is but [a] slubbered inuention" (ll. 20-21), and again, "an inuention that we are ashamed of, and therefore we haue promised the Copies to the Chandlers to wrappe candles in" (ll. 25-27). The ironic mixture of self-praise and self-blame that expresses the ambivalence of the Parnassus poet's idea of his role in society, is caught in a satiric passage where Defensor's claim that the play sports the most up-to-date dramatic device--"Some humors you shall see aymed at, if not well resembled" (ll. 32-33)--is ridiculed by Momus: "Humors indeede: is it not a pretty humor to stand hammering vpon two indiuiduum vagum, 2. schollers, some foure yeare?" (ll. 34-35). Yet, for all these serious overtones, the Prologue is basically comical satire, and the dialogue concludes in high spirits:

> Stage. What you ieering asse, be gon with a pox.
> Momus. You may doe better to busy your selfe in prouiding beere, for the shewe will be pittifull drie, pittifull drie. Exit.
>
> (ll. 53-55)

[15]Quoted above, Introduction, p. 24.

The First Return, of course, also deals satirically with matters of poets and poetry. What specifically distinguishes the Second Part of The Return as a Poetomachia play is an abundance of topical references to the personalities, styles and institutions of the contemporary world of literary London --including two allusions to the War of the Theaters itself. When we get a caricatured Will Kempe telling Philomusus and Studioso, "You . . . be lusty humorous poets, you must vntrusse" (IV.iv.1799)--with probable reference to the "untrussing" of Horace-Jonson in Satiromastix[16]--it is clear that we are in a new theatrical milieu.

Again a comparison between the Parnassus playwrights and Marston comes to mind, for the difference between The First Return and the Second is, in part, the difference between Histriomastix and What You Will. In each case only a few years had intervened; but they were years that witnessed major developments in English drama. For the playwrights who chose to write about artistic matters, the old dramatic formula of a progress of personified moral types through a stylized allegorical structure would no longer do to deal with topics of such vital and immediate concern. The creators of both the later Poetomachia plays and The Second Return transformed these generalities into particulars: the literary worlds of these plays make specific reference to the milieu of the professional Elizabethan author.

[16]Leishman, The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 340n.

Indeed, one of the most striking effects of the third Parnassus Play is the authors' fascination with literary London--an interest which ranges from the Parnassian heights of Spenser's noble muse, down to the coarse depths of the public theater. The institutions of the printing house, the wealthy patron, and the public stage were of the utmost importance to these students, for they would soon become the sources of their livelihood--or their ruination. But the Second Return playwrights were also obviously drawn by the great surface excitement of this specialized professional world. They had been to Paul's, to the booksellers, and even to the disreputable plays; they had seen the newest offerings and heard the latest gossip, and were eager to put it all on their private stage. The Cambridge amateurs may have feared this world, and were sometimes contemptuous of it; but as artists they were inexorably drawn to it.

In a sense, the interest on the part of the academics reflects the concerns of the professional poets themselves, and, on another level, the audience appreciation of this material. Major literary figures and issues were involved, the subject matter ranging from personal rivalries to the metaphysical values of poetry, and the material made good dramatic copy. Finally, the Cantabrigians' interest was, in part, the scholar's fascination with the professional creative world.

Scholars who have otherwise ignored the Parnassus trilogy have acknowledged The Second Return principally because of this important difference from the Poetomachia plays: in dealing with topical literary references, the academic amateurs, unlike the professional playwrights, felt free to name some names.

The Second Return is specific in two ways--in its caricatures of a few of the professional authors' economic antagonists, and in its critical commentary on a large number of contemporary writers. Here are no types of players, but the popular Burbage and Kempe, no typical printer, but the disreputable John Danter. The literary critics do not examine some nameless commonplace book, but Bodenham's Bel-vedere, and they evaluate Spenser and Daniel, Marston and Nashe, rather than the pseudonymous Mellidus, Musus and Decius criticized by Brabant in Jack Drum's Entertainment (Act V).[17] And when a character requests a tune from the fiddlers, it is, "Haue you neuer a song of maister Dowlands making?" (V.ii.1979-80). Most valuable to modern scholars are the references, two each, to Shakespeare and Jonson, one of which even places them in some contemporary relation to each other. While there is some mention of these giants in epigrammatic verse of the period, I believe that The Second Return is the only play that names either man, guaranteeing its status as a unique primary source document.

[17]Wood, The Plays of John Marston, III, 234.

There are two important sections in the play of a topical literary nature that should be discussed at length: the first, Judicio's censuring of the poets (I.ii), reveals the critical taste of the university wits regarding contemporary poetry; the other, Philomusus and Studioso's meeting with Burbage and Kempe (IV.iii, iv), comments on the professional writer's uneasy position vis-a-vis one of his major markets, the public theater. We have only to keep in mind that The Second Return is satiric drama, and not documentary.

The scene between Ingenioso and Judicio (I.ii), like Ingenioso's opening monologue (I.ii), is prefatory material, separate from any of the play's plot action. But it is much longer--it is the second longest scene in the play[18]--and more integrally related to the whole work. It is a unique passage, even in this play, in that it deals primarily with literary interests; yet it is kept within the socio-economic context that is the major concern of the play.

The first dozen lines of the scene encapsulate the themes of The Second Return. Ingenioso, the satiric spirit of the play, defends his bitterness toward the world with a variation on his First Return thesis of satire as the just literary deserts of an unappreciative world:

> Faith, Iudicio, if I carry a vineger bottle,
> it's great reason I should confer it vpon
> the bald pated world: and againe, if my
> kitchen want the vtensilies of viands, it's

[18] The longest scene is the mass confrontation scene, IV.ii.

> great reason other men should haue the sauce of vinegar; and for the bloudie nose, Iudicio, I may chance indeed giue the world a bloudy nose, but it shall hardly giue me a crakt crowne, though it giues other Poets French crownes.
>
> (I.ii.121-27)

This is the satirical complaint of the play. Then Judicio--whose name indicates his trustworthiness--in a sardonic version of Consiliodorus' stoicism, re-states the impossibility of solving this dilemma:

> I would wish thee, Ingenioso, to sheath thy pen, for thou canst not be successefull in the fray, considering thy enemies haue the aduantage of the ground.
>
> (I.ii.128-30)

This is the social reality of the play. But there is still another dimension to this scene--a certain note of artistic confidence, heard in Ingenioso's, "but hang 'hem swadds, the basest corner in my thoughts is too gallant a roome to lodge them in" (11.133-35). The satirist can afford to reject his Philistine "enemies" (1.130)--who, after all, have already rejected him. Ingenioso's swagger here is, of course, partly ironic. Yet the scene in its entirety conveys a sense of the artist's belief in his own work--which is, finally, the only positive value in the Parnassus Plays. At this introductory point, before the tribulations of the scholar-poets begin in earnest, the play leisurely presents a couple of literati engaged in the great academic sport of criticism--though they do it within the limitations of satire and irony.

Judicio is an interesting addition to the roster of contemporary literary types in The Second Return. A man of sophisticated literary sensibilities, his place in the publishing world is not much better than that occupied by Shakespeare's "rude mechanicals,/ That work for bread upon Athenian stalls" (MND, III.ii.9-10). Sarcastically, he warns his friend:

> Iud. . . . Ingenioso, what ere befall thee, keepe thee from the trade of the corrector of the presse.
> Ing. Mary so I will, I warrant thee, if pouerty presse not too much . . . .
> Iud. Would it not grieue any good spirritt to sit a whole moneth nitting ouer a lousy beggarly Pamphlet, and like a needy Phisitian to stand whole yeares tooting and tumbling the filth that falleth from so many draughty inuentions as daily swarme in our printing house?
>
> (I.ii.137-46)

Judicio's complaint is not that the job of proofreading is beneath him, but that in this publishing market, the material he must work with is contemptible. As Academico discovers about the pastorate, some of society's supposedly spiritual institutions are actually business enterprises, more concerned with economic profit than with the intrinsic value of their product or service. And in both cases, the scholars learn that what is profitable is spiritually impoverished.

The university wits condemned a publishing system that encouraged the mamufacture of hack work. Ingenioso teases Judicio, "Say man, what new paper hobby horses, what rattle babies are come out in your late May morrice daunce?" (ll.

148-50).[19] But in this one scene the weight of the attack is on the hack poets themselves. Judicio answers:

> Slymy rimes, as thick as flies in the sunne; I thinke there be neuer an Ale-house in England, not any so base a maypole on a country greene, but sets forth some Poetts, Peternells, or Demylances to the paper warres in Paules Church-yard.
>
> (I.ii.151-55)

Ingenioso then notes the cruelest blow of prodigious poetasters--that they manufacture their garbage at the expense of true artists:

> And well too may the issue of a strong hope learne to hop all ouer England, when as better wittes sit like lame coblers in their studies. Such barmy heads wil alwaies be working, when as sad vineger witts sit souring at the bottome of a barrell: plaine Meteors, bred of the exhalation of Tobacco, and the vapors of a moyst pot, that soare vp into the open ayre, when as sounder witts keepe belowe.
>
> (I.ii.156-62)[20]

In these few lines attacking those who abuse poetry from within the profession, we come back, for a moment, to the Pilgrimage principle of the primacy of the scholar-poet's self-integrity.

[19]Leishman translates: "What new books have been published since the beginning of Trinity term" or, "What have you got in your Spring List?" (p. 229n.).

[20]Cf. Philomusus' "To thinke so many actiue, able wits," IV.iv.1891-1900.

The particular hack genre under fire here is the popular commonplace-book, and the playwrights, as if taking advantage of academic immunity, ridicule a contemporary best-seller, Bodenham's Belvedere, or The Garden of the Muses, published in 1600.[21]

The commonplace-books were collections of quotations organized according to subject matter. A scrapbook of bits of other men's minds, the commonplace-book, at its worst, was the ultimate hack work. There was generally little recognition of individual authors, and even less respect for their work, which was bastardized for the purposes of translation, metrical regularization and subject classification. The appeal of these books undoubtedly lay in their offer of easy access to popular culture for a large reading audience, though the main purpose of some collections seems to be the wit the compiler contrived to display in his plan of categorization. Both aspects are painfully apparent in a passage from the address "To the Reader" in Belvedere:

> Concerning the nature and qualitie of these excellent flowres, thou seest that they are most learned, grave, and wittie sentences; each line being a severall sentence, and none exceeding two lines at the uttermost. All which, being subjected under apt and proper heads, as arguments what is then dilated and spoken of: even so each head hath first his definition in a couplet sentence; then the single and double sentences

[21]See Leishman's extended note to l. 173, pp. 230-32. Belvedere, edited by A.[nthony] M.[unday], was one of five commonplace-books compiled and patronized by John Bodenham. The others are Wits Commonwealth, 1597, Wits Theater, 1598, Wits Treasury (Palladis Tamia), 1598, and Englands Helicon, 1600.

> by variation of letter do follow: and lastly, similes and Examples in the same nature likewise, to conclude every Head or Argument handled. So let this serve to shew thee the whole intent of this worke.[22]

As a literary genre, the commonplace-book is a scholar-poet's nightmare, and Belvedere, about as unscholarly and unartistic a miscellany as ever saw print, was a fair target.[23] It consists of 4482 quotations of verse from hundreds of different sources, grouped according to various subjects.[24] But all entries are anonymous, and strictly limited to fragments of one or two lines. (To make matters worse, the selections are printed without linespaces between them, so that at first glance they look like one long poem.) This is not poetry, but a compilation of aphorisms, painstakingly organized only to display its own ingenious plan: in each of about 65 categories (including such subjects as God, beauty, jealousy, war, life and death), there are first general quotations, then "Similes on the same subject" and "Examples

[22]Belvedere was reprinted by the Spenser Society, Publications, v.17 (1875).

[23]Compare the commonplace-book at its best--Bodenham's other verse anthology, England's Helicon, also published in 1600, which consists of entire poems or long fragments, many of whose authors are identified, grouped together under a single pastoral theme (scholarly edition by H. E. Rollins [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935]).

[24]The Belvedere scholar is Charles Crawford, who identified 2380 of the entries--"Belvedere, or The Garden of the Muses," Englische Studien, 43 (1911), 198-228. The breakdown is of interest, with Drayton leading in number of quotations (269), followed by Daniel (215) and Spenser (215, 175 of which are from The Faerie Queene), and Shakespeare (214, 91 of them from Lucrece, and 47 from Richard II, the leading play over Richard III and Romeo and Juliet (13 each).

likewise on the same"--complete with table of contents and alphabetical index to subjects. Most outrageous of all is the metrical plan--the inclusion of only decasyllabic lines (single lines or rhymed couplets). To achieve this monument to drab verse, the compiler had to do a Gargantuan job of doctoring his sources, availing himself of the license taken by editors ever since Tottel tampered with Wyatt in the groundbreaking Songs and Sonnets (1557). But Bodenham did not stop with regularizing verse; Crawford's investigations reveal that the originals of some of the decasyllabic lines and couplets are actually prose passages![25] Finally, Belvedere contained one last personal affront to the Parnassian wits: the book's showy collection of dedicatory sonnets concludes with one to each of the universities.

The Second Return's criticism of Belvedere is total and devastating. Judicio and Ingenioso ridicule the title, the epigraph, the dedicatory sonnets and, with particular vengeance, the title-page device:

> Parnassus with the sunne and the lawrel?
> I wonder this owle dares looke on the sunne,
> and I maruaill this go[o]se flies not the
> lawrell: his deuise might haue bene better,
> a foole going into the market place to be
> seene, with this motto, scribimus indocti,
> or a poore beggar gleaning of eares in the
> end of haruest, with this word, sua cuique
> gloria.
>
> (I.ii.190-96)

[25] Crawford concluded, "the plan is directly responsible for many mutilations and additions to authors in the book, whose verse was often made to undergo the torture of Procrustes before it was fitted to repose in the place provided for it" (p. 202).

Last but not least is the inspiration behind this non-literature--John Bodenham, compiler and patron, for whom Ingenioso prophesies satiric perdition:

> Who blurres fayer paper with foule bastard times,
> Shall liue full many an age in after times:
> Who makes a ballet for an ale-house doore,
> Shall liue in future times for euer more.
> Then, Bodenham,[26] thy muse shall liue so long,
> As drafty ballats to thy praise are song.
>
> (I.ii.184-89)

Judicio's utter contempt for the project, its creator, and its audience, is expressed in his parody of the address to the reader:

> Turne ouer the leafe, Ingenioso, and thou
> shalt see the paynes of this worthy gentleman:
> Sentences gathered out of all kind of Poetts,
> referred to certaine methodicall heads,
> profitable for the vse of these times, to
> rime vpon any occasion at a little warning.
>
> (I.ii.197-201)

At this point the Judicio-Ingenioso scene moves on to its major business, the survey of contemporary authors. This is literary criticism in the modish epigrammatic style of wits such as John Weever (Epigrammes, 1599). The terse and witty observations, cast in an urbane, often cynical tone, are a free-wheeling mixture of criticism, appreciation and biography.

[26]Although there is some question about the naming of Bodenham in this line (Leishman, p. 233n.), the general sentiments are clear.

The authors surveyed differ widely--from an idolized Spenser--

> But softly may our Homers ashes rest,
> That lie by mery Chaucers noble chest
>
> (I.ii.227-28)

to a ridiculed Churchyard--

> Ing. Hath not Shor's wife, although a light skirts she,
> Giuen him a chast long lasting memory?
> Jud. No, all light pamphlets one day finden shall
> A Churchyard and a graue to bury all.
>
> (I.ii.306-09)

. . . and worse. In all, fifteen Elizabethan writers are mentioned by name; in order: Spenser, Constable, Daniel, Lodge, Watson, Drayton, John Davies, Locke, Hudson, Marston, Marlowe, Jonson, Shakespeare, Churchyard and Nashe.[21]

Spenser--a Cambridge man and a published writer--is the idealized scholar-poet of the Parnassus Plays. He is, first, a great poet--in Judicio's opinion, the greatest:[22]

[21]See Leishman's notes on the relation between the poets censured by Judicio and those featured in Belvedere. The main point is that while Judicio's survey follows the order of the names in the prefatory list of "Moderne and extant Poets" included by the editor of Belvedere in his address "To the Reader," that list is not in any way an index to the material in the text of Belvedere (p. 235n.).

[22]Leishman comments on the generally high opinion of Spenser on the part of the university wits. He quotes Hall's tribute in Virgidemiarum, noting that with the exception of this praise of Spenser, Hall "contrives to fall foul of nearly all contemporary literature" (The Three Parnassus Plays, pp. 54-55).

> A sweeter Swan than euer song in Poe,
> A shriller Nightingale then euer blest
> The prouder groues of selfe admiring Rome.
>
> (I.ii.210-12)

But for the university wits, Spenser's stature as a poet was enhanced by the knowledge that he was also an unappreciated one:

> And yet for all, this vnregarding soile
> Vnlac't the line of his desired life,
> Denying mayntenance for his deare releife:
> Carelesse ere to preuent his exequy,
> Scarce deigning to shut vp his dying eye.
>
> (I.ii.220-24)

Even the poet's poet was rejected by the world--for the upcoming scholar-poets, a tragedy, an outrage . . . and a curiously ironic consolation.

Judicio pays Spenser the particular tribute of imitating his style--an especially expressive gesture in this basically epigrammatic passage:

> Blith was each vally, and each sheapheard proud,
> While he did chaunt his rurall minstralsye.
> Attentiue was full many a dainty eare,
> Nay, hearers hong vpon his melting tong,
> While sweetly of his Faiery Queene he song,
> While to the waters fall he tun'd her fame,
> And in each barke engrau'd Elizaes name.
>
> (II.i.213-19)

As Leishman notes, this is only one of several stylistic references to Spenser in The Second Return. The other important allusions to Spenser's work are Philomusus' evocation of Despair from Book I of The Faerie Queene (III.v.1420-28)

and Ingenioso's reference to the Blatant Beast from Book VI (V.iv.211Off.).[23] In addition to this list of specific Spenserisms, there is Philomusus and Studioso's Colinesque vision of themselves in "A shepheards poore secure contented life" (V.ii.2037), in particular, Philomusus'

> We will be gone vnto the downes of Kent,
> Sure footing we shall find in humble dale:
> Our fleecy flocke[s] weel learne to watch and warde
> In Iulyes heate and cold of Ianuary;
> Weel chant our woes vpon an oaten reede,
> Whiles bleating flock[s] vpon their supper feede.
>
> (V.iv.2153-58)

For the Parnassians, Spenser served as a unique standard--the scholar as serious public poet. But the Second Return playwrights seem unable to accept Spenser's role of tragic artistic hero as a model for the lifestyle of their protagonists. The university wits, feeling themselves too much of this world, were more in need of what they would have considered a "realistic" model, a standard that in the satiric context of the play becomes an ironic one. This role is filled by Nashe, the Parnassian anti-hero. The survey of poets descends from a vision of the ideal to an accommodation to the real, and Nashe is, appropriately, the final poet censured. Ingenioso speaks of Nashe's satiric style in a gently mock-heroic tone:

[23]Leishman notes a few other one- or two-line echoes: ll. 1397-98, 1706, 1893 and 2103 (Index, p. 392).

> I, heer's a fellow, Iudicio, that carryed
> the deadly Stockado in his pen, whose muse
> was armed with a gagtooth, and his pen
> possest with Hercules furies.
>
> (I.ii.311-13)

And Judicio, with sympathetic comprehension for the bitterness of a galled wit, pays Nashe a surprisingly moving tribute:

> Let all his faultes sleepe with his mournfull chest,
> And there for euer with his ashes rest.
> His stile was wittie, though it had some gal[l],
> Some thing[s] he might haue mended, so may all.
> Yet this I say, that for a mother witt,
> Fewe men haue euer seene the like of it.
>
> (I.ii.314-19)

The legend of the Parnassus Plays is the unwilling ascendancy of Nashe over Spenser in the soul of the university wits.

Of the remaining poets, we can highlight those of greatest interest to modern scholars:

·Daniel, at this early point in his career, was regarded with lightweight admiration as a love poet:

> Sweete hony dropping Daniell may wage
> Warre with the proudest big Italian
> That melts his heart in sugred sonetting
>
> (I.ii.235-37)

(We are also given an interesting glimpse of scholarly values when the academics attack Daniel on the grounds of plagiarism:

> Onely let him more sparingly make vse
> Of others wit, and vse his owne the more,
> That well may scorne base imitation.
>
> (I.ii.238-40)

--an unusual accusation in a literary era when poets preached, and practiced, Aristotelian imitation.)

•The young Drayton is also commended for his sweet poetic style, while his sober life style merits ironic blame: "How euer he wants one true note of a Poet of our times, and that is this, hee cannot swagger it well in a Tauerne, nor dominere in a hot-house" (11.249-51).

Then, of great importance to the Parnassus playwrights, are the satirists--

•the comparatively Horatian Davies, whom Judicio praises in appropriately urbane couplets:

> Acute Iohn Davis, I affect thy rymes,
> That ierck in hidden charmes these looser times:
> Thy playner verse, thy vnaffected vaine,
> Is graced with a fayre and sooping trayne.
> [Martiall & hee may sitt vpon one bench,
> Either wrote well & either lou'd his wench.]
>
> (I.ii.253-58)

and the Juvenalian Marston.

•Marston is ostensibly censured for his indecorous excesses. Judicio exclaims: "What, Monsier Kinsayder, lifting vp your legge and pissing against the world? Put vp man, put vp for shame" (11.267-68). But in the length of the Marston commentary, and in the imitation of his style for the ironic purpose of condemning it, there is clearly an appreciation of this enfant terrible of contemporary poetry. Judicio says:

> I, there is one that backes a paper steed
> And manageth a pen-knife gallantly,
> Strikes his poinado at a buttons breadth,
> Brings the great battering ram of tearms to towne,

> And at first volly of his Cannon shot
> Batters the walles of the old fustie world.
>
> (I.ii.279-84)

Ingenioso is similarly ambivalent, blaming Marston--"Me thinks he is a Ruffian in his stile,/ Withouten bands or garters ornament" (269-70)--then praising him with a comparison to "plaine dealing Aretine" (278).

The last three highlights are the three great Elizabethan dramatists, Marlowe, Shakespeare and Jonson. The references are important because they are rare, and not, unfortunately, because they are particularly revealing--brief, and lacking in critical appreciation as they are.

•Judicio's assessment of Marlowe is disappointingly typical of contemporary criticism of this dramatic genius--that Marlowe was, unfortunately, though a talented tragedian, an immoral human being:

> Marlowe was happy in his buskind muse,
> Alas vnhappy in his life and end.
> Pitty it is that wit so ill should dwell,
> Wit lent from heauen, but vices sent from hell.
>
> (I.ii.286-89)

•Shakespeare is not even considered as a dramatist here,[24] but only as another sweet versifier of love:

[24]He is in the Second Return's reference to the Poetomachia (IV.iii.1769-73), discussed below in the section on Burbage and Kempe, pp. 395-98.

> Who loues not Adons loue, or Lucrece rape?
> His sweeter verse contaynes hart robbing lines,
> Could but a grauer subiect him content,
> Without loues foolish lazy languishment.
>
> (I.ii.301-304)

--a typical instance of the university wits' light opinion of the Bard.[25]

• As for Jonson, Judicio calls him "The wittiest fellow of a Bricklayer in England (l. 293), and Ingenioso describes him as:

> A meere Empyrick, one that getts what he hath by obseruation, and makes onely nature priuy to what he endites; so slow an Inuentor, that he were better betake himselfe to his old trade of Bricklaying; a bould whorson, as confident now in making of a booke, as he was in times past in laying of a brick.
>
> (I.ii.294-99)

It is not clear whether this is meant as ridicule, or if it is ironic blame intended as praise.[26] The comic irony suggests that it lies somewhere in between, as if the author were expressing an amused admiration for the distinctive figure Jonson cut of himself--an attitude which is very much in the spirit of the other Second Return reference to Jonson.[27] What is clear is that the author is capitalizing on the notoriety of the Poetomachia, for Ingenioso's

[25] The question of contemporary attitudes toward Shakespeare is discussed above, in Chapter 5 on The First Return, pp. 188-98.

[26] Leishman takes the latter position but does not defend it (p. 244). Marjorie L. Reyburn, in "New Facts and Theories about the Parnassus Plays," PMLA, 74 (1959), argues at length for the opposite position--that the passage is intended as ridicule--but is finally no more convincing (p. 331).

[27] IV.iii.1769-73. See below, pp. 395-98.

references play on the various characterizations of Horace-Jonson in the Poetomachia plays. And these include not only Marston's and Dekker's ridicule, but Jonson's peculiar defenses of himself as well--as in the issue of Jonson's rate of composition.[28] While his bricklaying background was something that Jonson's detractors used against him, it is likely that his claim to empiricism and his defense of slow invention would make him comparatively sympathetic to scholar-poets. Nevertheless, the Parnassus playwrights, at a comfortable satiric distance from London, seem to be having fun at the expense of all the parties concerned.

Judicio concludes the censuring of the poets with a final, coarse outburst against the abusers within the profession, the hacks:

> Fellowes that stand onely vpon tearmes to serue the tearme with their blotted papers; write as men go to stoole, for needes, and when they write, they write as a boare pisses, now and then drop a pamphlet.
>
> (I.ii.322-26)

But it is Ingenioso who bridges the gap between these essays in criticism and the social realities of the rest of the play. In one of his wonderful moments of self-revelation--though with uncharacteristic simplicity--he asserts that he is one of them--"Good fayth, they do as I do, exchange words for

[28] Induction to Cynthia's Revels, 176ff. (Leishman, p. 244n.).

mony" (11.327-28), and heads for Paul's Churchyard to 'traffic' with a disreputable printer about his own hack work.

The short but important scene with Danter (I.iii) illustrates the motto adopted by Ingenioso at the close of the censuring: Durum telum necessitas (1.327); for it shows how a Parnassian critic can be transformed into a Grub Street hack. The scene is, first, a satiric attack on publishing conditions. The university wits scorned the book industry insofar as it was, like the public theater, a business and not an artistic enterprise.[29] Again the general evil is attacked by means of a particular target: John Danter's biography implicates him in some of the seamier byways of the business such as piracies and the secret printing of forbidden material. It is somehow fitting to learn that "all his work [including the first (pirated) quarto of Romeo and Juliet] . . . was very badly printed."[30] In company with Burbage and Kempe, then, Danter is the third topical character in The Second Return--a very brief caricature of a publisher's materialistic measure of literature. He tells Ingenioso, "I lost by your last booke, and you knowe there is many a one that payes me largely for the printing of their inuentions;

[29]See Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, Ch. V, "Writers and Stationers," pp. 137-70.

[30]Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books, 1557-1640, ed. R. B. McKerrow (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1910), pp. 83-84.

but for all this you shall haue 40 shillings and an odde pottle of wine" (ll.341-45)--but then he decides to take the satirist's new book because he has been persuaded that it "will sell gallantly" (l.362).

There is another interesting biographical note on Danter, his close business relationship with Nashe, the Parnassian anti-hero. If the likes of Danter were an evil to an Elizabethan author, he was also a painfully necessary one. The topical scene is enriched by Ingenioso's awareness of his situation, in which he markets his vulgar "Chronicle of Cambrige Cuckolds" ("here a man may see what day of the moneth such a mans commons were inclosed, and when throwne open, and when any entayled some odde crownes vpon the heires of their bodies vnlawfully begotten," ll. 356-60), in Danter's own materialistic terms:

> Danter thou art deceiued, wit is dearer then thou takest it to bee. I tell thee this libel of Cambridge has much salt and pepper in the nose: it will sell sheerely vnderhand, whenas these bookes of exhortations and Catechismes lie moulding on thy shopboard.
>
> (I.iii.336-40)

Ingenioso's cynical accommodation to reality is mitigated by the shred of poetic integrity he salvages in his ironic praise of his own perverted wit:

> . . . as for me, Ile be paid deare euen for the dreggs of my wit. Little knowes the worlde what belong[s] to the keeping of a good wit in waters, dietts, drinckes, Tobacco, &c. It is a daynty and costly

> creature, and therefore I must be payd sweetly: furnish mee with mony, that I may put my selfe in a **new** sute of clothes, and Ile suite thy shop with a new suite of tearmes: it's the gallantest Child my inuention was euer deliuered off.
>
> (I.iii.349-56)

The other major passage of topical literary interest--and probably the most well-known passage of The Second Return --is the Act IV scenes between Philomusus and Studioso and Burbage and Kempe. In a comic confrontation between the scholar-poet heroes of the Parnassus Plays, and satiric caricatures of two popular stage personalities, we learn something about an issue of considerable artistic and economic concern to the university wits--their position vis-a-vis the professional theater. That the Second Return playwrights were positively attracted to this institution has already been established by my argument that they cast their own work in its image. In the Burbage-Kempe passage, however, they vent their hostilities toward it.

The general background of the animosity toward the professional stage is a familiar but complex history compounded of moral attacks on plays and playhouses, artistic criticism of popular drama, and writers' complaints about conditions of employment.[31]

The moral attack is usually associated with the Puritan

[31]See J. W. H. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: The Renascence (London: Methuen, 1947), Ch. viii. "Dramatic Criticism," pp. 216-61.

movement, in part because of the religious affiliations of the most outspoken critics--Stephen Gosson, a playwright turned prelate, who dedicated his intemperate Schoole of Abuse, Containing a pleasaunt invective against Poets, Pipers, Players, Jesters, and such like Caterpillers of a Commonwelth (1579) to an unappreciative Sir Philip Sidney, and Philip Stubbes, another bold individual,[32] who contributed The Anatomie of Abuses in England (1583) to the controversy.[33] However, as scholars have pointed out, the Puritan attack was largely a continuation of a long tradition of clerical hostility toward the popular drama.[34] The other major social force opposing the stage was the London civic authorities, and their campaign

[32]See above, p. 128, n.34.

[33]The Puritan attack began with John Northbrooke's Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra: A Treatise Wherein Dicing, Dancing, Vain Plays or Interludes with Other Idle Pastimes . . . Are Reproved (c. 1577), and, of course, did not peak until the second quarter of the seventeenth century and the closing of the theaters in 1642. For a later example, see the Histriomastix of a later lawman, a 1633 tract by William Prynne, Utter-barrister of Lincoln's Inn, subtitled, "The Players Scourge, or, Actors Tragedie . . . Wherein it is largely evidenced, by divers Arguments, by the concurring Authorities and Resolutions of sundry texts of Scripture; of the whole Primitive Church, both under the Law and Gospell; of 55 Synodes and Councels; of 71 Fathers and Christian Writers, before the yeare of our Lord 1200 . . . and of our owne English Statutes, Magistrates, Universities, Writers, Preachers, That popular Stage-plays . . . are sinfull, heathenish, lewde, ungodly Spectacles, and most pernicious Corruptions . . . And that the Profession of Play-poets, of Stage players, together with the penning, acting, and frequenting of Stage-playes, are unlawfull, infamous and misbeseeming Christians . . ." (New York Public Library).

See J. Dover Wilson, "The Puritan Attack upon the Stage," CHEL (1910), Ch. vi, 421-61; also Holden, Anti-Puritan Satire, 1572-1642, Ch. 3, "The Puritans and the Stage," pp. 94-144.

[34]Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 90.

against the playhouses as undesirable public institutions.[35] The noted chronicle of the times, John Stow's Survey of London (1598), presents a typically derogatory history of the theater, which, the author says, began with amateurs,

> But in process of time it became an Occupation; and many there were that followed it for a Livelihood. And which was worse it became the Occasion of much Sin and Evil. Playhouses thronged. And great Disorders and Inconveniences were found to ensue to the City thereby. It occasioned Frays and evil Practices of Incontinency. Great Inns were used for this Purpose, which had secret Chambers and Places, as well as open Stages and Galleries. Here maids, especially Orphans and good Citizens' Children under Age, were inveigled and allured to privy and unmeet Contracts.[36]

The moral objections were captured for the popular imagination--and for posterity--by Robert Greene, a first-generation university wit, in his sensational last prose pieces, the semi-autobiographical rogue pamphlets. In The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes (published posthumously 1592), advertised by the printer as the author's deathbed confession, Greene repented (among his many other sins) having made plays--a gesture explained by his association of the art of playwrighting with an adherence to atheism, a common prejudice in support of which the writer offers his own testimony:

[35] E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (1923; rpt. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961), Vol. I, Ch. viii, "Humanism and Puritanism," pp. 236-68, and Ch. ix, "The Struggle of Court and City," pp. 269-307.

[36] Quoted by Bentley in The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, p. 47. Bentley's book is rich in quotation of primary source materials.

> After I had wholy betaken me to the penning of plaies (which was my continuall exercise) I was so far from calling vpon God, that I sildome thought on God, but tooke such delight in swearing and blaspheming the name of God, that none could thinke otherwise of mee, than that I was the child of perdition.[37]

Greene's most striking blow against the theater was his advice to his fellow playwrights (probably Marlowe, Nashe and Peele) in Groats-worth of witte, bought with a million of Repentance (also published posthumously in 1592), a passage addressed:

> To those Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making plaies, R. G. wisheth a better exercise, and wisdome to preuent his extremities [38]

--his "extremities" being the poverty, disease and social rejection that had been his scholarly inheritance.[39]

This moral attack on drama is relevant to the Parnassus Plays principally as the larger controversy[40] affected prac-

[37]Robert Greene, M.A. Groats-worth of witte, bought with a million of Repentance; The Repentance of Robert Greene, 1592, Elizabethan & Jacobean Quartos, ed. G. B. Harrison (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966), p. 25.

[38]Ibid., p. 43.

[39]For a witty, satiric updating of the immorality charges, see the visit to the playhouse in Dekker's Guls Hornebooke (1609).

[40]The moral attack is also extremely important as a shaping influence on the Elizabethan defense of the drama, for, as with the defenders of Poetry in general, from Sidney's Defense (early 1580s) to Harington's 'Apology' (Preface to Orlando Furioso, 1591), those who took the side of the drama were apologetic--defensive in a literal sense. But playmaking was such a particularly unpopular critical cause, that there are

tices at the universities. The subject is covered in depth by Boas in University Drama in the Tudor Age.[41] The main point is that university administrators tried to maintain a distinction between amateur academic productions, which were generally encouraged on humanistic educational grounds, and the professional theater, which was condemned. This was the official posture, and while students were allowed to produce their own plays, they were forbidden, in repeated statutes, to attend performances of the traveling professional companies, the players being considered as bad an influence as their plays. In a 1584 statute against "common Stage Players," Leicester, at the time Chancellor of Oxford, cited as reasons the profanity of plays, of acting, and of Sunday

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very few champions to speak of. Typical in tone is George Whetstone's pioneering dedication to Promos and Cassandra (1578), a polite, moral and learned defense in which the author feels obliged to give a "rehearsall of the vse and abuse of Commedies" (my italics; in G. G. Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, I, 58-60). The most prominent formal piece is an early Lodge pamphlet (1579), a rather uninspired defense of poetry, including drama, written as a reply to Gosson. Curiously enough, for the most articulate defense of Elizabethan drama, we have to turn to Nashe, who is also its wittiest detractor (in his Preface to Menaphon). In Pierce Penniless, Nashe gives an enthusiastic account of contemporary theater, including, surprisingly, some warm praise of the players. (The most familiar passage is Nashe's emotive reference to "brave Talbot . . . [having] his bones new embalmed with the teares of ten thousand spectators at least," McKerrow, I, 212.) Cf. Nashe's defense of poetry in general, The Anatomie of Absurditie (1589), a more traditional apology directed against Stubbes's Anatomie of Abuses.

[41] Ch. X, "Friends and Foes of the University Stage," pp. 220-51.

performances.[42] But he took pains to exempt the academic productions, to which he extended his weighty support:

> As I . . . thinke the Prohibition of common Stage Players verie requisite, so would I not have it meant thereby that the Tragedies, Comedies, and shews of Exercises of Learning in that kind used to be set forth by Universitye men should be forbedden, but accepting them as commendable and great furderances of Learning do wish them in any wise to be continued at set times and increased, and the youth of the Universitye by good meanes to be incouraged in the decent and frequent setting fourth of them.[43]

In practice, however, this distinction was not so easy to maintain. As the Parnassus Plays indicate, the academic amateurs were actually influenced a great deal by the professional theater. And so the institution of university drama, for all its professed high-mindedness, seems never to have been able to cleanse itself of the stain of its worldly associations. A minority of academicians opposed it outright. At Oxford in the nineties, the controversy over academic drama provided good debate material for the larger humanist-Puritan split in the universities, resulting in one of the more noteworthy of the sixteenth century pamphlet wars, a semi-public exchange of letters between John Rainolds, Puritan divine and Greek scholar, who began by declining an invitation to a university play on moral grounds and then defended his decision

[42] Boas, University Drama, p. 227.

[43] Ibid., p. 192.

in writing, and for the defense, William Gager, a legal scholar who was one of Oxford's leading Latin dramatists, and Albericus Gentilis, a professor of civil law who came to Gager's aid.

Gager's contribution, a long letter to Rainolds in response to the latter's initial Puritanical attack (both dated 1592), is a moving and eloquent defense of academic drama.[44] Gager uses the traditional humanist education argument. With a verbal graciousness that substantiates the very point he is making, he protests:

> We . . . doe it to recreate owre selves, owre House, and the better parte of the Vniuersitye, with some learned Poeme or other; to practyse owre owne style eyther in prose or verse; to be well acquantyed with Seneca or Plautus; honestly to embolden owre pathe; to trye their voyces and confirme their memoryes; to frame their speeche; to conforme them to convenient action; to trye what mettell is in evrye one, and of what disposition thay are of; wherby never any one amongst vs, that I knowe was made the worse, many have byn muche the better; as I dare reporte me to all the Vniuersitye. of whom some of them have lefte vs suche domesticall examples and preceptes of well speakinge, as if many that dislike such exercises, and others, and owre selves had followed; so many solecisms in vttrance

[44] Gager's letter has never been published. Boas, however, quotes much of it.

shoulde not be comitted so often as there are.[45]

This rhetorical rationale is buttressed by the argument basic to every Elizabethan defense of poetry, the old dependable theme of the capability of literature for moral instruction. Gager illustrates from one of his own Latin tragedies:

> Neyther doe I see what evill affections could be stirred up by owre playes, but rather good, for in Vlysse Reduce, whoe did not love the fidelyte of Eumaeus and Philoetius towardes their Master; and hate the contrary in Melanthius? whoe was not moved to compassion to see Vlysses a greate Lorde dryvne so hardly as that he was fayne too be a begger in his owne house? whoe did not wisshe hym well, and all ill to the wooers, . . . whoe did not admire the constancye of Penelope, . . . lastly whoe was not glad to see Vlysses restored to his wife and his goods, and his mortall enemyes overthrowne and punished?[46]

However, as in the critical world outside the university, even the noblest defenses of drama are apologetic, and Gager's

[45]Boas, University Drama, pp. 235-36.

Cf. a passage in Thomas Heywood's An Apology for Actors (1612), the great defense of Jacobean professional theater: "Do not the Vniuersities, the fountaines and well-springs of all good Arts, Learning and Documents, admit the like in their Colledges? and they (I assure my selfe) are not ignorant of their true vse. In the time of my residence in Cambridge, I haue seene Tragedyes, Comedyes, Historyes, Pastorals and Shewes, publickly acted, in which Graduates of good place and reputation, haue bene specially parted: this is held necessary for the emboldening of their Iunior schollers, to arme them with audacity, against they come to bee imployed in any publicke exercise, as in the reading of the Dialecticke, Rhetoricke, Ethicke, Mathematicke, the Physicke, or Metaphysicke Lectures." (Ed. Richard A. Perkinson [New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1941] C3).

[46]Boas, University Drama, p. 237.

academic defense bears the heavy burden of association with the public stage. For example, Gager concedes the immorality of professional actors (or at least of the ancient Roman histriones cited by Rainolds)--"they came vpon the stage . . . of a lewd, vast, dissolute, wicked, impudent, prodigall, monstrous humor, wherof no dowte ensued greate corruption of manners in them selves, to say nothinge heere of the behowlders" [47]--though the point of this logical argument is that an occasional amateur performance cannot transform a gentleman into a player. ("I denye that we are to be termed Scenici or Histriones, for cũminge on the Stage once in a yeere, or twoe yeere, sevne, ten, or somtyme twentye yeeres," says Gager, undoubtedly stretching a point.) Yet, as in the non-academic criticism, defensiveness sometimes inspired eloquence. Boas, quoting the following passage, says, "Nowhere throughout the treatise are there to be found more moving and memorable words than here":

> I say to compare owre Playes to no better than thes thinges, it exceedethe the cumpasse of any tolerable resemblance. I cowlde have wisht that suche comparisons had byn forborne, if not for the Playes them selves (thoughe also thay ought for the Playes them selves, beinge thinges that savor of some witt, learninge, and iudgment, approved vnto vs by long continuance, recõmended by owre cheefest governors, and donne in a learned, grave, worshipfull, and sometyme honorable presence, with suche convenient sollemnytye, honest preparation, ingenuous expectation, due regarde, modest reverence, silent attention,

[47] Boas, University Drama, p. 235.

> and the generall, as it weare, simetrye and seemly carriage in them) yet in respecte of the actors, and owre whole House; of the spectators that sawe them, and hartely approved them, to whome it weare a foule shame, but to stand by as lookers on of thinges of suche nature; and lastly, of thos reverend, famous and excellent men, for life and learninge and their places in the Churche of God bothe of owre house, and otherwise of the Vniuersitye, that have byn, and nowe are lyvinge with vs, and abrode, whoe have byn, not only wryters of suche thinges them selves, but also actors, and to this daye doe thinke well of them, to whome it weare a greate reproche at any tyme to have byn acquaynted with thinges of so vyle, and base qualytye, and muche more still to allowe of them.[48]

Gager's letter concludes with a poignant revelation of the scholar-poet's ambivalence about his position--a personal statement by an amateur playwright of his own involvement in the theater issue:

> thus, have I also answered your wrytinge; not so muche to patronage Playes, which I can forbeare, and thinke of them as they are (for what have I to doe with them, more than an other?) as to defende owre House, my selfe, and many honeste towardely younge men my frendes, whom for good causes I hartely love, from open infamye. Wherwith it not a littell greevethe me, and them, that they shoulde be charged to the generall reproche of owre House, and to the particular contumelye of dyvers in their persons . . . . your goodwill I doe and ever will most gladly embrace, and your iudgment too, in this cause so farr, as you wryte in the generall agaynst Histriones; prayinge you too pardon me if, as I verely thinke, for good causes, I can not agree with you in the particular applycation against us.[49]

[48]Boas, University Drama, p. 238.

[49]Ibid., p. 241.

There is an interesting footnote to this debate. Two decades later, in 1622/3, another university playwright, this one from Cambridge, was still striving to articulate Gager's point of view: Boas describes a Latin play whose allegorical defense of university drama specifically refutes Rainold s' arguments.[50]

The artistic attack on popular drama came, ironically, but understandably, from the artists themselves. In George Whetstone's pioneering dedication to Promos and Cassandra (1578), which is meant to be essentially a defense of drama, the playwright complains that "the aduised deuises of auncient Poets, disc[r]redited with tryfels of yonge, vnaduised, and rashe witted wryters, hath brought this commendable exercise in mislike."[51] Blaming the Italians for their lasciviousness, the French and Spanish for following "the Italians humor," and the Germans for being "too holye," Whetstone drives the point home, concluding:

> The Englishman in this quallitie is most vaine, indiscreete, and out of order: he fyrst grounds

[50]The action, in which "the arguments for and against academic drama are personalized and brought upon the stage," centers on the attempts of Fucus, a 'puritanicus clericus,' with the aid of Ignaria, Calumnia and Invidia, to prevent the marriage of Philomathes, son of Judicum, and Comoedia, daughter of Ingenium and Poetice (Boas, University Drama, pp. 249-50).
The debate, of course, did not end here. Cf. Milton's attack on Cambridge theater in An Apology for Smectymnuus (1642), which is directed at the unseemly participation of would-be divines (Complete Prose Works of John Milton, ed. Douglas Bush, et al, Vol. I, ed. Don M. Wolfe [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953], pp. 887-88).

[51]G. G. Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays, I, 59.

> his worke on impossibilities; then in three howers ronnes he throwe the worlde, marryes, gets Children, makes Children men, men to conquer kingdomes, murder Monsters, and bringeth Gods from Heauen, and fetcheth Diuels from Hel. And (that which is worst) their ground is not so vnperfect as their workinge indiscreete: not waying, so the people laugh, though they laugh them (for theyr follyes) to scorne. Manye tymes (to make mirthe) they make a Clowne companion with a Kinge; in theyr graue Counsels they allow the aduise of fooles; yea, they vse one order of speach for all persons: a grose Indecorum . . . .[51]

The artistic attack had its next great spokesman in Sidney, who in the midst of a general defense of poetry, ridiculed contemporary plays for their unclassical form--which he dubbed "mongrel tragicomedy."[52] At the end of the century, all the familiar criticisms of popular drama were wittily rehearsed for the university wits by Joseph Hall in the first book of Virgidemiarum (1597), Satires III and IIII:

> Too popular is Tragick Poesie,
> Strayning his tip-toes for a farthing fee,
> And doth besides on Rimelesse numbers tread,
> Vnbid Iambicks flow from carelesse head.
>
> (Sat. IIII, ll.1-4)[53]

The most memorable criticism was made by the anti-hero of The Second Return, Nashe, in his audacious Preface to Greene's Menaphon (1589)--which was addressed, fittingly,

[52] Apology, ed. Shepherd, p. 135. Quoted in part above, Ch. 1, p. 85, n. 32.

[53] The Poems of Joseph Hall, ed. Davenport, p. 16.

"To the Gentlemen Students of Both Vniversities."[54] In an attack on the ignorant abusers of the art of rhetoric in all fields of popular literature ("I am not ignorant how eloquent our gowned age is grown of late; so that euery mechanicall mate abhorreth the English he was borne too, and plucks, with a solemne periphrasis, his ut vales from the inkehorne"), Nashe concentrates on the influential playwrights, "vaine glorious Tragedians, who contend not so seriously to excell in action, as to embowell the cloudes in a speech of comparison, thinking themselues more then initiated in Poets immortality, if they but once get Boreas by the beard and the heauenly Bull by the deaw-lap." And although it is difficult to pinpoint precisely whom Nashe is blaming for what,[55] it seems clear that he is attacking both the verse style of the popular tragedians--"the Alcumists of eloquence, who (mounted on the stage of arrogance) thinke to out-brave better pennes with the swelling bumbast of [a] bragging blanke verse" (in the next sentence he ridicules "the spacious volubilitie of a drumming decasillabon")--and the content of their work as a reflection of that style--in his derisive reference to "this

[54]McKerrow, III, 311.
The beginning of this address is similar in spirit to The Second Return--specifically the conclusion: "Curteous and wise, whose iudgements (not entangled with enuie) enlarge the deserts of the learned by your liberall censures; vouchsafe to welcome your Scholler-like Shepheard with such Vniversity entertainment as either the nature of your bounty or the custome of your common ciuility may affoord."

[55]The interpretive problems of this frequently cited passage are noted by McKerrow, IV, 445.

kind of men that repose eternitie in the mouth of a Player."[56]

Then there are the attacks made by the university wit playwrights themselves--from Marlowe, who in the brief prologue to his first play heralded a reformation of dramatic style and content:

> From jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,
> And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
> We'll lead you to the stately tent of war . . .
>
> --Tamburlaine, I (1587)

to Beaumont, who two decades later wrote an entire play on the subject, the brilliant Knight of the Burning Pestle, at once a parody and an appreciation of popular Elizabethan drama.

The immediate background to The Second Return would be the artistic criticism of popular drama expressed by the private theater playwrights in the Poetomachia plays--a point of view which, Harbage observes, "repudiates the informing spirit of the popular drama and nearly every dramatic type except satirical comedy."[57] The essence of the conflict is caught by Jonson in a bit of dialogue in The Poetaster between the outrageous Captain Tucca and a Chamberlain's-type professional player:

> Tvcc. And what new matters haue you now afoot, sirrah? ha? I would faine come with my cockatrice one day, and see a play; if I

[56] McKerrow, III, 311-12.

[57] Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 105. See all of Ch. IV, "The War of the Theatres," pp. 90-119, for documentation.

knew when there were a good bawdie one:
but they say, you ha' nothing but
humours, reuells, and satyres, that girde
and fart at the time, you slaue.

Hist. No, I assure you, Captaine, not wee. They
are on the other side of Tyber: we haue
as much ribaldrie in our plaies, as can bee,
as you would wish, Captaine: All the
sinners, i' the suburbs, come, and applaud
our action, daily.

(III.iv.187-196)

I have already referred to the well-known critical prefaces of the Poetomachia plays. In this area, as in others, the former artisan Jonson outdid his degreed colleagues, with material such as the pioneering critical apparatus of Every Man Out, and the lighter comedy of the Induction to Cynthia's Revels. Jonson's position is summed up in the formal Prologue to the second version of Every Man In His Humour (1601):

Though neede make many Poets, and some such
As art, and nature haue not betterd much;
Yet ours, for want hath not so lou'd the stage,
As he dare serue th'ill customes of the age:
Or purchase your delight at such a rate,
As, for it, he himselfe must iustly hate.
To make a child, now swadled, to proceede
Man, and then shoote vp, in one beard, and weede,
Past threescore yeeres: or, with three rustie swords,
And helpe of some few foot-and-halfe-foote words,
Fight ouer Yorke, and Lancasters long iarres:
And in the tyring-house bring wounds, to scarres.
He rather prayes, you will be pleas'd to see
One such, today, as other playes should be.
Where neither Chorus wafts you ore the seas;
Nor creaking throne comes downe, the boyes to please;
Nor nimble squibbe is seene, to make afear'd
The gentlewomen; nor roul'd bullet heard
To say, it thunders; nor tempestuous drumme
Rumbles, to tell you when the storme doth come;
But deedes, and language, such as men doe vse:
And persons, such as Comoedie would chuse,
When she would shew an Image of the times,

And sport with humane follies, not with crimes.

(11.1-24)[58]

Although Marston's prologues are similarly self-conscious, they are much briefer and lighter in tone. However, it is Marston who has given us the most explicit and extensive treatment of the subject within the main body of a play. This is the comical satire sub-plot of Histriomastix, or The Player Whipt--an old estates morality play to which Marston apparently added the anti-masque of a group of uneducated tradesmen turned players, under the direction of Posthaste, a hack poet who serves as their chief playwright. The adventures of Sir Oliver Owlet's Men enliven the stylized interlude with fashionable topical satire--what Caputi refers to as "the buffo burlesque on the public companies."[59]

Marston's ridicule of the players is comprehensive, including moral, social and economic issues. But some of the satire deals directly with the artistic weaknesses of the popular plays, beginning with the old point about "mingling

[58]Also see Every Man Out, where Mitis observes that some will fault the author of this satirical comedy as follows: "That the argument of his Comoedie might haue beene of some other nature, as of a duke to be in loue with a countesse, and that countesse to bee in loue with the dukes sonne, and the sonne to loue the ladies waiting maid; some such crosse wooing, with a clowne to their seruingman, better then to be thus neere, and familiarly allied to the time" (III.vi.195-201).

[59]John Marston, Satirist, p. 116.
Harbage notes further topicality--that Posthaste, like Antonio Balladino in Jonson's The Case is Altered (orig. version 1599), may be a portrait of Anthony Munday (Rival Traditions, p. 105).

kings and clowns": when Posthaste introduces himself as the playwright, one of the players adds, apparently in reference to the company's usual fare, "As concerning the king and the clowne" (Act I).[60] One important technique of Poetomachia criticism is parody. Posthaste's list of plays ridicules the soap-opera scope of popular repertory titles, complete with nonsensical genre designations:

> Mother Gurtons neadle; (a Tragedy.)
> The Divell and Dives; (a Comedie.)
> A russet coate, and a knaves cap; (an Infernall.)
> A prowd heart and a beggars purse; (a pastorall.)
> The Widdowes apron-strings; (a nocturnall.)
>
> (Act II)[61]

Posthaste then discusses his latest creation, "The Lascivious Knight, and Lady Vertue," with "the new plot of the prodigall childe." He begins to read his dreadful stuff, while his tavern audience offers obtuse encouragement:

> Post. Enter the Prodigall Child . . .
> Huffa, huffa, who callis for mee?
> I play the Prodigall child in jollytie.
> Clout. O detestable good.
> Post. Enter to him Dame Vertue:
> My son, thou art a lost child,
> This is a passion, note you the passion.
> And hath many poor men of their goods beguilt,
> O prodigal child, and child prodigal!
> Gul. Read the rest, sirs; I cannot read for tears.
> Well fellowes, I never heard happier stuffe,

[60] The Plays of John Marston, ed. Wood, III, 251.

[61] Wood, III, 263.

Heer's no new luxurie or blandishment,
But plenty of old Englands mothers words.
Clout. I'st not pitty this fellow's not imploid in matters of State?

(Act II)[62]

Later in the act the company even performs a bit of this foolishness, until they are cut off by an unappreciative audience. The "lascivious knight" turns out to be Troilus, his romance embedded in a homespun English morality marked by its stock devices, inept verse, and melodramatic tone.

Enter a roaring Divell with the Vice on his back, Iniquity in one hand; and Juventus in the other.

Vice. Passion of me sir, puffe puffe how I sweat sir,
The dust out of your coate sir, I intend for to beat sir.
Juv. I am the prodigall child, I that I am,
Who sayes I am not, I say he is too blame.
Iniq. And I likewise am Iniquitie
Beloved of many alasse for pitty.
Divell. Ho ho ho, these babes mine are all,
The Vice, Iniquitie and child Prodigall.

(Act II)[63]

Marston's parody is a mock play within the play, relating it to a group of comic set pieces which range from Bottom's "tedious brief scene of young Pyramus/ And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth" in A Midsummer Night's Dream (c. 1595) to "The ancient modern history of Hero and Leander," Littlewit's puppet show in Bartholomew Fair (1614), and climax in The

[62]Wood, III, 259-60.

[63]Wood, III, 265.

Knight of the Burning Pestle (1609?), a play whose basic conceit is a sustained parody.

Parnassian criticism, however, had its roots in more tangible problems. For the university wits, the conflict with the professional theater was a bread-and-butter issue, and a bitter one. The public stage does seem to have been one of the key markets for their literary talents--as Meres attests to with regret in Palladis Tamia, lamenting that by the public stage, "for lack of patrons (oh ingrateful and damned age) our poets are solely or chiefly maintained, countenanced, and patronized."[64] But the uncomfortable feeling on the part of many serious writers that an association with the theater was demeaning artistically and socially, was made even more painful by the modest going rate of pay. This is estimated by Harbage as about £6 per play in 1599, and that, of course, means a lump sum, without royalties or copyright: "From our vantage point it seems shockingly low, whether paid to university men or a poor 'dresser of plays about the town' like Thomas Dekker."[65] Harbage expresses the irony of the situa-

[64]"Poetrie," ed. Allen, p. 70.
Miller calls the theater the most dependable market (The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England, p. 9). Also see Bentley, The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, passim. Saunders' view of the writers' economic relationship with the theater (The Profession of English Letters, Ch. v) is even more sanguine.

[65]Harbage, The Rival Traditions, p. 95. However, Harbage goes on to observe, "In terms of the marketplace, the £6 rate was quite fair," and he explains his comment in economic terms. He also points out that the playwrights' fees compared favorably

tion succinctly: "The scholars objected simultaneously to the prostitution of their muses and to the low rates paid for their prostitution."[66]

Insult was added to injury when the wits found themselves in open competition with uneducated hack playwrights. Harbage again points to the ambivalence of the wits' situation: "These dramatists seemed to resent equally that university men were forced to write for the actors, and that non-university men, such as Kyd and Shakespeare, were ready to do so; their immense service to the art of the theatre was rendered unwillingly and sometimes even with a sense of shame."[67] In the Poetomachia plays, the authors defend their artistic pride with the weapons of satire. They ridicule the hack playwrights in satiric portraits such as those of "goosequillian"

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with those for non-dramatic writing: "the prices paid by the actors for plays, however low, were higher than those paid for free-lance writing in general. For a nondramatic work of equal length, an author would receive, in a typical instance, about £2 from the publisher and £2 from the dedicatee, thus preserving his sense of personal dignity at the cost of a £2 deficit" (p. 96).

[66] Rival Traditions, p. 95.

[67] Ibid, p. 94. Harbage says that this ambivalence toward the poetic profession was much less of a problem for the uneducated authors: "The unlearned author, the actor or former printer or scrivener, had at least the advantage of feeling unbesmirched by his occupation; in a number of instances his status as a dramatist must have been occasion of surprise and even gratification. We might expect, among these writers as a group, more satisfaction with their world, less all-embracing rancor, than among the learned contingent. Perhaps it is fortunate that Shakespeare stepped into the London scene with moderate expectations--that he qualified as a writer through one of the literate crafts rather than through a pilgrimage to Parnassus" (pp. 101-102).

Posthaste, Antonio Balladino and Demetrius [-Dekker], the "dresser of plays about the town" in The Poetaster. Their contempt, a less witty and more self-righteous matter, is best expressed by Chrisoganus, a true scholar-poet who is the central figure and satiric commentator of Histriomastix. In a major speech Chrisoganus denounces the popular theater in the exhortatory vein of the verse satires, his tirade encompassing the players, their plays, the ignorant audiences, and, most guilty of all, the poetastical playwrights:

> Write on, cry on, yowl to the common sort
> Of thick-skin'd auditors such rotten stuffs,
> More fit to fill the paunch of Esquiline
> Than feed the hearings of judicial ears.
> Ye shades triumph while foggy Ignorance
> Clouds bright Apollo's beauty. Time will clear
> The misty dullness of spectators' eyes;
> Then woeful hisses to your fopperies.
> O age when every scrivener's boy shall dip
> Prophaning quills into Thessalia's 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 puff't up with pride,
> Swell in conceipt and load the stage with stuff
> Rak't from the rotten embers of stale jests,
> Which basest lines best please the vulgar sense,
> Make truest rapture lose preeminence.
>
> (Act III)[68]

Posthaste, the focus of all this abuse, is a fair target. While a touch of learning places him a cut above the artisan players, it also makes him more guilty of artistic abuse, and

[68]Wood, III, 273.

he functions in the play as a kind of aesthetic Vice. Yet as in all of the most interesting Poetomachia poets there is a recognition of the pride that inheres in every artist, even in the poetaster--e.g., Posthaste's introduction of himself, "I Maister Posthast the Poet" (Act I)[69]--and, conversely, Marston's fleeting acknowledgment of the commercial hack incipient in every scholar-poet who has to earn his living. When Belch the beardmaker boasts, "Here's a Gentleman scholler writes for us," Posthaste, with comic dignity reminiscent of the self-irony of Ingenioso and Furor Poeticus, remarks: "A Gentleman's a Gentleman, that hath a cleane shirt on, with some learning, and so have I" (Act II).[70]

Speaking of the hack playwrights, Harbage observes further, "The unlearned dramatist was deemed no better than an actor; indeed he sometimes was an actor"[71]--and of course we have to look no further than Jonson and Shakespeare. This brings us to a last historical point about The Second Return's Burbage-Kempe scenes, the writers' grievances against the actors.[72]

As the most active members of a disreputable institution, the actors were generally regarded by the wits with moral and social disdain. That they had economic powers over the playwrights only made matters worse. In the turn-of-the-century Elizabethan theater, the actors, joined together in

[69]Wood, III, 251.

[70]Wood, III, 263.

[71]Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 98.

[72]See Bradbrook, The Rise of the Common Player, pp. 82-89.

professional companies, generally owned and operated the means of dramatic production, including the commission, purchase and ownership rights of a dramatic property[73] (e.g., the Chamberlain's Men, the cooperative company to which Shakespeare belonged--as an actor, not a playwright[74]). Bentley writes:

> In this period of the highest development of the English drama, the basic fact in the situation of the professional dramatists is that they were the employees of the acting companies. The relationship could take various forms, but it was always the acting company which the dramatist had to please first; it was the acting company which paid him eventually; and it was the acting company, which, under normal circumstances, controlled what we should call the copyright of his play.[75]

From the point of view of the university wits, however, the fact that some actors made an enviable living did not compensate for their humble social origins or their artistic and intellectual deficiencies. On the contrary, here was another artistic enterprise, like publishing, run for economic profit rather than artistic advancement, a business managed by poetic pretenders for consumption by Philistines--and all made possible by the unrewarded creativity of the scholar-poet. Hall's third satire is an extended and rather vicious attack on the tragedians. Most of the poem abuses the players

[73]See Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, Vol. I, Ch. x, "The Actor's Quality," pp. 308-47 and Ch. xi, "The Actor's Economics," pp. 348-88.

[74]Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, Vol. II, Book III, "The Companies," particularly "The Lord Chamberlain's Men," pp. 192-220.

[75]The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, p. 62.

for their outrageous artistic presumption:

> A goodly grace to sober Tragike Muse,
> When each base clown, his clumbsie fist doth bruise,
> And show his teeth in double rotten-row,
> For laughter at his selfe-resembled show.

But in the end Hall comes back to the issue of the popular theater's prostitution of poetry: "Shame that the Muses should be bought and sold,/ For euery peasants Brasse, on each scaffold."[76]

In The Second Return, after his brief stint at acting, Philomusus asks with rhetorical bitterness:

> And must the basest trade yeeld vs reliefe?
> Must we be practis'd to those leaden spouts
> That nought doe vent but what they do receive?
>
> (IV.iv.1846-48)

The complaint had already been stated for posterity by Greene in the famous advice to his "fellow scholars" in Groats-worth of Witte. Greene warns the educated playwrights of the ingratitude of the actors, "those Puppets (I meane) that spake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours." As Shakespeare scholars know, Greene singled out for special abuse the puppet who had had the audacity to become a playwright. "Yes trust them not," inveighs Greene;

> for there is an vpstart Crow, beautified
> with our feathers, that with his Tygers

[76] Virgidemiarum, I.III, 11.41-44, 57-58, The Poems of Joseph Hall, ed. Davenport, p. 15.

> hart wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and beeing an absolute Iohannes fac totum, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrey. O that I might intreat your rare wits to be imploieed in more profitable courses: let those Apes imitate your past excellence, and neuer more acquaint them with your admired inuentions. . . . yet whilest you may, seeke you better Maisters; for it is pittie men of such rare wits, should be subiect to the pleasure of such rude groomes.[77]

M. C. Bradbrook cites the author-actor hostility as a major issue of the Poetomachia:

> The War of the Theatres resolved itself into an attempt to define the Poet and to establish his superiority to his employers, the Players, whose economic control of the situation supplied them with the most effective form of retort.
>
> There is no true question to be followed through the various plays, but only the rival set of definitions, constituting a set of rival claims, and set forth by means of a common stock of images.[78]

That it was a topic of interest even to a popular-theater audience is documented by Rosencrantz' report to his prince on the state of the theater in the city: "Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides, and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to the controversy. There was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the Poet and the Player went to cuffs in the question" (II.ii.355-59).[79]

[77]Robert Greene, M.A. Groats-worth of witte, ed. Harrison, pp. 45-46.

[78]The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy, p. 96.

[79]The passage documents the challenge presented by the newly revived boys' groups to "the common stages," l. 345 (the adult companies).

Again the most extensive treatment is in Histriomastix. The enterprising Posthaste organizes Belch the Beard-maker, Gutt the Fiddle-string-maker and Incle the Pedler on no more than a song (they enter singing "The nut-browne ale")--

> Let's make up a company of players,
> For we can all sing and say,
> And so (with practise) soon may learne to play
>
> (Act I)[80]

--taking for their protection not a noble name, but that of a new man, a Sir Barbarism--"Whose but the merry knight's, sir Oliver Owlets,/ There was never a better man to Players" (Act I)[81]--leading a better man's steward to call them "Proud Statute Rogues" (Act III).[82] In Owlet's Men Marston satirizes not only ignorance that aspires to art, but commonness that dares to sport a crown. And with their goals as materialistic as ever, the tradesmen adapt themselves to Posthaste's description of "a knott of knaves" who, under his direction, will become "Politician Players":

> Post. I'le teach yee to play true Politicians.
> Incle. Why those are th' falsest subtle fellowes lives.
> Bel. I pray sir, what titles have travailing Players?
> Post. Why proper-fellowes, they play Lords and Kings.
> Incle. What parts would best become us (sir) I pray?
> Bel. Faith to play Roagues, till wee bee bound for running away.
>
> (Act I)[83]

[80] Wood, III, 250.

[81] Wood, III, 251.

[82] Wood, III, 275.

[83] Wood, III, 250.

Marston also treats the specific economic issue of a company's purchase of a script. In Act III the players approach Chrisoganus:

> Belch. Chrisoganus faith what's the lowest price?
> Chris. You know as well as I; tenne pound a play.
> Gulch. Our companie's hard of hearing of that side.[84]

£10 is a proud, high price; but the very next scene presents the players protesting to a potential buyer of their services, "Tenne pound a play will scarce maintaine our state".[85] The noble Chrisoganus chooses to maintain his self-integrity at the cost of mending his state. He rails at the actors:

> And will not this booke passe, alasse for pride,
> I hope to see you starve and storme for bookes,
> And in the dearth of rich invention,
> When sweet smooth lines are held for pretious
> Then will you fawne and crouch to Poesie.[86]

and then launches into the comprehensive denunciation of the popular theater quoted earlier. The closing lines of this confrontation capture the atmosphere of antagonism between Elizabethan Poet and Player:

> Belch. The fellow doth talke like one that can talke.
> Gut. Is this the well-learn'd man Chrisoganus,
> He beats the Ayre the best that ere I heard.
> Chris. Yee scrappes of wit, base Ecchoes to our voice,
> Take heed yee stumble not with stalking hie?
> Though fortune reeles with strong prosperity.

[84]Wood, III, 273.

[85]Wood, III, 275.

[86]Wood, III, 273.

> Clout. Farwell the Muses, poore Poet adiew,
> When we have nee't may be weele send for you.[87]

But in the morality world of this play, the Parnassian vision is vindicated: later, in harder times, the players are forced to acknowledge the worth of the poets:

> Gutt. Well sirs, the gentlemen see into our trade,
> We cannot gull them with browne-paper stuffe,
> And the best Poets growne so envious
> They'le starve rather then we get store of mony.
> (Act IV)[88]

There is also a professional actor in The Poetaster--the small, topical role of Histrio, whose company has hired Demetrius "to abuse HORACE, and bring him in, in a play," for the sole reason that "it will get vs a huge deale of money" (III. iv.323, 327). Jonson's critical attitude toward the actors is revealed in a dialogue between Histrio and Captain Tucca. Tucca looks down on Histrio, all the while acknowledging the material success won by the player beyond his social calling:

> A player? Call him, call the lowsie slaue hither: what, will he saile by, and not once strike, or vaile to a Man of warre? ha? doe you heare? you, player, rogue, stalker, come backe here: no respect to men of worship, you slaue? What, you are proud, you rascall, are you proud? ha? you grow rich, doe you, and purchase, you two-penny teare-mouth? you have fortune, and the good yeere on your side, you stinkard, you have? you have? . . . come, we must haue you turne fiddler againe, slaue, get a

[87]Wood, III, 274.

[88]Wood, III, 283.

> base violin at your backe, and march in a tawnie coate, with one sleeue, to Goose-faire, and then you'll know vs; you'll see vs then; you will, gulch, you will?
>
> (III.iv.120-36)

But Tucca is an opportunist, and he placates Histrio--"There are some of you plaiers honest gent'man-like scoundrels, and suspected to ha' some wit, as well as your poets; both at drinking, and breaking of iests: and are companions for gallants" (11.152-55)--in order to act as agent for Crispinus to collaborate with Demetrius. Tucca harangues Histrio:

> Goe, and bee acquainted with him [Crispinus], then; hee is a gent'man, parcell-poet, you slaue; his father was a man of worship, I tell thee. Goe, he pens high, loftie, in a new stalking straine, bigger then halfe the rimers i' the towne, againe: he was borne to fill thy mouth, MINOTAVRVS, he was: hee will teach thee to teare, and rand, Rascall, to him, cherish his muse, goe: thou hast fortie, fortie, shillings, I meane, stinkard, giue him in earnest, doe, he shall write for thee, slaue. If hee pen for thee once, thou shalt not need to travell, with thy pumps full of grauell, any more, after a blinde iade and a hamper: and stalke vpon boords, and barrell heads, to an old crackt trumpet--
>
> (III.iv.159-70)

Histrio objects to the price--the standard rate--and only after some bargaining, comes up with "all I haue . . . some fiue and twentie" (11.286-87).[89]

[89]For other references to actors in The Poetaster, see the brief appearance of "Aesop," who is punished for knavery (V.iii.114-28), and Tucca's descriptions of the members of Histrio's company, which may be topical caricatures (III.iv.292-306).

There is also Jonson's confession in To the Reader, "an apologeticall Dialogue," which begins, "Now, for the Players, it is true, I tax'd 'hem . . .," l.14iff. (Herford & Simpson, IV, 321).

In the same year as The Poetaster, the amateur academic playwrights, playing their own tangential parts in this poetomachia, also attacked the professional actors.

There is one serious and direct denunciation of players in The Second Return, Studioso's

> Faire fall good Orpheus, that would rather be
> King of a mole hill then a Keysars slaue:
> Better it is mongst fidlers to be chiefe,
> Then at [a] plaiers trencher beg reliefe.
> But ist not strange these mimick apes should prize
> Vnhappy Schollers at a hireling rate?
> Vile world, that lifts them vp to hye degree,
> And treads vs downe in groueling misery.
> England affordes those glorious vagabonds,
> That carried earst their fardels on their backes,
> Coursers to ride on through the gazing streetes,
> Sooping it in their glaring Satten sutes,
> And Pages to attend their maisterships:
> With mouthing words that better wits haue framed
> They purchase lands, and now Esquiers are namde.
>
> (V.i.1914-28)

The speech clearly illustrates one aspect of the Parnassian conflict; for while it is based on artistic pride and self-righteous anger, it veers off into the worldly competitiveness experienced by the professional author.

However, this one serious complaint comes after the Burbage-Kempe scenes, which are extremely light and comic by contrast. Eschewing the realistic economic problems, the playwrights relied on satiric ridicule of topical personalities--almost as if their differences with the actors were not all that important. After all, they were still pilgrims to Parnassus, not hacks on Grub Street! Burbage and Kempe are cast as clowns rather than

satiric villains, and the scholar-poets approach them not as they were likely to in life, as playwrights, but in an ironic guise, as aspiring actors. But the amateurs' casual air is betrayed by the fact that they bothered to include the actors at all, no less as the major caricatures in The Second Return.

As the leading tragedian and leading comedian of the highly successful Chamberlain's Men, Burbage and Kempe were excellent targets.[90] Each man was a popular personality with a distinctive reputation, though the emphasis in The Second Return is, appropriately, on Kempe, the clown for whom Shakespeare is thought to have conceived such roles as Costard, Bottom and Dogberry--"that Most Comicall and conceited Caualeire Monsieur du Kempe" to whom the anti-Martinist author (Nashe?) of An Almond for a Parrot (1590) ironically dedicated his pamphlet.[91]

[90]See Edwin Nungezer, A Dictionary of Actors and other Persons Associated with the Public Representation of Plays in England before 1642 (1929; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1971), Burbage, pp. 67-79; Kempe, pp. 216-22.

[91]McKerrow, Nashe, III, 341.

Kempe is a character in one other play, The Travailes of the Three English Brothers (Day, Rowley and Wilkins; published 1607 but performed earlier), in which he takes part in a witty and sophisticated discussion of drama (see Alexander Dyce's introduction to Kemps Nine Daies Wonder [London: The Camden Society, 1840], pp. xiv-xvii).

Recall the reference to Kempe in The Pilgrimage, where Dromo says to the reluctant clown: "Dost thou not knowe a playe canot be without a clowne? Clownes haue bene thrust into playes by head and shoulders, euer since Kempe could make a scuruey face" (V.664-67). Kempe is also mentioned in Every Man Out (Carlo Buffone: " . . . would I had one of Kemps shooes to throw after you," IV.viii.145-46), and in Jack Drum's Entertainment there is a reference to "Kemps Morice," Act I (Wood, III, 182).

Kempe is ridiculed for his social and artistic pretensions. As suggested by Shakespeare's purchase of property and a coat of arms, the prominent actors enjoyed both the security and status of their financial success, and Kempe chides the academics for their failure to accommodate themselves to the world:

> Well you merry knaues you may come to the honor of it one day, is't not better to make a foole of the world as I haue done, then to be fooled of the world, as you schollers are? But be merry my lads, you haue happened vpon the most excellent vocation in the world: for money, they come North and South to bring it to our playhouse, and for honour, who of more report then Dick Burbage & Will Kempe? Hee's not counted a Gentleman that knows not Dick Burbage & Wil Kemp, there's not a country wench that can dance Sellengers Round but can talke of Dick Burbage and Will Kempe.
>
> (IV.iv.1785-95)

Kempe's money and reputation give him affectations to gentility, and he pulls rank on the poor scholars in, "Thou wilt do well in time, if thou wilt be ruled by thy betters, that is, by my selfe, and such graue Aldermen of the playhouse as I am" (IV.iv.1832-34), and in his exit line, when, in answer to Philomusus' "We will follow you straight M. Burbage," Kempe retorts airily, "Its good manners to follow vs, Maister Philomusus and Maister Otioso" (ll. 1843-45).

Burbage and Kempe are satirized even more severely for their unwarranted artistic pride. They plan to exploit the scholars as cheap actors, despite Kempe's objections--first, that "the slaues are somewhat proud" (IV.iii.1756-57), and

second, that the formal style of acting he observed "once at a Comedie in Cambridge" (l.1761) is ludicrous ("tis good sporte in a part, to see them neuer speake in their walke, but at the end of the stage," ll.1757-59). The latter remark is primary material for the debate among modern scholars between "formalistic" and "naturalistic" assessments of Elizabethan acting.[92] Kempe is apparently ridiculing the traditional rhetorical delivery of school plays.[93] But although The Second Return is itself an academic product, and Kempe a satiric butt, the play's generally sophisticated professional orientation, and the specific ridicule in this scene of melodramatic speechifying, argue that the St. John's playwrights would have been sympathetic to Kempe's naturalistic bias. In other words, this is one of those places where we are meant to laugh with the satiric butt. The explanation may lie in the playwrights' consciousness of the Parnassus Plays' very special place in Cambridge theater --realistic vernacular satire in a repertory of Italianate Latin romances. The wits would thus be endorsing Kempe's ridicule of the acting in the usual Cambridge fare, dramatic material that the Second Return Prologue dismisses as

[92]See Marvin Rosenberg, a naturalist, for background and bibliography, "Elizabethan Actors: Men or Marionettes?," PMLA, 69 (1954), 915-27.

[93]John Russell Brown, "On the Acting of Shakespeare's Plays," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 34 (1953), 477-84; rpt. The Seventeenth Century Stage, ed. G. E. Bentley (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 48.

readily-written 'stories of love' (1.64).[94]

As we have seen, the university wits were most contemptuous of the actor who reached beyond his low calling in the arts. And the clown Will Kempe was a published author (Philomusus quips, "Indeed M. Kempe you are very famous, but that's as well for [your] workes in print as your parts in que," 11.1796-97). The specific work in question[95] is a pamphlet entitled Nine Daies Wonder, performed in a daunce from London to Norwich,[96] Kempe's own account of his traveling performance of a morris dance--a piece of self-promotion which the actor-author, cashing in on an event already touted in ballads and pseudo-autobiographical pamphlets,[97] had just had published in 1600.

The more sophisticated fun of topical literary satire comes in the audition passage, and if the amateur actors were any good, it must have brought down the house.[98] Kempe himself,

[94]The most eloquent proponent of a more natural acting style is of course Hamlet (III.ii.1-43).

[95]Phil. . . . What M.Kempe, how doth the Emperour of Germany?
Stud. God saue you M. Kempe: welcome M. Kempe from dancing the morrice ouer the Alpes. (IV.iv.1781-84).

[96]There was an edition edited by Alexander Dyce for the Camden Society of London in 1840.

[97]Kempe cites these works as his reason for publishing, on the title-page and in his prologue. The prologue, dedicated to no one less than a lady-in-waiting to the Queen, is marked by authorial self-confidence.

[98]I feel that here, as in Philomusus and Studioso's satiric roles as physician and tutor, their basically serious function is abandoned, and the characters are played for laughs. The problems involved are discussed in the next chapter.

utilizing a convention of city comedy, delivers a mock oration aping the rhetorical doubletalk of a petty magistrate:

> Forasmuch as there be two states of a common wealth, the one of peace, the other of tranquility; two states of warre, the one of discord, the other of dissention; two states of an incorporation, the one of the Aldermen, the other of the Brethren; two states of a magistrate, the one of gouerning, the other of bearing rule: now, as I said euen now, for a good thinge cannot be said too often: Vertue is the shooinghorne of iustice, that is, vertue is the shooinghorne of doing well, that is, vertue is the shooinghorne of doing iustly, it behooueth mee and is my part to commend this shooinghorne vnto you. . . .
>
> (IV.iv.1812-22ff.)

Then, with a satiric nod to typecasting, Kempe has Philomusus try the speech, observing, "Now for you, me thinkes you should belong to my tuition, and your face me thinkes would be good for a foolish Mayre or a foolish iustice of peace" (ll. 1809-11). But the high points for us are the direct quotations from the company's popular repertory. Burbage, alluding to two of the great roles in which he made his reputation, first considers Studioso for the lead in The Spanish Tragedy:

> M. Studioso, I pray you take some part in this booke and act it, that I may see what will fit you best. I thinke your voice would serue for Hieronimo, obserue how I act it and then imitate mee:
> Who calls Ieronimo from his naked bedd?
>
> (IV.iv.1802-06)

Then Burbage wryly tells Philomusus, "I like your face and

the proportion of your body for Richard the 3" (1835-37), and Philomusus delivers the opening soliloquy of that play.

The closest Poetomachia parallel is in The Poetaster, where Tucca, with the idea of renting his clever attendants to Histrio's company as actors, has them run through a number of dramatic bits in a variety of popular styles, beginning with "king DARIVS dolefull straine"--

> O dolefull days! O direfull deadly dump!
> O wicked world! and worldly wickednesse!
> How can I hold my fist from crying, thump,
> In rue of this right rascall wretchednesse!
>
> (III.iv.208-13)

and continuing with the lover, "the horrible, fierce Souldier," the ghost, a 'thunderer,' a lady, and a Moor. But while Jonson's weapon is literary parody, the attack in The Second Return is of a more documentary nature. Without having to compose original parody, the Cambridge playwrights obviously knew they could provoke laughter by means of direct quotation.

To fully appreciate the passage, I suggest we go back to its sources with the eyes of a turn-of-the-century university wit. Hieronimo and Richard III were two of the popular theater's most famous lead characters. The quotations in The Second Return were obviously well-known lines from established productions[99] and published texts (Spanish Tragedy, 1589?, published four times in the 1590s; Richard III, 1592/3, with quartos in 1597 and 1598). Burbage doesn't even have to quote

[99]See Harbage's play list in Shakespeare's Audience (1941; rpt. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 178.

Richard III for Philomusus, but says only, "let me see you act a little of it" (IV.iv.1836-37). That these plays were also the best of their kind[100] did not prohibit negative criticism; on the contrary, their box-office popularity and their artistic success made them even more vulnerable. In 1600, it was decidedly fashionable, in sophisticated theatrical circles, to ridicule The Spanish Tragedy: in Jonson's Induction to Cynthia's Revels, a boy actor, satirizing audience types, imitates one affected ignoramus who swears "That the old Hieronimo, (as it was first acted) was the onely best, and iudiciously pend play of Europe" (ll. 209-11).[101]

The speech quoted from The Spanish Tragedy is Hieronimo's monologue upon discovering his son hanged (II.v.1-33):

> What out-cries pluck me from my naked bed,
> And chill my throbbing hart with trembling feare,
> Which neuer danger yet could daunt before?
> Who cals Hieronimo? speak, heere I am.

Now regardless of the play's enduring dramatic power, this particular speech, especially out of context, is guilty of

[100]A fairer example might have been the extraordinarily popular tragicomedy, "A Most Pleasant Comedy of Mucedorus, the King's Son of Valencia, and Amadine, the King's Daughter of Aragon, with the Merry Conceits of Mouse, . . . Very Delectable and Full of Conceited Mirth" (c. 1590?).

[101]Jonson directly ridiculed Hieronimo's most famous soliloquy in Every Man In His Humour: Matteo. "Oh eyes, no eyes, but fountaines fraught with teares; there's a conceit; Fountaines fraught with teares," etc. (I.iii.135ff.). However, this did not prevent Jonson from writing "additions" to The Spanish Tragedy for Henslowe's 1601/2 revival of the play--suggesting that Jonson's satire, like Beaumont's in The Knight of the Burning Pestle, is enriched by a positive appreciation of the ridiculed material. There is also the tradition that Jonson once acted the role of Hieronimo. (In Satiromastix, Tucca says to Horace, "thou hast forgot how thou amblest (in leather pilch) by a play-wagon, in the high way, and took'st mad Ieronimoes part, to get seruice among the Mimickes," (IV.i.130-32).

all the sins for which Nashe attacks the genre in Menaphon:[102] melodramatic content-

> Alas, it is Horatio, my sweet sonne.
> O no, but he that whilome was my sonne.
> O was it thou that call'dst me from my bed?
> O speak, if any sparke of life remaine.
> I am thy Father; who hath slaine my sonne?

metrical awkwardness--

> O wicked butcher, what soere thou wert,
> How could thou strangle vertue and desert?

and rhetorical copiousness, though only of the simplest figures (e.g., alliteration, apostrophe, interrogation and self-correction, and a series of tired tropes)--

> And left thy bloudie corpes dishonoured heere,
> For me amidst these darke and deathfull shades,
> To drowne thee with an ocean of my teares?
> O heauens, why made you night to couer sinne?
> By day this deede of darkenes had not beene.
> O earth . . .

Perhaps the greatest problem with this speech is the burden of exposition it bears so awkwardly. Unlike the great soliloquies of the next two decades, the scope of this monologue is not bound by the introspective mind of the speaker; Hieronimo is also responsible for moving the plot along by responding to outward stimuli . . . at some points, with painfully slow articulation:

> I did not slumber; therefore twas no dreame.
> No, no, it was some woman cride for helpe,

[102] Nashe's probable reference to Kyd as "English Seneca" is quoted above, p. 187, n.25.

> And heere within this garden did she crie,
> And in this garden must I rescue her.
> But stay, what murdrous spectacle is this?
> A man hangd vp and all the murderers gone:
> . . . . .
> Those garments that he weares I oft haue seen:
> Alas, it is Horatio, my sweet sonne.

Studioso probably delivered the speech in the stylized and emotionally extravagant acting style of the old school which Falstaff mockingly recalls when he plays the melodramatic part of Prince Hal's father: "Give me a cup of sack to make my eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' vein" (1 Henry IV, II.iv.423-26). It is all too possible that in spite of Kyd's great rhetorical achievement, for the wits in the St. John's audience, Hieronimo's style may have come ludicrously close to that of Bottom's Piramus.[103]

As for Richard III, while he is infinitely more eloquent than Hieronimo, we can still see the humor of Philomusus descanting upon his own deformity, with the actor exaggerating the most obvious stylizations of the speech--elaborately extended metaphors that would "embowell the cloudes in a speech of comparison"[104]--

[103]See Jonas Barish's essay on "The Spanish Tragedy, or The Pleasures and Perils of Rhetoric," Elizabethan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies 9, ed. John R. Brown and Bernard Harris (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), pp. 59-85. Barish, commenting on Hieronimo's "Oh eies, no eies," (III.ii.1ff.), says: "What Elizabethan audiences found exciting and memorable in the language of The Spanish Tragedy was precisely such moments of high artifice as these. The numerous parodies of Hieronimo's lament, and of Balthazar's complaints, testify to the auricular impact of Kyd's theatrical tropes--testify, that is, to the pleasures of rhetoric, as well as, by their scorn, to its perils"(p. 77).

[104]Nashe, Preface to Menaphon, McKerrow, III, 311.

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
> And all the clouds that loured upon our house
> In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
> Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
> . . . . .
> Grim-visaged War hath smoothed his wrinkled front,
> And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds
> To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
> He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
> To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.

and the convention in which the Machiavellian villain-hero confides his policy to the audience-

> And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover
> To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
> I am determined to prove a villain
> And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
> Plots have I laid . . . . .

--purposely breaking Hamlet's proscription against an actor 'tearing a passion to tatters' by 'mouthing' the words (with over-emphasis), 'sawing the air too much' with the hand, and generally 'o'erdoing Termagant . . . out-herod[ing] Herod' (III.ii.1-15).

Altogether, then, the Second Return's audition passage offers a great deal to the documentarian and the director.

A final historical note in the Burbage-Kempe scenes is The Second Return's major reference to the War of the Theaters,[105] a passage that contains the second mention of Shakespeare and Jonson.[106] In reply to Burbage's suggestion that Philomusus

[105]The other direct reference to the War of the Theaters is also here--Kempe's, "You are at Cambridge still with size que, and be lusty humorous poets, you must vntrusse," IV. iv.1798-99.

[106]Shakespeare and Jonson are first mentioned in the Judicio-Ingenioso censuring of the poets, I.ii.

and Studioso might also serve a turn as cheap playwrights, Kempe replies:

> Few of the vniuersity [men] pen plaies well, they smell too much of that writer Ouid, and that writer Metamorphoses, and talke too much of Proserpina & Iuppiter. Why heres our fellow Shakespeare puts them all downe, I and Ben Ionson too. O that Ben Ionson is a pestilent fellow, he brought up Horace giuing the Poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath giuen him a purge that made him beray his credit.
>
> (IV.iii.1766-73)

The first point here, Kempe's ignorant rejection of the educated playwrights and the mythological romances they composed for the boy actors at the private theaters, illustrates Harbage's basic division between the university wits and the popular playwrights, with the satirist ridiculing Kempe's proud preference for the latter. The remaining lines, Kempe's observation on the personality poetomachia, refer to the major plays involved--The Poetaster, in which Horace[-Jonson] administers a word-emetic to Crispinus[-Marston] and Demetrius [-Dekker], and Dekker&Marston's Satriomastix, in which Crispinus and Demetrius retaliate against their original creator.[107]

I believe that Kempe's support of Shakespeare, prominent playwright and actor-member of the Chamberlain's Men, must be read ironically, making Shakespeare the satirist's chief target. Given the context, this is the most obvious interpretation, and there are no arguments--other than a wish that it

[107] As to the identification of Satiromastix with Shakespeare, Leishman explains that the play had been performed by the Chamberlain's Men (Appendix, pp. 369-71).

were otherwise--to the contrary. The writer's attitude toward Jonson, however, is more difficult to assess. As in the Second Return's other reference to Jonson, in Judicio's censuring of the poets, the humor seems to be ironic, indirect, and again I think that the author's judgment lies somewhere between praise and blame. Jonson, though a popular playwright, is not as near and dear to Kempe as "our fellow Shakespeare." After all, though he was not a university graduate, Jonson had certainly penned plays that "smell . . . of . . . that writer Metamorphoses."[108] For the academic playwright, however, this might well place Jonson a cut above Shakespeare. On the other hand, I see in Kempe's relish for the altercation the author's ridicule of the entire incident as a battle of barbarians, with a slap at Jonson for lowering himself to meet the other playwrights on their own level. By belittling the Poetomachia, the university playwrights managed to distance themselves from the whole lowly company of professional men[109]--even while

[108]The Poetaster and Cynthia's Revels, for example. With Kempe's line, cf. Sir Vaughan in Satiromastix: "Horace and Bubo pray, send an answere into his Masesties [sic] eares, why you goe thus in Ouids Morter-Morphesis and strange fashions of apparrell" (V.ii.187-89)--a charge Jonson had wittily anticipated in the Induction to Cynthia's Revels: "By the way, CVPID meetes with MERCVRIE, (as that's a thing to be noted, take anie of our play-bookes without a CVPID or a MERCVRY in it, and burne it for an heretique in Poetrie)," ll. 45-49.

[109]Reyburn ("New Facts and Theories about the Parnassus Plays") argues that the passage is "equally scornful" of both the Chamberlain's Men and Jonson (p. 332); "almost exclusive emphasis on Jonson and Marston calls particular attention to the stage quarrel and unmistakably reveals what the Cambridge playwright thought of its two chief participants. It is as if he were saying, 'Look at this precious pair! There is nothing to choose between them'" (p. 334).

they depended on audience interest in them for some of the most theatrical material in their play. The Cambridge amateurs scorned the public theater, but their obvious fascination with it suggests that they were as fatally enmeshed in it as were the original university wits of a decade earlier. Bradbrook concludes her observations on the Burbage-Kempe passage by suggesting that The Second Return's "mixture of admiration, envy and scorn for the common stages cannot be reduced to final coherence."[110]

As with numerous other unknowns of Shakespeare's and Jonson's biographies, it is tantalizing to speculate about what their responses might have been to the Parnassus wits' cavalier treatment of them. With The Second Return enough of a commercial success in London to warrant the publication of a second quarto in 1606, it is entirely possible that a play so rich in topical references to the contemporary literary scene, and the theater in particular, came to the attention of these major playwrights. (Especially with Burbage and Kempe as characters, it is difficult not to imagine that quarto making the rounds of their professional associates at the Globe.) But we do not know what the two giants--Shakespeare at work on Lear and Macbeth, Jonson on his masterpiece, Volpone--made of these satiric jests at their expense, for there is no evidence that the professional playwrights ever responded to the university wits' contribution to the Poetomachia.

[110]The Rise of the Common Player, p. 272.

Chapter 10. Poets as Protagonists

The characters Burbage and Kempe make topical reference to the London literary scene, which is one major way in which the Poetomachia plays deal with literary material. A second important technique that The Second Return has in common with these professional works is the presentation of poets as characters. There are three basic types--the discontented scholar, the idealized scholar-poet, and the poetaster, the last frequently a caricature of a contemporary figure. As a group, these characterizations are distinguished by a peculiar combination of satire and sympathy on the part of the playwrights--indicative, I believe, of their ambivalence toward the role of the poet.

The most interesting and successful type of stage poet is the disappointed scholar,[1] a particular version of a larger group of malcontent intellectuals (e.g., Marston's Planet in Jack Drum's Entertainment, a philosopher by inclination rather than vocation).[2] In the predominantly ironic mode of these

[1] See Harbage's survey of "the neglected scholar" in Elizabethan-Jacobean drama (Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, p. 96ff.).
Kernan: "It was fairly standard for Elizabethan and Jacobean authors to present their satirists as men who in their younger days had been overly curious scholars and who on entering the world discovered that their bookish wisdom was of no value. They react by becoming parasites, flatterers and satirists" (The Cankered Muse, p. 148).

[2] By extension, cf. the ultimate intellectual turned satirist, the princely amateur Hamlet--a dramatic type which flourished in the Jacobean theater of Webster and Tourner.

plays, this character must frequently sustain the dual function of being a standard of the play for his intellectuality, and a satiric target for his misanthropy.

The type became a Marstonian specialty, appearing first in the character responsible for holding together the disparate parts of Histriomastix--Chrisoganus, unappreciated minister of arts turned envious satirist. Later Marston developed the most profoundly moving of these tragic clowns, Lampatho Doria of What You Will.[3] In one scene Lampatho opens with this misanthropic complaint:

> In heaven's handiwork ther's naught
> None more vile, accursed, reprobate to blisse
> Then man, and mong men a scholler most.

With an artist's pride, he describes another character, a poetaster, as "a perfect beast," one "rich in ignorance," who "every day augments his barbarisme." But Lampatho is also cynical about his own achievements:

> I was a scholler: seaven use-full springs
> Did I defloure in quotations
> Of crossed oppinions boute the soule of man;
> The more I learnt the more I learnt to doubt,
> Knowledge and wit, faithes foes, turne fayth about.

[3]Poetomachia tradition has it that both Chrisoganus and Lampatho were inspired by the person of Ben Jonson. Jonson, at any rate, apparently believed himself caricatured in the mixed portrait of Chrisoganus, and supposedly retaliated with the Marstonian Clove of Every Man Out. As the story goes, the battle then ensued with Marston's reference to Jonson in Brabant Sr. of Jack Drum's Entertainment, Jonson's Marstonian Hedon in Cynthia's Revels, then Lampatho Doria, and, finally, Crispinus[-Marston], the Poetaster, and Horace[-Jonson] of Satiromastix. (See Leishman's Introduction, pp. 83-88; further references above, Chapter 9, p. 324, n. 1.)

At this point he shifts gears into a long, marvelously comic philosophical monologue comparing himself with his dog:

> . . . Nay marke list, Delight,
> Delight my spaniell slept, whilst I baused leaves,
> Tossd ore the dunces, por'd on the old print
> Of titled wordes, and stil my spaniell slept.
> Whilst I wasted lampoile, bated my flesh,
> Shrunk up my veines, and still my spaniel slept.
> . . . . . .
> . . . Philosophers
> Stood banding factions all so strongly propt,
> I staggerd, knew not which was firmer part.
> But thought, quoted, reade, observ'd and pried,
> Stufft noting bookes, and still my spaniell slept.
> At length he wakt and yawned, and by yon sky,
> For aught I know he knew as much as I.

Finally, Lampatho is reduced to anger, and to confusion:

> A company of odde phreneteci
> Did eate my youth, and when I crept abroad,
> Finding my numnesse in this nimble age,
> I fell a railing, but now soft and slow,
> I know, I know naught, but I naught do know.
> What shall I doe, what plot, what course persew?
>
> (Act II)[4]

The combined praise/blame function of Lampatho is underlined by the fact that throughout the scene he is ridiculed and chastised by Quadratus, the play's satiric commentator--who, however, is also Lampatho's patron.

The type had its final Poetomachia incarnation in the peculiarly sympathetic caricature of Jonson in Satiromastix, where Horace's antagonists criticize him with kindness, almost as if they would save him from himself. Even the outbursts

[4]Wood, The Plays of John Marston, II, 257-58.

of Captain Tucca seem more helpful than harmful:

> Art not famous enough yet, my mad Horastratus, for killing a Player, but thou must eate men aliue? thy friends? Sirra wildeman, thy Patrons? thou Anthropophagite, thy Mecaenasses?
>
> (IV.ii.61-63)

Jonson used the malcontent scholar only in his first comical satire--Macilente in Every Man Out--and then only for the critical commentary on the main plot.[5] As a more positive alternative--and a self-defensive one--he created the ideal stage poet, Crites in Cynthia's Revels, and then Horace in The Poetaster. This scholar-artist is also abused, although not so much by an unappreciative society at large, but by poetasters and pretenders to wit; and instead of responding in satiric kind, the ideal poet stoically rises above abuse, rewarded, at the end, with royal recognition.

The third kind of stage poet is the poetaster--the would-be or pretender who abuses the profession from within. Frequently, these characters bear topical reference to contemporary personalities. Horace[-Jonson] of Satiromastix is at once the most highly individualized caricature and the most rounded dramatic character. Some poetasters are portrayed by means

[5] In Jonson's introductory commentary on the characters, he describes Macilente as "A man well parted, a sufficient Scholler, and travail'd; who (wanting that place in the worlds account, which he thinks his merit capable of) falls in to such an enuious apoplexie, with which his iudgement is so dazeled, and distasted, that he growes violently impatient of any opposite happinesse in another" (Herford and Simpson, III, 423).

of stylistic parody--Crispinus[-Marston], the Poetaster of Jonson's play, is the most obvious example. Still others are pegged as social-professional types--Anthony Munday as the balladeer-turned-playwright Posthaste in Histriomastix, and Demetrius[-Dekker] as "a dresser of plaies about the towne" in The Poetaster (III.iv.321-22).

The Parnassus trilogy presents all these basic types, even while it retains its special academic interests: the poets are all university-trained scholars. However, as the three plays appeared over a few-year span, the focus shifted from Philomusus and Studioso, striving to be ideal scholar-poets in the positive allegory of The Pilgrimage, to Ingenioso, the disappointed scholar-poet turned professional satirist, as the moving spirit of the cynical Second Return. But The Second Return characters most readily identified as Poetomachia types are the pair of poetasters, the humourous poets Furor Poeticus and Phantasma.

In the Prologue, Defensor playfully promises the audience, "Some humors [sic] you shall see aymed at, if not well resembled" (ll. 32-33). For the so-called humourous character was one of the most fashionable comic devices in the late nineties in both popular and coterie theaters, following the success of Chapman's innovative An Humourous Day's Mirth, which he did for Henslowe's Admiral's Men in 1597. Jonson, who became the humourist of Elizabethan-Jacobean drama, acknowledged Chapman's success at once in The Case is Altered (1597), where Antonio Balladino, hack author, protests, "mary you shall haue some now (as for example, in plaies) that will haue

euery day new trickes, and write you nothing but humours" (I.ii.60-62). In the Prologue to his own new-style humour play, Every Man Out of His Humour (1599), Jonson took pains to define the term--

> It may, by Metaphore, apply it selfe
> Vnto the generall disposition:
> As when some one peculiar quality
> Doth so possesse a man, that it doth draw
> All his affects, his spirits, and his powers,
> In their confluctions, all to runne one way,
> This may be truly said to be a Humour.
>
> (ll. 105-109)

and to condemn the "abuse of this word "Humour" (l. 80) by hack playwrights.[6] Marston makes the same point comically in Histriomastix when one of the ignorant actors asks at a rehearsal, "Have I er'e a good humour in my part?" (Act III).[7]

A special feature of the Poetomachia plays was, naturally, the depiction of humourous poets, and the phrase "as humourous as a poet" became proverbial.[8] Jonson himself is of course the title character of Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humourous Poet--a literary joke that is played upon in The Second Return when Kempe says to Philomusus and Studioso, "You . . . be lusty humorous poets, you must vntrusse" (IV. iv.1798-99).

[6]As critics since T. S. Eliot have pointed out, in practice, Jonson did not stick to this narrow psychological definition, but satirized much social affectation. See Henry Snuggs, "The Comic Humours: A New Interpretation," PMLA, 62 (1947), 114-19.

[7]Wood, III, 283.

[8]E.g., The Poetaster: "Chloe. Is that hard-fauoured gentleman a poet too; CYTHERIS? Cytheris. No; this is HERMOGENES, as humorous as a poet though: he is a Musician" (II.ii.100-03).

The Second Return's own humourous poets are thinly dramatized stylistic humours: Furor Poeticus and Phantasma are farcical types of grandiloquence and pedantry,[9] in each case the satire dependent on one basic joke that is repeated each time the character appears. They are Ingenioso's sidekicks (Academico observes, "Fury and Fancie on good wits attend," V.iv.2127), and the trio's slight plot of verbal abuse against Sir Raderick is comparable to the Poetomachia sub-plots, with the poets' devices against the poetasters--i.e., the purge in The Poetaster and the untrussing in Satiromastix.

Despite his name, Phantasma is the barest possible humour poet. All of his dialogue consists of Latin quotations--causing Leishman to dismiss him as "a mere retailer of Latin tags."[10] Phantasma's is certainly a peculiarly academic humour. He is responsible for most of some fifty lines of Latin in the play, which, like Amoretto's technical description of the hunt and the legal jargon employed by Amoretto and the Recorder, stand out as strikingly obvious utilizations of bookish sources. The same joke could never have been sustained at such length on the public stage--and it works here with only erratic success.

Most of Phantasma's lines are clearly enough related to

[9]Boas, University Drama in the Tudor Age, p. 342.

[10]The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 6. Leishman identifies many of Phantasma's sources. Most of his lines are quotations from the Roman poets (his favorites are Virgil, Ovid and Horace, in that order, but he also quotes another half dozen)--though as was the case with Gullio, much of Phantasma's classical learning comes by way of Lyly's Grammar.

their contexts, as are his presumptuous borrowings from Virgil's Eclogues when he first meets up with Furor Poeticus--

> Furor. What slimye bold presumtious groome is he,
> Dares with his rude, audacious, hardye chatt
> Thus seuer me from sky bredd contemplation?
> Phant. Carmina vel coelo possunt deducere lunam.
>
> (I.iv.476-79)

and then persuades Furor to join him: "Nay faith maister Furor, letts go togither, Quoniam conuenimus ambo" (l. 500). A few of Phantasma's lines are successfully comic--mock-heroic juxtapositions of high poetry used in similar but ludicrously less worthy situations. When Furor complains about the disturbance, Phantasma protests lugubriously:

> Nay sweet Furor, Ipsae te Tytire pinus,
> Ipsi te fontes, ipsa haec arbusta vocarunt.
>
> (I.iv.469-70)

And later, in the confrontation scene, Phantasma assaults Amoretto with passionate outbursts from Virgil's amorous Eclogue II:

> O crudelis Alexi nil mea carmina curas?
> Nil nostri miserere, mori me denique cogis?
>
> (IV.ii.1591-92)

Some of Phantasma's lines are merely obvious--e.g., his Horatian address to Amoretto as Maecenas (IV.ii.1530-31), and some seem awkwardly forced--e.g., his Aeneid-Eclogue comment upon the patrons' exit, "Arma virumque cano./ Quem fugis ah demens?" (ll. 1716-17), and, at the end of the scene, a proverb (l. 1745) and a Virgilian warning to the unappreciative

(l. 1750). It should be noted, however, that for the original audience, with its greater familiarity with the Latin sources, Phantasma may have seemed funnier than he does to us.

The more interesting and successful poetaster is Furor Poeticus, whose humourous vein runs toward "high tiptoe-strowting poesye" (III.iv.1344).[11] His dialogue has the broader appeal of parody, in which the comedy is not dependent on audience recognition of specific sources. At his best, Furor delivers some of the funniest lines in the play--as in his first scene, when his outrageous invocation to the gods ("I am your holy swayne, that night and day/ Sit for your sakes rubbing my wrinkled browe,/ Studying a moneth for on[e] [fitt] Epithete," I.iv.456-58)[12] is disturbed by the entrance of Phantasma:

> Who's that runs headlong on my quills sharpe poynt,
> That wearyed of his life and baser breath
> Offers himselfe to an Iambicke verse?
>
> (I.vi.471-73)

With lines as comic as these, there must have been keen competition among the amateur actors for the role of Furor Poeticus,[13] though as he goes on--and on--in 'Ercles' vein, it becomes obvious that this character, too, would have benefitted from

[11] Also I.vi.504.

[12] Reyburn argues that in this speech Furor "mirrors Dekker's satirical portrait of Jonson" in Satiromastix ("New Facts and Theories about the Parnassus Plays," p. 331).

[13] Cf. Histriomastix, where a player announces happily at a rehearsal, "Stay sirs, rehearse no farther than you are/ For here be huffing parts in this new booke" (Act IV, Wood, III, 283).

a good manuscript editor.[14]

When Phantasma announces that he comes as Ingenioso's messenger, Furor dismisses that wit's verse as inferior to his own:

> Ingenioso?
> He is a pretty inuenter of slight prose,
> But there's no spirit in his groaueling speach:
> Hang him whose verse cannot out-belch the wind,
> That cannot beard and braue Don Eolus,
> That, when the cloude of his inuention breakes,
> Cannot out-cracke the scarr-crow thunderbolt.
> Hang him, I say.
>
> (I.vi.486-93)

The style, of course, is not Furor's own, but a mixed parody of contemporary styles--the heaven-shaking bombast of Marlovian tragedy, and the earth-shaking fustian of Marstonian satire. By this date, the parody of dramatic bombast was familiar comic material even in the popular theater, with Ancient Pistol having swaggered it on a public stage in 1597-98, and the quarto of 2 Henry IV appearing in 1600. But Furor is a distinctly poetastical version of the old roaring boy: he is a professional writer; and he is updated in fashionable Poetomachia terms as a disappointed scholar-poet turned satirist. In the Prologue to Every Man Out, Asper's angry promise to 'anatomize the time's deformity' elicits from the level-headed Cordatus a bemused, "Why this is right Furor Poeticus!" (l. 147).

The professional scholar-poet in extremis, Furor presents

[14]For a selection of Furor's excesses, see IV.ii.1695-1713.

a comic version of the basic Parnassian identity crisis: his enormous pride is repeatedly punctured by the pangs of an empty belly:

> The gods aboue that know great Furors fame,
> And do adore grand poet Furors name,
> Granted long since at heauens high parliament
> That who so Furor shal immortalize,
> No yawning goblins shall frequent his graue,
> Nor any bold presumptuous curr shall dare
> To lifte his legge against his sacred dust.
> Where ere I leaue my rymes, thence vermin fly,
> All saue that foule fac'd vermin pouerty:
> This sucks the eggs of my inuention,
> Euacuates my witts full pigeon house.
>
> (IV.ii.1611-21)

Artistic pride is essential to the scholar-poet; as Consiliodorus had forewarned Philomusus and Studioso, the poet's knowledge of his own worth was likely to be his only portion in this world. However, in the comic exaggeration of Furor's pride, the playwright ridicules the potential for presumption on the part of the poet, particularly as expressed in the apocalyptic poetics of authors such as Marlowe, Marston and, on occasion, Jonson. Here, in Furor, do we indeed hear "eternity in the mouth of a player."

Pride enables the Parnassian to set himself apart from the ignorant multitude, and Furor, whose special target of abuse in the confrontation scene is Sir Raderick himself, does so with a vengeance:

> Vile muddy clod of base vnhallowed clay,
> Thou slimie sprighted vnkinde Saracen,
> When thou wert borne dame Nature cast her Calfe:
> Forrage and time hath made thee a great Oxe,

> And now thy grinding iawes deuoure[n] quite
> The fodder due to vs of heauenly spright.
>
> (IV.ii.1662-67)

Basing his complaint on a belief in his own superiority, Furor had had visions of assuming his rightful ascendancy over the barbarian:

> The cerule current of my slyding verse
> Gently shal runne into his thick-skind eares,
> Where it shall dwell like a magnifico:
> Command his slymie spright to honour me
> For my high tiptoe-strowting poesye.
>
> (III.iv.1340-44)

But, again as Consiliodorus had counseled, this is an inherently impossible dream--as Furor himself anticipates:

> But if his starrs haue fauour'd him so ill
> As to debarre him by his dunghill thoughts
> Iustly to esteeme my verses towring pitch:
> If his earth rooting snout shal gin to scorne
> My verse that giueth immortality:
> Then, Bella per Emathios
>
> (III.iv.1345-50)

The declaration of war is inevitable, and Furor must at last let loose with Ingenioso's solution to the dilemma: satire--though Furor's verbal abuse of the enemy is in his own most egregious Crispinus-Marstonian vein:

> Fearefull Megaera with her snakie twine
> Was cursed dam vnto thy damned selfe,
> And Hircan tigers in the desert Rockes
> Did foster vp thy loathed hatefull life,
> Base Ignorance thy wicked cradle rockt,
> Vile Barbarisme was wont to dandle thee:
> Some wicked hell-hound tutored thy youth,

> And all the grisly sprights of griping hell
> With mumming looks haue dogd thee since thy birth.
> . . . . . .
> Baleful Alecto, preethe stay a while,
> Till with my verses I haue rackt his soule:
> . . . . . .
> Shame sitt & howle vpon thy loathed graue,
> And howling vomit vp in filthy guise
> The hidden stories of thy villanies.
>
> (IV.ii.1696-1713)

Yet Furor's bitterness is tempered by a painful awareness of the hunger that satire cannot satisfy. He is given the dubious honor of the closing line of the confrontation scene--the ironic couplet: "Ile lash Apolloes selfe with ierking hand,/ Vnlesse he pawne his wit to buy me land " (1751-52). Throughout the play, Furor, echoing Ingenioso, touches on the playwrights' sophisticated self-awareness and their ability to laugh at themselves. This kind of comic sympathy is done nowhere better than in the final, reunion scene, where, as the stage direction notes, Furor "takes a louse off his sleeve" and says:

> And art thou there six footed Mercury?
> Are rymes become such creepers now a dayes?
> Presumptuous louse, that dost good manners lack,
> Daring to creepe on Poet Furors back.
>
> (V.iv.2078-81)

And later, the sublime and the ridiculous of this poetaster come together in one wonderful line: "Furor is lowsie, great Furor lowsie is" (2133).

There remain for discussion the two original scholar-poets

of the Parnassus Plays, Philomusus and Studioso. In The Second Return they are still ostensibly the major protagonists. And as the only poets of high seriousness in the play, they basically retain their idealized image. But I feel that there are weaknesses in their characterization that make them unsatisfactory embodiments of the Parnassian vision, and which in turn account for much of the disjointed effect of this play. The first problem is their failure to articulate any positive Parnassian position. The second, and more complex problem is that in this last Parnassus play their Arcadian posture is yoked, rather awkwardly, to the satiric function introduced in The First Return, creating inconsistencies of characterization that undermine thematic integrity at the apparent heart of the play.

The bulk of the Philomusus-Studioso dialogue consists of long passages of familiar Arcadian complaint--generalized lamentations in highly conventional drab verse, much of it expressed in an academic capping of rhymes. This stylized passage on their ill-sailing ship of life is typical:

> S. Schollers must frame to liue at a low sayle.
> P. Ill sayling where there blowes no happy gale.
> S. Our ship is ruin'd, all her tackling rent.
> P. And all her gaudy furniture is spent.
> S. Teares be the waues whereon her ruines bide.
> P. And sighes the windes that wastes her broken side.
> S. Mischiefe the Pilot is the ship to steare.
> P. And Wo the passenger this ship doth beare.
>
> (IV.iv.1901-08)

In this play, many of the Philomusus-Studioso complaints have the same theme: a debate between poetic despair and Stoic

resignation. A characteristic passage is a series of Spenserian and Senecan aphorisms, with an appropriate division of parts between Studioso as the intellectual Stoic, and Philomusus as the poetic disciple of Despair:

> S. To wayle thy happs argues a dastard minde.
> P. To beare too long argues an asses kinde.
> S. Long since the worst chance of the die was cast.
> P. But why should that word worst so long time last?
> S. Why dost thou now these sleeple plaints commence?
> P. Why should I ere be duld with patience?
> S. Wise folke do beare what strugling cannot mend.
> P. Good spirits must with thwarting fates contend.
> S. Some hope is left our fortunes to redresse.
> P. No hope but this, ere to be comfortlesse.
> S. Our liues remainder gentler hearts may finde.
> P. The gentlest harts to vs will proue vnkind.
>
> (III.v.1429-40)

In these passages Philomusus and Studioso are given the burden of the serious complaint of the play. As previously noted in The First Return, this function of stating positive values is always difficult to carry off successfully in a satiric context.[15] In The Second Return, it is further undermined by the quality and quantity of the material. On the whole, it is poorly written dramatic poetry, tediously commonplace in form and content; and it is grossly overdone: there are too many of these passages, and they are too long.

Most of the statements are generalized complaints, making little specific reference to the characters' problems as

[15]Cf. Jonson's idealistic characters (not only Horace, but his young lovers, from Ovid and Julia in The Poetaster, to the pair in Volpone), who repeatedly verge on the ludicrous.

artists and intellectuals. And most are negative, lacking any positive articulation of the worth of the poet. Both of these points become clear when one contrasts what meager poetic program there is in The Second Return to that in the Poetomachia play most articulate in this regard, Jonson's Poetaster, a work that has been described as "primarily a dramatic defense of poetry, a theatrical and effectively written ars poetica."[16]

Of all the Philomusus-Studioso dialogue, only a few scattered passages are differentiated enough to be of particular interest. The richest of these is a passage of about thirty-five lines in IV.iv (ll. 1867-1900). Here we find the only positive definition of the poetic function (and only one aspect of it) in the entire play--Studioso's brief reference to the scholar-poet as a bestower of immortality:

> Fond world that nere thinkes on that aged man,
> That Ariostoes old swift-paced man,
> Whose name is Tyme, who neuer lins to run,
> Loaden with bundles of decayed names,
> The which in Lethes lake he doth intombe,
> Saue onely those which swanlike schollers take,
> And doe deliuer from that greedy lake.
> Inglorious may they liue, inglorious die,
> That suffer learning liue in misery.
>
> (IV.iv.1867-75)

For a moment, Ariosto's figure of Time has inspired a Second Return author into a simple, sad, stately measure.

[16]Ernest Talbert, "The Purpose and Technique of Jonson's Poetaster," SP, 42 (1945), 226.
Also see Eugene Waith's limited corrective to Talbert, "The Poet's Morals in Jonson's Poetaster," MLQ, 12 (1951), 13-19; Waith says that in Poetaster Jonson presents "the theme of the good poet as a bulwark of society" (p. 18).

After Philomusus and Studioso exchange a few couplets of attack on wealthy barbarians who fail to appreciate the classical value of fame, there is an even longer passage of exceptional quality--Philomusus' moving description of the bitter plight of true pilgrims to Parnassus. It is one of few complaints that make specific reference to the scholar-poet's particular social difficulties. Philomusus says that he does not regret his own failure to attain to the "gaudy painted state" (l. 1886) of such as Burbage and Kempe:

> For what am I? The meanest of many mo,
> That earning profit are repaide with wo.
> But this it is that doth my soule torment:
> To thinke so many actiue, able wits,
> That might contend with proudest birds of Po,
> Sitt now immur'd within their priuate cells,
> Drinking a long, lank, watching candles smoake,
> Spending the marrow of their flowring age
> In fruitlesse poring on some worme eate leafe.
> When their deserts shall seeme of due to claime
> A cherefull crop of fruitfull swelling sheafe,
> Cockle their haruest is, and weeds their graine,
> Contempt their portion, their possession paine.
>
> (IV.iv.1888-1900)

Leishman points out the Spenserian quality of these lines;[17] again the author's good reading has carried him beyond his usual drab. But the moment passes, and the scene concludes with the pedestrian ill-sailing ship couplets quoted above.

These lines from IV.iv are exceptional.[18] By and large,

[17] Teares of the Muses, 217ff. (The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 348n.).

[18] The other exceptional passage is III.v.1411ff., Philomusus' evocation of Spenser's Despair (see below, p. 426.)

Philomusus and Studioso deliver prosaic verses, multiplied to tedium. As a result, I feel that while Philomusus and Studioso are not being intentionally ridiculed in their moments of high seriousness--as Furor Poeticus and Phantasma are, for example--their extensive complaints eventually do begin to sound ludicrous.[19] Although they are the play's model scholar-poets (presented, though they are, in defeat), they have nothing positive to offer in the way of a Parnassian philosophy--either directly, in a program, or indirectly, by virtue of the artistic merit of their poetry.

The more interesting problem is one of characterization. For at this point in the trilogy, Philomusus and Studioso are no longer innocent idealists. Their recent worldly exploits have cursed them with the knowledge of social evil, and in The Second Return they descend even further, and choose,

[19] Cf. Barish's commentary on a speech in the anonymous masque-comedy The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune: "But by this time we have stopped listening. For this will outlast a night in Russia, when nights are longest there. Worse, this is not dramatic poetry at all, but a nondramatic rehearsal of a few well-worn topoi. Nothing we have heard in the patterned exposition relates it to the speaker's individual plight; nothing links it to the action of which it forms part. Only toward the end of what proves to be a forty line monologue does Bomelio let fall a few general facts concerning his misfortunes. The rest lurches along in the deep ruts of platitude, reiterating commonplaces on the instability of life in a gnomic deluge similar to those found often in the miscellanies. One feels that the patterning in such cases works to inhibit particularity. It seems to encourage the playwright to substitute strips of presynthesised abstraction for dramatic realities, and so to reinforce a habit, common to much English drama of the period and doubtless traceable to the influence of the moralities, of seeing characters nearly entirely as exemplary, as illustrative of certain constants in human nature, and not as individuals undergoing unique experiences ("The Spanish Tragedy, or The Pleasures and Perils of Rhetoric," p. 65).

cynically, to experience evil. This fall obviously creates conflicts.

Throughout my discussion of The Second Return, I have concentrated on Ingenioso as the satiric spirit of the play. The disappointed scholar-poet turned satirist, this character is a version of a recognizable dramatic type--and, I believe, an artistically successful one. The case of Philomusus and Studioso is something else entirely. In utilizing them as the continuing link in the trilogy, the Second Return playwrights experimented in combining two very different variations of the rejected scholar--the serious, idealized poet who complains in formal verse, and the witty cynic turned Nashean rogue. While Philomusus and Studioso try to maintain their roles as Parnassian prophets, the realistic plot situation forces them to commit the most debased actions in the play. Not only do they abuse the world on its own terms, playing the false French physician and tutor; they also pervert their own artistic values by co-opting with Burbage and Kempe, and then fiddling for Sir Barbarism's patronage. Thus, at the level of immediate audience response, Philomusus and Studioso are social quacks and abusers of art who at the same time demand sympathy for themselves as rejected Parnassians; and they switch back and forth between these roles with disturbing frequency and suddenness.[20]

[20] A helpful comparison here is with Nashe's narrators, who, in satiric novelle tradition, are compleat rogues who are also responsible for a good deal of didactic moralizing. The difference is that they do not set themselves up as morally superior; their pride is limited to their wit and their pluckiness.

This is not to say that Philomusus and Studioso are hypocrites. We should not ask that Elizabethan characters be the psychologically rounded entities that belong to other, different dramatic traditions. But we can object to them on their own terms--in this case, the author's awkward use of the same characters to fulfill diametrically opposed allegorical functions. This combination of masks might be defended as an expression of a basic Parnassian theme--the irony that the scholar-poet, even while he labors to provide spiritual sustenance for society, is denied a portion of its earthly bread, and so turns society's accuser. That is, the thesis is itself a paradox. But while this analysis is theoretically interesting, it does not hold up when applied to the roles as they were written. The playwrights failed to carry off the juxtaposition successfully, and instead of presenting Philomusus and Studioso in ironic situations, they often put them in ludicrous ones.

An extreme example is offered by the IV.iv meeting with Burbage and Kempe. While Philomusus and Studioso play the "merry knaves" (Kempe's term, l. 1785) with the actors, they also deliver a great quantity of complaint material, which ranges from the beautiful passage on Ariosto's Time (ll. 1867-75), to some of the most pedestrian stuff in the play (e.g., the ill-sailing ship, ll. 1901-08). The audition passage, as we have seen, is a piece of light humor, and the comedy written for Philomusus and Studioso works within the immediate context. But in any larger view of the play, their

clowning jars us as embarrassingly inappropriate. The rapid transformation of the allegorical functions of a single poetic character that Spenser handled so deftly in *The Faerie Queene* seems to be an awkward technique for a dramatic character, with its more immediate, weighty presence on stage.

The end result of this role conflict is that while the *social* thesis of the Parnassus Plays--society's rejection of the true poet--is stated most strongly in *The Second Return*, the treatment of Philomusus and Studioso undermines the integrity of the play's *artistic* philosophy --Bradbrook's "attempt to define the Poet." The thematic coherence of the play must finally be salvaged by Ingenioso. For *The Second Return* is ultimately satiric, and this spirit overwhelms even Philomusus and Studioso, forcing them to abdicate to Ingenioso as the only viable poetic intelligence of the play. Philomusus and Studioso, in their secondary role as cynics, fail to offer even the negative kind of poetic philosophy contained in Ingenioso's theory of the function of satire. Even more serious, they violate Consiliodorus' principle of self-integrity, and they do so without the ironic self-awareness that saves Ingenioso from irresponsibility.

These criticisms can be best illustrated by a close examination of the Philomusus-Studioso material.[21] In their

[21] I think it does the play no injustice to take the Philomusus-Studioso passages out of context and treat them as a separate unit. The pair appears three times in the play--in a sequence at the beginning (as the false French physician and tutor, I.iv,v and II.i), in one mid-play scene (III.v), and in another long sequence at the end (with Burbage and Kempe, IV. iv, and with the fiddlers, V.i,ii). But their plot line is completely separated from those of the other poets, and they never even meet with Ingenioso and the others until the very last scene of the play.

opening unit (I.iv, v; II.i), the most accessible problem is the conflict of roles. The youths enter the play in extremely compromising disguises--"Philomusus in a Phisitians habite, Studioso like his man" (stage direction, I.iv)--seeking to gull the world in unabashed Nashean knavery. The vulgar humor of this passage, compounded of excretory references and false Latin, has already been detailed in regard to the Burgess, Doctor Theodore's patient in II.i. Yet in this same section Philomusus and Studioso must also articulate the basic Parnassian complaint against the world:

> S. Oh how it greeues my vexed soule to see
> Each painted asse in chayre of dignitye:
> And yet we grouell on the ground alone,
> Running through euery trade, yet thriue by none.
> More we must act in this liues Tragedy.
>
> (II.i.557-61)

And suffering tragedians/they do seem, heaping lamenting verses on the university for "Making vs wandring Pilgrimes to and fro" (l. 576).[22] Thus they alternate back and forth between their roles as imposters and prophets several times over during these scenes. And yet they were apparently intended to do so with the sympathy of the audience. The motto of this first Philomusus-Studioso section--

> Then burst with teene vnhappy graduate:
> Thy fortunes still wayward and backward bin,
> Nor canst thou thriue by vertue, nor by sin.
>
> (II.i.554-56)

[22]II.i.569-70 is quoted above, Chapter 7, p. 252.

--may be a realistic assessment of their social situation, but it would be a very different matter to defend it morally and artistically.

Beyond the problem of the role conflict here are the inherent weaknesses, artistic and philosophical, of the serious passages. Let us examine the opening Philomusus-Studioso scene (I.iv) in detail. After the initial horseplay --Theodore the physician delivering a ludicrous Latin diagnosis to a patient, with the reminder, "Let me heare how many stooles you doe make" (l. 371)--the youths switch abruptly to their iambic pentameter lamentations: "Then let vs steale time from this borrowed shape,/ Recounting our vnequall happs of late" (ll. 375-76). They relate that they have just returned from Rome and Reims, "that wonted ar to giue/ A Cardinall[s] cap to discontented clarkes/ That haue forsooke their home-bred thatched roofes" (393-95)--where, to their unpleasant surprise, they were also rejected. But the content of their complaint is generalized drab verse:

> Yet now we finde by bought experience,
> That where so ere we wander vp and downe
> On the rounde shoulders of this massy world,
> Or our ill fortunes, or the worldes ill eye
> Forspeaks our good, procures our miserye.
>
> (I.iv.382-86)

There is little meaningful reference to their particular plight as scholars or as artists--with the important exception of Studioso's succinct summation of the Parnassian complaint:

We haue the wordes, they the possession haue.

(I.iv.403)

And the usual mode is a series of conventional metaphors set to an uninspired rhythm--for example:

> So oft the Northe[r]n winde with frozen wings
> Hath beate the flowers that in our garden grewe,
> Throwne downe the stalkes of our aspiring youth,
> So oft hath winter nipt our trees faire rinde,
> That now we seeme nought but two bared boughes,
> Scorned by the basest bird that chirps in groaue.
>
> (I.iv.387-92)

There are also a few satiric touches, though these lines are similarly stylized: "And it's as good to starue mongst English swine,/ As in a forraine land to begge and pine" (397-98).

The next part of I.iv is one of the Stoicism vs. Despair exchanges, which reads, in part:

> S.[23] Soon then, O soone, may we both graued be.
> P.[23] Who wishes death, doth wrong wise destinie.
> S. It's wrong to force life-loathing men to breathe.
> P. It's sinne for[e] doomed day to wish thy death.
> S. Too late our soules flit to their resting place.
> P. Why mans whole life is but a breathing space.
> S. A painefull minute seemes a tedious yeare.
> P. A constant minde eternall woes will beare.
> S. When shall our soules their wearied lodge forgoe?
> P. When we haue tyred misery and woe.
>
> (I.iv.405-14)

[23]Leishman notes that there is a question about correct line assignments because they are different in the manuscript and the quarto (p. 251, note to ll. 399-416). I happen to feel that his assignments are wrong because they contradict the logical distinction between Studioso the Stoic and Philomusus the despairer that seems clear in passages without textual problems (e.g., II.i.597-82; III.v). However, my point here is that the passage is incoherent, regardless of how the lines are assigned.

But the dialogue is confusing, even as dialectic. To begin with, the debate between grief and patience is framed by statements of the play's revenge theme--Ingenioso's social theory of satire, in which the discontented scholar-poet turns to attack a world that rejects him. The passage begins with a vengeful line from each character:

> S.[24] Ile scorne the world that scorneth me againe.
> P.[24] Ile vex the world that workes me so much paine.
>
> (I.iv.399-400)

and it ends similarly, with their opting for satire,

> S. It shalbe so, see what a little vermine pouerty altereth a whole milky disposition.
>
> (I.iv.437-48)

and for revenge:

> P.[24] So then my selfe streight with reuenge Ile sate.
> S.[24] Prouoked patience growes intemperate.
>
> (I.iv.439-40)

The problem is that this revenge theme is philosophically incompatible with <u>both</u> of the positions taken in the debate--either the despairing feeling that a scholar's revenge against the world is futile ("Thy lame reuenging power the world well weenes," l. 401), or the Stoic arguments against revenge as immoral and irrelevant--rendering the entire passage confusing

[24] Although the assignations differ in manuscript and quarto, both versions have Philomusus and Studioso each speaking one of these lines.

as dialogue. In other words, there are three distinct philosophical positions, which cannot be divided logically between two characters.

While this may be an overly technical point, the major problem in this scene is not. I am referring to the very next passage--Philomusus' declaration of Nashean roguery, a long outburst of satiric prose in which the poet-scholar of Parnassus, having been rejected by established society, damns his self-integrity by opting for survival in the social underworld. Philomusus begins by abruptly terminating their maudlin Platonic dialogue:

> But letts leaue this capping of rimes, Studioso, and follow our late deuise, that wee may maintaine our heads in cappes, our bellyes in prouender, and our backs in sadle and bridle; hetherto wee haue sought all the honest meanes we could to liue, & now let vs dare aliquid breuibus Gyaris et carcere dignum: let vs run through all the lewd formes of lime-twig purloyning villanyes, let vs proue Cony-catchers, Baudes, or any thing, so we may rub out.
>
> (I.iv.417-24)

He then goes on to detail "my plot for playing the French Doctor," with which "wee'l gull the world, that hath in estimation forraine Phisitians" (ll. 424-25, 429-30). He concludes with an unexpected jab at the university community, an attack on the social affectations of certain professional academics:

> . . . & if any of the hidebound brethren of Cambridge and Oxforde, or any of those Stigmaticke masters of Artes, that abused vs in times past, leaue their owne Phisitians, and become our patients, wee'l alter quite the stile of them, for they shall neuer hereafter

> write, your Lordships most bounden, but, your Lordships most laxatiue.
>
> (I.iv.430-36)

This speech demands attention because it is the only time in the play that Philomusus and Studioso exhibit any awareness of their double role[25]--their usual manner being to articulate their legitimate complaints, while acting the illegitimate rogues. But Philomusus' transformation from victim to villain is so abrupt and thorough, and so lacking in Parnassian rationale, that it is disturbing rather than instructive. In fact, this is one of the most cynical and debased speeches in The Second Return--especially coming, as it does, from this idealistic protagonist. And the academic reference is more awkward than aware; coming from Philomusus, it seems like misplaced satiric indulgence on the part of the author--in contrast, for example, to the academic satire meaningfully placed in the mouths of Sir Raderick and the Recorder (III.ii).

In review, the overall impression of this first Philomusus-Studioso unit is peculiarly disjointed--offering support to the authorial theory that The Second Return is a collection of contributions from different writers with varying talents and philosophies. The separate pieces read as if they had been patched together by an editor or stage manager, and, moreover, by one who had not done his homework in either poetry or logic.

[25]With the exception of Philomusus' quip to the Pages in V.ii (ll. 2018-19), quoted below, p. 433.

Philomusus and Studioso arouse similar audience tensions each time they appear. They have one scene in the middle of the play (III.v). At its core is one of their two distinctive and moving complaint passages.[26] This is a long verse passage spoken by Philomusus. It begins with one of the few references in the play to the particular plight of Parnassians, conveying a sense of the sacrifice, trial and loss sustained by the professional scholar who is unappreciated by society:

> In our first gamesome age, our doting sires
> Carked and cared to haue vs lettered:
> Sent vs to Cambridge where, our oyle yspent,
> Vs our kinde Colledge from the teate did teare,
> And for'st vs walke before we weaned weare.
>
> (III.v.1411-15)

The scholar's complaint concludes poetically--with Philomusus' evocative reference to Spenser's Despair (F.Q., I.xi.33ff.):

> Nay let vs run vnto the balefull caue,
> Pight in the hollow ribbs of craggy cliffe,
> Where dreary owles do shrike the liue-long night,
> Chasing away the byrdes of chearefull light:
> Where yawning Ghosts do howle in ghastly wise,
> Where that dull hollow ey'd, that staring syre,
> Yclept Dispaire, hath his sad mansion:
> Him let vs finde, and by his counsell we
> Will end our too much yrked misery.
>
> (III.v.1420-28)

A few other lines are touched with elegiac lyricism:

[26]The other, on Ariosto's Time (IV.iv.1867-1900), is discussed above, pp. 414-15.

> P. Why do fond men tearme it impiety,
> To send a wearisome sadde grudging Ghost
> Vnto his home, his long, long, lasting home?
>
> (III.v.1392-94)

But these lines of high poetry are preceded and followed by still more of the drab debate between grief and patience--for example:

> P. Why the wide world, that blesseth some with wayle,
> Is to our chayned thoughts a darkesome gayle.
>
> S. Oh no, the sentinell his watch must keepe,
> Vntill his Lord do lycence him to sleepe.
>
> (III.v.1388-89 and 1397-98)

And, again, there is the role conflict: all of this maudlin seriousness must be viewed in the perspective of the opening lines of the scene, Studioso's sardonic observation that they are actually on the run to escape the law!

> Well Philomusus, we neuer scaped so faire a scouring: why yonder are purseuantes out for the French Doctor, and a lodging bespoken for him and his man in Newgate. It was a terrible feare that made vs cast our hayre.
>
> (III.v.1381-85)

The Philomusus-Studioso problems climax in their final unit--outrageously, as we have seen, in their encounter with Burbage and Kempe, and then, rather more disturbingly, in the Act V episode with the fiddlers.

The Act V material again alternates between Arcadian complaint and Nashean satire. Though there is a fleeting touch of loveliness in Philomusus' "Time was, in time of my

young fortunes spring,/ I was a gamesome boy and learned to sing" (V.i.1958-59), the formal verse is generally uninspired --despite the fact that Philomusus' "priuate song" (l. 1939) of lamentation (ll. 1941-52) contains one of the few specific references to a life of art and scholarship:

> Fond arts farewell, that swallowed haue my youth.
> Adew vayne muses, that haue wrought my ruth.
> Repent fond syre, that traynd'st thy happlesse sonne
> In learnings loare, since bounteous almes are done.
>
> (V.i.1947-50)

But then the play shifts gears again: with only the briefest authorial acknowledgment of the juxtaposition--Philomusus' "Our life is a playne song with cunning pend,/ Whose highest pitch in lowest base doth end" (ll. 1935-36)--the youths veer cynically toward their final encounter with satiric vulgarity.

Philomusus and Studioso join with a troupe of fiddlers who, in search of a touch of Christian liberality at the New Year, play at the door of Sir Raderick's town house. This is as low as the Parnassians can go: Philomusus describes it as "the most desperate kinde of seruice that euer I aduentured on" (V.i.1965-66). As professional scholar-poets, turning beggar-musician is the basest trade, economically and socially. On the artistic level, they taint themselves by a last-ditch attempt to serve Sir Barbarism. Their commentary after the fact shows some awareness of their debasement:

> S. Then let vs leaue this baser fidling trade,
> For though our purse should mend, our credit fades.
> P. Full glad I am to see thy mindes free course
> Declining from this trencher waiting trade.
> . . . . . .

My busie conscience checkt my guilty soule
For seeking maint'nance by base vassallage.

(V.ii.2028-31, 2034-35)

But again the satirical action overwhelms the poetic commentary, and idealism is sacrificed for comedy.

The action here parallels that in the confrontation scene of the Ingenioso plot. Philomusus and Studioso, like their humourous counterparts, are rejected--the point being to reiterate the hopelessness of art appealing to ignorance for patronage, regardless of the latter's social power. But, unexpectedly, the Philomusus-Studioso experience turns out to be even more humiliating--and therefore more absurd--because it is a mock rejection: in an ironic echo of the Raderick-Amoretto-Recorder rejection of the humourous poets, the ideal Parnassians are dismissed not by the real powers, but by their pages, who amuse themselves at the expense of the scholar-poets by impersonating their masters.

The sequence with the Pages is well done, in a grossly comic way. In the Poetomachia vein, there are a few satiric literary references--the pseudo-Sir Raderick showing off his acquaintance with popular culture ("Haue you neuer a song of maister Dowlands making?" (V.ii.1979-80) and Amoretto's Page, ridiculing his master's academic and amorous dabbling, first by a request for the tune to a Virgilian verse, and then by a vulgar parody of popular lyrics ("Good fayth this pleaseth my sweete mistres admirably: cannot you play Twittye twitty twatty foole, or To be at her, to be at her?" (ll. 1976-78). But the scene moves on to re-state the encompassing sin of

the new men--the abuse of social power based on money. In a comic vignette of injustice, Sir Raderick's Page (referring to the knight's position as a justice of the peace) says: "Sirrha Amoretto: here are a couple of fellowes brought before me, and I know not how to decide the cause; looke in my Christmas booke which of them brought me a present." Amoretto's Page answers: "On New-yeares day goodman Foole brought you a present, but goodman Clowne brought you none." "Then," concludes the mock justice, "the right is on goodman fooles side" (1984-91). Sir Raderick's Page is a good mimic of his master's limited means of expression. He dismisses the fiddlers first with a blunt "What, haue they brought me any thing? If not, say I take Phisick" (1997-98), then with some of his punning legal doubletalk:

> Forasmuch fiddlers, as I am of the peace, I must needs loue all weapons and instruments that are for the peace, among which I account your fiddles, because they can neither bite nor scratch. Marry now finding your fiddles to iarre, and knowing that iarring is a cause of breaking the peace, I am by the vertue of my office and place to commit your quarelling fiddles to close prisonment in their cases.
>
> (V.ii.1999-2005)

Finally the Page imitates the knight's unwitting parody of the Recorder's specious legal jargon:

> For that Ile giue [you] Maister Recorders law, and that is this, There is a double oath, a formall oath and a materiall oath; a materiall oath cannot be broken, the formall oath may be broken: I swore formally: farewell Fidlers.
>
> (V.ii.2013-17)

The knight is satirized here; but even in this final ironic replay of the rejection of the scholar-poet, Sir Raderick's worldly will prevails, impressing us once more with an assertion of his triumphant reality.

Nevertheless, cynical though the Second Return playwrights were, they were not so pessimistic as to abandon their heroes here. Following this crassest brush with reality, Philomusus and Studioso, opting for "A shepheards poore secure contented life" (V.ii.2037), are sent off into Arcady. The transition is a last, extreme instance of their problematic shifting of roles. In a sense, Philomusus and Studioso's self-exile is their only truly Parnassian action in the play; but our admiration is overwhelmed by a sense of inappropriateness: they have been such rogues all along, to walk off now, self-righteously, into the sunset--or, to be more precise, "vnto the downes of Kent" (V.iv.2153).

Boas comments on this "unexpectedly Arcadian close to their motley adventures in the Elizabethan underworld"--though his analysis of it as authorial moralizing on the vanity of worldly aspirations seems to be critical rationalization.[27] Harbage deals with the problem more satisfactorily when he speaks of a "confusion in values" experienced by the university wits. Writing of the mid-sixteenth century

[27] University Drama in the Tudor Age, p. 339.

university population--specifically, the increased attendance of sons of the nobility and landed gentry, and its "unsettling effect on . . . students from families of lower rank"--Harbage states: "It is impossible to overestimate the effect of a university degree upon an individual's social attitudes in the period under scrutiny." He continues:

> The Cambridge Parnassus plays are revealing in a way unsuspected by their authors. Our sympathies go out to the youths who have made the difficult ascent of the Muses' hill, but their notion of their place in the commonwealth is sadly defective. Education to them seems to be something automatically conveying distinction and deserving reward, principally in the form of leisure to enjoy the arts; all forms of service, except possibly the holding of a rich benefice, seem contemptible.[28]

The first problem with the pastoral retirement is the immediate context: the audience is asked to switch from comedy to pathos one more time; but it is difficult for this episode to sustain still another abrupt change of mood. Moreover, the material with the Pages is so comic and crass[29]

[28] Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, pp. 98-99. The beginning of this paragraph is quoted above, Introduction, p. 14.

[29] The low point is the Page's parody of Amoretto, "My mistres is so sweete, that al the Phisitions in the towne cannot make her stinck, she neuer goes to the stoole: oh she is a most sweete little munkey" (V.ii.1992-94).

as to make it a particularly unfortunate lead-in for the most romantic material in the play. Philomusus' pious lament afterwards,

> Where ere we in the wide world playing be,
> Misfortune beares a part, and marres our melody;
> Impossible to please with Musickes straine,
> Our hartstrings broken are, nere to be tun'd againe.
>
> (V.ii.2024-27)

sounds ridiculous--especially coming, as it does, directly after one of the protagonists' rare acknowledgments of their own debasement, Philomusus' left-handed compliment to the Pages' wit as the way of the world:

> Farewell good wags, whose witt praise worth I deeme;
> Though somewhat waggish, so we all haue beene.
>
> (V.ii.2018-19)

The couplet is striking for its honesty, if not for its moral integrity, but in this play it is too singular a confession to merit absolution.

The pastoral retreat fails in a larger sense because it does not develop meaningfully from within the play, and it is an inadequate response to the thematic issues. Philomusus' textbook notion of pastoral life is one of emblematic simplicity and contentment:

> Why then letts both go spend our little store
> In the prouision of due furniture,
> A shepards hooke, a tarbox and a scrippe,
> And hast vnto those sheep adorned hills,
> Where if not blesse our fortunes we may blesse our wills.
> True mirth we may enioy in thacked stall,
> Nor hoping higher rise, nor fearing lower fall.
>
> (V.ii.2046-52)

But it has nothing to do with the harsh realities of the world of this play. It is clearly not a real solution; neither is it a poetic resolution of conflicts. The poverty of the conception is reflected in the triteness of the verse: "Nor any life to me can sweeter be/ Then happy swaines in plaine of Arcady" (ll. 2044-45). Philomusus and Studioso's pastoral retirement is a Spenserian convention without Spenserian substance.

Spenser also dealt with the great Parnassian dilemma--the tension between idealism and cynicism in the scholar-poet who desires to serve the spiritual needs of society but is rejected. His formal complaint is The Teares of the Muses, but he wrestles with this theme again and again throughout his oeuvre, beginning with the unresolved dialogue of the "October" eclogue in which Cuddie, "the perfecte paterne of a Poete, . . . finding no maintenaunce of his state and studies, complayneth of the contempte of Poetrie, and the causes thereof" (E. K.'s Argument), a complaint that idealistic Piers counters with the high Parnassian principle:

> Cuddie, the prayse is better, then the price,
> The glory eke much greater then the gayne (ll. 19-20)[30]

[30]The Parnassian defense of Elizabethan poetry is Daniel's monument to scholarship and art, Musophilus (1599). In the dedicatory sonnet to his apparently deserving patron Fulke Greville, Daniel says he presents his Muse

> Striuing to make, her now contemned arte
> As faire t' her selfe as possiblie she can;
> Least seeming of no force, of no desart
> She might repent the course that she began,
> And, with these times of dissolution, fall
> From goodness, vertue, glorie, fame and all.

(continued)

To depict the anguish of the artist's social dilemma, Spenser often utilized the convention borrowed by the Second Return playwrights, the poet's pastoral retreat. His richest use of it is a sophisticated variation in which the disappointed shepherd-poet breaks his pipe--the darker characterization of Colin Clout that appears intermittently from the "Plaintiue" verses of The Shepheardes Calender to Spenser's great poetic emblem of the poet's paradoxical relationship with society, Calidore's obstruction of Colin's artistic vision on Mt. Acidale in Book VI of The Faerie Queene. This paradoxical conceit of a poet-protagonist who does not sing enables Spenser to articulate the ironies of an artistic ministration to an unappreciative audience.

Daniel's lover of the Muses begins his defense in dialogue with the worldly Philocosmus, but then, in increasingly self-directed monologues, he whittles down his potential audience to "the few that onely lend their eare" (l. 555), then to "onely one" (l. 567), finally confronting the ultimate challenge to the unappreciated scholar-poet:

> But what if none; it cannot yet vndo
> The loue I beare vnto this holy skill:
> This is the thing that I was borne to do,
> This is my Scene, this part must I fulfill.
> (ll. 575-78)

There is nothing quite like these lines in all Elizabethan poetry--as there is nothing comparable to the unique critical tone of Daniel's Defence of Ryme (1603). In Musophilus, Daniel's poet-protagonist--like Spenser, but unlike Philomusus and Studioso, and even Colin Clout--comes to terms with the absolute responsibility of his calling--that the poet must sing . . . regardless of societal response. But Musophilus belongs to an Elizabethan genre of high narrative verse, and to fairly compare its philosophical content to the satiric complaint of the Parnassus Plays is too extensive an undertaking for a note. Daniel citations from Poems and A Defence of Ryme, ed. Arthur Colby Sprague (1930; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 67-85.

I think that in The Second Return there is similarly an attempt to artistically express the Parnassian paradox, but that it fails. The play is so dominated by the reality of society's rejection of poetry, and the scholar-poet protagonists offer so little evidence of their own artistic worth, that satiric complaint overwhelms positive value, and we are left with inconsistency rather than irony. While the biographical details of Spenser's life made him an idol to the St. John's playwrights, the young wits never seriously imitated his rich poetic treatment of the Parnassian theme.

The Philomusus-Studioso problem continues into the final scene of the play. Their Arcadian posture is reinforced by Studioso's description of the pastoral retreat as a consolation for the loss of society:

> Weel teach each tree, euen of the hardest kind,
> To keepe our woefull name[s] within their rinde;
> Weel watch our flock[s], and yet weele sleepe withall,
> Weele tune our sorrowes to the waters fall:
> The woods and rockes with our shrill songs weele bless,
> Let them proue kind since men proue pittilesse.
>
> (V.iv.2100-05)[31]

On the other hand, I doubt that anyone who had just sat through The Second Return could seriously sympathize with Philomusus'

[31] Also see his farewell speech:
> So shall we shun the company of men,
> That growes more hatefull as the world growes old:
> Weel teach the murmering brookes in tears to flow,
> And steepy rocke[s] to wayle our passed wo.
> (V.iv.2159-62)

pious cant:

> We haue run through many trades, yet thriue by none,
> Poore in content, and onely rich in moane.
> A shephards life thou knowst I wont t' admire,
> Turning a Cambridge apple by the fire:
> To liue in humble dale we now are bent,
> Spending our dayes in feareless merriment.
>
> (V.iv.2095-99)[32]

It is helpful to compare the treatment of Philomusus and Studioso with that of the minor protagonists, Academico and Furor Poeticus, as they appear in this final scene. With Academico, who is, like Philomusus and Studioso, an essentially serious character, the author gets into similar trouble by abandoning consistency for the sake of satire. The model academic announces that he will retire, fittingly, to Academe, returning to his modest but authentic status:

> Adew you gentle spirits, long adew,
> Your witts I loue and your ill fortunes rue.
> Ile hast me to my Cambridge cell againe:
> My fortunes cannot wax, but they may waine.
>
> (V.iv.2163-66)

And for a fragile moment, Ingenioso even suggests that the university is the true resting place for the neglected scholar-poet:

> And thou still happy Academico,
> That still maist rest vpon the Muses bed,
> Inioying there a quiet slumbering,
> When thou repayr'st vnto thy Grantaes streame,

[32]Also see his farewell speech, "Sure footing we shall find in humble dale . . . ," ll. 2154-58.

> Wonder at thine owne blisse, pitty our case,
> That still doe tread ill fortunes maze.
>
> (V.iv.2172-77)

However, the immediately preceding scene is a brief meeting between Ingenioso and Academico in which Academico, obtrusively out of character, plays the academic fop, complaining:

> Fayth Ingenioso, I thinke the Vniuersity is a melancholik life, for there a good fellow cannot sit two howres in his chamber, but he shall be troubled with the bill of a Draper or a Vintner: but the point is, I know not how to better my selfe, and so I am fayne to take it.
>
> (V.iii.2069-74)

Academico's momentary aberration as the stereotype of the wastrel university student seems another example of authorial indulgence and editorial negligence.[33] The casual treatment of this character here also underlines the playwrights' decided interest in the professional literary world; in The Second Return, academic life is never really presented as a viable alternative.

There is no such problem with Furor Poeticus. Like Ingenioso, the major protagonist he echoes, Furor is consistently satiric and, at his best, meaningfully ironic. In the last scene, his overweening pride is still comic; but the rededication of his talent to satire, although outrageously Marstonian in expression, somehow manages to preserve the

[33]Cf. the satiric power of the same stereotype in the mouths of the town of Cambridge merchants in The First Return (Act II).

integrity of this poetaster:

> Farewel my masters, Furor's a masty dogge,
> Nor can with a smooth glozing farewell cog.
> Nought can great Furor do, but barke and howle,
> And snarle, and grin, and carle, and towze the world,
> Like a great swine, by his long laue-eard lugges.
> Farewell musty, dusty, rusty, fusty London,
> Thou art not worthy of great Furors wit,
> That cheatest vertue of her due desert,
> And sufferest great Apolloes sonne to want.
>
> (V.iv.2191-99)

Nevertheless, the Philomusus-Studioso awkwardness does not destroy the impact of this single meeting of the protagonists, during which they recount their disappointments, plot their future courses, and bid each other farewell. And for one last time, it is Ingenioso who holds it all together, bridging the gap between the satiric and the pathetic. Concluding his role as stage-managing Vice, Ingenioso hosts the reunion, first delivering his own bitter complaint as the keynote address, and then bidding his fellows lovely farewells --the lines to Academico quoted above (2172-77), and the moving adieu to Philomusus and Studioso, which probably does more than anything else to legitimize their pastoral retreat:

> Adew good sheppards, happy may you liue,
> And if heereafter in some secret shade
> You shall recount poore schollers miseries,
> Vouchsafe to mention with teare-swelling eyes
> Ingeniosoes thwarting destinyes.
>
> (V.iv.2167-71)

Ingenioso's own final statement is a gesture of self-definition:

> Faith we[34] are fully bent to be Lords of misrule in
> the worlds wide hall; our voyage is to the Ile of Dogges,
> There where the blattant beast doth rule and raigne,
> Rending the credditt of whome ere hee please;
> Where serpents tongs the pen men are to write,
> Where cats do waule by day, dogges [barke] by night:
> There shall engoared venom be my inke,
> My pen a sharper quill of porcupine,
> My stayned paper, this sin loaden earth:
> There will I write, in lines shall neuer die,
> Our feared Lordings crying villainy.
>
> (V.iv.2108-18)

Thus at the conclusion of the Parnassus trilogy Ingenioso fulfills the prophetic analysis of the development of satire that he articulated at the beginning of The First Return. In a studied reversal of the praise function of poetry, the satirist, as master of the world's revels, will immortalize society's villainy. The destination--"the Isle of Dogges"--is expectedly Nashean;[35] but the allegory is surprisingly Spenserian. It is indeed curious that of all the Second Return poets, it is this cynical wit who best utilizes the master . . . although Ingenioso's grim selection of Spenser is from the treacherously

[34] I.e., Ingenioso, Furor Poeticus and Phantasma.

[35] Leishman notes the topical allusions to Nashe. The Isle of Dogs, a marsh opposite Greenwich that had acquired unsavory literary connotations--first mentioned by Ingenioso in the previous scene ("writts are out for me, to apprehend mee for my playes, and now I am bound for the Ile of doggs," V.iii.2064-66)--is the title of a lost play (1597) co-authored by Nashe. Other primary sources document that the play was judged seditious, the authors interrogated, and the actors (including Ben Jonson) imprisoned (The Three Parnassus Plays, Introduction, pp. 77-78).

There is also a possible allusion to an unsuccessful career at Cambridge. Ingenioso says:

> Wish them that are preferments Almoners
> To cherish gentle wits in their greene bud:
> For had not Cambridge bin to me vnkinde,
> I had not turn'd to gall a milkye minde.
>
> (V.iv.2178-81)

broken-off ending of The Faerie Queene, with the slanderous Blatant Beast in perpetual persecution of the true poet. The affirmation of the poetic vocation here lies in Ingenioso's application of the Spenserian insight to his own life, and his utilization of it for the creation of a poetic philosophy. Thus, in the only viable artistic choice in the play, Ingenioso will have his revenge . . . and write poetry too.

As the presiding spirit of The Second Return, Ingenioso also bids the audience farewell. His epilogue, which is unlike his Marstonian prologue (I.i) but very much in keeping with the play's original verse prologue (ll. 70-83), is a charming address to the "many gentle witts" in attendance. Ingenioso plays with the meaning of gentility, calling to mind the opening lines of The First Return where the Stagekeeper objects to the Prologue's ready use of the conventional address to the audience as "Gentles." First playing with the intellectual and academic qualifications of gentility, Ingenioso explains the unconventionally black conclusion of this comedy:

> Nay stay awhile and helpe me to content
> So many gentle witts attention,
> Who kenne the lawes of euery comick stage,
> And wonder that our scene ends discontent.
> Ye ayrie witts, subtill, [Iudicious],
> Since that few schollers fortunes are content,
> Wonder not if our scene ends discontent.
> When that your fortunes reach their owne content,
> Then shall our scene end here in merriment.
>
> (V.iv.2200-08)

At this point Philomusus offers the unlikely suggestion of an Arcadian sequel to the trilogy:

> Perhaps some happy wit, with feeling hand,
> Hereafter may recorde the pastorall
> Of the two schollers of Pernassus hill,
> And then our scene may end and haue content.
>
> (V.iv.2209-12)

But this is clearly not the stuff of this play, and in its final moments, The Second Return is true to the matter of "poore schollers miseries." Ingenioso reiterates the Parnassian theme of the artist's inability to function in society on his own terms; and he does so with artistic integrity: it is a complaint made not from envy but from pride, based on a scholar-poet's belief in the worth of "bright arts." For the artists who comprehend this dilemma--and Ingenioso, more than Philomusus and Studioso, is one of them--all that remains is the sympathy of the truly gentle, who are to be known by a refinement of moral as well as intellectual faculties. The play ends:

> Ing. Meane time if there be any spightfull Ghost
> That smiles to see poore schollers miseries,
> Cold is his charity, his wit too dull,
> We scorne his censure, hees a ieering gull.
> But whatsoere refined sprights there be
> That deeplye grone at our Calamity,
> Whose breath is turned to sighes, whose eyes are wet,
> To see bright arts bent to their latest set,
> Whence neuer they againe their heads shall reere
> To bless our art-disgracing hemisphere:
>
> Ing. / Furor / Phant. } Let them,
> Acad. / Phil. / Stud. } and none but them,
> All giue vs a Plaudite.
>
> (V.iv.2213-25)

Presumably the original St. John's audience of refined spirits obliged.

Appendix

An examination of the evidence for a common author and common title for the second and third Parnassus Plays

a. Author

While Leishman generally favored a single author for the two Return plays, he recognized the weakness of the available evidence for this hypothesis, and in his eminently fair and well-argued discussion, he presents most of the opposing arguments.[1]

The evidence consists of two allusions to the author in the Second Return Prologue, both of which are highly debatable. The passage Leishman considered more convincing[2] is a playful reference back to the first two installments of the trilogy:

> Humors indeede: is it not a pretty humor to stand hammering vpon two indiuiduum vagum, 2. schollers, some foure yeare? These same Philomusus and Studioso haue beene followed with a whip and a verse like a Couple of Vagabonds through England and Italy. The Pilgrimage to Pernassus, and the returne from Pernassus, haue stood the honest Stage-keepers in many a Crownes expence for linckes and vizardes: purchas'd [many] a Sophister a knock with a clubbe, hindred the buttlers box, and emptied the Colledge barrells; and now, vnless you haue heard the former, you may returne home [againe] as wise as you came, for this last is the last parte of the returne from Pernassus, that is, the last time that the Authors wit wil turne vpon the toe in this vaine; and at this time the scene is not at

[1] The Three Parnassus Plays, Introduction, "Authorship," pp. 26-34.

[2] Leishman argues the point in detail on p. 28.

> Pernassus, that is, lookes not good inuention in the face.
>
> (Prologue, ll. 34-38)

The line, "that is, the last time that the Authors wit wil turne vpon the toe in this vaine" seems to posit a single author. However, there are three objections to accepting this implication.

The first problem is that Leishman's text here is the manuscript, which, while it is not an autograph, Leishman considered more reliable than the 1606 quartos.[3] The quartos, however, insert a phrase into the line that gives it a completely different meaning: "that is, both the first and the last time that the Authors wit will turne vpon the toe in this vaine"--i.e., this is the author's only treatment of the subject. Leishman, although acknowledging the possibility that the manuscript scribe carelessly omitted these words, says that the manuscript version "seems to correct" the quarto implication that the author of The Second Return did not write either of the earlier Parnassus Plays.[4] Leishman's reason for believing the omission to be a correction seems to be based on his earlier conclusion that the manuscript is not only superior, but that it contains later revisions. But

[3] "Relationship between the Halliwell-Phillipps MS. and the quartos of 1606," pp. 12-17.

[4] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 28.

when one refers back to the passage explaining the revisions of the manuscript, one finds the circular argument that one reason for considering the manuscript variants to be "revisions" is that "the MS. appears to correct certain statements of fact" in the prose prologue.[5]

The second problem with this allusion involves the question of the authenticity of the complete Second Return Prologue. The Prologue as we know it consists of a comic prose dialogue and two formal verse speeches. Leishman concluded that lines 70-83 constitute the original verse prologue written for the first performance of The Second Return (1601/02), and that the introductory prose dialogue (which includes the speech under question) was written later and added for a second performance (1602/03), at which time a second verse prologue (ll. 58-69) was substituted for the original verse prologue.[6] This leaves us with a Prologue most of which was written two years after the composition of the play, and very possibly not even by the same author.

The third argument involves the more general problem of Elizabethan usage, and the possibility that a Prologue reference to "the Author"--particularly in a university production, and one which may well be a collaborative effort--is not a literal allusion, but rather a conventional reference to the maker, or makers, of the play, and not reliable as a source of historical information.

[5] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 15.

[6] Ibid., p. 223, note to ll. 58-69.

The second authorial allusion is in the opening lines of the original verse prologue:

> In Scholers fortunes twise forlorne and dead
> Twise hath our weary pen earst laboured,
> Making them Pilgrims to Pernassus hill,
> Then penning their returne with ruder quill.
> Now we present vnto each pittying eye
> The schollers progresse in their miserye.
>
> (ll. 70-75)

Leishman, developing a point made by G. C. Moore Smith,[7] comments:

> . . . it is not actually asserted, although, probably, implied, that [The Second Return] was written by the author of [The First Return] --implied, because the apologetic "ruder quill" would hardly have been applied to the author of [The First Return] if the play which the prologue is introducing had been written by a different author: in that case, something like
>
> > Now with yet ruder quill we let you see
> > The schollers progresse in their miserye
>
> would surely have been required, since one of the rules of prologue-writing would seem to be to exalt your predecessors and to disparage yourself.[8]

Leishman's reasoning is questionable on two counts. First, as Boas points out, "ruder quill" can be interpreted as a purely stylistic reference: "the words may have reference to the dropping . . . of the allegorical device, and the substitution of a looser dramatic framework."[9] Secondly, there is

[7] "The Parnassus Plays," MLR, 10 (1915), 168.

[8] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 27.

[9] University Drama in the Tudor Age, p. 338.

the point about the customarily loose usage of the authorial "we" and "our" by Elizabethan dramatists and actors. It is possible that by putting emphasis on the word "we"--"Now we present vnto each pittying eye/ The schollers progresse in their miserye"--the speaker of the verse prologue could have indicated that a new author, or group of authors, was responsible for the final Parnassus Play.

In sum, neither of the allusions to a common Returns author is persuasive on its own merits; they are much less convincing in the face of the powerful critical impression that The Second Return was written by different hands.

b. Title

I endorse Leishman's suggestion that the third Parnassus Play was originally called The Progress from Parnassus, "the three plays being originally known as . . . the Pilgrimage, the Return, and the Progress."[10] The source of this idea is the only manuscript version of the play (Halliwell-Phillipps, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C.), which is entitled "The Progresse to Parnassus" (with the preposition explained as a scribal error). There is also some internal support in the original verse prologue couplet, "Now we present vnto each pittying eye/ The schollers progresse in their miserye" (ll. 74-75).

The traditional title of the last play comes from the two 1606 quartos, which are entitled, The Returne From Pernassus:

[10] The Three Parnassus Plays, p. 27.

Or The Scourge of Simony. There may be internal evidence for this title in the line of Prologue dialogue discussed in connection with authorship, "this last is the last parte of the returne from Pernassus" (ll. 44-45). But given the hint of the Progress title, one can see two critical problems with accepting the Return title. The first is the improbability of writers so self-consciously bold as the creators of the third Parnassus Play using the two-year-old title of a comparatively old-fashioned academic play. The second problem is the inaccuracy of the sub-title, "The Scourge of Simony": simony is the subject of only one of the play's actions, and one that does not involve the three major poet-protagonists. It is possible that this sub-title was a printer's title-page advertisement that the play he was trying to sell, a scholar-poet's complaint, was not without redeeming social value.

In other words, there is reason to believe that the title The Return from Parnassus rightfully belongs only to the second Parnassus Play--i.e., the play Leishman and other scholars refer to as The First Part of The Return from Parnassus, whose only existing manuscript (Rawlinson D. 398, Bodleian Library) is entitled, "The Returne from Parnassus." The "first" and "second" parts nomenclature is the work of later scholars, beginning with the pioneering W. D. Macray, the discoverer of the Pilgrimage and First Return manuscript, who published The Pilgrimage to Parnassus with the two parts of the Return from Parnassus in 1886.

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