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The Body *Satyrical*:

Satire and the *Corpus Mysticum* during Crises of Fragmentation

in Late Medieval and Early Modern France

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in French and Francophone Studies

by

Christopher Martin Flood

2013

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Body *Satyrical*:

Satire and the *Corpus Mysticum* during Crises of Fragmentation

in Medieval and Early Modern France

by

Christopher Martin Flood

Doctor of Philosophy in French and Francophone Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Jean-Claude Carron, Chair

The later Middle Ages and early modern period in France were marked by

divisive conflicts (i.e. the Western Schism, the Hundred Years' War, and the Protestant

Reformation) that threatened the stability and unity of two powerful yet seemingly fragile

social entities, Christendom and the kingdom of France. The anxiety engendered by these

crises was heightened by the implicit violence of a looming fragmentation of those

entities that, perceived through the lens of the Pauline corporeal metaphor, were imagined

as *corpora mystica* (mystical bodies). Despite the gravity of these crises of fragmentation,

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each met with a somewhat unexpected and, at times, prolific response in the form of satirical literature. Since that time, these satirical works have been reductively catalogued under the unwieldy genre of traditional satire and read superficially as mere vituperation or ridiculing didacticism. However, when studied against the background of sixteenth-century theories of satire and the corporeal metaphor, a previously unnoticed element of these works emerges that sets them apart from traditional satire and provides an original insight into the culture of the time.

French humanists were convinced of a significant, etymological relationship between the literary form *satire* and the mythological *satyr*, a notion still debated today. This assumed connection informed the sixteenth-century concept of satire in several ways, but the most important relates to the common image of the satyr's hybrid physical composition. Imposing this image of hybrid corporality upon the metaphorical *corpora* of the Catholic Church and kingdom of France, certain satirists subtly posited within their corrective satirical works a hybrid mystical corporality that would have permitted continued union as an internally diverse social body. I designate this emphasis on continued social corporality communicated by satire the *satyrical*.

This dissertation has for goal the definition and examination of the *satyrical* as a literary and social phenomenon from its emergence in the late Middle Ages to its pinnacle during the Renaissance and concomitant Protestant Reformation, and rapid decline at the end of the sixteenth century. This is accomplished by means of a thorough analysis of the evolution of satire as a general literary mode, from its origins in Antiquity

to the Renaissance, and individual examinations of representative works from the periods

in question as they relate to their historical contexts.

The dissertation of Christopher Martin Flood is approved.

Malina Stefanovska

Zrinka Stahuljak

Brian P. Copenhaver

Jean-Claude Carron, Committee Chair

For my wife and children.

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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

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---. "Writing the Fragmented Body: Satire as Weapon and Metaphor in the Wars of Religion." Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. Fort Worth, TX. 29 Oct. 2011.

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---. "From Private Mockery to Public Scorn: Renaissance Satire and Nascent Subjectivities." Renaissance Conference of Southern California. Pasadena, CA. 6 Feb. 2010

---. "Instruments of Re-formation: The Watch as a De-Centering Force of the Reformation." Renaissance Conference of Southern California. Pasadena, CA. 7 Feb. 2009

Flood, Christopher M. and Nathalie Ségeral. "Memory, Forgetting, and History." *Paroles Gelées* 27.1 (2011).

Introduction
Weapon, Instrument, and Metaphor: Satire in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

> "La louange… est facile à chacun,
> Mais la satyre n'est un ouvrage commun:
> C'est, trop plus qu'on ne pense, un œuvre industrieux"
> -Joachim Du Bellay, *Les Regrets*

What is satire? In a modern world awash in satire, one where almost every new

comedy in any medium (be it film, television, or print) is casually branded "satirical," it

seems a ridiculous question. But while modern audiences may be familiar with this

ancient and increasingly common means of expression, perhaps even adept at recognizing

it, defining satire is altogether a separate challenge – and a far more complicated one at

that. So this question stands, even against a backdrop of almost ubiquitous satire. What is

satire?

Defining satire will occupy a major portion of the first chapter, but here it will

suffice to say that at its most essential level, satire is a form of instrumentalized discourse

that primarily operates within a moral scope (moral being put forth here in its broadest

sense). In the traditional conception, the fundamental moral function of satire is generally

accomplished by means of carefully crafted, exaggerated depictions of behaviors that

transgress the norms or beliefs of their society; by means of this depiction, individuals

and / or practices are exposed to some degree of ridicule. The precise nature of the satire

is a function of the author. Some more aggressive practitioners wield satire as a trenchant

weapon, a violent, albeit verbal, means crushing one's adversaries; others employ it as an instrument, a precise apparatus of critique and moral correction. But regardless of the precise nature of its use, there is a crucial aspect common to all satire: it is necessarily mimetic. The inspiration for the depictions and intended corrective functions of satire come from the real world. Likewise, the eventual goal of satire is external to the representation, based in the hope that the transgressive behaviors can be altered or eradicated, whether in regard to satirically depicted individuals, to the audience, or to both. So satire, more intricately and overtly than most other means of literary expression, is bound to the specific realities surrounding its creation. This innate aspect speaks to the goal of the current study, which is to identify, define, and explore a particular style of satirical expression as a function of the particular time and place in which it was produced.

France, in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, was caught up in a series of struggles and events that threatened both its stability as a political entity and its situation within the larger whole of Catholic Europe: for example the Holy See's abrupt move to Avignon in the early fourteenth century and subsequent Papal Schism, the Hundred Years' War, and the Protestant Reformation.[1] In each of these events, a rift between individuals or groups threatened to fragment a more or less explicitly defined social unit, or as they were widely understood and described in the day, a *corpus mysticum* (mystical

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[1] The Papal Schism (1378-1417) is also commonly referred to as the Western Schism and sometimes as the Great Schism, though the latter designation is usually reserved for the East-West Schism that divided the Church in the mid-eleventh century. Throughout this study the fourteenth- through fifteenth-century schism will be referred to as the Papal Schism.

body). This important, corporeal metaphor had its origins in the Bible, among the foundational epistles of Saint Paul; in those missives he repeatedly circumscribed the diverse, isolated populations of early Christians within a metaphorical body of Christ. As those pockets of early Christians coalesced into the centralized Catholic Church, this corporeal metaphor grew in significance and ecclesiastical force, particularly when the practical theological (read eternal) consequences of dissent are considered. Moreover, given its sacred symbolism as a representation of the body of Christ, the potential fragmentation of this *corpus* took on a character of horrific violence. Nonetheless, within the larger, ecclesiastical body, emerging divisions among its constituent political entities gave real substance to an anxiety over potential fragmentation. At the same time, those individual political entities, themselves composed of smaller territories bound together by feudal relationships, appropriated and adapted the corporeal metaphor, forming bodies politic plagued, in turn, by their own fragmentation anxiety in the face of divisive struggles.

Responses to such *crises of fragmentation*, as they will be designated throughout this study, took on a variety of forms. Official reactions often reverberated with authoritarian intensity: Pope Boniface VIII's early fourteenth-century doctrinalization of the consolidating, Christian corporeal metaphor, or sixteenth-century Valois oppression of French Protestants. But far more interesting and somewhat surprising given the somber realities of these crises, was the remarkable preponderance of satirical literature produced in overt response to some of these crises. While these works manifested the traditional traits associated with satire and spanned the satirical spectrum in terms of aggression,

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many of them were simultaneously characterized by an additional aspect peculiar to the time. Drawing simultaneously upon the corporeal metaphor of the *corpus mysticum* and etymological confusion linking satire to the hybrid, mythological character of the satyr, the authors of these works used their satire to posit a hybrid corporality in opposition to impending fragmentation. I have termed this unique characteristic of satire subordinated to a concept of hybrid corporality the *satyrical* – the first *i* replaced with a *y* to represent its relationship to the hybridity embodied by the character of the satyr.

The goal of this study is to define and explore the *satyrical* as a unique means of satirical expression, its social and political implications, and its manifestations. To this end, the first chapter will be devoted to defining the *satyrical*, which will necessarily include an examination of the origins and evolution of its parent form, satire, as well as the specific theoretical, literary, and historical elements that shaped it: allegory, theories of social corporality, and the Renaissance return to ancient literary models. The subsequent chapters will focus on a representative selection of French-language texts written in overt response to crises of fragmentation, examining how they manifest the *satyrical* and how they relate to the circumstances of their creation in light of that aspect. These texts were selected for the clear manner in which they illustrate the emergence and evolution of the *satyrical* from the Middle Ages to the end of the Renaissance and Wars of Religion. The second chapter will concentrate on texts composed between the early fourteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries: Gervès Du Bus's *Roman de Fauvel*, Philippe de Mézières's *Epistre au Roi Richart*, and Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue invectif*. The first of these was written in the midst of a conflict between the pope and the king of France; the

latter two were produced during the Hundred Years' War, with the first also being composed in the midst of the Papal Schism that was broadly tied to the war. The third chapter will treat the path to and pinnacle of the *satyrical*: from the first decades of the sixteenth-century Reform movement to the early 1560s. The first work in this series to be discussed is Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*, which set the stage for the later Protestant satires that most clearly manifest the *satyrical*. Following this will be detailed discussions of the anonymous *Farce des Théologastres*, and two of Théodore de Bèze's satirical masterworks, *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* and *La comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*. This chapter will also include a brief consideration of the Catholic response in the mid-sixteenth century, which will be contrasted with the *satyrical* thinking more common to the Protestant movement; it will focus on the pamphlets of Artus Désiré and Pierre de Ronsard's *Discours des misères de ce temps*. The fourth and final chapter before moving to the conclusion of the study will examine the decline of the *satyrical* in the final stages of the Wars of Religion as illustrated by the anonymous *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, a most interesting text actually used by both sides in the late stages of the religio-political conflict, and portions of Aubigné's epic work, *Les Tragiques*. In the end, this study will have illustrated the unique mode of satirical expression that formed in response to crises of fragmentation, the *satyrical*, and how a clearer understanding of this satire in these situations can offer a new perspective on the polemical discourse of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance in France.

Chapter One
Satire and the *Satyrical*: New Perspectives on an Enduring Literary Tradition

> "Difficile est saturam non scribere"
> -Juvenal

        The *satyrical* is not entirely distinct from satire as traditionally conceived, rather it is a derivative mode of expression. In essence it is an augmented form of satire, made up of the same functions and tropes as the ancient literary mode, but characterized by an added aspect of theoretical corporality. As such, a thorough understanding of the *satyrical* can only be built upon a similarly thorough understanding of satire in the broader sense. Unfortunately, satire is and has long been a most misunderstood means of expression. Traditional accounts are generally incomplete and frequently dismissive of satire, which, like comedy, is viewed as somehow less intellectual, less powerful, less artistic than other, more sober modes like tragedy. But this is not the case. Satire is as concerned, if not more so, with humanity and human interaction as any other literary form. The misunderstanding seems in large part to have resulted from the less than serious outward appearance of this mode animated by laughter.

        This first chapter will be devoted to establishing a functional definition of the *satyrical* that can then be applied to the circumstances and representative texts studied in the subsequent chapters. This will be accomplished by, first, constructing a complete definition of satire through an examination of its essential characteristics, (disputed)

origins, and evolution down through the Middle Ages and Renaissance. A particularly

important aspect of that evolution, specifically of Christian satirical practices and the

addition of allegory to the satirical formula, will receive special attention. Following this,

the discussion will focus on the added aspect that transforms satire into the *satyrical*, that

of mystical corporality and the perceived relation of the ancient satyr to satire. Finally,

the chapter will conclude with a concise definition of the *satyrical* and a brief discussion

of its general application.

I. Satire: (Re)Defining a Most Misunderstood Mode

What do we mean when we say *satire*? A genre? A style? A register ("registre")

as Pascal Debailly recently described it? In itself this is a difficult question to answer.

Satire was largely thought of as a genre from its formal origins in Antiquity to the

twentieth century, when it became a particular object of study for a relatively small but

notable group of literary critics that included Northrop Frye and Mikhail Bakhtin, both of

whom are still widely regarded in satire studies as the foremost authorities on the topic.

There is no real mistake in this, as most of the overtly satirical works were explicitly

labeled as such by authors who conscientiously adhered to certain formal criteria; this is

almost the definition of a genre. As a genre then, satire begins with Roman authors like

Horace and Juvenal, but it would also include works by their imitators from Antiquity

and to modern times, many of whom, at least through the fifteenth century, even went so

far as to write their imitative satires in the Latin of their models. But in the twentieth century, Frye, Bakhtin, and others recognized elements of satire in works representing a variety of forms and genres, opening it onto a far wider field and requiring a broader definition.

In his seminal work, *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye proposed a general theory of satire distinct from the formal constructions derived from the old Latin masters; it was the first and, perhaps even to this day, most complete examination of the topic.[2] From a wide range of works from various eras and cultures, he distilled a unique and universal satirical character, which he then classified as one of the four basic literary *modes* (alongside romance, comedy, and tragedy) (Frye 33 ff.). Satire, in this conception becomes a primary means of expression structured by a distinct rhetorical spirit; most importantly, it is differentiated from comedy, which had traditionally been regarded as its parent form. Since the publication of Frye's work, other scholars have similarly attempted to redeem satire from the restrictive classification of genre and fashion it into a more inclusive category. Bernd Renner, for example, redefined satire as a *meta-genre*, which while more inclusive than *genre*, still seems to exclusive for such a broad idea (Renner, "Avant-propos" 22). More recently, Pascal Debailly described satire as *register*, which is appropriately inclusive, but simultaneously lacks the structure necessary to examine how

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[2] Mikhail Bakhtin's influential work on Rabelaisian satire was written and presented to his doctoral committee years before Frye's work, but it remained unpublished and generally unknown until 1965, well after the publication of *Anatomy of Criticism*. But beyond mere questions of availability, Bahktin's concept, while useful and insightful, is too heavily colored by his political motives to offer a complete or objective theory of satirical discourse. So, it is Frye's work that forms the foundation of my study, as it is for most modern studies of the topic.

satire functions in its various instantiations (Debailly 17). The only reclassification that adequately encompasses the broad, fundamental influence of satire while also offering a sufficiently restrictive framework for analyzing its function in various domains is Frye's label of *mode.* Therefore, this is the concept that will be adopted in this study.

Renner does, however, suggest a different term that, together with its evolving application, is useful to this examination. After the mid-twentieth-century peak in the focused study of satire by Frye, Bakhtin, and others (notably Alvin Kernan, Gilbert Highet, Robert Elliott, and Ronald Paulson), there was a general decline in interest. More recently, beginning in the late 1990s and growing rapidly in the decade and a half since, a renewed focus on satire has emerged, particularly in the light of the relatively recent emphasis on interdisciplinary scholarship. Renner christened this new concentration *satirology*.[3] Though perhaps ringing with a haughty tone, this new designation asserts the primacy of satire as a fundamental mode. It is still a relatively small field operating within a somewhat limited scope, the majority of work concentrating on French Renaissance literature, but it is gaining recognition while growing in relevance. The current study will draw largely from this emerging field and its interdisciplinary methods in defining both satire and the *satyrical*. So then, in the light of these new perspectives, the question is posed again: What is satire?

One of the aforementioned scholars of satire, Gilbert Highet, humorously called it "the literary equivalent of a bucket of tar and a sack of feathers"? (Highet 155–6). In a

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[3] See Bernd Renner's *Difficile est saturam non scribere* as well as his introduction to *La satire dans tous ses états* for brief accounts and justifications of satirology as a unique discipline.

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way he was partially correct, but here as in most of his work on satire, Highet focused on perceived brutality to the exclusion of its finer aspects. For him satire was at best a secondary genre capable of little more than almost senseless, verbal violence. It was this view that inspired him to open his seminal book-length examination, *The Anatomy of Satire*, with apparently unintentional irony as he declared: "Satire is not the greatest type of literature" (Highet 3). While he does at other times concede that it is "one of the most original, challenging, and memorable forms," he forcefully maintains throughout his body of work on the topic that satire "cannot, in spite of the ambitious claims of one of its masters [Juvenal], rival tragic drama and epic poetry" (Highet 3). As this would seem to indicate, there has long been a certain degree of controversy surrounding the satirical mode. For example, Matthew Arnold, the influential nineteenth-century literary critic, underscored his vehement disdain for both comedy and satire with a moral judgment apparently derived from condescending opinions of their source material: satire and comedy, he argues, "should be kept in their proper place, like the moral standards and the social classes which they symbolize" (qtd. in Frye 22). But in this, Arnold does little more than reassert the ancient, Aristotelian tradition of literary theory that deemed comedy both uninteresting and almost exclusively linked to the baser aspects of human behavior.[4] Satire, in a narrow concept built up from this, was seen as nothing more than a subgenre of comedy, though more debased and even morally dangerous due to the nature of its transgressive subjects. Such assessments, however, lose sight of or willingly

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[4] See *Poetics* 5. Aristotle writes: "Comedy… is the mimesis of baser but not wholly vicious characters… comedy's early history was forgotten because no serious interest was taken in it…" (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449a30–1449b1).

overlook the most essential purpose of satire's portrayal of base behavior: criticism and condemnation. "Satire," writes John Snyder succinctly, "*means* to criticize, to aim reason at targets" (Snyder 95). While his insistence on the means by which this criticism is accomplished will require some elaboration further along, Snyder's general character is correct; by nature satire is critical, not laudatory. This is the pivot on which satire's moral, corrective function turns. As the sixteenth-century poet and early-modern literary theorist Joachim Du Bellay asserted in his *Défense et illustration de la langue française*, the satirist's goal is and ought to be to "reprehend with moderation the vices of [his] time" ("taxer modestement les vices de [son] temps") (Du Bellay 375, 374).[5] This notion is accentuated by Du Bellay's characterization of satire in another text as an "industrious work," which in the French of his time meant both industrious in the modern sense and a work of careful deliberation (Du Bellay 194, 195; Nicot, "Industrieux").

Even where this critical, moral function has been recognized, however, satire has still traditionally been perceived with trepidation, as a dangerous practice. A scholar of religious (specifically biblical) satire, Thomas Jemielity recounts some of the usual warnings:

> Enjoy the laughter of comedy, [psychologists, physicians, and therapists] urge, but beware the laughter of satire… in the laughter of comedy we laugh *with*, we laugh sympathetically and identifiably. We cheerfully recognize others in situations like our own, and we enjoy our common

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[5] Citations from this bilingual edition of Du Bellay's works, if listed in a single parenthetical reference, will indicate both the page of the original in Richard Helgerson's edition as well as his English translation, according to the order in which they are cited in the text.

fallibility. But in satire, we laugh at. We laugh with hostility. We imply

superiority in our laughter because laughing *at* implies that we do not

share in the object of derision. (Jemielity, "Ancient Biblical Satire" 16)

Highet described this aspect of satire as "condescending amusement," which he argues is

entirely motivated by a hateful satirist's attempts to "generalize and justify his hostility,

and usually to make his readers share it" (Highet 238). There is indeed a certain, obvious

degree of hostility inherent in satire's criticism, but reducing it to that aspect is a critical

mistake. All of satire's hostility serves a far more significant purpose; it is subordinated

to a loftier goal anchored in moral reform.

In this, satire is essentially hopeful. There would simply be no reason to work at

correcting behavior without an underlying hope that individuals can change. Thus, rather

than the personal and / or arbitrary hostility that some readers have come to perceive in

satire, it can and should be characterized by the moral function at its core. Alvin Kernan

contradicted the traditional view espoused by Highet, contending that the satirist "sees

the world as a battlefield between a definite, clearly understood good, which he

represents, and an equally clear-cut evil" (Kernan 21–2). He continues: "No ambiguities,

no doubts about himself, no sense of mystery troubles him, and he retains always his

monolithic certainty" (Kernan 22). The *I* of satire, as Debailly suggests, becomes the

source of values, redefining both moral references and their reference points (Debailly 8).

Ruben Quintero likewise emphasizes and elaborates this moralizing function in his

introduction to a more recent, authoritative anthology on the history of satire, proposing

that the satirist writes "not merely out of personal indignation, but with a sense of moral

vocation and with a concern for the public interest" (Quintero 1). Satire thus conceived is socially engaged. This in some part is a natural function of the configuration of the satirical relationship.

The satirical relationship is inherently triangular, comprising a real person or system that is being satirized (the target), the satirist, and the audience, without whom the attack, however amusing, could only ever be direct abuse. The configuration of this relationship can vary: for example, the satirist can explicitly situate him- or herself as an intermediary, a lens through which the audience perceives the target; the satirist can also assume a choral position (in reference to the Greek dramatic tradition), offering the audience a (supposedly) unmediated view of the target while mocking from an external point of view that is generally closer to the audience than the target – something like an engaged spectator nudging his neighbor and pointing so as to assure that the target's ridiculous behavior does not go unnoticed; or the satirist can combine and / or alternate between the two, as is more commonly the case in literary satire. Unlike in other literary styles, the author of satire cannot hide among a seemingly objective narrative framework. The satirist is always present and always clearly visible. This is why Highet and other so stress the satirist's personal objective. The satirist is also an inherently doubled *character*, functioning simultaneously within and without the *fiction*, like the satyr chorus of Greek drama. He or she forms a necessary bridge between the satirical representation of reality and the reality portrayed; without this bridge, the external moral function of the satire would be entirely lost. The amusing aspect would also be lost without the satirist emphatically pointing out the comic aspects of the situations portrayed. Satire inherently

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functions within these dualities, and this has been an essential aspect from its earliest formal conceptions.

Horace, traditionally regarded as one of the founding fathers of the Roman satirical genre as well as the first to formally describe the mode, authored a lengthy and persuasive justification for his literary style in which he effectively reduced satire to a succinct, bipartite formulation: "The centuries of the elders chase from the stage what is profitless; the proud Ramnes disdain poems devoid of charms. He has won every vote who has blended *profit* and *pleasure*, at once *delighting* and *instructing* the reader" (Horace 341–44, my emphasis).[6] This duality that mingles *profit* with *pleasure*, or the *useful* with the *pleasant* or *sweet*, as it is often rendered, has over the centuries become a de facto definition of the satirical mode in any form. Satire, in this foundational formulation, is both productive *and* entertaining. A similar definition can and has been applied to almost any literary form, but again it is the unique character of this relationship and manner in which it is accomplished that distinguishes satire.

Northrop Frye, in the aforementioned *Anatomy of Criticism*, offered his own variation on Horace's classic definition, likewise reducing satire to two essential elements though attributing a more aggressive character to it than the former: to "wit of humor founded on fantasy or a sense of the grotesque or absurd" Frye added "an object of attack" (Frye 224). Likewise building on this Horatian dualism, Ronald Paulson opened one of his examinations of the mode with a series of similar pairings: satire, he wrote, is

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[6] In the original: "centuriae seniorum agitant expertia frugis, / celsi praetereunt austera poemata Ramnes: / omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci, / lectorem delectando pariterque monendo" (Horace 341–44). The above English translation by H. Rushton Fairclough is taken from the cited pages in this bilingual edition.

"fantasy and a moral standard," "indirection and judgment," and "a wild, not quite stable comedy" paired with "moral condemnation" (Paulson 3). Highet, as always skeptical of satire, instead proposed a list of less noble characteristics: "it is topical; it claims to be realistic (although it is usually exaggerated or distorted); it is shocking; it is informal; and (although often in a grotesque or painful manner) it is funny" (Highet 5). Though far more positive in his assessment of satire generally, Debailly's describes the mode in similarly negative terms: satire, for him, mixes word and violence, the violence of indignation and the violence of laughter (Debailly 8). Nonetheless, he does insist upon the artistry and idealism of satire, which distinguishes it from invective and cold moralizing: it is the joining of literary beauty and ethical ambition (Debailly 7). Regardless of particular opinion on its value, all are in agreement that satire essentially reduces to two characteristics: it is amusing and concerned with improving human behavior. This latter characteristic led one prominent scholar of Latin satire to assert that the difficulty in distinguishing satire from comedy is "complicated by an additional need to differentiate [satire] from tragedy" (Sutherland 2). In fact, Frye presents his four fundamental modes as a squared spectrum with comedy and tragedy on opposite sides; satire lies between them, a variable product of their union (Frye 162ff). However, it is not enough to describe satire in terms of conjoined binaries when it is the relationship of its two fundamental elements that most significantly defines the mode. In a sense, the shifting relationship between satire's correction and humor along this spectrum is a matter of content and form, grammatically expressed attributively. Satire is comic tragedy, or tragic comedy, depending on whether it is primarily the humor that is

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subordinated to the work of moral correction or the work of moral correction that is subordinated to humor.

This shifting, attributive relationship is subject to the author's designs, but it is also a function of the link between satire and the social circumstances of its creation. If the corrective aspect is lost, or at least the perceived necessity of that correction is not sufficiently felt, then satire becomes comedy. Strangely, the contrary does not seem to true. When the perceived need of correction is highest, which is to say in the most extreme of social circumstances, at least some of that correction is always framed by laughter. John Snyder illustrates this point when he writes:

> Satire, it would appear, thrives either when there is little credence in public standards of morality and taste, as in first-century Rome, or when morality and taste attenuate to superficial, arbitrarily strict codes of decorum, as in Augustan London. But the satiric impulse wilts when there is a domineering political consensus, as in the Athens of Pericles and Aeschylus, then expands in a climate of democracy verging on chaos, as during the subsequent era of Aristophanes. It also retires when there is an oppressive official sanguinity, as in Victorian England, but flourishes within a context of stultifying bureaucratism, as the case of Gogol and other czarist satirists shows. The consequences of satire's delicate poise between too much hope and none at all – between too successful politics and complete political collapse, and between overly conventionalized

public standards and utter civic cynicism – is that the satiric genre is

unstable. (Snyder 100)

This instability and close correlation to the greater whole of society contributes to the

difficulty of defining satire, but it also gives rise to passing styles like the *satyrical*.

To continue refining the above definition of satire and, most particularly, to show

how, in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, this ambiguous form gave rise to the

peculiar means of expression that is the topic of this study, corporeal satire posed against

fragmentation, it will be necessary to discuss the disputed etymological origins of the

word *satire*, and particularly how these competing etymologies influenced production

and reception in the centuries in question. Not only will this lead to a better

understanding of the mode in general, but it will lead directly to the core of the *satyrical*,

which resides in a presumed connection between satire and the satyr.

II. The Ancient Origins of Satire: An Etymological Thorn in the Philologist's Side

"Satura quidem tota nostra est…"
-Quintilian

Scholars generally agree that the most likely etymological ascendant of the

modern word *satire* is the Latin *satura*: a culinary term designating a dish composed of

various elements that seems to have migrated from the kitchen to the library with the emergence of the new genre in first-century BCE Rome.[7] In its literary use, the word was applied to an easily recognizable class of works, both in terms of form and content, most notably, the satires of Horace, Juvenal, and Persius. While a number of justifications for this culinary origin can be imagined (e.g. the analogous pleasure derived from both food and literary diversion or the express randomness that has always formed an essential aspect of literary satire), this etymological lineage has been used over the years to justify a reductive concept of satire as a whole: that the mode began with the Romans. There were, to be sure, predecessors to Horace's Late-Republic refinement of his genre; most notable among them was Greek Old Comedy, with its familiar satirical qualities in both form and content, and its characteristic personage, the satyr, whose name is a conspicuous quasi-homophone of satire and *satura*. Nonetheless, the influential, first-century rhetorician Quintilian declared "satura quidem tota nostra est" ("satire, on the other hand, is all our own," which is to say, it belongs entirely to the Romans); this assertion was essentially accepted as fact for centuries (Quintilian 10.1.93). Quintilian did qualify this grand assertion, effectively limiting his discussion to the formal verse structure practiced by a handful of Latin writers, led by Lucilius and Horace, between the second century BCE and his own time. With this he acknowledged an older, different kind of satire beyond that small group of self-acknowledged Latin satirists, specifically naming Terentius Varro; even here, however, his discussion of satire's origins is entirely

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[7] For a more detailed discussion of the mixing of culinary and literary vocabulary, see Renner *Difficile est saturam non scribere* pp. 117-124.

restricted to Romans (Quintilian 10.1.94–5).[8] However, modern scholarship has definitively shown that much of what came to be claimed and later recognized as distinctly Roman was actually appropriated from other cultures; satire is no exception. As much as the simple recognition that it was borrowed from the Greeks, understanding the process by which satire (like other cultural aspects) was appropriated and adapted by the Romans will aid in tracing the trajectory from satire to the *satyrical*.

In his *Eccentric Culture: A Theory of Western Civilization*, French philosopher Rémi Brague essentially reduces much of Roman culture as it came to influence and inspire later Europe, the "Roman experience" as he calls it, to the cultural transmission of things that were demonstrably not Roman in origin rather than of Rome's innovations (Brague 32).[9] Brague distinguishes between two manners of cultural appropriation or, using his terminology, "types of reception": inclusion and digestion (Brague 106). Defining them by means of analogy, he compares *inclusion* to the creation of a common type of tourist shop knickknack in which a representative object is preserved in something like a transparent plastic bubble; in this mode of reception, the object is

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[8] Quintilian wrote: "Alterum illud etiam prius saturae genus, sed non sola carminum varietate mixtum condidit Terentius Varro, vir Romanorum eruditissimus. Plurimos hic libros et doctissimos composuit, peritissimus linguae Latinae et omnis antiquitatis et rerum Graecarum nostrarumque, plus tamen scientiae conlaturus quam eloquentiae" ("There is, however, another and even older type of satire which derives its variety not merely from verse, but from an admixture of prose as well. Such were the satires composed by Terentius Varro, the most learned of all Romans. He composed a vast number of erudite works, and possessed an extraordinary knowledge of the Latin language, of all antiquity and of the history of Greece and Rome. But he is an author likely to contribute more to the knowledge of the student than to his eloquence") (Quintilian 10.1.95).
[9] Brague's work originally appeared in French as *Europe, la voie romaine*, published in 1992 by Criterion, Paris.

perfectly preserved though inaccessible to direct interaction or manipulation; thus, its

(foreign) identity is largely preserved (Brague 106). Digestion, on the contrary, represents

a complete appropriation and assimilation to the point that the object "loses its

independence" and, therefore, its alien identity; the analogy here is vivid as Brague likens

this mode of reception to a lion "made from the digested lamb" (Brague 107). Rome

generally functioned, in Brague's estimation, along the lines of the latter in drawing on

the two great sources of European cultural heritage: the Greek and Judeo-Christian

cultures, represented in the intellectual tradition by their respective capitals in Athens and

Jerusalem. While Brague's concept and designations add a certain clarity to the

discussion, they are not entirely original; in fact, an interesting precedent is found in the

writings of Joachim Du Bellay. Du Bellay uses the same metaphor of digestion in

suggesting to French authors how they might enrich their own language by imitating a

distinctly Roman method for accomplishing an analogous goal: the imitation and

appropriation of prior poets and their forms. Du Bellay wrote:

> Si les Romans (dira quelqu'un) n'ont vaqué à ce labeur de traduction, par
>
> quelz moyens donques ont ilz peu ainsi enrichir leur langue, voyre jusques
>
> à l'égaler quasi à la Greque ? Immitant les meilleurs aucteurs Grecz, se
>
> transformant en eux, les dévorant, et apres les avoir bien digerez, les
>
> convertissant en sang et nourriture, se proposant, chacun selon son naturel,
>
> et l'argument qu'il vouloit elire, le meilleur aucteur… (Du Bellay 337)

If the Romans (someone will say) did not devote themselves to this labor

of translation, then by what means were they able so to enrich their

language, indeed to make it almost the equal of Greek? By imitating the

best Greek authors, transforming themselves into them, devouring them,

and, after having thoroughly digested them, converting them into blood

and nourishment, selecting, each according to his own nature and the topic

he wished to choose, the best author… (Du Bellay 336)

According to Du Bellay, the best means for improving and elevating French language and

literature was to do to the Romans that which they had done to the Greeks, to *devour*

them, culturally-speaking. It is not insignificant that, among the many authors and styles

that Du Bellay recommended to his countrymen as examples, he chose to strongly

emphasize satire: alongside references to satirical authors like Plautus and Lucian, he

mentions Horace no fewer than fourteen times in the relatively short *Défense et*

illustration de la langue française. But even within this precise emphasis on Roman

satire as a model, the reader cannot overlook the precedent to which Du Bellay pointed in

bolstering his fundamental imperative: Roman culture was largely appropriated from the

Greeks. There is an implicit nod to an earlier form, or at least the possibility of such.

Fortunately, the modern reader is not left to mere inference in tracing the Greek

influence on early modern satire. In a largely overlooked passage of the most read and,

quite possibly, the most important French satirical text of the sixteenth century, François

Rabelais's *Gargantua*, the author gives subtle voice to philosophical and literary

opposition to Latin and Roman dominance. Outlining the mutual genealogy of the kings

of Europe and his eponymous heroes, Rabelais records the "admirable transport des regnes et empires" ("remarkable transfer of kingdoms and empires"), but deliberately deviates from accepted history (Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 9). The unabashed Grecophile proclaims that these reigns descended:

> des Assyriens ès Medes,
>
> des Medes ès Perses,
>
> des Perses ès Macedones,
>
> des Macedones ès Romains,
>
> des Romains ès Grecz,
>
> des Grecz ès Francoys. (Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 9–10)

> - from the Assyrians to the Medes;
>
> - the Medes to the [Persians:
>
> -from the Persians to the] Macedonians;[10]
>
> - The Macedonians to the Romans;
>
> - the Romans to the Greeks;
>
> - and the Greeks to the French. (Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* 209–10)

This general parody of the accepted *translatio* tradition, as Matthew Gumpert characterizes the passage, is likely also a reference to an important satirical text of the

---

[10] M. A. Screech, whose translations of Rabelais's works have become the standard in English, omitted the Persians from his translation of this passage without explanation. I have reinserted it here for consistency with the original.

prior century, *Le Quadrilogue Invectif* by Alain Chartier (Gumpert 286). In almost

identical language, Chartier traces the "heureuses fortunes et le bruit des royaumes"

("happy fortunes and renown of the kingdoms") together with the "monarchie du monde

et la dignité du souverain empire" ("monarchy of the world and dignity of the sovereign

empire") as they were long ago *translated* ("fut jadiz translate"): "from the Assyrians to

the Persians, from the Persians to the Greeks, from the Greeks to the Romans, and from

the Romans to the French and Germans" (Chartier 3–4). Rabelais's departure from what

was apparently known and accepted, as evidenced by this passage from more than a

century earlier, emphasizes the conscious choice behind it. Moreover, given Rabelais's

well-documented erudition and prominent place in the evolution of French satire, this

deviation from the norm must be considered in an assessment of sixteenth-century satire

and its theoretical origins.

There is another manner of interpreting this excerpt that merits consideration.

Mireille Huchon reads this passage from *Gargantua* through a purely political lens,

arguing that his reference to the "Grecz" does not point to Classical Antiquity, but rather

to the Eastern Roman Empire (Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 10n, 1067–8). That Greek-

speaking half of the ancient empire survived its western counterpart by several centuries

and, therefore, would be presumed to hold the keys to that authority. Huchon additionally

contends that Rabelais is simultaneously commenting on the sixteenth-century political

circumstances that unsuccessfully brought France's François I into contention with

Hapsburg heir Charles V for the crown of the Holy Roman Empire (Rabelais, *Œuvres

complètes* 10n, 1067–8). While there is almost certainly something of this political

reading contained in the passage, to limit it entirely to such a reading is to overlook many

significant aspects of Rabelais's life and work. As Huchon repeatedly recalls in her

biography of Rabelais, the Renaissance humanist had a particular penchant for the works

of Galen and Lucian, both Greek-language authors inhabiting lands that would later

become part of the Eastern Empire, but he also greatly admired Hippocrates, a Classical

Greek (Huchon 10, etc.).[11] Rabelais, himself quite adept in Greek, devotedly translated,

annotated, and imitated these Greek authors throughout his life.[12] But Rabelais's

enthusiasm for Classical Greek literature and philosophy was no less robust. As is well

demonstrated in his correspondence with Guillaume Budé, the scholar largely credited

with reviving the study of ancient languages in France, Rabelais enthusiastically

embraced older works and styles as well (Huchon 80). But most significant to this

reference in the first pages of *Gargantua*, Rabelais has just opened his work with an

address to the reader almost entirely constructed around a reading of Plato and

conspicuously full of references to Socrates and other patently Greek characters

(Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 5–8). To argue that, not even a page later, his reference to

the Greeks does not also point beyond the Roman Empires to the ancient Greeks seems

contrived. A more inclusive reading seems more appropriate; one can easily imagine the

old polymath delighting in a potentially panoptic reading. Moreover, Rabelais's

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[11] There are far too many references to Rabelais's affinity for these authors in Huchon's biography to list in a single parenthetical reference, but the page of the first, listing all three referenced authors, is listed and more can be found in the index to that book.
[12] M. A. Screech responded to some objections that Rabelais did not explicitly insist on Greek in his writings by pointing out that, in Rabelais's worldview, a knowledge of Greek and Latin was so fundamental that it did not need to be mentioned (Screech, *Rabelais* 147). Furthermore, Screech points out that Syriac and Arabic, privileged languages in medieval studies, are conscientiously omitted.

perceived association with Classical Greek literature in his own time was documented by none other than Joachim Du Bellay, who placed Rabelais's work "under the patronage," to borrow from Huchon's paraphrasing of this passage, of Aristophanes, Democritus, and Lucian (Huchon 322; Du Bellay 410, 411). So then, what is to be inferred from Rabelais's divergent genealogy?

Rabelais, the devout Renaissance humanist, was drawing a direct line between himself and his chosen literary and philosophical models. In so doing, he was consciously circumventing not the ancient Romans so much as the Roman Catholic Church. An important instrument of the Church's control over European intellectual culture throughout the Middle Ages operated by means of its oppressive linguistic proclivity for Latin; more than simply promoting the universal use of Latin in liturgical, political, and philosophical domains, the Church vilified the study of Greek. Presumably this was to inhibit the transmission of pre-Christian *heathen* culture, but there was another, somewhat surprising reason for prohibiting the study of Greek, and, in the early sixteenth century, it bound Renaissance humanism to the burgeoning Protestant movement.

Early Protestantism generally, but most particularly in its French form, was firmly rooted in the study of Greek, the language of the New Testament, for which it was largely indebted to Renaissance humanism. As young students in Orléans, Jean Calvin and Théodore de Bèze, the vicious satirist and renowned theologian who succeeded Calvin as the head of French Protestantism, were introduced to Lutheranism not by their theology or philosophy professors, but by their mutual Greek teacher, Melchior Wolmar. A German living in exile in France, Wolmar had first encountered Reformed thought while

himself at university, where he became close friends with Martin Luther's collaborator and, as is widely recognized, the first great theologian of the Reformation, Philipp Melanchthon. Like Melanchthon (whose adopted name is a Hellenization of his German family name Schwartzerdt) and Wolmar, the eventual leaders of French Protestantism made extensive use of their education in the Greek language to develop a theory of a new approach to the *word of God*, thereby freeing themselves from what they saw as the restrictive and errant mediation inherent in Catholic, Latin translations of the Bible. This was precisely the second reason for the Catholic Church's ban on Greek, to prevent alternate interpretations of biblical sources. Building on their own experiences, Calvin and Bèze encouraged followers to develop a personal, unmediated relationship with the God of true Bible, as opposed to the Catholicized God of the Latin Vulgate. While it is true that Greek philosophical traditions already weighed heavily on Catholic theology, particularly through the influence of early Christian Neo-Platonism and Aristotelian theologians like Aquinas, Protestantism and Renaissance humanism represented a more widespread turn toward Greek thought and culture.

The long debate surrounding the origins of satire grew not out of suspect claims of Roman primacy, but primarily out of confusion concerning the cross-cultural, quasi-homonyms of the Latin *satura* and the increasingly familiar Greek Σατυρος (satyr). As the latter's presence in the early-modern consciousness was reinforced by the rediscovery of ancient literary works, the general public and even learned Renaissance humanists understandably linked the more or less familiar Roman literary genre to those wily and sharply comic mythological characters. Far more than an isolated quarrel among

academics, this debate fed into the broader and more impassioned political and

theological currents of Renaissance humanism and Reformed thought. Particularly where

these two currents intersected, a subset formed that could be thought of as a Protestant

form of humanism distinct from its Catholic counterpart. Within this subset, a double

inclination toward Greek, culturally from humanism and theologically from

Protestantism, imbued evolving religio-political polemics with what will be cast further

along as a conspicuously Greek style, one that draws heavily on the unique corporality of

the satyr and what it could be extrapolated to represent.

The objection could be raised at this point that there is no clear relationship

between the satyr and satire, this phenomenon being nothing more than a misreading, a

meaningless folk etymology. However, the modern reader must remember that, as the

idea spread in the sixteenth century, authors and readers came to consciously see satire

through that lens, however misinformed it may have been. This is abundantly clear in

both explicit, authorial declarations from the time as well as the more vivid

pronouncements to that effect made by printers who adorned the frontispieces and title

pages of self-stated satires with images of the mythological creature.[13] For these

individuals, satire was Greek, not Roman, which was a culturally and theologically

significant assertion. On the scholarly side of the debate, this question received a good

amount of attention, in itself a testament to its cultural significance. Protestant author and

printer Robert Estienne, for example, forcefully supported the connection between satire

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[13] For a discussion of these traditions and examples of the art, see Antónia Szabari, *Less Rightly Said*, pages 2-9.

and satyrs in his *Thesaurus Latinae Linguae*, interestingly a work on Latin, not Greek.[14]

Likewise affirming the Greek origins of satire, another prominent, early modern scholar,

Julius Caesar Scaliger, proclaimed in his *Poetices*:

> They are in error who think that satire is wholly Latin. Indeed it first
>
> existed among the Greeks both in its rudimentary and perfected states. It
>
> was then taken by the Romans and removed from the stage. Therefore it is
>
> named neither for a law nor for a dish as the grammarians vainly and
>
> thoughtlessly maintain. On the contrary I think it is so called from the
>
> Satyrs. For they used to go forth with dishes and baskets full of all sorts of
>
> fruits to attract nymphs. (qtd. in Medine ix)[15]

The countercurrent was no less forceful. The late-Renaissance philologist Isaac

Casaubon, a Protestant by birth who came to enjoy great association with and even

admiration among prominent Catholics including the converted Henri IV, was a most

outspoken critic of the idea.[16] He composed his lengthy 1605 *De Satyrica Graecorum &*

Romanorum Satura with the singular goal of refuting the increasingly accepted

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[14] See Estienne's *Thesaurus Latinae Linguae* entries for "Satyr" and "Satyra."

[15] English translation by Peter E. Medine in his introduction to Casaubon's *De Satyrica Graecorum Poesi & Romanorum Satira*. The original reads: "Iccirco falluntur, qui putant Satyram esse Latinam totam. A Graecis enim et inchoate, et perfecta primum. A Latinis deinde accepta, atque extra scenam exculta. Quamobrem non a Satyra vel lege, vel lance dicta est, ut frustra ac temere fatagunt Grammatici. Quin has a Satyris genere plenis, quibus Nymphas allicerent" (Scaliger 47).

[16] It is recorded, in fact that Catholics like the King were diligently working to convert Casaubon throughout his later life while the Protestants, among whom he was raised, worked with equal diligence to keep him within the Protestant fold.

etymological *mistake*.[17] Casaubon's passionate and erudite counterargument, persuasive

as it is, could not entirely abolish this belief that Renner describes as "monnaie courante"

throughout Renaissance Europe (Renner, *Difficile* 35).[18] For most in that time, satire was

named after satyrs.

All of this naturally leads one to wonder why this notion merited so much

attention both in the past and in the current study. Perhaps it can simply be reduced to the

expected controversy born of openly contradicting the accepted genealogies of authority,

the *translatio*, as illustrated in the above quotation from Rabelais's *Gargantua*. Surely

denying Roman ascendancy, so closely tied to both the Church and the crown, in favor of

a Greek ascendancy that validated neither could be construed as treason and /or heresy in

a culture already so eager to pass such judgments. If this were the case, then engaging in

overtly Greek satire could be seen as a flagrant declaration of political and theological

rebellion. While there is surely something of rebellion in the satirical style and

manifestations to be considered in this study, there is something more that can only be

discerned by means of a careful consideration of Rome's satirical antecedent(s). As

Brague argued, Rome, through which the bulk of the satirical tradition was filtered, was a

conduit for both the Hellenistic and Judeo-Christian traditions that preceded and

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[17] In the first of the two books composing this work, Casaubon argues that satyr plays
grew out of tragedy rather than comedy; in the second he argues for a purely Latin origin.
[18] Renner writes: "La confusion autour du drame satyrique grec, cette espèce de comédie
lascive, et de la *satura* romaine, facilitée par la quasi-homophonie entre les deux termes
et documentée par l'orthographe 'satyre', était monnaie courante à la Renaissance,
comme le montre l'examen de la reception de la satire classique" ("The confusion
surrounding Greek satyr plays, this type of lascivious comedy, and Roman *satura*,
facilitated by the quasi-homophony of the two terms and documented by the "satyre"
spelling, was common currency in the Renaissance as an examination of the reception of
classical satire will show.") (Renner, *Difficile* 35).

augmented it; the *satyrical*, as it evolved over the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, prominently manifests both of these influences and so can only be understood in relation to them.

Rome's Satirical Sources: The Greeks and the Hebrews

Robert C. Elliott, the ubiquitously quoted authority on the anthropological, if not literary, origins of satire, argues that the mode developed from ancient magic rituals (Elliott, "Satire" 738). According to his view, the impulse that gave rise to satire, evidently viewed in its productive sense, developed "from one primordial demand – a demand that out of the fears and confusions engendered by a hostile world man shall be able to impose some kind of order" (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 58). Evolving, as Elliott argues, from such rituals, satire's cultural heritage includes the utterances intended to repel perceived evil influences and invoke beneficial ones (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 5). The most significant implication of this ritualistic origin lies in the subtle suggestion of realizability, which is to say that there appears to be a belief that these words, this form of discourse, can indeed effect change in the real world. In satire this aspect is represented by "engaged laughter," as Jean-Claude Aubailly called it, the laughter that seeks to provoke real-world manifestations of a new awareness brought about by satire (Aubailly 459). A similar notion lies at the heart of early modern satire according to Emily Butterworth, who, in her study of satire and slander in French culture, attributes to both an analogous, perceived or hoped for real-world result outside of the text. Relating

images of slander to mortal dangers "such as poison, a wound, or a charm that works directly on the body of its victim," Butterworth suggests that the "mechanisms of defamation" were located "in a quasi-mythic realm where words had immediate, magical effects on bodies" (Butterworth 24). Elaborating on this idea of real-world efficacy, Butterworth contends that "for writers in early-seventeenth-century France, words gained their poison and their potency when social and linguistic conditions allowed them to construct or destroy an individual's identity" (Butterworth 95). Likewise, Antónia Szabari, writing on sixteenth-century satire, draws upon J. L. Austin's ideas and terminology in describing satirical statements as "perlocutionary performative utterances," which, as Austin explains, embody a genuine power over the real world (Szabari 12). Austin elaborated on this idea, writing: "Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them" (Austin 101). Szabari further emphasizes that the effects of such speech acts "are not contained by social institutions and conventions, nor are they containable; they depend in each case on the situation and circumstances of the utterance" (Szabari 12). All of this underscores the perceived power, and potential dangers, of satire; it reaches beyond the moment of the satirical fiction to essentially (re)construct reality by influencing its audience's perceptions and, in turn, actions. The aim is that the satire will force them to change, and these effects are not limited to the moment of utterance, but they ripple out to affect larger swaths of society.

The leap from originating religious ceremony to diversion or, as Elliott calls it, from "magic to art," can be traced through the earliest Greek tragedies. Citing an earlier study by Gilbert Murray, Elliott points to Aeschylus's *The Suppliants* as a prominent illustration of this transition, arguing that the play's sacral nature is sublimated into an artistic expression while maintaining distinctly ritualistic overtones (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 89). In Elliott's model, tragedy develops quite naturally out of choral recitations and eventual dramatic portrayal of myth while Old Comedy, he agrees with the Aristotelian tradition, grew out of the coarse, invective-laden phallic songs of fertility rituals (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 90–92). Elliott further contends that, even in the time of Aristophanes, comedies still bore the unmistakable elements and "plot formulae" of those ancient rites (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 92). While these models of Greek drama's classic binary of comedy and tragedy are well established and broadly accepted, the origins and evolution of the satyr-plays that developed alongside them remain largely mysterious. There is a great deal of evidence that satyr-plays accompanied tragic trilogies, being performed after the sober, cautionary dramas to restore the audience's good spirits before departing, which conspicuously recalls the Horatian pairing of the useful with the pleasant. But much more than the other two genres, the satyr-play seems to have maintained a close connection to its originating religious traditions. Such works represented, as Gregory W. Dobrov contends, "an island of unadulterated dionysism, at a time when theater and the theatrical festivals were rapidly evolving" (Dobrov 260). Though, as Dobrov and others assert, the practical connection between Old Comedy and satyr-drama is at best speculative, the meta-fictional poetics of the satyr-play, along with

the personage of the satyr, were eventually adopted and adapted into both comedy and tragedy as they diverged stylistically and thematically; it was this process that gave rise to the ubiquitous chorus of Greek theater.[19]

In his *The Birth of Tragedy*, Friedrich Nietzsche begins with the broad assertion that all art is born of a conceptual and aesthetic binary comparable to the procreative relationship of the two sexes, which he aligns with the Greek gods that anciently embodied these contrary forces: Apollo and the Dionysus (Nietzsche 33). As they function in art, the Apollonian influence is associated with dream and the illusion of individuation, whereas the Dionysian represents intoxication and primal unity (Nietzsche 36–7). In the specific case of tragedy, Nietzsche argues that the spectators of ancient tragedy were fooled, as it were, into believing that they were really distinct from the personages and intrigue of the play, which saved them from the full pain of the recognizing in their theatrical reflection the tragic circumstances in some way encompass the whole of humanity. At the same time, the Dionysian influence was manifest through the satyr chorus, which revealed, through boundary-blurring interaction with both the audience and the fiction portrayed, that all were, in fact, bound together in primal unity.[20] Though this model was formed around pure tragedy, it applies to the comic tragedy of satire as well.

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[19] For more on the relation of satyr-drama to comedy and tragedy, see Dobrov, "Comedy and the Satyr-Chorus" in *The Classical World* (2007); also M. Kaimio et al., "Metatheatricality in the Greek Satyr Play" in *Arctos* (2001); and R. A. S. Seaford's comments on his translation of Euripides's *Cyclops* (Oxford, 1988).

[20] Aristotle argued in his *Poetics* that the chorus, who quite obviously stands apart from the enclosed world of the fiction, "should be treated as one of the actors; it should be part of the whole and should participate…" (Dobrov 260).

In the satirical configuration, a distance between the target and audience is crucial in order to enable the demonstrative function that opens the target to ridicule. However, in the broader goal of moral correction, the audience is also implicated and, therefore, bound to the target. This connection is even more pronounced when targeted behaviors figure into the common practices of a society. Satire's Apollonian illusion turns the target into such, proclaiming it both other and worthy of mockery. At the same time, the laughter of satire unites the audience and satirist into a Dionysian whole, but the satirist's simultaneous participation in the representation establishes a bridge, a link between target and spectator. This is crucial in the *satyrical*. When the goal is simultaneously bound up with a hope for perpetuated unity in a hybrid social body, the connection between audience and target must be forcefully established in spite of vicious critique. To accomplish this, the satirist must be more forcefully present in the satire. This pronounced presence manifests in various manners, but typically it is facilitated by the satirist adopting a strong choral position, which further augments the *satyrical* character of the work to the degree that the dramatic chorus was traditionally associated with hybrid satyrs, though this was not so from the beginning. In this and other characteristics, early modern *satyrical* satire draws closer to the Greek models than to uniquely Roman predecessors.

In earlier stages of Greek drama, the members of the chorus were simply portrayed as crude and lascivious old men, usually costumed with comically exaggerated bellies and genitalia, but they gradually adopted the personae of the insatiable and bawdy fauns traditionally composing Dionysus's retinue. In this they recalled the earliest Greek

examples of both tragedy and comedy, which featured dancers adorned in animal costumes that were "probably in the beginning thought of as divine" (Elliott, *Power of Satire* 90). Moreover, portrayed as fauns, these satyrs visually reiterated their distinctly hybrid performative role in the drama, that is, as both spectators and participants. But these are not the only ways in which the dramatic satyrs manifested their characteristic hybridity. Their physical composition was seen to echo a presumed intellectual hybridity as well, their minds similarly divided between human and animal (Dobrov 260). In addition, Dobrov suggests that they represented a bridge between the mortal and divine worlds, as well as connection to the pre-political past, that is, to man's primal origins; thus, they were endowed with a fundamentally dual nature, he continues, "both lewd and playful on the one hand, ancient and wise on the other" (Dobrov 260). This distinction is heavily accentuated by the manner in which satyrs were divided: the lower, animal parts (i.e. belly, sex, and excretory organs) represented natural, bodily urges, while the upper, human parts (head, heart, and sensory organs) corresponded to man's higher functions and abilities. The satyr, thus conceived, bridges the gap dividing animal and human realms but only while maintaining a certain *natural* order of things, i.e. human dominance, as conceived in both Christianity and the philosophy of the time – this becomes particularly significant in the first work to be treated, the *Roman de Fauvel*. The satyr was the embodiment of hybridity and within the theatrical tradition, as it passed to the Romans, the creature represented a blurring of the boundaries that separate spectator from representation.

In the century following the apex of Greek Old Comedy, another mode of satirical expression developed among the Greeks, this time anchored in philosophical critique rather than dramatized religious ceremony. Menippean satire, named for its first recognized practitioner, the third-century BCE Greek cynic Menippus of Gadara, was easily distinguished from its theatrical counterpart in structure, theme, and method. Where Greek comedy and later Roman satire were written in verse, Menippean satire was written in prose or, far more commonly, a mix of prose and verse, which was later recognized as one of its distinguishing characteristics. With this "rejection of aesthetic norms," as W. Scott Blanchard calls it, and a foundation in Cynicism and Pyrrhonism, the *formless form* of Menippean satire eludes traditional classifications and inherently calls into question the validity of such categories (W. S. Blanchard 11). Blanchard argues that the Menippean satirist attempts to assume the uneasy posture of a sage and anti-intellectual iconoclast simultaneously, again a hybrid of sorts, which is only possible as a function of the author's exceptional erudition and wit (W. S. Blanchard 12). In character, the Menippean philosopher / satirist recalls the social gadfly, Socrates pestering the citizens of Athens with his unsolicited interrogations on virtue and the like; the Menippean satirist questions accepted values, though never quite offering an alternative himself. Thematically and stylistiaclly, Menippean satire further distinguishes itself in its characteristic mix of serious topics and comical mockery, of parody and diatribe, of biting but ultimately hopeless criticism. It is this last aspect that Blanchard locates a fundamental distinction between Menippean and Roman satire; the latter, he proposes, suggests "that sanity is possible, if difficult, to achieve in this world" (W. S. Blanchard 19).

Like the associated Cynical school of philosophy, Menippean satire is broadly skeptical and deeply anti-institutional, attacking all traditional intitutions of society with scathing wit and vicious parody.

Classical works of Menippean satire are relatively rare. The works of Menippus, for example, are entirely lost; our only modern means of access to them comes through commentaries by his contemporaries as well as by admirers living in the few centuries after his death. Diogenes Laertius, for example, described Menippus as without "seriousness" and his works as "overflowing with laughter" (Laertius 6.99). His works were so clever, in fact, that, as Laertius recalls, there was some debate concerning their authorship, with many arguing that they had to have been produced by a more gifted and engaged author (Laertius 6.100). Strabo described Menippus in his *Geography* as a σπουδογέλοιος (a "serio-comic" or satirist), a term used by Plato and Aristophanes but later strongly associated with Meleagar of Gadara (Strabo 16.2.29). Despite being less popular than Old Comedy, Menippus and his particular strain of satirical discourse came to influence an impressive, albeit relatively small, collection of important authors over the centuries: Varro, Petronius, and Lucian of Samosata not the least among them. Approaching Menippus more in form than in the particular nature of their works, the influence of these authors weighed heavily on the sixteenth-century revival of satire in France, as evidenced by the celebrated 1593 *Satire Ménippée*, which was named after the style. But even beyond this overt reference, the satires of Erasmus, Rabelais, and others bear an unmistakeable resemblance to Menippus's mix of the serious and the comical, uproarious laughter and biting wit, parody and invective. But these works and this style

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were most certainly part of the Renaissance's rediscovery; apart from the occasional

author in the Greek-speaking lands around the Mediterranean, they were largely lost to

the Middle Ages. While I will return to Menippean satire in discussing the establishemnt

of Renaissance satirical traditions, the evolution of satire as outlined here will generally

focus on Roman borrowings from the better known theatrical traditions of ancient

Greece.

Early Roman playwrights like Plautus and Terence borrowed so much from Greek

sources that, at times, it seems they did little more than translate Greek comedies into

Latin, even keeping the Greek settings and character names.[21] The influence of Greek

Old Comedy was not, however, limited to the theater. The Roman satirist Horace, whose

opinion of his recognized satirical predecessor, Lucilius, was generally less than

favorable, does credit him for one thing: drawing formal and thematic inspiration from

the Greek comic writers whom he calls "true poets" (specifically referring to Eupolis,

Cratinus, and Aristophanes).[22] Commenting more specifically on Lucilius's relation to

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[21] Terence's *Hecyra* (*The Mother-in-law*) is a particularly good example. In this case even the title is still in Greek (the Latin word for mother-in-law is *socrus*).

[22] There is some debate regarding the assumed positive valence of this translation. The original text reads: "Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae / atque alii, quorum comoedia prisca virorum est, / si quis erat dingus describi, quod malus ac fur, / quod moechus fore taut sicarius aut alioqui / famosus, multa cum libertate notabant" (translated by Fairclough as: "Eupolis and Cratinus and Aristophanes, true poets, and the other good men to whom Old Comedy belongs, if there was anyone deserving to be drawn as a rogue and thief, as a rake or cut-throat, or as scandalous in any other way, set their mark upon him with great freedom") (Horace *Sat*. 1.4.1–5). Fairclough bases his reading on another passage in Horace's second book of epistles 1.247 in which the word *poetae* is similarly used without obvious qualifier, but the connotation is quite clearly good. Additionally, it is clear from numerous other sources that this trio of Old Comedy authors were highly regarded both in ancient Greece and by their Roman successors (Storey 40–1). Thus, the association would logically seem a positive one.

these authors of Old Comedy, Horace wrote: "hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus / mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque" ("It is on these that Lucilius wholly hangs; these he has followed, changing only metre and rhythm") (Horace *Sat.* 1.4.6–7). So it seems that these early authors of Roman satire were well familiar with, even overtly drawing inspiration from Classical Greek works that were tied to satyrs and the satyr chorus.[23]

At the same time, satyrs also entered the Roman consciousness through religion, where they were closely associated with Bacchus (the Roman form of Dionysus); it was at this time that their physical form became fixed as that of the hybrid faun. Even more striking than an admitted debt to Greek playwrights, Horace himself references the character of the satyr in describing the origins of his medium. In his *Ars Poetica*, Horace cites the role of *agrestis satyros* (wild satyrs) and *sacris et potus et exlex* (drunken and lawless festivals) in the development of what became Roman satire (Parsons 123).[24] In later antiquity, the fourth-century Latin grammarian, Diomedes, also recognized similarities between old Greek satyr plays and Lucilian satire, though he was less convinced of a direct link. Nevertheless, his discussion of the etymology of the word *satire* presaged the confusion that would color the debate in later centuries as he argued for a hybrid origin that included both the Latin *satura* and the Greek satyr (Medine ix).

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[23] Dobrov attests to an apparent barrier, a "firewall" as he calls it, in Classical Greek theater separating Old Comedy from formal satyr plays (Dobrov 251–2). Interestingly, tragedy seems to have intersected with both of the other genres without any problems. Nonetheless, there were, in the Roman perception, a number of points of contact linking the aforementioned trio of Greek comedy writers to formal satyr plays, including misattributed works (Reckford 106–10; Storey 305–7). Thus, it seems that, in many cases, there was a general belief that their choruses were composed of satyrs, even if not explicitly stated.
[24] See Horace, *Ars Poetica* line 221ff.

Turning to the other source of Roman culture, the Judeo-Christian tradition, like

that of the Greeks, prominently featured verbal cursings and blessings; this is recorded in

various texts, but, most notably, in the Bible. Though that religious text, particularly as it

was later appropriated by the Christians, might seem an unexpected source for satire, it is,

nonetheless, among the writings of Old Testament prophets that Thomas Jemielity,

Robert Alter, and others discern some important precursors to the early modern satirical

spirit. Most interestingly in regard to the development of satire within ancient Hebrew

culture, James S. Ackerman argues in his essay on the literary qualities of *Jonah* (the

most recognizably satirical / comical book of the Bible) that Hebrew satirical traditions

seem to have evolved in relative isolation; he contends that there was little or no cultural

contact with satire as it was developing in other parts of the Mediterranean world at that

time (Ackerman 242).[25] For this and other reasons, there is some question as to whether

these biblical writings can properly be considered satire. Thomas Jemielity responds to

such questions, writing: "Do the Hebrew writers intend to write satire? Probably not. Do

they intend to ridicule? Repeatedly"; elaborating on this point, he continues: "The

Hebrew Scriptures repeatedly engage in ridiculing criticism which I call satire"

(Jemielity, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets* 203). While Jemielity's definition is

admittedly sparse and subjective, it is not substantially more reductive than those

proposed by Frye and others, going back to Horace himself.

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[25] While the events in the book of Jonah are set in the eighth century BCE, during the
reign of Jeroboam II, it seems that the book was actually composed some centuries later,
possibly as late as the fifth or fourth century BCE (Ackerman 234). Thus, its composition
would have approximately corresponded to the life of the Greek comic playwright
Aristophanes.

As much as stylistic similarities might draw Hebrew writings into the discussion

of satirical antecedents to Rome's formal genre, there is, as with Greek, a conspicuous

and noteworthy etymological connection as well. The Hebrew Bible contains a quasi-

homophone of the word *satyr* that is derived from the word for *goat*. Anglicized as

se'irim (in the plural as it appears in the Hebrew Bible), this word was used to describe

hairy, pagan idols and the mythical creatures in whose image they were formed. In

vulgates and modern language editions the word was sometimes translated as "goat,"

other times it was extrapolated to refer to an idol representing a goat-like deity and

translated as "devil," while, in some instances, it was simply translated as "satyr."[26] Saint

Jerome carefully avoided the Greek word in his translation, instead rendering it as a

substantivized adjective "pilosus" ("hairy one") in cases where it refers neither to idols

nor to ordinary goats.[27] It seems from the context of those references that the biblical

se'irim, like their Greek counterparts and Roman successors, were associated with

dancing, debauchery, and evil. Thus, here too there is both a cultural and etymological

predecessor to the Roman phenomenon and, most importantly, there was a distinctly

biblical means of transferring the character and his nature to later Europeans.

This may serve to partially explain how satyrs (along with other hybrid creatures)

entered into the Christian imagination, thereby finding their way into medieval

illuminations. However, the degree to which this intriguing synchronicity between the

evolving Judeo-Christian and pagan, mythological traditions may have served as an

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[26] See Leviticus 16.8 for an instance where it was translated as "goat" and 2
Paralipomenon 11.15 (2 Chronicles in the King James Bible) for translation as "devils,"
referring to the idols.
[27] See Isaiah 13.21 and 34.14.

alternative point of entry for literary satire into medieval and early modern culture is all but impossible to determine in the absence of explicit references to it. There is no evidence that any among the relatively small group of identifiable, medieval satirists drew upon it. Nonetheless, it is easy to imagine that, within the Renaissance and Reformation movement toward ancient sources in their original languages, it may have legitimized the satirical mode, commonly perceived as ultimately pagan, in the eyes of Christian (and most specifically early-modern, Protestant) humanists, many of whom cautiously sought to draw from and imitate only appropriately religious sources.[28]

While the above discussion of satire's contested origins and the ongoing etymological and philological debates they has inspired illustrates how the various satirical customs of the Greeks, Hebrews, and Romans all flowed together into a broad satirical tradition that gave rise to early modern satire, there is a critical distinction between the earlier and later stages of the mode. In all three of the ancient traditions discussed, satirists readily named their targets, unambiguously charging them before the public; this practice became increasingly difficult and even dangerous as social structures evolved and the conventional targets of satire grew in power, wealth, and influence. Satirists had to adapt to the new realities of medieval and early modern European culture, which they managed, in part, by appropriating a significant concept and tool of the progressively dominant, Christian social structure. It was an important step toward early modern satire in general, but it was a crucial one in the development of the *satyrical*.

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[28] The question of Christian versus pagan models became a source of particular antagonism. See the discussion in chapters three and four of Théodore de Bèze and Pierre de Ronsard.

III. From Satire to the *Satyrical*

> Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate,
> tunc autem facie ad faciem…
> -Saint Paul, First Epistle to the Corinthians

At its core, satire remains essentially the same from its most ancient instances to modern times: humorously presented correction (or corrective humor, depending on the reader's perspective). But what transformed the direct, unveiled invective of ancient satire into the narrative form more familiar to modern readers was the medieval addition of allegory. Laying a symbolic veil over satirical critique, allegory transformed the mode while opening it to new literary, philosophical, and social potentials, like the *satyrical*. At the same time, this turn toward an allegorical expression of satire aligned the mode with the social phenomena of mystical corporality that ultimately gave rise to the *satyrical*. Thus, this examination of the transition from satire to the *satyrical* will focus on these two aspects: how Christianity affected satire and how late medieval and early modern satire appropriated both the allegorical mode and social allegory of the mystical body.

Satire and Christianity: The Allegorical Turn

As the fallen Western Roman Empire disintegrated into the numerous kingdoms

and territories of Europe, most of which adopted Catholicism over the subsequent

centuries, the civic virtues of Rome were replaced by a universalized Christian concept of

morality and a politic largely defined in spiritual terms. According to Snyder's theory

cited above, a general decline in the amount of satire produced would inherently follow,

and to a large degree, and this is the prevailing view of medieval literary satire: that it did

not exist. However, as G. L. Hendrickson argued in regard to the disputed Greek

influence on Roman satire, the lack of a formal and commonly accepted name for

satirical practices within that cultural context may have led to just such a misguided

assumption (Hendrickson 40–41). This seems a reasonable explanation for the apparent

absence of satire in the Middle Ages, particularly given the drastic changes in form that

accompanied its integration into Christian society. Nonetheless, satire was produced and

studied in the Middle Ages, and, more to the point of this study, it was during that time

that the *satyrical* began to take shape.

Writing on medieval concepts of satire, Ben Parsons cites various primary sources

that illustrate not only an awareness of classical satire in the Middle Ages, but a

contemporary theoretical discourse focused on both the precise form and general mode:

Conrad of Hirsau (c. 1070 – c. 1150) commented on Horace, Juvenal, and Persius;

Matthew of Vendome's (born c. 1130) *Ars versificatoria* and John of Garland's (c. 1195

– c. 1272) *Parisiana poetria* both contain lengthy discussions of satire; and, most

significantly, the Latin Church Father Isidore of Seville wrote extensively on a

Christianized theory of satire that was "not derived inductively from the Roman satirists"

and that "remained 'effective for centuries'" (Parsons 106–8). The Christian model

focused, as one would expect, on human morality as conceived within that religious

context. Developing this idea, Isidore referenced various classical works of satire and

satirical authors. He wrote:

> Satirici a quibus generaliter vitia carpuntur, ut Flaccus, Persius, Iuvenalis
>
> vel alii. Hi enim universorum delicta corripiunt, nec vitabatur eis
>
> pessimum quemque describere, nec cuilibet peccata moresque
>
> reprehendere. Unde et nudi pinguntur, eo quod per eos vitiasingula
>
> denudentur. (Isidore VIII.vii.7)

> Satire generally gathers together vices, as in the work of Horace, Persius,
>
> Juvenal, or other similar authors. These on the whole snatch up sins, never
>
> shying away from describing even the worst, nor from reprimanding sinful
>
> habits. Each naked sin is pictured, its every part laid bare. (English trans.
>
> Parsons 108)

Familiarity with Classical satire was not limited to these few educated elites, but rather,

as Suzanne Reynolds has shown, ancient satirists were grouped with other Classical poets

classified as "satirists and historiographers" for study in medieval grammar schools and

universities, both terms "designed to reassure the medieval reading community of their

moral standing" (Reynolds 11). Rita Copeland likewise observed that, "in elementary

Latin instruction, satire was a preferred genre for teaching Latin – and thus literacy – to

young boys" (Copeland 79). Building upon this familiarity, there were a good number of

self-identified, formal Latin satires produced throughout the Early Middle Ages that very

closely resembled those of the Roman masters in both form and content.[29] However, as

Laura Kendrick notes, medieval satirical expression diverged from classical satire "to the

extent that medieval societies (agrarian and feudal, but increasingly commercial) and

their values (Catholic) differed from those of the classical world" (Kendrick 53). In her

work on sixteenth-century satire, Antónia Szabari describes how these Catholic values

contributed to a Christian satirical aesthetic. She writes:

> The "Angelic Doctor," Thomas Aquinas, defines "derision" as a serious
>
> sin whose aim is the shaming of the other. Renaissance authors such as
>
> the Dutch humanist Erasmus and the French poet Joachim du Bellay,
>
> however, strive to reconcile classical satire with Christian morality by
>
> promoting the kind of satire that has a moral function ("high satire"),
>
> whose aim is to correct the vices, not to attack persons. (Szabari 96)

As the goals and explicit motivation behind satire evolved and conformed to the social

contexts of Christianity, so too did its primary means of expression; this may help explain

why medieval satire is so often overlooked and even denied, because it did not closely

enough resemble its Classical predecessors.

While Latin-style, literary satire did continue, mostly among the clerical class

whose linguistic education gave them access to those older works, the generic name

satire was sublimated into a broad spirit manifesting in a number of existent genres,

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[29] For example the Goliards, like Walter of Châtillon (c. 1134 – c. 1200) and Peter of Blois (c. 1135 – c. 1211), whose satirical works were included in the *Carmina Burana* (c. 1230). Likewise Pseudo-Martial (Godfrey of Winchester, died 1107), who imitated the Latin epigram form.

frequently to the point that even works that were "almost exclusively devoted to satire [went] under other generic labels" (Kendrick 52). These various new forms and styles reached a broad variety of the population, where traditional satire had only a necessarily limited audience. One particularly populist form of satire that came to prominence in the Middle Ages, and that simultaneously recalled the mode's Greek, theatrical origins, was farce.

Like Greek Old Comedy, farce was characterized by bawdy humor and exaggerated ridicule. Furthermore, as Sara Beam argues, farces were "inherently satirical plays, and their jokes directly challenged the authority that religious and royal officials enjoyed" (Beam 7). However, unlike in the Greek and Roman satirical traditions, where overt references to real public figures were tolerated, Medieval farceurs had to veil their critique behind caricature and stereotype, particularly in places like France, where kings ruled and direct criticism of royal officials was considered treasonous (Beam 3). Together with a surprising degree of tolerance on the part of both religious and political authorities, perhaps, as Muir proposed regarding early-modern, carnivalesque celebrations generally, seeing farce as a sort of social pressure release valve, this veil of caricature permitted the continued presentation of farces with relatively little official interference (Muir 89ff). Only the rare instances of more targeted satire garnered attention or condemnation from officials, but even in those cases the farceurs generally escaped with relatively light punishments, being, as Beam explains, almost exclusively young men whose youthful folly was more or less easily forgiven (Beam 25–27). So farce continued throughout the

Middle Ages and into the Renaissance where it largely influenced all forms of satirical discourse.

In another similarity to Greek Old Comedy, farce is thought to have grown out of the Mystery Play tradition of the Middle Ages, functioning in earlier days as lighter intermèdes during the emotionally draining spiritual dramas, before eventually evolving into a distinct genre of stand-alone performances (Rouvière 40). A final commonality that brings farce into the discussion of satire is the etymology of the word itself: like the Latin *satura*, *farce* was first (and still is) a culinary term used to describe a dish composed of assorted elements (meat, spices, nuts, vegetables, etc.) that were stuffed together into some other item, often a cavity of an animal, and cooked – in essence, as Nicot labeled it in his 1606 *Thresor de la langue francoyse*, a *tomaculum* or sausage (Nicot, "Farce"). The literary application of the word is also mentioned in the *Thresor*, where it is described as a playfully comedic theatrical genre; the verb *farcer* or *se farcer de quelqu'un* also became a synonym for *mocquer* (Renner, *Difficile* 118). This culinary origin also relates to the corporeal nature of farce as described by Sara Beam:

> Farces and other carnivalesque texts explore the porous nature of the human body and its interdependence with the wider world. Priests, kings, royal officials, and wealthy merchants are mocked and debased with reference to the physical imperatives of the organic body that no one can transcend: its needs to eat, drink, and excrete. (Beam 31)

This, she then points out, is the humorous version of the body that Bakhtin called the *grotesque*, which rose to a particular prominence in medieval and Renaissance comic

discourse. It is important to note, as Beam does, that this notion of the grotesque body "as expressed in farces was not incompatible with Christianity as practiced and understood" at the time, in which the human body was considered to be "a pathway to the sacred: physical practices such as sexual abstinence, fasting, and flagellation were means to achieve a closer relationship with God" (Beam 32). This corporeal lens through which farceurs seem to have viewed and portrayed the world corresponds well to the increasingly allegorical worldview that settled over medieval culture and the other evolving forms of literary satire.

Satire generally relies upon a number of literary devices in order to achieve its comic correction and ridicule, but none is more essential to the mode from the Middle Ages forward than allegory. In fact, satire is one of the principal modes and genres specifically described by Angus Fletcher in his research on allegory, as being characterized by allegory (Fletcher 3). A number of medieval examples of allegorical satire come to mind: *Le roman de la rose*, the Renart cycle, and, as will be discussed in the following chapter, the *Roman de Fauvel*. To be sure, it is no exaggeration to say that the medieval and early modern satirist is almost always already an allegorist. The most obvious contribution of allegory to satire in those times when society was ruled by at-times reactionary political and ecclesiastical authorities was its fictitious façade; this veil of imagery and misdirection could have served to protect the author by offering a sort of plausible deniability against accusations of slander and, worse yet, treason or heresy. By traditional accounts, this then frees the satirist to express ideas that otherwise would have been impossible. Indeed, as Dustin Griffin points out, writers in societies where open

challenge is not permitted have and will always "turn to irony, indirection, innuendo, allegory, fable – to the fictions of satire" (Griffin 139).[30] But this practical function engenders a complex theoretical dilemma upon which hangs satire's essential function and goal. Ellen Douglas Leyburn warns that if the satirical representation resembles too closely the truth being satirized, then all sense of metaphor is lost and the satire becomes ineffective; at the same time, she continues, too great a difference between the truth and representation likewise renders the metaphor impuissant as it strays into overt antagonism; thus, the allegorical satirist must maintain a precarious balance between too much fiction and not enough (Leyburn 12). However, even this more elaborate conception of allegory's function within satire ultimately overlooks the most important aspect of both means of expression: they are not meant to conceal, but rather to communicate ideas, to reveal truths, to unfold mysteries, and to inspire the audience to action. It is in this that allegory most powerfully serves satire.

To illustrate how these two modes converge and how this product then relates to the *satyrical* that is the topic of this study, it will be helpful to review some important aspects of allegory and its evolution within the Christian culture that dominated France, and the whole of Europe, throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The oft-quoted historian of the Middle Ages, Johan Huizinga, posited that there was "no great truth" of which the medieval mind was more conscious than that famously expressed by Saint Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians concerning the spiritual evolution of mankind's perspective (Huizinga 235). Paul wrote: "We see now through a

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[30] See also Angus Fletcher's account of Soviet writers in his *Allegory, the Theory of a Symbolic Mode*, page 328.

glass in a dark manner, but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know

even as I am known" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* 1 Cor. 13.12).[31] To the Christian scholar of

the Middle Ages (and thereafter), this progress from impaired, mortal perspective to

divinely-granted clarity took place not only across the expanses of mortality and

subsequent eternities, but also within the relatively brief moments of Biblical lucidity

attained via the exegetical method and its four fundamental senses: historical, allegorical,

tropological, and anagogical. Exegetes and scholars divided the four according to the

Pauline dichotomy of *letter* (history) and *spirit* (the other three), and this distinction was

crucial to the application of the method.[32] In simultaneous concert with and opposition to

the supposed concrete realities of history, the final three exegetical senses are all

allegorical in a certain sense (i.e. they involve the interpretation of symbols), with only

their specific domain distinguishing them: the allegorical was rooted in relating past

events and prophecies to the present; the tropological concerned moral behavior in the

present; and the anagogical pointed beyond this mortal sphere to things proper to God

and his eternal kingdom.

In a purely practical sphere, this potential for multilayered meaning permitted the

reinterpretation and appropriation of the Old Testament by Christians despite its pre-

Christian, Judaic origins. The histories recounted therein were, thus, not invalidated or

contradicted by Christianity, but rather, as the eminent Catholic theologian Henri de

Lubac asserts, they were vivified by spiritual interpretation, which opened them as

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[31] The more poetic and famous English rendering of beginning of this Bible passage
comes from the King James Version which reads: "For now we see through a glass,
darkly…".
[32] See Paul's Epistle to the Romans 2.29.

sources of and support for later Christian doctrine; nonetheless, it should be noted that, following logically from this, Christians privileged the allegorical interpretation over a purely historical one (de Lubac, *Exegesis* 2: 24–27, 85). The implication of this approach and its theoretical underpinnings is that, as de Lubac declares, the true purpose of allegory is to reveal truth, in a particular way and to a particular group (de Lubac, *Exegesis* 2: 100). As Angus Fletcher wrote of allegories, they often have "a literal level that makes good enough sense all by itself" and can "get along without interpretation," all the while suggesting "a peculiar doubleness of intention" that demands analysis; it is this superficial sufficiency that creates the protective façade described above, but this superficial layer within the context of allegory (and satire) simultaneously indicates to the conversant audience the substance that lies beneath it (Fletcher 7). In short, the overtly allegorical character of many medieval and early modern satires signaled the need for interpretation while hiding the interpretable meaning from the uninitiated. Thus, allegory facilitated intentional communication as much as it hindered unintentional communication. How it does so and, in particular, how it functions within satire is a topic that merits brief consideration here.

Allegory was not new when it came to prominence among medieval Christians. The Christian allegorical tradition seems to descend, like so many of the other Christian concepts discussed in this study, from the New Testament Apostle Paul, whose epistle to the Galatians contains the only Biblical use of any form of the word *allegory*. Discussing the Old Testament account of the Abraham's sons and their respective mothers, Paul asserts that the professed differences between the two boys and the circumstances of their

births, which as a story in itself seems clear enough, are "said by an allegory," which he proposes will elucidate not only the characteristic disparity between God's original chosen people, the Jews, and all others, but will also presage a corresponding difference between God's new covenant people, the Christians, and their contemporaries (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Gal. 4.24 (22–31)).[33] Citing Cicero, de Lubac contends that the term *allegory* was a relatively new one when Paul used it, perhaps coined only one hundred years earlier by the grammarian Philodemus of Gadara to denote that figure of style "which consists in saying one thing so as to make another be understood by it" (Cicero qtd. in de Lubac, *Exegesis* 2: 1). Paul's use of a neologism, as well as his modeling of the described method, combined to legitimize this approach within the Christian movement. Drawing on this implicit imperative as well as the Jewish exegetical tradition (in which Paul had famously been educated), Christian thinkers such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Gregory the Great developed the elaborate methodologies of Christian exegesis and, thus, the interpretive practices later associated with literary allegory.[34] In late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, the Christian allegorical tradition transitioned from an primarily interpretive function focused on integrating older texts into Christianity into a mode of creation as authors like Prudentius and Boethius populated fictional worlds with allegorical embodiments of abstract qualities; the eventual caricatures of satire likewise fit into this tradition.

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[33] The word *allegory* is etymologically derived from the Greek word appearing in this biblical passage, which reads: "ἅτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα" (Greek NT Gal. 4. 24).
[34] De Lubac comments on each of these individuals and their contributions to the developing allegorical method in his *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture* (see pages 1: 117-159).

There is a common and somewhat unavoidable notion that the allegorical figures so prominent in medieval Christian literature derived from classical mythological characters. Nancy Freeman Regalado, for example, draws a straight line between classical mythology and medieval Christian allegory, writing:

> No ancient myths… spoke more vividly to the medieval imagination than the pantheon of ancient personification allegories, conceived within a Christianizing context, the great female presences that spring not from legend or history but from language itself: the goddess Fortuna, Boethius' noble Philosophy, the epic women warriors in Prudentius' *Psychomachia*. (135)

It is true that, as Christianity spread throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, the new religion appropriated and Christianized much of its converts' native culture. However, as much as early Christians were undeniably adept at incorporating and adapting aspects of other cultures, they were simultaneously and vigorously working to distinguish themselves from those *pagan* societies. Most particularly as the early Christians worked to establish a monotheistic faith in the midst of longstanding polytheistic cultures, the idea that they would have casually recreated pantheons, even for the sake of literary facility, is difficult to defend. Responding to this common conflation of mythological imagery and later Christian allegory from an unabashedly Christian perspective, de Lubac concedes that both Christian and "pagan" allegory make use of "a certain number of analogous procedures," but he asserts that they are "nonetheless two functionally heterogeneous things; they are two opposed methods, proceeding from two opposed

doctrines and two frames of mind" (de Lubac, *Exegesis* 2: 19). He locates the principal

difference in what he calls the "fact of Christ," which is to say that Christian allegory is,

in his conception, based in actual events and in the real fulfillment of prophecy rather

than in primitive attempts at explaining the natural world (de Lubac, *Revelation* 159–72).

Bolstering his claims with ancient authority, de Lubac quotes Sallust, who argued that the

"fables" of classical myth were nothing more than "poetic fictions" signifying "things

which had occurred at no moment in time, and yet last forever"; elaborating on this, de

Lubac declares that myths concerned only "abstract truths, outside of time; they were

ideas about the world, about the soul, about divinity; they were speculations of the moral

or metaphysical order" (de Lubac, *Revelation* 162). This emphasis on a real-world

referent draws Christian allegory away from such mythologies and reaffirms its relevant

function within satire, which is also inherently attached to reality.

Deriving their substance from reality and, therefore, demanding interpretation,

both Christian allegory and satire manifest the essential qualities of what Umberto Eco

has labeled the *open work*. Bernd Renner announced the importance of Eco's concept in

regard to satire, explaining that an *open work* is one in which "the problem of

interpretation constitutes the central question of the text"; this is the key characteristic of

satire (Renner, *Difficile* 11). However, in contrast to Eco's description of the somewhat

limited interpretations necessarily prescribed in the case of much of medieval allegory,

satire is more *open* to the proliferation of meaning that Eco describes (Eco, *Open Work*

6). This may seem to contradict satire's close connection to reality, however, as George

Lord argued: "the richest satire… is that which transmutes concrete historical realities

into universals," he continues, satire's "fictions include but transcend historical fact" (qtd. in Griffin 117). In its use of allegorical caricatures rather than the unveiled invective of ancient satire, medieval and early modern satire (and modern satire, for that matter) extends beyond the particular place and time portrayed and opens onto timeless, universal critique. A certain ambiguity, grounded in allegorical techniques, is what transforms simple invective into complex satire. In contrast to the narrow conceptions of many of satire's critics, for example Highet and Arnold, what makes satire significant, particularly within the context discussed, is that it is universalizable by virtue of its openness to interpretation.

While literary concepts of allegory expand and invigorate satire generally, there was a specific allegorical function at work in the broader medieval and early modern society that laid the foundation for the *satyrical*: that of the *corpus mysticum* or mystical body. The mystical bodies of Church and kingdom were the canvases upon which the *satyrical* image was drawn.

The *Corpus Mysticum*: The Social Foundation of the *Satyrical*

The *satyrical* was born of a medieval world awash in symbolism. Using the same exegetical techniques that revealed hidden meaning in religious texts, the medieval Europeans drew a veil of symbolism over the natural world. As Umberto Eco succinctly describes it: "The Medievals inhabited a world filled with references, reminders and overtones of Divinity, manifestations of God in things. Nature spoke to them heraldically:

lions or nut-trees were more than they seemed; griffins were just as real as lions because, like them, they were signs of a higher truth" (Eco, *Art and Beauty* 53). Michel Foucault likewise described a medieval world replete with symbolic meaning and anchored in a particular worldview: "Le monde s'enroulait sur lui-même : la terre répétant le ciel, les visages se mirant dans les étoiles, et l'herbe enveloppant dans ses tiges les secrets qui servaient à l'homme" ("The universe was folded in upon itself: the earth echoing the sky, faces seeing themselves reflected in the stars, and plants holding within their stems the secrets that were of use to man") (Foucault, *Mots* 32; *Order* 17). The crucial point to be drawn from these descriptions of the medieval worldview is probably best and most clearly approached, however, from the overtly Christian point of view offered by Henri de Lubac, who wrote:

> It is well known that medieval symbolism readily encompasses not only Scripture and the visible universe, but that other universe, that other living, sacred book which is divine worship. The Fathers transposed the ancient doctrine that saw the universe at once as a temple and as a body and each temple as being at once the human body and the universe. By virtue of this transposition, the cosmic and liturgical mirrors, while corresponding with each other, also correspond to the mirrors of history and the Bible. The material Church is an image of the perfect Man, being as it is "the geometric projection of the Son of Man on the cross." (de Lubac, *Exegesis* 1: 103)

The Christian reader of these symbols saw not only an object pointing to God, but also a reflection of his or her own humanity via Scripture's accounts of divine origins and the perfect personification of what was wholly non-human in the form of Jesus. Just as the previous section outlined a progress from literary interpretation to an imitative style of creation, this means of interpretation led medieval Christians to symbolically *read* abstract qualities into objects, which in turn gave rise to a culture of allegorical invention built around (frequently anthropomorphic) representations of abstract qualities. These systems of symbolic and allegorical representation extended to include social objects as well, most particularly the Christian Church and the political state, e.g. the Kingdom of France. Both of these cultural entities, as well as many others, were prominently and powerfully imagined in corporeal terms, as bodies, and they, more than any other entities, dominated the ethereal landscape of the allegorized and satirized world that provided the backdrop for the texts to be studied in the following chapters.

Finding its conceptual origin and, thereby, theological justification in the Saint Paul's New Testament writings, the ecclesiastical body was the first to inhabit the medieval world. Throughout his missives to distinct Christian groups, Saint Paul repeatedly called on culturally disparate, linguistically distinct, and geographically divided Christians to be *one*. Employing almost identical wording in his many such pronouncements, Paul poignantly declared to the Christians at Rome, the geographic source of the imperial oppression of early Christianity: "So we being many, are one body

in Christ, and every one members one of another" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Rom. 12.5).[35] It

was in no way surprising that this corporeal metaphor became a favored analogy for the

itinerant *Apostle to the Gentiles*, whose implicit charge was one of unification; the

underlying concept of the mystical body became a *de facto* official metaphor and

theological cornerstone for a church steeped in corporeal culture and burdened with a

universal imperative.

    This analogy is repeated at various points throughout the New Testament and

undoubtedly guided a good deal of theological exposition over the centuries, but Henri de

Lubac locates its first official enunciation in the writings of Boniface VIII, the

aggressively consolidating pope whose reign happens to be the setting of the first satirical

work considered in this study, the *Roman de Fauvel* (de Lubac, *Corpus* 13). In his 1302

Papal bull known as *Unam Sanctam*, Boniface asserted papal authority over the *singular*

body of the Catholic Church whose head, as declared by Scripture, is Jesus Christ.

Greatly stressing this point, he wrote:

> …of the one and only Church there is one body and one head, not two
>
> heads like a monster; that is, Christ and the Vicar of Christ, Peter and the
>
> successor of Peter, since the Lord speaking to Peter Himself said: "Feed
>
> my sheep," meaning, my sheep in general, not these, nor those in

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[35] The passage in the sixteenth-century Latin Vulgate, which more likely reflect the text as the writers discussed in this study would have known it, reads: "ita multi unum corpus sumus in Christo, singuli autem alter alterius membra" ("Latin Vulgate" Rom. 12.5). French-speaking Protestants of the time would have most likely read something like the following translation in the 1560 *Bible de Genève*: "Ainsi nous qui sommes plusieurs, sommes un seul corps en Christ : & chacun en son endroit membres l'un de l'autre" (Olivétan, Calvin, and Des Gallars Rom. 12.5).

particular, whence we understand that He entrusted all to [Peter] (Boniface

VIII par. 2).

The specific social impetus and repercussions of this document will be discussed at

length in the following chapter, at this point it suffices to focus on the broader inspiration

and implications. The principal motive guiding this declaration of papal authority is

hardly spiritual: Boniface VIII (famously lampooned by both Dante and Rabelais for his

greed and corruption, and counted among E. R. Chamberlin's eponymous "bad popes")

had unmistakable designs on secular authority – most particularly on reigning in defiant

monarchs like Philippe IV of France.[36] Ernst Kantorowicz wrote concerning this bull that

it "betrays the supreme effort on the part of the spiritual power to answer and, if possible,

to overcome the challenge of the nascent self-sufficiency of the secular bodies politic"

(Kantorowicz 194). Placing "two swords" in the Church's hands, that is, the "spiritual

and the temporal," Boniface articulated an absolutely inclusive social body under a single

authority, no "two-headed monster," but a naturally defined body with one head

represented on earth by the papacy. Explicitly referring to the *Greeks* (i.e. those who had

split off from the Church of Rome some two hundred and fifty years earlier), Boniface

declares that outsiders to this mystical body face a supreme ultimatum: they must either

accept exclusion from Christ's fold and the eternal consequences thereof, or recognize

universal papal authority (Boniface VIII par. 2). Theological exposition, affirmed by

Communion, unified and subjugated the mystical body. The bounds of this metaphorical

body were simultaneously objective, marked by the physical boundaries of Christendom,

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[36] See Dante's *Inferno*, canto XIX; Rabelais's *Pantagruel*, chapter 30; and E. R.
Chamberlin's *Bad Popes*,

and subjective, affirmed by the individual recognition and participation of its constituent members in the sacraments that formed it. Over time this Pauline concept of the *corpus mysticum*, this *mystical body* of the Church composed of a diverse, even fragmented membership, became entrenched as both pragmatic prescription of communal self-perception and doctrinally substantiated, abstract truth.

Building from that Pauline bodily metaphor and responding to those papal assertions of temporal authority, certain political entities gradually adopted a similar corporeal self-perception, forming mystical bodies politic with a monarch taking Christ's place as its simultaneous head and fractal incarnation. In his seminal work on political theology *The King's Two Bodies*, Ernst Kantorowicz illustrated the extent to which this Pauline metaphor influenced French political perceptions down through the Early Modern period. One of its most enduring and influential consequences was the ensuing theory of divine kingship; not only was the kingly right to rule affirmed by scriptural precedent, it was individually legitimized by the active participation of religious authority in coronation and rendered intelligible through the conspicuous appropriation of longstanding religious models.[37] An insight into perceptions of this notion at the time comes from the writings of the Norman Anonymous who, writing in response to the Investiture Controversy of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, announced that the power of the king is the natural power of God given to the sovereign by grace; "hence," the author declares, "the king, too, is God and Christ, but by grace; and whatsoever he does,

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[37] Kantorowicz describes how even parliamentary procedures took on the appearance and aspects of religious ceremony including scriptural recitations and exposition in the conspicuous goal of transposing the spiritual significance of the bodily metaphor from religious to secular entities (Kantorowicz 227).

he does not simply as a man, but as one who has become God and Christ by grace" (qtd.

in Kantorowicz 48). In this view, the king becomes a "twinned" being like the two-

natured Christ, simultaneously "human by nature" and "divine by grace," and a rightful

heir to both spiritual and temporal power (Kantorowicz 49, 59). Nowhere were these

beliefs held more firmly than in France, a kingdom blessed with the title *First Daughter*

of the Catholic Church owing to its celebrated status as refuge for early Christians fleeing

imperial persecution (not insignificantly including the legendary installation of a

resuscitated Lazarus as bishop of Marseille following Jesus Christ's death), and for the

enduring, official union between the Church and kingdom dating back at least as far as

the baptism of Clovis in 496 CE.[38] The French king's divine nature was resolutely

reiterated within the larger set of rituals surrounding coronation, including a public

spectacle wherein the newly anointed king would heal his scrofulous subjects by the

laying on of hands (Kantorowicz 252). The significance of this royal claim of divinity,

however, was not limited to the spiritual spectacle of coronation, it comprehended an

assertion of primacy over other earthly monarchs, not the least of which was the pope

himself, who ruled by election rather than the *grace of God*. While this mimetic

relationship between Church and kingdom might strike the modern reader as peculiar,

Kantorowicz asserts that it was not unusual at the time. He writes:

> Taken all by itself, this transference of definitions from one sphere to
>
> another, from theology to law, is anything but surprising or even
>
> remarkable. The *quid pro quo* method – the taking over of theological

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[38] See Voragine's *Golden Legend*, page 23 for this account of Saint Lazarus.

notions for defining the state – had been going on for many centuries, just

as, vice versa, in the early centuries of the Christian era the imperial

political terminology and the imperial ceremonial had been adapted to the

needs of the Church. (Kantorowicz 19).

Throughout the Middle Ages and down to the sixteenth century, statesmen and jurists

alike frequently and freely invoked the political incarnation of the mystical *corpus* as a

useful, even essential national metaphor in contest with the Church. While the theological

force of such traditions may have suffered in the face of humanistic reason and Protestant

reform, the constitutional weight of the political corporeal metaphor remained a

frequently referenced, foundational tenet, and binding force on the French kingdom until

a guillotine blade brought about its dramatic conclusion through the simultaneous

decapitation of both of the *king's two bodies*.

In regard to the *satyrical*, this corporeal metaphor for the Church and kingdom

imparted a certain conceptual substance to perpetuated unity; it also inspired a fair

amount of anxiety faced with potential fragmentation. The *satyrical* is specifically

established upon this corporeal concept of the political or ecclesiastical entity. It was

when these metaphorical entities were threatened with fragmentation that some early

modern satirists reimagined the mystical body in a hybrid form, based on the widely

accepted notion that satire as a literary mode was derived from the satyrs of ancient

literature. The *satyrical*, mystical body was a composite whole that both reflected the

realities of an evolving society and posited a potential solution to recurring crises of

fragmentation.

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IV. Defining the *Satyrical* Body: From Mythological Creature to Societal Embodiment

At various points over the course of the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance, internal conflict, at times resulting from external conflict, led to worrisome fractures in the two mystical corpora discussed in this study, the Catholic Church and French kingdom. As relatively small, divisive conflicts like the Papal Schism, Hundred Years' War, and Protestant Reformation, grew into full-scale crises of fragmentation with an imminent threat of disunion, faith in the social institutions and cultural traditions that had established and molded those metaphorical corpora inevitably waned, leading to a flourishing of satire. This expected preponderance of satire, born of crises of fragmentation in the mystical corpora, resonated quite naturally with the internally divided, mythological creature whose name the literary mode seemingly bore. This *satyr* that many authors and readers perceived in *satyre* came to represent the goal as well as the origins of satirical discourse. Much of how this etymological *coincidence* colored production and reception of these works is directly related to how the creature was understood. Therefore, a brief overview of how the creature was perceived in medieval and early modern culture will help to illustrate how it came to embody a positive solution, particularly in its unexpected union with the sacred metaphor of Christ's *corpus mysticum*.

As is the case with the other hybrid grotesques that inhabited the margins of medieval manuscripts, many medieval depictions of the satyr easily lend themselves to a reading based on the Pauline, internal conflict pitting the spiritual self against the shameful and unshakeable "sensual" or "natural man".[39] But over time, and particularly as the Renaissance blossomed with an overwhelming fondness for Antiquity, Christian concepts of the satyr evolved and, somewhat surprisingly, they gradually merged with distinctly Christian attributes to yield positive interpretations.

Possibly the most doctrinally significant, early reference to satyrs, as creatures in the Greek and Roman traditions, was handed down to medieval Christian Europe through the hagiography of the fourth-century Saint Paul the Hermit, translated into Latin by Saint Jerome and eventually recorded in Voragine's late-thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea*. The story recounts that Saint Anthony, disabused in a vision of the notion that he was the first eremite, set out to find his saintly superior, and in his wanderings came across both a centaur (hippocentaur) and a satyr in the wilderness (Voragine 85).[40] While across the various versions of the story, the centaur was clearly demonic and tried to mislead the saint, the satyr was generally depicted as helpful, honest, and, most interestingly, apparently Christian: he offers the hungry saint some sustenance, describes himself as a mortal mistaken for a god, and requests a Christian blessing of the saint (Lavocat 176–79). The satyr depicted here takes on the characteristics of a man and even

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[39] Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians contrasts the "sensual" (Douay-Rheims) or, as it is rendered in the King James Version as well as many other English versions, "natural" man with the "spiritual" man (see *Douay-Rheims Bible* 2 Cor. 2.14).
[40] It is interesting to note that, in this text, Saint Jerome calls the two creatures a centaur and a satyr where other versions simply call them devils or demons (Bacchus).

possesses the capacity for Christian faith. As this story is recounted in the *Belles Heures* of Jean de France, the satyr, here portrayed as entirely goat rather than hybrid (which would indicate some freedom in the conception and depiction of these creatures), kindly guides Saint Anthony in the correct direction on his quest to find Saint Paul; the satyr is neither malicious nor dishonest, but, in fact, a friend to the searching saint (Husband 232–33). Moreover, within the same story and series of illustrations in the *Belles Heures*, Anthony is later attacked by demons that in form and color are conspicuously distinguished from the earlier mythical guide, a further proof of a generally positive view of the satyr (Husband 237).[41]

Another significant medieval description of satyrs is found in Saint Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, where he characterizes them as "little men with hooked noses, horns on their foreheads and goat's feet"; he then relates the story of Saint Anthony and the satyr, agreeing with other accounts in regard to the creature's generally affable nature (qtd. in Eco, *On Ugliness* 121). Even beyond these more or less generous depictions of the creatures, the anonymous thirteenth-century *Liber Monstrorum* attributes to fauns (by this point generally synonymous with satyr) a desirable and familiarly Christian gift of prophecy as well as a most human love of music (qtd. in Eco, *History of Beauty* 139).

This humanized concept of the satyr can be contrasted with the creature briefly described in Latin bestiaries of the time, which, simply by virtue of the satyr's inclusion in the work, seem to imagine him as more animal than human, calling him a restless type of ape with an "agreeable face" (Clark 133). In other media of the time, most particularly

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[41] The goat parts of the satyr are a shining white while the demons are dark, almost black.

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in illuminated manuscripts and architectural features, monsters, as any hybrid creature would have been called, were often moralized and allegorized with outward, physical deformity representing inner moral corruption (Bovey 40). In addition to moralizing, these hybrid monsters were often used to amuse in correlation with literary texts, though some authors, like Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, were critical of such practices (Bovey 42).[42] Alixe Bovey argues that these "comical and crude hybrids, and their monstrous behavior, belong to the world of the body and its basest functions," which, particularly when such images were set next to passages explicitly concerning the spirit, as she indicates they were, reaffirms the Pauline dichotomy of the spiritual and natural man; she contends that this juxtaposition was intended to illustrate the "tension between the desires of the body and the needs of the spirit" as it was keenly felt in the Middle Ages (Bovey 44–45). But the satyr does not represent this problem ambiguously. As described above, the conceptual details of the represented, internal struggle are reinforced by the particular configuration of the satyr's body: the animalistic functions of sex, belly, excretion in opposition to the higher, human faculties of sentiment, faith, and reason.

 With the reintroduction of Greek thought in the Renaissance and Reformation, the image of the satyr changed from an ambivalent embodiment of a very human dilemma to a mythical personage with a specific social function. Szabari asserts that the "unruly figure of the 'satyr' enjoyed a symbolic prominence in print culture… as the enunciator of the truths that books, authors, and printers were promoting" (Szabari 2). Emphasizing

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[42] One notable example is a twelfth-century copy of Horace's *Ars Poetica* in which the artist responds to the author's description of imagined comical hybrid creatures by putting the words into images.

this tradition as it manifested in the sixteenth century, she points to frontispieces and other illustrations accompanying satirical works in which a satyr-like, winged Saturn is depicted as "the emblem of 'truth revealed'" (Szabari 2). Building on these notions, Szabari argues that satire was not linked to any genre in particular, but rather it was a mode of expression that "harshly and directly" voiced the truth as conceived by the satirist (Szabari 2). She further proposes that the satyr's coarse and lewd persona matched the "rhetorical force of the assertions… and also the unrestraint and even pleasure that are permitted in asserting those truths" (Szabari 2–4). In addition to Saturn and satyrs, a third mythological personage was conflated into this heterogeneous character that functioned as a revealer of truth: Silenus, the mythological preceptor and companion of Dionysus (Lavocat 18). In all of these personages, as they descended from mythology, the key to sixteenth-century interpretations seems to crystalize around a notion of hybridity, whether of a disparity between appearances and reality, between form and substance, or between incongruous parts bound together in a single body. To at least some extent, this tradition has its roots in the rediscovered writings of Plato.

In the final pages of Plato's *Symposium*, the Platonic dialogues' recurring foil Alcibiades compares his former tutor, Socrates, to some curious mythical characters in a comically backhanded tribute. Plato's Alcibiades declares:

> Look at him! Isn't he just like a statue of Silenus? You know the kind
> of statue I mean; you'll find them in any shop in town. It's a Silenus
> sitting, his flute or his pipes in his hands, and it's hollow. It's split right

down the middle, and inside it's full of tiny statues of the gods. Now look

at him again! Isn't he just like the satyr Marsyas?

Nobody, not even you, Socrates, can deny that you *look* like them. But

the resemblance goes beyond appearance, as you're about to hear.

You are impudent, contemptuous, and vile!... And you're quite a

fluteplayer… In fact you're much more marvelous than Marsyas, who

needed instruments to cast his spells on people… you do exactly what he

does, but with words alone… Also, he likes to say he's ignorant and

knows nothing. Isn't this just like Silenus? Of course it is! And all this is

just on the surface, like the outsides of those statues of Silenus. I

wonder… if you have any idea what a sober and temperate man he proves

to be once you have looked inside. (Plato, "Symposium" 215a–216d)

Despite his less-than-attractive physical appearance, Socrates is, in Alcibiades's

description, a surprising receptacle for wisdom and even divinity.

This notion and its origin were apparently common intellectual currency in the

Renaissance, as attested to by Piero Valeriano Bolzani in his 1556 *Hieroglyphica sive de*

sacris Aegyptiorum litteris commentarii. Referencing this passage, the Italian scholar

explains: "Hinc Alcibiades Symposio Socratem Silenis similem esse dicit, quod is longè

alius esset interius intuenti, quam summo habitu videretur. Unde etiam Σιλενοί

αλκιβιάδου dici solet, de re quae prima fronte vilis ac ridicula videatur, interius tamen ac

propius contemplanti sit admirabilis" ("In the Symposium, Alcibiades declared Socrates

to be similar to these Sileni, for he was far different inwardly than he seemed on the

surface. This is why it is commonly said *sileni of Alcibiades*, regarding a thing that prima

facie seems worthless and ridiculous, yet that on closer inspection is inwardly

wonderful") (Bolzani 48v–49). Bolzani's simple statement regarding the commonality of

this expression speaks to the real influence of the idea behind it while opening onto the

potential relationship of these characters to the associated literary practices of the time.

Specifically in regard to early modern satire, Rabelais famously echoed this same

idea borrowed from Plato in introducing his celebrated 1534 satire, *Gargantua*, with a

discussion of his work's dual nature and similar references to Socrates and Silenus.

Warmly addressing an audience of "illustrious drunkards and cherished syphilitics"

("Buveurs tresillustres et vous Verolez tresprecieux"), the father of modern French satire

first likens his work to *Silenes*, grotesquely decorated boxes containing healing

medicines, and then to Socrates himself, whose unattractive exterior masked an

unmatched wisdom and gift for philosophy (Rabelais, *Gargantua* 47). Rabelais follows

these analogies with a clever metaphor, drawing a parallel between his satire and a bone

gnawed upon by a most philosophical canine who, knowing that the unremarkable, even

unpleasant exterior conceals the nourishing and delicious marrow inside, gnaws and

cracks until he has obtained its precious, hidden substance (Rabelais, *Gargantua* 49–51).

Throughout the rest of his prologue, Rabelais repeatedly stresses these metaphors and

explicitly invites his readers to approach his work as a metaphorical *silene*: grotesque in

appearance, but full of higher truths. Rabelais's invocation of Plato's image ties the early

modern French satirical tradition firmly to Classical philosophy while establishing a

foundation and terminology for later satirists. The satirical work, like the characters from

whom the name was assumed to descend, communicated truth despite a sometimes-
unappealing exterior. For Christians familiar with the Bible, as Renaissance humanists
generally were, this concept would bring to mind an even more powerful image than that
of the great Greek philosopher Socrates.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah (Isaias in the Douay-Rheims Bible) contains a
messianic prophecy prominently applied to the New Testament Jesus by Paul in his
epistle to the Romans. The author of this passage describes the future Messiah by
contrasting his lack of physical beauty with the magnificence of his invisible, salvational
role.[43] The Dutch humanist Erasmus took hold of this notion and, in his 1508 adage
entitled *Sileni Alcibiadis*, asked:

> And what of Christ? Was not He too a marvelous Silenus (if one may be
> allowed to use such language of Him)?... Observe the outside surface of
> this Silenus: to judge by ordinary standards, what could be humbler or
> more worthy of disdain? Parents of modest means and lowly station, and a
> humble home; poor Himself and with few and poor disciples, recruited not
> from noblemen's palaces or the chief sects of the Pharisees or the lecture-
> rooms of philosophers, but form the publican's office and the nets of
> fishermen. And His way of life: what a stranger He was to all physical

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[43] Isaias 53.1-4: "Who hath believed our report?… there is no beauty in him, nor
comeliness: and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be
desirous of him: Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted
with infirmity: and his look *was* as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteem
him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows: and we have
thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted." Paul explicitly
references this passage in Romans 10.16 where he writes: "But all do not obey the
gospel. For Isaias saith: *Lord, who hath believed our report?*"

comforts as He pursued through hunger and weariness, through insults and

mockery the way that led to the cross!... [Erasmus quotes the referenced

passage from Isaiah]… And now, if one has the good fortune to have a

nearer view of this Silenus, open – if, in other words, He shows Himself in

His mercy to anyone, the eyes of whose soul have been washed clean – in

heaven's name what a treasure you will find, in the cheap setting what a

pearl, in that lowliness what grandeur, in that poverty what riches, in that

weakness what unimaginable valour, in that disgrace what glory, in all

those labours what perfect refreshment, and in that bitter death, in short, a

never-failing spring of immortality! (Erasmus, *Adages* 245)

Erasmus restates this idea and reaffirms his interpretation some six years later when he

wrote to Martin Dorp:

In the 'Adagia,' now that I think of it, I called the apostles Sileni; what is

more, I called Christ himself a sort of Silenus. If a malicious critic should

come forward and interpret these words in a scanty and perfunctory

fashion, in order to put them in the worst possible light, they would be

absolutely intolerable. But if a holy and fair-minded man should read what

I wrote, he would approve of the allegory. (Erasmus, "Letter to Martin

Dorp" 159)

The image of Silenus and, by extension, of the satyr (as the two characters had been

conflated by that time), are here Christianized in the highest degree, being likened to

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Christ himself as unexpected repositories of philosophical and divine truth despite incongruous outward appearances.

Extending this notion and adapting it to the particular Christian literary practices of the Middle Ages and early modern period, Guillaume Budé, who is to a great extent credited with the popularization of Greek language and literature in early modern France, employs Silenus and satyrs as representations of literary interpretation generally and the interpretation of allegory specifically (Budé §24–27). Thus, not only did the satyr, a pagan character in origin, become a symbol of truth revealed, it became an embodied lens through which even Christian texts were interpreted. It is this positive perception of the satyr that eventually permits the analogy that underlies the *satyrical*.

Conclusion
The *Satyrical*: A Particular Truth Revealed

Satire is inherently introspective. If its targets lie beyond the scope of the author's self-identified culture, then it cannot ascend beyond the level of propaganda or invective, and most particularly in the case of early modern, Christian satire, it cannot at that point achieve the fundamental goal of fraternal correction. Thus, satire aimed at correcting mistakes within the Catholic Church must come from among the membership of the Catholic Church; likewise satire aimed at correcting French morals must come from among the French. In this way, satire is constructed upon a necessary familiarity and even

emotional attachment on the part of the satirist to the object of satirical attack. This dual character contributes to the choral position of the satirist, at once a spectator and a participant in the corrective fiction, the bond that subtly circumscribes the audience and target into a primal whole. In examining early modern satire, particularly the vicious satirical attacks traded between Catholics and Protestants, this aspect of the satirical context must be considered because it entirely changes the nature of the work. For example, if Protestant satires of Catholicism are read as internal, fraternal correction rooted in a shared French identity rather than mere invective aimed at theological adversaries, then the scope and functions change drastically; a satire thus read ceases to participate in a process of exclusion through ridicule, and becomes instead an expression of inclusion. It is at this point that the image of the Greek satyr becomes a most significant addition to the literary concept.

As the hybrid satyr came to define satirical expression in the early modern period, its unique, hybrid corporality resonated with a particular truth about the evolving cultures of both France and the Catholic Church that some authors were attempting to communicate: those erstwhile (supposedly) homogeneous mystical bodies of Church and kingdom had become discernably heterogeneous, but they could theoretically remain united in a hybrid mystical corporality. As widespread crises of fragmentation in the late Middle Ages, such as the Hundred Years' War and Papal Schism, erupted with bloody violence and theological discord, certain authors posited a satirical expression that resonated with a conspicuously hybrid notion of the mystical body as an allegorical description and hopeful redefinition of that traditional social entity. Mystical corporality

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could be maintained, these authors worked to illustrate, despite internal dissimilarity. This is not to say that *satyrical* works are free of animosity; they are characterized by the same outward hostile critique that animates most satire. But that expected, corrective animosity is subordinated to an overarching notion of perpetual unity in the mystical body. Whether implicitly or explicitly, the satyr emerges from these works as his hybrid corporality resonates with the underlying hope of continuing inclusion. This is the essence of the *satyrical*.

Chapter Two
***Satyrical* Beginnings in the Late Middle Ages**

As described in the previous chapter, late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages saw a significant decline in formal satire while, at the same time, the unique character of such works gradually grew into a generalized satirical spirit that could inhabit a work of any genre. Nevertheless, as mounting tensions within the mystical corpora of Christendom and the French kingdom gave rise to legitimate crises of fragmentation, the underlying theoretical impetus of satire, particularly as it became associated with the hybrid body of its supposed namesake, again led authors to take up that corrective labor of didactic and entertaining literature. The carefully constructed responses to such crises in each of the three cases presented in this chapter, ranging from the early fourteenth to the early fifteenth centuries, set some form of mystic-corporeal hybridity against the threatened fragmentation, and two of the three overtly do so with the characteristic comedic flare associated with traditional satire. While the *satyrical*, as defined in the preceding chapter, had not yet fully developed, the following discussion of three representative works from this period will trace its emergence and evolution in the two centuries leading up to its most perfect manifestation during the Protestant Reformation and concomitant Renaissance.

It is significant to note, particularly given the link between the *satyrical* and later religious conflict, that the authors whose works are to be studied in this chapter shared some interesting and related characteristics that undoubtedly played a role in the

development of the mode and that uniquely suited them to treat such crises. So far as can be determined, all three were clerics, educated in, among other things, the Latin of the Catholic Church and Classical satire. Additionally, each served in the French royal court as a notary or secretary, the latter two also filling a high-level advisory role; this position provided them not only with an exceptional and intimate vantage point from which to view the crises they saw, but it also gave each of them a vested interest in the perpetuation of the social bodies they served. Writing from this interested perspective, these clerics posited unity in the face of fragmentation and, owing to their placement in the political structure, they became important figures in the struggle against fragmentation, the imperative lying at the heart of the *satyrical*. As Joël Blanchard and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler argue, French "clerics in the service of the State, particularly from the end of the thirteenth century on, played a decisive role in the affirmation of the unity of the country, following from a nationalistic sentiment that their writings diffused among the intellectual and political elites of the kingdom" ("les clercs au service de l'Etat ont joué, surtout à partir de la fin du XIIIe siècle, un rôle décisif dans l'affirmation de l'unité du pays, puis d'un sentiment national que leurs écrits diffusent parmi l'élite intellectuelle et politique du royaume") (Blanchard and Mühlethaler 33). This unique confluence of education and position, together with the consequent complex web of allegiances, sowed the medieval seeds of the *satyrical* in the face of recurring crises of fragmentation.

It was as the singular relationship binding the Catholic Church to her *first daughter*, France, weakened under the strain of a warring king and pope, that the

presumed author of the two-part *Roman de Fauvel* (1310, 1314), Gervès Du Bus (died c. 1338), wrote a scathing satire against corruption he witnessed and the division rising from it, positing a purely evil, human-horse hybrid as a depiction of an internally conflicted and conspicuously inverted Franco-Catholic world. Similarly, it was in the midst of the Papal Schism (1378-1417) and the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) that the French king's trusted advisor and former tutor, Philippe de Mézières (c. 1327-1405), was called upon to broker peace between the warring nations, his efforts taking the form of a remarkable allegory in which the conflict was depicted as a wound tearing the body of Christendom asunder. It was likewise from within the royal court that Alain Chartier (1385-1430) looked out upon a broken kingdom, still suffering agonizing wounds of Agincourt and the subsequent royal surrender, and proposed a powerful allegory of corporeal unity aimed at healing and reunifying the internally divided France. In this dual role, both political and religious, these court clerics became, as Florence Bouchet describes them, a kind of national prophets similar to the Old Testament prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah, who were called to bear witness of iniquity and call God's chosen people to repentance (Bouchet 31–32). These authors warned their people as a whole of the impending doom following from threatened disunion and they did so by means of the literary tools of satire and allegory.

The study of these three texts will proceed in chronological order. The first part of this chapter will consider the *Roman de Fauvel*, an early fourteenth-century verse text recounting the comical rise of a devilish, more or less anthropomorphic horse. The second portion is devoted to Philippe de Mézières's famous 1395 *Epistre au Roi Richart*

and his striking metaphor of Christendom's wounded and composite body. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue invectif* (1422), in which France is portrayed as a neglected and abused mother chastising her undutiful children as she strives to unite them for the common good.

I. A Horse Is a Horse…: Satirical Hybridity in the *Roman de Fauvel*

De Fauvel que tant voi torcher

Doucement, sanz lui escorcher,

Sui entrez en merencolie,

Pour ce qu'est beste si polie. (Du Bus lines 1–4)

Because of Fauvel, whom I see curried so attentively,

Gently, without flaying,

I am entered into a state of melancholy,

For this beast's coat is polished to such a sheen.[44]

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[44] The *Roman de Fauvel* has never been translated in its entirety into English; thus, unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. Quotations from the Old French original will be taken from the Arthur Långfors edition (compiled between 1914 and 1919), which has been the standard edition referenced in secondary literature since that time, including all of the secondary sources cited in this chapter. Armand Strubel's 2012 critical edition and annotated, modern French translation was also used in this study, particularly as a help in the English translations. However, as this latter edition includes an enormous amount of additional texts (e.g. musical interpolations) that also appear in the BN fr 146

The melancholic narrator of the first of two books composing the *Roman de Fauvel*,

begins his allegorical roman with a lament. This horse whose name deliberately resonates

with revealing homophony (and it should be noted that oral performance was the

common means of literary encounter at that time), this Fauvel or "faus vel" ("false veil"),

is attentively caressed and curried by the masses, including rulers and ecclesiastics, but

for all this persistent brushing, their careful strokes do not peel away ('flay') his exterior

and reveal the beast for what he is. Fauvel's lustrous, polished coat is proof of an evil and

sycophantic world, a society more concerned with appearances than truth and gravitating

toward an inverted sovereignty that subjugates the spiritual to the worldly. This central

figure is not merely an anthropomorphized animal like those of fabliaux, nor is he

borrowed from the world of allegorical personification; it is a parabolic creature wholly

defined by corporeal hybridity, both in its microcosmic individuality as a character within

the world of the fiction, and in its macrocosmic reflection at the head of a hybrid social

body composed of men.

Human-animal hybrids were commonly depicted in medieval art, but where such

beasts typically inhabited the margins of illuminated manuscripts, they migrated to a

central position in the *Roman de Fauvel*. This emphasis on hybridity manifests itself at

multiple levels: figuratively, as the action revolves around Fauvel, a horse with human

characteristics in personality, intellect, and, in many of the illustrations, physical

appearance; and textually, with the most famous extant manuscript comprising not only

the original text, but also numerous textual and visual additions (i.e. various musical

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manuscript, and diverges, at times a great deal, from the established text traditionally
attributed to Du Bus, it will not be cited other than the editor's notes and commentary.

interpolations, supplementary text, and, most importantly, the prominently placed

illuminations depicting Fauvel as a hybrid rather than a simple horse). Nonetheless, the

original two books composing the satirical roman, written respectively in 1310 and 1314,

were, generally speaking, fairly typical for the time: extended narratives written in

octosyllabic Old French and commenting on the standard vices by means of allegory.[45]

Though appearing at a superficial level to fit directly into the common traditions of

allegory and romance, satire characterizes the work; as Dustin Griffin vividly argues, the

satirical spirit takes over its host literary structures in the same way a cuckoo, when it

finds another bird's nest, tends not just to borrow it for its eggs, but to "subvert it or… to

alter its 'potential' and (more like a body-snatcher) to direct its energies toward alien

ends" (Griffin 3).The first book lacks any indication of authorship; however, the second

concludes with an authorial self-attribution giving the name of Gervès Du Bus, a notary

in the court of Philippe IV of France.[46]

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[45] The dates of the two books are inscribed into the text itself. The first book ends with
the following: "Que cest petit livre… / Qui fut complectement edis / En l'an mil e trois
cens et dis" ("That this little book… / Which was completely composed / In the year one
thousand and three hundred and ten") (1224-26). The second book similarly includes a
date toward the end: "Ici fine cest second livre, / Qui fu parfait l'an mil et .iiij. / .ccc. et
.x., sans rien rabatre" ("Here ends this second book, / Which was completed the year one
thousand and four / three hundred and ten, without any debate") (3272-74).
[46] The author of the second book playfully but clearly self-identifies as Gervès du Bus
through a linguistic puzzle: "Ge rues doi .v. boi .v. esse / Le nom et le sournom confesse /
De celui qui a fet cest livre" ("… The name and surname I confess / Of he who wrote this
book") (lines 3277-79). The words *doi, boi,* and *esse* are respectively the medieval names
of the letters *d, b,* and *s,* giving with Roman numeral *.v.* (*u* and *v* still interchangeable in
medieval French) *Gerves Du Bus* (Långfors lxxi–lxxii). There is no such authorial
signature in the first book, though Långfors located an additional reference to Du Bus as
the author in another manuscript; nonetheless, a debate has endured regarding the
authorship of the first book. It is true that there are some indications of a second author,

It was only a few years after the appearance of the second book, around 1317, that

a certain Chaillou de Pesstain seems to have masterminded a massively augmented and

illustrated version of the work, contained in the much-studied manuscript BN fr. 146.

Through the addition of various media, this new version implicitly amplified the

characteristic hybridity of Fauvel's corporeal microcosm by enveloping it in a

conspicuously hybridized macrocosmic manuscript; at the same time, the artist(s)

responsible for the miniatures reiterated this notion in the visual representations of the

title character. Fauvel is depicted as entirely equine only on the first page of the

manuscript, thereafter he takes on a fluid and evolving human-horse hybrid form, with

the ratio of humanness to horseness conforming to the circumstances at that point in the

story (Camille 162). Michael Camille counts nine miniatures in which Fauvel is depicted

with a human body and horse's head and eighteen with the reverse (i.e. a horse's body

with a human head) (Camille 162). Images of centaurs and satyrs naturally come to mind

as Fauvel takes on these hybrid forms of the satyrical body, but the conflicted self shaped

here is just as firmly rooted in prominent biblical and philosophical traditions of the time.

The story unfolds as the presumptuous horse Fauvel inexplicably finds favor with

Lady Fortune and subsequently wins the misplaced admiration of the whole human race.

Dame Fortune, portrayed as a common medieval, allegorical personification, develops

her sudden and irrational fondness for the erstwhile ordinary horse when he, inclined

toward better lodgings and fare, leaves the stable for a room in the house. Once in the

house, a kind of royal court forms around the unusual animal – a kingly station typically

but, in the absence of any real evidence to the contrary, it seems logical to conclude with
Långfors that du Bus is the author of both (Långfors lxxvi-lxxvii).

reserved for lions in animal imagery – and his admirers line-up to curry and caress him; all of this so impresses capricious Dame Fortune that she then, "contraire a Raison" ("contrary to Reason"), makes Fauvel lord of the house (16–24). Making every effort to exalt (*essauchier*) the horse for reasons that become only slightly clearer in the second book, Fortune leads him to a palace where the masses flock to caress the beast (25–33). Kings, dukes, counts, princes, lords, knights of various ranks, a noble group amasses from every province, rushing to Fauvel's court "unashamed" (35–42). They are followed by ecclesiastical leaders including administrators (55–60), admiring representatives of all monastic orders (61–72), and even the pope himself (51–54). All seem genuinely taken with the unnaturally distinguished horse. The pope, while patting Fauvel's head, declares, "Ci a bele beste" ("Here is a beautiful beast"), to which the cardinals sycophantically reply, "Vous dites voir, sire saint Pere" ("You speak true, Holy Father") (113–116). The horse continues to rise in power and status until, at the opening of the second book, a naïve and exceptionally arrogant Fauvel proposes a new idea to his court:

> Or ay je pensé d'autre part
>
> Que Fortune, qui tout depart,
>
> Il ne puet estre qu'el ne m'aime
>
> Quant si grans honneurs en moy seime.
>
> . . . .
>
> Et elle n'est pas mariee,
>
> Ne moy aussi, qui a lié bee,
>
> Et croy, qui li en parleroit,

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> Que moult tost s'y acorderoit. (1749–52, 1757–60)

> For I have thought anyhow
>
> Regarding Fortune, who all things bestows,
>
> That she does not love me, it cannot be
>
> When such great honors she sows for me
>
> . . . .
>
> She is not married
>
> Nor am I, though wishing to be wed,
>
> I will go and speak to her, and I believe
>
> That quite quickly she will agree.

With the encouragement of his court, now inhabited by a pantheon of personified vices, Fauvel ventures from *Microcosme* to *Macrocosme* (an explicit reference to the important medieval concept), with the goal of winning his supposed beloved. However, Fortune, as characteristically capricious now as in her initial interest in the beast, cruelly declares over literally hundreds of lines that his marital ambitions reach far beyond the self-aggrandizingly demonstrative aims of her original favor. In consolation, she fittingly gives Fauvel her sister, Vaine Gloire ("Vain Glory"), to wife, explaining to him: "Car tu es vain et elle est vaine" ("For you are vain and she is vain") (3181). Lest the reader should feel any compassion toward the spurned beast, the narrator tells us that, with his new wife, Fauvel engenders masses of "Fauveaux nouveaux" ("new Fauvels") who, sadly, spread over the whole earth to continue his work of evil (3215–21). This ending is

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a warning as much as it is a commentary on current conditions, a fact that is crucial to

understanding its *satyrical* function.

The first set of divine instructions given to man in the Bible, even before the

fateful injunction against partaking of the forbidden fruit, included a command to subdue

the earth and exercise dominion over all the beasts thereof.[47] Surely, as Jean-Claude

Mühlethaler suggests, one of the most shocking and, arguably, most significantly

instructive aspects of this satirical tale is the portrayal of subservient masses of humans

flocking to adore an animal that has transcended its proper status in that divinely

mandated hierarchy.[48] It is no small coincidence that, according to the exegetical tradition

going back at least to Augustine, the authority given Adam over the animals is paralleled

by an individual, spiritual injunction to control one's own passions. Saint Augustine

warned that man is to "keep in subjection all the feelings and emotions of the spirit which

we have in common with these animals, and [we] should lord it over them by self-

restraint and moderation," he continues, "When these emotions, you see, are not strictly

controlled, they break out and lead to the filthiest habits, and drag us off through a variety

of pernicious pleasures, and make us like every kind of animal" (Augustine 1.20, 31).

The composite individual he imagines comprising rival influences of reason (unique to

man) and "emotions" (shared with animals), echoes similar distinctions running through

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[47] Genesis 1.27-28 reads: "And God created man in his own image: to the image of God
he created him: male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying:
Increase and multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and
the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth." (*Douay-Rheims
Bible*)
[48] For Mühlerthaler's extended treatment of this topic, see his *Fauvel au pouvoir*, pages
38-52.

centuries of classical philosophy including Plato.[49] Likewise Aristotle, whose influence

on Christianity was acutely felt in the later Middle Ages through the writings of Thomas

Aquinas and others, imagined a composite individual (of sorts) divided between

reasoning and *passionate* parts. A particularly pertinent discussion of his concept is

contained in his *Politics*, which, in the mid-thirteenth century, had been rediscovered,

repeatedly translated into Latin, and, though not being officially admitted to the

curriculum, was a focus of heavy study by philosophers of the time, Aquinas not least

among them (Flüeler 15–27).[50] The Philosopher asserted that the living creature "is

composed first of soul and body, where by nature the former is the ruler and the latter the

ruled" (Aristotle, *Politics* 1254a33–4). Elaborating on this basic description, he proposes

that therefore:

> …we must look at the human being who has the best disposition both in
>
> body and in soul, since what is natural will be clear in him. For those who
>
> are depraved or in a depraved condition the body seems often to dominate
>
> the soul because their condition is base and against nature.

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[49] Though only two parts are listed here, this dividing of the soul between conflicting influences recalls Plato's tripartite soul outlined in the *Phaedrus* ("Phaedrus" 524–531; 246a–254e), and elaborated in other dialogues (see *Republic* book 4).

[50] Aristotle's *Politics* was somewhat unusual in that it was not rediscovered by means of Arabic translations, like many other Greek philosophical texts, but rather was discovered and translated directly into Latin in the mid-twelfth century by Flemish Dominican, William of Moerbeke (1215-c. 1286), whose Latin translations of Greek philosophical texts were influential throughout Europe. References to the work first start appearing between 1265 and 1268, for example in Aquinas's *Quaestiones disputatae de potential Dei*, question 5 article 9 (Flüeler 24). For a complete account of the rediscovery and appropriation of Aristotle's *Politics*, see Christoph Flüeler's *Rezeption und Interpretation der Aristotelischen Politica im späten Mittelalter*.

But it is, as we say, first possible in the living animal to study both

despotic and political rule, for the soul rules the body with despotic rule

and the intellect rules appetite with political or royal rule. Here it is

manifestly natural and beneficial for the body to be ruled by the soul and

for the passionate part of the soul to be ruled by the intellect (the part that

processes reason). But all of them are damaged together if rule is shared

equally or reversed. The same holds true of human beings with respect to

the other animals. The tame animals are better in nature than the wild

ones, and it is better for the former all to be ruled by humans because thus

they are preserved. (Aristotle, *Politics* 1254a36–1254b12)

Finally, he asserts that, "Thus, all those who are as widely separated from others as are

soul and body or human and beast… are slaves by nature. For them it is better to be ruled

over by a master," concluding that "the other animals give their assistance without

perceiving reason but rather by what they feel" (Aristotle, *Politics* 1254b15–24). Through

the visual representation of Fauvel as a human-horse hybrid, the hybridity already

contained within the character of an anthropomorphized animal is amplified and this

philosophical dichotomy comes to the fore. Where Fauvel is represented as an animal

with a human head, it would seem that, as least in a superficial manner, the right

hierarchy is established and human reason rules over animalistic passions; however,

when the situation is reversed, it would appear to signal the opposite – a theological and

philosophical upheaval. However, this is only within the microcosm of Fauvel's body. In

broader, social terms, a reflection of this fluid and inverted hierarchy manifests in the

narrator's disgusted description of the human masses fawning over the evil animal that has usurped a place properly reserved for human reason. As the narrator laments at about a quarter through the first book:

> Il plut a Dieu le monde faire
>
> Et il vout de limon pourtraire
>
> Homme et former a son ymage;
>
> A l'omme fist tel avantage,
>
> Que des bestes le fist seigneur
>
> Et en noblece le greigneur;
>
> Mès or est du tout bestourné
>
> Ce que Diex avoit atourné,
>
> Que hommes sont devenus bestes. (335–37)

> It pleased God the world to create
>
> And from mud he wanted to shape
>
> Man and form him in his image;
>
> To man he gave such an advantage,
>
> That of the beasts he made him lord
>
> And by nobility to the rest superior;
>
> But now all is disordered
>
> The work that God had ordered,
>
> For men are become beasts.

The word *bestourné*, meaning "mettre à l'envers, ruiner,"doubly emphasizes the author's

point through the orthographically implicit *beste* ("beast") (Godefroy). The tragic

bestournement depicted in this satire encompasses all levels of society and comes about

through a remarkable confluence of the sinful animal's pride and capricious fortune.

Based on cultural context as well as verbal cues in the text, Mühlethaler

insightfully argues that these descriptions of people, particularly clerics, venerating the

animal deliberately recalls the biblical account of the golden calf blasphemously

worshipped by the Children of Israel while Moses was on the mount (Mühlethaler,

Fauvel Au Pouvoir 61–62).[51] Upon his return, the furious prophet "burnt it, and beat it to

powder, which he strowed into the water and gave thereof to the children of Israel to

drink" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Exod. 32.20). Extending this comparison to its logical

conclusion, the *Roman de Fauvel* can be read as the author's condemnation of such

idolatry among his own people; taking upon himself the role of prophet, he smashes the

metaphorical idol that is Fauvel, verbally pounding it into its constituent elements and

then serving it up for the literary consumption of those foolish masses who blindly

worship it. Fauvel is false, clearly from the first mention of his name; but simultaneous

with this subtle homophonic indication of Fauvel's falsity, the name contains an equally

revealing adjective of color: *fauve*. The author cites Aristotle in calling attention to the

horse's color, arguing that "Les accidens… Font cognoistre la substance" ("The

accidental properties… Make known the substance") (179–80). In the elaborate language

of medieval symbolism, this tawny hue, as Mühlethaler and others suggest, recalls the

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[51] See Exodus 32 for the full account.

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dirty red of sly Renart (himself a representation of *bestournement*), the suspicious red beard of the treacherous apostle Judas Iscariot, and, together with Fauvel's species, the color-coded, apocalyptic horsemen of the biblical *Book of Revelation*.[52] This final reference is affirmed in the text itself as Dame Fortune announces, in the latter part of her lengthy speech rejecting Fauvel's presumptuous marriage proposal, that the world is approaching Armageddon (Palmer 395, 417). Referring to lines 2993-3097, Nigel F. Palmer contends that Fortune "sets out her doctrine of the microcosm and the macrocosm, relating the four humours, phlegm, blood, yellow bile, and black bile (or melancholy), out of which the human body is composed, to the four ages of man and to the four ages of the world… Fauvel is revealed as a representative of the fourth age of the world" (Palmer 395). This black bile, this melancholy that characterizes the catastrophic fourth age of the world, recalls the author's self-proclaimed state at the opening of the text. Indeed the author believes that he and his reader as well stand at the threshold of the end of days, not in some abstract sense, but in all reality; he proclaims that the apocalypse is nigh, as evidenced by the frightening events he allegorizes. His assumption of prophetic function is, in his mind, literal.

Within this prophetic mode, the author's job is not to hide information from those that would have it, rather he must disclose it, expose sin as sin, and, thereby, call the offenders to repentance. So crucial is function that, apparently fearing that his reader may have missed his more subtle indications of Fauvel's character, the insistent author breaks

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[52] The actual shade described as *fauve* has long been debated, but Mühlethaler makes a convincing argument for a foxlike reddish brown (see *Fauvel au pouvoir* page 37), while also offering a lengthy and elaborate justification for connections to the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (ibid. pages 70-112).

the fourth wall, as it were, and almost pedantically invites the reader to interpret the text and its title character:

> Se cest livre voulon entendre,
>
> Des or mes nous convient descendre
>
> A Fauvel proprement descrire
>
> Et par diffinicion dire
>
> Ce que Fauvel nos senefie… (Du Bus 171–75)

> If we want to understand this book,
>
> It is necessary for us henceforth to manage
>
> To precisely describe Fauvel
>
> And say, proceeding from his definition,
>
> What he signifies to us…

Over the next one hundred or so lines, the author proceeds to explain in great detail just what this horse represents, finally breaking Fauvel down to his constituent elements:

> De Fauvel descent **F**latterie,
>
> Qui du monde a la seignorie,
>
> Et puis en descent **A**varice,
>
> Qui torchier Fauvel n'est nice,
>
> **V**ilanie et **V**arieté,
>
> Et puis **E**nvie et **L**ascheté.
>
> Ces siex dames que j'ai nommees

Sont par **FAUVEL** signifiees:

Se ton entendement veus mestre,

Pren un mot de cescune letre. (247–256, Långfors's emphasis)

From Fauvel springs **F**lattery,

Which over the world has lordly mastery,

And **A**varice also from him descends,

Of which those who curry Fauvel are not innocent,

Villainy and **V**olatility,

And then **E**nvy and **L**axity.

These six ladies that I have identified

Are by Fauvel signified:

If your understanding you wish to apply,

A word from each letter derive.

But this is the sort of ambiguous symbolism that fills the pages of pure allegory; Fauvel is

different. The *Roman de Fauvel* is firmly grounded in reality, an idea that is

grammatically asserted throughout the work.

Inscribing a distinctly performative orality and, more importantly, a strong sense

of immediacy, the narrator declares in the opening lines of the first book, "voi" ("I see")

and "sui entrez en merencolie" ("I am entered into a state of melancholy") (Du Bus lines

1, 3). The latter, though technically functioning as an auxiliary in the past tense, subtly

asserts existence while the former forcefully delineates an existential relationship: the

narrator, and by extension the author, *sees* the scene he describes symbolically. The

insistence on the present tense, used throughout the roman, redeems the satire from the

'long ago' and 'far away' of fairy tale or epic, it likewise dissipates the ethereal mists of

purely allegorical abstraction, positing the satire as a distorted reflection of reality.

Accompanying this accent on the present tense is another stylistic feature that

likewise alters the narrative valence of the work: the author frequently breaks the fourth

wall (as shown in the example above), repeatedly speaking in first-person plurals ("nous"

and "nos," "we" and "us") and directly addressing the reader. The author, via the

narrative voice, identifies with the audience – and the word seems more appropriate here

than *reader* based on the orality of the manner in which the author addresses the

audience. Kevin Brownlee takes this self-identification as an affirmation of the author's

"authority and authenticity," contending that the author "does not simply describe

Fauvel's power from a position safely outside that power, but rather shows himself to be

an interested party, a patriotic Frenchman and a devout Christian, a member, as it were,

of the work's audience" (Brownlee 82). Instances of direct address in the second person

seem less inclusive; for example, the narrator commands his reader: "Or entent, tu qui

Fauvel torches!" ("For hearken, you who curry Fauvel!") (Du Bus 403).[53] The accusatory

and condescending tone here would seem to contrast significantly with the inclusive first-

person plural above, however, Mühlethaler argues that the *tutoiement* (i.e. the use of the

familiar *tu* pronoun) establishes a familiar, albeit possibly hierarchical relationship

between the author and reader – perhaps that of a teacher and student, or even an

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[53] The narrator addresses the reader at several points, including in the following lines:
304, 401, 430, 499, 504, etc.

ecclesiastical relationship (Mühlethaler, "Discours" 338). This familiarity in tone also coincides with the satirical relationship in which the narrator / author, who has emphatically inscribed him- or herself into the allegorical depiction, simultaneously works to align him- or herself with the audience. This middle position is that of the Greek chorus as previously discussed. Mühlethaler rightly points out that the *Roman de Fauvel* is "intimately linked to events under the last direct Capetians," specifically under Philippe IV (Mühlethaler, *Fauvel Au Pouvoir* 21). This point cannot be overstated. The *Roman de Fauvel*, in the satirical vein, represents a symbolically constructed detour through fiction connecting disparate aspects of reality: that of the audience and that of the otherwise invisible (to them) calamities of the political and religious circumstances of the time – events that the author witnessed firsthand.

As an eventual hybrid whole, the manuscript of the *Roman de Fauvel* was produced by a group of like-minded clerics in the chancellery staff that included Gervès Du Bus and Chaillou de Pesstain, and the satire they produced is anchored in real events as they witnessed them (Lalou 307, 310). Moreover, these notaries and clerics were directly implicated in the affairs of the court and publication of royal acts, participating in the sealing audience among other official capacities; they knew their subject well and intimately (Lalou 309). Speaking to this point, Andrew Wathey presents evidence that Du Bus was far more entangled in the courtly politics of the day than generally thought; involvement with certain documents would suggest that he may have served as a personal secretary to certain high-ranking court officials and, based on some of the letters that he notarized, it appears that he may have travelled with the royal household, even regularly

performing his function in the presence of the king (Wathey 602). This level of contact leads one to wonder whether the king himself is the subject of the satire. The target was almost certainly tied to the court, as indicated by the precision with which the author describes the physical location of the action (particularly in the second book): in Fauvel's court (which bore certain telling similarities to Philippe's court), in the palace, in Paris (Davis 188). Additionally, some scholars contend, based largely on visual references in the elaborately illustrated manuscript to Philippe's own iconographic attempts at binding his legacy up with that of Saint Louis, that the king was most certainly the inspiration for Fauvel (Kauffmann 287–89). In further support of this interpretation, Malcolm Vale points to the fact that Philippe seems, like Fauvel, to have had reddish hair as well as a court full of dangerous and sycophantic advisors (Vale 592–93). This latter point is not to be overlooked, as Blanchard and Mühlethaler point out, because flattery, abundantly practiced at court, is listed first in the enumeration of Fauvel's nominal sins (Blanchard and Mühlethaler 65). However, this simple assignment of identity is too narrow; in the broader sense of the satire, Fauvel does not merely represent the king, but rather he is the common source of evil embraced by the pope and the king in a struggle that threatens to tear the kingdom and Church apart: this, in short, is the crisis of fragmentation against which this merging of satire and hybrid-corporeal imagery that defines the *satyrical* is posited.

The *Roman de Fauvel* was written in the early years of the Avignon Papacy, a time of burgeoning schism in the Church following a series of vicious power struggles between popes and kings. From 1294 to 1303, the ambitious and acquisitive Benedetto

Gaetani occupied the Holy See as Boniface VIII; consequently, large portions of the

Church's massive bureaucracy seemed acutely subject to the same avarice and

expansionist designs that drove secular rulers. Not least among those secular rulers was

the equally ambitious and avaricious Philippe IV (*le Bel*) of France, whose designs on

nationalizing the French Church and divesting the Roman Church of its French

possessions were abundantly clear from the early stages of his reign. Philippe's greed is

well attested: it was he who began expelling Jews from the kingdom in 1306 so that he

might seize their possessions and who, beginning in 1307, suppressed, tortured, and

executed the Knights Templar in order to assert his authority and free himself from the

debts he owed to the order. The events that brought these two powerful and unyielding

men into conflict and eventually threatened the unity of Christendom's mystical body

actually grew out of France's seemingly perpetual conflict with England at this time

when the Holy Land Crusades, a unifying experience that had, through a sort of blood-

soaked baptism, reinvigorated notions of divinely derived political rule among sanctified

noble participants, were giving way to intra-European wars over territory and royal

succession.[54]

A short time after the crusaders lost the city of Acre to the Muslims in 1291, and

with it their last stronghold in the Holy Land, tensions began to mount between Philippe

IV of France and King Edward I of England, who was also the Duke of Aquitaine and,

thereby, the French king's vassal. Minor skirmishes and French annexations of Norman

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[54] No kingdom suffered more than France as the Crusades declined in popularity and
success, as "the crusading movement was predominantly French, with three French kings
among the leaders and a greater number of French nobles taking the cross than from all
other regions of Europe combined" (Roelker 163).

territories on the continent were followed by failed negotiations as Philippe refused to deal with a mere vavasour. Hostilities and, thereby, expenses escalated between 1294 and 1297, leading both kings to seek funds in unusual places, for example in the taxation of the clergy, something neither had the right to do according the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 (Jordan 3). But Philippe, in particular, having exhausted his subjects almost to the point of revolt with ever-increasing taxes levied to fund his feudal wars and maintain authority over royal territories, slyly began "to milk" the wealthy Cistercian monasteries throughout France; it was an even greater affront as the Cistercians were an exempt order under no obligation to contribute even to the crusades (Chamberlin 116–7; Jordan 3). The Cistercians appealed directly to the newly elected Pope Boniface VIII, who was, himself, diverting crusading funds to his own private wars, the result was one of Boniface's many papal bulls. The bull, *Clericis Laicos* (issued 5 February 1296), cunningly reaffirmed the pope's (pecuniary) rights while recalling his protective duties in regard to the clergy for whom "the laity cherished a deep and increasing hostility" (Chamberlin 117). However, just before that papal bull was to take effect, Philippe and his legal advisors preemptively responded to Boniface, whose pre-pontifical legal prowess was widely renowned, with a carefully tailored edict forbidding the export of French gold and silver for any purpose whatsoever, and that "to the detriment of the papal income" (Gaposchkin 4–5). A complicated relationship developed as Boniface, in need of French king's good will, not to mention his military and political support, against papal rivals like the powerful Colonna family, negotiated the canonization of the Philippe's grandfather, Louis IX, and

a (temporary) end to hostilities (Gaposchkin 5).[55] The simmering animosity that had

pitted Philippe (under the strong influence of his *légistes*) against the uncompromising

Pope Boniface VIII escalated into a "life-and-death struggle" for worldly political

authority when, in 1301, the pope created a new bishopric in the southwestern French

town of Pamiers without the king's consent (Kantorowicz 195; Bertier de Sauvigny 72).

It was arguably a calculated display of the pope's 'rightful' authority over the Church

specifically and generally papal supremacy above all earthly monarchs, a doctrine he

would eventually elaborate in the controversial papal bull *Unam sanctam* of 1302.[56]

Nonetheless, his actions were in stark contrast to centuries of tradition giving the king of

France a unique role in the affairs of the Gallican Church, particularly in approving

appointments; these long-cherished Gallican liberties, as Nancy Lyman Roelker calls

them, were both "a shield of the French nation and the sign of its superiority" among

Catholic kingdoms (Roelker 67). Philippe had the new bishop arrested and Boniface, in

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[55] Concerning the motivation to end the dispute over clerical taxes, M.C. Gaposchkin writes: "Back in Rome, trouble in the form of immediate challenge from Boniface's longtime rivals, the Colonna family, staged in May of 1297, induced Boniface to palliate what he saw as less pressing problems, and he thus agreed to rescind the original decree… One of Philip's ministers, Pierre Flotte, arrived at the papal court in early June to negotiate the settlement with Boniface… To ensure the king's appreciation of the pope's good will, Boniface also agreed to the long-sought canonization of the king's grandfather (August 11, 1297)… That the canonization was politically motivated was not lost on contemporaries: 15 years later Cardinal Peter Colonna bitterly charged that Boniface canonized Louis in order to gain an ally in his crusade against his principal enemy, the Colonna family." (Gaposchkin 5)

[56] The bull represents an extreme declaration of absolute papal authority proclaiming: "Porro subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanae creaturae declaramus, dicimus, definimus, et pronuntiamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis" (Kirsch). All powers are united in the pope – he borrows the imagery of the two swords (secular and spiritual) mentioned in Luke 22.38. Clement V was able to soften the effects of Boniface VIII's definitive declaration, particularly in regard to his supporter, Philippe IV, and the Gallican Church.

turn, summoned the French bishops to Rome for a special examination of Philippe's

kingly conduct (Bertier de Sauvigny 74). It was in this struggle that historians believe

Philippe's propagandists unsuccessfully attempted to extrapolate the French king's

weighty title of *Most Christian King* to the kingdom as a whole, literally re-christening it

as the *Most Christian Kingdom* of France, in what seems an attempt to nationalize the

Church with the sanctified king at its head (Roelker 161). Quite to the contrary, this

conflict eventually led to the king's excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church,

as well as that of his powerful advisor Nogaret, and to a pontifical declaration that legally

(which is to say by virtue his self-declared supremacy over all earthly rulers) relieved

Philippe's subjects of their duty of fidelity to the king.

    While Boniface's papacy only spanned the middle nine years of Philippe's nearly

thirty-year reign, their struggle echoed over the coming years, most obviously as the

French king played a major role in the papal relocation to Avignon. Moreover, Philippe

urged the first pope seated there, the French-born Clement V over whom Philippe

enjoyed a strong influence, to posthumously try Boniface VIII (ironically, the pope who

had canonized Philippe's grandfather) for charges ranging from heresy to immorality –

many of the same crimes Philippe charged against the Templars; in the end the trial did

not return a verdict (Shahan "Clement V").[57] Prior to Boniface's death, however, these

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[57] A certain comic irony accompanies Philippe's definitive expression of disdain for his
papal enemy who had, in fact, accomplished the sought-after canonization of Philippe's
grandfather. It was a major concern in the trial, as Gaposchkin recounts: "Philip
hesitated… to evoke Louis in his campaign to impugn Boniface's very legitimacy as
pope; he was quiet of the subject of Saint Louis, perhaps lest Boniface's credibility as
legitimate pope be linked to Louis' credibility as legitimate saint. Indeed, at the trial of
Boniface's memory in 1310, one witness defended Louis' canonization at one point by

disputes with the French king gave birth to an enduring dilemma that represented, according to Kantorowicz, "the supreme effort on the part of the spiritual power to answer and, if possible, to overcome the challenge of the nascent self-sufficiency of the secular bodies politic" (Kantorowicz 194). However, rather than two coextensive, metaphorical bodies, the Gallican subdivision of the Catholic Church and the French kingdom were one and the same: a single, hybridized (social) body. Du Bus acknowledges and extols France's unique dual status in the second book:

> Le beau jardin de grace plain
>
> Ou Dieu par especïauté
>
> Planta le lis de roiauté
>
> Et y sema par excellence
>
> La france graine et la semance
>
> De la flour crestïenté,
>
> Et d'autres flours a grant plenté… (3228–34)

> The beautiful garden full of grace
>
> Where God, with special favor
>
> Planted the royal flower

---

saying that even such a tyrant as Boniface did some good deeds. But in general, once canonized, Louis became one of Philip's most potent symbols for defending royal prerogatives. It was precisely for the legitimizing force that the symbol of a saint-king afforded to a monarchy in its affairs with its 'national' church that Louis resurrected as the founder of Gallican liberties in the fifteenth century" (Gaposchkin 24–5).For a complete account of the trial, see J. Coste, *Boniface VIII en procès: articles d'accusation et dépositions des témoins (1303–1311)* (Rome, 1995).

> And there sowed perfectly
>
> The noble grain and seed
>
> Of the flower of Christianity
>
> And other flowers most abundantly…

The secular kingdom is legitimized and inextricably intertwined with divine kingdom exemplified there. But at this point in their shared history, the political authority, whose grounding in divine will was ritualistically reaffirmed by a papal blessing, was beginning to exert greater control within that singular social entity. This rule of the material kingdom over the spiritual was the *bestournement* allegorized and satirized, which is to say, *satyrized* in the unstable hybridity of Fauvel's body.

The Fauvel of the first portion of the story is a simple horse, but as the corrupting influences of pride and luxury exert their force upon him a conflicted, hybrid character begins to emerge. He is part man, part horse, at times a centaur, at times a horse-headed human; the internal struggle of human reason and animalistic passions, or between the spiritual and the temporal, struggling within for control of the whole. This allegorical representation of the struggle becomes a fractal incarnation of the broader allegorical satire as the first sets of dignitaries arrive and worship Fauvel in his court: first, political (kings, dukes, barons, etc.), immediately followed by equally obsequious ecclesiastics, including the pope himself. These two adversarial forces converge upon the evil embodied by the beast. However, to associate one or the other exclusively with the human or animal would be an error. Corruption and greed ruled over both social entities, each of which was characterized by its own internal struggle that played out, in this case,

in the overlapping mystical corpora. Thus, as the kingdom or Church, each represented

by its highest officials, come to face the beast, it is a reflection they encounter. In a third

reiteration of the internal struggle that threatens corporeal harmony on this trajectory

moving from the singular corporeal microcosm of Fauvel's hybrid body toward a more

overt, macrocosmic depiction of imperiled society, the ruefully portrayed, devotional

relationship of man to beast blatantly resonates with the biblical and philosophical

injunctions discussed above: animal is clearly reigning over man. This particular instance

of *bestournement* could specifically be read to reference circumstances with which the

author would have been most familiar: the displacement from Rome to Avignon of

Boniface's successor, Clement V, as well as the poorly concealed influence of the French

king over the Church in the years following.

  The *Roman de Fauvel* is clearly a satirical work in the familiar tradition. But its

satire is entirely constructed around a notion of internal conflict, depicted allegorically in

the form of unstable hybridity. While the author may not be positing this hybrid form as a

solution to the impending crisis of fragmentation growing from the conflict between the

Church and the kingdom of France, this is the means by which he chose to represent it. It

is at this intersection of satire and symbolic corporeal hybridity that the *satyrical* begins

to emerge. That crucial move from hybridity as mere depiction to hybridity as

prescription would more clearly manifest some eighty years later in the writings of the

Philippe de Mézières.

II. A Body Wounded: Philippe de Mézières's *Epistre au Roi Richart*

"[T]here is an open wound in Christendom today…" ("il a une plaie ouverte en la crestiente…"), writes the French statesman Philippe de Mézières (c. 1327-1405) in his 1395 *Epistre au Roi Richart* (Mézières 21, 93).[58] Elaborating on this image, he writes: "depuis lx. ans en enca en la crestiente a puissaument regne une plaie ouverte et mortele, et si plaine de venin que elle a envenime toutes les parties de la crestiente, et par especial les regions parties occidentales…" ("for the last sixty years and more there has existed an open and mortal wound, so full of poison that it has infected the whole of Christendom, and especially the western parts thereof…") (Mézières 6, 78). Overtly drawing upon Paul's biblical allegory of mystical corporality, Philippe insists upon the corporeal allegory of Christendom, which will animate the whole of his work and lay a foundation for his solution to the crises before him.[59] Explicitly pulling back the veil of allegory to reveal the real object of his concerns, an appropriate move in a political missive, he vividly describes the circumstances that have led to his literary intervention: "This accursed wound, leaving aside all parables and figure, is the mortal schism in Holy Church [sic], the mother of these two sons of St. Louis. She lies in her bed, sick, wounded, in fragments, divided in two" ("Cest plaie malditte, sans / parabole ou figure

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[58] Citations of the *Epistre* are taken from Coopland's 1975 edition containing both his English translation and the original text: the first page number given in the citation represents the English translation; the second refers to the original French. Coopland's is still the only modern edition of the work in French or English (though Joël Blanchard et al. are currently working to produce a new critical edition).

[59] Mézières references Saint Paul the Apostle's teachings on the subject in the *Epistre*, pages 5 and 77 (English and French respectively). For more on Philippe's tendency to explicitly explain his symbols, see Blanchard and Mühlethaler, page 28.

aleguier, est le mortel sisme de nostre mere sainte eglise, cest la propre mere principale des ii. filz saint Loys, qui gist en son lit malade, plaie, et detranchie, et en ii. moieties partie") (Mézières 21, 93–94). In Philippe's depiction, this body of Christendom is already fragmented, but seemingly still tenuously bound together by strained family ties. These two sons (both actually fourth great-grandsons) of the sainted King Louis IX of France and simultaneously of the Mother Church, are the fifth cousins King Richard II of England and Charles VI of France, who ascended to their respective thrones amid the occasionally interrupted series of conflicts that made up the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) and the coinciding Papal Schism (1378-1417) that divided the Catholic Church and Christendom with it.[60] They inherited a fragmented Christian world, but Philippe de Mézières, statesman, soldier, advisor to multiple monarchs over his long career (including the late Charles V of France), and childhood tutor of the current French king Charles VI, was determined to close the *wound* and reestablish a singular, but deliberately hybrid Christian body, a *satyrical* body.

Philippe's longing for international Christian unity actually predated his involvement in this particular conflict; in fact, it was largely bound up with the experiences of this younger days, and most particularly, with a vaguely-referenced spiritual event that occurred sometime during his first visit to the Holy Land (Coopland, "Introduction (Songe)" 72). From about 1347 he was by all accounts preoccupied with the idea of retaking the Holy Land, a desire that grew as he served in the court of the

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[60] Richard II descends from the union of Edward II of England and Isabella of France, the daughter of Philippe IV and great-granddaughter of Louis IX. Charles VI, on the other hand, was Louis's fourth great grandson and eventual heir to the throne of France through male bloodlines.

would-be crusader King Peter I of Cyprus (1328-1369), who was also the titular King of

Jerusalem (1358-1369). While the crusading spirit evidently waned in continental

Europe, Philippe busied himself in "furious writing, putting together spiritual and moral

treatises, letters, and missives to quell the warring in Christendom, reform its morals on

all levels… and rekindle the spirit of crusade among Western leadership" (Blumenfeld-

Kosinski and Petkov 2). Having witnessed firsthand the advantage held by well-

regimented, Muslim armies over the disunited, disorganized crusaders, he hoped to found

a cohesive, multinational, and devout order of chivalry that would be an example to the

whole of Christendom, uniting schismatic factions and directing their hostility toward an

appropriate target, i.e. away from fellow Christians and toward the *Turks* occupying

Jerusalem. Far more than military conquest, however, he imagined a full complement of

families, men, women, and children, marching alongside those chaste warriors with the

goal of establishing a permanent Christian occupation of the Holy Land (Contamine 27).

Using Michael Hanly's terminology, the knights that composed Philippe's proposed

Order of the Passion of Jesus Christ formed a sort of Christian-European peace

movement (ironically grounded in war with the Muslims), born of the travels and

connections that served to proliferate an international sense of community through the

transmission of ideas and literature, this is nowhere more manifest than in the well-

traveled Philippe (Hanly 74). In essence, the crusading movement represented to Philippe

an ideal that simultaneously offered a possible sublimation of the fragmentary crises of

the Schism and Hundred Years' War, in which conflicts he was called upon to intervene.

His grand attempt at reconciliation took the form of a direct epistle to the English king, written in the form of second-person address; however, as G. W. Coopland asserts, this text written at the behest of the Charles VI is not a letter in the strict sense, but rather "the medium employed by Philippe to set forth his views and pleadings on the great issues of the day" (Coopland, "Introduction (Epistre)" xxv). Stylistically, the work does not conform to the traditional definition of satire in that it is not intended to provoke laughter. While this aspect sets the *Epistre* apart from the other works considered in this study, Philippe's proposal of a unified but hybrid, mystical Christian body as the solution to the mounting crisis of fragmentation makes it a critical text in the evolution of the *satyrical*. The argument can be made, however, that even in the absence of intended laughter, the *Epistre* coincides with Horace's ambiguous qualification of satire: merging the *useful* and the *pleasant*. But more than this, the letter fits into the critical tradition of which satire is an important part. The author's goal is one of correction, as is proper to satire, but this is not accomplished by means of comic exaggeration and ridicule, rather by reliance on other, familiar literary tropes, allegory foremost among them.

In the service of the literary aspects of his *Epistre*, Philippe's authorial persona assumes the posture of the "Old Solitary," a character more spiritual than political that he had created some six years earlier in his equally allegorical *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (*The Dream of Old Pilgrim*); he borrows greatly from the imagery and subject matter of that earlier work in his *Epistre*, for the most part seeming to assume that his audience was

already familiar with the earlier work.[61] He explicitly fashions this character of the Old

Solitary as a nexus between the spiritual and political, invoking a biblical tradition that

would legitimize his counsel to a sovereign. Speaking as the Old Solitary, Philippe

justifies his words by aligning himself with biblical models: "Most devout King, although

because of my sins and because, like Moses, I do stammer, I am not worthy to speak or

write to your royal wisdom, yet, trusting in Him who caused the ass of Balaam the

prophet to speak, I will raise my voice with King David, the most holy prophet…" ("Et

combien que je ne soie pas digne d'ouvrir ma bouche, tredevot roy, de parler ou escripre

a vostre grande sapience royale, pour mes pechiez et que je suy beesgue avec Moyses,

toutefois, en confiant de Celuy qui fist parler l'anesse de Balaan le prophete, je ouverray

ma bouche avec David le tres saint roy prophete…" (Mézières 3, 75).[62] By establishing

this context, he assumes the role of a biblical prophet who, like Moses and Samuel,

"counsels, rebukes, gives promises to the monarch, all from a position of independence,

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[61] The *Songe* is also focused on ending the war and schism by bringing together the respective kings, proclaimed brothers there as well. While containing ample criticism of Richard's hawkish uncles / counselors (depicted as large, black boars), the main message of the *Songe* centers on Philippe's preoccupation with retaking of the Holy Land (Hanham and Cropp 117–18).

[62] As recorded in Exodus 4.10, Moses timidly objects to the Lord's command to go address Pharaoh, saying: "I beseech thee, Lord. I am not eloquent from yesterday and the day before: and since thou hast spoken to thy servant, I have more impediment and slowness of tongue." The story of Balaam's ass also comes from the Old Testament; the mercenary prophet Balaam had accepted to curse the Israelites for money, but along the path his ass repeatedly turns aside, much to the prophet's frustration. Balaam beats her, but the Lord then "opened the mouth" of this faithful beast, who then reproves her unkind master, following which the Lord opens his eyes to reveal that the ass had, in reality, saved the evidently spiritually blind prophet from a sword-wielding angel placed in their path to prevent his sinful cursing of God's chosen people (see Numbers 22). The final of these three biblical comparisons draws upon the image of King David, the shepherding giant-slayer turned prophet-king as recorded in First and Second Kings (First and Second Samuel in other translations).

living in his own house" (O'Donovan 64).[63] Moreover, considering his social circumstances, Philippe can play the part well, corresponding perfectly to Oliver O'Donovan's characterization of those biblical personages: an "upwardly mobile wise man who ends up as the minister of kings – foreign kings in both cases, reminding us of the broadly international character of this ideal" (O'Donovan 75). Further invoking biblical references and framing the coming narrative, which is largely constructed in the symbolic imagery of dream-vision, Philippe draws parallels between his circumstances and those of Joseph of Egypt and the prophet Daniel, interpreters respectively of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar's dreams (Mézières 4, 76). This interpretive role affords the author a certain degree of freedom from responsibility for the content of his text, which ostensibly comes from a higher source, while also creating a more entertaining medium for the delivery of a dreadfully serious message (Blumenfeld-Kosinski 97–99). In addition to the biblical imagery, Lori J. Walters argues that the narrative self-identification as an Old Solitary must be read within the context of the political theology of Jean Gerson, another thinker working toward the reunification of Christendom, in which solitude becomes a proper setting for political contemplation as well as a remedy for various vices (Walters 120–21, 133).[64] Grounded by these legitimizing spiritual and political traditions, Philippe has theoretically positioned himself to counsel a king on his duties to God and society.

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[63] Reference to 2 Sam. 12.15.

[64] More than conjecture or historiographical convenience, there was a real connection: Gerson explicitly instructed Mézières to practice that sort of solitary contemplation, something the former expected would be simple considering that the latter was already living in a Celestine abbey (Walters 134).

The war between the two countries that this Old Solitary was working to end began as the French crown passed successively to each of Philippe IV's relatively short-lived male heirs and then, in 1328, to his nephew Philippe VI, heir through the cadet Valois branch of the Capetian line. The English King Edward III, himself a grandson of Philippe IV through a female line, also made a claim to the French throne at that time. However, the Estates-General had established a dozen or so years prior what became known as the Salic Law, which limits French succession to lines of agnatic succession, to the absolute exclusion of women; thus, Edward's claim was dismissed in favor of the more distant, but male line.[65] Historiographical tradition has it that Edward III's successor Richard, his grandson by the marauding Edward the Black Prince, was more interested in peace between the two kingdoms than dynastic claims; however, as Anne Curry points out, Philippe's profuse, obsequious flattery of the "peace-loving" Richard may betray the author's fears that he was likely to revive hostilities (Curry 311). Citing certain events from Richard's later reign, particularly his course of vengeance on the Lords Appellant (including the exile and disinheritance of Henry of Bolingbroke, who would soon overthrow Richard and become King Henry IV), Curry suggests that Richard may not have been the man of peace portrayed in the *Epistre*, but rather the opposite (Curry 319). Nonetheless, Richard seemed willing to consider the French offer, which he did eventually accept.

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[65] This succession tradition was born of a controversy following the premature death of Jean I in 1316. His only sibling was an older sister, later Jeanne II de Navarre, whose paternity was questionable. Their uncle, and the regent since the untimely death of their father, was determined by the council to have the right to rule, giving birth to a tradition that was a posteriori assigned an ancient origin.

The financial and social effects of the Hundred Years' War, already some six decades old at that point, rippled throughout the continent leading to large alliances and widespread hostilities. Not even the Church was above the fray, particularly given the French king's apparent sway over the reputedly corrupt and selectively generous papal court located since 1309 at Avignon: a period known derisively among foes as the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. Though his full motives are unknown, Pope Gregory XI, himself a native of the territories disputed by the English and French, moved his court back to Rome in 1378 to the chagrin of the French king and delight of the Italians, as well as the English, who supported his Roman successors throughout the remainder of the conflict.[66] Unfortunately, particularly given the heightened hostilities characterizing that period of the war, Gregory died shortly after the move and a papal vacancy so soon after the controversial relocation of the Holy See led to difficult negotiations between the French majority Cardinals and their Italian colleagues; nonetheless, they settled, purportedly under duress, on a Neapolitan archbishop (significantly not a Cardinal or member of the conclave) to fill the papacy. The newly elected Pope Urban VI did little to ingratiate himself with the French faction of the College of Cardinals, and so, with the French king's backing, a second pope, later labeled an antipope, was elected to the former pontifical seat at Avignon, Clement VII. The Mother Church, as Philippe de Mézières wrote, became a "two-headed monster," "un monstre… a ii. tetses [sic]," and remained so with subsequent papal elections in both Sees until 1417 (Mézières 22, 94).

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[66] Tradition credits Saint Catherine of Siena with convincing the pope to relocate on behalf of the Florentines.

This is the type of critique animated by corporeal imagery that draws this work into the realm of the *satyrical* despite its lack of traditional satirical characteristics.

Though addressing them under separate headings in the *Epistre*, Philippe conflates the war and the schism throughout the text, which is not surprising given that ecclesiastical loyalties among the other territories of Europe closely coincided with the war's strategic alliances, with France and her allies supporting the Avignon (anti)popes, while England and her allies sided with the Roman pope.[67] The Papal Schism, as Philippe describes it, essentially reduced to the contest between France and England: two royal sons, by blood and faith a single house and metaphorical body, having severed their mutual *mother* in two ("detranchie, et en ii. moieties partie") (Mézières 21, 94). Images of internal conflict forcefully resonate on a grand scale throughout the work: the body of Christendom wounded and torn apart from the inside, the single royal house of Saint Louis divided, etc. But they also appear on a smaller scale in the author's interesting use of an analogy to describe individual combatants.

Philippe recalls a passage from a famous book called *Dicionaire*, which describes "a great bird called the harpy, cruel beyond belief, which has the face of a man and is a bird of prey" ("un oysiau appele arpia, grant cruel oultre mesure, qui a la face d'omme et vit de proie") (Mézières 43, 117). This cruel bird instinctively kills the first man it sees, then, when it inevitably confronts its own humanlike reflection, the memory of the man it has killed leads it to attack the reflection "so violently," Philippe recounts, "that

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[67] Joining the French in support of the Avignon pope were Aragon, Castille, León, Cyprus, Burgundy, Savoy, Naples, Scotland, and the rebelling Welsh. On the Roman side with England were Denmark, Flanders, the Holy Roman Empire, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Poland, Sweden, and various city states of northern Italy, including Venice.

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sometimes its own death results; and if it does not die, it remains for the rest of its days stricken with grief for the killing of the man" (Mézières 43–44, 117). He extrapolates this allegory to represent English or French Christians, even their kings, who almost instinctively kill their enemy, only thereafter to know the burden of having unthinkingly slaughtered their own kind (at least in part). This metaphor can likewise be expanded to encompass the whole of those Christian nations, England and France, in the way that Fauvel reflected the conflicted, hybrid states of the disputants in that crisis. As hybrid national creatures individually, Christianity becomes their common quality, that reflection of humanity that would make of their murderous conflict a grievous burden, but it is nothing more than instinct before the resemblance is recognized.[68]

Despite his somber depictions of the conflict between the two kingdoms, there is remedy for that great, poisonous wound afflicting Christendom; this is the principal message of Philippe's work. He describes a balm that "removes pain and cleanses the wound in such a way that neither decay nor dead flesh can long remain, and restores the nerves, if they have not received injury, to their former vigour," moreover, "in a marvelously short time it brings together the edges of the wound" even removing "all traces of the scar" and "any disfigurement" ("oste la douleur de la plaie et le mondifie en tele maniere que pourreture ou morte char dessoubz luy ne puent longuement arester, en confortant les nerfs, s'il estoient bleciez, en les ramenant a leur premiere vertu… fait en brief temps rejoindre ensemble les ii. parties de la plaie merveilleusement… deffait

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[68] Hybrid creatures also figure prominently in another of Philippe's works on the war between France and England, *Le songe du Vieil Pelerin*. In this work, the author portrays the traditionally personified vices as hybrid creatures with human bodies and monstrous heads.

entierement les cicatrices… en ostant toute defformite de la plaie") (Mézières 6, 78). But this balm is most effective when paired with a remarkable lodestone, his description of which straddled the soft boundary distinguishing superstition from medicine. Philippe recounts that the lodestone, as it was believed in that time, could: reveal truth (particularly female infidelity); draw worthy husbands to their equally worthy wives (both sexually and spiritually); attract iron (as all magnets do), this quality being of particular importance in the manufacture of compass needles, which point true and enable navigation; and, finally, lodestones could be employed to staunch the flow of blood (Mézières 11–12, 83–85). This final quality forms the basis of a particularly poignant image in the context of a war that Philippe argues is worse than the biblical plagues on Egypt because it is precious Christian blood being spilt rather than that of pagans (Mézières 7, 79). These two extraordinary objects represent, as Philippe characteristically explains with profuse detail, the respective kings of France and England. Wielded by the *Great Physician*, a New Testament title for Christ, the author argues that these miraculous materials can bring about the end of the war and heal the great wound (Mézières 8, 79–80).[69] Philippe elaborates over the following pages on the specific applications of the balm and lodestone: Richard, like the stone, attracts men and women by his grace and physical beauty, he can staunch the flow of blood by ending the war, and he attracts the iron swords of his knights, which he then, like the lodestone magnetizing a compass needle, points in the proper direction (i.e. toward the Holy Land) (Mézières 11–

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[69] See Matt. 9.12; Mark 2.17; Luke 5.31.

17, 83–9). Charles, as the balm and already disposed toward peace, can then heal and sooth the wound, with the help of the lodestone (Mézières 17–18, 89–91).[70]

Over the course of the work, this union is portrayed through a somewhat muddled process of moral alchemy, to paraphrase Blanchard, and occasionally clumsy lapidary imagery (J. Blanchard 234). Philippe obsequiously transforms the balm and lodestone into still more precious symbols representing the two kings: the lodestone, or as it is also known, the "aymant" becomes through a little orthographic play a "dyamant" ("diamond"), a stone that is "very potent against poison," and then, with a some imaginative homophony, that precious stone transforms into "Dieu amant," a sign that Richard loves God and is beloved of Him; Charles, meanwhile, by virtue of his Latin name becomes a beloved light ("kara lus") and then a glowing carbuncle that, in reference to the Old Testament temple, leads the faithful to God (Mézières 11–18, 83–91). Aiming at more than a mere truce, Philippe imagines how, "by the goodness of God… the glowing carbuncle was… transmuted figuratively speaking by the virtue and love of the diamond, and carried into the heart and soul of our diamond in such a way that the love of the two precious stones, by the grace of God, became merged into one whole…" ("par la bonte de Dieu… l'escharboucle reluisant en un moment auxi fu transmuee en la vertu et amour du fin dyamant, par le moien duquel en figure et doulce volente ell fu tantost transportee en l'ame et ou cuer de nostre dyamant figure, par telle maniere et vertu singuliere que l'amour des ii. pierres figures, par la grace de Dieu est

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[70] When Charles VI reached his majority in 1388, he "displayed the influence of his tutor by making a truce with England, and expressing his fervent desire to end the Schism and call a new 'holy war' for the destruction of the Saracen menace" (Hanly 66).

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encore toute entire") (Mézières 20, 92). The author declares that God has infused the hearts of the two kings with peace as though they were one heart and one soul, which seems natural as they ultimately descend from the same family and, as is eventually revealed, the plan is for this unity to be reaffirmed by a marital union (Mézières 40, 113). On the part of King Charles, Philippe offers the six-year-old princess, Isabella, to the childless, 27-year-old widower Richard, thus, by the sacrament of marriage the one king would become the son to the other, "dwelling in harmony in one Temple of God, in one love, and in a single will" ("concordans et habitans en un temple de Dieu, en une amour, et en une volente") (Mézières 66, 140–41). Philippe's insistence on the marriage is particularly interesting given his prior outspoken opposition to child marriages; nonetheless, he communicates and endorses the king's offer, which was accepted, Richard and Isabella marrying the following year.[71] The author's change of heart on the matter, at least in this case, seems firmly tied to the unique circumstances of the conflict to be resolved; Philippe is most insistent in reminding his reader(s) that the whole conflict between the two kingdoms had essentially resulted from a marriage, and, thus, it would

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[71] Only five or six years prior to writing the *Epistre*, Philippe had authored a treatise on marriage entitled *Du Sacrament de Marriage et du Reconfort des Dames Mariees*, in which he vehemently denounced the common practice among French nobles of marrying off young children for political and financial gain. But even by the French standards of the time, Isabella was disconcertingly young, a fact that hindered popular reception of the marriage on both sides, though it did not impede the nuptials (Hanham and Cropp 119–20). One great concern was the fact that, given her age, it would be some time before she would even have the capacity to give her childless husband an heir, and this was a legitimate concern amid the succession disputes that had plagued both kingdoms in recent decades.

take another marriage to resolve it (Hanham and Cropp 122; Mézières 111–13).[72] He pushed for a sacramental (re)union of the two kingdoms that would simultaneously end the war and the schism that had divided the Church, restoring peace to Christendom, but it is the manner in which he describes this solution that aligns the work with the *satyrical*.

Faced with the fragmentation of Christendom's mystical body, Philippe proposes a static hybridity: France and England would remain bound together in the healed *corpus mysticum* of Christianity while, as he emphatically asserts in the final pages of his *Epitre*, maintaining their national identities. There is absolutely no projection toward political assimilation, only spiritual assimilation (Mézières 69ff, 143ff). To this point, Philippe describes the two kingdoms joined by marriage as "one, with one 'policy'" ("un royaume et une sainte policie"), immediately thereafter explicitly citing the law that would preclude future English claims to the French throne based on this union, because "women cannot inherit the crown of France" ("la couronne de France femme ne puet heriter") (Mézières 69, 143). The two kingdoms would be one, but perpetually distinct. Moreover, this proposed unity should extend well beyond 'Christendom's two greatest kingdoms' France and England; he proclaims to Richard that peace between the two kingdoms would essentially represent peace among all Christians (Mézières 32, 105). This new reiteration of Christian unity, in Philippe's conception, would be stronger and more stable, being built upon a clear and established acceptance of multiple identities within

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[72] Philippe subtly refers to the troubles caused by Isabella of Valois and her sons, writing: "vous doies bien examiner le champ ouquel vous semerez le fourment, pour avoir une sainte et gracieuse lignie qui ne saute pas la nature des espignes de la terre de sa mere" ("you should examine carefully the field in which you are to sow you wheat, so as to ensure a holy and blessed issue, which shall not partake of the thorny nature of his mother's land") (Mézières 38, 111–12)

the single corporeal whole. How to solidify this grand union? Philippe already had that in mind: renewing the crusades, not under the banners of kings, but under that of his spiritual order. It would have been a hybrid Christian body stretching out to enlarge its borders and (spiritually) assimilate more peoples and lands. Philippe de Mézières's solution to the crises posed by the Hundred Year's War and Papal Schism was corporeal hybridity in perpetuity and expansion.

III. Mother France and Her Children: Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue Invectif*

"Dure chose est a moy que ainsi me convient plaindre" ("It is to me a harsh thing that justifies my complaint"), laments the beautiful woman who has appeared in a dream before the narrator of Alain Chartier's 1422 *Quadrilogue Invectif* (Chartier 11).[73] She is France personified, a mother lamenting her sad fate to a small audience composed of her three children, each representing one of the estates: clergy, nobility, and peasants. This was not an unusual image in Chartier's time, writing in the ninth decade of the seemingly interminable conflict that was the Hundred Years' War, as Joël Blanchard and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler recall: "Figure de mère ou d'épouse éplorée, la France hante les écrits au tournant du XIVe au XVe siècle…" ("Figure of a tearful mother or spouse, France haunts writings at the turn of the fourteenth to fifteenth century…") (Blanchard

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[73] Despite the international popularity of this work in the decades following its publication, there is no Modern English translation, only those completed in the Middle English of the fifteenth century. Thus, all translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

and Mühlethaler 39). But the moment that spawned the *Quadrilogue* was a particularly painful one for France: the kingdom was still suffering the humiliating wounds of Agincourt (1415) and mad king Charles VI's subsequent royal forfeiture to English pretension in the Treaty of Troyes (1420). But more than a personification of convenience meant to portray a pitiable victim of English aggression, Chartier's Mother France represents an early humanist political ideal, diffused by Chartier and other authors of his day; she represented "une *patria* commune, corps mystique sécularisé auquel chacun se sent lié et dont chacun est un membre responsable" ("a common *patria*, a secular mystical body to which each feels attached and of which each is a responsible member") (Blanchard and Mühlethaler 39).[74] What most poignantly distinguishes Chartier's France are his descriptions of her injuries and their causes, as well as the unique manner in which he posits the relationship of France and her children: as a heterogeneous corporeal whole.

In a sharp condemnation of those whom she declares should have been her comfort, her own children, France declares: "…vous, qui me devez soustenir, defendre et relever, estes adversaires de ma prosperité, et en lieu de guerdon querez ma destruction et l'avancement de vos singuliers desirs" ("…you, who should sustain me, defend and honor me, are adversaries of my prosperity, and instead of recompense you seek my

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[74] Some might argue that to refer to Chartier as a humanist is anachronistic. However, as Emma Cayley argues in her *Debate and Dialogue: Alain Chartier in His Cultural Context*, Chartier was well connected to the humanist current already blossoming in Italy. She highlights connections between his works and those of Coluccio Salutati, Petrarch, and Nicolas de Clamanges, while also emphasizing his abundant references to and imitations of Cicero, Sallust, Seneca, etc. (Cayley 103). Thus, for the purposes of this study, Chartier will be treated as an early French humanist.

destruction and the advancement of your selfish desires") (Chartier 11). She continues:

"Mes anciens enemis et adversaires me guerroient au dehors par feu at par glaive, et vous par dedans me guerroiez par voz couvoitises et mauvaises ambitions" ("My ancient enemies and adversaries attack me from without by fire and blade, and you attack me from within by your unruly passions and evil ambitions") (Chartier 11). Chartier, along with Christine de Pisan and other concerned authors of the time, imagined France's afflictions, even the war with England, as just punishments sent down from God upon an internally divided and contentious people (Blanchard and Mühlethaler 48). Chartier's goal is not to arouse sympathy in his readers, rather the work reads as something of an indictment of the reader who undoubtedly belongs to the groups portrayed. As Blanchard and Mühlethaler affirm: "Ainsi émerge dans *Le Quadrilogue*, un sentiment de culpabilité que les 'aspres paroles', adressées par la France à ses trois enfants, ne font que renforcer. N'accuse-t-elle pas les Français d'être, par leur persévérance dans le péché et leurs dissensions perpétuelles, la cause de leur propre malheur ?" ("Thus emerges in the *Quadrilogue* a feeling of guilt that the 'cruel words' that France addressed to her three children only reinforce. Does she not accuse the French of being, by their perseverance in sin and their perpetual dissension, the cause of their own misfortune?") (Blanchard and Mühlethaler 39). But the *Quadrilogue* is much more than a denunciation of an undutiful French people.

As has been discussed throughout this study, moral correction is traditionally seen as the hallmark of satire, and Chartier's *Quadrilogue* conforms explicitly to that aspect of the mode. The authorial prologue concludes with the forthright Latin declaration: "Incipit

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Quadrilogium invectivun et comicum ad morum Gallicorum correctionem" ("Here begins the invective and comical Quadrilogue aimed at correcting the morals / customs of the French") (Chartier 5).[75] Authorial intent is clearly established, together with a strong indication of Chartier's Latin literary models, itself also reinforcing the traditional satirical character of the work. However, it is the specific nature of the vices that the author is trying to correct that most forcefully draws the work into the realm of the *satyrical*. The *Quadrilogue* was born, as is explicit throughout, of the author's despondent vision of his beloved France divided and thereby afflicted; so he conceived his satire in hope, hope of reconciliation and perpetual unity among a disparate people forming a single, heterogeneous mystical body.

Chartier, like Du Bus and Mézières, was a cleric serving at the royal court. As such, he was well educated in theology and classical literature, both of which are reflected in the *Quadrilogue*. The work opens with a prologue written in a distinctly Ciceronian style in which the author introduces himself as a "humble secretaire du roy" ("humble secretary of the king") and, indicating his literary models, a "lointaing immitateur des orateurs" ("a distant imitator of the orators") (Chartier 1). As much as it is an obvious reference to his predecessors, it should be noted that, as Françoise Bouchet suggests, "the term *oratio* refers us not only to eloquent speech, but also to prayer, oration" (Bouchet 43). It is simultaneously a literary work and a prayer in behalf of his king and patria. In this vein, Bouchet contends that the *Quadrilogue* straddles the line

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[75] The Latin word *morum*, like French *mœurs* derived from it, has multiple meanings, including: morals, customs, moods, habits, etc. Given the moral valence attached to this word in the context, I feel that *morals* is the best translation, though *customs* expands the sense in line with Chartier's apparent goal.

distinguishing sermon from satirical allegory, uniting "literary elegance and vernacular expression" (Bouchet 42). This latter aspect, the author's choice of language, is in itself a significant aspect of the work meriting discussion. Julien Molard supposes that, because Chartier was a cleric, his natural written language ("langue écrite naturelle") would have been Latin, not French; however, wanting to be understood by the greatest number possible, not only by his peers, he chose to write this work in the vernacular (Molard 35–36).[76] Chartier's choice of language emphasizes his goal of unity; as the historian of the Middle Ages, Bernard Guenée, recalls: "Une nation au Moyen Age, c'est d'abord une langue" ("A nation in the Middle Ages was first and foremost a language") (Guenée 117). In the pursuit of unification, the overarching commonality of a shared language makes a stronger case than most other aspects could.

The *Quadrilogue* did indeed reach a large part of the population; it was the only prose work of the period copied and recopied on the same scale as popular poetical works (Laidlaw 43–44). Interestingly, it was frequently paired in the many manuscripts of the time with works by Cicero and other classical authors, a possible indication of its status within the intellectual community.[77] Even beyond France, the work was an enormous success in Chartier's day and after, as attested to by the relatively large number of extant manuscripts found in long-established collections throughout France, England, Italy, Germany, Sweden, and even the United States (Droz ix). Moreover, it would seem that

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[76] Others, such as Eugénie Droz, comment on Chartier's unique capacities in both languages as exemplified by his numerous poetic and prose works in both. Molard does not address this fact, but his instinct is, I believe, correct in assuming that Chartier was aiming at a large, inclusive readership with this text.

[77] See Eugénie Droz's introduction to her 1923 edition for comments on the manuscripts.

the situation described in the *Quadrilogue* was not entirely unique to France as authors in other countries repeatedly cited and quoted Chartier in their own, targeted political treatises.[78]

Regarding the form of the work, the author inscribes an almost pedantically precise description into his prologue: it is a *quadrilogue*, he writes, because it consists of a conversation between four participants, and an invective because of its reproachful tone (Chartier 5). In both form and content, the relatively short *Quadrilogue* (about 2,100 lines in the Droz edition) broadly draws on the common literary topoi of the day (beyond the already mentioned, cliché portrayal of France as a neglected mother). Huizinga compares it to the literary debates on national concerns that were common to the time (Huizinga 66–67). Looking at the *Quadrilogue* stylistically, Chartier's Ciceronian rhetoric paired with lengthy prose monologues quite conspicuously recall classical and medieval philosophical dialogues, a genre with which the author was no doubt well acquainted. But in a more specialized and insightful reading, Emma Cayley proposes that, more than traditional debate, the body of the *Quadrilogue* closely resembles legal proceeding of the time: charges are levied, defenses laid out, judgment passed, and all of it carefully recorded by a court official (Cayley 30ff.). As a cleric in the royal court, Chartier would have been well familiar with such official procedures and it would not be surprising if they influenced his work. However, given the punitive nature of justice at the time and Chartier's explicit aim at correction, such resemblances should not be overemphasized. In

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[78] The work had a significant impact on Catalan readers, as described by Pascual-Argente (Pascual-Argente 121). William Worcester famously copied large portions of the *Quadrilogue* into his *Boke of Noblesse* (revised between 1453-1475) (Nall 135).

addition to these helpful and interesting readings, the *satyrical* perspective opens the work to a new reading that both reinforces the author's explicit designs and better illustrates this perspective than any work considered to this point in the study.

The structure of the fiction, which is to say excluding the authorial prologue, establishes the *satyrical* nature as much as the individual characters' words. The fictitious conversation proceeds as follows:

1. **Acteur** presents the characters.

2. **Mother France** opens the debate and levies her accusations against her children, the Three Estates.

3. **Acteur** briefly describes the emotional reactions of the participants and what little movement there is.

4. **Peuple** responds to France's charges and directs the blame toward Chevalier.

5. **Acteur** describes the scene.

6. **Chevalier** responds to Peuple's criticism and defends his actions, blaming Peuple in return.

7. **Acteur** describes the scene.

8. **Peuple** replies to Chevalier's accusations.

9. **Acteur** describes the scene.

10. **Chevalier** again responds to Peuple.

11. **Acteur** describes the scene.

12. **Clergé** does not respond to his brother, but soliloquizes on the nature of their mutual misfortune and the needed reconciliation in God.

13. **Acteur** again describes the scene.

14. **Mother France** responds sharply to her children, ending their mutual accusations and unforgivingly calling upon them to meet their respective responsibilities.

15. Finally **Acteur** concludes the conversation, closes the dream vision, and quotes Mother France's charge to him to write what he saw; this last aspect marks the direct interaction between the Acteur and any of the characters of the *Quadrilogue*.

One significant aspect of the work is readily apparent in an analysis of the structure: the intended manner of reception. The Acteur's numerous descriptive interjections of the static tableau and the length of the monologues leave little doubt that the work was meant to be read, not performed, despite its superficial theatricality. This is a work designed for serious contemplation and correction, not casual amusement. But it is a vastly more important and subtle aspect of the structure that most concerns the current study.

After the prologue, the remainder of the work is laid out in symbolic layers. The narrative voice passes from the prologue's author to the *Acteur*, who draws the reader into the familiar tropes of contemplative somnolence as his churning anxiety over France's misfortune, perfectly reflecting that expressed in the prologue, gives way to a familiar, medieval, visionary slumber. His dream vision opens a scene of four characters, which he introduces through revelatory physical descriptions of each. First he describes

beautiful France: she is elegant, beautiful, well dressed in a symbolic mantle representing through color and fabric the three estates, and blonde, which Molard reads to mean that she is a northerner, probably Picard or Norman (Molard 71). However, as the description continues, her appearance quickly deteriorates before the reader's eyes; she is now ragged and lachrymose, her mantle is tattered and threadbare. Mirroring France's sad trajectory is the palace situated next to her in the description. It decays from a shining beacon of glorious kings to dilapidated ruins, no doubt a commentary on both the general state of the kingdom and, more specifically, on the fallen state of what was technically at that point the dual monarchy. Acteur goes on to describe France's three children who represent the three estates: Clergé, Chevalier, and Peuple. In appearance, the three meet common expectations of their respective classes, but they are also described as assuming peculiar postures that are likewise intended to communicate something regarding their station: Chevalier stands haughtily, Clergé sits contemplatively, and Peuple lies idly on the ground. The Acteur's opening and closing commentaries completely frame the conversation within the narrative of his vision: his first remarks establish the extradiegetic circumstances of the vision and then the allegorical scene; at the end he closes the work with a brief monologue explaining the charge given him by Mother France to record what he has seen (France's extension beyond the world of the vision into the narrator's reality is, in itself, a significant point that will be addressed further along). The Acteur also briefly intervenes before each monologue within the vision, guiding the reader throughout and adding descriptive nuance to the otherwise static scene. He spans

the gulf separating reality from the vision, like the satyr chorus, he marks the boundary while transgressing it on the reader's behalf.

Mother France forms the next layer moving from the exterior toward the center of the text. Though obviously the central personage around whom the whole account turns, she speaks only twice in the entire work: once immediately following the Acteur's introduction and description of the scene, and once again at the end just prior to the Acteur's conclusion. Enclosed, as it were, within their mother's verbal womb, are her three children. The whole of their interaction takes place within the bounds of their mother's being – the cleric author subtly recalling the quarrelsome twins born to Rachel in the Bible.[79] At the same time, this enveloping Mother France reflects the physical kingdom whose borders surround the divergent classes, binding them into a heterogeneous whole. She becomes a hybridized national corpus mysticum and, given her circumstances as described by the narrator, internal division and the subsequent risk of fragmentation are the root problems that have rendered her vulnerable to the outside threats posed by "ancient enemies." Mother France forcefully reminds her children of their duties: "après le lien de foy catholique, Nature vous a devant toute autre chose obligiez au commun salut du pays de vostre nativité et a la defense de celle seigneurie soubz laquelle Dieu vous a fait naistre et avoir vie" ("after the tie of Catholic faith, Nature has obligated you before all other things to the common salvation of the land of your birth and to the defense of the realm under which God birthed you and gave you life") (Chartier 10). But, according to her criticism, none of her children are meeting their

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[79] Jacob and Esau, twins whose prenatal fighting presaged generations of conflict and servitude, as had been prophesied concerning them while in utero (seee Genesis 25).

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responsibilities: "Pluseurs de la chevalerie et des nobles crient aux armes, mais ilz courent a l'argent ; le clergé et les conseilliers parlent a deux visaiges et vivent avecques les vivans ; le peuple veult estre en sceurté gardé et tenu franc, et si est impacient de souffrir subgection de seigneurie" ("Many of the knightly class and nobility call to arms, but they chase after money; the clergy and counselors speak out of both sides of their mouths and pander to their immediate company; the people want to be kept secure and free, but impatiently endure lordly subjection") (Chartier 12). Implicitly she argues that salvational unity can be achieved if the various members of this mystical corpus that is France would only perform their proper functions, which recalls Paul's doctrinal exposition on the mystical body of Christ in which all of its constituent parts are seen as integral and equal.[80]

It is immediately clear that the principal internal division has arisen between Chevalier and Peuple, or between the nobility and the peasants. Though speaking as the least of the three children from a political and social stance, Peuple accuses Chevalier of

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[80] Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12: "And if the ear should say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were the eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him. And if they all were one member, where would be the body? But now there are many members indeed, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand: I need not thy help; nor again the head to the feet: I have no need of you. Yea, much more those that seem to be the more feeble members of the body, are more necessary. And such as we think to be the less honourable members of the body, about these we put more abundant honour; and those that are our uncomely parts, have more abundant comeliness. But our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, giving to that which wanted the more abundant honour, That there might be no schism in the body; but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer any thing, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it." (*Douay-Rheims Bible* 1 Cor. 12.16–26)

shirking his responsibilities toward the peasants in a vivid, but less elegant style than the others, ostensibly reflecting his expected level of education (Molard 113–16).[81] He compares himself to an ass charged with an unbearable load, pricked and beaten beyond all suffering, arguing that the external enemy is fought with mere words while he (Peuple) is physically broken (Chartier 18, 19–20). He then pointedly asserts: "je suys en exil en ma maison, prisonnier de mes amis, assailli de mes defendeurs et guerroyé aux souldees dont le paiement est fait de mon propre chatel" ("I am in exile in my own house, a prisoner of my friends, assailed by my defenders, and assaulted by mercenaries who are paid with my own belongings") (Chartier 20). Chevalier indignantly responds to Peuple's accusations with his own: the people, spoiled by the bounty so generously provided by the nobility, have fallen into "delicious idleness" and ingratitude, conditions that he argues, citing the Catilinarian Conspiracy, have always led to internal strife (Chartier 23–24). The classical reference here, not only to Roman history but also to Cicero, whose famous orations in the ensuing trial are still studied today as examples of exceptional Latin prose, accent Chevalier's likely level of education as well as his heavily emphasized respect for classical and noble examples at the expense of scriptural ones. This distinction in manner of speech, as well as the nature of the examples cited by the characters of the *Quadrilogue*, features prominently in analyses by Molard and others. Clara Pascual-Argente suggests that Chevalier's lack of scriptural references may betray Chartier's feelings toward the faint and treacherous nobility of the time (Pascual-Argente

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[81] Molard argues this based, in part, on the length of the characters' respective sentences. France and Clergé pronounce the most complex and longest sentences, followed by Chevalier, and finally Peuple whose average sentence is only about half the length of those spoken by the first two (Molard 113).

124). Peuple is likewise limited, though, contrary to Chevalier, he only explicitly refers to a few biblical precedents; meanwhile, France and Clergé cite both scripture and classical history, demonstrating education in both secular and spiritual domains (Molard 115 ff.).

In addition to an analysis of their references, differences in the number of times the personages speak and in the length of their respective discourses reveal their relative importance and function within the discussion: of the three estates, Clergé speaks far more than the others, and that only after his brothers have carried on their dispute (Rouy 251–2) Chevalier speaks the most times, but his speeches added together are still somewhat shorter than Clergé's single intervention, while his tone is haughty and accusatory (Rouy 251–2). Peuple and France speak the least, but make the greatest mark on the reader through their respective complaints against their mutual, undutiful kinsmen. Clergé, the final speaker within the maternal bounds delineated by France's two speeches, dedicates his single but lengthy monologue to reconciling his brothers. It should be noted that Clergé, the character most closely resembling the author's own station, is not implicated in the bickering, but remains neutral and detached, appropriately playing the peacemaker and, therefore, most closely fulfilling his expected societal function. In this and other aspects, Chartier maintains the strict distinction in the style of speech among the participants in his *Quadrilogue*: Clergé speaks like a cleric, Peuple like a peasant, and Chevalier addresses the others in the puffed up rhetoric of a noble (Molard 111). This linguistic disparity serves to reinforce the heterogeneous nature of the body of France composed by those members. At the same time, an inclusive and extra-textual sense is manifest in the author's frequent use of what Rouy calls the pedagogical "nous"

(Rouy 274). Inclusion and unity despite differences are the fundamental principles Chartier is trying to convey, which is what principally classifies this work as *satyrical*, though that is not the only characteristic that does so.

After Clergé's careful, but seemingly vain attempt at reconciliation between his brothers, and Chevalier's defensive response, Mother France finally intervenes and sharply closes her children's debate:

> Je ne veuil voz excusacions et deffences plus longuement escouter, ne en voz discors et descharges l'un vers l'autre ne gist pas la ressource de mon infortune, si non en tant que chascun la doye plus appliquer a son chastiement que a vitupere de son prouchain ; mais l'affection du bien publique peut estaindre voz desordonnances singulieres, se les voulentez se conjoingnent en ung mesme desir de commun salut et en souffrant leur fortune et les ungs vers les autres gardent pacience, peut a tous ensemble venir ce bon eur que chascun vault querir par divers remedes. (Chartier 58)

> I do not wish to listen any longer to your excuses and rationalizations, the remedy for my misfortune does not lie in your speeches and charges against one another, except insomuch as each must take it [my misfortune] for his own chastisement rather than vituperate his neighbor; nonetheless, regard for the common good can snuff out your individual agitations, if wills join together in a shared desire for common salvation, and in

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accepting their circumstances, and in patience one for another, all could

together come to that happy state that each seeks by diverse means.

She rejects polemics and contention, instead urging her children toward fruitful rather

than hateful disputation, "n'aiez pas disputacion haineuse, mais fructueuse" (Chartier 58).

These are patriotic commandments, as Rouy calls them, given in the tone and style

conforming to the spiritual role Bouchet assigns her:

> La France is clearly a political personification, endowed with a sacred aura
>
> symbolized by her 'mantel ou paille' (mantle or cloak): she is the
>
> incarnation of the mystic body of the State. Although she is terribly
>
> mistreated, she maintains, as a mother, authority over her wayward
>
> children, and even reaches a kind of sublime state. This 'France aux
>
> outrages' (dishonoured France) is the political equivalent of a dishonoured
>
> Christ. Christ sacrifices himself for the salvation of man, Lady France
>
> takes care of the 'commun salut' (public salvation): patriotism is her
>
> political version of faith. (Bouchet 35)

This sacred tone carries over into the command she gives the Acteur. Quoting her within

his own concluding monologue, and thereby enveloping her into *his* person more fully,

the Acteur recounts that she ordered him, he "who heard this present disputation," to

"escry ces parolles afin qu'elles demeurent et a fruit" ("write these words that they might

live on and bear fruit"). These words that, as Chartier's possible analogue Clergé

carefully points out to his interlocutors, are spoken not to inspire further contention, nor

in reproach, but with the goal of correction (Chartier 55). Her words deliberately recall

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the command given to John the Revelator in the opening of his biblical Revelation: "What thou seest, write in a book…" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Apoc. 1.11). Mother France breaks the boundaries of her metadiegetical frame as she directly addresses the Acteur, bridging those two levels of the fiction like the satyr chorus. The Acteur in turn breaks his bounds, directly addressing the reader and pulling the reader into the mystical corpus constructed within the text. This is the merging process that derives from the satyr tradition, and that molds both the aesthetic and theoretical underpinnings of Chartier's project. Chartier carefully incorporates the disparate but overlapping mystical bodies of church and kingdom within the corporeal bounds of Mother France, before extending that corpus beyond the bounds of the text to envelope the reader as well. This process grounds the author's effort to repair the cracks threatening France, not in a homogenized whole, but as a hybridized corpus, a *satyrical* body.

Conclusion

The three texts considered in this chapter all manifest certain emerging aspects of the *satyrical* expression that would continue to develop through the late sixteenth century. The *Roman de Fauvel* illustrated the use of satire in specific response to a crisis that threatened to tear Catholic French society apart. Moreover, this satire was entirely constructed around a hybrid character, like the satyr, whose unstable configuration underscored the undesirable circumstances that that author was allegorically satirizing.

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While this approaches the more developed *satyrical* expression of a later century, the

author does not explicitly posit hybridity as the solution to impending fragmentation.

This, however, is the key characteristic of the second work discussed, Philippe de

Mézières's *Epistre au Roi Richart*. Though not relying on satire as traditionally

conceived, the author explicitly argues for a hybrid, Christian body, united in purpose and

faith while maintaining national individuality. This exceptional example of the explicit

use of hybrid corporeal imagery as a potential solution to a crisis of fragmentation

establishes a fundamental aspect of the tradition, as it would be handed down to later

subsequent *satyrical* authors. It is in the third text studied, Chartier's *Quadrilogue*

invectif, that those respective elements of satire and the explicit suggestion of mystical

corporeal hybridity finally come together. Chartier put forth the most fully developed,

pre-Renaissance example of *satyrical* expression, but there is a final aspect that will be

added by authors and readers in the following century that will bring the *satyrical* to full

bloom.

In the fully developed *satyrical* mode, satire's targeted humor and sublimated

invective animate the author's imagined corporeal unity, but they are heavily influenced

by the renewed interest in Antiquity and, most particularly, shaped by a revived image of

the mythological character of the satyr. This hybrid personage comes to function as a

theoretical instantiation of the potential, mystical hybridity posited in response to crisis. It

is only after satirists and readers begin to imagine satire as a derivative function of the

satyr that the *satyrical* will develop into a more common mode of discourse. The

following chapter will focus on the emergence of this fully developed means of satirical

expression, specifically as it prominently manifested in and around the religious conflicts

that marked the Protestant Reformation in France.

Chapter Three
Humanism, Humor, and *Satyrical* France

A great deal transpired in the century following Chartier's lament on the shocking defeat at Agincourt. France did indeed suffer a temporary fragmentation in the later stages of the Hundred Years' War as the English and Burgundians took control of the northern regions including Paris and Rheims, the traditional consecration site for the French kings. *La Pucelle* Jeanne d'Arc made her legendary journey from Lorraine to Chinon, after which she went on to lead the liberation of Orléans as well as some other conquered lands before her eventual trial and execution. Various factors, the Wars of the Roses not least among them, drew England and France's attention away from each other, thus bringing an uneasy end to the Hundred Years' War. Like England, France experienced its own internal conflicts during this same period as twice the nobility rose up against the crown: first during the reign of Charles VII, the Praguerie (1440) as it is now known, and then in the Mad War (1485-88) against the Beaujeu regency of Charles VIII's minority. Despite these internal conflicts, the latter half of France's fifteenth century was characterized by a slow process of reconsolidation as strategic marriages, wars of conquest, and hard-fought truces reunited France with many of her provinces lost over the years to war and appanage. French society greatly evolved as well with the emergence of what Bertier de Sauvigny proclaims the birth of the modern kingdom and kingship beginning with the coronation of Louis XI in 1461 (Bertier de Sauvigny 117–20). Probably the greatest societal change concerned the bourgeoisie and its steady climb

to the higher echelons of late medieval society. Johan Huizinga contends that, from the twelfth century onward, monetary power and influence displaced the chivalric values that had anchored the feudal system in France and its vassals, thus shifting power from the nobility to the increasingly numerous, wealthy, and educated merchant class (Huizinga 61). This new segment of the population, both financially and intellectually capable of profiting from recent developments in printing, exercised a great influence on the literary world as well as the political and financial ones. Authors and printers began catering to the far larger, non-noble audience and the courtly romances of the Middle Ages gave way to more populist forms, many of which were based at least in part on Classical models. Frederic J. Baumgartner observes that while the subject matter of genres like *sotties* changed little, they began to exhibit distinctly Classical influence (Baumgartner 106).[82] Even farce transitioned to some extent from a uniquely performative genre to print while vernacular publications on all subjects and of every genre made their way into circulation.

Increased contact with Italy toward the end of the fifteenth century and beginning of the sixteenth, mostly through war it should be noted, introduced the French to the bustling rediscovery of antiquity that had fueled the great artistic and philosophical flourishing of Italy's quattrocento. It was in 1494 that the most celebrated of early French humanists, Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples, returned from Italy and began laying the foundation for a Christian humanist movement in France. While the University of Paris's powerful and uncompromisingly conservative faculty of theology endeavored to stifle

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[82] Baumgartner specifically describes a turn toward Juvenalian-style satire.

most of the more revolutionary ideas coming north from the Mediterranean, some humanist advances took root with the king's support. Most notable in the early French humanist days was Guillaume Budé's college *Collegium Trilingue*, founded under the auspices of the king François I and dedicated to the teaching of the three principle languages of the Judeo-Christian and humanist traditions: Classical Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Though the Catholic University of Paris was awash in ecclesiastical Latin, its masters dismissed the study of those other ancient languages in part, as Baumgartner argues, because of the threat such studies posed to their authority: "a mere undergraduate in arts who knew a little Greek could challenge the most senior theologian's understanding of scripture" (Baumgartner 102). Antagonism between the University of Paris's faculty of theology and humanists continued throughout the period in question and for the Reformers, whose close ties to humanism have already been discussed in the first chapter, the university to which they generally referred as the Sorbonne was imagined as a primary source of ecclesiastical and political corruption.

Alongside all of these cultural changes was the Protestant Reformation. While Martin Luther's nailing of his *Ninety-five Theses* to the door of Wittenberg's Castle Church is generally hailed as the start of the Reformation, a general dissatisfaction among sincere Churchmen and laypersons alike with the visible corruption of the Church had been simmering for some time. This mounting sentiment was in no small way a product of the growing body of readers' greater access to the Bible. As Janine Garrisson-Estèbe argues, these better educated and more dedicated Christians took on a greater role in their own salvation, engaging sacred texts and publicly expressing their faith through the

formation of beneficent confraternities and acts of charity, e.g. caring for the poor,

essentially circumventing traditional priestly authority (Garrisson-Estèbe, *Les Protestants*

Au XVIe Siècle 11–13). Early reform-minded Catholics, hesitant to break with the

Church but insistent that change was needed, likewise tended to embrace humanism in

the face of *Sorbonnic* opposition. Erasmus, the great Dutch humanist of the late fifteenth

and early sixteenth centuries, had become disenchanted with the University of Paris and

the conservative faculty of theology as a student there from 1495 to 1496, reportedly

writing of its Collège de Montaigu "where the eggs were stale, and the theology staler"

(Baumgartner 102). One major confluence of these social, philosophical, and theological

tendencies emerging at that point concerned the translation and vernacular publication of

religious texts, specifically the Bible (in whole or in part).[83] While Lefèvre and other

early Christian humanists were generally tolerated by the Gallic Church and the king,

growing dissent and theological radicalism, which Baumgartner argues exceeded its

German counterpart, created the hostile environment in France that eventually led to the

brutal violence of the Wars of Religion (Baumgartner 138). A major turning point in the

relationship between the crown and French humanists was the infamous *Nuit des*

Placards on October 17, 1534. Though many aspects of that legendary intellectual assault

on Catholic doctrines of the Eucharist are debatable, the royal response is well

documented. The indignant, Catholic monarch, François I, transitioned from a carefully

constructed posture of tolerant ambivalence regarding the burgeoning Reformation in

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[83] Lefèvre's 1509 publication of the Psalms stands out as a major moment in this
progression, along with his other translations and commentaries leading up to the
supreme triumph of his 1530 translation of the entire Bible, the first in French.

France to full-fledged persecution of Protestants with a grand display of French and Catholic unity; on 21 January 1535 the king led an unprecedented procession of nobles and clergy through the streets of Paris, all accompanying the Eucharistic Monstrance, unambiguously sheltered beneath a canopy adorned with the royal fleur-de-lis (Elwood 29–30). Even the king's Protestant-sympathizer sister, Marguerite de Navarre, could no longer protect Reformers and Evangelicals as she had so frequently in the past. Over the decades that followed, François and his successor, Henri II, directed a sweeping campaign of persecution and expulsion against the French Protestants, despite pleas from erstwhile friendly acquaintances, including Jean Calvin himself. Drawing on the same political and ecclesiastical corporeal imagery that forms the foundation of this examination, Garrisson-Estèbe summarizes the French Catholic perception of Protestants as a plague representing "the assault of a fatal disease upon a healthy body" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 304). Corporeally imagined France was in danger, and the responses on both sides in the struggle employed literature as a weapon and a metaphor.

It was most particularly amid this developing religious conflict that satire came to unexpected prominence. Moreover, within this broader cultural phenomenon, the *satyrical* mode that had emerged from allegorical satire in the prior two centuries was heavily influenced by rediscovered Greek comedy and Menippean satire, evolving into the generally aggressive and vulgar forms commonly associated with Renaissance humanism and, even more so, with Reformation-era polemics. This chapter will treat some early sixteenth-century works that manifest this transition into the developed *satyrical* mode, underscoring its introduction into the polemical discourse of the

Protestant Reformation: Dutch humanist Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*, which in many ways set the tone for subsequent Reformer satire, and the anonymous *Farce des Théologastres*, which represents the beginning of the fully *satyrical* mode. The study will then focus on two masterworks of fully-developed *satyrical* expression, the *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* and *La comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*, both by one of the most important figures of Francophone Protestantism, the great theologian, ecclesiastical leader, and merciless satirist, Théodore de Bèze. The last portion of this chapter briefly consider the Catholic response to Protestant satire in general and particularly to Bèze, examining works by Artus Désiré, his 1560 *Contrepoison des cinquante deux chansons de Clement Marot*, and Pierre de Ronsard, the 1562 *Discours des misères de ce temps*.

I. Folly and the *Théologastres*: Early Sixteenth-Century, Humanist Satire

With Renaissance humanism's rediscoveries of Antiquity evolved a peculiar culture of erudition paired with corporality, at once epicurean, sensual, and innocent. While this is clearly visible in the visual and plastic arts of the Renaissance, where depictions of nudity associated with happy circumstances and, most particularly, religious or mythical settings became a common standard, it is also manifest in contemporaneous literature. The ribald tales of Boccaccio's *Decameron* and its imitators immediately come to mind, and with them the sometimes-less-overtly sexual, but nonetheless corporeal satires of the French Renaissance and Protestant Reformation. The following brief

discussions of two influential satirical works from the early sixteenth century will illustrate how the *satyrical* grew in the early decades of the Protestant Reformation and French Renaissance before reaching its full bloom in mid-century.

Erasmus: *The Praise of Folly*

That great prince of Renaissance humanism, Erasmus, was one of the first and most prominent authors of the time to embrace satire as a means of real critique in early modern religious debate. Drawing largely on Greek-language authors, Erasmus deserves much of the credit for adapting and reintroducing the Menippean style of satire into the Christian allegorical tradition handed down from the Middle Ages. A brilliant author and a faithful but reform-minded Catholic, Erasmus and his works in turn influenced literature and philosophy on both sides of the sixteenth-century religious divide. Like other educated Christians calling for the reform of a corrupt Church in the early sixteenth century, Erasmus tended toward *Evangélisme*, the adherents of which distinguished themselves from other Christians of the time, as M. A. Screech explained, by "their personal knowledge of the Scriptures and their conception of what the Bible is and what it teaches," as well as their commitment to "Scriptural theology as a guide to life and worship" (Screech, *Clément Marot* 6). These were clearly the ideals that guided Erasmus throughout his life and heavily influenced his literary production. To this point, Blanchard proposes that it was his *Evangélisme* that permitted Erasmus to adapt Menippean satire and temper it with Christian faith for a reading public that had largely

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turned away from the philosophical Renaissance in a current of anti-intellectualism that favored lighter literary forms (W. S. Blanchard 78). Erasmus, like other devoted humanists, found a means of merging the pleasant, for which the reading masses clamored, and the useful in the old form of Menippean satire: adding the tenets of *true* Christianity and ancient philosophy to the popular allegorical literature of the Middle Ages in a decidedly Greek comedic style. The most perfect example of Erasmus's satirical style and the work that best fits with the current study is his mock encomium, *The Praise of Folly*.

Written primarily in England some eight or nine years before the beginning of the Lutheran controversy, but published approximately two years later and somewhat ironically in Paris, a stronghold of the traditional, reactionary theologians "whose hairsplitting arrogance and exegetical ineptitude are so often the butt's of Folly's wit," Erasmus's sharply critical and comical *Praise of Folly* met simultaneously with unparalleled commercial success and aggressive theological condemnation (Miller, "Introduction" x–xi). Surprisingly, however, reactions were not consistent among specific groups: though he drew harsh criticism and accusations of heresy from many churchmen, it was also among that group that the work found some of its greatest admirers. The work was inspired, as Erasmus himself recorded, by a 1509 trip to Italy during which he "had been stimulated by his contact with Italian humanism, disgusted by secular and ecclesiastical corruption, and exhausted by his prodigious labors on the *Adagia*," the last of these presumably leading him to this more pleasant, less academic type of work (Miller, "Introduction" ix). Additional influence undoubtedly came from the author's

close contact with the works of Lucian of Samosata, whose Greek dialogues Erasmus had recently been translating into Latin with his close friend Thomas More. It should also be recalled that the work was conceived and written while the great Dutch humanist was in the midst of preparing his monumental commented version of the Greek New Testament. These mixes of serious and comic influences, of disgust and exhaustion, that colored Erasmus's worldview at the time are boldly expressed in a work that the author himself called *morosophos* (foolishly wise), a term he seems to have coined to describe the hybrid nature of his work.[84] This same aesthetic of contradictory and hybrid singularity reappears throughout the work, emphasizing both the nature of his satire and the philosophical ideal he is attempting to establish.

"Whatever mortals commonly say about me – and I am not unaware of how bad my reputation is, even among the biggest fools of all – still it is quite clear that I myself, the very person now standing before you, I and I alone, through my divine radiance, pour forth joy into the hearts of gods and men alike," so declares the title character in the opening of Erasmus's mock encomium (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 9). The whole of the work is a lengthy, comically self-aggrandizing discourse offered by an embodied Folly, a farcical echo of Boethius's Philosophy. In Folly's foolishly wise voice, Erasmus cautiously and calculatedly weaves a satire that, unlike those of the preachers and friars, is conceived with an intention to "wound" rather than "titillate" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*

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[84] Other authors of the time played with this concept in their own texts; among them is Thomas More, to whom *The Praise of Folly* was dedicated, who in his *Utopia* uses the term *morosophis* to less-than-favorably describe the leaders of France; likewise Michel de Montaigne plays with the notion of "fool's wisdom" in his *essai* "De la force de l'imagination," which many read as a reference to Erasmus's joke (Montaigne, *Essais* 1: 143–52; *Complete Essays* 109–20).

106). Unflinchingly the satirist lances his wounding words at various targets, but none more so than the corrupt and venal clergy that had been the target of satire and harsh criticism for centuries. With other early Reformers, Erasmus attacks the sale of indulgences, writing: "Now what shall I say about those who find great comfort in soothing self-delusions about fictitious pardons for their sins, measuring out the times in purgatory down to the droplets of a waterclock, parceling out centuries, years, months, days, hours, as if they were using mathematical tables" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 64). But amid those pointed attacks, the careful satirist deflects blame with Ciceronian flair and paralipsis: at a certain moment, Folly wonders whether it might be better to pass over theologians in her rant against offensive classes, "*not stirring up the hornets' nest* and 'not laying a finger on the stinkweed,' since this race of men is incredibly arrogant and touchy" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 87). Always conscious of the dangers inherent in writing ironically, almost to the level of paranoia, Erasmus has his Folly clarify her, and therefore his, intent: following a catalog of offenses among the clergy, she announces that is not her intention to "rummage through the lives of popes and priests, lest [she] should seem to be composing a satire rather than delivering an encomium" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 115). In so forcefully denouncing his own clerical class, Erasmus joins with Luther and Calvin in ennobling the common, the laborer, the layman; having denied the contemplative life its saintly façade, early Reformed thought restored a certain dignity to the humble existence of the laity (Garrisson-Estèbe, *Les Protestants Au XVIe Siècle* 79). This is no accident, but rather it lies at the heart of Protestantism's personal relationship with the Divine and universal priesthood; it also resonates with the *satyrical*. Just as the

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satyrs and Sileni described above are defined by their incongruous dual nature, man, in this conception, is posited as a hybrid singularity, at once holy and profane.

Erasmus, in Folly's voice, poignantly emphasizes this singular duality as he sketches the "usual distinction" between wisemen and fools, reciting that "the fool is governed by emotion, the wiseman by reason" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 45). The author then criticizes the Stoics, and Seneca in particular, for essaying to eliminate all "emotional perturbations" and even emotion itself from their ideal wiseman, thereby *fabricating* something that "cannot even be called human" and that has "never existed and never will" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 45). Wisdom, it would seem, needs a little emotion, a little folly, to prop it up. This is abundantly clear as Folly, in actuality a hybrid of foolishness and (apparently accidental) wisdom, touts her own necessity in numerous aspects of the good Christian life as imagined by the Reform-minded Erasmus. Marriage, for example, is only entered into foolishly and can only endure by means of folly-fueled flattery and "pretending things are not as they are" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 33). Likewise women, particularly those having already suffered the pains of childbirth, would never consent to do so again if not for Folly's intervention; and so the perpetuation of humanity is only possible through her. But it is in this discussion of marriage and procreation that Folly most clearly approaches the *satyrical*. She declares:

> I ask you, is it the head, or the face, or the chest, or the hand, or the ear –
> all considered respectable parts of the body – is it any of these which
> generates gods and men? No, I think not. Rather, the human race is
> propagated by the part which is so foolish and funny that it cannot even be

mentioned without a snicker. That is the sacred fount from which all

things draw life, not the Pythagorean tetrad. (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 18)

Implicit here is the division of the body along the lines visible in the hybrid satyr: the

sensory organs, the head and chest, representative of reason and human sentiment, are all

classified as respectable, but sterile. It is the lower stratum alone that can produce as it

perpetuates through pleasure. "After all," asks Folly emphasizing this point, "what is this

life itself – can you even call it life if you take away pleasure?" (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*

19). Building on this image of procreation, the author recalls that Flora, the "mother of all

pleasures," was the most worshipped of Roman deities while that "worthless fig-wood

puppet" Priapus provides "endless jokes," uniting physical and intellectual pleasure in

this union (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 26–7).[85] To this Folly adds a sort of perpetual

Olympian revelry, inspired, of course, by folly, beginning with the divine and eventually

working down to the semi-divine beings: frisky Silenus dances a jig while nymphs dance

barefoot, "satyrs, human above and goat below, flounce around doing bumps and grinds,"

and Pan sings a song that none would hear from any lips but his, not even the Muses

(Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 27).[86] Significantly, the hybrid satyr and Pan are the last of the

"heaven-dwellers" mentioned before Folly brings her audience back to earth where her

work is equally visible in the joy she makes possible in man.

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[85] The translator of this edition, Clarence H. Miller, cites Ovid's *Fasti* 5.331-54 and
remarks: "The spring rites of Flora were so lascivious that even Ovid found them a little
shocking" (Miller, *Praise of Folly* 26n). Priapus was a fertility god whose likeness in the
form of a wooden statue with an oversized phallus was a common garden ornament.
[86] The translator explains the anachronistic "bumps and grinds" as his rendering for
Erasmus's description of the satyrs "doing Atellan skits" ("Satyri semicapri Atellanas
agitant"), which Miller describes as "so obscene that they were suppressed," citing
Tacitus (*ann.* 4.14) and St. Jerome (*ep.* 147.5) (Miller, *Praise of Folly* 27n).

Those final hybrid characters mark the boundary between earth and the ethereal

realm of the Olympians. In the myths, however, these creatures are earth-dwellers, semi-

divine inhabitants of our world, bridging the two spheres, standing with one foot on either

side of the divide. But similarly within them, the body is divided yet inextricably bound

up in singularity. All men, according to Folly's discourse, possess both folly and wisdom,

the best they can do is follow the common advice and conceal folly, which in her

syllogism logically implies that folly is most precious since we hide away those things

that are precious to us (Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* 121). This image of the individual body

divided between folly and wisdom, or holiness and profanity as discussed above, was

easily imposed onto the increasingly heterogeneous mystical body of the Church and

kingdom, particularly as theological division characterized the changing nature of that

body. Being, as they were, more inclined to embrace a hybrid concept of the mystical

body, Protestants readily adopted this heterogeneous image and the satire by which the

Reform-minded Erasmus articulated it.

The Anonymous *Farce des Théologastres*

This short, early sixteenth-century verse farce opens upon the eponymous

character, Théologastres, who, speaking to his companion Fratrez, denounces these 'new

theologians' for having left aside traditionally Catholic Latin for the study of Greek and

Hebrew. Specifically referring to those two languages, he declares (in rather

unimpressive, non-rhyming Latin): "Non legi de totum duo / Aliquid sed scïo bene /

Quod hic qui loquitur grece / Est suspectus de heresi." ("I have not read anything in either of the two / But I do know well that / Whoever reads Greek / Is suspected of heresy") (*Théologastres* lines 10–13).[87] The irony of a character with a glaringly Greek name denouncing the study of Greek may have only spoken to the more educated members of the audience, but it is clear throughout that this work was composed for a broad audience, as Claude Longeon emphasizes in the introduction to his commented edition of the work, there are no complex theological arguments, merely pointed and comical critiques against the commonly targeted clerical abuses of the day: indulgences, benefices, simony, etc. (Longeon 21). Stylistically, outside of the brief Latin passages, the farce conforms to the common practices of the genre in that period: it was written in octosyllabic verse common to farce, though with an unusually heavy emphasis on the quality (richness) of the rhymes, including frequent occurrence of *rimes équivoques*.[88] Nonetheless, its satirical tone and humanist verve, as Longeon calls it, distinguished this work from many of the other farces of the day (Longeon 19). Some of the practical and desirable effects of these thematic and stylistic choices are evident (reaching a larger portion of the population, etc.), but popular farce also offered a greater degree of relative safety to the author; while books and pamphlets were monitored and held in evidence by officials, theatrical works, with the exception of plays that mocked the royal family, went

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[87] There is no complete English translation of the work. Thus, all translations, including from the Latin, are my own and are completed in consultation with reference to the editor's notes on the original text. Regarding rhyme and Latin poetry, tail rhymes were not commonly employed in Classical Latin verse, however, the influence of vernacular poetry in the Middle Ages carried over into new Latin verse and the tail rhyme was adopted.

[88] For example: lines 383 and 384 where "maintenant" is rhymed with "main tenant"; or lines 387 and 388 where "parage" is rhymed with "par aage."

relatively unchecked until the 1540s, perhaps owing to the carnivalesque traditions and annual festivals of which they had long been part (Longeon 17–18). That being said, there is virtually no evidence that this farce was ever actually performed. What few indications there are of action or stage direction lend themselves more toward an allegorical reading than performance and there is no record of any public performance.

Though published anonymously, most likely sometime between 1526 and 1529, there is significant reason to believe that the author was the celebrated Reformer and royal advisor, Louis de Berquin: the farce was evidently written by an educated man, well versed in Scripture and familiar with the works of Luther, Melanchthon, and Lefèvre, as well as the polemical literature of the day; but most importantly, the author exhibits an intimate knowledge of Berquin's legal problems (Longeon 13–14). Berquin was also well acquainted with the more comical and satirical works of the early Reformation, having been a respected translator of Erasmus under no less than the auspices of French King François I; the king did abandon him, however, about the same time he lost patience with Evangelism. But more significantly, a pro-Luther, 1523 text associated with Berquin builds on the prominent medieval and Renaissance trope of *specula*, describing a *Speculum Theologastrorum*, perhaps Berquin's first use of the epithet that would designate the eponymous character of the farce in question (Longeon 13). It is this name, Théologastres, that first and possibly most importantly draws the work into the *satyrical* tradition.

Contrasted with more common literary and theatrical personifications of the farce, like Fratrez the monk and the allegorical embodiment of Reason, Théologastres bears a

conspicuously artificial name, which is to say, unlike the other personages presented

throughout the farce, he is not a pure representation of an abstract ideal or of an easily

identifiable social class. This name, that seems to have been borrowed from Martin

Luther, via Melanchthon, simultaneously reverberates with commonly decried clerical

abuses while comically marking the character as a 'theologian of the belly' or

'worshipper of the belly' (or yet some other equally absurd and insulting combination of

misplaced devotion to baser, animalistic bodily urges) (Longeon 22–23, 51n).[89] More like

the mythological satyr than an allegorical embodiment, he is a manufactured comic foil, a

self-contradictory hybrid that unites the highest and basest, the divine *theos* (god) and the

all-too-earthly gut, *gastros*. In essence, he becomes a recursive representation of the

larger company that completes the farce, as well as the population that it signifies;

returning to the text this will become clear.

In addition to his initial, unashamed admission that he does not read Greek or

Hebrew, Théologastre adds that he does not much know what to say to his flock, though

he bellows and cries nonetheless (*Théologastres* 18). The approach of his interlocutor, the

good brother Fratrez, is more practical, even sophistic; relying almost entirely upon the

generosity of parishioners, he knows to tailor his preaching to seasonal production: wool

in May, abundant sheaves of grain in August, and, preaching with great exertion,

sausages and ham at Christmas ("Je sçay au may prescher la laine, / En aoust les gerbes à

foissons, / Et au Noël j'ay mainte paine / Pour prescher boudins et gembons")

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[89] For numerous references to those *theologians who are slaves to their bellies*, see the preface to Luther's *Large Catechism* and sermons, and Melanchthon's defense of Luther against the *Determinatio theologorum Parisiensium super doctrina Lutheriana*.

(*Théologastres* 24–27). This ironically materialistic conversation is interrupted by cries

of agony as Foy, the allegorical embodiment of Faith, enters: "Helas, que j'ay de

passïons!," she cries, "Je me meurs, entendés à moy!" ("Alas, I suffer greatly! / I am

dying, attend to me!") (*Théologastres* 28–9). In this instance, Faith stands in

simultaneously for the broader concept while also lending a distinct corporality to the

Church, which, as Jeff Persels has shown in his research on polemical Protestant theater,

had become a common trope: the *corrupted* Catholic Church personified as an ailing

corporeal individual in need of healing at the hands of the Augustinian *Christus Medicus*

(Persels 1089–90).[90] This was a central aspect of the early Reformist aesthetic

constructed around a notion of correction and healing, what the German specialist of

early modern theater, Werner Helmich, has called the trope of allegorical illness and cure

(qtd. in Persels 1090). Persels elaborates on the enduring and far-reaching significance of

this trope at the time, pointing out that it "can be found in polemical works of other

genres, both discursive and iconographic, down through the Wars of Religion," which, he

reasons, "must say something of its hold on the popular imagination" (Persels 1091). This

trope does indeed guide the remainder of the farce as various personifications come to

Faith's aid with greater or lesser degrees of success.

 Confused and seemingly somewhat unfamiliar with that Faith whose well-being

should logically be his utmost concern, Théologastres asks his companion if it was Faith

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[90] There were some prior examples of allegorical plays where embodied abstracts
simultaneously represented the Church or kingdom (see the fifteenth-century *L'alliance
de Foy et Loyalté* or *La moralité d'Arras* by Michault Taillevent) (Longeon 25).

he heard cry out, Fratrez confirms and explains that she is ailing (*Théologastres* 30–2).

Théologastre then proceeds to interrogate Faith as to her condition:

> THEOLOGASTRE. Dame, dont vous vient tel depos
>
> De santé?
>
> FOY.   Par une colicque
>
> Qui me exime de aise et repos,
>
> Dicte passïon sophisticque.
>
> Mon chef à mon cueur tant replicque
>
> Et s'est tant eslongné de luy
>
> Que Simonïe la pthisicque
>
> M'a du tout mon bon bruit tolly.
>
> *Mereri* et *demereri*,
>
> Et une mode lunatique
>
> D'arguer m'ont tant aneanti
>
> Le corps que j'en suis tout ethicque. (*Théologastres* 37–46)

> THEOLOGASTRE. Lady, whence comes to you this lack
>
> Of health?
>
> FAITH.   By a colic
>
> I am robbed of comfort and peace,
>
> The so-called deceitful passion.
>
> My head so contends with my heart

And has moved so far from it

That phthisical simony

Has robbed me of my good name.

Earned and deserved,

And a lunatic manner

Of arguing has so annihilated

My body that I am emaciated.

A concerned Fratrez joins the interrogation, asking just what malady she has contracted; "Sorbonique," she replies in a single word (*Théologastres* 47). An incredulous Théologastres and Fratrez ask for greater precision, and Faith attributes her suffering to the Sorbonnic style of arguments, hypotheses, glosses, opinions, and conclusions (*Théologastres* 47–51). The relationship between the stated cause and nature of her suffering is curious; these intellectual causes inflict upon her not only a mental agony, but a physical one, specifically a *colicque*, which is to say a gastrointestinal condition described in Randle Cotgrave's 1611 *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* defines in English as "a painful windinesse in the stomacke, or entrails"; it is what Jeff Persels has labeled the "Sorbonnic trots" (Cotgrave; Persels 1092). The ills she suffers, though caused by arguments and hypotheses, are grounded in the baser processes of the physical body, consumption and excretion – the processes that would occupy a central place in the anti-Catholic polemics of the time.

Among the many Catholic doctrines and practices that Protestants found objectionable, none received greater attention than the mass, and specifically the doctrine

of transubstantiation. A most horrifying doctrine to the Protestant mind, it was characterized by objectors as *théophagie* (god-eating) or more simply as a unique form of cannibalism. Building on distinctions made by Claude Lévi-Strauss, Frank Lestringant contrasts the *théophagique* Catholics and *théoémique* (theoemic, which is to say god-vomiting) Protestants, who "could not envisage the simple idea of swallowing [God's] simulacrum without feeling violently ill" ("ne peuvent envisager la simple idée d'avaler [le] simulacre [de Dieu] sans en ressentir un violent haut-le-cœur") (Lestringant, *Sainte Horreur* 58). Moreover, at a time when sensationalist stories of New World cannibalism were fresh in the European consciousness, and would be for some time to come as attested to by Montaigne's famous essay "Des Cannibales" (Montaigne, *Essais* 1: 251–64; *Complete Essays* 228–41), the temptation to degrade Catholics by connecting them to the *pagan savages* of South America must have been overwhelming. Indeed, Lestringant recalls that the notion of "revenge cannibalism," whether presented as real or imagined, gained a certain rhetorical force as a trope in the later Wars of Religion: for example the repeated images of Catholics eating massacred Protestants' "Foyes et cœurs" ("livers and hearts") and "fricassées d'oreilles d'hommes" ("fricassees of human ears") (Lestringant, "Catholiques et cannibales" 233). But this sense of cultural repugnance was secondary in satirical representation to the imagined, unpleasant physical effects of ingesting of the blasphemous "god of dough," as Protestants mockingly called the Eucharist. The most immediately perceptible and comical consequence of participation in that pernicious adulteration of biblical teachings were various sorts of gastrointestinal distress: intense belly pain, noxious flatulence, diarrhea, and even mortal poisoning in the cases of more

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vicious attacks. Naturally, all of these were drawn into parallel with the spiritual harms inflicted by false teachings, but the metaphor of consumption and excretion is an important one, not only does it resonate with familiar tropes of intellectual and spiritual *ingestion*, 'eating words' as it is called in the Bible, but, as it was applied to the Eucharist, isolates Catholicism within the purely physical, baser parts of the metaphorical being.[91] Doctrine is consumed, but its effects are only physical, leaving the spiritual aspects of the being relatively untouched, and what effects it does have are portrayed as noxious. It likewise draws a clear and direct line connecting the bad theologian of the belly, Théologastres, and the cause of Faith's suffering. However, within the world of this farce, hope is not lost and healing is possible. This, according to Persels, is a principal characteristic of this corporeal metaphor in early Protestant polemics: the Church is portrayed as sick, but it is still curable, this latter characteristic he argues is lost as confessional hostilities progress (Persels 1089–91). Likewise Sara Beam remarks on the *Farce of the Théologastres*, arguing that it "not only condemns the corruption of the Church but also provides a radical new theological solution to the problem of reform: direct engagement by individual laypersons with the vernacular text of the Bible" (Beam 102). This cure is the Protestant biblical approach, as is clearly played out in the remainder of the text.

Returning again to poor Faith, she implores her interlocutors to fetch her a doctor from "where reason reigns" ("Où Raison domine"), explicitly pointing them toward

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[91] A biblical example of this trope is found in the book of Jeremias (KJV Jeremiah); speaking to the Lord, Jeremias declares: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was to me a joy and gladness of my heart…" (*Douay-Rheims Bible*, Jer. 15.16).

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Germany, where Reason resides – and Luther too, as Fratrez points out (*Théologastres*

52–6). After some bickering concerning Pauline distinctions between spiritual and

worldly *science*, neither of which seem to be available to Fratrez and Théologastres, as

well as a list of prominent Catholic theologians, Faith emphatically declares:

> Point ne veux de leurs ergotis.
>
> Bien me bailleroit guerison
>
> Le textuaire Jehan Gerson.[92]
>
> Car il me faut, c'est ma nature,
>
> Le texte de saincte Escripture,
>
> Sans *ergo*, sans *quod* ne *quia*. (*Théologastres* 116–21)

> I want no part of their vain arguments.
>
> Well would heal me
>
> Jean Gerson the textualist.[93]
>
> For I require, it is my nature,
>
> The Text of Holy Scripture,
>
> Without *ergo*, without *quod* and *quia*.

The editor here cites the medieval notion of the word *nature*, concluding that Faith is in

fact naming the holy text as her origin, not merely her cure (Longeon 69n). This family

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[92] The word *textuaire* (textualist) simply referred to one particularly attached to Holy Scripture.

[93] A reference to the celebrated scholar and reformer Jean Gerson (1363-1429); he is remembered for his significant role in reconciling the Papal Schism, his efforts to spiritualize the University of Paris, and reform the corrupt clergy.

relation is restated in the text when, hearing Faith's anguished cries, the beaten and

bruised personification of Holy Scripture enters and calls out in a straining, hoarse voice:

"Mamie, ma fille Raison, / Alons par forme solative / Visiter vostre ante, Foy vive" ("My

dear, my daughter Reason, / Come in consolation / Visit your aunt, living Faith")

(*Théologastres* 134–6). Reason quickly responds and, defending her kinswomen, she

berates Théologastre and Fratrez at length:

> Les erreus et les argumentz
>
> De Noz Maistres Théologastres
>
> Avecques leur compaignon Fratrez
>
> Alencontre des textuaires
>
> Vous ont donné de grans affaires,
>
> Sans prendre avecques eux raison. (*Théologastres* 138–43)

> The false judgments and accusations
>
> Of Our Masters Théologastres
>
> With their companion Fratrez
>
> Contrary to textualists
>
> Have caused you these great pains,
>
> Without opening a reasonable dialogue.

This passage marks the introduction of a fundamental principle of the author's argument,

that reason is necessary generally, but particularly in the interpretation of Scripture

(Longeon 34–5). It is not simply personal engagement with the text of the Holy

Scriptures, as Beam argues above, that is posited as the cure for Faith's unfortunate

condition (and the Church by extension), but it is the pairing of Reason and Scripture that

can heal.

At this point in the text, the topic of discussion abruptly turns to Louis de

Berquin, first introduced into the discussion as the "truchement d'Allemaigne" ("the

interpreter from Germany") – a reference, according to the editor, to the fact that Berquin

was a vassal of Charles V – and to his unjust imprisonment, having been arrested for one

thing, but tried for another (177-186) (*Théologastres* 177–86).[94] Referred to as *Mercure*

d'Allamaigne (Mercury from Germany) upon his eventual entrance, Berquin is

introduced as a liminal character, a mediator, German but acting in a French space,

reasonable but functioning within the irrational domain of the Théologastres. Over the

next hundred lines, Fratrez and Théologastres offer sermons, decretals, glosses, etc., in

short, every manner and manifestation of Catholic theology, to which ailing Faith

forcefully replies "Je veuil le texte d'Evangile, / Aultrement dit sainct Escripture"

(*Théologastres* 287–88). This then leads to a flurry of verbal assaults aimed at

Théologastres and his companion by the trio of personifications, Faith, Reason, and Holy

Scripture, until finally the last declares: "Il nous fault avoir le Mercure /

D'Allemaigne…" ("We need the Mercury / From Germany…") (*Théologastres* 414–15).

This Olympian designation at first seems curious, but far less so in recalling that, in the

sixteenth century, the Roman god Mercury was commonly associated with wisdom and

reason; moreover, he was frequently portrayed in humanist literature as a mediator

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[94] This intimate knowledge of Louis de Berquin's legal woes is one of the evidences,
mentioned above, that lead the editor to conclude that he is indeed the author of the farce.

between man and the gods, a similar function to that served by satyrs in the early days of Greek drama (Longeon 24; *Théologastres* 487). But here the mediating role is not only one that links the divine and mortal worlds, but that binds Reformed thought with Catholicism, even that corrupt Catholicism decried by the characters of the text. This Mercury, ascertains the situation and, like the others before him, turns his anger toward Théologastres and Fratrez:

> MERCURE. Ha! Texte de saincte Escripture
>
> Et vous Raison, accolés moy!
>
> Comment se porte dame Foy?
>
> Est elle saine?
>
> RAISON.   Elle est malade.
>
> MERCURE. Qui luy sert maintenant de garde?
>
> TEXTE. Pour vray, c'est ce bon frère Fratrez
>
> Et Noz Maistres Théologastres.
>
> Quand nous sommes là arrives,
>
> Nous les avons tous deux trouvés.
>
> Mais ilz ne nous ont point congneus.
>
> MERCURE. Vous estes deux gens incongneus
>
> De telz gens? O Vierge honorée
>
> Que nostre Foy est bien gardée
>
> Par gens de sy profound sçavoir! (*Théologastres* 438–51)

MERCURY. Ha! Holy Scripture

And you Reason, come to me!

How is Lady Faith?

Is she well?

REASON. She is ill.

MERCURY. Who is now caring for her?

HOLY SCRIPTURE. Truly, it is this good brother Fratrez

And Our Masters Théologastres.

When we arrived here,

We found the two of them.

But they did not recognize us.

MERCURY. The two of you are not known

To such people? Thank the Virgin

That our Faith is well attended

By people of such great wisdom!

His sarcasm lands, more scathing than amusing, as Holy Scripture entreats his help and

he agrees to intervene. Suddenly noticing the beaten, scraped, and bruised condition of

Holy Scripture, Mercury asks how she came to such a state to which she replies: "J'ay

esté mis en sy mal point, / Par les cas de Sorbonne" ("I was brought to this awful point /

By Sorbonnic disputations") (*Théologastres* 464–5). The violent, corporeal imagery

drags those ethereal personifications from a realm of ideas and into the physical world

where words take on the form of weapons against reason and salvation. Mercury steps in

to defend the personifications against those appointed to care for them, but he is clear that is neither Lutheranism nor Sorbonnism that he preaches, rather it is a sort of middle ground, a unifying identity: simply Christianity. "Je suis Berquin," he says, to which Fratrez adds "Lutherïen," eliciting a stern declaration from the former: "Nenni non, je suis chrestïen!" ("Not at all, I am Christian!") (*Théologastres* 488–90). It is not a declaration of distinction or separation; on the contrary, it is a declaration of unity. Despite dissimilarities and divisions in opinion, even despite increasing internal tension, the characters together form a single Christian body united by an overarching faith.

This enduring unity is exemplified as the action continues. Faith calls to Mercury, pleading with him to forget Fratrez and Théologastres, and to attend to her; but he explains that in order to heal her, he must first attend to them, which he does by means of a *compresse* and the *Speculum*, otherwise known as "le grant Miroer des Théologastres" ("the great mirror of the Théologastres"), that will show them just what monsters ("hydres") emanate forth from the Sorbonne (*Théologastres* 520–45). Rather than exile those bad theologians and false preachers, he seeks to heal them, to show them the error of their ways. The healing process continues in this mutual fashion as Holy Scripture is cleansed, bathed onstage by Reason, and thus capable of healing Faith: "Vela le texte fraiz et cler / Pour vous garir, la souveraine" ("Here is Scripture, fresh and clear, / To cure you, sovereign Faith") (*Théologastres* 548–9; Eng. trans. Persels 1093). In the end, Fratrez and Théologastre, suddenly labeled *Théologiens* for the first and only time in the work, announce themselves "mal contentz" ("unhappy") in departing the scene, but in one final, inclusive overture Reason excuses herself to pursue them, that she might fulfill

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her purpose ("Pour pervenir à mon propos") (*Théologastres* 655–6). She then breaks the fourth wall and addresses the audience to bid adieu, adopting a choral persona and grounding the common bond that unites the company of the fiction to the spectators in reason.

Beyond the inclusive and corrective nature of this work, the author subtly inscribes the Franco-Catholic mystical body within a fully *satyrical* form: Fratrez and Théologastre overtly representing the lower, baser half, while the others, all revolving around that most elevated faculty of reason, form the upper half in a division consistent with depictions of the satyr. Fulfilling a function similar to that of the satyr in Greek theater where the human spectator could have looked upon the human half of the satyr with some degree of self-recognition, the spectator of the corporeal comedy played out here could have looked upon the company and recognized him- or herself; at the same time, just as the human half of the satyr is bound to the animal parts, there is no movement toward separation between the contending parts of the company portrayed, only healing and correction. This is the underlying concept of the *satyrical*. While confessional divisions were threatening to fragment the Church and kingdom, a representation of perpetual hybridity and fraternal correction translated into a corporeal realm as physical cleansing and healing.

As Persels indicates, this is only the beginning of a broad series of works in which the emerging theological divisions of the Protestant Reformation are allegorized in a medical context. Persels follows this specific medical trope through to the 1560s, by which point he contends it has died out, along with any hope of reconciliation on the part

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of Protestants. However, it is my contention that such hope does not vanish until the last phases of religious conflict, some fifty years later. In those intervening years the hope of corrective reconciliation may have sublimated, in many instances, into something more along the lines of resignation, but hope in a peaceful if internally divided, perpetual hybridity persisted, as is evidenced by the continuing abundance of *satyrical* literature.

II. The Poetics of Sacrilege: The Satires of Théodore de Bèze

"J'ay veu en ma jeunesse," wrote Michel de Montaigne of Théodore de Bèze in his essay "De la vanité," "un galant homme presenter d'une main au peuple des vers excellens et en beauté et en desbordement, et de l'autre main en mesme instant la plus quereleuse reformation theologienne de quoy le monde se soit desjeuné il y a long temps" ("When I was a youth I saw a fine gentleman offering to the public, with one hand, poetry excelling in beauty and eroticism both, and with the other, at the same instant, the most cantankerous reformation of theology that the world has had for breakfast for many a long year") (Montaigne, *Essais* 3: 202; *Complete Essays* 1119). To be sure, Théodore de Bèze was a peculiar man: a gifted poet and dramatist, a competent theologian and charismatic leader to whom Jean Calvin entrusted his vast Protestant flock, and the brutal satirist with a unique gift for verbal violence who stood as the central figure in what Jeff Persels argues was a sudden revival of polemical religious satire in the 1560s after a relatively quiet few decades (Persels 1091).

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His early years were difficult, having lost his mother in a riding accident as she returned from entrusting the young Théodore to his uncle Nicole de Bèze, a cleric and counselor to the Parlement de Paris, for his education. It was this same uncle that sent him off some years later to study with Melchior Wolmar, the German, Lutheran teacher of Greek who introduced both Jean Calvin and Théodore to Reformed thought. The relationship between Wolmar and Bèze seems to have been a close and enduring one as the latter dedicated more than one of his published works to his old preceptor. Under the tutelage of Wolmar, Bèze developed great skill in both Greek and Latin, and it was in the latter that he wrote his first major literary works, mostly poetry imitating to a great degree the works of his Roman models: the great orator Cicero, the legendary satirist Horace, and the vulgar, cruelly comical Catullus. Bèze was first and foremost a humanist, only accepting his religious role after several years of reflection on "those dictates of his conscience which the early acquaintance with Wolmar had prompted in him" and the internal battle he faced as undeserved benefices were offered him (Smith 47). Though constantly working to distance himself from those early, humanist works and the accusations of frivolity and vulgarity that they would eventually evoke from his theological foes, it was largely because of these works that Bèze first rose to prominence within the French Protestant movement. Having arrived at Geneva, after teaching for some time in Lausanne with another great Protestant satirist of the time, Pierre Viret, Bèze found himself a poet among theologians, which, along with Bèze's gift for ancient languages, led Calvin to engage him in the completion of Clément Marot's translation of the Psalms (Dufour 23). Bèze is credited with infusing a particular musicality into his

translations that invigorated the original texts, an aspect of his writing that manifests in

his later satires as well (Dufour 24). Despite this success, his sacred writings were largely

overshadowed by his polemical works.

Throughout the early years of Protestantism in France, Catholic opponents

attacked Calvin and his followers in vicious tracts and pamphlets, accusing them of all

manner of sin and heresy. Well practiced in the art of Horace and Catullus, Bèze offered

his services to the theologian, responding with biting satire against the various charges

hurled at him and his followers (Dufour 29). In reply to a 1549 literary assault from

Johannes Cochlaeus, a man known for his savage attacks on Luther, Bèze published an

open letter to the celebrated zoologist Conrad Gesner, an acquaintance from his time at

Lausanne, recommending the zoological classification of not only Cochlaeus, but also the

entire faculty of the Sorbonne.[95] While serving as the official polemicist of the French

Reformation, he briefly returned to more sacred subjects in a peculiarly medieval manner.

In 1550, Bèze authored and presented a biblically based tragedy, considered the

first tragedy written in French, entitled *Abraham sacrifiant: tragédie française*. In many

regards it was reminiscent of medieval miracle plays, portraying an episode from the

Bible, but as François-Marie Mourad argues, there is also a pronounced Greek influence

felt throughout, particularly in the characters of the shepherds who fulfill a choral role

interacting with both the actors and the audience (Mourad 81, 85). He wrote it while still

teaching at Lausanne, where his principal subject matter was ancient languages and,

while he would have spent a fair amount of time studying Greek and Roman theatrical

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[95] The *Brevis et utilis zoographia Joannis Cochleæ* was written to correspond with
Gesner's *Historia animalium*.

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works, he had never written a tragedy before. Of apparent concern to the author was the question of genre: is this representation of Abraham and Isaac a tragedy or a comedy? While the Biblical account certainly resonates with tragic potential, the end is a happy one as Abraham's faith is proven and Isaac is replaced on the altar by a divinely provided ram.[96] But referring again to Mourad's study of the play and its authorship, Bèze's own labeling of the work as a tragedy seems fitting. Mourad wrote: "Bèze présente le commandement de Dieu comme un test d'obéissance à la fois direct et irrationnel s'abbatant brutalement sur un être humain qu'il saisit d'angoisse" ("Bèze presents the commandment from God as a test of obedience at once direct and irrational brutally assailing a human being that it seizes with anguish"), based upon which he argues that it is wholly tragic (Mourad 84).

In terms of form, Bèze eschewed the stylistic norms developing in France at that time, most particularly under the influence of the members of the Pléiade.[97] He freely alternates between hexasyllabic, octosyllabic and decasyllabic couplets, though the bulk of the play is written in the familiar octosyllabic verse of French medieval poetry and farce. While revered among the author's coreligionists, the play was attacked from outside the Protestant community for its perceived theological shortcomings more than literary ones, and that despite Bèze's careful fidelity to the biblical story and complete lack, to that point, of any theological education (Dufour 32). It is true, however, that the play was not free of Bèze's famous polemics: in the preface Bèze openly attacked

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[96] See Genesis chapter 22 for the complete account.
[97] See Dufour (72ff) and below for discussions of Bèze's contentious relationship with the members of the Pléiade.

Ronsard and the character of Satan was costumed as a Catholic monk. This was indicative of the adversarial relationship Bèze shared with his Catholic contemporaries.

Throughout this period, Bèze's general rule was never to let an attack go unanswered; but while it all began as defense in the early 1550s, by the 1560s Bèze had grown increasingly aggressive, waging a satirical campaign against the growing physical and political violence perpetrated by Protestantism's detractors. This attitude won him some prominent enemies among the Catholics, including Ronsard, Du Bellay, and Artus Désiré, all of whom engaged with Bèze in decades-long literary feuds.[98] It was over this same period that Bèze developed his unique strain of simultaneously philosophical and scatological satire, bearing the marked influence of Villon and, most particularly, of Rabelais (Dufour 30, 72). At the same time, his continued theological training gradually added a certain gravity and substance to his work; so much so, in fact, that his biographer, Alain Dufour, paints Bèze as a hybrid of Rabelais and Calvin, two men whose occasionally coinciding views on theology and politics were eclipsed by an enduring, mutual disdain (Dufour 32). These stylistic and intellectual influences first find powerful expression in his celebrated 1553 *Epistola Magistri Benedicti Passavantii*, a biting satire against Pierre Lizet, the president of the Parlement de Paris behind the infamous *chambre ardente* against the Protestants; Lizet became a favorite target of

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[98] The nature of these enduring literary conflicts was based in theology, but extended to pointed, personal attacks and, above all, vicious criticism of the other's literary abilities. They generally referred to each other indirectly through pseudonyms and periphrastic, but evidence shows that the reading public was well aware of the targets' identities and of the authors' disdain for each other. Théodore de Bèze's feuds with Désiré and Ronsard will be discussed in the following chapter. His conflict with Du Bellay was less antagonistic than with the other two, but it did continue until the latter's death in 1560.

Bèze, who continued to write against him even after his death. This personal and vindictive character of Bèze's work became its hallmark.

From his early years as a serious and gifted poet to his more somber years as a renowned satirist and theologian, the image Montaigne painted of him, Théodore de Bèze was a most intriguing figure of French Protestantism and an author meriting far more attention than he has received to this point. This subchapter will focus on two prominent satirical works from the early 1560s that are now, after centuries of confusion and debate, generally (and correctly) attributed to Bèze: a sprawling, episodic hybrid of formal satires, dialogues, and harangues comically entitled *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* and a play, *La Comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*.[99]

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[99] Debate concerning the authorship of the first work persists despite the convincing evidence presented by Eugénie Droz and Charles-Antoine Chamay attributing it to Théodore de Bèze. Alain Dufour, in his biography of Bèze, summarizes the evidence: "Ces vers étaient généralement attribués à Conrad Badius, leur imprimeur, mais Eugénie Droz, en 1976, les a restitués à Bèze, sur la base de la requête d'imprimer présentée par Conrad Badius aux autorités genevoises, que le hasard nous avait fait retrouver aux Archives de Genève… Dans cette requête, Badius dit qu'il a 'recouvré par le moyen de Monsieur de Beze des satyres'" ("These lines were generally attributed to Conrad Badius, their printer, but, in 1976, Eugénie Droz restored them to Bèze on the basis of the printing request presented by Conrad Badius to the Genevan authorities, which was rediscovered by chance in the Geneva Archives… In this request, Badius states that he had 'received the satires by means of Monsieur de Bèze'") (Dufour 70). To this Dufour adds stylistic evidence discovered by Droz linking this work to others known to be authored by Bèze as well as passages from Henri Estienne's *Apologie pour Herodote* (1577), cited by Chamay, that refer to the author of the *Satyres chrestiennes* and can point to no other than Bèze (Dufour 70–71).

The authorship of second work has also been disputed over the years. It has long been generally accepted that, based on numerous stylistic, thematic, and lexical similarities, the two works were composed by the same author; thus, the *Comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin* was traditionally attributed to the printer Conrad Badius, as the former had been. However, drawing on the previously cited work of Eugénie Droz and Charles-Antoine Chamay, it seems logical to conclude that this comedy is also the work of Théodore de Bèze.

Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale

Among the many polemical pamphlets, tracts, and plays that flowed out from

Protestant print houses with the renewed fervor of religious conflict in France and the

neighboring Francophone cantons of Switzerland, few can compare in savage satirical

force and vulgar wit of the 1560 *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale*. It was a

modest but aggressive collection of verse satires, dialogues, and harangues, all packed

together into eight *satyres*, without any apparent attempt at logical grouping. The lengths

of these divisions varies greatly, from about 180 lines to over 650; if there is an

underlying structural coherence, it would be found in the prominent, octosyllabic

couplets that make up the vast majority of the work, and which Bèze seems to have

eagerly adopted out of spite for the Pléiade, with whose members he had enduring

personal, theological, and artistic conflicts.[100] In terms of content, however, the *satyres*

are all tightly bound to the title's curious culinary metaphor of the papal kitchen, which is

portrayed as the diabolical center of a sinful household representing the whole of the

Catholic Church. In the preface to the work, the author elucidates both the overarching

metaphor and the peculiar culinary emphasis by means of a reference to an obscure

proverb (the mere fact that he takes time to explain it perhaps indicates that the

connection was no more obvious to his contemporary readers than it is to us now); the

cited proverb reads: "à bien fonder une maison il faut commencer par la cuisine" ("to

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[100] See the section on Ronsard in the following chapter for more detail on Bèze's
antagonistic relationship with members of the Pléiade.

properly establish a house it is necessary to begin by the kitchen") (Bèze, *Cuisine* 7).

Thus, reasons the author, the same should hold true for the contrary process, namely the demolition of said house; so it is the pope's kitchen that becomes the central object and starting point of his destructive satire (Bèze, *Cuisine* 7). But proverbial wisdom alone does not account for the author's preoccupation with the titular metaphor, rather, it is the common function of that imagined papal kitchen, i.e. preparing and serving food, that animates the overarching critique and draws the satire into a corporeal realm.

Served from this kitchen is a perfectly wicked feast celebrated, as described in the opening of the fifth satire, with quite a ruckus:

Qu'est-ce là ? Portes sont fermées.

Tabours, cymbals de sonner.

Monsieur le Pape veut disner

Avec les amis de son ventre. (Bèze, *Cuisine* 83)

What is that there? Doors are closed.

Drums, cymbals sounding.

The pope wants to dine

With his companions in gluttony.

Next to its harshly satirical tone, the second most striking feature of this work is the abundant, almost overwhelming Latin and French gloss that accompanies it and, to a great extent, fulfills the choral role as it addresses the reader directly from within the abstract and physical (being printed on the same pages in the same ink and font) worlds

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of the text. The note clarifying this particular passage indicates to the reader that these cymbals and drums announcing the banquet are, in fact, the church bells that would call the faithful to Mass. It is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper parodied here as a sinfully sumptuous feast attended by a voracious pope and his similarly gluttonous friends. That which is doctrinally posited as a sacred commemoration is reduced by the Protestant satirist to physical urges and gratification. The papal banquet is further denigrated as its menu is revealed to include the Protestants' favored characterizations of cannibalism and theophagy in the Eucharist, here reiterated and augmented by charges that this gluttonous clergy feast not only upon their God, but also upon the weak and poor in what Frank Lestringant explains was seen as a sort of metaphorical cannibalism in the exploitation of another's property or labor (Lestringant, "Catholiques et cannibales" 235). Adding to these denigrating images, the author echoes other, common, food-related criticisms of the clergy: he imagines the starving flocks over which those gluttonous shepherds have been given charge, forgotten and unwelcome outside the walls of the banqueting household ringing with iniquitous luxury and sinful overindulgence. It was a common Protestant charge against the opulently wealthy Catholic Church, but even these accusations of gluttony and neglect are secondary to the theological abuse at the heart of the work.

The more poignant critique at work in these satires, likewise animated by the culinary metaphor, revolves around one particular pair of corrupting consumables prepared and served, so to speak, from the pope's kitchen: the Host, snidely referred to by Protestants in those days as the "god of dough," and the sacramental wine, sipped, as the author proclaims, to help the sin go down (Bèze, *Cuisine* 34). Though sacred in symbol

and substance according to Catholic faith, or rather more precisely, *because* of the peculiar aspects of those qualities as conceived within accepted Catholic doctrines, the Eucharist is relegated to a particularly scornful realm of Protestant irony, as is illustrated in the following comical *colloque* selected from the seventh *satyre*.

"Nostre Maistre, une question…" ("Our Master, a question…") sheepishly asks Messire Nicaise, a comical stock character whose name was synonymous with simpleton. "Si tout ce qu'on mange se chie ?" ("Is it so that all we eat is shit out?") (Bèze, *Cuisine* 154). It is a silly question from a silly character, but one, in fact, with an underlying impish wit and no insignificant theological consequence – as any familiar with Protestant objections to transubstantiation can see coming. More than that, however, it is a near quotation of Christ himself, as recorded in the book of Matthew: "Do you not understand," Jesus asks, "that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy?" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Matt. 15.17).[101] But even with the added weight of scripture, or perhaps because of it, Nostre Maistre Friquandouille can only muster a curt reply: "Only a fool would deny it" (Bèze, *Cuisine* 154). This latter also bears a name with a familiar comical (i.e. Rabelaisian) resonance that paints him a vivid portrait: a plump and haughty fried sausage of a man, andouille no less! a product made from the ignoble parts of the pig (traditionally made entirely from the stomach and

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[101] In the Geneva Bible, which was the translation in use among Protestants at the time this work was written, the passage reads: "N'entendez-vous point encores que tout ce qui entre en la bouche, s'en va au ventre, et est ietté au retraict?" (Olivétan, Calvin, and Des Gallars Matt. 15.17). The context for this seemingly unusual verse was Jesus's explanation to his disciples of his cryptic condemnation of the Pharisees: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but what cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Matt. 15.11).

intestines). Andouille sausage was also a common comical substitute, both in literary symbolism and in the performance of bawdy farces, for male genitalia. Thus, this master of doctrine, this wise churchman to whom others go for theological clarification, is, by his name and its implications, reduced to pure carnality both in culinary and sexual terms. He is purely a creature of the lower corporeal stratum, to draw again on Bakhtin's distinction.

Nicaise continues his logical, albeit scatological inquiry regarding the eventual fate of all we consume with seeming innocence, while Friquandouille replies to his *foolish* questions with evidently increasing impatience:

> MESSIRE NICAISE. Paradis n'est-il pas au lieu
>
> Où se trouve nostre Bon Dieu
>
> Qui au paravant estoit pain?
>
> NOSTRE MAISTRE FRIQUANDOUILLE. Cela est un poinct tout
>
> [certain.
>
> Et que concluez-vous pourtant?
>
> MESSIRE NICAISE. Ergo je conclu que d'autant
>
> Que le dieu que nous avons fait,
>
> S'en va droit de ventre au retraict,
>
> Il y faut chercher paradis. (Bèze, *Cuisine* 155)

> MESSIRE NICAISE. Is Paradise not the place
>
> Wherein one would find the Good Lord

Who was formerly bread?

NOSTRE MAISTRE FRIQUANDOUILLE. It is certainly so.

And what exactly do you conclude from this?

MESSIRE NICAISE. Therefore I conclude that in as much as

The god that we have made

Goes directly from the belly to the privy,

That it is there that paradise ought to be sought.

The Protestant satirist places a heavy emphasis on these objectionable aspects of Catholic doctrine rhyming "fait" ("made") in the phrase "le dieu que nous avons fait" ("the god we have made") with "retraict" ("privy"). In the shocking logic of these verses, this god that the Catholics have doubly made, as it were, first from flour and then remade as excrement, is desacralized and even demonized, residing in an ironically fetid *paradise* of the outhouse's infernal pit. This line of questioning and naïve logic is not so contrived or replete with satirical undertones that one would have trouble imagining a sincere and concerned person, a child perhaps, asking similar questions and arriving at similar conclusions – if with a little snicker. The practiced churchman Friquandouille quickly dismisses Nicaise's puerile syllogism: "C'est un argument de jadis" ("That is an old argument"), he retorts (Bèze, *Cuisine* 155). Indeed it was an old argument and a common source of Protestant humor regarding the Eucharist, having derived from sincere medieval interrogations on topics like mice accidentally eating the sacred substance before being appropriated by Luther and others in the early Reformation for satirical

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reproach.[102] Perhaps this is why the topic was receiving great attention at about this same time, in no less august a setting than the Council of Trent.[103] Over the course of that council, the doctrines surrounding the biologically initiated reversal of transubstantiation were being carefully worked out; as Lestringant recalls, it was determined that "the transubstantiated God ceases to be God over the course of digestion… the divine majesty is in no way diminished by the horror of the privy" ("le Dieu transubstantié cesse d'être Dieu au cours de la digestion… si bien que la majesté divine n'est nullement atteinte par l'horreur du retrait") (Lestringant, "Des Hauts Lieux" 72). The pontificating Friquandouille similarly reassures his simple interlocutor, announcing that what there is of God in the transubstantiated Host departs before evacuation: "C'est foire," he declares, "et non pas Dieu qu'on chie" ("It is dung, and not God that we shit") (Bèze, *Cuisine* 155). The word *foire,* which I've translated as *dung* above because there is no real English equivalent, is key to understanding this passage: it does not refer to regular excrement, but rather to painful diarrhea; as Jean Nicot's 1606 *Thresor de la langue francoyse*

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[102] Satirical and serious discussions of the final fate of the transubstantiated Host date back to the dogmatization of the doctrine in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. Chaucer, Boccaccio, and Dante all prominently featured excrement in their works, often with some religious signification tying filth to sin (Morrison 8). In the French Reform tradition, Marguerite de Navarre included scatological humor in *L'Heptaméron*, for example nouvelle XI, the story of unfortunate Madame de Roncex whose urgent need to use the privy at a Grey Friars monastery landed her in a disgusting mess of all wine and food that "had passed through the friars' bellies" ("passé par le ventre des Cordeliers") (Marguerite de Navarre XI: 200–203). Most significantly, in this story the filth and muck covering the whole place, as the author describes, was left by the debauched monks who should have been holy and capable of restraint.

[103] The Council of Trent first convened in 1545, under the papacy of Paul III (papal reign 1534-1549), and continued over twenty-five sessions through the reigns of Julius III (1550-1555), Marcellus II (1555), and Paul IV (1555-1559), finally concluding some eighteen years later in 1563 under Pius IV (1559-1565).

describes it, "il signifie ce mal de ventre, qui fait aller du corps par fiente liquid" ("it signifies this stomach pain, that leaves the body by liquid stool") (Nicot, "Foire"). This word choice is particularly significant when read alongside another of Bèze's satirical works from about this same time, his *Comedie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*, which will be treated in the next section. For the time being, it suffices to say that in that comedy, the fictional pope's mortal illness is none other than extreme gastrointestinal discomfort brought on by what he has consumed. By introducing the word *foire* into this discussion of the Eucharist, Bèze creates an unfortunate, physical cause and effect relationship that, of course, is only intended allegorically as a representation of the sinister spiritual effects of the associated doctrines. If, as Sara Beam argues, the body was "a pathway to the sacred" that could bring an individual closer to God through acts of submission like fasting and abstinence, then it stands to reason that this same body could also be employed as a pathway toward the opposite end through unholy acts (Beam 32). The physical consumption of the Host is meant to symbolize a spiritual communion with God and purification worked by the ingestion of sacred substance; the physical illness caused in this case, as indicated by the author's choice of words, resonates with the preceding discussion of gluttony among the abusive clergy, these bodies are conduits of sin as they are sickened, poisoned even, by ingesting a harmful substance, which is to say, by accepting false doctrines. But one cannot overlook the important fact that there are two processes at work here: first, the physio-theological poisoning of an unsuspecting adherent and, second, the transformation of what was once believed divine into the basest of matter.

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The powerful metaphor of spiritual nourishment symbolized by eating and drinking is subverted: rather than introducing an overwhelming divinity into the creature, the natural attributes of the creature overcome the divine substance and convert it into a sickly and sickening excretion. The body, the corporeal, the carnal, snuffs out the spiritual. Just as Jeff Persels has skillfully posited corporeal Protestant satires as metaphors for the ailing mystical body of the Catholic Church, the individual body in this satirical conversation, as it consumes God and then excretes something infinitely less noble, becomes a grand Protestant analogy for the Catholic Church as a whole. The mystical corpus of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in its Gallic instantiation for the purposes of this satire, consumes the spiritual matter of the Bible and Christ's teachings only to rob it of its sacred nature and, by virtue of processes inherent to that body, expel it in an absolutely ignoble manner, excreting a most vile substance with great physical pain. The wording of the naïf's question to his Sorbonnic master, rhyming "god we have made" and "privy," inverts the Genesis account of man's creation from the dust of the earth by God, literarily forming an all-too-physical Catholic God from the mud and muck; the essentially immaterial becoming not only material, but disgustingly so. Similarly, while this transformative, biological process naturally maps onto the human body, it can only do so onto the mystical body by attributing to it some characteristics and parts that a mystical body should not, strictly speaking, have. After all, in the many biblical references to the mystical body of Christianity, hands, eyes, ears, heads, and feet are mentioned, but never stomachs or bowels.[104] It was precisely this sort of conceptual

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[104] Paul, in chapter twelve of his first epistle to the Corinthians, does instruct Christians to

transformation that grounded the medieval and Renaissance definitions of sacrilege and

blasphemy, as illustrated by some of the legally-punishable expletives (e.g. "Mort de

Dieu," "Corps de Dieu," and "La Char Dieu"); the sacrilege lay not in the irreverent

repetition of God's name or even in overtly vulgar insults, but rather, as Jean Benedicti

wrote in 1601, "speaking evil of (God), in attributing to him or to his Saints what they do

not have (most notably, a physical body), or in denying them what is theirs" (qtd. in

Christin 339).[105] The line separating various types of sacrilege and blasphemy from satire

is blurry at best, particularly in an era where the satirical spirit grew from persistent and

horrific religious war. It would be easy to argue in modern clichés that one man's

sacrilege is another man's satire, but that does not adequately describe what was

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bestow "more abundant honor" on the "less honorable members" and "uncomely parts"
of the mutual, metaphysical body, but there is no sense of reference to those less
dignified parts of the physical body, only an allegorized discussion inclusion and unity in
regard to the weaker or less prominent members of the Christian community (*Douay-
Rheims Bible* 1 Cor. 12. 21–24).

[105] One of the most famous cases of formally prosecuted sacrilege from the Renaissance
concerns a certain Antonio Rinaldeschi, an inhabitant of Florence who was tried and paid
the ultimate price for having cursed the Virgin Mary, after a string of bad luck in
gambling, and then throwing animal dung at a revered mural depicting her. Though a
generally unsavory character well known to the city's judicial officials, it was these acts
of sacrilege rather than his other criminal activities that cost him his life. As recorded by
William J. Connell and Giles Constable in their short but engaging study of the case, the
first of Rinaldeschi's crimes was not an unusual one. Citing medieval precedents, the
authors explain that gamblers "at the moment of play often called on God and, when they
lost, blamed the Virgin, who thus took on the character of Dame Fortune and Lady Luck"
(Connell and Constable 36). While the second of his blasphemous crimes, hurling
excrement at an image of Saint Mary bears a sort of superficial similarity to the portion of
the *Satyres chrestiennes* cited, it is the other that more closely relates to the topic at hand.
It is built around a sort of transformational metaphor: attributing to Mary, Mother of the
Christian Savior, the character and attributes of the often cruelly indifferent
personifications inhabiting the allegorical realm.

happening here. The author of these vicious satires does not simply seem to be mocking what the other holds sacred, rather he denigrating it in the harshest terms possible. The satirist's goal is clearly sacrilege, the abuse of what is considered sacred, and by attributing to the mystical body a digestive tract and, more shockingly, an excretory system, the Protestant author desacralizes it, reduces it to the material and, therefore, the mortal. But this is, literally, only half of the story.

The mystical body of the Catholic Church is effectively reduced to only two bodily functions: consumption and excretion. Resonating with the previously discussed image of the Sorbonnic Master Friquandouille, this again recalls Bakhtin's reading of Renaissance corporeal concepts based in Rabelaisian satire, most particularly his description of the grotesque body whose face is essentially reduced to a gaping mouth and the rest of the body to the sex and excretory organs.[106] This Catholic body posited by the Protestant satirist is glaringly incomplete, and that is precisely the point, it is not a whole body, but only those baser parts; it is at this point that the much-maligned conclusion based in orthographical happenstance enters into the discussion and forces the reader to consider the satyr and its impact on the overarching metaphor of Bèze's Christian Satires.

While the text lends itself to such a reading, the title page of the work leaves little doubt as to the *satyrical* nature of the text. The original printed edition of *Les Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* includes Conrad Badius's printer's mark, which features an image of the Roman god Saturn, depicted as an animal-legged satyr, pulling

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[106] See Bakhtin's *Rabelais and His World*, chapters 5 and 6.

the nude Veritas, the Roman embodiment of truth, from a cave. Flanking the image is the inscription: "Des creux manoirs et pleins d'obscurite / Dieu par le temps retire Verite" ("From dugout lairs full of darkness / God [in or by] time draws out Truth") (Bèze, *Satyres, orig. ed.* title page). There are at least two ways of reading the preposition that precedes "le temps," and both give interesting interpretations of how this character will extract truth from darkness. The first is *in time*, or maybe more clearly expressed in modern English, *over time*. This would signal that God, here represented as satyr-like Saturn, which, as the above discussion of the symbolic use of these pagan characters in early modern Christianity, would not have been terribly shocking to early modern readers, accomplishes this revelatory work slowly, gradually. The second possible reading of the preposition is instrumentally, *by Time*. Saturn is the Roman version of the Greek Chronos (and the predecessor to our Father Time); thus read, God is not depicted here, only his means, which is to say, *time*, embodied here as a satyr-ized Saturn. This image is in no way unique to this work or this author; Protestant satirical works of the time commonly bore such an image, whether of Saturn or, as it evolved, of satyrs on title pages and frontispieces. This heavy emphasis on the *satyr* in *satyres* was intentional and specifically related to the conceived function of that type of literature. As Antonia Szabari argues in her *Less Rightly Said*, these mythological characters represented truth revealed, truth exposed, and they were thus employed to indicate the nature of the works they adorned (Szabari 2–6). Therefore, just as Saturn fathered Veritas (Truth) in the myths, and here pulls her naked from a cave's obscurity, the Protestant satirist was himself engendering and extracting truth from the imagined dark recesses of Catholic

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dogma. But what was this truth? It is, in fact, a function of the satyr, or at least satyr-ized

Saturn (who was eventually conflated with satyrs in the Renaissance) lying at the core of

Bèze's *satyres chrestiennes*. The work itself is a hybrid and the author function is

hybridized in a choral manner, all of the features discussed above, but this pronounced

hybridity extends most significantly to the metaphorical creature whose image gradually

emerges from the text, and this was the truth revealed by the author.

As Ernst Kantorowicz famously argued, the Christian concept of a composite,

mystical corpus was, at this point in European history, being applied to political entities

like the kingdom of France. In this stage of Reformation, the French political body, with

the king as its head, was anything but homogeneous; it was a hybrid composed of two

conflicting religious factions. Divided between Protestants and Catholics, fractured and in

real, persistent danger of fragmentation, the Protestant satirist posited the hybrid satyr as

a model for enduring cohesion despite incongruity. Drawing on that ancient,

mythological model, the author of the *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* did not

merely reduce the mystical Catholic body to a material one, but to the purely material

half of a national mystical corpus that included the Protestants. This is not to say that the

author was somehow suggesting that the two factions were equal in their co-occupation

of that corpus, far from it in fact, this fused duality is naturally hierarchical as was the

Renaissance conception of the satyr. While the Catholics were far more numerous and

powerful than the Protestants, and somewhat ironically considering that the king, the

official head of that national body was Catholic, the Protestant satirist imagines his own

sect as the upper, respectable, reasoning human parts of the national corpus,

complementing the baser Catholic parts. Thus, while violently rejecting Catholic doctrine, the *satyrical* permits a continued, albeit incongruent unity. The *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale* represent an expression of the uneasy and presumed inescapable duality that was France in the mid-sixteenth century – that is, before war and massacre enacted a violent excision that did eventually bisect the mystical body; it was a hybrid body of which one half was immune to the supposedly malign materialism of transubstantiation by virtue of its wholly spiritual nature, while the other, material, eating and excreting half was nourished by the sinful products of the pope's kitchen.

La comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin

In a 1561 Protestant comedy, a farcical pope lay suffering, dying from extreme intestinal distress while a cast of caricatures of real individuals and allegorical figures, including Satan himself, variously attempt to console the dying pontiff, assuage his suffering, and duplicitously prepare for the impending papal succession. Prima facie, *La Comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*, a boisterous play traditionally attributed to the same author as the *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale*, seems unexceptional among the many vicious and vulgar satirical attacks carried out by otherwise dour Protestants on the dominant Catholic faith. However, the heavy-handed symbolism of the perishing papal body riddled with one thousand "meurtrissures" ("bruises") and twice as many "pointures" ("wounds"), read as a metaphor for an ailing Church marked by years of violence and the small but numerous bleeds of Protestant converts, conspicuously recalls

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St. Paul's foundational and frequently cited corporeal metaphor for the Christian Church

(Bèze, *Pape* 24).[107] This corporeal metaphor, more clearly pronounced here than in most

of the satires examined in this study, lends itself to the *satyrical* reading, but in a slightly

different way. While the hybrid body is still present and while it is posited in response to

the continuing crisis of fragmentation posed by the Protestant Reformation and

burgeoning Wars of Religion, the relationship between the incongruent parts is conceived

differently: specifically there is a distinct violence to the union that mirrors the growing

physical violence of the religious conflicts in France. This violence is manifested in the

text through explicit direction and descriptive dialogue that, together, colorfully depict an

increasingly fragmented French Christianity and debased images of religion rendered

material like those found in the *Satyres chrestiennes*.

It is a rather lengthy play, particularly given the farcical tone of the work,

comprising a preface addressed "au lecteur," and brief statement of the argument,

followed by a prologue and finally the sixty-page play: seventy-two pages in all. While

the *au lecteur* is written in prose and the prologue in alexandrines, the argument and

dialogue are written in the same octosyllabic couplets as the *Satyres chrestiennes*;

likewise, the tone is almost identical, drawing upon much of the same symbolism and

mounting the similar criticisms. Though the author explicitly states in the preface that he

did not divide his play into scenes and acts, in the manner of the "anciens Comiques"

("old Comics") (Bèze, *Pape* 6), the action can essentially be divided into three scenes: the

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[107] There is no modern French or English edition of this work, commented or otherwise. Thus, all quotations are taken from the original sixteenth-century text and the translations are my own.

first takes place around the ailing pope's sickbed and prominently features Satan interacting with the pope and his attendants, Priesthood (Prestrise) and Monasticism (Moinerie, played by a female in keeping with the grammatical gender of the word); in the second, Satan leaves on a quest to find talented polemicists willing to employ their plumes in his anti-Protestant cause, in his search he encounters several characters representing Protestantism's (and Bèze's personal) enemies; finally in the third Truth (Verite) and the Church (l'Eglise) provide an explicit moral for the story and a call the audience to action. As to whether the work was ever actually staged, there is lack of evidence either way, regardless, the performative character written into the work imbues it with a certain theatricality that recalls Classical Latin and, most particularly, Greek comedies.

The author begins his preface in a far more confident tone than that of the *Satyres chrestiennes*, citing the second-century BCE, Latin playwright Terence:

> Le proverbe du Comique Payen, qui dit que Verite engendre haine, a eu
> son approbation dés la transgression du premier homme, & tant plus le
> monde continue, tant plus est-il pratiqué & mis en usage. Car qui sont
> ceux qui sont les plus hais & detestez des hommes, sinon ceux qui leur
> disent leurs veritez ? (Bèze, *Pape* 3) [108]

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[108] Terence wrote, in the first scene of his *Andria*: "namque hoc tempore obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit" (translated by John Barsby with dialogic flare as "these days obsequiousness makes friends, the truth just makes you very unpopular," though the final clause is more simply rendered "truth begets hatred") (Terence lines 67–8). This pithy sentiment was taken up by several of the Church Fathers. For example Tertullian who wrote in book seven his *Apologeticus*: "Cum odio sui coepit veritas. Simul atque

The proverb of the Comic Pagan that says Truth begets hatred, was

established at the moment of the first man's transgression, and insomuch

as the world continues, so increases the extent to which it is practiced and

put to use. For who are the most hated and despised among men if not they

who speak truth to them?

He asks his reader not to take offense at the liberties he will take in this work, then,

drawing a parallel between his own time and the Old Testament, he quotes the forceful

rebuke found in the third chapter of the Bible book of Nahum, aiming it at the

"abominable eglise Romaine" ("abominable Roman church"):

Because of the multitude of the fornications of the harlot that was

beautiful and agreeable, and that made use of witchcraft, that sold nations

through her fornications, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold I

come against thee, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will discover thy shame to

thy face, and will shew thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to

kingdoms. (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Nah. 3. 4–5)

A little further along in this preface, the author softens his words for those in the Catholic

Church, and he admits there are some, who are not corrupted and may find his

condemnation too harsh. He writes:

Or donques, ceux qui sont encore scrupuleux, & qui trouvent ces

reprehensions Satyriques trop aigres & violentes, apprennent que les

apparuit, inimica est" ("Truth and hatred of truth are born together; as soon as it has
appeared, it begins to be disliked") (Tertullian vii. 3).

douces & aimiables remonstrances dont on a usé si souvent & de si long temps n'ont de rien servi, & que le mal est tellement creu, qu'il n'est plus question de medicamens lenitifs, ains de cauteres & incisions: encores est-il bien à craindre que le tout ne pourrisse, tant le mal est enraciné. (Bèze, *Pape* 5–6)

For behold, those who remain scrupulous and who find these satirical reprimands too bitter and violent, let them learn that soft and friendly protests, as have been so frequently and so long employed, have accomplished nothing, and that evil has so increased that it is no longer a question of gradual remedy but of cauterizing and incision: for there is good reason to fear lest all should rot, so firmly rooted is the evil.

With these harsh words of warning and condemnation there is the explicit claim of satire, essentially reiterating what the title has already indicated: that this work is intended to amuse while it corrects. This idea is heavily emphasized throughout the remainder of the preface as the author insists repeatedly that this work is indeed a comedy and not a tragedy (Bèze, *Pape* 6). Not insignificantly, comedy as a mode is marked by inclusion, traditionally ending in a marriage or another mark of unification and inclusion, whereas tragedy tends toward exclusion and isolation. Moreover, this is particularly interesting as the narrative voice then into the prologue, which seems to point toward the contrary.

In the prologue, which stylistically recalls the Classical works of Terence and Plautus, the author warns any "papistes" among his audience that may want to excuse

themselves for fear of offense, "ce ieu-ci" ("this play") is only for those who "hate the pope and contest the many abuses of truth" – a first overt manifestation of the exclusionary resignation that seems to color the work (Bèze, *Pape* 10). To the remaining audience, he implores "Riez donc vostre saoul" ("Laugh therefore your fill"), but, he qualifies, "pas d'un ris profane & sans science" ("not a vulgar, thoughtless laugh"), rather "de ce ris sobre & sainct" ("that sober and saintly laugh") (Bèze, *Pape* 10). This is not mindless mockery, but rather, as the author insists, a work that should inspire reflection. The prologue closes with cliché urgency as the characters' entrance, like the *truth* portrayed in the work, can no longer be held back.

The comedy opens as Priesthood and Monasticism enter, leading the visibly infirm Pope. "Pere tressainct, appuyez vous / Sur mon espaule, allez tout dous / De peur d'esmouvoir vostre rheume" ("Most holy father, lean / On my shoulder, carefully / For fear of aggravating your rheumatism"), says the kind and gentle Priesthood to the ailing Pope who replies with complaints, "Mon foye est dur comme une enclume, / I'ay tant la ratelle oppilee !" ("My liver is as hard as an anvil, / I have such a clogged spleen!") (Bèze, *Pape* 12). The Pope then seems to indicate the sincerity of his faith, asking only for a *Kyrie Eleison*, a *Fidelium*, and other prayers as his poultice (Bèze, *Pape* 12). But he and his concerned attendants are quickly joined by Satan, with whom all three freely interact. Satan's concern is less centered on the suffering Pope than on the threat to his power posed by these interfering Huguenots "qui ostent nostre butin" ("who deny us our plunder") (Bèze, *Pape* 16). Over the course of the ensuing conversation between these characters around the Pope's sickbed, his illness becomes more acute and its

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manifestations more pronounced: he moans and wails, and emits flatulence so vile that

Satan himself, presumably well acquainted with Hell's sulfury stench, is sickened and

distances himself. The Pope's gastrointestinal distress recalls the *foire* (painful diarrhea)

that the Sorbonnic Master Friquandouille assures his interlocutor to be the desacralized,

final product of ingesting the Eucharist in the *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale*.

   Beginning to suffer as much from fear of the imminent final judgment as from

extreme physical discomfort and, again, indicating a certain sincerity to his faith, the

suffering pontiff cries out for a piece of "pain beni" ("blessed bread") or "le sainct *corpus*

domini" ("the sacred body of the Lord") (Bèze, *Pape* 26). But his attendants turn their

discussion to the cause of his agony, the "poison" that is killing him; Monasticism

concludes that it is sin and, thus, the only remedy is confession, at which suggestion the

Pope calls over Priesthood, telling him to don his "grande chemise" ("big shirt") and give

him absolution (Bèze, *Pape* 29–30). Then, as he begins his confession, the Pope suddenly

and with a written "Ouah, ouah" violently, but comically, vomits, spewing out the

sickening substance of his misdeeds in what appears to be a mass of undigested human

flesh. Priesthood reacts with apparent shock and horror while calling the others' attention

to the contents of the papal vomitus. Satan apathetically responds:

    Et pourquoy trouves-tu estrange

    Que quelqu'un rende ce qu'il mange?

    Il a tant mange d'orphelins

    En guise de bons poupelins,

    Et beu le sang de mainte veufve,

Que ie m'esbahi qu'il ne creve. (Bèze, *Pape* 30)

And why do you find it strange

That someone would vomit up what they eat?

He has eaten so many orphans

In the guise of buttery little pastries,[109]

And drunk the blood of so many widows,

That I'm amazed he doesn't burst.

The Pope continues vomiting, each time with a written "ouah," and his companions continue to analyze the vomitus. Monasticism points out, in addition to the flesh of innocent victims, discernable representations of various, iniquitous Catholic institutions and clerical classes; coating these recognizable remnants are bilious traces of the ecclesiastical iniquities and doctrinal deviations explicitly declared to be the source of the fictional Pope's extreme discomfort and imminent death (Bèze, *Pape* 31).

This simultaneously comic and horrific scene marks a stark shift in the play: the farcically bellowing pope whose sincerity in the Catholic faith is displayed at several points, is nothing more than a monster, an orphan-eating cannibal who suffers a poetically just gastrointestinal pain for the indulgence of his wicked appetites. The pope's body, in this depiction, takes on the twinned character of Kantorowicz's king's body, which is simultaneously individual and metaphorical: the ailing pope's body represents

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[109] *Poupelins* were small, irregular morsels of pâte à choux, baked and dipped in warm butter. The delicacy was invented by Marie de' Medici's personal Italian chef Popelini sometime around 1540 (Sender and Derrien 98).

his physical individuality and the Church. Thus, depiction of these unassimilated elements violently bursting from the symbolic substitute for the mystic corporality of the Church forcefully suggests the distinctly composite nature of that violently inclusive institution. Somewhat reminiscent of Mother France from Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue Invectif*, the Pope's body seems to envelop the contentious factions composing his real-world stewardship, however, where Mother France interacts with her children and strives to correct them, the cannibal pope of Bèze's comedy simply devours them until they burst forth in a violent display – this is not the willing unity of Saint Paul's corporeal metaphor, but rather forceful absorption.[110] This vivid depiction of decomposition represents the particular moment in which Bèze wrote this comedy: the Catholic Church was suffering under the increasingly Reform-minded population, for which the only remedy was, in fact, the violent spewing out of the aggravating or, as Bèze would more likely have considered them, victimized masses. This manifestation of unassimilated hybridity in the ecclesiastical body draws the work into the realm of the *satyrical*, but the peculiar, graphic manner of its revelation alters its trajectory in a significant way.

This image of the composite, ecclesiastical body in a state of violent rupture and decomposition, at first blush, does not seem to align with the hopeful goal of the *satyrical*; it may even seem to contradict it. It does not. Rather it marks a conceptual transition. For Persels, who uses this play to illustrate the abandonment of the medical trope previously discussed, it represents resignation to the irredeemability of the Catholic Church. In some ways this is indeed the case. However, rather than dissipate, *satyrical*

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[110] See chapter two, subchapter three for the full discussion of Chartier's *Quadrilogue Invectif*.

hope shifts from the potential perpetuation of the ecclesiastical body (manifested in Mézières's *Epistre*, Chartier's *Quadrilogue*, and Berquin's *Farce des Théologastres*), to a political hope, like that expressed in the *Satyres chrestiennes*. While the pope expels the composite contents of his simultaneously individual and metaphorical bodies, the substance and characters remain within the same linguistic and political space. This is emphasized by Satan's quest.

Satan ventures from the papal deathbed and announces that he intends to find:

> Quelque homme en malice approuvé,
>
> Qui scache escrire en toutes langues
>
> Des invectives & harangues,
>
> Pour rembarrer & faire taire
>
> Ces asnes qui ne font que braire
>
> Contre les abus de la Messe
>
> Ceste noble & brave deesse
>
> Qui si bien remplit nos chaudieres
>
> De povres ames prisonniers. (Bèze, *Pape* 35–36)

> Some man proven in malice,
>
> Who knows how to write in every language
>
> Invectives and harangues,
>
> To drive back and silence
>
> These asses who bray

> Against the abuses of the Mass
>
> That noble and splendid goddess
>
> Who so well fills our cauldrons
>
> With poor, imprisoned souls.

On a superficial level, this quest furnishes the author with a conspicuously convenient occasion to take shots at some of the famous figures of Catholic polemics, such as Villegagnon, who in the play has only just returned from his "Antarctic adventure," and the belligerent Catholic pamphleteer Artus Désiré, respectively parodied in the comedy as *L'outrecuidé* and *L'affamé* (the Presumptuous One and the Hungry One).[111] This caricature of Villegagnon is accompanied by his valet Philaute, a somewhat common allegorical figure whose name is from the Greek for self-love; Désiré *L'affamé*, on the other hand, keeps contentious company with *L'hypocrite*, a parody of the Catholic inquisitor Jacques Guéset, and *Le zelateur*, the most vague of these references, but most likely a reference to the infamous Noël Béda. Even a formerly prominent Protestant figures among Bèze's targets as Satan crosses paths with *L'ambitieux*, a caricature of Sebastian Castellio whose feud with Calvin, beginning with the latter's refusal to endorse the former's French translation of the Bible, lasted until his death. The real significance

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[111] Nicolas Durand, sieur de Villegagnon was a military leader turned polemicist who led a 1555 colonization mission into Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on behalf of the French king Henri II with the intention of creating a "France antarctique." The majority of the colonists were Huguenots and Swiss Calvinists seeking relief from persecution in Europe. The mission ultimately failed as external forces resulting from Portuguese claims to the territory, and internal conflict between Catholic and Protestant factions led to the defeat and collapse of the colony. Returning to France, Villegagnon became a controversial figure, sometimes attacking the Catholics in his vicious pamphlets, other times attacking the Protestants.

of this list of individuals is a function of the author's admitted resemblance to those who

write for the opposite side in the religious conflict. This subtle admission of similarity,

even in an adversarial relationship, reaffirms the notion of *satyrical* hybridity: Bèze

recognizes, even in this work marked from the beginning by a distinctly exclusionary

impulse, that there is an underlying unity. Both the Francophone Protestants and Gallic

Catholics share in the mystical corpus that was the kingdom of France.

This play was written at roughly the same time as the failed attempt at

reconciliation among various Christian factions in the Colloquy at Poissy, at which

Théodore de Bèze was called upon to represent the Calvinists.[112] Just as that failure in

theological reconciliation led Catherine de' Medici and her advisors to seek political

solutions to the growing division that threatened France, the author of this play insists

upon a perpetuated political and cultural unity. This shift in *satyrical* hope is likewise

manifest by an earlier passage in which the pope discusses France within the larger body

of the Church. Describing the fragmentation that had already lost him Germany and

England, he bemoans at length the particularly painful, potential loss of his erstwhile

faithful *daughter*, France (Bèze, *Pape* 23). The peculiar, filial metaphor, referenced here

by the author, had for some time translated into unique ecclesiastical privileges for

France's *Most Christian* king. It was not merely individuals bursting forth in a vomitous

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[112] There is no date given for the composition or publication of the *Comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin* other than the year, 1561. The Colloquy at Poissy was held in September and October of that same year, though in the Julian calendar still used at that time, those months would only have marked the halfway point of the year. It seems reasonable to conclude that this comedy was written during or after that meeting, based on timing, but more importantly on the apparent lack of hope for reconciliation.

mass, but whole nations, France chief among them. As a political body, France could erupt from the ailing ecclesiastical body, and assert its own mystical corporality.

III. The Catholic Response

This emphasis on the perpetuation of a hybrid national body was a predominantly a Protestant ideal, one that was informed by humanism and pragmatism. Not only did Catholics far outnumber Protestants in France, but a firm majority of France's most powerful families, including that of the king, were faithful to the Catholic Church.[113] There were powerful Protestant families, the enduring and hard-fought Wars of Religion prove that, but France remained firmly Catholic – even the Protestant who would eventually claim the French throne by legal lines of succession, Henri IV, had to convert in order to finalize his accession. From that appreciably weaker social position, Protestants (perhaps grudgingly, perhaps willingly) accepted the *truth*, as it has been presented in this study, that fracturing France need only recognize its own hybrid nature

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[113] Janine Garrisson-Estèbe estimates that in 1562, roughly when these works were produced, Protestants of all sects (i.e. Calvinist, Lutheran, etc) made up about 10% of the total population of France (two of approximately twenty million). This percentage, according to her research, dropped significantly with the violent religious wars, down to 6%, and again with revocation of the Edict of Nantes, down to 4.2%; this trend continued until the latter twentieth century, when she conducted her research, by which time Protestants only made up between 1.4 and 1.7% (Garrisson-Estèbe, *L'homme Protestant* 67–71). Throughout this period, French Protestants were most densely situated in the southwest of France, including the traditionally Protestant Montauban and Toulouse region (see maps showing distribution of Reformed churches in Garrisson-Estèbe, *L'homme protestant*, pages 10, 34, and 40).

to realize possibilities of peace and perpetuation of the kingdom. The more powerful and overwhelmingly numerous Catholics, however, lived with the luxury of viewing the Protestant *members* of the national *corpus mysticum* as something of a pernicious growth to be excised, giving rise to what Luc Racaut describes as a "rhetoric of exclusion… spun by Catholic authors who concentrated on portraying the Protestants in the worst possible light" (Racaut 5). Thus, Catholic polemicists, even when employing some form of satire, worked outside of the *satyrical*. In fact, in so much as the Catholic response largely contradicted the hybridity at the heart of the *satyrical*, explicitly encouraging and even demanding the fragmentation against which the *satyrical* is posited, these works can be called anti-*satyrical*.

While the *satyrical* is primarily rooted in the inherently populist function of satire, the anti-*satyrical* is largely defined by a hierarchical approach and a conscious turn away from the fictions of satire. Catholic authors, owing largely to their privileged status within the kingdom, did not need to rely as heavily upon satire's protecting façade and unifying laughter. Moreover, they were able to address their complaints directly to their head, the king or regent, all the while speaking from a surprisingly authoritative point of view. Where the Protestants resorted to satire, Catholics could satisfy themselves with invective and accusation. This is not to say, however, that there was no Catholic satire at the time. There most certainly was, but it was less common and more straightforwardly violent, approaching the physical brutality that it underscored. One famous example of Catholic satire aimed at Protestants was composed by a certain Antoine Catelan, a defrocked Franciscan Cordelier who, after his dismissal from the order, went to Lausanne

where he studied with Bèze; however, the latter sent him away after only a year because

of his general "ignorance" and poor Latin (Dufour 32). Angered by this treatment from

the Protestants, which it should be noted seems on par with how he was treated by his

Catholic brethren, Catelan wrote a response to Bèze's *Epistola Magistri Benedicti*

Passavanti, entitled *Passavant parisien respondant à Pasquin romain*. While a generally

uninspired satire, Catelan does effectively work to discredit Bèze by citing his literary

past and the Candida to whom he had dedicated his earlier love poems (Dufour 33).

Nonetheless, Catholic attempts at satire in the face of Protestant *satyre* tended to land

only clumsy blows with little social impact beyond the excited acclamations of fellow,

vehemently anti-Reform Catholics. Nonetheless, it is well worth the effort to briefly

consider two prominent Catholic writers, to examine how their rhetoric diverged from

that of their opponents and how it contradicted the Protestant desire for reconciliation

lying at the heart of the *satyrical*. The authors to be considered here are Artus Désiré and

Pierre de Ronsard.

Artus Désiré: Priest, Pamphleteer, and Gadfly

Relatively little is known about Artus Désiré despite his persistent and brash

participation in the literary world of the Reformation and Religious Wars. Frank S. Giese,

the author of the only monograph, modern or otherwise, devoted entirely to Désiré, offers

what scant biographical details he can, much of which is drawn from caricatures and

invective contained in the works of Bèze and others Protestant foes: Désiré was almost

certainly a priest hailing from Normandy and he was, by all accounts, a genuinely

unpleasant fellow with a penchant for self-aggrandizement and flouting all non-

ecclesiastical decorum (Giese 19, 21). Jacques Pineaux argues that Désiré was not taken

seriously by his opponents, as evidenced by the abundance of personal attacks against

him in comparison with the nearly non-existent refutations of his works (Pineaux 11). In

the *Satyres chrestiennes de la cuisine papale*, Bèze puns on his name, calling him "Artus

deschiré" ("Artus torn apart") and describing him in the marginalia as a "beau faiseur de

lardoires qui rimaille pour avoir sa lippie" (a "fair composer of pointed attacks who

dabbles in awful rhymes so as to stuff his face") (Bèze, *Cuisine* 158). In the *Comédie du

pape malade* he is portrayed as a "venal hack" engaged in the defense of the Church for

solely financial reasons, though Giese argues that this characterization is unfair (Giese

32). Such commentary is expected from theological foes, but even his coreligionists who

mention him, particularly the less robustly zealous among them, admit his nasty

temperament and uncouth manner (Crouzet 204). Désiré's writings give literary

substance to those depictions, as he openly and vehemently attacked what he saw as a

wholly sinful society while vulgarly demanding patronage from the various nobles and

high churchmen to whom he presumptuously dedicated his works, not having received

their permission.

Stylistically and educationally, Désiré stood apart from the great majority of his

contemporaries, particularly his more erudite enemies, like Bèze and Badius. Giese offers

this rather harsh description of him: "Without talent, with a strictly orthodox education

and no interest in classical antiquity, with a profound distrust of intellectual curiosity and

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no understanding whatever of the reformation, Artus Désiré lived his life untouched by any aspect of the Renaissance" (Giese 10). However, Luc Racaut argues that such perceptions of Désiré "spring from historiographical bias rather than familiarity with the sources" (Racaut 4). Denis Crouzet likewise refutes these popular characterizations of Désiré, arguing that:

> …ce qui peut sembler aujourd'hui une étroitesse d'esprit avait, entre 1545 et 1562, une finalité précise qui était de l'ordre de la persuasion… L'intelligence « limitée » [as described by Giese] d'Artus Désiré n'est que l'effet… d'une très grande lucidité qui lui fit comprendre que son action de persuasion… devait reposer sur une technique de la fusion avec la culture collective, tant par un mode théâtral d'exposition que par le recours à un langage souvent d'une très grande crudité. (Crouzet 191)

> …that which might seem narrow-minded today possessed, between 1545 and 1562, a precision and finality on the order of persuasion… The "limited" intelligence [as described by Giese] of Artus Désiré is nothing more than the effect… of a great lucidity that made clear to him that his action of persuasion… had to rest upon a technique of fusion with collective culture, as much by a mode of theatrical exposition as by resort to a language frequently marked by great crudeness.

However, regardless of his intellectual shortcomings, it can be argued that Désiré distinguished himself from his theological and literary foes in another, perhaps more

positive manner: he seems to have underscored his literary intervention with physical deeds, though it appears that these overtures were largely inhibited by his bumbling and lack of sophistication, all of which further exposed him to satirical attack. One famous example has him setting out for Spain after the failure of the Colloquy at Poissy to solicit help from Philip II. A highly partisan account of the event, written by none other than Théodore de Bèze in the guise of historian, begins:

> Quelques uns de Paris, en ces entrefaites, tant des docteurs de Sorbonne que d'autres des plus grands zélateurs de la religion romaine, désespérans de leurs affaires, s'oublièrent tant que d'entreprendre de solliciter le roy d'Espagne de se vouloir mesler de l'estat du royaume de France à bon escient. Et, pour le comble de leur audace et folie, choisirent pour leur messager un certain prestre rimailleur, des plus impertinens hommes du monde, nommé *Artus Désiré*. (Bèze, *Histoire ecclésiastique* 1: 396)

> In the meantime, some of them at Paris, as many doctors of the Sorbonne as others from among the greatest zealots of the Roman religion, despairing in their affairs, so forgot themselves as to undertake to solicit the King of Spain to willingly and cunningly meddle in the state of the French kingdom. And to complete this audacity and folly, they chose as messenger a certain hack poet of a priest, one of the most impertinent men in this world, by the name of Artus Désiré.

Whether he was sent on this mission by some more powerful figure or took it upon himself is unclear in the historical evidence, though, given his boorish reputation, it is difficult to imagine a political or religious superior enlisting his help for such a delicate diplomatic mission (Giese 23). Désiré seems to have made a habit of presumptuously inserting himself into important affairs, both national and ecclesiastical, but, as happened here, various authorities worked vigilantly to hinder him. This mission ended prematurely when Catherine de' Medici sent orders for his arrest at the hands of the Marshall of Orléans, who apparently accomplished his task with the help (intentional or not, it is not entirely clear) of Désiré's reputed accomplice, the *curé* of Saint Paterne, Jacques Guéset (Giese 24).[114] What followed his arrest, the "surprisingly mild" sentence that he received and the ease with which he escaped serving it, has led some to speculate that numbered among his supporters in this mission, as well as his general literary aggression, were prominent members of the Parlement of Paris (Giese 28). This judicial leniency in his favor manifested again when Désiré was caught plotting against King Charles IX, a gravely serious crime for which he was sentenced to a prison term that he never served (Giese 31).

Fanatical, malicious, intolerant, presumptuous, these are the qualities that seem to have defined Artus Désiré; nonetheless, he attained a certain degree of relevance and renown throughout the religious conflicts in France. In his work on the polemical literature of the sixteenth-century, Charles Lenient, the first scholar to make a real study of French satire in itself, devoted a few pages to Désiré and recognizes in him "one of the

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[114] This event, or at least its aftermath is parodied in Bèze's *Comédie du pape malade et tirant à la fin*. See the above discussion.

first articulate Catholic voices to be raised in French against the heretics" (Giese 75; Lenient 221–24). His writing career appears to have ended around 1580, though "new" works continue to appear as late as 1586; his references to events under the reign of Henri III (1573-1589) do not extend beyond the earlier date and the complete lack of expected commentary on the Protestant Henri IV would appear to indicate that Désiré was dead, or at least no longer writing, before the end of that decade.

In regard to Désiré's literary style, Giese echoes the general consensus, proclaiming it "uniformly flat and prosaic" (Giese 186). He continues: "[Désiré's] lines are filled with padding to satisfy his rhythmic requirements; his themes are repetitive and scarcely 'poetic' in the usual sense; his humor when he attempts it is heavy; and his satire is more often vituperative than barbed" (Giese 186). Indeed, as Giese argues, Désiré's corpus offers little if any substance worthy of literary study, earning him the "well-deserved" oblivion "into which he fell almost as soon as he ceased writing" (Giese 186). Nonetheless, a brief discussion of one of his more prominent works will serve to illustrate in broad strokes the Catholic response to the witty, biting attacks of Bèze and his fellow Protestant satirists.

Désiré's 1560 *Contrepoison des cinquante deux chansons de Clement Marot*, a response to the Marot's vernacular translation (paraphrasing really) of the biblical Psalms, was the most polished satirical work of his long and infamous career. The title page of the original edition of the work actually gives a much longer name and pronounced imagery to the work:

Le Contrepoison des cinquante deux chansons de Clement Marot,

faussement intitulees par luy Psaumes de David, faict & composé de

plusieurs bonnes doctrines & sentences preservatives d'Heresie, tant pour

les sains, que pour les malades & debilitez en la Foy de nostre mere

saincte Eglise. (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 49)

The Antidote to the fifty-two songs of Clément Marot, falsely entitled by

him the Psalms of David, written and composed of many good doctrines

and judgments to ward off heresy, as much for the healthy as for the sick

and infirm in the Faith of our Holy Mother Church.

The corporeal metaphor implied within the title implies interesting connections to the

topic of this study, though the author does not expressly elaborate upon it. Désiré depicts

the doctrines of the Reformation as venomous heresies against which he posits an

antidote suitable for all degrees of spiritual sickness within the Catholic Church; this limit

to the Catholic fold underscores common, Catholic caricatures of Protestants as the living

dead, *des morts-vivants*, and, therefore, already irredeemable (Pineaux 6).[115] In one of the

several prefaces and introductions that precede the work, the author offers an interesting

image of the Protestant enemy and the reason for his efforts. He writes:

Quand quelque ennemy de la Foy

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[115] Du Bellay, for example, describes the Protestants as such in his *Regrets*, sonnet 136:
"Je les ay veuz (Bizet) et si bien m'en souvient, / J'ay veu dessus leur front la repentance
peinte, / Comme on voit ces esprits qui là bas font leur pleinte, / Ayant passé le lac d'où
plus on ne revient" ("I have seen them, Bizet, and if I remember well, I saw repentance
painted on their brows, as one sees those spirits who, having crossed the loke from which
there is no return, wail in the underworld") (Du Bellay 186, 187).

Chante les Chansons de Marot

Et qu'on luy demande pourquoy

Il les chante, il ne respond mot,

Sinon que le malheureux sot

Dict qu'il vault mieulx en lieux publiques

Les chanter, que Chansons lubriques,

Dont a ceste cause & raison

I'ay pour tous les bons Catholiques

Composé ce Contrepoison. (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 8v)

When some enemy of the Faith

Sings the Songs of Marot

And one asks him why

He sings them, not a word he replies,

Unless the miserable sot

Says that it is better in public places

To sing them than bawdy Songs,

For which cause and reason

I have, for all good Catholics,

Composed this Antidote.

The offending behavior of the Protestant is remarkably inoffensive, as cited here, in fact,

the reason for singing these songs is specifically to avoid otherwise offensive, vulgarity

in public – it is interesting to note that the Psalms and vulgar songs were often set to the same melodies at that time. Nonetheless, Désiré seems to find such cause for offense in these un-Catholic renderings that the only resort, and in his mind it appears a necessity, is this antidote to counteract the potentially nefarious doctrines of the Reformation.

Thematically the *Contrepoison* is indistinguishable from Désiré's other works; he harps on the same aspects of the Protestants' supposed heresy and frames his arguments within the usual critiques. Stylistically, however, this work is unique within his corpus. To each of Marot's Psalms, Désiré offers a well-composed, metrically identical contrafactum; he even follows Marot's rhyme scheme so closely as to frequently use the same sounds. By composing contrafacta and calling them the antidote, he effectively desacralizes the Marotic song while exposing it as the poison infecting corporeal, Catholic France; at the same time, the Protestant singing Marot's version becomes the agent by which the poison enters the mystical body of France and propagates its noxious substance. An antidote, however, only stays the effects the poisonous substance; it does not eliminate the noxious element or its source. Désiré had an answer to that aspect of the problem as well. Though less explicitly violent than his treaty on how to obtain peace within the Kingdom of France, *Traicté des articles de la paix, entre Dieu & les hommes* (1558), his calls for political intervention against the *heretics* in the *Contrepoison* is no less absolute.[116] Désiré writes in *Chanson III*:

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[116] The whole of the *Traicté des articles de la paix, entre Dieu & les hommes* is composed of concise quatrains following a general formula established in the first: "Qui vouldra la paix obtenir / Qu'on mette peine de punir / Les pechez du peuple qui erre, / Autrement tousiours aurons guerre" ("Whoso would desire to obtain peace / Let him

Les iours viendront que les Roys de la terre

Se banderont avec les princes grans

Et leur feront une si grosse guerre

Qu'ilz mettront fin aux malheureux errans. (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 9r)[117]

The day will come when the Kings of the earth

Will band together with the great princes

And make so great a war against them

That they will put an end to the unhappy strays.

Further along in the same song, closely quoting the original biblical text and assuming

the voice of God the Father addressing Jesus Christ, Désiré declares:

Verge de fer en ta main porteras

Pour les confondre & tenir tous en serre

Et s'il te plaist menu les briseras

Aussi aisé comme un vaisseau de terre,

Donc maintenant entre vous Roys & Princes

Faictes punir les mauldictz reprouvez. (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 10r)

A rod of iron will you wield in your hand

To confound them and keep them all in your grasp

strive to punish / The sins of a wandering people, / Otherwise we will always have war")
(Desiré, *Traicté* pag.).
[117] Following the introduction to the work and original title page, this facsimile edition
adopts the pagination of Desiré's original.

> And if it pleases you will dash them to pieces
>
> As easily as though it were an earthen vessel,
>
> Therefore, now from among you Kings and Princes
>
> Punish the accursed damned.

Désiré's plan for the source of the pollution poisoning the mystical body of France is violent extermination.

The commanding tone of Désiré's work embodies the principal political image and self-aggrandizing posture of the polemicist striving to construct for himself a prophetic role: he imagines himself a Samuel or Nathan, molding the modern Christian King into an Old Testament David, he who drove the Philistines from the Promised Land and ruled as a prophet-king.[118] Perhaps more importantly, it also illustrates how the Catholic polemicist, a member of the privileged majority, unabashedly called upon powerful political authorities to intervene in the theological dispute. Like the bulk of Désiré's works, this was dedicated to a noble, so these political pleas were not abstract or general, but quite specific and targeted. However, while he does address French authorities, there is no ambiguity in the text that it is in defense of the universal Roman church that he writes, not only its Gallic subdivision. The battle he paints in explicit and repetitive strokes pits Rome against Geneva. But the nobility was not the only intended audience for this particular work.

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[118] Denis Crouzet writes extensively on sixteenth-century Catholic polemicists' method and appropriation of prophetic postures, and specifically that of Artus Désiré. See *Guerriers de Dieu*, pages 191ff.

The *Contrepoison* was Désiré's most successful work, being reprinted in several editions and even garnering favorable attention from the Sorbonne, whose faculty of theology proclaimed it "tresutile, et necessaire estre mis en lumiere" ("most useful and needing to be brought to light") (qtd. in Pineaux 32). Emboldened by such praise and his first real wide acceptance, Désiré augmented the violent rhetoric in subsequent editions, aiming it squarely at Calvin and Marot. Nonetheless, the apparent goal of the work, as Pineaux argues in his introduction to the facsimile edition, was to "trace the portrait of the faithful Catholic" ("tracer le portrait du Catholique fidèle") (Pineaux 30). This was, in part, accomplished by means of the aforementioned modernization of the Psalms and distinctly Catholicized reading of the Old Testament, in which Désiré substitutes the devout, early modern Catholic, depicted as a victim of Protestant aggression and corruption, for the beleaguered Jew of the Egyptian and (anachronistically) Babylonian captivities. In this, Désiré elaborates and embellishes the confessional strife for a lay and largely uneducated audience, vividly inscribing familiar characterizations and effectively evoking visceral reactions among his coreligionists.

A most interesting addition to the work, which was obviously aimed at Catholics, is a rather genial open letter to Protestants that seems to undermine the obvious antagonism of the work. "Aux citoyens et habitans de Genesve" ("To the citizens and inhabitants of Geneva"), he begins, entreating them to abandon their heresy and become converted, thereby, receiving a "resurrection de leur mort à vie S. en nostre Sauveur Iesus Christ" ("resurrection from their [state of] death to holy life in our Savior Jesus Christ") (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 75r). There is nothing of particular literary or theological

significance in this addition – he levels the usual criticisms at the Protestants while extoling the virtues of the Holy Mother Church – but he closes it with a seemingly heartfelt plea for his Protestant reader's soul:

> Donc ie vous supplye prendre bien tout ce que ie vous dy, & ie priray nostre Sauveur Iesus Christ, vous retirer, convertir & radresser à l'obeissance de sa saincte espouse l'Eglise, en laquelle il est & le sera iusques à la fin & consummation du monde. (Desiré, *Contrepoison* 78v)

> Therefore, I beseech you to consider well all that I tell you, and I will pray our Savior Jesus Christ to draw you out, convert you, and redirect you to obedience in his holy spouse the Church, in which he is and will be until the end and consummation of the world.

This concern for Protestants' souls, however, did not carry over into the dozens of other pamphlets and tracts he wrote over the subsequent two decades leading up to his death. Indeed, the bulk of Désiré's corpus merits the label that Luc Racaut gave generally to Catholic polemical literature of the time in entitling his study *Hatred in Print*. Likewise, none of his later works matched the *Contrepoison* in style or artistry, characteristics that can be attributed to his extensive use of a more gifted poet's work as its skeleton. But where Désiré's poetry was overwhelmed by venomous invective and clumsy literary affect, his far more prominent contemporary and coreligionist brought a unique literary flare to bear in the same cause.

Pierre de Ronsard and the *Discours des misères de ce temps*

Nicknamed "Prince des poètes et poète des princes" ("Prince of poets and poet of

princes"), a title that signaled not only his poetic prowess but also his courtly standing,

the celebrated Renaissance poet Pierre de Ronsard made his own relatively modest

contributions to the ongoing literary hostility between Protestants and Catholics. He, like

Désiré, maintained a lifelong, personal feud with Théodore de Bèze; however, unlike the

former, Ronsard enjoyed a humanist education and career in secular poetry beyond these

forays into religious polemics that matched him to his opponent in many ways.

Undeniably a singularly gifted poet, Ronsard did not immerse himself in the more

common modes of invective and satire, as Bèze and Désiré had, instead maintaining his

refined poetic style; nonetheless, he competently and even successfully engaged several

of the more familiar Protestant polemicists in a tense series of public exchanges from

1560 to 1564, when the Court ordered him to cease these activities and let the last

pamphlet aimed at him to go unanswered (Racaut 76).[119] In addition to the literary skill

manifest in his works, Ronsard demonstrated a keen political awareness and faithful

devotion not only to the Roman Catholic Church, but also to humanism. The unusual

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[119] Ronsard explained this in the preface to a collection of his poetry entitled "Epistre au
Lecteur, par laquelle succinctement l'autheur respond à ses calomniateurs." He wrote:
"Vous donc quiconque soyez qui avez fait… contre moy… mille sonnets… je vous
conseille… d'en escrire davantage… Ce m'est un fort grand plaisir de voir ces petits
gallans agitez et debordez contre moy… mais d'oresnavant je me tairay pour obeyr à
ceux qui ont puissance sur ma main et sur ma volonté" ("You, whoever you are, who…
write a thousand sonnets against me… I advise you… not to write any more… It is a
great pleasure for me to see these little suitors get agitated against me… but from now on
I will be quiet in order to obey those who have power over my hand and my will")
(Ronsard, *Œuvres complètes* 2: 1089–92; Eng. trans in Racaut 76–7).

restraint with which he treats the theological divide, in contrast with the majority of Catholic polemicists of the time, can be attributed to this latter influence, as can the similarly rare populist character of his polemical contributions. These aspects of his work, and the works themselves for that matter, are best considered within the context of his life.

Ronsard was born in 1524 to a well-connected Vendômois family of the lesser nobility. His childhood was largely spent in the service of various royals: first as a page following Madeleine of France, daughter of François I, to Scotland following her marriage to James V; and then in the court of Madeleine's brother Charles, Duke of Orléans. This early familiarity seems to have formed the basis of his later relationships with nobility. In his youth Ronsard had planned to pursue a career in either diplomacy or the military, but those hopes were dashed by his sudden deafness and general ill health; having thus lost those opportunities, the budding poet immersed himself in scholarly, humanistic pursuits. It was during these studies that Ronsard first came into contact with the other revolutionary poets with whom he would form the famous Pléiade group: Joachim du Bellay, Rémy Belleau, Antoine de Baïf, Pontus de Tyard, Étienne Jodelle, and Jacques Pelletier du Mans. It was through his association with this last of these poets, Pelletier, that Ronsard first met Théodore de Bèze. The two shared a great deal in common in those days: both were young humanist poets and scholars dedicated to the imitation of Classical authors and they even frequented the same humanist circles. There was, in the sixteenth century, a great overlap of poetry and theology, particularly in the cases of these two authors, as Malcolm C. Smith recalls (Smith 8). The contention

between Ronsard and Bèze filtered into both arenas, but it essentially revolved around a single question that would seem to pit humanism against Christianity at a fundamental level: should the modern poet take for model the Bible or Antiquity?

As Bèze, originally a devout humanist, came to embrace Reformed Christianity, this became a major point of contention with his fellow humanist poets (Smith 19). In his "Au lecteur" to the tragedy *Abraham sacrifiant*, Bèze attacked those poets who occupy themselves with "fantaisies vaines et deshonnestes" ("vain and dishonest fantasies") rather than "magnifier la bonté de Dieu" ("magnifying the goodness of God") (qtd. in Ordine 229). Citing this statement and pointing to Bèze's early love poetry clearly built upon Classical models, Ronsard and others proclaimed him a hypocrite. The animosity continued to grow between the two as they responded to each other's published attacks with remarkable speed. But their interaction was not limited to print, as they would cross paths many times over the subsequent decades, notably at the Colloquy at Poissy (Smith 12, 61–2). Their theological division is most interesting because, as Malcolm C. Smith contends, there is no obvious reason why Bèze and Ronsard should have parted company on religion (Smith 15). Both poets, along with Ronsard's Pléiade companion Joachim Du Bellay, unabashedly deplored "that corruption in the Catholic Church which drove so many [including Bèze] into the arms of the Reformers, and which remained painfully uncorrected" (Smith 15). Moreover, all of them openly attacked this ecclesiastical corruption in their works.[120] But while Bèze distanced himself from that *corrupt* body,

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[120] Bèze, of course, did so for the bulk of his literary career. An example of such critique by Ronsard can be found in book five of his *Odes* (1550), where, in an ode addressed to King Henri II, he wrote: "Ton œil vigilant… A contemplé de Dieu le temple, / Que noz

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Ronsard remained faithful to his *native* Catholicism and defended it against Protestant attacks. This notion of native religion, reminiscent of Montaigne's famous assertion that religion was more or less as accident of geography like nationality, seems, in fact, to have been a prime motivating factor for Ronsard, both in terms of lifelong association and of Catholicism's relation to French culture.[121]

While Ronsard's attacks against Protestants pursued well-worn, doctrinally superficial paths, some aspects of his polemical work were unique and resonated with his humanist background. Aside from the perhaps less educated contingency of Catholic polemicists, e.g. Artus Désiré, and in contrast with the more populist Protestant works, the bulk of Catholic polemical literature in that period was, as one might expect, written in Latin and, thus, only accessible to the educated classes (Perdrizet 4–6). Ronsard,

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Bancquiers par faulx exemple / Combloient de larrons eshontez : / Et doctes aux fraudes Rommaines / N'enduroient en un seul cartier / Qu'un Benefice fust entier / Voyant leurs pechez francz de peines" ("Your vigilant eye… Has contemplated the temple of God, / That our Bankers by false example / Were filling with shameless thieves: / And learned in Roman frauds / Would not permit in a single quarter / That one Benefice be left whole, / Seeing their sins free from punishment") (Ronsard, *Œuvres Complètes* 3: 95 (Laumonier edition)). The phrase "Et doctes aux fraudes Rommaines" ("And learned in Roman frauds") was replaced by the author in subsequent editions with "Et doctes en chiquaneries" ("And learned in chicanery") (see the Pléiade edition of Ronsard, *Œuvres complètes* 1: 848). Likewise, Du Bellay in his *Regrets* made several mentions of ecclesiastical corruption and the need for reform within the Church. One of the more vivid passages is found in sonnet 109 in which the "good Marcellus," pope for less than a month in 1555, is described as "ayant levé la bonde, / Pour laisser escouler la fangeuse espesseur / Des vices entassez, don't son predecesseur / Avoit six ans devant empoisonné le monde" ("having pulled out the stopper to drain away the thick slime of accumulated vices with which he predecessor had for the previous six years poisoned the world") (Du Bellay 161, 160).

[121] In his "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" (chapter twelve of his second book of *Essais*), Montaigne declares: "Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme titre que nous sommes ou Perigordins ou Alemans" ("We are Christians by the same title that we are Périgordians or Germans") (Montaigne, *Essais* 2: 112; *Complete Essays* 497).

however, champion of the vernacular that he was, wrote his polemics in a polished French befitting the leader of the Pléiade; this includes his most famous polemical work, the 1562 *Discours des misères de ce temps*, which, while addressed to the Queen Regent Catherine de' Medici, seems clearly to have been intended for broad audience – it was written in the vernacular and, most significantly, it was published. This is not to say that Ronsard was a populist, far from it in fact. He was an elitist to the core who struggled with the overarching Protestant imperative that sought to put the Bible in the hands of the common man (Perdrizet 77). Nonetheless, it was to the common man that Ronsard appeared to be addressing his criticism of Protestantism, more precisely, Ronsard was addressing the whole of the French people and not merely his coreligionists (Perdrizet 87). Sara Barker emphasizes the author's anxiety, manifest in the *Discours*, as he wrote shortly after the outbreak of violence that mark the accepted beginning of the Wars of Religion and amid the subsequent preparations on both sides for the seemingly inevitable war (Barker 133–4). What is most interesting about Ronsard's work is that, unlike Désiré, he was less concerned with the elimination of Protestants than with the preservation of France. Speaking to this point, Nuccio Ordine asserts that it was evident in Ronsard's writings against the Protestants that he was writing not in defense of his religion so much as in defense of his king and nation (Ordine 55–6). Indeed, Ronsard's *Discours* and its *continuations* indicate a high level of concern regarding the effects of civil war: a fragmented society, the destruction of longstanding political institutions, the end of religion entirely (Ordine 56).

He opens his *Discours des misères de ce temps* with an address to the queen

regent and a brief exposition on vice generally, whose growth from age to age is, in

Ronsard's estimation, both quite evident and troubling:

> Si depuis que le monde a pris commencement,
>
> Le vice d'âge en âge avoit accroissement,
>
> Cinq mille ans sont passez que l'extreme malice
>
> Eust surmonté le peuple, et tout ne fust que vice. (1-4)[122]

> If since the world had its beginning
>
> Vice has grown from age to age,
>
> Five thousand years have passed since extreme malice
>
> Overcome the people, and all is but vice.[123]

But this increasing vice is not so overpowering as to completely snuff out virtue, he

continues, for there is a complementary ebb and flow of vice and virtue across time.

"Ainsi plaist au Seigneur," he continues, "de nous exerciter, / Et entre bien et mal laisser

l'homme habiter, / Comme le marinier qui conduit son voyage / Ores par le beau temps &

ores par l'orage" ("Thus it please God, to work us by permitting man to live between the

good and the bad, like the mariner who guides his journey sometimes in good weather,

other times through storms" (21-4). These alternate calm and troubled seas of society,

Ronsard contends, even reach so far as to include the king himself. Throughout the

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[122] Unless otherwise marked, all French citations from the works of Ronsard are taken from the 1993 Pléiade edition. The citations will be marked by line rather than page numbers, but this text begins on page 991 of volume two.

[123] No English translation of this text is available, thus all translations are my own.

history of France, he recalls, the throne has at various times been inhabited many types of memorable kings:

> Un tel Roy fut cruel, l'autre ne le fut pas,
>
> L'ambition d'un tel causa mille debats.
>
> Un tel fut ignorent, l'autre prudent et sage
>
> L'autre n'eut point de cœur, l'autre trop de courage… (29-32)

> One king was cruel, the other was not
>
> The ambition of one caused a thousand disputes.
>
> One was ignorant, the other prudent and wise
>
> The other had no heart, the other too much courage…

But what is most significant here, warns the poet, is that as the king goes, so go his subjects ("Tels que furent les Rois tels furent leurs sujets") (33). Thus, he reasons, it is imperative that the king remain true to his native faith. He must be taught to keep "devant ses yeux / La crainte d'un seul Dieu…" ("before his eyes / Fear of one sole God…"); indeed, Ronsard argues that the king must remain "devotieux / Vers l'Eglise approuvée, et que point il ne change / La foy de ses ayeuls…" ("devoted to the Holy Church and must not change / The faith of his ancestors...") (37-40). In the notes to the Laumonier edition of Ronsard's works, the editors point out that Ronsard was essentially writing Catherine on the part of the Guises, to whom she seemed to have an aversion, warning the queen regent against her generally tolerant policies toward the Protestants (Laumonier edition of Ronsard, *Œuvres Complètes* 11: 21 n. 4). Ronsard then somewhat

sycophantically commends the queen regent for her son's fidelity to that point under her tutelage, seemingly tempering what can be read as a veiled ultimatum from the Guises with flattery.

The author then adopts the form of an argument from tradition, invoking the names of past kings as examples of virtue and courage in defense of the realm, the Pepins, the Martels, the Charles, the Louis, they who shed their own blood in battle, what would they say and do before the proud "monster" threatening French peace and hammering away at the kingdom's centuries-old identity? (55-60). This "monster," as he repeatedly calls it, that sends the French to Savoy and Spain in search of help, that arms "le fils contre son propre pere" ("the son against his own father") and "frere factieux… contre frere" ("factious brother… against brother") (159-60). He continues hyperbolically, but without an apparent sense of irony, through the rest of the family: sisters, first cousins, uncles, nephews, servants, etc., finally arriving at the married couple who refuse to recognize one another, leaving their subsequently abandoned children with neither order nor faith (161-6). It is the dissolution of inherent, natural, familial bonds that Ronsard is fearfully describing here, not those of theological accord; to be sure this is emotional rhetoric, but it is also key to understanding Ronsard's intervention.

The poet seemed to perceive Catholicism first and foremost as a historical dimension of French identity. As Daniel Ménager contends:

> L'entreprise qui tendrait à 'changer la religion' lui parait aussi utopique et
> dangereuse que celle qui voudrait changer le naturel d'un peuple, car la
> religion est liée de multiples façons au passé national ; ce ne sont pas

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seulement les rois qui l'incarnent, mais la vie du peuple tout entier, ses

autels et ses images. (Ménager, *Ronsard* 171).

The enterprise that would lead to 'changing one's religion' seemed to him

as utopic and dangerous as that which would change the essence of a

people, for religion is bound in many ways to the national past; it was not

only the kings who embodied it, but the lives of the people as a whole,

their altars and their images.

According to Ronsard, as Ordine explains, "la religion a surtout une fonction civile : elle

sert à cimenter l'unité des diverses composantes de la société, au nom de l'Etat, de la

Justice, de l'ordre" ("religion has above all a civil function: it cements the unity of the

diverse components of society, in the name of the State, of Justice, of order") (Ordine

56). Drawing upon this same notion, Ménager explores the etymological connotations of

the word *religion* as they may have influenced Ronsard's thought on the subject: possibly

derived from the Latin *religare*, meaning *to bind together* (Ménager, *Ronsard* 169). If

religion has for its primary function the binding together of a people, then changing

religions, and most particularly proselytizing, becomes an egregious crime against the

state. Reformers were upsetting the established social order, willfully breaking the bonds

that had formed French identity, and, thereby, fracturing the mystical body of the

kingdom (Ordine 62). This, in fact, was Ronsard's greatest charge against the Protestants

and it is why he exclaims toward the end of his discourse not that the Faith is divided,

but: "Ainsi la France court en armes divisée" ("Thus France divided runs to arms") toward the "barbarous war" that is destroying her (195, 219).

Though this division does indeed frighten the patriotic poet and motivate him to literary action, Ronsard's particular disdain for Protestant polemicists, and most particularly for Bèze whom he admired as an author, was more personal and complicated in nature. Broader charges of divisiveness that could have been levied against all Protestants were compounded, in his mind, by what he saw as a simultaneous rejection of that humanist tradition they claimed to share. Their violent engagement (verbal or otherwise) in the religious conflict contradicted the pacifism fundamental to both humanism and especially Christianity, which he had argued in his works of the late 1550s.[124] Of the Catholic polemicists engaged in the great war of words leading up to and overlapping with the first violence of the Wars of Religion, Ronsard most closely approximates the *satyrical* as it was developed and expressed by Protestant authors of the time. However, where Protestants were evidently willing to share the national *corpus mysticum* with Catholics, albeit while still trying to correct them, Ronsard's please for the perpetuation of the national body of France seems to assume a prior or concurrent change on the part of the Protestants. France could and, Ronsard hoped, would remain intact providing the Protestants abandoned their heresy.

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[124] For example *Exhortation pour la paix* (1558) and *La paix* (1559), both of which were included in his *Second livre des Poèmes* (Ronsard, *Œuvres complètes* 2: 807–12, 812–18).

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the emergence of the *satyrical* among Protestant authors from the early days of inter-confessional strife, characterized by accusation and antagonism, to the aftermath of the failed Colloquy at Poissy, and start of the brutal violence that characterized the decades-long Wars of Religion. In the earlier stages of this process, the Evangelical and Protestant satirists drew upon the corporeal imagery of the satyr, read as inherent to the satirical mode, to posit a reunified ecclesiastical body, as in the example of Berquin's *Farce des Théologastres*. In this hopeful model, the corrected pair of Théologastres and Fratrez remained part of the Christian mystical corpus despite being harshly corrected by the Mercure. But hope for ecclesiastical reconciliation gave way to hope for a perpetuation of the body politic as the divisions between Protestants and Catholics grew to a point of irreconcilable theological difference. This resignation to the hybrid body politic, represented by Bèze's works, most clearly expresses the *satyrical* as defined in this study: verbalizing in the form of satire the possibility of a composite social whole. These Protestant works were then contrasted with the Catholic response, which rejected the possibility of a perpetual, composite whole and demanded either violent excision, as in the case of Désiré, or reconversion, as was presented by Ronsard.

What should be recognized in these manifestations of the *satyrical*, particularly in those by Bèze, is that, as much as a potential, it was posited as a depiction of the realities within the social body of France. The hope seems to have been that to articulate those realities was to legitimize them. Thus, the goal of the *satyrical* was not to change society

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so much as it was to change a society's self-perception and, thereby, secure an enduring, peaceful cohabitation. But this was only a real possibility before the outbreak of real hostilities with the Wars of Religion, after which time satire in all forms seems to have given way to survival. A stark decline in satirical works marks the period of war, but the mode was noticeably revived in the 1590s as Henri de Navarre's accession to the throne became imminent.

Moving forward in this study, a brief historical outline of the wars through the early 1590s will set the scene for the final two works to be discussed, which together illustrate the decline and end of the *satyrical*: the anonymous *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* (1593) and Aubigné's *Les tragiques* (published in 1616, but evidently begun well before).

Chapter Four
The Wars of Religion and the Death of the *Satyrical*

On 1 March 1562, the Duke of Guise stopped to attend mass in the town of Wassy while journeying between Paris and his estates. However, upon arrival he discovered that a group of Protestants were holding services within the town, a violation of current laws regarding the *New Religion*. He and his troops confronted the unarmed Protestants and slaughtered them in what became known as the Massacre of Wassy and, traditionally, the formal beginning of the French Wars of Religion. However, Janine Garrisson-Estèbe contends that the wars actually began a few years earlier, in July of 1559, when the French King Henri II died unexpectedly. His death left a divided kingdom in the hands of a sickly adolescent king, his son François, and a council composed of hawkish Catholic zealots, most particularly two prominent members of the House of Guise: François, the aforementioned duke, and his younger brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 332). Even more than his father before him, Henri II saw in Protestantism a challenge not only to the religion of his ancestors, but also to his own royal authority. Protestants rejected the religious authority that legitimized the king's right to rule; additionally, in contrast with the strict, hierarchical relationships that had governed for centuries in both the kingdom and the Catholic Church, Protestantism embraced an inverted, almost democratic power structure in which the leadership explicitly derived authority from the masses. Indeed, as Garrisson-Estèbe recalls the Protestants "were seen as rebels who dared to bear arms against their king," she continues, "in the 13 years

preceding the [1572] Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day they were seen as the troublemakers, not only responsible for the permanent insecurity in which Catholics lived, but also guilty of treason" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 305). When one converted to Protestantism, he or she became a traitor and heretic simultaneously, rebelling against God's church and His divinely appointed king. In response to this perceived threat, Henri II enacted a program of harsh repression and even persecution throughout France, but despite these efforts, increasing numbers of his subjects were drawn to the Protestant faith.[125]

The most significant numbers of Protestant converts came from traditionally marginalized groups, from among the individuals who were subjugated rather than served by the power structures of the Catholic Church and monarchy: women and young people. To a great extent it was this latter group that, for better or worse, played a particularly prominent role in creating the public image of the Protestant faith; Garrisson-Estèbe attributes to these youthful converts a large portion of anti-Catholic violence and, specifically, of the unrestrained iconoclasm that so acutely perturbed the establishment, while providing it with a visible enemy against which to turn the faithful population of Catholic France (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 289).[126] But more dangerous to the

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[125] It was not until 1565, as Janine Garrisson-Estèbe records in her *A History of Sixteenth-Century France, 1483-1598* (a translation and merging of two of her French works: *Royauté, Renaissance et Réforme, 1483-1559* and *Guerre civile et compromis, 1559-1598*), that the conversion rate slowed and Protestant numbers began to shrink (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 284).

[126] While Catholic physical violence against Protestants is well documented, Protestant violence, primarily against Catholic edifices in this period is less well known. Garrisson-Estèbe, citing the accounts of Nicolas de Villars and the Cardinal Joyeuse in regard to their respective dioceses in Agen and Toulouse, found that literally hundreds of Catholic

establishment than gangs of angry young converts was another, more prominent group among whom Reformed theology was increasingly finding adherents: powerful and well-placed nobles in France and her vassals, most notably the Prince of Condé and the admiral Gaspard II of Coligny. Following the lead of its head, the Prince of Condé, the majority of the influential House of Bourbon, with the notable exception of the Cardinal Charles de Bourbon, leaned heavily toward Protestantism; among them was the royal family of the kingdom of Navarre. The Bourbons, though close relatives of the French royal family, subsequently took leadership of the Huguenot cause. While wealthy and powerful families were choosing their sides in France, France's longtime foe to the east, the Holy Roman Empire, was in the process of resolving similar religious struggles. In 1555 the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V concluded Peace of Augsburg, thus establishing a precedent for religious tolerance and inadvertently adding to the increasing tensions in neighboring kingdoms.[127]

Throughout the tense pre-war period from Henri II's death to the Wassy massacre, both sides engaged in a series of tactical, even treasonous maneuvers that included the attempted kidnapping of the young king François II as well as his younger brother and successor, Charles IX. However, this was not merely a period of increasing

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churches in these regions were "burnt out, wrecked, pillaged, dilapidated, or roofless" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 302). It should be noted that Catholic troops were also responsible for a good amount of the destruction to these edifices during the Wars of Religion as they used them for armories, strongholds, and even stables.

[127] In essence the Peace of Augsburg, as it has come to be known in the English-speaking world, was a treaty between Charles V and the Schmalkaldic League, a defensive alliance of Lutheran princes within the Holy Roman Empire, establishing among other things the principle of *cuius region, eius religio* (whose realm, his religion). In other words, the ruler of a territory decided its official religion.

division; there were some significant efforts to reestablish unity among the people of France and prevent the seemingly imminent fragmentation of the kingdom. Though she is rarely credited for her diplomacy and political insight, the principle actor in these attempts at reconciliation was the Queen Regent Catherine de' Medici, whose tolerance toward Protestants is all the more surprising given that her famous Italian family produced more than one quarter of the popes to reign during her lifetime.[128] With the Chancellor, Michel de l'Hôpital, Catherine worked toward a practical solution to the Protestant problem by carving out a "political space" for the Protestants within the kingdom (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 320). However, their first and most famous overtures for peace, like the 1561 Colloquy at Poissy, were aimed at reconciling the religious factions. The goal of this grand, month-long conference, which was attended by a number of French Cardinals on the Catholic side and Théodore de Bèze leading the Protestant delegation, was to find some point of doctrinal compromise that would permit the reunification of the Huguenots with the Gallic Church. Unfortunately, neither side would be contented; the greatest sticking point, as one might anticipate, concerned the Eucharist. Perhaps discouraged in the months after the Colloquy, though not conceding, Catherine and l'Hôpital promulgated, in the name of the young king Charles IX, the Edict of January (also known in French as *l'Edit de tolérance de Saint-Germain*), to that point,

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[128] Catherine lived from 1519 to 1589 under the reigns of: Pope Leo X, formerly Giovanni Lorenzo de' Medici (1513-21); Pope Clement VII, Giulio di Giuliano de' Medici (1523-34), Catherine's first cousin twice removed who cared for her after the deaths of her parents and grandmother and gave her in marriage to François I's son, Henri; and Pope Pius IV, Giovanni Angelo Medici – a more distant relative, but related nonetheless (1559-65). In all, a relative of Catherine's occupied the papacy for approximately 19 of Catherine's 70 years.

the greatest expression of official tolerance for Protestantism in France. The edict lifted many of the past restrictions on Protestantism, permitting private, though not public, worship and allowing for the organization of synods.

In the wake of Catherine's failed diplomatic efforts and frightened by the government's increasingly tolerant attitude toward Protestants, a powerful group of Catholics gradually coalesced under the leadership of the Constable de Montmorency, the Duke of Guise, and the Marshal de Saint-André: the Catholic League of France, or, as it is commonly known, the Ligue. Secretive in its earlier years, these prominent individuals withdrew from the court in 1561 only to come against both Protestants and the king in total warfare over the subsequent three decades. While the more prominent members of the Ligue were nobles and powerful churchmen, the broader membership came from all levels of society, as visually attested to by painter François Bunel the Younger's famous painting *La procession de la Ligue* (1593), which depicts lords and ladies, soldiers and peasants, bourgeois merchants, performers, children, and monks, all merging into a chaotic and, one might imagine, terrifying armed mob. The members of this diverse body were "bound by a common oath and a common readiness to risk their lives for their religion" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 311). Garrisson-Estèbe characterized the Ligue as a "reaction of spontaneous violence against the heretical foe," and, indeed, the Ligue response to the 1562 Edict of January was nothing if not violent; over the following weeks and months, Ligue Catholics resorted to murder in various locations throughout

France (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 307).[129] But these somewhat isolated incidences of murder and inter-confessional fighting were only a prelude to the real brutality unleashed with François de Guise's order to attack that group of unarmed, Protestant worshippers in Wassy, which claimed the lives of 63 innocent Protestants at a barn they were using as a church, and marking the real beginning of open hostilities between the two religious factions.

In response to the massacre, the Huguenots, led by Louis, Prince of Condé, began organizing their forces and preparing for war despite vastly smaller numbers, wealth, and territory. Every Reformed church in France at that time was expected to equip or finance a horseman, while each synodal province was to appoint "a military commander, each colloquy a colonel, and each church a captain" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 338). Tensions increased on both sides as Catholic leaders and preachers throughout France began urging their flocks to exterminate the heretics. It is recorded that, in May 1562, certain preachers in Toulouse blessed violence against Protestants and commanded their flocks: "Kill and rob them all. We, your fathers, stand surety for you" (qtd. in Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 343). Massacres led to retaliations and so on as the Ligue and Huguenots marched toward inter-confessional civil war.

Rather than one continuous war, the decades-long conflict in France is divided into eight wars, the first seven of which were relatively short with the eighth lasting some thirteen years. These periods of open warfare were separated by hard-won periods of peace, usually forged by a young but war-weary Charles IX and his mother, both of

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[129] Garrisson lists Toulouse, Meaux, Troyes, Sens, Tours, and Rouen (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 307).

whom sought an end to the inter-confessional strife and threat of fragmentation. With each cessation of hostilities, the rights of Protestants to live and worship in France ebbed and flowed in diplomatic brokering, the results of which never satisfied both sides simultaneously. But it was a decade after the massacre at Wassy that Charles IX and Catherine managed their greatest maneuver for reconciliation.

The pair brokered a 1572 marriage between Marguerite de Valois, the sister of King Charles IX, and Henri de Navarre, king of Navarre and one of the heads of the Huguenots following the death of his uncle Condé in 1569. It was touted as a marriage for peace, though it tragically furnished radical Catholic factions an opportunity to attack the large Protestant contingency that had come to Paris to celebrate the union. Following the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day, as it came to be known, Henri de Navarre and other high-ranking Protestants were held as prisoners of the king in Paris. Charles IX died in May 1574, his last years and months spent in despair and physical agony, eaten away, as Bertier de Sauvigny describes, as much by remorse as tuberculosis (Bertier de Sauvigny 163). Having left no legitimate heir, Charles's crown passed, amid the most recent outbreak of hostilities, to the third son of Henri II and Catherine de' Medici who reigned as Henri III.

Henri III was, as one historian argues, a gifted and progressive leader who could have been a genuinely successful king had he also been a "man of action" (Baumgartner 218). Bertier de Sauvigny describes this favorite son of Catherine de' Medici as possessing, among other positive qualities, a handsome appearance, intelligence, a gift in both speech and writing, and courage (Bertier de Sauvigny 163). However, Garrisson-

Estèbe contends that, while Henri III was earnest in his efforts to rule the kingdom, he was too much like his father and grandfather, a legislator rather than an executive, to rule effectually (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 369). Despite all the good that can be said about him in retrospect, the common image of this unfortunate king during his life was something less than positive. Bringing an end to the fifth war, which he had inherited from his older brother, with the Edict of Beaulieu (1576), Henri III conceded still more liberties to the Protestants who had gained the support of the king's ambitious younger brother, the Duke of Anjou and Alençon. This continuation of Charles IX's gradual concession to Huguenots infuriated and frightened the members of the Ligue, who responded with a slanderous campaign portraying the king as indolent, extravagant, and, most shockingly for the time, homosexual. As Baumgartner asserts: "No other French king, not even Louis XI or Louis XVI, was as vilified as Henry III" (Baumgartner 218). Pamphlets produced at that time and after portrayed him as an effeminate prodigal whose favor at court could be swayed by a strategically padded pair of tights – this last accusation being of significance to the next text studied. Propagated depictions of his debauchery, and there is some evidence to suggest that the accusations were at least partially valid, did not win him the hearts of his subjects. In contrast, the new Duke of Guise, also named Henri, who had replaced his slain father at the head of the Ligue, was gaining fame as a Catholic hero for his fervent, public opposition to both the king and Protestants. Growing ambition and religious zealotry dictated the Ligue's actions as, mere months after the peace forged by Henri III and his Protestant counterparts, a sixth war broke out.

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It was during this sixth war that interested foreign powers became heavily involved in France's civil wars. Guise and his Ligue had obtained the support of Catholic Spain, while England and Protestant regimes in Dutch and German territories aided the Huguenots. Henri III worked to bring an end through diplomatic means, but ultimately only managed his goal by rescinding, with the Treaty of Bergerac (1577), many of the liberties previously granted to French Protestants. Though open hostilities ceased for a short time, the two factions continued preparations for war. The seventh war broke out after an act Huguenot aggression in the capture of a town in northern France. Once again, the campaign was short lived, but this time the peace was worked out by the king's younger brother, the Duke of Anjou and Alençon, whose Treaty of Fleix (1580) manifested his increasing alignment with the Huguenots. This treaty held for the most part until the young duke's death in 1584, which came while battling alongside the English for the cause of Dutch Protestants. Henri III had not yet produced an heir, and so, with the death of his younger brother, the Protestant Henri de Navarre rose to the top of the line of succession as legal heir to the French throne.

Henri de Guise and his reformed Ligue, generally called *la Seconde Ligue*, now threatened with the prospect of a Protestant, concluded a treaty with the Catholic Philip II of Spain through which they secured significant financial and military assistance. At this same time militant Ligueurs in Paris organized, electing a council of representatives from each of the sixteen wards of the city, which came to be known as the *Seize* (Sixteen). This increasingly vehement faction within the Ligue, which becomes a symbol for militant Catholicism in the next text to be discussed, began calling upon Henri de Guise to depose

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the perfidious, Protestant sympathizer Henri III and proclaim himself king of a devoutly Catholic France. Mounting tensions gave way once again to combat as the Seize called upon Parisian Catholics to revolt against their king; on 12 May 1588 the citizens rose up in what has become known as the Day of the Barricades (apparently the first of the now famous Parisian uprisings employing barricades). The combination of internal and external pressures from both sides of the religious divide left Henri III with few options but to accept the Ligue's demands. Throughout this time, Guise had been waging war against Henri de Navarre's Protestant forces with Spanish help; this three-way conflict pitting Henri III, Henri de Guise, and Henri de Navarre all against each other came known as the War of the Three Henrys. Henri III, faced with mounting pressure and the increasing threat of deposition, lured Guise and his Cardinal brother to the council chamber where he had them executed on successive days. In the aftermath, the Ligue continued to wage open warfare against the king while the Parlement of Paris levied criminal charges against him, forcing him to flee. Left without other options, Henri III allied with Henri de Navarre, his brother-in-law, ninth cousin once removed, and legitimate heir under Salic Law. In exchange for his support, the king officially recognized Navarre as his heir. When Henri III was assassinated in 1589 by the Dominican monk Jacques Clément, this question of succession drew France into another, protracted struggle as Henri de Navarre, now king Henri IV, realized that his sole means of claiming his lawful crown was a war of conquest against the Ligue, eventually ending in Paris, a major stronghold of opposition.

Many devoted Catholics who had, to that point, managed to stay above the fray rushed to join with the Ligue in violent opposition to the accession of the known heretic Henri de Navarre. With the prior favorite, the assassinated Duke of Guise, out of the running, many possible successors to the late, childless king were proposed by various factions within the Catholic opposition, among them were: the Cardinal of Bourbon, Henri de Navarre's obviously Catholic uncle; the Duke of Mayenne, a younger Guise who assumed leadership of the Ligue after his brothers' assassinations; and the most Catholic king of Spain, Philip II, whose weak claim to the French crown, coming by means of his marriage to Henri II's daughter Elisabeth, would more likely have placed his eldest daughter Isabella on the throne. Mayenne held true to the Ligue plan at that point, refusing the crown in favor of the Cardinal of Bourbon, who also refused, instead recognizing the legitimate right of his nephew. Nonetheless, the Ligue proclaimed the Cardinal their king, calling him Charles X, and Mayenne as leader of the Ligue served as a sort of marshal over Catholic France.

The political situation during the roughly five-year period of Henri de Navarre's conquest of his own kingdom (1589-94) grew even more complex as a faction of so-called *Politiques* emerged among Catholics. This new faction recognized a dangerous degree of fanaticism in the Ligue and called for a political solution to the dilemma, specifically one that honored the traditional laws governing succession and that would hand the crown over to Henri de Navarre. The core of this faction, as Garrisson-Estèbe recalls, was largely composed of self-interested officials who were "well aware that their careers depended on the continuity of the State" (Garrisson-Estèbe, *History* 328). But

over time, this movement also took root among the war-weary inhabitants of Paris and the whole of France. In essence the question amounted to one of priority: which had primacy, the laws of succession or the common Catholic faith? While the war between Catholics and Protestants continued throughout the kingdom, this new development pitted the Second Ligue against a new enemy in the Politiques, who believed that the answer lay to France's decades-old conflict lay in a centralized government under a strong monarch and a general policy of religious tolerance (Ascoli 9). This is the setting of the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*.

I. The Anonymous *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*

"Qui vive?" ("Long live who?"), the 1593 *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* opens with a traditional night-watch call, here voiced by the Maheustre, one of the titular characters (Cromé 43). However, this idiomatic demand for identification, a practical albeit self-effacing iteration of the resigned political subject, meets in this instance with disingenuous confusion as the sly Manant responds: "Qu'est-ce a dire, Qui vive, je n'entends point ce langage" ("What does that mean, Long live who, I do understand this manner of speech at all") (Cromé 43). A seemingly anxious, and now suspicious Maheustre repeats his question, adding a little clarification: "Qui vive, de quel party es-tu?" ("Long live who, for which side are you?") (Cromé 43). To this more precise question, the Manant coyly replies: "Je suis Catholique" ("I am Catholic")

(Cromé 43). The frustrated Maheustre then gives explicit verbal form to the obvious subtext of his original question: "Et moy aussi, mais es-tu du party du Roy, ou des Princes de Lorraine?" ("And so am I, but are you for the king or for the princes of Lorraine?") (Cromé 43). The singly-breathed paradox of unity and division as he affirms "moy aussi," only then to insist that the Manant divulge his loyalties within their shared confessional identity diegetically manifests one of this satire's most interesting and significant qualities: an underlying, incongruous singularity. Much like Ronsard who firmly circumscribed the pronounced confessional division of his time within the bounds of France, the anonymous author of this dialogue announces in the first lines that both parties portrayed are not only French, but also Catholic; they are doubly bound despite the bitter division that will form the core of their debate. Though implicitly referenced in the Maheustre's demand for clarification and explicitly discussed throughout the text, Protestantism and its adherents are conspicuously absent from the author's microcosm of divided France; Protestants have no real spokesman, notwithstanding their central role in the conflict portrayed. Such is the unusual nature of this work and the circumstances that inform it.

Relatively little is certain about the *Dialogue*, either in its original form or in the monarchist adaptation, which was commissioned by the newly crowned Henri IV in an effort to garner public support through the appropriation of this curious work. Based on textual clues, predominantly references to the evolving religious stance of the disputed king, Peter M. Ascoli and others have deduced that the *Dialogue* was written over the summer of 1593, begun before Henri IV's July conversion to Catholicism, and completed

sometime after September of that same year (Ascoli 23, 27).[130] Additionally, it can be

reasoned from the names of the characters and their respective positions that the

anonymous author of the original version was, in fact, a Ligueur: to the Politique, he gave

the name Maheustre, which, as J. H. M. Salmon recalls, was "an abusive term derived

from the padding with which [Henri III's] court favorites enhanced their anatomy," the

most recent formation of the Ligue and the Seize were, after all, originally established in

opposition to Henri III; in stark contrast, the name Manant, which the author gave to the

Ligue supporter, established him as a sort of everyman, a common city-dweller (Salmon

264). Nonetheless, as Daniel Ménager observes, these two characters comment a great

deal on past and current events in such a way as to portray both sides at various points in

a positive and negative light (Ménager, "Maheustre" 100). Somewhat shockingly, for a

presumed Ligueur author, he draws a fairly critical picture of the Seize and the Ligue,

describing them as "hopelessly divided and consumed with personal ambition"

("désespérément divisés et dévorés d'ambition personnelle"), a characterization that most

likely led to a significant readership among monarchists who, as Ascoli supposes, must

have rejoiced in reading such internal criticism (Ascoli 31–2). Drawing on all of this,

Ascoli concludes in the introduction to his commented edition that François Morin, sieur

de Cromé, was most likely the author (Ascoli 24). As the evidence presented by Ascoli is

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[130] In the earlier pages of the dialogue, Henri de Navarre is referred to as a Protestant, but
later as a false convert, indicating that the work was begun before and completed after his
conversion. An further indication of its date comes at one point in the work when the
Maheustre declares that eight months have lapsed since the opening of the Estates
General in January of 1593.

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convincing and has become widely accepted, he will be considered the author for the purposes of this study.

Cromé was a minor figure in the events of the time, devoutly Catholic and, thus, loyal to the Ligue, but suspicious of the ambitious Guise and Mayenne factions. This perhaps serves to explain the ambivalence that comes through in this depiction of a debate between two relatively equal characters, in terms of intellect and knowledge of the current state of affaires. This unexpected fairness could also have simply arisen from the dialogic form. Dialogue was, of course, an ancient literary form closely associated with Classical philosophy and religious inquiry that had again come to prominence in the sixteenth century in numerous spheres, not the least of which was satire; as Ascoli recalls, citing Salmon, the *Maheustre* fit well into the evolving tradition of the time, which included the more famous *Satire Ménippée* (Ascoli 14). The dialogic form's widespread use in those particular areas can largely be attributed to its reliable and efficient manner of presenting both sides of an argument and inclusive nature derived from the dramatic aspect draws the reader into the debate depicted. Regardless of what exactly gave rise to this almost equitable treatment of both sides, it is precisely this quality that inspired and facilitated the consequent appropriation by the opposition.

This is arguably the single most interesting aspect of this work, that it was used by both sides in the conflict. As Henri IV worked to solidify his hold on the kingdom, he appropriated this remarkably evenhanded work and, with relatively few edits by his advisors, republished it in a royalist edition. With both sides of the conflict receiving more or less fair treatment, the dialogue became a reasonably useful and, perhaps,

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entertaining means of presenting the arguments to a less informed citizenry while also satirizing the debate and its participants. Despite its length, 201 recto-verso sheets in the royalist edition, the *Dialogue* is so painfully redundant that it can be reasonably summarized in a few paragraphs. More than a manifestation of poor literary style, however, this tedious repetition well illustrates the nature of the debate it portrays: reactionary politics, intransigence on both sides, relatively superficial and simple understandings of underlying issues, etc. The Maheustre, representing the Politique opinion, argues that Henri de Navarre is the rightful heir to the French throne as determined by Salic Law. Even The Manant repeatedly rebuts that Henri, as a heretic and, specifically, as a *relaps* (one who returns to his heresies after repenting of them), is simply unfit to rule over the Catholic kingdom of France. Against this line of reasoning, the Maheustre remains firm in his opinion, contending that tradition, frequently represented by an appeal to the ancient Salic Law, and national identity should take precedence. But more importantly, in the Maheustre's argument, the Manant's objections are nullified by Henri's conversion(s). Furthermore, the Maheustre charges that the Seize and the Ligue, entirely composed of brutes and thieves motivated by lucre and ambition rather than their self-proclaimed righteousness, are no more fit to rule than a supposed heretic. Throughout this text, and most particularly after Henri de Navarre's supporters adapted it, the carefully cultivated image of the Ligue was destroyed; their pious façade was dismantled and they were exposed as the opposite of what they preached (Crouzet 2: 212). Most surprising is that the Manant repeatedly affirms the Maheustre's accusations. In response to a lengthy critique of his movement's leaders, depicted as thieves, rabble-

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rousers, and exploiters, the Manant admits in the middle of his own lengthy tirade:

"Tellement que vostre Noblesse suit l'heresie, & la nostre l'argent" ("Just as your nobles

chase after heresy, and ours after money") (Cromé 84). Implicit, however, in his

admission is no excuse for their greed and brutality, but simply the contention that the

masses of regular citizens like him are well meaning and devout – specifically, faithful to

the *correct* religion – even if the prominent men representing and leading their cause are

corrupt. The Manant emphasizes this point, arguing:

> Je vous declare que je crois ce qu'avez dit cy-dessus, mais je ne tiens non
>
> plus de compte de voz discours, encores qu'ils soyent veritables, que de
>
> ceux qui les effectuent. Car les princes, princesses, la Cour de Parlement,
>
> les magistrats, et les grands ne m'ont point fait resouldre à prendre le party
>
> que je tiens, mais le seul respect de l'honneur de mon Dieu et de son
>
> Eglise. (Cromé 177–8)

> I declare to you that I believe what you have said, but I pay no mind to
>
> your discourses, though they may yet be true, because of who preaches
>
> them. For the princes, princesses, Court of Parlement, the magistrates, and
>
> the great ones did not convince me to take up the side I did, but respect
>
> alone for the honor of God and of his Church.

Mere logic and historical fact cannot convert this devout Catholic, only faith in God. He

continues in harsh condemnation of the Maheustre and his side: "J'aime mieux mourir

avec les theologiens, les Seize, et les Espagnols catholiques, que de vivre avec les

heretiques, Politiques et atheistes, tels que vous autres qui suyvez le party du Roy de Navarre chef des heretiques…" ("I would rather die with the theologians, the Seize, and the Catholic Spaniards than live with the heretics, Politiques, and atheists, like you who take the side of the king of Navarre, chief of the heretics…") (Cromé 184). To the degree that one can assume that the Manant represents the author's voice, as Ascoli contends, this is a striking admission. The devout Catholic's allegiance belonged not to the Ligue, in whom he or she recognized corruption, but to God alone, of whose body in the metaphysical relationship of the Church he or she is a member.

The Manant's remarkable intransigence is illustrated throughout by his redundant repetitions of Henri's supposed heretical status and, therefore, unworthiness to rule. But he is not limited to slander and complaint, he espouses a possible solution, the one promoted by the Ligue, in fact, which can be reduced to two basic premises: first, that a heretical (i.e. Protestant) king could legally and morally be deposed; and, second, that the people, represented by the Estates General, possessed the right to elect a new king who would promise to maintain the Catholic faith (Ascoli 10). In the royalist edition, the Maheustre refutes this supposed moral right, ambiguously referring to the Bible, he argues that the Holy Scriptures teach us that "le glaive est mis en la main du Prince souverain, et qu'il n'y a que luy seul qui le puisse degainer, ou ceux a qui il en donne la puissance" ("the sword is placed in the hand of the sovereign Prince and that there is none but he alone who can unsheathe it, or those to whom he imparts authority") (Cromé 119). He continues, arguing that one who resorts to violence without proper authority, except in express defense of his life and property, "est digne de mort et temporelle et

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eternelle" ("merits death both temporal and eternal") (Cromé 119). Most deserving of this retributive death, the Maheustre proclaims, are the Seize, the fanatical Catholic representatives of the sixteen quartiers of Paris, whom he portrays as a covetous bunch having actually personally robbed him (Cromé 129). The Maheustre further contends that, along with the Seize, the Ligue leaders, the ecclesiastics among them as much as the laymen, "crevent d'ambition & regorgent de larcins" ("are bursting with ambition and running over with larceny") (Cromé 129). Again the Manant agrees, but holds, nonetheless, firm to his position. The limits of logic in this dispute are pronounced in the final pages as the frustrated Maheustre proclaims: "Cessons nos disputes ! Car je voy bien que tu es un pauvre homme sans cervelle, j'espere de gaigner par l'espee ce qui ne se peut avoir par raison" ("Let us cease our disputations! For I well see that you are a poor man without a brain, I hope to win by the sword that which cannot be had by reason") (Cromé 209). There is a promise of future violence, but significantly no immediate effort at severing the connections that bind these two personages together. Fragmentation is threatened, but not enacted; feared, but not accepted. This reveals the *satyrical* essence of this dialogue, an aspect that is accentuated in the royalist edition of the dialogue.

While the royalist edition does alter the text quite a bit, the bulk of those changes consist in alterations to the Maheustre's comments and depiction. Where in the original he occasionally slips into an inferior social position in relation to his city-dwelling counterpart, there is no doubt in the royalist version that the Maheustre is a reasonable foil for the intransigence and intolerance of the Ligue (Ascoli 33). The most striking

change, however, comes as the two part company in the final pages. In the original, it was the Manant who had the last word, responding with an optimistic prayer to the Maheustre's condescending invitation to inquire of God in all things:

> Dieu, par le ministere de la Saincteté du Pape et du Roy Catholique, desquels après Dieu est l'esperance de la France, et l'asseurance de tous les catholiques, ausquels Dieu par sa grace donne sa benediction aux siecles des siecles. Ainsi soit-il. (Cromé 211)

> God, by the ministry of the Holiness of the Pope and of the Catholic King, in whom after God is the hope of France, and the assurance of all Catholics, to whom God by grace gives his blessing from century to century. So may it be.

The royalist version ends the Manant's prayer after "Roy Catholique," and the Maheustre then begins his own, somewhat longer injunction:

> Pauvre homme à ce que je voy, les impostures des predicateurs ont bien gagné sur toy. Je crains fort la ruine de cette pauvre ville de Paris, si entre vous autres Manants n'estes plus sages. Croyez que Dieu ne supporte jamais les subjects contre leur Roy, et c'est blasphemer que de le nommer protecteur de division, luy qui est le Dieu de paix et concorde, tout ainsi comme le diable est l'autheur de rebellion, de discorde, de mensonge et d'homicide. Va retourne-t-en, et dy aux Seize, à Boucher et tous ces autres mercenaires et espagnolisez predicateurs, que devant que Pasques arrive,

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nous les aurons entre nos mains, et que par Dieu, ils me responderont de mes meubles qu'ils m'ont volez et fait vendre. Va, et dy hardiment que je leur mande. Adieu, Manant, adieu. (Cromé 211 n.351)

Poor man, from what I see the imposters of preachers have well won you over. I greatly fear the ruin of this poor city of Paris, if among you there are none wiser. Know that God never supports subjects against their king, and it is blasphemy to name Him protector of division, He who is the God of peace and harmony, just as the devil is the author of rebellion, of discord, of lies and murder. Go back and tell the *Seize*, tell Boucher and all of those other mercenaries and Spaniardized preachers that, before Easter comes, we will have them in our grasp, and that by God they will answer to me for my belongings that they stole and sold. Go and tell them bravely that I call them out. Adieu, Manant, adieu.

The difference between the two endings is most striking in comparison to the other texts discussed in this study: the Catholic version looks to a (forceful) homogenization of the fragmenting kingdom while the royalist, which is to say at least to some degree, the Protestant and / or Politique version, accepts a hybrid, but unified France.

The essence of the problem for Protestants and Politiques of the time, and especially for the formerly Protestant king, lies not in another's heretical beliefs, but in disunity and internal conflict – though it is somewhat ironic for the side that began the conflict decades earlier. Thus, as has been discussed above, the weaker and less

numerous side wishing to maintain its identity within the social whole of France places its hope in a heterogeneous whole that is, in many ways, underscored by the dialogic form as well as its participation in the *satyrical*. Noticeably missing from the dialogue is a narrative voice that would validate one side over the other, which contributed to the evenhanded portrayals that characterize the work. This authorial absence permits the conversation to develop as a truly *dialogic* dialogue, to borrow Bernd Renner's term, which is to say, as a legitimate discussion rather than lopsided didacticism (Renner, *Difficile* 40). To be sure, one of the more remarkable aspects of this work is that, after literally hundreds of pages of dialogue, it closes with cold, unconvinced rhetoric and promise of future violence, but no clear logical victor. Neither character has conceded; they remain divided and incongruently dissimilar, but, and this is crucial, bound together as members of the fracturing, mystical bodies that are the Catholic Church and the kingdom of France. The final injunction simultaneously betrays the author's anxiety at the developing fragmentation of a traditional unity while echoing St. Paul's epistolary pleas for Christian unity. Despite the Maheustre's warning, internal division abides as the characters separate unswayed. Like the distinct instantiations of the fractured narrative voice, ultimately bound together by the diegetic frame of the dialogue, the incongruous members of a mystical body remain bound together by a second coextensive, mystical *corpus* superimposed over fragmenting *members*, thus creating a hybrid national creature – in essence, Catholic France takes on the metaphorical appearance of the satyr-like, religio-political beast that is had become. Most significantly, this time it is articulated by a Catholic.

As is well known to history, Henri de Navarre conquered the bulk of France and

converted to Catholicism in order to secure the rest of his rightful kingdom. Ruling as a

Catholic king, in name at least, he nonetheless granted unprecedented rights to

Protestants and made for them a place in his heterogeneous kingdom. The kingdom

prospered under his leadership, but this did not end the conflict that had for decades

pitted the Catholics against the Protestants. Scheming and subversion generally took the

place of open warfare, though physical violence did not disappear entirely. With Henri's

assassination in 1610 and the subsequent rule of his son, Louis XIII, and his son's chief

minister, the infamous Cardinal Richelieu, Protestants again knew persecution in France.

However, with this later violence and persecution, the prior hope of a *satyrical* France

was lost to the new generation of Protestant satirists, such as Agrippa d'Aubigné, whose

work *Les tragiques* will be the last considered in this study. In essence, the emergence of

a new satirical tone among Protestants represented the end of the *satyrical*.

II. Writing the Fragmented Body: Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*

"Voici le larron Prométhée" ("Behold [I] the thief Prometheus"), Aubigné opens

his introduction to *Les Tragiques* playing the role of the mythological titan who stole fire

from the gods and gave it to mankind (Aubigné 53).[131] But this time, rather than the

literal flame, Prometheus has brought down a literary one. This fire, he continues,

"mourait sans air" ("would die without air"), it is the "flambeau sous le muid" ("candle

under the bushel") spoken of in the Gospel of Matthew (Aubigné 53).[132] Indulging in the

topos of the stolen manuscript, Aubigné draws a false veil of fiction over his references to

real events and individuals, but somewhat more importantly, he constructs an allegory to

communicate both the purported divine origins of the work and its supposed, supreme

utility (Coats 58). It is also, as Frank Lestringant proposes in his preface to that work, an

accurate characterization of the spirit of the work; "Ceci est un livre qui brûle" ("This is a

book that burns"), he declares (Lestringant, "Introduction" 7). Indeed, it is a burning

book, a work of trenchant satire and bitter condemnation.

Théodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné was born in 1552 near Pons, in the strongly

Protestant region between La Rochelle and Bordeaux, to a judge, Jean d'Aubigné, and a

member of the lower nobility, Catherine de l'Estang. His family was active in the

Huguenot cause, so much so, in fact, that his father was implicated in the Amboise

Conspiracy (1560), a failed attempt to abduct the young king François II and capture his

advisors, the Guises. The apprehended conspirators were executed and Jean d'Aubigné

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[131] The entire work has never been translated into English. In his 1953 dissertation at Columbia University, Jesse Zeldin translated the first three books, but nothing more, not even the prefaces. So, when possible I use Zeldin's translation, as will be indicated, all other translations are my own.

[132] Saint Matthew records that Jesus declared: "You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (*Douay-Rheims Bible* Matt. 5.14–16).

brought his then eight-year-old son to witness the aftermath: decapitated corpses, maimed and tortured bodies hanging about the castle were the attack took place. Before the gruesome scene, the Huguenot father instructed his young son to defend their cause and seek revenge against their enemies. Not surprisingly, this experience marked the young Théodore-Agrippa and, as Marie-Hélène Prat argues, heavily influenced his *Les Tragiques* (Prat 10). But two other events from his life seem to have exercised an equally formative influence on his later work.

Like so many prominent French Protestants, Aubigné was in Paris for the August 1572 wedding of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite de Valois, which was followed four days later by the infamous events of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. However, following the scuffle that ensued from a duel in which he served as second, Aubigné was forced to flee the city before the fateful day, thus escaping the brutal massacre (Quainton 9). Nonetheless, it was that event which most clearly served as inspiration for the first part of *Les Tragiques*. A little later, in the winter of 1572, Aubigné was gravely wounded in an ambush and, in his subsequent delirium, saw a vision in which the "divine poetic mission" that ultimately gave birth to *Les Tragiques* was revealed to him (Quainton 9). But it was not until five years later, when the author was again confined to bed by an injury, that he began dictating the first elements of what would become the monumental work (Lestringant, "Introduction" 349). He worked on it over the subsequent decades, finally publishing it in 1616. Early versions were distributed in manuscript form, most notably, as Aubigné asserts in his introduction to the work, to Henri IV, who had read it in its entirety "plusieurs fois" ("several times") to ascertain if anti-monarchist charges

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levied against Aubigné were justified (Quainton 11; Aubigné 59).[133] Lestringant,

however, contradicts Aubigné's assertion, arguing that Henri could not have read the

whole work since the year given for these readings, 1589, is well before its completion

(Lestringant, "Introduction" 369 n. 35). Later manuscripts circulated in 1593 and seem to

have "exercised some influence on public opinion at this stage" (Quainton 11). The final

version, which included references to the Edict of Nantes (1598) and the deaths of Philip

II of Spain (1598) and of Elizabeth I of England (1603), could not have been completed

before those dates (II, lines 525ff.; III, 953–98).[134] This long process of creation and

revision may have robbed the work of its intended impact; Debailly recalls that *Les

Tragiques* met with a cold reception at its publication in 1616, well after the period in and

for which its galvanizing satire was conceived (Debailly 619). Nonetheless, it is today

recognized as a masterwork of Renaissance satire, the culmination, as Renner proposes,

of the tradition begun by Marot in the early sixteenth century (Renner, *Difficile* 354–6).

      The structure of the work itself is greatly significant and revealing in terms of the

author's ultimate goal. This 'burning' work comprising some 9,300 lines of alexandrine

couplets is divided into seven books, which in themselves are lengthy works, ranging

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[133] Aubigné grew increasingly critical of Henri IV, particularly after his conversion to
Catholicism

[134] The standard for referencing this work will be followed in the parenthetical
references: the Roman numeral indicates in which of the seven books the reference is
found, followed by the line numbers. The exception is for the prose passages (like the
Aux lecteurs), which will simply be referenced by page number in the cited edition.

from 1062 lines to 1564.[135] Stylistically, the author outlines his approach in the *Aux lecteurs*, establishing a spectrum across the seven books:

> Le premier livre s'appelle *Misères*, qui est un tableau piteux du Royaume en général, d'un style bas et tragique, n'excédant fort peu les lois de la narration. Les *Princes* viennent après, d'un style moyen mais satirique en quelque façon… Et puis… *La Chambre dorée*… de même style que le second. Le quart, qui s'appelle *Les Feux*, est… d'un style tragique moyen. Le cinquième, sous le nom des *Fers*, du style tragique élévé, plus poétique et plus hardi que les autres… Le livre qui suit le cinquième s'appelle *Vengeances*, théologien et historial. Lui est le dernier, qui est le *Jugement*, d'un style élévé tragique… (Aubigné 57)

> The first book is called *Miseries*, which is a tableau of the Kingdom in general, in a low, tragic style, exceeding but little the laws of narration. The *Princes* comes after it, in a middle but somehow satirical style… And then... *The Golden Chamber*... in the same style as the second. The fourth, which is called *The Fires*, is… in a middle tragic style. The fifth, under the name *The Swords*, in a high tragic style, more poetic and bolder than the others… The book that follows the fifth is called *Vengeances*, theological

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[135] Books I through VII of *Les Tragiques*, in order, comprise: *Misères*, 1380 lines; *Princes*, 1526; *La Chambre dorée*, 1062; *Les Feux*, 1420; *Les Fers*, 1564; *Vengeances*, 1130; and *Jugement*, 1218.

and historical. It and the last, which is the *Judgment*, in a high tragic

style…

Generally accepting the author's classifications, this study will only treat the first three

books, which, as he explains and later critics affirm, form a unit with the second and third

elaborating on the first (Aubigné 57; Quainton 34). But before looking at those books

alone, this stylistic progression outlined by the author merits further discussion as it

pertains to the goal and underlying theme of the work.

Quainton argues that Aubigné's creative work was heavily influenced by

Calvinist exegesis, which is manifest in both the manner in which the explicitly stated

style of each book relates to the subject matter and in the stated progression in styles,

building from the low to the high (Quainton 20). With this declaration of style, Quainton

maintains, Aubigné was specifically aligning his work with the Calvinist eschatological

traditions, particularly as they relate to exegesis of the biblical Book of Revelation

(Quainton 20–1). This is most clearly evident in the division of the larger work into seven

books, a number with deep religious significance and specific connection to the biblical

Revelation.[136] Aubigné's less-than-subtle imitation of the seven-sealed book described by

Saint John the Revelator, which reveals the unfolding of eschatological events as each

succeeding seal is broken, grounds the work broadly in religious imagery while imbuing

the author's time and self-proclaimed divine mission with theological substance. Aubigné

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[136] In the first and second chapters of the Book of Genesis, the Lord creates the earth, its
flora, and its fauna in six days, resting on the seventh, thereby establishing the tradition of
the seven-day week. In the sixth through eighth chapters of the Book of Revelation, Saint
John the Revelator witnesses the opening of a book by its seven seals, each representing,
in popular interpretation, a new phase of eschatological events.

takes upon himself the role of prophet, of revelator, divinely ordained to warn his countrymen of the imminent end of days. This eschatological reading is reinforced by an additional manifestation of ascending categories that simultaneously underscores the grouping of the first three books, they all take place on earth, while the remaining four ascend to the heavens (Quainton 35).

Thus dividing his work between terrestrial and celestial worlds, Aubigné essentially distinguishes between the tropological and anagogical senses of traditional exegesis, a duality that permitted him worldly references in an otherwise religious text. Catharine Randall Coats proposes that this mingling of biblical elements and the profane redeemed the latter, "permitting its existence but moving beyond it" (Coats 13). Aubigné seems, thereby, to occupy a sort of middle ground in the debate regarding biblical versus Classical models that engrossed Bèze and Ronsard.[137] Moreover, it permits the inspired satirist, as Aubigné saw himself, to assume a specifically divine version of the choral role in the satirical relationship. Building from this function, the condemning eye of the satirist in *Les Tragiques* becomes, as Debailly describes it, an avatar for the divine eye that can see through the "shadows and fog in which vice hides itself" (Debailly 613). Lestringant likewise emphasizes the satirist's role in the concept and application of divine justice as promulgated in this work, the sardonic laughter of *Les Tragiques* was conceived in the name of the people and imagined to comprehend the power of divine vengeance (Lestringant, "Rire en Sardaigne" 198). Further illustrating this point is yet another ascending trajectory imposed upon the series of poems: Prat points out that, in

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[137] See chapter three, particularly the sections on Bèze and Ronsard.

the earlier parts of the text, a striking number of the verbs of destruction (déchirer, diviser, entamer, dissiper, dévorer, rompre, trancher, etc.) actually have the "victimes, les élus ou leurs alliés" ("victims, the elect of their allies") as their subjects, whereas in the later books these acts are committed by God and his angels in punishment of the wicked (Prat 313–4). It is, however, important to note that, particularly within the realm of satire, it is a verbal violence that matters more than physical brutality; *Les Tragiques* is no exception.

The act of revealing truth, which, as discussed above, was the understood goal of sixteenth-century, Protestant satire, comprised a certain degree of violence for Aubigné, who measured the authenticity thereof in terms of the reprisals it inspired (Debailly 586–7). Aubigné, devoutly Christian as he was, claimed to have adopted the traditional position of hating the sin while loving the sinner, and so presumably strove for a satire that attacked the vices rather than vicious people (Debailly 589). If this was the case, he did not succeed in *Les Tragiques*. The second and third books, in particular, contains numerous, malicious lampoons of Catherine de' Medici (whom the author repeatedly refers to as "Jésabel") and her sons, Charles IX, Henri III (against whom Aubigné levies the familiar charges of effeminacy and debauchery); even François duke of Alençon, a supporter of the Protestants, is not spared as Aubigné attacks the Valois family (Aubigné I, 747; II, 755–930).[138] Ingrid A. R. De Smet suggests that, next to *Les Hermaphrodites*,

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[138] While *Jezebel* has become a common epithet for a woman of questionable morals, Aubigné is actually referring to the biblical character who plays a significant role in the books of Third and Fourth Kings (First and Second Kings in the King James Version). She was the foreign-born, idolatrous widow of King Achab (Ahab), scheming mother of

Les Tragiques is "the most highly prized satire… on the effeminacy and debauchery of the last of the Valois kings of France, Henri III" (De Smet 131). Such rancorous satire was justified, supposes Debailly, "par la quête et par la manifestation de la vérité" ("by the quest for and manifestation of truth") (Debailly 606). Moreover, he saw the bitterness of his satire as necessary in order to counter the "arsenic ensucré" ("sugared arsenic") of the flatterers and liars who wrote on behalf of the truly guilty parties (Aubigné II, 949–70). But Aubigné's acrimonious tone is not purely his own invention; it is largely a function of the satirical models he drew upon.

Debailly recalls that Aubigné only concerned himself with ancient satire and showed no interest in the satirists of his time (Debailly 588). Furthermore, as Quainton indicates, Aubigné avoided the Greek references and styles, common in earlier Protestant satire, in favor of Latin ones: most particularly Lucan, Ovid, and Juvenal (Quainton 91). It was the last of these three who truly served as a model for Aubigné; his is a work of indignation in the classic Juvenalian style. In fact, Debailly asserts that Aubigné is one of the few poets whose indignation can be compared to that of Juvenal (Debailly 583). Modeling himself after Juvenal, and to a lesser degree Persius, Aubigné adopted for himself the persona of a "great avenger" and judge whose satire matched in vehemence and rage the crimes being denounced (Debailly 594, 598). This Juvenalian influence contributes to what Debailly calls the omnipresent Roman legalism of *Les Tragiques*, which, combined with the Christian prophetic posture, form Aubigné's unique, satirical voice (Debailly 602). But before adopting either of those personae, Aubigné was a

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two equally idolatrous sons who acceded to the throne of Israel, and enemy of the prophet Elias (Elijah).

warrior for the Huguenot cause and his literature was merely a continuation of that fight. As Debailly put it, Aubigné continued to pursue "par la plume… le combat qu'il a mené par l'épée au cours de sa longue vie de guerrier" ("by the plume… the war he waged by the sword over the course of his long life of a warrior") (Debailly 585). Indeed, it is a war he wages, and it is distinct from the other Protestant works studied in the previous chapters.

In many ways the Juvenalian tone of the work, the rancor with which Aubigné attacks his satirical victims is enough to mark a shift from even the mid-century works of Bèze. This latter was vicious, there is no doubt, but the imagery always returned, however subtly, to a depiction of perpetuated unity through hybridity. The goal of Bèze's work was correction and revelation in the pursuit of perpetual unity. This stands in stark contrast with the Catholic authors discussed in that same chapter, most particularly Désiré, whose solution to the problem of inter-confessional conflict was exclusion, execution, and, thereby, disunion. The earlier Protestant satire was decidedly Horatian in character. This later turn toward Juvenalian satire on the part of Aubigné marks a shift toward a style style more resembling that of the Catholics, as defined above. His indignation had risen to the point of demanding violent disunion at the hands of God where it could not be accomplished by the Protestants. Aubigné's apocalypse is characterized by the final judgment, an ultimate separation of good from evil, of the persecuted from the persecutors; to this end, he depicts the violent end of the shared mystical body and its *satyrical* instantiation.

The body, Prat argues, is the principal character of *Les Tragiques* (Prat 9). Throughout the work, but most particularly in the first book, the author paints a gruesome image of brutal violence and death. The body is mangled and harmed in various manners. The France of *Les Tragiques* is awash in blood and decomposing flesh. He paints incriminating images of Catholic oppression and the slaughter of Protestants, largely based in the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. In Aubigné's description, France has degraded to a place where "L'homme est en proie à l'homme, un loup à son pareil" ("Man is prey of man, wolf of his kind") (Aubigné I, 211; Aubigné and Zeldin I, 211). He imagines a thousand souls presented to God "dépouillées / De leurs corps par les feux, les cordes, les couteaux…" ("stripped of their bodies by fires, ropes, and knives…") (Aubigné III, 110–11; Aubigné and Zeldin III, 110–111). But it is not only these beaten and slaughtered individual, physical bodies that Aubigné is depicting for the reader, but the mystical body of France.

Like Chartier, Aubigné imagines France as a mother, a common trope in the literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. But unlike Chartier, the *corpus mysticum* in *Les Tragiques* has already died, been murdered, in fact. Comparing a maternal embodiment of France under the Valois kings to the cinders of Rome under Nero, Aubigné writes:

> Quand le tyran s'égaye en la ville où il entre,
>
> La ville est un corps mort, il passe sur son ventre,
>
> Et ce n'est plus du lait qu'elle prodigue en l'air,
>
> C'est du sang, pour parler comme peuvent parler

Les corps qu'on trouve morts : portés à la justice,

On les met en place, afin que ce corps puisse

Rencontrer son meurtrier, le meurtrier inconnu

Contre qui le corps saigne est coupable tenu. (Aubigné I, 586–92)

When the tyrant sports in the town he has entered,

The town is a lifeless corpse, he treads on its belly;

And it no longer lavishes milk abroad,

But blood, that it may speak with the voice

Of bodies found dead: brought to the bar,

They are put where the body

Can meet its killer; the unknown slayer

Towards whom the body bleeds is judged to be guilty. (Aubigné and

Zeldin I, 585–92)

As Aubigné recounts it, the tyrannical princes sadistically fiddled while their beloved

France was devastated by war, they were the arsonists, so to speak, who set her ablaze.[139]

In the second book, *Princes*, the author elaborates how these tyrants killed France, and he

does so by drawing explicitly upon the traditional concept of the mystical body.

Speaking of the divine wrath that awaits the *Princes*, Aubigné constructs a

lengthy exposition detailing the nature of the relationship and responsibilities that bind

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[139] His comparison of the last Valois kings, especially of Henri III, to Nero is a motif that runs throughout the first three books of *Les Tragiques*. In book two, Aubigné elaborately uses the story of Nero's marriage to Pythagoras, in which the emperor played the role of bride, as a metaphor for Henri III's sexual reputation (Aubigné II, 819–64).

the "chef" ("head") to "ses membres chers" ("its dear limbs"); in short, he argues, all falls apart and the Princes' efforts are in vain when God is not properly honored (Aubigné II, 391–422). At the end of this section, he conspicuously draws from the corporeal imagery of Saint Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, writing:

> Le peuple étant le corps et les membres du Roi,
>
> Le Roi est le chef du peuple, et c'est aussi pourquoi
>
> La tête est frénétique et pleine de manie
>
> Qui ne garde son sang pour conserver sa vie,
>
> Et le chef n'est plus chef quand il prend ses ébats
>
> A couper de son corps les jambes et les bras.
>
> Mais ne vaut-il pas mieux, comme les traîtres disent,
>
> Lorsque les accidents les remèdes maitrisent,
>
> Quand la plaie noircit et sans mesure croît,
>
> Quant premier à nos yeux la gangrène paroît,
>
> Ne vaut-il pas bien mieux d'un membre se défaire
>
> Qu'envoyer lâchement tout le corps au suaire ?
>
> Tel aphorisme est bon alors qu'il faut curer
>
> Le membre qui se peut sans mort séparer,
>
> Mais non lorsque l'amas de tant de maladies
>
> Tient la masse du sang ou les nobles parties :
>
> Que le cerveau se purge, et sente que de soi
>
> Coule du mal au corps duquel il est le roi.

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Ce Roi donc n'est plus Roi, mais monstrueuse bête,

Qui haut de son corps ne fait devoir de tête. (Aubigné II, 467–486)[140]

As the people is the body and limbs of the King,

So is the King is the head of the people, and that is why

That head is frantic and mania-ridden

Which does not guard its blood to preserve its life,

And the head is no longer the head when it takes its sport

By cutting the legs and arms from its body.

But is it not better, as the traitors say,

When accidents outdistance their remedies,

When the wound blackens and increases beyond measure,

When gangrene first appears to our eyes,

Is it not be much better that one limb should be lost

Than that all the body should cravenly be sent to the shroud?

Such an aphorism is good when we must remove

The limb which can be separated without causing death,

But not when the sum of all the maladies

Possesses the mass of the blood or noble parts:

The brain should then purge itself and feel that from itself

Flows the evil to the body of which it is king.

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[140] See 1 Corinthians 12.12-27.

That King is no longer a King but a monstrous beast,

When from his body's height he does not force the head to do its duty.

(Aubigné and Zeldin II, 467–86)

In this elaborate depiction of the state of France during the Wars of Religion, the "traîtres," of course representing the Catholics like Désiré, demand amputation of the infected parts from the mystical body. Moreover, they are portrayed as doing so in shortsighted accordance with traditional wisdom. But, responds Aubigné, it is not wise to sever vital or "noble" parts. Nonetheless, this is precisely what has happened in the author's illustration. The blood has already flowed and Mother France is already dead. While in this second book of the *Les Tragiques*, France's demise is likened to that of Rome under a tyrant, it is another depiction of this same death that most concerns this study.

In the first book, *Misères*, Aubigné grotesquely relates a far more disturbing end for this Mother France. He writes:

Je veux peindre la France une mère affligée,

Qui est entre ses bras de deux enfants chargée.

Le plus fort, orgueilleux, empoigne les deux bouts

Des tétins nourriciers ; puis a force de coups

D'ongles, de poings, de pieds, il brise le partage

Dont nature donnait à son besson l'usage ;

Ce voleur acharné, ces Esau malheureux

Fait dégât du doux lait qui doit nourrir les deux,

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Si que, pour arracher à son frère la vie,

Il méprise la sienne et n'en a plus d'envie.

Mais son Jacob, pressé d'avoir jeûné meshui,

Ayant dompté longtemps en son cœur son ennui,

A la fin se défend, et sa juste colère

Rend à l'autre un combat dont le champ est la mère.

. . . .

Cette femme éplorée, en sa douleur plus forte,

Succombe à la douleur, mi-vivante, mi-morte…

Elle voit les mutins tous déchirés, sanglants,

Qui, ainsi que du cœur, des mains se vont cherchant.

Quand, pressant à son sein d'une amour maternelle

Celui qui a le droit et la juste querelle,

Elle veut le sauver, l'autre qui n'est pas las

Viole en poursuivant l'asile de ses bras.

Adonc se perd le lait, le suc de sa poitrine ;

Puis, aux derniers abois de sa proche ruine,

Elle dit : « Vous avez, félons, ensanglanté

Le sein qui vous nourrit et qui vous a porté ;

Or vivez de venin, sanglante géniture,

Je n'ai plus que du sang pour votre nourriture. (Aubigné I, 97–130)

I wish to depict France as an afflicted mother,

Who bears two children in her arms.

The stronger, arrogantly, clutches the nipples

Of the nursing breasts; then striking out

With his nails, his fists, and his feet,

He destroys the portion nature gave to his twin.

This persistent robber, this ill-starred Esau,

Wastes the sweet milk meant to nourish two,

So that, in order to snatch his brother's life,

He scorns his own, no longer wishes it.

But his Jacob, forced to fast that day,

And having for long suppressed the pain in his heart,

At last defends himself; and his righteous anger

Gives the other battle on the mother-field.

. . . .

The woman, weeping in her greater pain,

Succumbs to pain, half-living, half-dead;

She sees the rebels, torn and bloody,

Seeking each other with their hands as well as their hearts.

When in motherly love she presses to her breast

The one whose cause is right and just,

Wishing to save him, the other, still unwearied,

Violates the asylum of her arms in his pursuit.

So the milk is lost, the sap of her breast;

And then, at the last extremity of her approaching ruin,

She says: "You, traitors, have bloodied

The breast which nourished you and bore you:

Now feed upon venom, bloody progeny,

I have nothing left but blood to feed you. (Aubigné and Zeldin I, 97–130)

While Chartier's Mother France enveloped her bickering but not nonviolent children, Aubigné turns his Mother France's exposed breast into a bloodied field of battle, torn asunder and ruined by struggling twins in the mold of the biblical Esau and Jacob. She comes to resemble Mézières's Mother Church, afflicted and divided by the festering wound of war between her children. This distinction with the imagery of Chartier's work and similarity to that of Mézières is natural given the circumstances: Aubigné was writing of an actual war, like the latter, while the former only wrote of internal divisions that had not given way to widespread violence. Thus, Aubigné can rightly describe that gruesome scene of a mother's body divided into "funèbres moitiés" ("dead halves") (Aubigné I, 131–2). Fragmentation, at this point, is not a menacing crisis or painful possibility, it has become a reality. This terrible allegory of a mother's violent death at the hands of her warring children signals the end of France as a corporeal entity capable of sustaining the hybrid parts of the heterogeneous but unified social whole imagined in the earlier decades of the inter-confessional conflict; with it, this culminating masterwork of Renaissance Protestant satire signals the end of *satyrical* thinking.

Adding, as it were, an exclamation point to this pronouncement of France's death, Aubigné wrote an even more disturbing scene a little further along in the same book. He describes a starving mother who, seemingly succumbing simultaneously to her own weakness and to pity for her suffering child, murders the innocent infant in an act of utter hopelessness; then, in delirious frenzy recalling Thyestes feast and the cannibal mothers described in the Old Testament, she consumes her child: "la faim et la raison / Donnent pâture au corps et à l'âme poison" ("hunger and reason / give food to the body and poison to the soul") (Aubigné I, 495–562).[141] This is easily read as an allegorical and somewhat cliché indictment of the Catholic Mass, in which believers consume the flesh and drink the blood of the perfectly innocent victim as well as a bitter depiction of the sad state of France, but it can also represent the murderous and consuming Mother Church as it snuffs out and devours the child to whom it ultimately gave birth, whether her first daughter France or the Protestant faith that burst forth from her only a century earlier. Heterogeneity within the realm of mystical corpora is here abolished through a violent, cannibalistic act – a somehow fitting end for the literature of a conflict largely growing from a theological dispute over the specific nature of sacred consumable substances.

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[141] In the myth, the usurper Thyestes was tricked by Atreus into consuming his own sons. In the Bible, two mothers in the besieged and famine-stricken Samaria agree to kill and eat their children, one mother's son the first day and the other's the next; but on the following day, the second mother hid her child to save his life and was brought before the king for breech of contract (*Douay-Rheims Bible* 4 Kings 6.24 – 7.20).

Conclusion

As the war of words that characterized the earlier decades of the Reformation and subsequent religious conflict in France gave way to physical violence, the tenor of the literature changed. The clever, biting satires that subtly proposed perpetuated, hybrid unity lost their force in the face of actual bloodshed. It was not until the wars subsided after the contested accession of Henri IV that satire reemerged as a dominant mode, though, as illustrated by Aubigné's *Les Tragiques*, the sides aligned differently. In the example of the Catholic Cromé's *Dialogue*, both the original and the royalist versions, the violence that would separate the incongruous parts of the hybrid mystical body of France was deferred and a heterogeneous unity grudgingly accepted. It represented a divergence from, though not total rupture with the hopeful *satyrical* of the earlier Protestant satires. As the balance of power was clearly shifting from the Catholic majority to the (formerly) Protestant Henri and his supporters among various segments of French society, an emboldened and embittered Aubigné adopted an exclusionist position as the Catholics had in earlier decades – though it should be recalled that the force that would separate the warring factions in his imagining was not royal, but divine. His Protestant satire was not like that of earlier decades, hopeful and corrective, instead bore the marks of the violence and disappointment that shaped it. In this most prominent Protestant satire of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the *satyrical* was lost, or perhaps killed, lying among the many victims of the Wars of Religion.

Conclusion

The *satyrical*, as a unique mode within the larger mode of satire, was a peculiar product of a peculiar period in the history of France. Inspired by ancient forms and philosophies, molded by the increasingly complex political context of late medieval and early modern Europe, and ultimately unleashed by moments of crisis in which the social entities that formed the foundation of French society were threatened with irreparable fragmentation, the *satyrical* spirit offered not only the corrective observation of satire, but a potential response to those crises. Amid the savagery of contentious times when satirical literature washed over the better part of French society, these works that have traditionally been reductively conceived merely as another weapon in the arsenals of hostile factions, were instead developed as complex expressions of acrimonious correction and, paradoxically, social harmony. They were intricate instruments in the hands of careful practitioners who sought to establish enduring stability by altering national and ecclesiastical self-perceptions. Finding a powerful metaphor and convenient analog in the image of the mythological character whose name seemed a logical source for the broader category of satire, satirists constructed literary reflections of a changing society and posited unnoticed realities as an alternative to impending fragmentation. Existent hybridity was recognized and defined through the imposition of the hybrid satyr's form onto the mystical bodies of Christianity and the French kingdom in the goal of perpetuating them as enduring hybrid entities.

The goal of this study was to reveal this crucial and, until now, unobserved aspect of early modern satire, the *satyrical*, and explore how it functioned within the literature and the broader culture. This first required an understanding of satire in broad and traditional terms. Beginning with the common source of much of modern literary styles and modes, ancient Greek culture, satire was grounded in the supposed efficacy of religious ritual, from which the whole of the Greek theatrical tradition is thought to have derived. As the binary relationship between spectator and performer expanded to engender a third position, establishing the triangular relationship of satire, direct abuse gave way to performative mockery and satire was born. Greek comedy, the first documentable, truly satirical form, was boisterous and often spiteful, mocking for mockery's sake and for a good laugh; but it was the Romans, traditionally credited with creating the mode, who instrumentalized and moralized the comic scorn of ancient Greece. In the hands of Horace and his imitators, satire first received its defining didactic character. Later Roman satirists, most notably Juvenal, infused this satire with the indignation that manifests in some of the early modern works studied. As Christianity replaced the fallen Empire, satire was adapted to a culture built, in principle, on fraternal love and charity. Invective was masked by allegory and tempered by notions of universal brotherhood. This is the culture that gave birth to the *satyrical*.

It was in the selected works from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the *satyrical* mode first becomes discernable. The title character of the *Roman de Fauvel* is defined by a certain hybridity, specifically of the same kind as the mythological satyr, which is to say a human-animal hybrid. As illustrated in the analysis of that work, the

author posited this hybrid creature as something of a reflection of the contemporary cultural context in which, as he describes, the world had become *bestourné* or inverted with the baser parts wrongly ruling over those that should have dominance. While the internal division that came to characterize the later *satyrical* is not explicitly described, it is clearly present. The second work discussed, Philippe de Mézières's *Epistre au Roi Richart*, lacks the essential comic elements that are the traditional mark of satire, but the author gave graphic form to the dilemma that underlies the *satyrical*. His depiction of the mystical body of the Catholic Church in a state of fragmentation, with the warring sides divided by a festering wound, provided a model for the corporeal portrayal of later crises. Alain Chartier drew upon this corporeal imagery and traditional concepts of satire to construct, in his *Quadrilogue Invectif*, the first readily recognizable manifestation of the *satyrical* as he circumscribed the disputing segments of a distinctly singular society within the corporeal bounds of an allegorical representation of the whole of that society. Nonetheless, it was in the following century, with the renewed interest in Antiquity, that the *satyrical* developed into its fullest form.

As writers like Erasmus began to recognize the symbolic force of certain mythological characters, even within Christianity, the notion of the satyr as the apparent source for the larger satirical mode gave form to an increasingly prominent means of literary expression. The satyr became a common symbol of hybridity and, specifically, of perpetual unity of disparate, even incongruous parts in a singular, corporeal entity. Reformers in the early days of the Protestant Reformation sought, as the name would imply, to reform, not divide, the Catholic Church. Thus works from that period, like the

Farce des Théologastres, still depict a single ecclesiastical *corpus mysticum* in need of correction, of course. But as the reform movement grew and developed, reconciliation between the factions became impossible; it was at that point that the hope for perpetuated unity in a hybrid mystical body shifted from the ecclesiastical to the national. This was the solution posited by Théodore de Bèze in his vicious, but ultimately hopeful satires of Catholics. French Protestants and Catholics could remain united in a single, heterogeneous body, he subtly suggested while clearly delineating the relational composition of that beast. Of course, it was not a reorganization that he proposed, merely a change in national self-perception; the French kingdom was already a hybrid mystical body, its constituent parts simply had to recognize it. This was an obvious and safer position for a Protestant minority in an overwhelmingly Catholic kingdom. But against this Protestant redefinition of the mystical body were the Catholic polemicists like Désiré and, to a lesser extent, Ronsard, who called upon the monarch for a decisive act of exclusion, proposing to resolve the inter-confessional conflict by means of a violent return to social homogeneity. It was indeed such violence that marked the latter decades of the sixteenth century in France.

However, as war-weary citizens of both factions began to consider the possibility of a hybrid France, the nature of the satirical debate changed and the hopeful *satyrical* of mid-century, Protestant works was replaced by the grudging acceptance illustrated by the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*. The realities of a hybrid France were finally recognized by Catholics, albeit a recognition characterized by fear and mistrust as the throne was passing to a (former) Protestant. Finally, it is from this new found position of

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Protestant power and integration into French society, colored by vivid memories of brutal violence and a self-proclaimed apocalyptic mission, that Aubigné renders his satirical judgment, calling for a violent exclusion of Catholics.

While the underlying goal of the *satyrical* was largely met at the end of the wars, with the accession of Henri IV and subsequent integration of Protestants into the mystical body of the French kingdom, which finally became the hybrid entity that the *satyrical* posits, the *satyrical* spirit was lost. Perhaps it was simply a function of the fact that there was no longer a need to insist upon it – at least until the persecution of Protestants recommenced after the assassination of Henri IV. But the strong countercurrent against the conflation of satire and satyrs, led by Isaac Casaubon, likely played a role in its demise. At its core, the *satyrical* is based upon the notion, mistaken or not, that satire was somehow derived from the satyr; if that notion is disproven, then the mode has no foundation. So, the *satyrical* is necessarily delimited by the belief in this etymological notion; this is why the etymological origins formed such an important part of the early stages of this study. But this is not to say that the impact of this research is likewise restricted.

Recognizing and understanding the *satyrical* enriches our concept of satire generally. Far from the flat, spiteful invective described by Highet and satire's detractors, a new image emerges of a complex and hopeful means of expression. This richer, more complex notion of satire is able to fulfill the role imagined by Frye as a foundational literary mode. Likewise, a full understanding of the *satyrical* opens similar works from the periods examined to new readings. The classic satires of the sixteenth century in

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particular, the works of Rabelais and Marot for example, can be reexamined in this light and new insights into the literary culture of the time discovered and explored. But possibly more importantly and far reaching, the *satyrical* complicates traditional perceptions of the social dynamics of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, forcing us to reassess accepted ideas and, hopefully, develop a richer understanding of these moments and events, these crises of fragmentation, that still resonate within the modern world they shaped.

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