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Abstract

Title: Satire in the Old Testament

Candidate: Daniel Christian

College: Wycliffe Hall

Degree: D.Phil.

Date of Submission: Trinity Term 2014

In recent years, through the process of narrative and literary criticism, scholars have begun suggesting that satire is present in specific texts of the Old Testament. Thus the primary function of this thesis is to analyse the validity of these arguments alongside suggesting different places where satire may be found. To achieve this goal, the thesis begins by analysing and defining satire as a concept. A clear definition provides the thesis with the method needed to identify satire in texts which predate any defined understanding of the concept. The thesis also uses satirical works from throughout history as templates for understanding similar types of satire within the biblical works.

Once this methodology has been established, different genres of the Old Testament form the different chapters of the thesis. It identifies four different places where satire is deployed. Thus it examines satire in narratives, the book of Jonah, prophetic texts and wisdom literature. Each chapter combines new ideas with the analysis of previous scholastic arguments concerning the presence of satire. Within each genre a different type of satire with a range of complexity is deployed. The idol critiques in prophetic texts show simplistic satire. Narrative satire shows both situational and character-based satire. The book of Jonah is an example of hypocritical satire. Finally, satire in the wisdom literature contains a range of different satirical styles.

The thesis concludes that satire is present within the texts of the Old Testament. This has implication to the field of satire. It affirms the existence of pre-Hellenistic satire. Alongside this, it shows that satire is a subconscious human technique, deployable even when the proponent has no defined understanding of the concept. In the field of Old Testament studies it provides an alternative reading of many familiar texts. A satirical reading provides clear insight into authorial intent as well as offering different interpretations of the texts which are examined.

Long Abstract

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Satire is prevalent within the Old Testament in many different guises. The genre of satire in Israelite literature is one that has been recently proposed by scholars in the field. This doctorate is an important area of research because it addresses a specific gap in the current literature. The thesis proposes that satire exists within a variety of texts within the Old Testament. To prove this thesis and to extrapolate further concerning the nature of the satire within these texts, the thesis aims to accomplish several goals. Firstly, the thesis completes a comprehensive study of the places where satire is used in the Old Testament. This study both examines previous arguments for satire by scholars as well as suggesting new texts which can be understood satirically. This has not been done yet in the field. Secondly, it addresses the question of whether satire is its own independent genre, or a literary device of critique deployed within an alternative genre. Thirdly, the thesis shows how a satirical reading of different Old Testament texts offers a different and in some cases innovative interpretation of those texts. Overall, this study investigates how satire is used across different genres of Old Testament literature. It compares the different ways in which satire is used to mock, challenge, undermine or even form a separate literary genre of its own.

One of the main deficiencies in the previous Old Testament scholarship concerning satire is the lack of definition. Satire is a very elusive subject and therefore it needs a tight definition. This definition can then provide the foundation for the strong methodology needed in identifying satire within the biblical texts. The first chapter of my thesis highlights the problems in identifying satire within pre-Hellenistic texts. In analysing this issue, a strong definition of satire is defined by differentiating between criteria and attributes of satire. The criteria of mimicry and critique must be fulfilled to correctly argue the presence of satire in any ancient text. To prove that this definition is correct, the thesis examines different satirical texts throughout history. The analysis of these texts corroborates the primary features of satire that the definition identifies. Furthermore, these texts offer several different types of satire that are applicable to different forms of satire that will be argued to be present in ancient Hebrew texts.

The following texts are analysed alongside their typology:

1. *Satire of the Trades*: Ancient Egyptian instruction text that deploys simplistic satire.
2. Aristophanes' *The Knights*: Ancient Greek drama that is character-based satire.
3. Chaucer's *The Pardoner's Tale*: Early English fable that uses hypocritical satire.
4. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: English novel that shows situational satire.

The final part of the chapter analyses modern satire. This is fundamentally important as it shows the way that satire has evolved to transcend both different art forms and to broaden the range of its target of critique. In identifying these changes it shows how the modern understanding of satire differs from its ancient counterparts. This highlights the dangers of applying a modern understanding of the concept to a reading of an ancient text.

Once this framework has been established, this methodology can then be used to analyse satire within the Old Testament texts.

The thesis then uses a satirical methodology to examine satire's presence in different genres of the Old Testament. Each different genre within the Hebrew Scriptures will provide a chapter for the rest of the thesis. In each case a satirical reading will be examined, verified and finally analysed to identify an alternative interpretation of each text. Within each different chapter, the thesis both examines previous arguments of satire in the Old Testament as well as offering new suggestions of where a satirical reading could be informative for biblical scholarship. Each chapter focuses on a different genre of writing within the canon, thus satire is examined within a broad range of texts.

1. Chapter on narratives: This focuses on different narratives within the canon of the Hebrew Bible. Narrative is the natural place that satire has been identified within previous scholarship. Much of this chapter is the summary and analysis of the larger arguments for the presence of satire in different narratives. It focuses on the work of Weisman, Marcus and Valeta. The methods of Marcus and Valeta are shown to be reliant on the characteristics of satire rather than its fundamental criteria. In analysing their work the thesis engages with a series of texts: The Tower of Babel, Balaam's donkey, Elisha's summoning of the bears, the narratives of Daniel and others. The types of satire used within the different pericopes hold similarity to Aristophanes' character-based satire as well as Swift's situational-based satire.

2. Chapter on Jonah: This chapter will focus on a single narrative where satire is most clearly identified. The book of Jonah will be analysed in detail in this chapter as it is the longest complete narrative in the Old Testament that uses satire. Whilst satire in Jonah has been previously identified by scholars, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the book using a satirical methodology. In doing so, it argues that there are six different satires within the book of Jonah. These combine to form a complicated form of hypocritical satire with similarities to the pardoner of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* It also argues that this work is the closest the Old Testament has to a genre of satire. However, despite the continued presence of satire in the book,

the lack of an identifiable external target makes it doubtful that the book can be categorised as a satire. This is compounded by the fact that the book is concerned with far too many themes to reduce it into a single genre.

3. Chapter on prophetic literature: Prophetic texts provide a natural home for satire as they are often fundamentally about criticism. This chapter looks at the idol-production texts as good paradigms for Israelite satire. It focuses on simplistic satire, akin to the *Satire of the Trades* and examines whether satire is present in this guise within the harshest critiques of the prophets. The target of criticism is self apparent in these texts making the existence of satire relatively easy to identify. Furthermore, the brevity of the passages that deal with idol critique shows that satire is a literary technique deployed by the author within the framework of a larger work. However, the fact that the idol critiques differ from simple polemical statements to complicated satires, suggests that satire was not being consciously deployed by the author.

4. Chapter on Wisdom literature: This chapter will focus on the Wisdom texts and examining satire in Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes. The chapter begins by analysing Miles' work that Proverbs 1-9 functions as a satirical criticism against Solomon. The main part of the chapter focuses on the book of Job. It assesses both the internal and the external satires that Holbert and Dell have argued. It then applies a satirical reading to alternative parts of the book that are more suited to the suggestion of satire. Lastly, the book applies a satirical methodology to the book of Ecclesiastes. It argues that of all the wisdom books, the contradictions of Qoheleth can be explained through a satirical reading of the character. The disjointed nature of the wisdom books means that forming affirmative conclusions over the nature and type of satire deployed is extremely different. Instead, this chapter offers to scholarship the opportunity of seeing alternative interpretations of these texts that can be gleaned by using a satirical reading.

The final chapter of the thesis will draw together the conclusions of the previous chapters. It will summarise the difficulties in using a satirical approach to the text, from forming a definition to its application within a body of literature which had no coherent view of what satire is. It will then conclude that despite these difficulties satire is clearly present across a range of texts within the Old Testament. The simplistic nature of satire makes it exceptionally easy to use even if an ancient writer does not have a conscious understanding about what satire is. Thus, satire is consistently used as a literary device with a range of features in different texts. The thesis concludes that the closest that satire comes to becoming a defined genre within the Old Testament is within the book of Jonah.

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBET	Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
ELH	*English Literary History*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JHS	*Journal of Hebrew Scriptures*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSOT	*Journal of the Society of the Old Testament*
JSOT Supp	Journal of the Society of the Old Testament Supplement Series
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OTE	*Old Testament Essays*
OTL	Old Testament Library
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association*
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentaries
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Difficulty of Defining Satire

Satire, by its transient nature, is difficult to define. Identifying satirical works has been a difficult exercise throughout history for scholars to undertake.[1] David Marcus gives three reasons why theologians have not looked for or examined issues of satire in the Old Testament:[2] Firstly, because it has not been identified by English scholars in their textbooks on satire. Macdonald argued that parody was something that was not used by Jewish or Christian writers and thus, 'there is no trace of it in either the Old or the New Testament.'[3] Secondly, satire has not been recognised because of the sacred nature of the biblical canon. The text was taken literally and the narrative qualities of the text were therefore ignored. Thus, the Old Testament was thought to be devoid of humour and comic elements. Thirdly, satire can easily be misinterpreted through a lack of understanding of its context. The narrative becomes a realistic version of events or a fantastic tale, simply written for enjoyment. Jonathan Swift's opus, *Gulliver's Travels*, is frequently and mistakenly thought to be an entertaining fantasy by both children and adults alike. Without knowledge of England during Swift's time, the reader misses the criticism of 18th century politics and religion made within the parodies of the book.[4] It is for this same reason that both literary scholars and theologians overlooked the presence of satire within the biblical canon.

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[1] Jenson argues that its 'essence is as illusive as the centre of Peer Gynt's onion.' See H. J. Jenson, *The Satirist's art* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), p. 9.

[2] See D. Marcus, *From Balaam to Jonah: Anti Prophetic Satire in the Old Testament* (Brown Judaic Studies 301; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), pp. 2-5.

[3] D. Macdonald, *Parodies, an Anthology from Chaucer to Beerbohm – and after* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 562.

[4] For more information on the different types of satire in Swift, see E. W. Rosenhiem, *Swift and the Satirist's Art* (Chicago: University Press, 1963), pp. 5-15, and for information on political satire, see R. Knowles, *The Politics of Satire* (London: Prentice Hall International, 1996), pp. 20-32, and for religious satire, M. Kallich, *The*

The greater depth of understanding of the biblical texts and, more importantly, the contexts in which they were written, enable the theologian to identify parts of the Old Testament that can be satirical in nature.[5] Therefore, as scholarship has progressed, theologians have been able to identify areas of the texts which contain elements of satire and parody. Over the last fifty years, articles and books have arisen that have argued for the presence of satire in various biblical texts from different genres. As Marcus notes, there is no book which analyses satire across the biblical writings.[6] This work aims to compare the different uses of satire to draw conclusions over the way it was deployed in biblical texts.

Before a definition of satire can be identified, it is important to acknowledge the development of narrative criticism in Old Testament studies over recent years. There is an underlying tension in the field between a modernist and post-modernist approach to the text.[7] It is important to distinguish between the two approaches. Primarily, the scholar should be searching to identify whether the text was written as a satire. This is the first job of this thesis, to find out whether or not any texts of the Old Testament were intended to be satirical. Secondary to this purpose, this thesis will use an alternative method to see if offering a satirical reading can inform an understanding of the text. Using this method, satire can be deployed as a literary device for informing an alternative reading of the text.

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other end of the egg; religious satire in Gulliver's Travels (Bridgeport: Conference on British Studies, 1970), pp. 12-24. The novel, *Gulliver's Travels,* will be examined later on in the chapter.

[5] A good example of this is the story of the Tower of Babel. The satirical nature of the text can only be understood with a wider knowledge of the ancient Near East and specific Babylonian texts and phrases. This story will be examined later. For the arguments about Babel and Satire, see Z. Weisman, *Political Satire and the Bible* (Semaia Studies; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), pp. 39-50, and U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part 2. From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964), pp. 225-9.

[6] Marcus, p. 6.

[7] The tension between these two approaches in modern scholarship can be seen in article written by Aichele, Miscall and Walsh and the response by Van Seters. Aichelle, Miscall and Walsh attempt to marry the two approaches. However, Van Seters responds by highlighting the primary importance of the historical-critical method. See G. Aichelle, P. Miscall, and R. Walsh, 'An Elephant in the Room: Historical-Critical and Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible' *JBL* 128 (2009), pp. 383-404 and J. Van Seters, 'A Response to G. Aichelle, P. Miscall and R. Walsh, "An Elephant in the Room: Historical-Critical and Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible"' *JHS* 9 (2009), pp. 2-13.

There is an inherent problem in dealing with satire and the Old Testament. Previously satire as a genre was thought to have been invented by Aristophanes, writing at the end of the 5th Century BCE.[8] Therefore, the majority of biblical works would appear to predate the creation of the genre. [9] The term 'satire' was not created until Quintilian, drawing on Lucilius, defined a very specific area of Roman literature to be satire.[10] The term was derived from a Latin phrase, *lanx satura*, meaning 'full', or 'medley'.[11] However, there is an Egyptian document, *The Instruction of Dua-Kheti,* which has become commonly known as 'The Satire of the Trades'[12]. This scribal exercise predates any Greek satire. Thus, its presence would give justification to the view that a satirical genre existed in the ancient Near East before the conquest of Alexander and its subsequent Hellenisation.

At this point a clear distinction needs to be made: satire functions in two ways in both ancient and modern literature. Firstly, satire is a genre that dictates the purpose of the writing. In this guise, satire forms an entire subset of literature whose purpose is to entertain and criticise. Within this genre, satire has been split into Horatian and Juvenalian camps.[13] Secondly, satire takes the form of a speech, poem or pericope within a larger work. It becomes a literary or rhetorical technique which the writer is able to deploy within

[8] See Macdonald, pp. 562-3.
[9] Only those texts dating from the Hellenistic period would be aware of Greek works. This very much limits the influence of Greek satire on any writing of the Old Testament.
[10] A Quintilian satire had to be written in hexameter and be of Roman origin. For more information on the differences between the two concepts, see R. C. Elliott, *The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual and Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p.101
[11] See J. Ogborn and P. Buckroyd, *Satire* (Cambridge Contexts in Literature; Cambridge: University Press, 2001), p. 13.
[12] This work will be examined in greater detail later. For a full copy of the text see M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Reading vol.* 1 (3 vols; London: University of California Press, 1973-80) pp. 184-93 or A. Erman, *The literature of the ancient Egyptians; poems, narratives, and manuals of instruction, from the third and second millennia B. C.*(London: Methuen & co, 1927), p. 67.
[13] Horatian satire is generally lighter with a more comic edge; it is named after the Roman writer Horace who was its main ancient proponent. Juvenalian satire is darker, less funny and more openly critical; again it is named after its ancient father, Juvenal. For more information on the categories of the satirical genre, see L. Feinberg, *Introduction to Satire* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967), p. 4.

a wider narrative, prophetic or wisdom text. Previously, biblical scholars have often ignored this differentiation, moulding a definition of satire to serve their own purposes. Recently, both distinctions have been applied to certain parts of the Hebrew canon. Weisman and Lessing both argue that, 'as a definer and denominator of a specific genre the term satire is not used in Old Testament studies.'[14] Thus, they both see satire used only as a literary technique when it is deployed in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, a few scholars have suggested that certain books were written as polemical satires.[15] If these theories are verified, then, in combination with the existence of the 'Satire of the Trades', the genre of satire has an older origin in the ancient Near East. It is for this reason that the distinction of definition is essential to making conclusions about the writing techniques of the authors of the Old Testament.

As has been already noted, the concept of satire was first given a name by Roman writers in the first century CE. Therefore, if the modern scholar places the concept of satire into the mind of an earlier author, he is danger of committing the crime of anachronistic eisegesis. It is too easy to read ideas into a text that were not originally meant to be there. This is particularly easy for the twenty-first century theologian, arriving from a culture which is inundated with satire even on its most popular levels. Thus, in creating criteria for satire, theologians have too often made the mistake of defining either too broad or too narrow categories for satire's presence within the biblical texts. At its heart, satire has only two important aims: comedy and critique. Without the author's direct intention of creating

[14] Weisman, pp. 56-57. See also, R. Lessing, 'Satire in Israel's Tyre Oracle, '*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28 (2003), pp. 89-122.

[15] Katharine Dell has argued that the book of Job was writing as sceptical literature to undermine the wisdom tradition that it is critiquing. Other scholars such as Marcus, Holbert and Vawter have argued that the book of Jonah was written as a satire against the prophetic tradition. See Marcus, pp. 93-141; J. C. Holbert, '"Deliverance belongs to Yahweh" Satire in the book of Jonah', in *JSOT 21* (1981), pp. 59-64; and B. Vawter, *Job and Jonah – Questioning the Hidden God* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

these two results, the writing is not satirical. Instead, the text is just coincidentally similar to another piece of work or to a real-life scenario. The two outcomes of comedy and critique occur to varying degrees within satire, as has been shown within the two types of Roman satire. Fundamentally, it is important that satire retains both these qualities. Thus, most importantly for identifying satire within biblical texts, the scholar must traverse the difficult mire of discerning purpose and intention of biblical authors or even redactors.

The lack of a biblical Hebrew word for satire intensifies the difficulty in analysing the Hebrew canon through the medium of a later concept. It is for this reason that Weisman conducted a study of literary terms in the Hebrew language in order to identify if satire was understood within that language and culture. He argues that, although there is not a direct term for satire, the concept is understood within the root לעג (to mock).[16] Weisman notes that the term is used in tandem with שחוק (laughter). He argues that this shows that there was a semantic understanding of satire in biblical Hebrew. His point is substantiated by the presence of the idiomatic terms, משל (parable) and שנינה (taunt), these together forming a hendiadys in biblical Hebrew.[17] Therefore, in Weisman's view, the semantic field of the root לעג proves the concept of satire was understood by the writers of the Old Testament.[18] However, Weisman's approach is a good example of an overzealous methodology. The passages that he cites as examples of these Hebrew idioms have not been identified by Weisman or any other scholar as being satirical in nature. His primary text, Jeremiah 20:7-8, is not comic in nature but tragic, as Jeremiah is lamenting the derision he is receiving from his foes. The root לעג is not used to undermine Jeremiah in critique, but it is deployed as a marker that he is a victim of ridicule. This is clearly not satire: שחוק is not a literary device

[16] See Weisman, pp. 4-7.
[17] Ibid, p.6
[18] Ibid, p.7

used to graft comedy on to the people's critique of Jeremiah, but instead the word intensifies the abuse that Jeremiah is receiving. Furthermore, the relationship between משל and שׁנינה is not satirical in nature. Instead, the hendiadys is used, in all three of Weisman's citations,[19] to designate a downtrodden position of persecution. In each case, if Israel does not adhere to Yahweh's statutes, then he will punish them and they will become scorned by the nations around them. This is clearly not satire. There is no critique, comedy or parallel; instead the terms are used as a warning that the rejection by Yahweh will lead to ridicule from the nations. However, the absence of a Hebrew word for satire is not necessarily problematic. Just because the modern concept was not designated in that language does not mean that satire was not used by the ancient writers. In the same way, there is no classical Greek phrase or term for satire, yet it was still deployed by many Greek writers.[20]

Weisman's search for an ancient Hebrew word to convey satire shows the desire of scholars to extrapolate modern literary theory into ancient texts. It is for this reason that a clear methodology is fundamental in applying modern concepts to ancient literature. In order to identify satire's presence in the Old Testament, the scholar must return to finding the two aspects of comedy and critique.

These two attributes are affirmed in modern literature studies. Scholars such as Elliott, Feinberg, Worcester, Highet and Frye all identify these two areas as the main criteria for satire. All five of these scholars agree on the critical aspects of satire. An external and

[19] Deuteronomy 28:37, 1Kings 9:7 and 2 Chronicles 7:20. See Weisman, p. 6.
[20] Satire was most famously used by Aristophanes in plays like 'The Knights', but other Greek authors include Menippus of Gadara and Menander. For more information, see S. Halliwell, 'Aristophanic Satire', in *Yearbook of English Studies,* Edited by C. J. Rawson (Oxford: University Press, 1984), pp. 6-20.

recognisable target of the text must be found to enable the work to be labelled as satire.[21] Therefore, satire must contain a moral dimension that is mediated through various rhetorical devices. These devices form the basis for creating a mimic of a recognisable external target of critique. Thus, for Frye a range of comical devices can be used to create this doppelganger.[22]

The comic aspect of satire has one major attribute: it always uses mimicry as its main device to create comic effect. The imitation of a real object is vital even in darker, humourless, Juvenalian satire. An example of this is the book *Lord of the Flies*, which creates an impression of a human society that breaks down. The book uses the comic technique of parody to create its primary critique despite the narrative being very sombre and serious. This example shows that comic techniques can be deployed by an author, even if the book is not trying to make the reader laugh. Thus, the first criterion for any text to contain satire is that the work must use some form of parody of a real object or concept.

This technique naturally associates satire with its related cousin, parody. The two terms overlap and inform each other. However, they have certain key differences. Fundamentally parody is concerned with creating a copy of its target. The motivation for the imitation is inconsequential. There is no positive or negative assertion behind the creation of the mimic. Thus, parody can be used for the glorification of a target or to undermine it. Parody transcends purpose, unlike satire which is bound to criticism. Thus, the principal difference between satire and parody is the motivation behind the imitation.

[21] See Elliott, p. 70-6, Feinberg, p. 4-5, D. Worcester, *The Art of Satire* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1940), pp. 16-7, G. Highet, *Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp.16-8 and N. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 226-34.
[22] See Frye, pp. 228.

It is the critical aspect of satire which causes the greatest problem for the classical, biblical and modern scholar. To discern critique within a text, the object of criticism must be found. This is often problematic as it requires either a detailed knowledge of the world of the author or the possession of the literature which is being attacked. The satirist will then twist the object into a parallel, but different context to highlight its flaws. As Koestler asserts, 'The Satire is a verbal caricature which distorts characteristic features of an individual or society by exaggeration and simplification.'[23] This ability to disfigure is the art of satire, as it causes the reader to question the validity of the original object of critique, although it does not necessarily provide an alternative solution.[24] However, once the object has been undermined, satire never tries to provide an alternative solution.[25] This can be seen even in texts which appear to be encouraging a reader. C. S Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* is written as an encouragement for Christians struggling with temptations. Within the biblical canon, to ascertain the presence of satire within the text, the object of critique must be identified and authenticated. If the first criterion for identifying satire is mimicry, then critique is the second and most important criterion for locating satire within the texts. This may mean that some texts that could be satirical in nature cannot be verified, as their object of critique is yet unknown or undiscovered. However, this is an important qualification to be achieved, as without a tight definition, theories concerning satire can multiply exponentially.

Thus, the criteria for identifying satire have been shown to be two-fold. Firstly, the text must contain some form of comic parody or mimicry. Secondly, the object that is

[23] A. Koestler, *The Art of Creation* (London: Pan Books, 1966), p. 72.
[24] See Worcester, p.10.
[25] It is this which differentiates satire from morally instructive literature such as fables or parables. See Feinberg, p. 3.

satirised must be found. Once these two criteria have been satisfied, the attributes of a type of satire may be shown. In applying this clear methodology to the Old Testament, three important features of satire can be examined. Firstly, previous theories of satire in the Bible can be collated and verified. Secondly, new texts within the canon may be observed and shown to be satirical in nature. Lastly, satire can be shown to be either a genre or a literary technique in Hebrew writing.

A History of Satire

The definition of satire that has been proposed can be verified by examining the history of satire from ancient times until modern day. It would be an impossible task to summarise the wide breadth of satiric works throughout history. Therefore, this chapter will analyse specific examples from different periods of history. It will show that throughout its use in literature and other media, satire has retained certain fundamental characteristics. Firstly, by examining satire in its different guises, it can be seen that satire transcends form. Satire can be spliced into different genres, augmenting their form and function. Secondly, satire will be shown to be primarily concerned with comedy and critique. It creates a comic effect by mimicking a recognisable target. However, it is not bound to pure imitation, like its cousin parody. Satire always subtly undermines an external target. This will be shown within its different uses throughout history.

This chapter will not be limited to focusing on the consistencies within satire; it will also show that satire has evolved over the different periods of history. Before it was consciously defined, satire mainly functioned in an auxiliary way, supplementing the purpose of a text. After its formal definition and subsequent formation as a defined genre, satire transformed the way it integrates with different media. It has transferred from its

literary constraints to be present within an array of different contexts from music to film. Consciously, it makes critique the fundamental reason for its existence. As satire enters the modern era, it changes the quantity of targets which it attacks. Instead of specifically attacking one or two objects, satire instead becomes a vehicle for the universal critique of society.

By examining satire's use in history, various types of satire can be identified. In the past satire had been classified by the object it has targeted. Thus, satire has been placed into political, religious or sociological categories. Whilst these are useful distinctions to make, satire can utilise different forms that enable its creator to criticise certain targets. This chapter will categorise different kinds of satire that are prevalent throughout its history by its style and form. This enables a better understanding of the different styles of satire that are used within the Old Testament.

Satire of the Trades

The first piece of recorded literature that has been identified as satire is a scribal exercise from ancient Egypt. The document, *the Instruction of Dua-Kheti*, is commonly known as the *Satire of the Trades*. Because of its didactic nature, there are multiple copies of this document, both fragmentary and complete,[26] in existence. Lichtheim believes that the text was composed during the Middle Kingdom between 2025-1700 BCE.[27] Most of the documentary evidence has been dated from the Middle Kingdom. However, Jasnow has argued that a fragment of the *Satire* is to be dated as late as the twenty-fifth dynasty – 760-

[26] There are numerous fragments in the British Museum and the Louvre as well as other institutions. There is a complete, but corrupted, copy of the satire in the *Sallier II papyrus* held in the British Museum. See Lichtheim, pp. 187-193.
[27] Ibid, p. 184.

656 BCE.[28] This has been important for biblical scholars in comparing Egyptian instruction literature to biblical wisdom texts. The *Satire* has been traditionally compared with Ben Sira 38:24-39:11, another example of a scribe praising his occupation over other artisans.[29] The traditional designation of the instruction as a satire is highlighted by Lichtheim. She argues that the descriptions of the artisan trades are hyperbolic versions of the traditional Egyptian view.[30] Thus the author of the work is perverting the portrayal of alternative occupations in Egyptian society to prove the magnificence of the scribal profession above all others. Most recently, Rollston has expanded on this argument to assert that Ben Sira was not just dependent on one text but on an Egyptian tradition of scribal satire. As the satire was written as a scribal exercise, Rollston argues that there are other Egyptian texts which were used for the same function. Thus he concludes that Ben Sira 38:24-39:11 'may have functioned as a similar motivational tool.'[31] By attacking the other professions, the satire's purpose is not solely limited to ridicule but therefore acts as 'a pedagogical device to increase recruitment, retention and motivation in the scribal training programme.'[32]

The Satire itself begins with a description of its author and its purpose. It identifies Dua Kheti as the author and the document's purpose is to teach his son Pephi.[33] The teaching begins with an exaltation of the scribal profession. The first three paragraphs then

[28] R. Jasnow, *A Late Period Hieratic Wisdom Text (P. Brooklyn 47.218.135)* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation 52; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1992), p. 34.
[29] This has been suggested by various commentators, notably J. T. Sanders, *Ben Sira and Demotic Wisdom* (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 28; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), pp. 61-9 and J. G. Snaith, 'Ecclesiasticus: A Tract for All Times', in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in honour of J. A. Emerton* (ed. John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 175.
[30] Lichtheim, p. 184. In contrast, Helck has argued that these texts portray realistic scribal views. However, most Egyptologists agree that the author exaggerates many derogatory features of the alternative profession in the *Satire.* See, W. Helck, *Die Lehre des DW3-Htjj* (Kleine Aegyptische Texte, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1970), p. 162.
[31] C. A. Rollston, 'Ben Sira 38:24-39:11 and the "Egyptian Satire of the Trades": A reconsideration' *Journal of Biblical Studies* 120 (2001), p. 139
[32] Ibid, p. 139.
[33] Papyrus Sallier II, column III, line 9.

proceed to explain how Pephi has been sent to learn his vocation and why Dua Kheti believes that the scribal office is 'greater than any other office.'[34] His argument is substantiated by the fact that the profession confers social status on the young boy despite his age. This is affirmed by his receipt of a linen garment.[35] The instruction's main body is an attack on the other professions in Egyptian society. This critique comes in the form of a list where the author takes each alternative profession in turn and highlights its limitations. The vocational nature of these multiple targets makes the instruction a sociological satire.

The instruction examines eighteen different professions and proceeds to ridicule each one in turn. Satire is created by twisting each vocational portrayal to highlight the toil of each occupation. Its purpose is to ridicule and mock. This mockery indicates the presence of satire. The author creates juxtaposition with the scribal profession that asserts its dominance as the career of choice. The range of vocations varies from hard labourers to skilled craftsmen. The document's purpose is clear. Critique is both explicit and implied throughout the whole section. Satire has taken parodies of different professions and used them to show their deficiencies. Satire takes its place at the centre of the document. It functions symbiotically with rest of the scribal exercise. The mockery that is created is used to promote the superiority of the scribal career. This is shown as the document ends with traditional Egyptian instruction. Dua Kheti instructs his son in scribal etiquette. These commandments range from what to do when in the presence of the master of the house to a command not to speak falsely of your mother.[36] These individual commands lead to the conclusion of the piece. In this, the budding scribe should thank the gods for his father and

[34] Column IV, line 5.
[35] Column IV, line 6.
[36] A maternal figure occurs multiple times within the document. This character appears to act as both the personal mother of Pephi and a universal figure representing the mother of scribes everywhere.

mother who placed him upon this career path.[37] Creating social etiquette and gratitude is another device that the father is using to convince his son to become a scribe. Thus, it is retaining his son's presence within a scribal career that is the predominant motive behind the document.

By examining the satire present in the instruction, *The Satire of the Trades* is an example of simplistic satire. It takes the target of critique, in this case alternative Egyptian occupations, and reproduces it with their negative aspects accentuated. This makes the targets' illegitimacy apparent to everyone and makes them objects of ridicule. Simplistic satire functions by exaggeration. By exaggerating the flaws of the alternative occupations to the detriment of all their other aspects, *The Satire of the Trades* achieves its purpose to undermine them. It is worth noting that in this first category, satire does not function as an independent critique. The critique works parasitically as part of the wider purpose of the text. Before satire has been clearly defined, ancient literature always appears to use satire as part of other genres. Its function is always to add an element of critique to an alternative motivation. In the case of *The Satire of the Trades*, satire becomes a device in a piece of Egyptian instruction literature. Satire does not appear as an independent literary entity until later in its development.

Greek Satire

Excluding *The Satire of the Trades,* satire is traditionally thought to have been invented in ancient Greece. There are various different proponents of satire in Greek literature, but all come within the medium of drama. This chapter will assess one of the major proponents of Greek satire, Aristophanes. The other two satirists of note are

[37] Column XI, line 4.

Menander and Menippus of Gadara. Menander wrote after Aristophanes in the later era of 'New Comedy.' Despite the fact that most of Menippus' writings are lost, his influence reaches into later writers, such as Lucian, Varro and Seneca.[38] The style of Menippean satire is revived in later Western literature. The specific attributes of Menippean satire are identified by Mikhail Bahtkin and will be assessed in a later chapter. These three Greek satirists predate any defined understanding of a satirical genre. They all worked within a newly established comedic genre that had entered Athenian drama in the fifth century BCE. Thus, Aristophanes and Menander used satire within a dramatic genre. In the writing of comic plays, their principal aims were to win awards at the various Athenian festivals, to entertain audiences and to comment on the society around them.

The plays of Aristophanes were written over a period of thirty-nine years. Throughout his career as a playwright he entered his work into two Athenian festivals of drama, the *Lenaia* and the *Dionysia*. The two festivals were the catalysts for a formalised genre of comedy within Athenian literature known as 'Old Comedy.'[39] Over his career, Aristophanes authored plays for both festivals. His first play *The Banqueters,* which received second prize at the *Lenaia* in 427 BCE, was written under the pseudonym of his producer Kallistratos.[40] He continued to write for both festivals until his death in 385 BCE. Whilst he

[38] For more information about Menippean Satire see E. P. Kirk, *Menippean Satire: An Annotated Catalogue of Texts and Criticism* (New York: Garland, 1980) or H. D. Weinbrot, *Menippean Satire Reconsidered: From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005).

[39] Rusten argues that Athenian comedy began with the inclusion of comic plays in the Dionysia in 486 BCE. Although this comedy differed in style from the later comedy of Aristophanes sixty years later, Rusten argues that the first few decades of this comedy were considered to be inconsequential by the ancient commentators. Instead, they provided the platform for political comics beginning with the introduction of comedy into the second festival, *the Lenaia,* in 440 BCE. It was this shift which enabled playwrights such as Aristophanes to write satirically for entertainment. See, J. Rusten, 'Who "invented" comedy? The Ancient Candidates for the Origins of Comedy and the Visual Evidence', *American Journal of Philology* 127 (2006), pp. 37-66.

[40] Without any manuscript evidence of this play, there is a degree of debate over the exact nature of who produced the play. For more information about the debate and the play see, D. M. Macdowell, 'Aristophanes

is not necessarily the father of Greek satire, Aristophanes is the playwright from whom we have the largest canon of 'Old Comedy'. Of the forty plays that Aristophanes is known or thought to have authored, there are eleven survivors in various degrees of completion today.[41] In forming his satires, Aristophanes was indebted to earlier comic writers such as Magnes, Crates and Cratinus. Unlike Aristophanes, there is a lack of manuscript evidence for the work of these playwrights. Despite this gap in evidence, Aristophanes himself interacts with these playwrights in his works as well as tragic writers, such as Sophocles, Euripides and Aeschylus.[42] Most famously he criticises Cratinus in the play *The Knights,* portraying Cratinus as a washed up drunkard.[43] The entirety of his works was written within a Hellenistic dramatic genre. The different forms deployed in his plays are consistent with other Greek playwrights. He used poetic forms such as iambic hexameters and trimeters as well as dramatic conventions such as prologues, parados, agons and most importantly parabases.[44] If his work is argued to be satirical, it has to be understood as being mediated through a distinctive Hellenistic dramatic medium.

In analysing the works of Aristophanes, it is important to note his consistent use of parody and critique. It is for this reason that traditionally Aristophanes is seen as the father

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and Kallistratos', *The Classical Quarterly 32* (1982), pp. 21-6; D. Welsh, 'Philonides and Aristophanes' Banqueters', *The Classical Quarterly* 33 (1983), pp. 51-5.

[41] For more information on the surviving manuscripts, see P. Cartledge, *Aristophanes and his theatre of the Absurd* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1990), pp. Xvi-xvii.

[42] All three are parodied within the play 'The Frogs'. They are all consistently referenced and mocked throughout many of Aristophanes' other plays.

[43] Cratinus' response to Aristophanes leads to the creation of his most famous play, $\Pi\upsilon\tau\acute{\iota}\nu\eta$. In it, Cratinus defends his love of wine, whimsically portraying himself as the hero of the drama. $\Pi\upsilon\tau\acute{\iota}\nu\eta$ went on to beat Aristophanes' own play, *The Clouds,* in the Dionysia in 423 BCE. For more information see C. Austin, 'From Cratinus to Menander', *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 63 (1999), pp. 37-48.

[44] The parabasis was an interlude within the play when the chorus addressed the audience with a message from the playwright. It functions as the principal way that an author can defend his own creation. Aristophanes used his parabases very pertinently, often deploying multiple parabases to make strong indictments against the political world around him. Bowie argues that Aristophanes used his parabasis to create a literary construct of himself through which he could be a vehicle for his stronger political statements. The most famous critique is of the politician Cleon, which will be examined later in this chapter. See A. M. Bowie, 'The Parabasis in Aristophanes: Prolegomena, Acharnians', *The Classical Quarterly* 32 (1982), pp. 27-40.

of satire. Many of Aristophanes' dramatic creations, whether characters, settings or situations, were direct mimics of actual people, places or events. Often this was very unsubtle with the character sharing the actual name of the person being parodied. For instance, in the play *The Acharnians,* Aristophanes' earliest surviving play, there are direct portrayals of multiple existing figures. These include political figures such as Pericles,[45] Aspasia,[46] or Thucydides.[47] Alongside these characters, Aristophanes directly portrays or references other writers such as Euripides[48] or Herodotus.[49] Whilst these parodies were often used to celebrate the object of mimicry, for the most part Aristophanes created humour by highlighting their flaws. Most famously Aristophanes consistently undermined the politician Cleon.

Aristophanes' multiple attacks against the politician Cleon exemplify how satire uses its host genre as a vehicle for attack. Within the dramatic form, satire attaches a subversive motivation to the underlying comedy of the play. Parasitically, satire combines a degree of critique with any parody. This transforms the object of mimicry into something that is inherently polemical as well as comic. Within the Aristophanic canon this can be best seen in his consistent attack against Cleon. It is impossible to verify if there was any personal hatred that instigated the feud between these two Athenian celebrities. However, it is known that Cleon attempted to prosecute Aristophanes for slander against the *polis* in his play *The Babylonians*. This is evidenced in Aristophanes' subsequent play, *The Acharnians*. Within the play, Aristophanes portrays two facets of a public defence against Cleon's incrimination. Firstly, he makes it clear that he was not attacking the *polis* in his previous

[45] Aristophanes, *The Acharnians (*Trans. A. H. Sommerstein; Warminster: Aris and Philips, 1980), line 530.
[46] Line 527.
[47] Lines 703-12.
[48] Line 10.
[49] Whilst Herodotus himself is not mentioned, his work is satirised. See lines 502-6.

play, but the men wielding power in leadership.[50] Secondly, he prepares the audience for his forthcoming response to Cleon's prosecution in his first parabasis. This response is made through his subsequent play, '*Ιππεις*, or *The Knights*. This play is one of Aristophanes' most vehement satires and thus it is a good paradigm to assess the features of Ancient Greek satire.

Although the name Cleon is never mentioned throughout the text of the play, it is clear that the character of the Paphlagonian is intended to be a portrayal of Cleon. Cleon's actual name was used in various different manuscripts, within the list of speakers and dramatis personae. For this reason, some translators designate the character of the Paphlagonian simply as Cleon throughout the whole play. Aristophanes creates the association with the real life figure of Cleon by constant linguistic and thematic parallels. Firstly the play uses the nickname of Cleon 'the dog - *κυων*' multiple times in reference to the Paphlagonian in lines 424 and 1119-30. The nickname is also used by Aristophanes in the play *The Wasps*.[51] Secondly, the play refers contextually to historical events of the time which identify the character of the Paphlagonian with Cleon. The attack by the sausage seller at the Pnyx is the clearest example of this association. Beginning at line 750, Aristophanes uses the speech of the sausage seller to twist many of the supposed deeds of Cleon. He bases the polemic within events that designate the character of the Paphlagonian as Cleon. An example of this is in lines 770-88, where he claims that Cleon takes false credit for victories against the Medes.

The term 'Paphlagonian' functions in two ways to undermine the character of Cleon. Firstly, the term implies that the character is a foreigner and therefore undermines his

[50] Aristophanes does this through the words of his protagonist Dicaeopolis in lines 515-7.
[51] See L. Edmunds, *Cleon, the Knights and Aristophanes' Politics* (London: University Press of America, 1988).

authority to lead in the city of Athens. This is confirmed in line 449, where the sausage seller accuses the Paphlagonian of being the grandson of a foreign bodyguard of the Athenian tyrant, King Hippias.[52] Secondly, the term relates to the root 'paphlazein', meaning to bubble over or to splutter. The phrase is appropriate to the character of the Paphlagonian, as he spends much of the play angrily ranting about his position as the servant of the people.

The plot of the play *The Knights* revolves around the protagonist Agoracritus, a sausage-seller. The play begins with two servants, Demosthenes and Nicias,[53] complaining about how the Paphlagonian has deceitfully obtained favour with their old master, Demos.[54] After drinking some wine, these two characters steal a set of oracles from the unconscious Paphlagonian. In these oracles there are four different people who are destined to direct the affairs of the city. The Paphlagonian is the third of these rulers. However, it is prophesied that he will be deposed by a sausage-seller. Conveniently at that point, the protagonist of the play, the sausage-seller, walks by. Whilst Nicias goes to spy on the Paphlagonian, Demosthenes attempts to persuade the sausage-seller of his destiny to rule Athens. Using the sausage-seller's lowly estate as proof of his right to rule, Demosthenes compares ruling the city to the creation of a sausage. His argument is compounded when he shows the sausage-seller the oracles in which the serpent destroys the eagle. The sausage-seller is represented by the serpent, as its shape is long and thin like a sausage.

[52] This insult firstly implies the foreign lineage of Cleon, an insult which has no real evidence. It secondly associates the Paphlagonian with a despised Athenian tyrant. Aristophanes creates this insult indirectly through Hippias' wife Myrsine. For more information see the translators' notes in Aristophanes, *The Birds and Other Plays* (translated by A. H. Sommerstein and D. Barrett; London: Penguin, 1978), p. 317.

[53] The two characters of Demosthenes and Nicias probably relate to the real life Athenian generals of the same name. This is consistent with their portrayal as slaves of 'Demos', who represent the Athenian public. However, the function of these characters within the play is merely introductory. They act to set the scene of the play, to introduce the principal protagonist and antagonist and finally to summon the chorus of knights. By the end of the play both characters have disappeared into insignificance.

[54] This name designates Demos as a representation of the people of the city of Athens.

Eventually the Paphlagonian arrives to break up the scene by accusing everyone of conspiring against Demos. Demosthenes then summons the chorus of knights, who proceed to attack the Paphlagonian because of his villainous ways. The Paphlagonian asks the audience to shout to give him support. In answer, the leader of the knights calls on the sausage-seller to outshout the Paphlagonian. This begins a series of competitions between the protagonist and antagonist of the play. At first, they have a vulgar shouting match, heaping insults against each other. Whilst the knights deliver a parabasis praising the virtues of the playwright, the contest between the two is presented to the council. At the start of the second act, the sausage-seller reports on how he won the council's favour with food. The remainder of the play shows the continued victory of the sausage-seller over the Paphlagonian in a series of contests which are fought for the favour of Demos, the people. They firstly argue about politics; secondly, they both present oracles to Demos; thirdly, they engage in a competition of flattery; lastly, the Paphlagonian tries to undermine the sausage-seller's credentials in fulfilling the oracle. The sausage-seller triumphs in each contest before revealing his name as *Agoracritus*, confirming his humble origins within the Greek market place. After a final parabasis from the knights, Demos is revealed to have been revived by Agoracritus, who boiled him like a sausage. After presenting Demos with peace-treaties that had been hidden by the Paphlagonian, the play concludes with the Paphlagonian being thrown out to sell sausages at the city gates.

Aristophanes creates his satire against Cleon by making the Paphlagonian into a venomous villain. Within the play, the Paphlagonian is subjected to multiple attacks which undermine his character and his actions. The unpleasant characterisation of the

Paphlagonian adds to the audience's disgust towards him. Furthermore, there are verbal and physical attacks against the antagonist from every other character within the play:

Demosthenes and Nicias: Before the Paphlagonian arrives on the stage, these two characters introduce the wickedness of the Paphlagonian to the audience. Their attack is verbal, constantly insulting the Paphlagonian whilst complaining about the influence he holds over Demos. Their words are consistently scathing, thus creating a strong introductory defamation of the character. Demosthenes states in the first line of the play, 'It's that blasted Paphlagonian again – that horror master's gone and bought!'[55] This sets the tone for the whole play. The Paphlagonian is consistently insulted, ridiculed and undermined by all the other characters in the play.

The Sausage-Seller: The main vehicle for the attack against the Paphlagonian is driven by the protagonist of the play. The sausage-seller engages the Paphlagonian in multiple verbal conflicts to obtain the favour of various members of Athenian society as well as the audience themselves. As well as insulting the Paphlagonian throughout the play, the sausage-seller makes a series of accusations against the Paphlagonian. These indictments range from the realistic to the absurd. In their first engagement the Paphlagonian and the sausage-seller continuously insult each other.[56] Cumulatively, Aristophanes uses the character of the sausage-seller as a voice to ridiculously mock the Paphlagonian and therefore Cleon. Furthermore, the triumph of Agoracritus at the end of the play produces a juxtaposition of leadership. Cleon's leadership is undermined when placed in contrast to a humble market seller.

[55] Quoted from line 1 of *The Birds and other plays.* All subsequent quotations are from the Barrett and Sommerstein translation.
[56] See lines 280-301.

The Knights: The chorus of the play is made up of a group of knights. They are exceptionally important to the play, as their voice is the closest to the playwright's own words. They are responsible for the two parabases within the play. The parabasis is a type of soliloquy which the leader of the knights proclaims to the audience. Within it he conveys a direct message of the author that functions almost like a piece of stand-up comedy. The two parabases within *The Knights* are not greatly critical of Cleon. Most of the parabasis at the end of act 1 is concerned with laughing at other Athenian playwrights or poets. After extolling the virtue of the author, the leader of the knights mocks Magnes, Cratinus, Connas and Crates. The only attack against Cleon himself comes near the end of the parabasis. There Aristophanes praises the virtues of the patriarchs of Athens. Their greatness functions satirically in juxtaposition to Cleon's pettiness. Aristophanes criticises Cleon's desire for social status. In line 580, the leader of the knights claims that Cleon would go on strike unless he receives the social perks of his position. This is the only time in the play when the name of Cleon is vocalised. Outside of the parabases, the knights are clearly antagonistic to the Paphlagonian. When they arrive in line 243, they immediately attack the Paphlagonian shouting, 'Strike, strike and never cease, the wrecker of our peace.'[57] The leader of the knights continues this defamation claiming, 'haven't you had your finger in the public pie for years?'[58] This antagonism is consistent throughout the whole play. By the end, the knights are celebrating the demise of the Paphlagonian. Through this the knights' purpose is revealed. They become a voice of critique for the author to build up his continued attack against Cleon.

[57] Line 243.
[58] Line 259.

Demos: The character of Demos is relatively passive throughout the whole play. In comparison to the other characters in the play he does not really insult the Paphlagonian. Despite this, his rejection of the Paphlagonian at the end of the play is the most damning insult to Cleon. He says in line 1223, 'You unutterable villain! So you've been hoodwinking me the whole time.' Because Demos represents the people of the city, his expulsion of the Paphlagonian symbolises Aristophanes' political message. Aristophanes desires that the people of Athens will remove Cleon from his position.

Aristophanes' creates a satire which is based entirely upon characterisation. His attack is dependent on creating a recognisable mimic of his target of ridicule. This caricature thus provides the playwright with the tools to make his attack. Like the simplistic satire, character based satire recreates a twisted form of its target by accentuating the targets' flaws. In this case, the character of the Paphlagonian has all the worse facets of Cleon without any of his virtues. This disfigurement enables the author of the satire to portray all the negative features of his target to create disgust in those watching the play. Character-based satire has a larger arsenal for creating critique than the limited simplistic satire. Aristophanes is able to create mockery by the appearance, actions and dialogue of his antagonist. Alongside this he uses the voices of the rest of the cast to insult his target of ridicule. In doing this character- based satire has a greater degree of literary complexity and depth than the attack of *The Satire of the Trades.*

Seeing satire's presence within Hellenistic drama shows its ability to transcend form. Satire again functions within an independent genre. As a device within Greek plays, it generates laughter which is essential for the primary function of comedic drama. Aristophanes' plays were written for Athenian festivals. This primary aim was to make the

audience laugh and therefore win accolades at the various festivals.[59] Thus, critique becomes a secondary purpose to the function of the play. However, the comedy and critique within the play cannot be separated from each other. Thus, satire forms a symbiotic relationship with the comedy of the text. It creates laughter in its mimicry alongside its subversive purpose to be a polemic against a specific target of mockery.

Early English Satire

In English literature, the earliest examples of satire can be found in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Written by Chaucer in 14th Century, *The Tales* are based around the fictional journey of a group of pilgrims to the shrine of Thomas Becket. It is often seen as one of the forerunners of English literature, as Chaucer wrote in his native tongue rather than the more common Latin or French. The tales are consistent in form as they are written in poetic verse commonly using rhyming couplets.[60] However, Chaucer uses a range of themes and styles for each different tale. Thus, in its entirety, *The Tales* form a pastiche of fables, courtly romances, fabliaux, sermons and confessions. Most notably Chaucer uses irony consistently throughout many of the tales, often creating incongruity between the storyteller and his tale. Because of this it is very difficult to assign *The Tales* into a specific genre, as Chaucer uses a range of rhetorical and literary devices to create this complicated tableau. It is therefore unsurprising that satire can be found within *The Tales* in various guises and with different degrees of vehemence. Chaucer's pilgrimage contains a diverse

[59] There is a debate concerning how the festivals were judged and their purpose. It is clear however, that entertainment was at the heart of the reason why the festivals were put on. The fact that performances were not repeated suggests that the plays were intended for the moment rather than for posterity. For more information, see I. Ruffell, 'A Total Write-off. Aristophanes, Cratinus, and the Rhetoric of Comic Competition' *The Classical Quarterly 52* (2002), pp. 138-67.

[60] Different tales contain different rhyming metres. Whilst rhyming couplets are the most common, there is a range of different styles used that range from simple couplets (General Prologue) to more intricate metres within each stanza (Monk's Tale).

make up of fourteenth-century social classes.[61] His party is a cross section of different social strata, mainly made up of the gentry, the church and the working classes. By creating a fictional version of himself, Chaucer is able to examine and often undermine the deficiencies of each member of the party.

Whilst there is a range of social commentary that occurs within *The Tales*, the most powerful polemic is reserved for the church. This is immediately apparent in the irony that the backdrop for the whole work is a pilgrimage. Despite this, most of the pilgrims appear to have immoral qualities which mark the hypocrisy of their journey. It is here that satire is prevalent within *The Tales*. Chaucer particularly uses his portrayal of church figures to create this attack. However, it is impossible for any commentator to conclude that Chaucer was against religion or the church in its entirety. Chaucer creates a variety of characters from the church that range from the utterly corrupt to the rightly pure. The eight religious characters indicate that Chaucer had a complex view of the church. He maintained the integrity of some members of the church in the characters of the parson, the Second Nun or the Nun's Priest. Others are more morally ambiguous like the friar, the prioress or the monk. Others are morally repugnant such as the pardoner and the summoner. It is through the vehicle of these two characters that Chaucer brings his biggest critique of the church. These two are continually lambasted throughout the whole work, from their induction in the General Prologue to the inappropriate nature of their tales. Through the examination of the pardoner in particular, the nature of Chaucerian satire can be understood.

[61] The degree to which Chaucer's *Tales* are a truthful portrayal of the society of the time is debated. It is true that Chaucer's characters are exaggerated for literary effect, but that does not undermine the inherent problems in each of the social classes. For more information on the debate, see G. Morgan, 'Moral and Social Identity and the Idea of Pilgrimage in the General Prologue', *The Chaucer Review 37* (2003), p. 286-8.

The pardoner's portrayal in the prologue describes his background, his occupation as well as his appearance. It is in this description that Chaucer begins to build his substantial critique against the corruption of church officials. The office of pardoner within canon law at the time was relatively minute. They were to act as the messengers who delivered the indulgences from the Pope or the bishops who were the only ones entitled to license them. However, it is clear that the church struggled to limit pardoners to this function. Multiple attempts were made to control the role of the pardoner. Instigated first by Innocent III in 1215, the council of the Lateran instituted the first general code for pardoners. Subsequent other attempts were made by Clement IV in 1267 and Clement V in 1311-12, which gave bishops the powers to punish pardoners who abused their position.[62] It is clear from the continuity of these papal proclamations that the problem of corrupt pardoners continued and enforcement was particularly difficult. The pardoner's official position was intended for hospitals. There, indulgences were given to people approaching death.[63] In the light of this, it would appear that Chaucer's description of the pardoner is at least plausible to his fourteenth century readers.

Chaucer's satire of the office of the pardoner is threefold. Firstly, he undermines the office by the specific description of his pardoner. Secondly, he attacks the pardoner's greed in his role as a custodian of relics. Lastly and most importantly, Chaucer's critique of the pardoner is created by the inappropriate nature of his tale to his character. In examining all three components together, it can be shown that the Chaucer's satire is dependent on

[62] For a fuller examination of these laws see A. L. Kellogg and L.A. Haselmayer, 'Chaucer's Satire of the Pardoner', *PMLA* 66 (1961), pp. 255-8.

[63] It is for this reason that the pardoner is described from being from Rouncivale. This identifies him with St Mary's Roncevall convent and hospital at Charing Cross. Manly argued that this identification created a specific satirical attack, implying that there was corruption at that institution. However, it is nearly impossible to substantiate this claim and thus Kellogg and Haselmayer argue that the word Rouncivale is included for poetic effect. See, J. M. Manly, *Some New Light on Chaucer: Lectures delivered at the Lowell Institution* (London: Bell, 1926), pp. 124-30 and Kellogg and Haselmayer, p. 274.

creating a fissure between the pardoner's words and his actual character. It is this ironic discrepancy that creates a figure that can be easily mocked and therefore undermined.

Chaucer introduces the pardoner with his good friend the summoner. The first half of Chaucer's description in the General Prologue is the beginning of his critique. His polemic is founded by a description that is inconsistent with the piety required for a member of the church. Throughout his introduction Chaucer uses ironic compliments. Immediately Chaucer begins by saying, 'with him (the summoner) ther rood a gentil pardoner.'[64] The word gentil is subsequently proven to be a wholly inappropriate term to apply to the pardoner. His appearance is noticeably effeminate, being described as having blonde hair, [65] glaring eyes[66] and a high pitched voice, as well as being clean shaven.[67] Chaucer's insult lies not just in the description but in the pride the pardoner has in his appearance. His description finishes with an obvious and jaded insult. He believes that the pardoner is 'a gelding or a mare'[68] as well as being the best pardoner in the whole land. The last comment again forms an ironic statement praising the pardoner's aptitude in a corrupt career. This defamation of character undertaken by Chaucer is compounded by the implication that the pardoner is drunk.[69] Here we see a character satire being deployed by Chaucer. The pardoner is a caricature of a churchman. Whilst he maintains the social respect of his

[64] G. Chaucer, *The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales (*Ed. J Winny; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), line 671.
[65] His hair was yellow as wax and it was displayed in the latest fashion without covering. See lines 677-82.
[66] Chaucer continues his insult by comparing the pardoner's voice to a goat. See line 690
[67] Chaucer indicates that he is incapable of growing a beard. See lines 691-2.
[68] This statement has caused scholars to debate widely the sexuality of the pardoner. Chaucer's description in line 693 is sufficiently ambiguous to denote whether or not the pardoner was a eunuch. Other scholars have suggested that he was just castrated, impotent but physically intact, a hermaphrodite or a homosexual. For a full list of suggestions, see E. Whitney, 'What's wrong with the pardoner?: Complexity Theory, the Phlegmatic Man, and effeminacy', *The Chaucer Review* 45 (2011), pp. 357-8.

[69] Whilst it is not explicitly clear that the pardoner is drunk, it is implied throughout both the prologue and the tale. His constant drinking alongside his glaring eyes has allowed commentators to make this assumption. It is reflected by the ease in which the characters in his story drink. See J. M. Bowers, '"Drunkenesse is Ful of Stryvyng": Alcoholism and Ritual Violence in Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale', *ELH* 51 (1990), pp. 757-65.

position, indicated by Chaucer's flattery, the femininity of his appearance serves to undermine him.

The second half of the description in the General Prologue focuses on the pardoner's dealings with relics. A greater part of his description is given to his role as a guardian of relics than his physical appearance.[70] In this Chaucer abandons any pretence that the pardoner was anything but a deceitful exploiter of people. In lines 696-702 he describes the different relics that the pardoner carried around with him. There are four relics that are mentioned: a veil of Mary, a piece of the sail from the boat when Peter walked on water, a brass cross and some bones. Chaucer's description assumes that the artefacts are fakes. This is implicit throughout his description of the relics in the General Prologue as he uses the phrase 'he seyde' twice concerning the pardoner's claims about the authenticity of the relics.[71] In the end, Chaucer explicitly denounces the relics, claiming that his cross is made from a cheap alloy, latoun, and the bones are from pigs.[72] He then proceeds to proclaim that the pardoner used these relics to exploit money from poor people.[73] This description lacks any subtlety in its critique. Chaucer's satire is simple, he creates a character that is corrupt and uses the superstitions of people for financial gain. His description is affirmed at the end of the pardoner's tale itself. After his sermon on greed, the pardoner tries to use his relics to earn money from the pilgrims. There he claims that he has relics as good as any

[70] Most commentators have focused on the appearance of the pardoner to the exclusion of a discussion about his relics. The focus on relics has been reintroduced back into studies on the pardoner by Siegfried Wenzel. See S. Wenzel, 'Chaucer's pardoner and his relics', *Studies in the age of Chaucer* 11 (1989), pp. 37-40.
[71] See lines 697-8.
[72] It is important to note that Chaucer was not necessarily attacking the authenticity of all relics. Indeed, engrained within medieval culture was the belief that relics carried power. However, the relics that were generally thought to be authentic were very rarely shown. Inherent within the backdrop of the story is the idea of travelling to Canterbury cathedral to see the bones of Thomas Becket, relics that were rarely shown to the public. For more information see, R. Malo, 'The pardoner's relics (and why they matter most)', *The Chaucer Review* 43 (2008), pp. 84-6.
[73] Lines 703-8.

man in England.[74] When he exhorts the host of the pilgrimage to seek pardon and kiss his relic, the host boils in anger claiming that the pardoner would make him kiss his undergarment as a relic.[75] His rage reflects Chaucer's own contempt for those who manipulate relics for wealth. It is for this reason that Malo argues that the pardoner is a parody of a relic custodian.[76] He represents a culture which holds relics both physical and spiritual from the communities than most desired them.

Both the appearance of the pardoner and his misuse of relics serve to create a repulsive character to the audience. This is the foundation for Chaucer's fundamental satirical device. Chaucer creates disunity between the vile character of the pardoner and the moral tale that he tells. The pardoner's tale is essentially a sermon with a prologue on how to preach to extract money from the listeners. The structure of the story has a simple formula:

1. Prologue concerning the pardoner's techniques and motives, lines 1-176.
2. Introduction to the story, lines 177-95.
3. Lengthy excursus on the vices of drunkenness, gluttony, gambling and blasphemy, lines 196-374.
4. Story of three men trying to kill death, lines 375-608.
5. Completion of the sermon calling the pilgrims to abandon avarice by purchasing his pardons, lines 609-659.
6. Response of the host and the knight to the pardoner, lines 660-end.

[74] G. Chaucer, *The Pardoner's Tale* (Ed. D. Kirkham and V. Allen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), lines 634-5.
[75] Lines 657-663.
[76] Malo, p. 96-7.

The prologue to the sermon serves to finalise the immoral nature of the pardoner's character. If there was any doubt before the pardoner begins to speak that his motivation for his work is greed, this is destroyed as the pardoner explains his skills and motivation. The pardoner's theme for every sermon is the same, *radix malorum est cupiditas*.[77] This statement is the centrepiece of the satire of the character. Whilst it is the pardoner's main critique of society, it is also the motivation behind his preaching. This creates an incongruity between the pardoner's speech and his actions. This is the basis for hypocritical satire. The pardoner is consistently shown to be a hypocrite throughout the prologue and his tale. The pardoner is clear that he exploits his preaching to gain material wealth and to attempt to escape poverty. In lines 153-67 he describes his desire not to be in poverty and that he would exploit the poor for money to drink and womanise.

'I wol noon of the apostle countrefete;
I wol have moneie, chese and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
Or of the povereste widwe in a village,
Al shoude hit children sterve for famine.
Nay, I wol drinke licour of the vine,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.'[78]

It seems unbelievable that the pardoner would be so open about his true intentions, especially as he tries to scam the pilgrims at the end of his tale. However, here Chaucer is leaving the reader in no doubt concerning the immorality of the pardoner. This intensifies the hypocrisy of his subsequent tale and sermon. The pardoner's message is most

[77] That is 'the Love of money is the root of all evil', see line 48. Here the pardoner is quoting 1 Timothy 6:10 in Latin. It is the only point the pardoner speaks in Latin, displaying his lack of religious education.
[78] Lines 161-7.

appropriate for him to hear. His ignoring of his own message creates a blatant satirical attack. The hypocrisy of the tale magnifies the polemic against him through the obvious incongruity between character and words. The ironic words of the pardoner form a moralistic sermon. The sermon has two parts: the proclamation against immorality and an illustrative story to reiterate the fundamental message: *radix malorum est cupiditas.*

The sermon begins with the pardoner preaching against those who break the Ten Commandments. In this excursus he attacks the vices of gluttony, drunkenness, lust, oath breaking and gambling. He cites both biblical and extra-biblical examples to illustrate his points. His hypocrisy is completely unsubtle. He preaches against the same vices which he has already shown that he commits. His eventual story goes further to highlight the main points. His sermon is exceptionally accomplished and goes further to indict the character of the pardoner. He is clearly a gifted public speaker, as his language is eloquent and evocative.

The tale concerns three brothers who attempt to kill death. There is an inherent irony in the story as the brothers' search for death ultimately leads to their own passing. The tale culminates in the three brothers finding a large amount of money. Two of them stay with the money whilst the third goes to fetch food and drink. The two brothers with the money plot to and eventually kill the third brother when he returns. However, the third brother visited an apothecary and poisoned the food which the other brothers proceed to eat after his death. Thus, all the brothers find death. The story illustrates that the greed of the brothers leads to death. It is an attack against materialistic gain. At the conclusion of the tale the pardoner uses it to illustrate the different sins that the brothers were guilty of. This becomes the foundation for the pardoner's subsequent sales pitch. Having illuminated

the sins of others, he tries to sell them his pardons. Here the hypocrisy of the pardoner is complete. He is consistently guilty of every sin which he condemns. The greed of the three brothers in the tale is the same greed which motivates the pardoner's exploitation of others.

Hypocrisy is an innately repulsive human quality. By satirising not just the character of the pardoner but making him into a hypocrite, Chaucer intensifies the critique against him. Thus a simple character based satire is evolved. The fact that the pardoner is remotely aware of his own hypocrisy goes further in indicting him.

Within *The Tales* itself, satire has formed into its own distinctive sub-genre. It functions almost independently within the wider narrative of *The Tales*. Whilst there are important links from the pardoner's and summoner's tales to the rest of the work, they are not dependent on them as they form individual pericopes within the wider work. This step is a transition for satire being a symbiotic literary device to becoming an independent genre of its own. In *The Tales* satire forms an important fraction of the whole narrative. Due to the fragmented nature of the whole work, it is impossible to conclude that satire has evolved into a unique genre in this work. However, because each tale can function as an independent piece of literature, satire functions as a sub-genre within the greater work.

Satire in Western Literature

After Chaucer, satire developed as an important part of European literature through the Middle ages. Through the Elizabethan writings of John Dunne and Joseph Hall,[79] satire

[79] Hall wrote in a classic Roman style of satire. His most famous work was the *Virgidemiarum,* a collection of six works attacking a variety of sociological issues. For more information, see R. J. Corthell, 'Beginning as a Satirist: Joseph Hall's Virgidemiarum Sixe Bookes', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 23 (1983), pp. 47-60.

rose to prominence again in popular literature. At the start of the eighteenth century, satire had become an established literary genre in Western literature. Satire started appearing in European literature, most famously in the works of Voltaire and Goethe. However, it was in Britain that satire was becoming a popular genre of the literary world at the time. In 1714, several important British authors founded the Scriblerus club.[80] Prominent members included Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay, John Arbuthnot, and Henry St John. What distinguished this literary club was its leaning towards satirical writing. Through the quantity of writing, satire by this point had evolved into its own genre. Authors were consciously writing satires that indicted various different themes in society. These satires were political, religious or social. Jonathan Swift was one of the main proponents of satire during his time. His two most famous works were both satirical attacks even though they were written in contrasting forms. Firstly, Swift wrote an essay called *A Modest Proposal* that caused a sensation by suggesting that poor parents sell their children to the rich for food.[81] This hyperbolic proposal aimed to illuminate the issues of social engineering within eighteenth century society. Secondly, Swift's magnum opus was his four-part *Gulliver's Travels*. It is here that satire has definitively become an independent genre of its own. Furthermore, Swift's work is one of the finest examples of narrative satire throughout the whole canon of literature.

The piece of literature commonly called *Gulliver's Travels* first appeared on 28th October 1726, supposedly written by Lemuel Gulliver. Swift originally used the pseudonym of Gulliver to avoid criticism. The book is written in four parts, each section detailing a

[80] For more information on the Scriblerus club, see P. C. Brückmann, *A Manner of Correspondence: A Study of the Scriblerus Club* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).
[81] It has been suggested by Baker that Swift was drawing on the work of Tertullian's *Apology.* See, D. C. Baker, 'Tertullian and Swift's "A Modest Proposal", *The Classical Journal 52* (1957), pp. 219-20.

different voyage undertaken by the protagonist. Within each different situation, Swift makes comparisons to parts of European society and ideology. Thus, the narrative becomes a vehicle for the author to create different kinds of critique mediated through the situations the protagonist encounters. Thus, the book is an example of situational satire. Narrative becomes the literary tool to interpret the society in which the author lives. In this way, *Gulliver's Travels* becomes the first example of a multi-faceted satire. It does not fulfil a singular purpose but attacks multiple aspects of society at the time. This phenomenon is further examined within its appearance in modern satire. In analysing the many critiques created by Swift, it is important to see that his use of situational satire is the foundation of his attacks.

The book is written in prose as the first-person narration of the protagonist. In this way, its form parodies a sub-genre of traveller's tales. The anonymous absence of the author allowed the book to be viewed as a true account of events at its time of publication. This is a common feature of satire. Unless it is recognised as a piece of allusion, satire is consistently misinterpreted as sensationalist truth. This form shows satire's ability to adapt and evolve across literary forms. Here satire is incorporated into a non-poetic form, whilst retaining its primary functions of mimicry and critique.

The structure of the book works in dualistic parallels to analyse opposing viewpoints. The first and second voyages are intrinsically linked by opposing ideologies, as are the third and fourth. Gulliver's first, and probably most famous voyage, is to the island of Lilliput. There the captain finds an island of people who are one twelfth his size. This is paralleled in his second voyage to Brobdingnag, where Gulliver is one twelfth the size of the giants in that land. The two voyages work in tandem to highlight the immorality of the warring European

nations at the time of Swift. At the first island, Gulliver is disgusted by the pettiness of the conflict between the Lilliputians and their neighbouring island, Blefuscu. In chapter five, the protagonist inadvertently prevents a war between the two nations by stealing the fleet of Blefuscu. However, Gulliver refuses to continue to aid the Lilliputians in their war and is subsequently framed for high treason. This leads to his flight from the island, firstly to Blefuscu, before finding a ship to escape home in.

This first part of the book is a political satire of European tensions at Swift's time. The two nations of Lilliput and Blefuscu represent Britain and France. Lilliputian society in particular is described in ways that mirror the political landscape of Britain at Swift's time of writing. Within chapter four of the book, the narrator describes the attributes of Lilliputian society. The two political parties of the country reflect the Whigs and the Tories of Britain at the time. The *Tramecksan* are parodies of the Tories, their high heels representing their High church sympathies, whilst the *Slamecksan* are references to the Whigs. The emperor of Lilliput's favour towards to Slamecksan reflects George I's own preference for the Whigs. The religious controversy between Catholicism and Protestantism is reflected in the Lilliputian dispute over whether to break an egg at the big or little end. This gave rise to the two parties of the Big-enders and the Little-enders. The prominence of the little-enders in Lilliput reflects the dominance of Protestantism in Britain at the time, whilst the expulsion of big-enders to Blefuscu represents the flight of Catholics to France. The satire of Swift is shown by a literal and metaphorical belittling of Lilliputian society as well as their war with Blefuscu. Swift uses physically little people to morally repulse his Protagonist. This functions to criticise the very same politics, religion and conflicts that were present in Swift's

own society. Gulliver is morally and physically bigger than the people of Lilliput and Blefuscu.

This critique of European society and politics is reiterated through Gulliver's second voyage. The equation of physical size equating to moral supremacy is affirmed in the second act of the book. In this voyage, Gulliver travels to the island of Brobdingnag. The setting is an inversion of his first voyage, where Gulliver has gone from towering over the population to being towered over. This second society functions as morally superior in the same way Lilliput was seen as morally inferior. After being capture by a farmer, Gulliver is eventually brought to the King of Brobdingnag. The most illuminating part of the narrative occurs in a conversation between Gulliver and the king concerning European politics. In chapter 6, Gulliver describes European society to the King who is disgusted by their petty wars, finally describing them as 'the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the Surface of the Earth.'[82] The setting is inverted and so is the satire. Whereas the Lilliputian narrative belittles that society, here European society is belittled. Swift's two-fold satire is effective in creating a comprehensive attack on the politics of his time.[83]

As the first two parts of the story function as a joint critique, the third and fourth parts also form a literary unity. In them Swift continues to satirise different political or sociological theories. In the third part of the *Travels*, Gulliver journeys to the floating island of Laputa. This is a society that is governed by music and mathematics. In this, Swift attacks

[82] J. Swift, *Gulliver's Travels (*Ed. By C. Rawson; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 121.
[83] A fuller description of the depth and severity of this attack against European politics is shown by Lock. See F. P. Lock, *The Politics of Gulliver's Travels* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 35-62.

the utopian ideas of scientific reason.[84] The Laputans are blessed with great mathematical knowledge, yet this virtue is offset in chapter 3, where the Laputans punish other nations by throwing rocks upon them from above. Furthermore, the Laputans are incapable of utilising their intelligence for practical purposes. The greatest critique Gulliver brings is in chapter four, where he desires to leave this society due to its inability to understand anything outside of mathematics or music. 'They were indeed excellent in two Sciences for which I have great Esteem... but at the same time so abstracted and involved in Speculation that I never met with such disagreeable Companions.' [85] It is here that Swift critiques an isolated methodology of scientific reason. However, his satire is not confined to this scientific reason as he attacks natural reason in his fourth act.

Gulliver's third voyage finishes with short stints in Balnibarbi, Glubbdubdrib and Japan. Whilst in these places Swift continues to use the conditions in his book to satirise various ideologies of his own time. However, the final satire lies in the final voyage of Lemuel Gulliver to the country of the Houyhnhnms. They were a race of horses who viewed themselves as the pinnacle of creation. In comparison to the natural beauty of the Houyhnhnms are the animalistic humans called the 'Yahoo'. The character of Gulliver is drawn in to the virtue of the Houyhnhnm over the savagery of the Yahoo. However, within this, Swift's voice can be seen as veiling a critique built upon the virtues of natural reason. This is primarily shown in the Houyhnhnms' practice of eugenics upon the helpless Yahoo.[86]

[84] The attack against a utopian ideal is an underlying critique that runs alongside the whole book. It is for this reason that critiques have argued whether or not Lemuel Gulliver finishes the book as a misanthropic. This is arguable fulfilled in the final attack against the pure reason displayed in Thomas More's *Utopia* through the society of the Houyhnhnm. For more information see J. Mezciems, 'The Unity of Swift's "Voyage to Laputa": Structure as Meaning in Utopian Fiction', *Modern Language Review* 72 (1972), pp. 1-21; R. C. Elliot, *The Shape of Utopia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[85] *Gulliver's Travels* p. 161.

[86] This is a simplification of the levels of satire that are present within the fourth part of the tales. For a fuller explanation of the different levels of satire present within this narrative, see R. S. Crane,' The Houyhnhnms,

In a manner that echoes Swift's *A Modest Proposal*, the author portrays a society capable of committing unfathomable acts as the result of reasoned logic.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift makes multiple attacks against different facets of politics, religion and society of his time. The principal method for creating these critiques is the situations in which his fictional counterpart finds himself in. The narrative functions to facilitate a variety of different places and characters which represent corresponding parts of society. Unlike a character-based satire, situational satire has a much wider potential. Swift is able to attack multiple targets and illuminate many different deficiencies in the society which he lives. It is this overarching critique that places satire into its own independent genre. It is no longer constrained to critiquing for an alternative purpose. Instead it functions for its own sake of critique, incorporating multiple and different attacks at society. This phenomenon is translated into the modern era where satire evolves into a genre that is formed for the very process of critique.

Modern Satire

Whilst modern satire does not bear specific resemblance to any of the satire present in the Old Testament, it is important to see how it is understood within this context. This allows scholars to appreciate their own preconceived ideas about the term before applying it to its ancient context. There are two major attributes of modern satire that are important to note. Firstly, satire has developed within a variety of different forms of media. It left the constraints of literary form and was deployed in other arts. As it moved into the modern era satire is now used within the fields of art, literature, film, and music. Secondly, satire

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the Yahoos, and the history of ideas' in J. A. Mazzeo (ed.), *Reason and Imagination: Studies in the History of Ideas, 1600-1800* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 231-53.

has transitioned from targeting singular objects to making overarching critiques about everything in society.

In the nineteenth century, satire started infiltrating different art forms. Moving outside the realm of literature and drama, satire began to be deployed in a range of media. In 1841, the magazine *Punch* began the process of importing satire into everyday British culture. The magazine was indebted to earlier caricaturists in the eighteenth century as well as the annual, *The Comic Almanac*.[87] The magazine specialised in using pictures as one of the main vehicles of critique. Whilst it retained the verbal witticism that was fundamental in much of its social commentary, the magazine included many cartoons that attacked political and religious targets of the day. Spielmann argued that the original success of the magazine was due to its rejection of bawdy and explicit sexual content.[88] This made the magazine culturally acceptable. At its beginning, *Punch* contained quite radical satire, as it was edited by Douglas Jerrold. During that time he published the infamous "Q" Papers which attacked religious and political leaders.[89] The magazine had continued success throughout the Victorian era and peaked in the 1940s. Punch and other such magazines transferred satire to an alternative form. Satire found a natural home within the visual arts. Its characteristic of imitation allowed illustrators to create instantly recognisable figures that facilitated easy polemics.

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[87] For more information, see M. Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture, 1790-1822* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); K. Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[88] See M. H. Spielmann, *The History of "Punch"* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 10-22. This view was substantiated by Altick, who argues that the magazine was common in the homes of women who felt the magazine retained respectability. See D. Altick, *"Punch":The Lively Youth of a British Institution 1841-51* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997), pp. 6-10.

[89] For more information on the specific content of the papers see, M. Slater, *The Life of Douglas Jerrold 1803-1857* (London: Duckworth, 2002); B. A. White, 'Douglas Jerrold's 'Q' Papers', *Punch*' *Victorian Periodicals Review* 15 (1982), pp. 131-7.

Literary satire continued throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Authors such as Dickens, Twain, Huxley and Orwell retained satire's literary focus. However, as new forms of media have been created, satire has become an important genre within each art form. Due to its fundamental characteristics of mimicry and critique, it is simple for artists to utilise satire in innovative new forms to comment on society. Within the respective art forms of radio, television, music, and film satire has been ever present. It has been a consistent tool in social comedy, most notably deployed by stand up comedians. This ability to transcend form has allowed satire to be integrated into all areas of Western culture and understanding. Satire has even evolved to transcend art forms, being seen in varied places across modern culture.[90] This broadening of satire is one of the reasons why scholars have struggled to define the term strictly.

As satire has become used within a variety of different forms, it has also become transformed in its social targeting. As satire developed as a defined genre in the eighteenth century, it was limited by its form to making specific targeted polemics. With its transition in form combined with the rise of free speech as an ethical prerogative, satire can now create sustained comedic attacks against all areas of society. Whilst some satire is utilised for a singular purpose, it is now very common for satire to critique anything and everything that it can. A pertinent example is in American cartoon satire. There are multiple television shows which portray this phenomenon.[91] The most illuminating is the cartoon *South Park,* which focuses on the lives of four children in their home town of South Park, Colorado. It was created in 1997 by Trey Parker and Matt Stone. The show is famous for its crude and offensive humour. It has been running consistently for sixteen seasons consisting of around

[90] Most notable examples of this are the 'Ignoble' awards, a satire on the Noble Prizes or 'Stupidedia', a German satire of the website Wikipedia.
[91] Examples of this are The Simpsons, Family Guy, King of the Hill, or American Dad.

fourteen half an hour episodes. It is this longevity which has allowed the show to attack such a wide range of targets. The show is famous for attacking anything it can without discrimination. The fundamental ideology is that there is nothing above reproach. The show has often been criticised for portraying racist, sexist or classist positions. However, as Hart argues, these positions are used to lampoon their ridiculousness.[92] It principally functions by attacking areas which make viewers uncomfortable, dealing with material that is deemed as taboo. Sienkiewics and Marx argue that this is its fundamental satiric technique. For those who do not understand the satire, the show is repulsive. However, the positions portrayed in the show are present to attack their insufficiencies.[93] The comprehensive nature of the show's critique can be seen in its attacks against religious positions. There are no specifics in its critiques of religious positions and philosophies. Christianity, Judaism, Islam as well as atheistic views are all lampooned. This is combined with religious and ethnic hatred such as Islamophobia or anti-Semitism. South Park is an example of a satirical vehicle. Instead of being a singular satire, it is a tool through which satire can function as a multi-faceted attack against all areas of society

Conclusion

Before one can examine satire within the texts of the Old Testament, it is important to notice the fundamental difficulties in undertaking the task. The elusive nature of satire and the fact that the Old Testament texts predate a formal understanding of satire mean that the scholar must proceed with both caution as well as a clear definition of satire. This chapter has shown that satire must fundamentally contain both comic mimicry and

[92] See M. Hart, ''South Park', in the Tradition of Chaucer and Shakespeare' *Chronicle of Higher Education* 25 (2002), pp. 5.
[93] See M. Sienkiewicz and N. Marx, 'Beyond a Cutout World: Ethnic Humour and Discursive Integration in South Park' *Journal of Film and Video* 61 (2) (2009), pp. 5-18.

discernible critique to be clearly shown to be satire. This method of classification is justified by both literary scholars and by examining satire in its different guises throughout history. The motivation of criticism is what differentiates satire from its literary cousin, parody.

In analysing satire within the Old Testament, there is a clear distinction between satire as an overarching genre and satire as a rhetorical device. For a text to be proven to be within a satirical genre, satire must be shown to be its primary function. Alternatively, when satire is present as a poem, excerpt or pericope then the satiric part becomes incorporated into a larger purpose of the text. There satire can only be proven to be a rhetorical device.

By focusing on specific examples within the wider history of literature, this chapter has made a variety of conclusions:

Firstly, satire always displays the dual criteria of mimicry and critique.

Secondly, satire transcends any particular form or genre. This chapter has examined a range of different styles and forms and shown satire to be present in each one. Satire is not constrained to any specific form or genre. Within literature, it is present in instruction, drama, comedy, poetic narrative as well as prose narratives. Since the nineteenth century satire has been shown to infiltrate other art forms including audio and visual arts. This shows how satire is able to be present in a wide range of forms within the Old Testament. For this reason, this thesis will identify satire within narrative, prophetic and wisdom texts.

Thirdly, satire evolves as it becomes consciously used within different media. When it is first used, satire functions symbiotically with its host's genre. It is deployed in a segment of the wider text as a polemic whose function is integrated into a larger purpose.

This is seen particularly in *The Satire of the Trades* and *The Canterbury Tales.* As it develops through history, satire evolves to being the primary purpose of a text. Thus, by the eighteenth century, satire has become a genre within itself. In applying a satirical methodology back to the ancient texts of the Old Testament, it is worth noting that satire is more likely to function in its ancient guise, especially as biblical Hebrew did not have a semantic understanding of the term. This would imply that it is very unlikely that an ancient text was written within a satirical genre. It would be surprising, although not impossible, for an ancient writer to write a satire before the idea of satire has been conceived.

Lastly, this chapter has suggested four different types of satire that are characterised by the way satire is deployed in each text. Simple satire, like *The Satire of the Trades,* functions by mimicking and exaggerating the target of critique to accentuate its flaws to the reader. Character-based satire, like *The Knights,* revolves around the critique of a singular character. The remainder of the characters, plot and background serve to indict the antagonist. Hypocritical satire, like *The Pardoner's Tale,* creates an incongruity between the words and actions of a character. The critique is achieved by showing the reader the blatant inconsistencies within the character being attacked. Lastly, situational satire, like *Gulliver's Travels,* utilise the whole background of the work to create the potential for multiply satires.

These distinct categories are useful in assessing the different types of satire that are present within the Old Testament.

Chapter 2

'It was called Babel': Satire in Narrative

The most natural place to find satire in the Old Testament is within biblical narratives. Narrative is one of the most common forms of literature within the Old Testament. Various scholars have suggested the presence of satire within certain biblical narratives. This chapter aims to build on the methodology outlined in the previous chapter. In asserting that mimicry and critique are the main criteria for identifying satire, this chapter will show the limitations of alternative methods by analysing satire in two ways. Firstly, it will show the dangers of an overzealous satiric methodology as it is applied to inappropriate texts. Secondly, it will show the limitations of the methodologies proposed by Marcus and Valeta when they identify satire in biblical narratives. After completing this exercise, this chapter will finally propose some occurrences of satire within the biblical narratives by beginning with texts suggested by scholars such as Weisman. This chapter aims to verify the validity of these suggestions as well as to propose alternative places where satire may be found. The book of Jonah is the most important text when considering satire in the Old Testament. Therefore, it will be examined on its own in the next chapter.

The first hint of satire in the Old Testament occurs in Genesis 11. It is difficult to ascertain whether there are elements of satire in the previous chapters. Although there are similarities to other ancient Near Eastern texts, there are two fundamental problems in identifying satire within the antediluvian narratives and the flood story itself. Firstly, the parallels between the stories are not strong enough to argue that one is a parody of the other. Secondly, when the parallels are proven, there is no explicit critique of any Near Eastern text. In analysing the stories to try and identify satire, the failure to establish

parody within the creation narrative and the flood story show the importance of a strong methodology when dealing with these texts. The scholar must prove that an interrelationship exists between the satire and its object of critique and must further show that the parodic differences undermine the original object or the characters in the satire itself.

The Creation epic

In the creation narratives in Genesis 1-3 comparisons have been made with other ancient Near Eastern creation epics, most notably *Enuma Elish*. Scholars have identified points of contact where the Genesis accounts mirror certain aspects of the Mesopotamian creation epics.[94] While it is widely debated whether the writer or redactor of Genesis had access to other accounts, the comparisons between the narratives are not strong enough to suggest that the Genesis texts were trying to satirise the Babylonian story. There is a possibility that there are hints of a polemical attack on the Babylonian accounts. This view would become more prevalent the later the material is dated. Thus, if the Genesis accounts were exilic or post-exilic then the author would have a natural motivation to attack Babylonian thought and would have access to the Babylonian sources. However, even if the object of critique could be identified as the ancient Near Eastern creation narratives, to imply that satire is being used here is difficult to substantiate due to the lack of parody. There are not strong enough parallels between the texts to show that the Genesis account is twisting a recognisable Babylonian tale. This is a case of parallelomania, the desire to find

[94] Gunkel made this connection after the discovery of the Babylonian creation account in the nineteenth century in his book *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895), ET *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12* (Trans. K. W. Whitney, Jr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006). Since then the parallels have been affirmed by many biblical scholars including Driver, von Rad, Speiser and Westermann.

parallels between texts where the similarities are nor consistent enough.[95] The presence of תהום[96] and the use of Divine speech to bring creation into order more plausibly show ancient convention rather than specific parody.[97] The lack of any cosmic warfare in the Genesis account goes to show a crucial difference in the accounts. Even if, like Gunkel, one argues that there are echoes of Marduk's and Tiamat's struggle in Genesis, the fundamental differences in the styles of the narrative show that one is not a parody of the other.[98] Fundamental to seeing its absence in the creation accounts is that satire does not create a substitutionary proposition to its object of critique. While the Genesis creation narratives probably do contain some polemic against a Babylonian world view, it appears its primary purpose is to provide an alternative reality with God or YHWH as the supreme creator of everything.

The Flood Account

The weak parallels in the creation accounts are proof of the lack of parody in Genesis 1-3. However, the parallels between the biblical and Near Eastern flood accounts are stronger, which could suggest the existence of satire in the primeval history of Israel. There are certain similarities in style and structure, particularly between the Gilgamesh Epic and the Sumerian King list and the final redaction of the biblical account.[99] As Lambert asserts,

[95] The term parallelomania was introduced by Sandmel. Sandmel's argument provides a good safeguard in the quest to find the parallels between texts which are fundamental in the quest to identify satire. See S. Sandmel, 'Parallelomania', *JBL* 81 (1962), pp. 1-13.
[96] It is argued that this Hebrew word is related to the Babylonian 'Tiamat'. For more information on the debate see C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* translated by J. J. Scullion (London: SPCK, 1984), pp. 104-106.
[97] John Day deconstructs Gunkel's and his comparisons between Tiamat and תהום. He shows that the Genesis account is more likely to be linked to a Canaanite version of the myth rather than *Enuma Elish*. See J. Day, *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1-11* (Library of Old Testament/Old Testament studies 592; London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 19-21.
[98] See Gunkel, p. 21-50.
[99] This is seen by the antediluvian King list in the Sumerian appearing to mirror the patriarchs in Genesis 5. This was originally proposed by Zimmern in H. Zimmern, 'Urkönige und Uroffenbarung', in E. Schrader (ed,). *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament* (Giessen: Reuther & Reichard, 3rd edn, 1902-1903), pp. 530-43. It

'While flood stories as such do not have to be connected, the episode of the birds in Gen 8:6-12 is so close to the parallel passage in the XIth tablet of the Babylonian epic that no doubt exists.'[100] Tablet XI of the Gilgamesh epic and the Atrahasis Epic[101] provide the closest parallel to the flood narratives.[102] In the Gilgamesh epic, Utnapishtim, who has been granted immortality, regales Gilgamesh with a retelling of the flood and his role in it. The features of the narrative mirror the structural composition of both Genesis accounts:

Narrative Parallel	**Genesis**	**Gilgamesh Epic – Tablet XI[103]**
Call of the protagonist	6:12-14	Lines 23-26
Instructions to build an ark	6:14-16	Lines 27-30 and lines 50-79
Boarding of the animals	7:1-16 in two accounts	Lines 84-88
Landing on a mountain	8:4	Lines 140-145
Sending out the birds	8:6-12	Lines 145-155
Sacrifice to deity	8:20-21	Lines 156-161

has been affirmed by von Rad, VanderKam and Dalley. See G. von Rad, *Das erste Buch Mose: Genesis* (Das Alte Testament Deutsch, 2.4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 5th edn, 1958) p. 56, J. C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (CBQMS 16; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984) pp. 23-51 and S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) p. 6. More recently, Walton argued that the numerical ages of the antediluvians in Genesis 5 correlated to the ages in the King List. The limited nature of his argument is highlighted by Day, who notes the difficulties in agreeing with his conclusion. For more information see J. Walton, 'The Antediluvian Section of the Sumerian King List and Genesis 5', *The Biblical Archaeologist* 44 (1981), pp. 207-8 and Day, p. 72.

[100] W. G. Lambert, 'A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis' *JTS 16* (1965), reprinted in *"I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* Ed. R. S. Hess and D. T. Tsumara (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), p. 101.

[101] Though less detailed than Gilgamesh, this account holds many parallels. For the full text see W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-Ḫasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). John Day argues that the Gilgamesh epic is dependent itself on Atrahasis. For this reason, the Genesis account has better parallels to the story in Atrahasis. However, the incomplete nature of the Atrahasis narrative, particularly its omission of the story of the birds, means that a closer analysis can be made with Gilgamesh and the Genesis account. See Day, pp. 100-2.

[102] For a full version of the text see J. B. Pritchard (Ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 93-97. A more modern translation can be found in translation and commentary of A. R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Text* (2 vols,; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[103] Quoted from ANET, p.93-97.

These close parallels in narrative structure show a dependency of the biblical narrative on the Babylonian story or at least a shared source. It is for this reason that Speiser argued that 'so much correspondence in overall content is inescapable proof of basic interrelationship.'[104] Such a closeness of textual structure could suggest that the Genesis account or at least one of the sources for the Genesis narrative could be a parody. Once the first step of interdependence has been shown, the second step in discerning the satirical nature of a text is showing that the differences in the new text undermine and critique the original narrative. This is problematic in the flood account as the major differences do not appear to undermine either the Gilgamesh epic or the actions of Noah in the Genesis account. Wenham writes concerning the main differences between the texts in his commentary. A summary of his points is listed below.[105]

Key Differences:

Narrative Difference	**Genesis Account**	**Gilgamesh Account**
Number of Divinities	Monotheistic	Polytheistic
Purpose of the Flood	Moral punishment, see 6:12-14	Whim of the deity (Enlil)
Power of divinities	YHWH in control of the flood, see 8:1-2	God's cowering – lines 113-120
Length of the flood	One hundred and fifty days	Six days – line 127
Status of the protagonist	Noah is a commoner	Utnapishtim is a king

[104] E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB 1; New York: Doubleday, 1964), p.55.
[105] See G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Bible Commentaries 1; Waco: Word, 1987), pp. 164-66.

The chart above shows the differences in the two tales. These differences direct the reader to understand the dissimilar characterisations of both the deity or deities and the protagonist. While the Gilgamesh epic portrays the deities as a pantheon, fighting against each other in a titanic struggle for power, YHWH is portrayed as the sole ruler and source of justice. God is given very few human attributes and his actions are portrayed as just. Likewise, Noah is depicted as the obedient hero par excellence. His quality is proven at the start of the narrative as he is described as being צדיק. Noah is then a passive figure in the stories as he follows God's every command. In contrast, the characters of Utnapishtim or Atrahasis are more developed, and form active parts of the narrative. Thus, the characters of both YHWH and Noah in the Genesis account are shown to be morally good and stable. The characters are not a twist of the Babylonian counterparts. Further, in such a positive portrayal of God and Noah, Genesis' only plausible critique is that it depicts righteous alternatives to the Babylonian characters. Satire does not retain this attribute. Instead, the twisting of the original serves only to undermine. It is for this reason that although the flood narrative in Genesis holds a definite relationship with its Babylonian counterparts, it does not mean that satire was present. This provides us with good evidence for caution in the method of identifying satire in the texts of the Old Testament. Interrelationship may be a prerequisite for satire, but, it does not always prove that satire is present. Unlike the creation narrative, the flood accounts appear to have similar themes and enough consistent parallels to be classed as parody. Despite this, there is no substantial evidence that the Genesis story is trying to critique other similar narratives. Instead it appears to be creating a pre-history for the origins of the people of Israel, as well as the nations surrounding them. However, even if these narratives were not compiled with the intention of critique, it does not mean that the first 11 chapters are devoid of mockery altogether.

Alternative methodologies

There are two scholars who have argued for the presence of satire within large biblical narratives. David Marcus argues that there is anti-prophetic satire present within four narratives of the Old Testament. David Valeta proposes that a satirical reading of the first six chapters of the book of Daniel explains many of the difficulties of the book. Whilst both scholars make detailed arguments for the existence of satire, this chapter will show that their conclusions are restricted by their methodologies. Both scholars' methods are based upon the identification of attributes of satire rather than justifying a suitable object of critique.

David Marcus

Marcus' fundamental mistake is to state that it is literary techniques which define satire. He argues correctly that a satirical text requires 'a target which is the object of attack.'[106] Thus, the critical nature of the text is shown. However, he argues that the second characteristic is the presence of 'a preponderance of the essential attributes of satire.'[107] These are defined as fantastic events, grotesqueries, distortions, ironies, ridicule, parody and rhetorical features.[108] It is these attributes that Marcus uses to identify and examine four anti-prophetic satires in his book. This is the basis for Marcus' method of identifying satire.

Using this methodology Marcus argues that satire is present in four different narratives of the Old Testament: Balaam and his donkey, Elisha and the boys of Bethel, the lying prophet and the man of God, and the book of Jonah. There is much to be admired in

[106] Marcus, p. 9.
[107] Ibid, p. 9.
[108] Ibid, pp. 10-25.

Marcus' work as he shows clearly the comparisons between the narratives in their use of different literary devices. All four of them contain fantastic situations, irony, ridicule, and rhetorical features. Furthermore, many parts are littered with examples of grotesqueries and distortions. Fundamentally, each narrative deploys a prophetic figure as its central protagonist. Yet, the weakness in his method is ultimately made apparent by his conclusion. Marcus argues that each of the stories functions to attack a 6th century prophetic profession.[109] There is little information given about the actual identity of these prophets which forces Marcus to admit that they may not even have existed.[110] This inability to identify properly the target of the critique is shown further as Marcus struggles to date the stories around the same period. Whilst the stories of Elisha and the lying prophet in the book of Kings have clear Deuteronomistic connections, the dating and authorship of Jonah and Balaam are a lot harder to associate with the other texts.[111] The problem lies in the fact that Marcus uses their narrative attributes to identify satire and then has to fabricate an unconvincing target of critique. If critique is a prerequisite of satire then the scholar must clearly identify its target before designating a text as satire.

Without the verification of his conclusion, it undermines each of the narratives that Marcus claims are satirical.

Balaam and his Donkey

The short story of Balaam, his donkey and the angel of the LORD in Numbers 22:21-35 is both comic and fantastic. Previously it has caused scholars problems as it interrupts

[109] Marcus, pp. 166-8.
[110] Ibid, p. 168.
[111] Marcus only cites one piece of evidence that indicates any correlation in the texts. Rofé suggested that the Balaam story and the Jonah narrative may have originated in the same circles. See, Marcus p. 167 and A. Rofé, *The Book of Balaam* (Jerusalem Biblical Studies 1; Tel Aviv: Simor, 1979), pp. 52-4.

the wider narrative of Balak and Balaam's four oracles of blessing. Martin Noth noted that the short story is probably an addition as there are discrepancies between the two texts.[112] Thus the short pericope functions as a self contained narrative within the wider story. However, despite this there are clearly connections between the two stories.

Marcus argues that the tale of Balaam displays many of the key components of satire. Firstly, there are obvious fantastical elements. The plot of the tale revolves around a man, a talking donkey and an unseen angel. Secondly, the story contains a plethora of ironies. Balaam, despite being a professional seer, is unable to see the angel. Likewise, despite claiming knowledge elsewhere (Num. 24:16), Balaam has to admit his ignorance (Num. 22:34). The most obvious irony is that the prophet is rebuked by the most stupid of the animals.[113] Thirdly, the tale criticises the protagonist by constant ridicule. The prophet is ridiculed by the undignified situations he finds himself in; by his anger at the beast who is trying to save his life; by his acceptance of a talking donkey as a natural occurrence; by the story putting the delusional prophet in contrast with the enlightened donkey; and by his negative response to the donkey's two rhetorical questions which do not require response. Fourthly, Balaam becomes a parody of Samuel in his call (1 Samuel 3) and Abraham in the Aqedah (Genesis 22). In each parody Balaam is ridiculed whilst Abraham and Samuel are venerated.[114] Lastly, as most commentators note, the story contains some outstanding

[112] Noth argues that there are two fundamental differences. Firstly, the travelling companions change from the Moabite delegates to just Balaam's two servants. Secondly, God's anger is kindled against Balaam at the start of the story. This contradicts the previous verse that claims that Balaam is obeying God's command to go with the Moabites. Historical critical scholars have spent a great deal of time trying to dissect the Balaam text and assign them to the different Pentateuchal sources. What is consistent is that the story of Balaam and his donkey is considered to be a complete narrative. See, M. Noth, *Numbers* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), p. 178 and P. J. Budd, *Numbers* (WBC 5; Waco: Word, 1984), pp. 256-61.

[113] Marcus, pp.32-4.

[114] Marcus bases this comparison on the work of Zakovitch and Safren. Zakovitch argues that both the Samuel and Balaam narratives are based upon a three-four sequence. For Samuel, God calls him three times before he responds on the fourth. In Balaam's case, the angel of the Lord appears three times before Balaam becomes aware of it on the fourth time. Safren argues that the two stories of Balaam and Abraham are linked by the

rhetorical features.[115] Marcus argues the text uses a three-fold motif, a concentric arrangement of phrases, the repetition of לחץ in both the active and the passive, and the donkey's double rhetorical question.[116] These combine to form an inherent rhetorical beauty within the narrative.

Marcus is correct in showing that this narrative functions consistently to attack and ridicule the character of Balaam. The story achieves this most potently through the internal parody of the donkey. When Balaam is directly contrasted to the donkey, his behaviour, his words and his ultimate humbling before God form an internal satire. The fact that the donkey acts in a righteous manner undermines the supposed prophet. Whilst it is possible to prove internal critique, identifying an external representation for Balaam is far more difficult. The story of Balaam and the donkey does not fit the critique that Marcus suggests. The principal problem with his argument is that Balaam's identity is not one of an Israelite prophet. To circumvent this fundamental identity problem, Marcus argues that Balaam represents a type of non-Israelite seer.[117] Thus the function of the book is to show that all non-Israelite seers were incompetent and illegitimate sources of the divine voice. This conclusion has very little archaeological or textual verification. Marcus offers no evidence

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appearance of an angel at a key dramatic moment. The angel then functions to reverse God's original intention in the narrative. This comparison is substantiated by the fact both get up in the morning to saddle donkeys and both take servants with them. Both of these comparisons are tenuous. Samuel and Balaam do share the same numerical sequence, however, there is no further evidence to substantiate a link between the two tales. Furthermore a three-fold sequence is very common in biblical narrative. An angelic intervention is also not an uncommon feature in Jewish writing. Thus, it is not substantial enough evidence to link the Balaam and Abraham narratives. The comparison is questionable due to the fact that both narratives use a different word for donkey. Abraham rides a normal male donkey (חמור), whilst Balaam's infamous mount is a female donkey (אתון). If the author was trying to create a parody then surely the donkeys at least would be of the same gender. See Y. Zakovitch, *The Pattern of the Numerical Sequence Three-Four in the Bible* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Ph.D. Dissertation, 1977), pp. 107-9 and J. D. Safren, 'Balaam and Abraham', *VT* 38 (1988), pp. 105-13.

[115] Robert Altar argues that this passage intertwines theological argument and narrative art together beautifully. The repetitive nature of the text connects the story of Balaam and his donkey with the wider narrative of Balak and the oracles of God. See Altar, pp.104-7.

[116] Marcus, pp. 40-1.

[117] Marcus, p. 166.

that a such defined group existed in the 6th Century. Consequently, it is difficult to make the scholastic leap that the author of the pericope was utilising the story to attack this elusive target. Thus, the conclusion that the text functions as a satire against an external target is deeply problematic. Marcus only attempts to justify this critique at the end of his thesis. Instead, identifying the target of critique must be a criterion of satire or one is forced to make circumstantial conclusions concerning the purpose of the text.

Noegel raises a subsidiary issue to this fundamental problem. If the Balaam text is written as a satire, then were the Transjordanian Balaam texts from Deir 'Allā intended to be satirical as well?[118] If not, then the only alternative explanation is that the biblical author crafted the legend of Balaam into a satire from an earlier Balaam source. The same claim could be made of the biblical stories of Jonah: the author took an existing figure or a legend and crafted them into a satirical attack.

Elisha, the Boys and the Bears

Marcus then moves on to consider his second example: the short pericope of Elisha, the boys and the bears in 2 Kings 2:23-5. Marcus starts by noting the interpretative problem behind this short tale.[119] In response to these issues, he suggests that satire can provide an

[118] The Transjordanian texts were first discovered and published by Hoftijzer and van der Kooij. The presence of the name Balaam son of Beor, a seer of the gods is strong evidence that the biblical account was built on an earlier tradition. See S. B. Noegel, 'Review of From Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Old Testament by David Marcus', *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 22 (1997), p. 104. For more information on the Aramaic texts from Deir 'Allā see J. Hoftijzer and G. Van der Grooij, *Aramaic texts from Deir 'Alla* (Documenta et Monumenta Orientis Antiqui 19; Leiden: Brill, 1976), P. K. McCarter, 'The Balaam Texts from Deir 'Allā: The First Combination', *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 239 (1980), pp. 49-60 or J. A. Hackett, 'Some Observations on the Balaam Tradition at Deir 'Allā', *The Biblical Archaeologist* 49 (1986), pp. 216-22. Most importantly see, J. A. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Allā* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 31; Chico: Scholars Press, 1984).

[119] The punishment meted out to the offending youths seems vastly out of proportion. In response to this, both confessional and academic interpreters have struggled to see the point of this story within the narrative. Gray called the story 'in every respect a puerile tale'; Jones noted that it does no credit to the prophet; whilst Rofé argued that the rabbis wrestled with the brutality of this text. See J. Gray, *I and II Kings* (Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 2nd edn, 1970), p. 428, G. H. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings* (New Century Bible

alternative method for interpreting this short but complicated story.[120] Thus, using his methodology he argues that the story contains many of his signposts of satire.[121] Fantasy can be found firstly in the power of Elisha's stare which is the catalyst for the boys being cursed. More obviously it is seen in the appearance of the two she-bears who mangle the children. Grotesqueries are apparent in the story in two ways. Firstly, the punishment of the children is disproportionate to the nature of their crime. According to Marcus, this is an example of the author engineering the events to create a hyperbolic distortion. Secondly, Elisha curses the children who are specifically described as קטנים (little). The story then contains three ironies concerning blessing and curse. Firstly, Elisha commits a curse, having just performed a series of miracles. Secondly, the name of LORD is used for curse not blessing. Lastly, Marcus argues the children actually come from Jericho and not Bethel so Elisha curses a place he has previously blessed when he purified the polluted water (2 Kings 2:19-22). Ridicule is present in the simple taunt of the children to Elisha. With regard to parody, Marcus argues the text creates a two-fold parody of Elijah. The young boys undermine Elisha by his lack of hair in comparison to the hairy Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). Also, he says their use of the verb עלה parodies Elijah's ascent into heaven. These comparisons, however, are not really strong enough to conclude a parody, particularly as the verb עלה is a very common word and it is used of Elisha's ascent to Bethel at the start of verse 23. Lastly, concerning rhetoric, Marcus suggests there are rhetorical features shown by the chiastic structure of the story as well as the multiple repetitions of certain terms. Thus, for Marcus, the story becomes a satire in which Elisha becomes the avatar of prophets who abuse their power.

Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 389 and A. Rofé, *The Prophetical Stories* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982), p. 15.

[120] Marcus, p. 45.

[121] Ibid, pp. 46-65.

There are several major issues with this theory. Firstly, the brevity of the story means that the satire is only created over three verses.[122] This is too small a passage to make the definitive conclusions that Marcus claims. For example, his rhetorical features are dependent on only seven lines of text. Secondly, the story is inconsistent with the rest of the Elisha cycle. Nowhere else in the other stories of Elisha is the prophet subject to the critique which Marcus suggests. The vast majority of the prophet's actions appear to be divinely condoned.[123] This is especially shown in the number of miracles that the prophet performs. This positive portrayal creates a fundamental problem if the character of Elisha is meant to represent the group of prophets that Marcus suggests the story is attacking. Either the short story has to be read independently of the rest of the Elisha stories or the remaining stories were actually functioning to commend this elusive group of prophets. It would seem strange for an author or editor to include this short satire within a non-satirical wider narrative. Thirdly, the prophet is not explicitly rebuked for his actions. Whilst it seems easy to infer blame upon Elisha for the incident, the narrative does not seem to suggest that he did anything wrong. The fact that God clearly acted to fulfil the curse suggests that Elisha's actions received divine approval.[124] Brueggemann argues that Elisha does not even specify the punishment that the boys receive. He just curses them and the following statement is the punishment. Thus, the prophet was well within his rights to curse the boys

[122] The final verse of the section is not a part of the story but a connecting verse describing Elisha's next destination.

[123] Bergen goes as far as to theorise that Elisha is not really a prophet as he does not really have a message to give. In the post-Carmel Israelite world, the dual threat of Baal and Jezebel are noticeably absent from the Elisha cycle. Instead, he functions as an itinerant miracle worker, performing acts of wonder both inside and outside the imperial court. See W. J. Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism* (JSOT Supp 286; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1999), pp. 175-9.

[124] Nelson argues that the mauling of the 42 children is predominately a modern problem with the text. The lack of rebuke suggests that the narrative finds the curse to be perfectly acceptable in its ancient context. Würthwein argues that the attributing of the curse to the 'name of Yahweh' was a later addition to the text. However, his main reasoning is that he finds the words problematic. If that is the case there would be no good reason for a later editor to add the phrase to the text. See R. D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings* (interpretation; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), p. 161 and E. Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige* (Das Alte Testament Deutsch 11/2; Göttinge: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1984), p. 278.

for their taunting. The exaggerated consequence of the curse was not the intent and therefore not the fault of the prophet.[125] Furthermore, at the conclusion of the incident, the prophet continues on his way without either divine or human rebuke. Lastly, the connection to a group of prophets who abuse their power is also problematic. Marcus concludes that these are all attacks against a sixth century prophetic type. Elisha represents a group of prophets who were misusing their power. However, if this group reflect Elisha then the comparison would suggest that they were using their divine power for evil. This makes the already elusive type of prophet even more unbelievable.

The Man of God and the Lying Prophet

The third story that Marcus turns his attention to is the two-part narrative of the man of God and the lying prophet in 1 Kings 13 and 2 Kings 23:15-18. The main story in 1 Kings is set against the backdrop of Jeroboam I's rule. It begins when a man of God prophesies that Josiah will eventually destroy the altar at Bethel. Following that, there is a curious incident of Jeroboam's hand being burnt on the altar before the prophet restores it. The man of God has been divinely informed that he cannot eat, drink or stay in Bethel, so he refuses an invitation from Jeroboam. The man of God is then deceived by an old prophet of Bethel, who claims to have been brought a contrary message by an angel. After the man of God follows him to his house to eat and drink, the old prophet is given an actual prophecy concerning the condemnation of the man of God. The punishment is then enacted upon the man of God after he leaves the prophet's house. Whilst riding away on the prophet's donkey, a lion kills the man of God. However, the lion neither attacks the steed nor consumes the man of God's body. When the prophet hears of his fate, he goes and fetches

[125] See W. Brueggemann, *1 and 2 Kings* (Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 2000), pp.299-300.

the body to be buried in Bethel. Three hundred years later in the account in 2 Kings, Josiah finds the monument to the man of God before he destroys the altar at Bethel. There, he decrees that the man of God's bones are to remain in his tomb.

This story has been the subject of a great deal of scholarly debate, particularly over the nature of true and false prophecy.[126] Before Marcus published his book, in an earlier article he had already argued that this tale contained many of the characteristics of satire.[127]

According to Marcus, the fantastical elements of the stories abound within the narrative. Firstly, it is astounding that the oracle can predict the actions of Josiah three hundred years before they happen. Despite the prophecy probably being an example of *post eventuum* writing, within the constraints of the narrative the prophecy is still astounding. Secondly, the paralysis and restoration of Jeroboam's hand is unbelievable and it parodies the miracles of Moses in Exodus 4:6-9. Thirdly, the fulfilment of the man of God's prophecy in the splitting of the altar distorts reality. Lastly, the appearance, action and restraint of the lion are completely uncharacteristic of a wild animal. Here like the other stories, the animal kingdom is deployed to condemn the actions of the prophet.[128]

[126] A vast amount of work on the story has arisen over the last thirty years. See T.B. Dozeman, 'The Way of the Man of God from Judah: True and False Prophecy in the Pre-Deuteronomic Legend of 1 Kings 13', *CBQ* 44 (1982), pp. 379-393; D. W. Van Winkle, '1 Kings xiii: true and false prophecy', *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989), pp. 31-43; J.T. Walsh, 'The contexts of 1 Kings xiii', *Vetus Testamentum* 39 (1989), pp. 355-370; E. Eynikel, 'Prophecy and Fulfillment in the Deuteronomistic History: 1 Kgs 13: 2 Kgs 22: 16-18', in *Pentateuchal and Deuteronomistic Studies*, ed. by C. Brekelmans and J. Lust (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), pp. 227-237; D.G. Deboys, '1 Kings xiii-A 'new criterion' reconsidered', *Vetus Testamentum* 41 (1991), pp. 210-211; P.T. Reis, 'Vindicating God: Another Look at 1 Kings xiii', *Vetus Testamentum* 44 (1994), pp. 376-386; D.W. Van Winkle, '1 Kings xii 25-xiii 34: Jeroboam's cultic innovations and the man of God from Judah', *Vetus Testamentum* 46 (1996), pp. 101-114; and J. K. Mead, 'Kings and Prophets, Donkeys and Lions: Dramatic Shape and Deuteronomistic Rhetoric in 1 Kings XIII', *Vetus Testamentum* 49 (1999), pp. 191-205.

[127] See D. Marcus, 'Elements of Ridicule and Parody in the Story of the Lying Prophet from Bethel', in *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Judaism: Jerusalem, June 22-29, 1993* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1994), pp. 67-74.

[128] See Marcus (1994), pp. 73-6.

Alongside these fantastical components, Marcus argues that there are multiple ironies within the activities of all the characters in the story.[129] It is ironic that Jeroboam's hand tries to arrest the man of God, but instead receives a punishment. This irony is extended to the man of God who loses his life despite originally having God's protection from Jeroboam. Ironically the old prophet is the one to pronounce the death sentence, despite his actions in leading the man of God astray. The lion's abstinence ironically contrasts with the lack of restraint of the man of God who eats and drinks at the prophet's house. Lastly, Marcus argues that the man of God's third prohibition not to return to Bethel is ironic as he ends up being taken and buried there at the end of the tale.

For Marcus, the last three criteria that confirm that this is an example of satire are that the story displays ridicule, parody and rhetorical features.[130] He argues that the three main characters in the narrative are subject to mockery. Jeroboam is mocked in his humiliation at the judgement on his altar, in his punishment upon his hand, and in the fickleness of moving from trying to punish the man of God to inviting him to dine at his house. The man of God is ridiculed when he is lied to by the old prophet, when he is killed in an unnatural way by the lion, and when his corpse cannot be retrieved for burial. The old prophet is attacked by the narrative in his portrayal as a liar and in his fear about his own burial. Parody occurs in two major ways in the narrative: the evil of Jeroboam's idolatry is overtly contrasted with Josiah's destruction of the altar three hundred years later. Also, the old prophet parodies the man of God. The lie told by the prophet does not result in his own punishment but only of the one whom he deceives. Lastly, Marcus declares the narrative to be satirical in its use of two major literary devices: repetition and chiasm.

[129] Marcus' analysis is indebted to the arguments suggested by Uriel Simon. See, U. Simon, '1 Kings 13: A Prophetic Sign – Denial and Persistence' *HUCA* 47 (1976), pp. 81-117.
[130] Marcus (1994), pp. 82-91.

The fundamental critique of Marcus in his claims that this narrative is a satire is the plethora of targets within the narrative. It would be easy to see how the story could be used as a satirical attack on the kingship of Jeroboam. He is clearly condemned by both his actions in this short story and his portrayal in the rest of the Deuteronomistic sources.[131] This argument is substantiated by the parody of his actions three hundred years later in the corresponding account of Josiah. However, this is not the target that Marcus envisages. Instead, he argues that the two prophetic figures in the text are representatives of a criticised prophetic group in the sixth century. Just like the difficulties in using Balaam and Elisha as literary constructs, this story has the problem of being too complicated for the satire that Marcus suggests. If the man of God and the old prophet are being conflated into one critique, then finding historical counterparts becomes more difficult. It would be far simpler for the narrative to use only one of the prophets as the vehicle for criticism. Furthermore, the actions of both of the prophets are not just negative in the story. The man of God is clearly fulfilling his correct role in the first part of the narrative. His only mistake is being deceived by the prophet of Bethel. Likewise, the prophet is clearly condemned for his lying. However the character is not without a sense of redemption in his retrieval and burial of the body of the man of God. This problem undermines Marcus' reduction of the text into a simple prophetic satire. If the text were intended to have an allegorical meaning, then it must retain the complexity of the story. Barth, although coming at the text from a synchronic position, offers a better explanation that the two characters

[131] This is particularly clear in the prophecy of Ahijah in the subsequent chapter. There, Jeroboam's actions are described as evil and idolatrous. See S. J. De Vries, *1 Kings* (WBC 12; Waco: Word, 1985), pp. 150-5.

represented the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel.[132] This could still imply the presence of satire, but not quite in the way that Marcus suggests.

Jonah

Marcus' final example of anti-prophetic satire is the book of Jonah. The book of Jonah contains multiple satires and therefore warrants more detailed examination. Thus, Marcus' arguments will be analysed in a future chapter.

Difficulties in Marcus' Method

Highlighting the problems inherent in Marcus' theory illuminates fundamental problems with his method. Using literary attributes as satirical markers is problematic for the following two reasons:

1. These attributes, although often common in satirical literature, are not a prerequisite for a text to be satirical. For example, satire does not have to be fantastic. The most effective satire is often very realistic, bearing a close resemblance to the object it is critiquing. A pertinent example of this is the satirical British comedy, 'Yes Minister'. It is devoid of the fantastic or unbelievable as it attempts to recreate realistic situations to identify the failings of the British political system in the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, a satire can be missed if it does not deploy some of the attributes that Marcus identifies as satirical markers.
2. Other types of literature draw on similar techniques. Within the biblical canon, this might include an epic or mythological text. Thus, by defining satire by the

[132] For more information on Barth's views of 1 Kings 13, see D. Bosworth, 'Revisiting Karl Barth's exegesis of 1 Kings 13', *Biblical Interpretation: A Journal of Contemporary Approaches* 10 (2002), pp. 367-72.

literary techniques used to create it, confusion can ensue, as non-satirical texts can be easily mistaken for satire. The use of fantastic situations is a prerequisite for any biblical narrative which is concerned with a deity. Marcus particularly identifies that these texts portray the natural world in supernatural ways (Balaam's donkey, the bears of Elisha, the lion eating the man of God, and the fish in Jonah). Yet, the animal kingdom plays a consistent part in a significant number of fantastical biblical narratives that are not satirical, from the serpent in Eden to the animals of the ark, from the plagues of Egypt to the ravens of Elijah. Grotesqueries, defined by Marcus as 'atrocities characterized by violent actions',[133] are commonplace in the historical context which most narratives of the Old Testament are set. Distortion, or the use of exaggeration or hyperbole, is a standard technique of Hebrew and ancient Near Eastern writers, most clearly seen in the claims of longevity of the antediluvians as well as censuses and army sizes. Ridicule can be present in any narrative which involves an antagonistic presence. Rhetorical features are an essential part of understanding any biblical narrative, satirical or not.[134] Lastly, irony and parody are useful markers for satire. However, as has been already shown in the last chapter, parody differs from satire in its motivation. Both seek to mimic, twist and distort, but something only becomes satirical if its purpose is to critique or undermine. Likewise, the creation of irony is often a pertinent weapon in the hand of the satirist. However like parody, irony does not always retain the motivation of critique.

[133] Ibid, p. 11.

[134] Robert Alter argues that biblical narrative gravitates towards dialogue and rhetoric as its primary way to convey the primary meaning of a text. For this reason rhetorical features are essential to all parts of biblical narrative. See Alter, p. 182.

By examining Marcus' arguments, this chapter has shown the problems inherent in his method. Using literary features as a marker for satire enables the scholar to identify internal satires within the text. However, it is an inadequate method to identify external targets of critique. Without proving a connection to an outside object, the scholar can only offer a subjective satirical reading rather than conclude that the text was actually written as a satire. This view is substantiated by Sweeney in his review of Marcus' work. Sweeney feels that Marcus is overly reductionist in his critique. He also questions whether the narratives are primarily concerned with attacking the prophets. Instead each text appears to have a much broader remit.[135]

David Valeta

Valeta uses a slightly different approach from Marcus but ultimately with the same underlying problem. He argues that a satirical reading of the first six chapters of the book of Daniel offers an explanation for many of the inconsistencies present within the book. He uses the specific genre of Menippean satire as the basis for his reading. Valeta begins by identifying four major issues within the study of the book of Daniel. He argues that scholars have yet to find a solution to the issues of the book's social history, its humour, its bilingualism and its seemingly conflicting attitudes toward foreign power.[136] He is also seeking to form a bridge between the narratives of the first six chapters and the polemics against Antiochus IV within the apocalyptic texts of the final six chapters. A satirical reading provides a natural connection due to its inherent emphasis on critique. Once he has identified this solution to the problems in Daniel, Valeta then defines his method for

[135] See M. A. Sweeney, 'A Review of 'from Balaam to Jonah: Anti-Prophetic Satire in the Old Testament', *Association for Jewish Studies Review* (1999), p. 121.
[136] D. M. Valeta, *Lions and Ovens and Visions: A Satirical Reading of Daniel 1-6* (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 12; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), pp. 10-38.

applying a satirical reading. He draws on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin as the basis of his method. Bakhtin was a Russian scholar who became fascinated with Menippean Satire as an example of a type of ancient literature which he defined as *serio-comical*.[137] For Bakhtin these texts were fundamentally important in the formation of the modern novel. Bakhtin wrote a short history of Menippean satire, before defining fourteen characteristics of the genre which he named *Menippea*.[138] These fourteen characteristics become the basis of Valeta's method for defining Daniel 1-6 as a piece of Menippean satire.[139] The fourteen characteristics are:[140]

1. The satire uses a comic element to create laughter.
2. The satire is liberated from historical constraints to create a fantasy.
3. The satire turns these fantasies into extraordinary situations for attacking its target.
4. The satire is free from sociological taboos, meaning that there is no subject or place which is off limits in its examination of an idea. This means that a Menippean satire is often very vulgar.
5. The satire is concerned with testing and exposing the limitations of extreme philosophical ideas.
6. The satire transcends the barriers between different worlds and communication across these planes is considered normative.
7. The satire creates a narrative where the reader may observe the behaviour of the characters from vantage points of great height.

[137] Ibid. pp. 42-57.
[138] M. M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics,* Translated by Caryl Emerson (Theory and History of Literature 8; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1984), pp. 112-9.
[139] Valeta, p. 59.
[140] For a fuller explanation of each characteristic see Valeta, pp. 59-63 or Bakhtin, pp. 114-9.

8. The satire exposes its characters to moral-psychological experimentation. The characters experience circumstances in the narrative which leave them in unusual psychological states.
9. The satire places its characters within scandalous situations which highlight eccentricities and cause inappropriate speeches.
10. The satire sets up stark contrasts such as a wise man and a foolish one or an emperor and a slave.
11. The satire toys with the concept of a social utopia.
12. The satire combines different genres and styles often flitting between prose and verse.
13. Because of these multiple different genres, the satire creates a polygot of multiple voices and styles.
14. The final criterion is that the satire deals with the ideological issues of its time.

These characteristics are specific to Menippean satire and Valeta argues that they are all present in the narrative of Daniel 1-6. He analyses each of the six tales of Daniel and his friends which are self-contained in the first six chapters of the book through the medium of these criteria. Naturally, the narrative qualities of the book fit nicely into the model that Valeta proposes. Using the first three criteria, Valeta shows that there are comic and fantastical elements in each short pericope.

For Valeta, all six narratives in the book of Daniel function to subvert the power of the king. He argues the text creates irony by its depiction of each monarch. The text 'ironically establishes that the authority of earthly kings is limited by divine power and

will.'[141] Thus in chapter 1, Nebuchadnezzar is introduced as an all-powerful king. At their arrival at court, Daniel and his friends are forced into conforming to the Babylonian way of life. This is portrayed most notably by the changing of their names.[142] In the first chapter, the commands of the king are subverted by the success of the Hebrew young men. By rejecting the king's programme, most notably through their rejection of the Babylonian royal diet, the young men prove their calibre outside of the king's methodology. Their stand is one that is going to be consistently mirrored in different situations throughout the book.

Valeta argues that chapter 2 continues this ironic theme of subverting the power of the monarch in charge. The setting of the chapter renders Nebuchadnezzar impotent as he is unable to understand his dream. Valeta quite rightly argues that the narrative sets up ironic critique of the monarch in multiple ways.[143] Firstly, that it is only the intervention of God that enables Daniel to interpret the dream. Secondly, the loftiness of the statue and its eventual destruction highlight the insignificance of human authority. Lastly, Nebuchadnezzar's response is to bow down in worship to Daniel. All these combine to show how the narrative functions to undermine the power of the supposedly potent ruler. Having criticised the king, the narrative extends the attack by juxtaposing the impotence of the king with the confidence of the servant, Daniel. This happens to a lesser degree in the first chapter, but is accentuated in the second. The angelic calmness of the protagonist contrasts

[141] Valeta, p.68.
[142] The process of name changing away from a theophoric name is an opposite phenomenon to the rest of the Hebrew scripture. However, it holds power in the attempt to integrate exilic communities into the foreign world around them. Ironically, Daniel's new name, Belteshazzar is a reflection of his new allegiance to the Babylonian culture, as it is derived from the deity Bel. See, O. Eissfeldt, 'Renaming in the Old Testament', *Words and Meanings: Essays presented to David Winton Thomas on his retirement,* Ed. P. R. Ackroyd and B. Lindars (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 73-9 and P. P. Chia, 'On Naming the Subject: Postcolonial Reading of Daniel', *Jing Dao* 7 (1997) pp. 17-36.
[143] See Valeta, pp. 73-8.

not just with the incompetence of the other courtiers but also with the king himself.[144] For Valeta, the praise of Daniel's God and the promoting of the Jewish young men serve to continue this critique of the king. By admitting Daniel's God to be the 'God of Gods and Lord of kings', he is placing himself in submission beneath him. In promoting the young Jews, he is devolving his power into their authority.

Chapter 3 has an ironic link to the second chapter.[145] Having dreamt about the eventual downfall of his kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar's answer is to build a statue for worship. The irony of this action is self-evident. Valeta notes that scholars identify this as a comic chapter.[146] The story shifts from Daniel to the plight of his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Valeta argues that the narrative deliberately portrays Nebuchadnezzar as having delusions of grandeur in his construction of the gold statue. Again, like the previous two chapters, the king's decree is undermined by the stand of the three friends. It is in this chapter that the novellas start to become more fantastical. The first two chapters only contain fantasy that is contained within the constraints of the narrative. Daniel's actions in rejecting the Babylonian food and interpreting the dream of the king were normative for a Jewish courtier fulfilling his job. The writer of the narrative expects there to be men in the court whose occupation would be solely to interpret dreams. When Nebuchadnezzar intensifies the difficulty of the interpretation by not revealing the content of his dream, Daniel still performs an act which the king would expect of him. However, chapter 3 brings

[144] Ibid. p. 78.

[145] This forms a link between the narratives in the book. Each chapter can function as a self-contained story and thus could have been formed from different sources. This suggests the presence of either a single author or the hand of a skilled redactor in joining the narratives together.

[146] Here he draws on the work of Collins, Montgomery, and Gunn and Fewell. Each argues that comedy can be seen through different narrative devices of hyperbole, repetition, alliteration and word play. See J. J. Collins, *Daniel: A commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), p. 181, J. A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1927), p. 193 and D. M. Gunn and D. N. Fewell, *Narrative in the Old Testament* (Oxford Bible Series; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 175.

in the fantastical element of the fiery furnace. The survival of the three friends alongside the mysterious fourth figure in the exaggerated heat of the furnace introduces the supernatural into the narrative which extends the story beyond the borders of normality. The fantasy continues in the second conversion of Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of chapter 2 he praises the Hebrew God, yet his subsequent action in the next narrative is to raise the golden statue. Likewise, in response to the protection of the three friends from his punishment, Nebuchadnezzar praises the Jewish deity. Furthermore, in 3:29, he makes a decree to prohibit blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Valeta argues that this conversion is just as fantastical as it would be incomprehensible for an ancient Near Eastern king to convert to following a god of his conquered subjects.[147] The overt conversion of Nebuchadnezzar is continued in the last few verses of the third chapter.[148] This forms another link to connect the different pericopes together.

Chapter 4 is the most blatant example of the subversion of the monarch. The narrative shifts from the third person to a first person account by Nebuchadnezzar.[149] In it, the king describes the details of a second vision of a tree being cut down despite its splendour. Just like in chapter 2, none of the interpreters of the court are able to understand it. The king recounts how Daniel, known as Belteshazzar, reluctantly interprets the dream as a vision of the humiliation of the king designed to teach him humility. The

[147] Valeta, p. 86.

[148] The English translations place these verses at the start of chapter 4. It is unclear whether the verses are Nebuchadnezzar's response to events of the fiery furnace or whether Nebuchadnezzar is praising God after his return from madness. The discrepancy shows how the verses function as a link between the two stories. For more information see M. Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar: The Ancient Near Eastern Origins and History of Interpretation of Daniel 4* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, 61; Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp.18-26.

[149] This shift in person does not associate the text with the latter chapters. Daniel 7-12 is also written in the first person but is introduced separately with the purpose of conveying Daniel's vision. Alternatively, Nebuchadnezzar's testimony is a literary device that fits within the wider narrative. It serves to emphasise the dramatic nature of Nebuchadnezzar's transformation and restoration. See C. L. Seow, *Daniel* (Westminster Bible Companion; Westminster John Know Press: Louisville, 2003), p. 4-5.

narrative returns to affirm that these events took place and that the king was afflicted by a beastly madness. The final verses of the chapter return to Nebuchadnezzar's testimony. Here, he contritely admits that he has learnt the true ordering of the world and his authority is always subject to the power of God. Valeta continues to argue that these events function as a satirical attack upon the king. The use of comedy and fantasy is abundant throughout this chapter. The comedy is shown through wordplays, hyperbole, paronomasia and clear antithetical statements. The narrative functions by juxtaposing the limitations of Nebuchadnezzar with the power of God.[150] The fantastical elements are clear, firstly in the content and interpretation of the dream but more pertinently in Nebuchadnezzar's descent into a bestial madness.

The narrative has a fundamental shift in chapter 5. The character of Nebuchadnezzar is discarded and is replaced by his son Belshazzar. For Valeta this is unproblematic because he believes that the text continues to function as an attack on Babylonian kingship. If chapter 5 was written on its own then it would be the most appropriate narrative for a satirical attack. Belshazzar is introduced and immediately indicted by the narrative. Firstly, he is guilty of the crime of gluttony in his great feast. However, this is insignificant compared to his secondary crime of profaning the sacred temple vessels. The fantastic is then introduced when a human hand appears and begins writing an incomprehensible message on the wall. The king is then gripped by fear and his reaction is described literally as 'the knots of his loins were untied.'[151] Belshazzar's

[150] Valeta uses the work of Lucas to claim that the chapter contains antithetical *Leitwörter.* The antonyms ארע and שמיא are written to represent the dwelling places of God and man. Their repeated use in the passage intensifies the comparison between the human and the divine. See Valeta, p. 93 and E. Lucas, *Daniel* (Apollos Old Testament Commentary 20; Leicester: Intervarsity, 2002), p. 102.

[151] Wolters believes that this reaction denigrates the king and would be an obvious comic moment for the reader. See A. Wolters, 'Untying the King's Knots: Physiology and Wordplay in Daniel 5', *JBL* 110 (1991), pp. 117-22.

interpreters are unable to comprehend the meaning of the words that are written and Daniel is called in to solve the riddle. Like his father, Belshazzar receives a message of judgement which condemns his actions and summarises his punishment. Again, like his father, he rewards Daniel for his wisdom. However, unlike his father there is no sign of repentance. Nebuchadnezzar praises God three times in response to the stand of the young men or his own punishment. Belshazzar does nothing before he is killed that night and replaced by Darius the Mede. Valeta argues the chapter is filled with wordplay and even the words 'Mene, Tekel and Parsin' are used to subvert the power of the King and his court.[152]

Valeta concludes his argument with a summary of the most famous of the Daniel stories. The narrative leaves Belshazzar and the Babylonian empire and picks up after the invasion of the Medes. The Babylonian kings are replaced by the elusive figure of Darius the Mede.[153] The narrative of chapter 6 portrays Darius more sympathetically than the other two monarchs described in the previous stories. He lacks the ignorance of Nebuchadnezzar as well as the blasphemy of Belshazzar. He shows support, love and affection to Daniel at the start of the chapter. Darius' fundamental crime is that he gets caught in the middle of the political struggle between Daniel and the other officials. Valeta notes the irony of the officials' request to the king to set a decree that the population may only pray to him. [154] By

[152] Here he draws on the arguments of Arnold and Polaski, who both interpret a link between writing and bureaucratic power in an empire. This writing particularly attacks the bureaucratic power of the satraps and high officials in Daniel 6. See D. C. Polaski, 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin: Writing and Resistance in Daniel 5 and 6', *JBL* 123 (2004), pp. 649-69 and B. T. Arnold, 'Wordplay and Narrative Technique in Daniel 5 and 6', *JBL* 112 (1993), pp. 479-85.

[153] There was no such figure in history. It is probably a conflation of a possible vassal king who ruled for Cyrus after the death of Belshazzar and the later Persian king, Darius the Great. The confusion concerning this character undermines the book's value as an historical source. It is possible that the idea of the Mede conquest of Babylon was derived from the prophecies in Isaiah 13:17 and Jeremiah 51:11 and 28. For more information concerning the range of arguments about Darius see H. H. Rowley, *Darius, the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel : a Historical Study of Contemporary Theories* (Cardiff : University of Wales press board, 1935) or for a more recent discussion, J. E. Goldingay, *Daniel* (WBC 30; Dallas: Word, 1989), p.112.

[154] Valeta, p. 105.

setting the king up as a divine figure, in truth, the officials are manipulating him for their own nefarious purposes. Thus, the officials force the king to punish Daniel by placing him into the infamous den of lions. Clearly, the preservation of the protagonist in a manner that is akin to the fiery furnace of chapter 3 is fantastical. The king's power, having been shown to be ineffectual, is again devalued by this narrative. Valeta argues that the narrative highlights the weakness of the king in his inability to stand against his officials.

Valeta is correct in identifying satire within these chapters. There is clearly a significant degree of both comedy and fantasy within these stories. His argument that the narrative uses irony and a form of parody to subvert the authority of the monarch is convincing. The first six chapters of the book set up many ironic comparisons. These contrast the ruling monarch with either the purity of one of the four protagonists or with the power of the deity. In each case, in all six stories, the king is shown to be impotent in comparison. The narrative uses these to form internal satires. However, Valeta does not understand this critique as the main vehicle of satire. Because he has identified the chapters as a form of Menippean satire, he is convinced that they must be critiquing an outside target. For Valeta, this target is the Seleucid hegemony and in particular the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.[155] Considering the dating of the book,[156] this would appear at first glance to be a highly plausible conclusion. However, what is disappointing in Valeta's work is the absence of a detailed argument to justify this connection. Valeta argues that the links are created by four connections in the setting of the narratives. Firstly, the idolatrous

[155] Valeta, pp. 148-50.

[156] The dating of the book has caused scholars multiple problems over the years. Aside from the most conservative of scholars, the final few chapters are generally considered to be Hellenistic in date. This is generally discerned from the prophecies inherent within the vision of Daniel. They appear to have direct relationship to the events of the Maccabean rebellion and the rule of Antiochus IV. However, the vast majority of scholars consider the Daniel narratives to be derived from earlier sources. Whilst their compilation may have occurred in the later Hellenistic period, they are supposed to be composed from earlier traditions or legends. For more information see Collins, pp. 29-38 or Goldingay, pp. 322-8.

actions of Antiochus are mirrored in the Babylonian profaning of sacred Israelite material. Second, the actions of a Hebrew deity toppling a foreign power is a distinctly Maccabean concern. Thirdly, the madness of Nebuchadnezzar reflects Antiochus' own reputation for madness. Lastly, the idea of prayer to the monarch in Daniel 6 matches Antiochus' desire to be worshipped. Valeta does not mention Antiochus' abolition of the kosher laws. This would make a suitable comparison to the food prohibitions in Daniel 1.

These connections by themselves are not enough to justify that the author of Daniel 1-6 was writing a piece of political satire. The reason for this is that the contrasts are too broad and vague. The four aspects which Valeta cites could be applied to the situation of any people under occupation. The profaning of sacred material, the desire for freedom and rebellion, the implied madness of a ruling monarch and imperial worship are all characteristic of generic empire rule. The Jewish people were under occupation from the Babylonian invasion all the way through to the Roman Empire, excluding the hundred years of Hasmonean rule. Arguably the story could apply across the breadth of different time periods during the occupation. Because of this there needs to be substantial evidence to connect the stories of Daniel to the specific time period of Antiochus' rule. However, Valeta's argument is undermined by the vague nature of his connections.

Throughout the narratives there is an underlying conflict between the religious views of the Jewish heroes and the Babylonian desire to suppress these views. In each case, the Hebrew young men have to stand up and defend their position by abstaining from partaking in the dictates of the king. This is a fundamentally reactive position for an exilic people to undertake in a foreign culture. Nebuchadnezzar and the other monarchs are not seeking to cause offence. Therefore they only create the profanity through ignorance. This does not

equate with the actions of Antiochus. The setting of Antiochus' offences against the Jewish people is not within his own court but instead within Jerusalem itself. In the most famous desecration of the second temple, Antiochus placed an altar of Zeus within the temple courts. This has traditionally been thought to be the *abomination of desolation* mentioned three times in the final chapters of Daniel.[157] An obvious link between the two texts would appear to be the idea of a altar of Zeus mirroring the statue motif in Daniel 2 and 3. However, Valeta does not make this connection and it would be problematic in its own way. Likewise the case in Daniel 5, where the temple vessels are used by Belshazzar for his drunken banquet does not match the actions of Antiochus. The activities of Antiochus invert this action. Rather than defiling the sacred temple vessels in a profane location, Antiochus is guilty of defiling the sacred location of the temple with articles of profanity. Whilst there is a similarity in that both commit a profanity, unlike the ignorant acts of the kings in Daniel, Antiochus conducts a proactive attack on Jewish culture and worship.

Valeta argues that the second connection between the texts is that they are both concerned with the toppling of a foreign power. His argument is based upon the substantial evidence that the stories of Daniel 1-6 are concerned with the undermining of three different monarchs. However, to connect the inversion of imperial authority in Daniel with the Maccabean desire for rebellion is difficult. The subversion deployed by Daniel and his three friends are examples of a protestation narrative. This contrasts sharply with the revolutionary narrative of the Maccabean rebellion. Again like Valeta's last connection, the

[157] It is referenced in Daniel 9:27, 11:31 and 12:11. The connection between the two was first proposed by the rabbis. The abomination of desolation is referenced in 1 Maccabees 1:54 and 6:7. This places the actions of Antiochus into direct correlation. Specifically, the action of setting up the altar of Zeus and the sacrifice of swine relates to the concept of desecration.

broad setting of a vassal society would enable this comparison to be made within multiple other periods of time.

Thirdly, Valeta argues that the madness of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4 links well with Antiochus' own reputation for madness. Valeta creates this connection but is unable to elaborate on the details to substantiate it. The connection between the two kings was first suggested by Rowley, who argued that the writer imagined Antiochus, like Nebuchadnezzar, receiving a humiliation from God.[158] Antiochus was indeed known as Epimanes by reputation.[159] However, there is a distinct difference between the madness of Antiochus and that of Nebuchadnezzar. According to Livy, the nickname was used of him by those unimpressed by his style of rule.[160] Apart from the broad association, there is very little correlation between the two incidents. It is for this reason that many scholars reject any association. Collins notes that Nebuchadnezzar is never called a "madman". Unlike Antiochus, his madness has no connection to the persecution of the Jews.[161] Goldingay, building on the work of Keil, argues that the stories are too different and that internally the book of Daniel has no hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Judah until the later apocalyptic chapters.[162] Hartman and Di Lella reject this proposal due the fundamental

[158] See H. H. Rowley, 'The Unity of the Book of Daniel.' *HUCA* 23, (1950-1), p. 277.
[159] This was probably a play on word with his self endowed title 'Epiphanes'.
[160] See J. Briscoe, *A Commentary on Livy: Books 41-45* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 43-48.
[161] See Collins, p. 233.
[162] One of the fundamental problems with the two stories is the restoration of Nebuchadnezzar to both his sanity and his throne. This could relate to the Antiochus' supposed acknowledgement of God on his death bed (2 Maccabees 9). However, firstly this admission does not imply restoration. Secondly, if Daniel functions as a unified work then Daniel 7 implies that Antiochus is a beast who is slain and thrown into the fire. See Goldingay, p. 86 and C. Keil, *Biblischer Commentar über den Propheten Daniel* (Leipzig: Dörffling, 1869), pp. 140-2.

problem of dating.[163] It is for this reason that Valeta's assumption that madness provides a satirical link is insufficient.

Valeta's final connection is the link of imperial worship between the Daniel narratives and Antiochus' decrees. It is true that Antiochus introduced the idea of imperial worship into his empire. However, the actions of the rulers in Daniel do not equate to this specific action. It would be tenuous to suggest that Nebuchadnezzar's statue of gold directly represented himself. The closest would be the prayers to Darius in Daniel 6. However, this incident of praying to the king is less about the creation of an imperial cult and more about the population suspending prayers to their own deities. Particularly, the prohibition was a plot device that was intended to undermine the most regular activity of the protagonist. This makes the connection to Antiochus vague at most.

Alongside the connection issues, there is a fundamental problem with the narrative if the purpose was simply an attack on Antiochus and his Seleucid regime. If the primary purpose of the text was a satire, then the timescale of the six narratives are problematic. By setting the six pericopes over a long period of time, the author has his protagonists transcending different monarchs and indeed different empires. Because of this they do not retain a consistent antagonist. The presence of three different kings during the lifetime of Daniel shows that the story is not principally concerned with villains but with the heroes. This creates a fundamental problem if the stories were intended to attack Antiochus. Satire is very ineffective if the reader has to continually reinterpret different characters as representing the target of critique. If the six stories were intended as a Menippean Satire,

[163]They argue that the Aramaic and literary expression used in the chapter means that it cannot be dated as late as the Maccabean revolt. However, they do accept that a reader in that time would sympathise with the sentiments of God inflicting madness on a ruling monarch. See L. F. Hartman and A. A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel* (AB 23; New York: Doubleday, 1977), p. 174.

then it would have made sense to retain Nebuchadnezzar in each of the six stories. The presence of the other kings suggests that satire was probably not the primary intent. This problem is compounded by the different characters of each of the three monarchs. Whilst, Nebuchadnezzar's character is constantly undermined, in each story he is at least repentant when he understands his error. Belshazzar would make the best comparison to Antiochus as he never shows any affection for Daniel's god and his misdemeanour only leads to destruction. Darius is the most difficult to contrast with Antiochus as he is genuinely affectionate towards Daniel. He is not criticised for malicious intent rather for being manipulated by others.

Just like Marcus in his classification of prophetic narratives, Valeta is guilty of defining the book as a satire before proving a connection to their external target. Once they have established satire by a literary method, their identifying of their target of critique is lazily justified. In Valeta's case, what is most disappointing is that his analysis is both detailed and convincing. There is substantial evidence from Bahtkin's criteria that satire is present within the book. However, by failing to justify his target, Valeta's conclusions are severely inhibited. Many of the literary qualities of the book point to the presence of internal satires within the narrative. The structure of the whole book revolves around the juxtaposition of the saintly heroes with the deluded monarchs. The critique extends outside the royal figures to the officials and interpreters of the court. They are either shown to be incompetent (chapters 2 and 5) or conniving (chapter 6). The narratives criticises all those who seek power outside of the blessing of God. Valeta is correct in showing that the narrative points to man's insignificance when placed in contrast with the divine.

Interestingly, Valeta uses the modern children's novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,* as a comparable text to Daniel 1-6 throughout his argument. This novel, by L. Frank Baum, shows the modern preoccupation with identifying satire liberally within literature. The phenomenom is particularly prevalent within the genres of children's and fantasy literature.[164] Despite the author's claim that the book was written with the sole purpose of entertaining children,[165] in the last fifty years scholars have suggested that Baum was instead satirising the politics of the US at the end of the nineteenth century. This position was built on the idea suggested by Littlefield, who argued that the stories reflected Baum's own views in populism.[166] Thus, they were a literary allegory or a parable.[167] Once this idea has been established, it is very easy to add a satirical aspect to the novel as the evil characters become representations of historical figures. For Littlefield, the novel was an attack rather than an endorsement of the populist ideal. The fundamental problem for the scholar is there is little to verify whether their targets of critique are accurate. Thus every

[164] Due to the creation of a completely alternative world, fantasy lends itself well to allegory and therefore by extension to satire. Famously, J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis debated whether or not their works should be understood allegorically. Lewis believed that allegory was an acceptable device for the author so Aslan in his Narnia novels is a Christ-like figure. However, in his later writing Lewis accepted that he moved away from allegory to symbolism. Conversely, Tolkien believed that simple allegory of the type that Lewis deployed in Narnia was an insult to the reader. In his foreword to the Lord of the Rings he speaks of his dislike for allegory. He was vexed by the constant questioning over who his characters represented. However, Tolkien accepted that it was impossible for the writer not to be influenced by his surroundings and experience. Thus, his greatest love story written in the Silmarillion, *Beren and Luthien*, was influenced by his own marriage and the love of his wife Edith. For more information on their views, see C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (London: G. Bles, 1958), pp. 58-62, C. S. Lewis, 'Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare', in *Selected Literary Essays* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 251-65 and J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1968), pp. 10-3.

[165] See the introduction to L. F. Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (New York: Dover, 1960), p. 9.

[166] Published in his article: H. M. Littlefield, 'The Wizard of Oz: A parable on Populism', *American Quarterly* 16 (1964), pp. 47-58.

[167] This idea has split scholars. At its inception, the idea was clearly refuted by the family of Baum. See, D. Moyer, 'Oz in the News' *Baum Bugle* 46 (1998), p. 8. However, the idea was appreciated by many scholars who began to associate the different characters with historical figures at the turn of the century. See D. B. Parker, 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Rise and Fall of the Wonderful Wizard of Oz as a "Parable on Populism"', *Journal of the Georgia Association of Historians* 15 (1994), pp. 49-63.

scholar, starting with Littlefield, has had their ideas refuted at some point. [168] If Baum did intend the novel to be read as a satire, he clearly did not admit it. The difference between Baum to the other famous satirists is therefore one of motivation. Satire can only be inferred within the novel by the reader. As Parker notes, it is easy to turn *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* into anything that we wish. Some may want it to be a parable or a satire, others may not.[169]

This fundamental problem with reading *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as a satire makes Valeta's choice of it as a comparative text problematic. Valeta is too focused on the narrative qualities of the book rather than examining the plausible targets of critique. Just as it is difficult to identify *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as a piece of satire without showing what it is critiquing, so it is the same with the book of Daniel. Valeta does not give enough time to showing how the first six chapters symbolise the Hellenistic problems of its author. Instead, by his constant comparison to the work of Baum, he creates a parallel with children's fantasy and not necessarily with satire.[170]

Marcus' and Valeta's methods display many of the problems with trying to identify satire in an ancient text:

1. Without any information concerning the author of the text, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not they intended the work to be read critically.

[168] Most recently Taylor argued that the story does function on two levels: on one level it is a work of childish fiction, on another it playfully satirises the politics of his day. He again tries to reassess Baum's political position and assign new historical figures to the characters of Oz. See Q. P. Taylor, 'Money and Politics in the Land of Oz', *The Independent Review* 9 (Winter 2005), pp. 413-26.
[169] See Parker, p. 59.
[170] The comparison with children's literature has been made by Richard Briggs. He argues that the self-contained stories with seemingly eternally young protagonists fit well into the genre of children's fiction. See R. S. Briggs, 'Reading Daniel as Children's Literature' in *Biblical Reception* 1 (2012), pp. 235-46.

2. There is a fundamental difficulty in defining a text as satirical by its narrative qualities. Because satire shares many literary connections with other genres of comedy and fantasy, it is insufficient to attempt to identify satire solely by these markers. However, it is useful for showing internal critiques within the narrative of the text. Thus internal satires can be identified and proven.
3. Identifying a justifiable target of critique must be a prerequisite in the quest for satire. Without this, satire cannot be ever fully verified. This always lends towards a synchronic reading of the text. At best the scholar can offer a satirical reading of the text rather than prove that it was written as a satire.

Thomas Jemielity is guilty of a similar mistake to Marcus and Valeta. He claims that 'Hebrew prophecy often displays the nature, qualities, techniques, themes and patterns of satire.'[171] After arguing that this link exists he then embarks on a methodology of comparing Hebrew prophecies to modern satirical texts. This is pre-eminently done by comparing thematic links between the texts. An example of this is when he compares the prophecy of Amos to Evelyn Waugh's satire 'Vile Bodies'.[172] His reasoning for making this comparison is the identification of the paralleled use of a moral grotesquery. This again is an insufficient methodology, as it does not start from a defined meaning of satire, instead it allows the ancient texts to redefine what satire is. In fairness to Jemielity, his purpose is to draw comparisons between modern satire (his primary field) and Hebrew prophecy. He is not necessarily arguing that prophecy is satirical, although this is a result of some of his conclusions. Because of this motivation, his comparisons provide a good entry point to try and identify satirical parts of Old Testament.

[171] T. Jemielity, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), p.24.
[172] See Jemielity, pp. 54-55

By analysing the alternative methods deployed by other scholars, this chapter has shown that identifying the object of critique is fundamental in proving a text to be a satire. With this established, it is possible to show certain biblical narratives to be satires of external targets.

The Tower of Babel

The story of the tower of Babel is a short pericope which occurs in between two sets of genealogies. Despite being only 9 verses long, according to Wenham it is a 'brilliant example of Hebrew story telling.'[173] Satire was first identified in the narrative by Cassuto, who argued that 'the biblical story refers specifically to the city of Babylon and to the ziqqurat *Etemenanki* therein.'[174] Thus, with the object of the satire identified, the narrative twists the building of the tower from being an object of glory to one of disaster. This satire is ultimately shown in the naming of the city. In Akkadian the name *Bābili* is traditionally translated 'Gate of God' or 'Gateway of the Gods'.[175] The biblical account undermines this name by suggesting the source for the name is instead from the Hebrew root בלל (to confuse).[176] The biblical story argues that the name is given to explain the confusion of languages by YHWH. Thus, it provides an explanation of the diversity of speech present in the ancient world.

The object of critique is not necessarily as obvious as Cassuto suggests. If the story does contain satire, there are several items that could be being undermined. The object

[173] Wenham, p. 234.
[174] U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part 2. From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964), p. 229
[175] This view has been challenged by Gelb, who thinks originally the name was given to a forest in the area and had little to do with its later meaning. See I. J. Gelb, 'The Name of Babylon', in *"I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11*, Ed. R. S. Hess and D. T. Tsumara (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 1994), p. 269. However, if in later Akkadian the name was understood to mean 'Gate of God' then the original etymology holds little significance to the satirist.
[176] See Cassuto, p. 229.

could be identified internally within the narrative, or alternatively it could be an external text. Thus, Sarna argued that the story holds a general satirical hostility towards pagans.[177] Von Rad suggested that the story functions 'as a remarkable satire on man's doing.'[178] Scholars have attempted to find related accounts in Near Eastern texts that could suggest the story imitates a specific external source. Speiser argues that the Genesis text is dependent on *Enuma Elish*'s account of the building of the ziggurat Esagil.[179] Kramer argues that the Sumerian epic 'Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta' is an example of an earlier assertion of a unified language.[180]

Both these external texts highlight different points of comparison with the biblical narrative. Kramer's text is littered with difficulties due to its incomplete nature. Furthermore, his work has been questioned by commentators who argue that the Sumerian text looked forward to a time when everyone would speak one language.[181] It is impossible to identify this text as the object of satire as firstly, the single parallel of a unified language is not strong enough to show interrelationship, and secondly, there is no evidence that the author of Genesis had any access to the Sumerian work. The Babylonian text has more possibilities as an object of satire. There is a more natural link to the rest of the J texts in Genesis to make it plausible that the author of J had access to or was at least aware of *Enuma Elish*. However, the stories contain few parallels except the presence of a tower being built. *Enuma Elish* contains no mention of language or dispersion. This means the main themes of the Genesis text are excluded, which gives enough evidence to imply the

[177] N. M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York: Schocken books, 1970), p. 76.
[178] G. von Rad, *Genesis* (Old Testament Library; London: SCM, 1961), pp. 143-8.
[179] See Speiser, p. 75.
[180] See S. N. Kramer, 'The "Babel of Tongues": A Sumerian Version' in *"I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood": Ancient Near Eastern, Literary and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* Ed. R. S. Hess and D. T. Tsumara (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns: 1994), p.278-281.
[181] This view was proposed by Alster. See, B. Alster 'An Aspect of "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta"' in *Revue d'Assyriologie* 67 (1973), p.101-9, see also Wenham, p. 236 and Day, p. 180.

satire is not of the Babylonian text itself. This shows that the object of critique is not an external text.

However, if Babylon itself is the object of critique in the narrative then *Enuma Elish* highlights the importance of the ziggurat to Babylonian society. If the tower is important, its fame would have been known to an Israelite author whenever one dates the writing of the Genesis text. Weisman spends a great deal of time analysing the different targets of critique within the narrative. He constructs an argument that political satire functions in the narrative with a two-fold polemic.[182] Weisman's method differs noticeably from that of other scholars. Whilst he is concerned with the literary structure of the story, the majority of his work is spent trying to identify whom the political polemic is targeting.[183] Firstly, he argues from von Rad that the narrative is an ironic critique of the actions of humankind. With the principal theme of the story revolving around the 'generation of separation' the narrative creates the irony that humanity and God have changed places. Thus for von Rad the story becomes a satire on human endeavour.[184] The people on the plain are literally the whole of humankind in the narrative and they are meant to be a metaphor for the whole of humankind outside of the story. Secondly, Weisman argues that the narrative shifts to a specific polemic against the Babylonian empire. Whilst the story does not contain the direct criticisms of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the narrative is an attack against the Babylonians, hidden within an epic narrative. In doing so Weisman rejects the idea that the narrative is written at a specific time period of the Babylonian empire. Instead the critique is more veiled.

[182] See Weisman, pp. 45-50.
[183] Ibid, pp.7 and 8.
[184] Von Rad, pp. 143-8.

The text of the pericope in Genesis 11 is concerned with the building of a city that contains a tower that reaches to the heavens.[185] The narrative is used by the author to explain the dispersion of man as well as the diversity of languages. However, there are clear parallels in the text to enable the reader to identify that Babylon is being parodied in the narrative. The geographical location of the story is immediately identified in verse 2 as the plain of Shinar. The use of the name Shinar is important as it places the narrative in Babylonia without using the obvious name of the place.[186] The word Babel is withheld to enable the author to reveal his fundamental critique later on in the story. However, the parody is set up within the narrative as the reader immediately sees the parallel between the subject of the story (The Babylonian builders) and the object that it will undermine (Babylon itself). This parallel is then strengthened by the text's assertion that the principal building material was brick. '"Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar.'[187] Speiser argues it is the presence of bricks alongside the tower reaching towards the sky (verse 4) which shows the dependency of the Genesis text to *Enuma Elish*.[188] Indeed, *Enuma Elish* states that to build Esagil 'the

[185] The inclusion of both the city and the tower has caused commentators to suggest that there are two different recensions of the story, one based upon the tower, the second concerning the city. This has been debated with some scholars doubting the unity of the narrative. For the purposes of discerning satire within the text these debates are somewhat irrelevant. If the story has come from two different sources satire can still be created by the redactor in his final editing. German commentators still hold onto the importance of the two source theory. There is a debate over whether the story of the city or the story of tower is primary. For two contrasting views see L. Ruppert, *Genesis: ein kritischer und theologischer Kommentar I. Gen. 1,1-11,26* (Forschung zur Bibel 70; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1992) pp. 485-94 and C. Rose, 'Nochmals: Der Turmbau zu Babel', *VT* 54 (2004), pp. 223-38. Day argues that most scholars now do not doubt the essential unity of the text. For more information on the two sources, see, G. von Rad, p. 146 and Day, *From Creation to Babel*, pp. 166-7.

[186] The connection of the name Shinar to Babylon is attested by the majority of scholars. Zadok has argued that the name relates to the Akkadian *Šanḫara* and the Egyptian *Sngr*. The name is a foreign term for Babylonia which was not employed by the country itself. See R. Zadok, 'The Origin of the Name Shinar', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 74 (1984), pp. 240-44.

[187] Genesis 11:3.

[188] See Speiser, p. 75.

Annunaki applied the implement; for one whole year they moulded bricks.'[189] However, there is no further correlation between the two texts to substantiate Speiser's argument.[190] Instead, it is more feasible to theorise that the city of Babylon was particularly famous for its central tower made from bricks. Indeed, in the Genesis account the bricks are mentioned before the building of the city itself, not just the tower. This suggests that the fame of the whole city of Babylon was for its brick work, not just the tower itself. The writer of J would have known of this reputation in creating a coherent picture that was instantly recognisable as Babylon. Thus, our object of critique is clearly identified for the reader.

Scholars almost all agree that the tower described in the Genesis account directly corresponds to the ziggurat at Babylon. As Day notes, ziggurats were temples that were characterised by their height. The term derives from the Akkadian word *zaqāru*, 'to be high'. It was conceived as a stairway through which the gods could travel between heaven and earth.[191] Whilst some scholars used to identify the Genesis tower with the ziggurat at Borsippa,[192] most agree that the tower reflects the ziggurat in Babylon as the name Babel suggests.[193]

The rest of the story is then inundated with twisted parallels of Babylon which indicate a satirical undertone. The narrative internally mimics the building of the city and its tower, only to pervert its reputation with its portrayal of the builders. The author uses

[189] See Tablet VI lines 59-60 published in ANET, p. 68.
[190] Day notes that Enuma Elish does not mention bitumen, unlike the Genesis account. This implies that the Genesis story is not guilty of literary borrowing from Enuma Elish. Instead it drew on knowledge of the tower itself. See Day, p. 176
[191] Day, p. 171.
[192] See E. G. Kraeling, 'The Tower of Babel', *JAOS* 40 (1920), pp. 276-81, J. P. Peters, 'The Tower of Babel at Borsippa', *JAOS* 41 (1921), pp. 57-9.
[193] See A. Parrots, *Ziggurats et tour de Babel* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1949), E. Klengel-Brandt, *Der Turm von Babylon. Legende und Geschichte eines Bauwerkes* (Berlin: Koehler & Amelang, 2nd edn, 1992), A. R. George, 'The Tower of Babel: Archaeology, History and Cuneiform Texts', *Archiv für Orientforschung* 51 (2005-2006), pp. 75-95.

beautiful literary techniques to construct this narrative. There are examples of alliteration,[194] word play based around different Hebrew roots,[195] chiasmus,[196] and juxtaposition.[197] Using these literary techniques, the author creates a short but complex narrative. Within this framework, the author's satirical intent appears to fit perfectly into an intricate pericope. The story's main intention is the explanation of the dispersion of people and the diversity of languages. However, in creating this world view, the author appears purposefully to undermine a specific place and thus by extension, the people who live there. The critique of Babylon occurs in five ways within the text:

1. The identity of the builders is shown to be international. The text suggests that it is not only the Babylonian people themselves who embark on the building of the city. Verse 1 argues that it is a unified people under one language. Verse 4 suggests that people were scared of dispersion, indicating to the reader that they were a unified people from the nations. This is confirmed when they are dispersed in verse 9. This twist undermines the Babylonians as they are not responsible for the building of their own city. It was definitely not the deific Annunaki that *Enuma Elish* suggests.
2. The motivation of the builders is thought to be selfish. Verse 4 implies that the text thought the builders were searching after their own glory: note the statement 'let us make a name for ourselves.'[198] The author uses irony to show the futility of man's endeavours. The builders aim to create the tower as a

[194] For a list of alliterations see Cassuto, p. 233.
[195] See Wenham, pp. 239-242.
[196] See Wenham, p. 235.
[197] The ascent of man juxtaposes the descent of YHWH to come and see the city.
[198] Genesis 11:4.

protection against dispersal. Instead the direct result of their actions causes YHWH to disperse them in verse 8.

3. The incomplete nature of the city undermines the glory of Babylon. The author of the Babel account argues, in verse 8, that after the people were dispersed the city was left incomplete. This incompleteness discredits the greatness of the city in the mind of the reader.
4. The dispersion of the people implies to the reader that the city is a place of great upheaval. Immediate negative connotations are then associated in the mind of the reader with the city of Babylon, implying that it is a place of fallen glory. The tragedy that YHWH causes through the dispersal portrays the failed potential of man, localised at the city of Babylon itself.
5. The twist on the etymology of the name Babel causes the greatest slur. Whether or not the author was aware of the Akkadian meaning of the name Babel,[199] the story mocks the name by associating it with the Hebrew verb בלל. A pun is used by the author in this narrative. It is surprising that most modern English translations fail to render בלל as 'made a babble' as this would render the pun nicely into English. This use of a pun is a common device used in both ancient and modern satire as well as in Hebrew writing as a whole.

It is clear, in these five critiques, that the author is using parody to create his mockery. Each time the author twists an understood norm in his portrayal of the people living in Babylon. This is satire. The reader, even with a limited knowledge of the context,

[199] Although, it is entirely possible that the author was aware of the Akkadian meaning of the name Babylon. The later one dates the authorship of Genesis 11 the more likely that the author was aware of the meaning. However, if the text knows about the presence of bricks as the building material for Babylon it is not unrealistic to assume that the writer was aware of the Babylonian understanding of their name.

would immediately identify the demeaning way that Babylon and therefore its people are portrayed. Through this defamation of character the critique is complete. However, the conclusion of the story differs from this critique. Verse 9 indicates that the story is there to explain the confusion of languages and the dispersion of humanity. This fits the wider context of the narrative. It is placed in between two sets of genealogies. The redactor is highlighting its meaning by its position, as if to provide a short excursus to explain to the reader why there is diversity of locality and language. This is a problem only if the genealogies argue that there is a single forefather (in this case Noah). The reader then needs an explanation to understand why language is not unified and how everyone changed location. If this is the underlying point of the tale then satire becomes a literary device used by the author. As Weisman notes, the satire on Babylon fits perfectly within the author's tale of the foolishness of man. The author uses the satire as a little side critique of an Israelite enemy who are elsewhere in the Old Testament are portrayed as the epitome of arrogance.[200] Thus, we see satire functioning alongside other literary devices in the creation of a fine piece of Israelite narrative.

In many ways the Tower of Babel narrative is a reduced version of a situation satire. By reflecting a mirror to the historical reality of the primordial beginnings of humanity, the author establishes the situation required to attack their Babylonian oppressors. Whilst the narrative is a lot smaller, the style of the satire matches Swift's opus, *Gulliver's Travels*. It is the background of the story which creates the recognisable social and historical resonances required to deliver the polemic.

[200] See Isaiah 13:19, 14:13 and Jeremiah 51:6, von Rad, p.147 and Weisman p. 50.

Two Fables

Weisman continues to identify satire in two other narratives within the Old Testament.[201] He identifies two fables which he argues have a satirical edge.

First, he looks at the story of Jotham in Judges 9:7-20. This tale is a simple case of a man using a fable to illustrate a simple point. Unlike the satire present in the Tower of Babel narrative, the text is not attacking an external target. The satire is all self-contained within the narrative. By putting the fable into the mouth of Jotham, the author is explicit that the fable's function is to criticise the men of Shechem. The narrative therefore defines the critique. The short tale differs in narrative style from the rest of the book. For this reason, some scholars view the tale as being written from an independent source.[202] After the murder of his seventy brothers by Abimelech, Jotham tells a story about the trees searching for a king. They begin by asking the olive tree, the fig tree and the vine to rule over them. Each decline the offer and the trees are forced to ask the mysterious אטד plant, which conditionally accepts. The condition is that the trees would come under the shade of the אטד plant or they will be destroyed by flame. Weisman notes that the story may have intended to have a veiled attack against Abimelech,[203] but the main polemic is against the

[201] Weisman goes beyond narrative to examine satire in prophetic literature. This will be examined in the later chapter on prophetic critique.

[202] See K. J. Cathcart, 'The Trees, the Beasts and the Birds: Fables, Parables and Allegories in the Old Testament' in J. Day, R. P. Gordon, H. G. M. Williamson (eds), *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 212-221.

[203] The critique against Abimelech is dependent on the meaning of the word אטד. The traditional translation of 'bramble' or 'thornbush' is backed by many modern commentators such as Boling, Gray and Soggin. This has an implicit negative meaning that could be interpreted as an attack against the man whom it represents. This polemic would be wholly appropriate in the context of the story. However, recently Tatu has argued that the term אטד may refer to the zizyphus plant. This would suggest that the fable is not as critical as it may seem. See R. G. Boling, *Judges* (AB 6A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), p. 166, J. Gray, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth* (New Century Bible Commentaries; London: Nelson, 1967), p. 304, A. J. Soggin, *Judges: A Commentary* (OTL; London: SCM, 1981), pp. 171-2 and S. Tatu, 'Jotham's Fable and the "Crux Interpretum" in Judges IX', *Vetus Testamentum* 56 (2006), pp. 105-24.

men of Shechem who played kingmaker.[204] The fable can be characterised as satire, as Jotham goes on to explain the meaning of the fable in verses 16-20. The trees represent the men of Shechem and the אטד plant is an allegory for Abimelech. Before he runs off in verse 21, Jotham reiterates the threat of the fable to the people of Shechem. This is a simple satire. Through the rhetoric of a parable the targets of critique are made into literary characters. The story then simply lampoons the actions of these characters. Interestingly, Schöpflin argues that the story could have deeper resonances to represent the crowning of Saul and Israel's desire for a king. Thus, within the Deuteronomic narrative the pericope becomes a double satire. However, Schöpflin admits that this conclusion is speculative rather than conclusive.[205] The tale is a wonderful example of the fact that the Old Testament deploys satire amongst its literary forms. Whilst the tale lacks complexity, having an overt target means that satire can be definitively shown.

Most scholars who deal with Jotham's fable hold that the miniature story of Jehoash in 2 Kings 14: 8-10 has a corresponding style.[206] Like Jotham, the story is self-contained within the narrative and satire is explicit as the characters explain the meaning of the story. Thus, this is Weisman's second satirical fable. In the narrative, Jehoash uses a simple fable to warn Amaziah not to face him in war. He uses a three-fold image of a thistle, a cedar and a wild beast all from Lebanon. The thistle asks the cedar if it will send its daughter to marry its son. However, the wild beast comes along and tramples the thistle. Jehoash follows this fable with a threat, explaining to Amaziah that he should stay at home and not attack.

[204] See Weisman, pp. 26-8.
[205] See K. Schöpflin, 'Jotham's Speech and Fable as Prophetic Comment on Abimelech's Story: The Genesis of Judges 9' *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 18 (2004), pp. 3-22.
[206] See Schöpflin, p. 18.

Weisman explains that Judah is represented by the thistle and Israel is the cedar.[207] This is the simplest of satirical forms. In a one line statement, Jehoash creates a comparison and a critique.

These two satires are both very short and simple. In this way they mirror the Egyptian 'Satire of the Trades'. Satire is created simply by having one thing allegorically representing another. The satire is then completed by using the literary comparison to attack the original target of critique.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined a wide variety of texts to ascertain whether or not satire exists within biblical narratives of the Old Testament. Through this analysis this chapter has shown multiple conclusions:

Firstly, it has substantiated the methodology for the identification of satire. By examining two inappropriate narratives in the creation and flood stories in Genesis, satire is shown to need the two-fold attributes of mimicry and critique. For something to be satirical there must be substantial evidence to connect the satire to an alternative object and to show that the satire uses this connection to attack and undermine that object. Furthermore, alternative methods of identifying satire by literary techniques have been shown to be insufficient. Marcus and Valeta both use variants of this method. Both have a large amount of evidence to show that the texts they examine contain multiple internal satires. However, they fail to make sufficient arguments to link the narratives to plausible external targets of critique. Therefore their narratives are limited to contain only satirical devices and cannot be classified within the genre of satire. This does show the prevalence

[207] Weisman, p. 38.

of a satirical attitude in ancient Israelite writing, but does not prove the presence of an ancient genre. The approach of both Marcus and Valeta would be acceptable as a modern synchronic reading of the text. Using the tools provided by modern literary study, a satirical reading of a text does inform the way that text could have been received throughout history. However, through the lack of evidence concerning the authorial intent of these stories, a genre of satire cannot by verified in these narratives.

Secondly, this chapter has shown through the work of Weisman that a small sub-genre of satire is present within the Old Testament. The story of the Tower of Babel contains multiple satirical elements which show how the genre of satire parasitically joins itself to a narrative. Whilst the text is concerned with a subtle attack against Babylon, its purpose is broader than that. This means that it is difficult to prove that within biblical narratives there is an isolated genre of satire. Instead a genre of satire functions alongside an alternative textual purpose. Here satire is functioning parasitically. It function augments the wider motivation of the narrative. This is very similar to the way it is used in 'The Satire of the Trades'.

Lastly, internal satire has been shown to be prevalent within biblical narrative. It is shown within the texts analysed by Marcus and Valeta and in the fables of Jotham or Jehoash. Hebrew literature enjoys using a satirical critique to undermine characters within its own narratives. The fact that satirical devices are used alongside other comic devices within these narratives shows that satire is integrated into the toolbox of the Hebrew narrative author. Therefore a satirical technique can be added to the extensive list of Hebrew literary devices that are deployed to create some of the most beautiful pieces of literature in the whole of the ancient world.

Chapter 3

Wading the Depth of Satire: Jonah and the Six Satires

The book of Jonah is one book of the Old Testament which is perfect for assessing satire and its relationship to Hebrew writing. It is one that has entertained both children and adults alike for many generations. It is essentially a book in four parts and like Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, is generally remembered for just its first chapter. The tale, popularly known as 'Jonah and the whale', is a dramatic incident without equal.[208] However, the book contains three other important chapters: the soliloquy of Jonah inside the great fish in chapter 2; his eventual visit and prophecy to Nineveh in chapter 3; and his final complaint to God in chapter 4. The narrative qualities of the book reveal much about the nature of Hebrew literature. Whilst it is only a short tale, there are numerous literary devices deployed within the book to create an intricate narrative. To analyse satire within the Old Testament it is essential to examine the book of Jonah. Satire is present within the book in varying forms and on different levels. It is for this reason that several scholars have already suggested that satire is an important tool to understand this short story. This chapter will assess their arguments to discern the characteristics of Hebrew satire within the book of Jonah. Underlying all these arguments is the question whether Jonah was written as a satire, creating a genre of its own within Israelite literature. This chapter will therefore conduct a thorough study of the book of Jonah to identify whether it was written as a polemic. Without the overall motivation of critique it cannot be assigned to a satiric genre.

The book of Jonah is an anomaly in the whole of the canon of Old Testament literature. It is found within the prophetic books despite retaining a completely alien

[208] The term 'whale' is never used. Unfortunately, 'Jonah and the big fish' doesn't retain the same literary beauty.

structure. Whilst the rest of the prophetic books are written as the message of the prophet, Jonah is three quarters prose and one quarter soliloquy. Structurally, the book of Jonah holds closer comparisons with the stories of Elijah in Kings or the biblical narrative of Ruth. The fact that Jonah's prophecy only lasts five words in Hebrew differentiates it from the rest of the prophetic canon. The book is less concerned with the words of the prophet than his character, actions and responses. Although the book has a traditional prophetic opening,[209] there are two key differences which suggest that it is only masquerading as a prophetic book. Firstly the opening word in the book is ויהי which precedes the subject of the sentence. This emphasises the prose nature of the book which is more focused on events rather than prophetic messages. Secondly, this verb is prefixed by the waw consecutive. This is unique among the prophetic books and gives an indication that the book is narrative in nature.[210] Instead the introduction resembles the call of Elijah in 1 Kings 17:2. The grammatical construction is identical to the opening of Jonah: Qal + Waw Consecutive of the verb היה, the construct of דבר יהוה, the preposition אל, the object of the call,[211] and the infinitive of אמר. Whilst דבר יהוה is a common expression throughout the Hebrew canon, it indicates the prose nature of the text. YHWH's call becomes a device to introduce the protagonist to the reader, not to legitimise the words of the prophet. The book is therefore clearly not to be associated with the rest of the prophetic canon. It further means that assigning the book of Jonah to a specific genre is very difficult.

[209] The opening words mirror the introduction of other prophetic works. Hosea, Joel, Micah, Zephaniah, and Malachi all use the phrase דבר יהוה to legitimise the prophetic message which follows.

[210] In this way the form ויהי resembles the prose openings of the book of Joshua, Ruth, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel and Esther. An appropriate translation would be 'and it happened that the word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai...' Interestingly the awkwardness of the start of the book reflects the abruptness of the book's conclusion. For more information on this see, W. B. Crouch, 'To Question an end, to end a Question: Opening the Closure of the Book of Jonah.' *Journal for the Society of the Old Testament 62* (1994), pp. 101-12.

[211] The call of Elijah uses a prepositional suffix while Jonah uses the name of the prophet.

To analyse the book through a satirical lens it is essential to assess the book's background. This chapter will apply a satirical methodology to all four chapters of the book to prove that satire as a literary device is integrated into the whole narrative. Satire will be shown to be present in several different guises, critiquing one major target. However, before the text is examined it is important to analyse the background of the book. The dating, composition, and authorship all relate to whether satire is present. To make any conclusions concerning the nature of the satire in the book of Jonah it is important to analyse these fundamental components.

The dating of the book has caused a great amount of debate. Jonah's introduction in the first verse places the book into its historical context. Its setting is clearly indicated by the author as the eighth century. The only other mention of the prophet's name is in 2 Kings 14:25 in which the prophet is sent to Jeroboam II with a message to restore the Northern border of Israel. Jonah is further described as being from the town of Gath-Hepher, a northern town in Zebulun located near the town of Nazareth. This indicates the earliest possible date that the story could have been written.[212] However, there are several problems which suggest that a later date is more appropriate. Firstly, the book contains seven Aramaisms; secondly, the book's seems to rely on other biblical books for its major themes; and lastly it focuses on Nineveh which did not become the capital of Assyria until the Neo-Assyrian period a hundred years later. This has led to many commentators dating the book in the post-exilic era.[213] The post-exilic dating is reliant on the seven Aramaisms within the book. However, there are plausible explanations for these terms within the text.

[212] Some conservative commentators retain this date as appropriate for the authorship. They explain the problems in the text with various degrees of competence. For the strongest case for historical accuracy and an early date see D. Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* (WBC 31; Waco: Word, 1987), pp. 432-3.
[213] For a summary of this position see H. W. Wolff, *Obadiah and Jonah* Trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), pp. 76-77.

The rarity of the words, due to their specialist nature, would explain why some are not used in other biblical texts. The ship in chapter 1 (ספינה) and the plant in chapter 4 (קיקיון) are both unique terms that may well have been in usage in biblical Hebrew despite their absence in other texts.[214] This may suggest that the book is not as late as is often claimed. However, the influence of other biblical texts is fundamental in understanding the main themes of the book of Jonah. It is for this reason that the book is probably at least exilic in its authorship.[215] As will be argued later, the book of Jonah is reliant on the theological interest of YHWH with the nations. It is an exploration of the promises to Jeremiah at the potter's house in Jeremiah 18. The historical difficulties throughout the text further highlight the chances that the book was written at a later date to its setting. The amount of hyperbole that is instinctively deployed by the author proves that he is more concerned with the book's literary effect rather than historical accuracy. All this goes to show that an exilic or at latest a post-exilic date is appropriate for the book of Jonah. However, the date of the book is only important if links can be made to the Greek satires. Even dating the book as post-exilic, it is exceptionally difficult to argue that Jonah was written in the style of a Greek satirist. Aristophanes did not start writing until the late fifth-century and there is no evidence to show that Hebrew author would have had any access to Hellenistic writing until after the conquest of Alexander.

The unity of the book of Jonah has come under scrutiny over recent years. The most common debate concerning a unified text resolves around chapter 2 or 'Jonah's Psalm' (2:2

[214] For further arguments see Stuart, p. 432.
[215] Recently Downs has argued that there is an exilic motif underlying the whole text of the book. He argues that the major events of the narrative can be understood as reflections of an exilic mindset. Whilst, there is a degree of speculation to his findings it goes further to suggest an exilic or post-exilic dating of the book. See, D. J. Downs, 'A Specter of Exile in the Story of Jonah' in *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 31 (2009), pp. 27-44.

– 2:9)[216]. Many scholars have argued that this Psalm is not the work of the prose narrator of the other three chapters. At this point a distinction needs to be made between two seemingly similar issues. Firstly, the issue of the authorship of Jonah's poetic soliloquy inside the fish; secondly, if the Psalm was not written by the author, the question is whether it was inserted into the book by the same author or by a later redactor. Those who have favoured a redactor have often focused on his incompetence. The first dilemma would appear interesting, but it is essentially an irrelevant detail. This chapter will focus on the second question and will argue that if the Psalm is understood satirically it provides a good reason why chapter 2 forms an important function in the book's final form.

Using a satirical methodology, this chapter aims to provide a new perspective on how to read the book. The analysis will begin by identifying the six parodies created by the book, understanding that comparisons can be made both internally and externally to the story. Once the parodies have been located then this chapter will assess whether or not these parodies create an attack against the object of satire. This will reveal how the author of the book uses satire as well as showing its key characteristics. Furthermore, by using a satirical lens the overall genre of the book can be understood. If there is enough consistency in the way satire is deployed then it can be argued that the book is an example of a Hebrew satire.

Chapter 1: A parody of a prophet

The story begins with the introduction of the protagonist. In the first verse of the book Jonah is clearly identified as a prophet. Although the word נביא is not used, as has been already shown, the opening statement of the book forms a prose parody of the

[216] In the Masoretic Text 2:3 – 2:10. The Masoretic verses will be shown in brackets from here on.

prophetic genre. Whilst there has been a lot of debate over the meaning of the name Jonah son of Amittai,[217] its immediate function is to associate the main character with an historical figure. The character has a definite point of reference in 2 Kings 14:25. There he is explicitly called 'the prophet' (הנביא), justifying his credentials to the readers of the book of Jonah. It is for this reason that the name of Jonah is important. The book is placed in an historical setting with a protagonist who is known to be a living, working prophet.[218] Jonah's call from YHWH resembles the call of many other prophets.[219] However, as has already been argued, the introduction of Jonah differs slightly but importantly from the other prophetic books. Instead, Jonah's call is identical to the call of Elijah.[220] Comparisons with the prophet Elijah can be seen throughout the tale of Jonah. Vawter identifies this link in his assessment of chapter 4,[221] which will be analysed later in this chapter. The correlation between the two characters is substantiated with the message to the prophet. Jonah is commanded in verse 2 'to arise and go to Nineveh.' The construction of קום + command that constitutes YHWH's message to Jonah is mirrored in stories of Elijah.[222] It appears four times in the Elijah cycle,

[217] The name literally means 'dove/pigeon son of truth'. There has been a large amount of debate as to whether the name functions symbolically within the frame-work of the narrative. Holbert argues that the meaning of Jonah's name identifies him as a righteous man chosen purposefully for the job. See J. C. Holbert, '"Deliverance belongs to Yahweh," Satire in the book of Jonah' in *Journal for the study of the Old Testament* 21 (1981), p. 63. However, the symbolic nature of the name could be a coincidence. Stuart points out that a symbolic reading of the text must be present in the Kings text as well as the book of Jonah to be significant. See Stuart, p. 447. Even so, conveniently the name seems appropriate for a self-righteous prophet who is going to be the target of abuse.

[218] Little more is known about this prophet from Gath-Hepher. He prophesied to king Jeroboam II about expanding the Northern borders of Israel. After that he disappears and is never mentioned in Scripture again. The obscurity of the character could well have made Jonah the ideal protagonist for the author. With little information available, a whole new narrative could be constructed around the person of Jonah. However, the book might have been built on existing oral traditions concerning the legends of the character Jonah.

[219] The phrase 'ויהי דבר יהוה' occurs 112 times in the Old Testament in combination with a prophetic oracle. See Stuart, p.446.

[220] Marcus notes the comparison occurs thrice in the Elijah narratives, in 1 Kings 17:2, 8 and 21:17. See, Marcus (1995), p. 132.

[221] Vawter's argument is that the setting of chapter 4 forms a similar type-scene to Elijah on Sinai in 1 Kings 19. This will be examined later in the chapter. See Vawter, p. 113.

[222] The construction is also used in Jeremiah 13:6. There the prophet is commanded to go to the Euphrates.

twice from YHWH's mouth and twice from his angel.[223] Jonah's receipt of this call is fundamentally important in the creation of this parody. Whilst Elijah is always literally obedient to this call,[224] it is Jonah's failure to obey which shows the critique against the prophet. Each time, Elijah always arises and follows the command. Jonah in comparison arises but then flees in the opposite direction (verse 3). It takes the first two chapters of the book for Jonah to rectify this mistake. Finally in 3:3, Jonah responds in the correct way to his second call. Jonah's primary disobedience to his prophetic call is the first instance of satire within the book. Jonah, who has been identified as a prophet, acts in the opposite manner to what is expected. Thus, immediately Jonah's characterisation is undermined through his parody of prophetic obedience, most notably in his comparison with the prophet Elijah.

This prophetic parody is then exaggerated throughout the rest of the first chapter by Jonah's two-dimensional flight. Firstly, Jonah flees in the diametrically opposite direction to where he is called. His disobedience is total as he attempts to run from the presence of YHWH. Geographically, verse 3 shows that Jonah is fleeing to Tarshish, an elusive place, but one clearly reached by heading west across the Mediterranean Sea.[225] Jonah's attempt to head west functions in two literary ways: Firstly, it forms a geographical counter-weight to

[223] See 1 Kings 17:9, 19:5 and 7, and 21:18.

[224] In all four cases Elijah obeys the command of God. In the first three instances his obedience is made explicit, see 1 Kings 17:10, 19:6 and 8. In Elijah's final command to arise and prophesy against Ahab over his treatment of Naboth, it is implied that that Elijah obeys as the narrative shifts immediately to his conversation with Ahab.

[225] There have been several suggestions for the location of Tarshish, the most popular is Tartessos in Spain. See H. Wildberger, *Jesaja Kapitel 13-27* (Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament, 10.2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), pp. 869, M. Koch, *Tarschisch und Hispanien* (Madrider Forschungen 14; Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 1984), E. Lipiński, *Itineraria Phoenicia* (Orientalia lovaniesia analecta 127; Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 225-50 or J. M. Sasson, *Jonah: A new commentary* (AB 24B; New York: Doubleday, 1990), p. 79. An alternative view is held to be Lemaire who argues the location is Tarsus in Cilicia. This view is comprehensively rejected by Day who argues that the tradition view is reasonable in a world affected by Phoenician trade links. See A. Lemaire, 'Tarshish-*Tarsisi*: problème de topographie historique biblique et assyrienne', in G. Galil and M. Weinfeld (eds.), *Studies in Historical Geography and Biblical Historiography Presented to Zecharia Kallai* (VTSup 81; Leiden: Brill, 2000) pp. 44-62 and Day, *From Creation to Babel*, pp. 154-65.

his call east to Nineveh. Secondly, it reveals Jonah's ignorance that the dominion of YHWH is bound to the land of Israel.[226] Even Jonah's retreat to the port of Joppa to find a ship reveals a linear flight away from Nineveh. If Jonah is based at Gath-Hepher or anywhere in the Northern kingdom, as 2 Kings 14 suggests, then Nineveh would be north-east of Jonah's position. Thus, it would make sense for him to flee in an opposite south-westerly direction to a southern Judean Port.[227] Secondly, Jonah's disobedience is mediated by his vertical descent. In his flight, Jonah moves consistently in a downwards direction. The narrative repeats the verb ירד to create this effect. In verse 3, Jonah goes down to the port of Joppa. This word has a dual function in this sentence, literally there is an assumption than Jonah travels down from the hillside country where he receives his call. However, the word also has a symbolic meaning to emphasise Jonah's flight away from YHWH's presence. This concept is substantiated as Jonah continues to descend, firstly into a ship (verse 3) and then into the ship's innermost part (verse 5). Although the word ירד is not used, Jonah's final descent is made apparent as he is thrown into the sea by the reluctant sailors. This idea is continued in Jonah's Psalm in chapter two. There Jonah claims he descended to the base of the mountains in 2:6(7).[228]

Jonah's flight away from YHWH juxtaposes the actions of Elijah. Elijah always obeys and follows the call he receives, despite extremely difficult circumstances. Even in his flight from Jezebel in 1 Kings 19 he is still obedient to the angel of YHWH. His subsequent journey

[226] This is shown by the repetition of the phrase 'from the presence of YHWH' in verse 3. The book seems to want to correct the illusion that fleeing from YHWH's presence is possible at all.

[227] Scholars have postulated why Jonah travels to a southern port that was probably not occupied by Israel or Judah at the time. A notable explanation is that is makes perfect sense for Jonah to flee to a non-Israelite port if he was attempting to escape YHWH's presence. For more information on the different arguments see Wolff, p. 102.

[228] Holbert believes the descent to be a parody of Jonah's own call to arise. Alternatively, Marcus thinks the descent to be an inversion of Jonah's own name. A dove is meant to soar or ascend to the heights, whereas Jonah acts in the opposite way. See Holbert, p. 64 and Marcus (1995), p. 105.

mirrors the path of Jonah as he travels to Horeb, a place of theophany and the mount of God in 1 Kings 19:8.[229] The indication in the rest of the Old Testament is that Horeb is a place where God's presence is to be found.[230] Elijah himself is the recipient of a theophany on the mountain as YHWH appears in the sound of a low whisper. Whereas Elijah proceeds towards YHWH's presence, Jonah is attempting to flee it.[231] Jonah's descent adds to the creation of the prophetic parody. Elijah's two major narratives both occur on mountain tops at Carmel and Horeb. Whilst it is quite normal for divine activity to occur on mountain tops, the Elijah cycle shows height to be an important feature of the prophet's success. This is parodied in Jonah's journey towards the opposing depths. Elijah's final act epitomises why ascent forms a link to the divine presence. In 2 Kings 2, he is taken up in a whirlwind into the heavens. His final ascent provides a perfect juxtaposition of Jonah's descent into the fish. The verbal antonym of ירד (עלה) appears twice in different forms at the beginning and end of the Elijah pericope in 2 Kings 2, thus, indicating the importance of Elijah's final ascent for proving his prophetic worth. Jonah's opposing action is the foundation for the satire. His descent is precisely the opposite of the prophetic paradigm established in the Elijah cycle. Whereas Elijah rises up to the heavens, Jonah sinks into the depths of the sea. Jonah's claim in chapter 2 that he is in the belly of Sheol literarily completes the juxtaposition. Elijah is in Heaven while Jonah is in Hell. The chapter is clear that Jonah's main error is running away from YHWH. However, this primary indictment against the

[229] This description is a repetition of the title given to the mountain in its introduction in Exodus 3:1.
[230] This is shown most notably in the theophanies of Moses. Elijah's own experience of YHWH on the mountain forms an inversion of the Moses incidents as instead of being revealed in fire, Elijah meets YHWH in the form of a low whisper.
[231] Marcus rightly points out the irony in Jonah's thinking at this point. YHWH has already commented that the wickedness of the Ninevites has come into his presence. Thus, attempting to flee his presence appears to be a futile activity. See Marcus (1995), p. 106.

character of Jonah is thus intensified through his identity as a prophet, forming a parody of Elijah. The author uses this first satire of Elijah to exaggerate the disobedience of Jonah.

Whilst the comparisons between Jonah and Elijah do extend into other areas of the book, the author is not content with just creating one parody with his main protagonist. The rest of the chapter juxtaposes Jonah with the sailors on the ship with him. If the first three verses satirise Jonah's reaction to YHWH's call, then the rest of the chapter examines Jonah's reaction to the storm. The parody is created between the characters of Jonah and the sailors by placing them in an identical situation. YHWH hurls a great wind at the sea in verse 4 which causes a storm to arise.[232] The extreme magnitude of this supernatural storm is shown through the dual use of the author's favourite adjective גדל, firstly to describe the wind, and secondly the storm itself. It is further substantiated by the description of the ship's response to the storm. The author uses a pun to imply that the ship itself was threatening to break up.[233] In response to this paranormal event, the actions of Jonah and the sailors are wholly different. The sailors' immediate reaction is quite natural. They seek to pacify the storm by crying out to their gods, whilst practically working to maximise the chance of survival by throwing overboard excess baggage. Jonah, in stark comparison, is a picture of calm as he wanders down to the innermost part of the ship and falls asleep in verse 5. Jonah does not fall into a normal sleep. Instead the author uses the rare root רדם

[232] The root טול is used four times in the chapter 1. The action of YHWH in causing the storm is mirrored by the sailors who attempt to placate the storm. Firstly, they try and throw overboard the vessels in verse 5. Secondly after Jonah's suggests hurling himself overboard in verse 12, the sailors eventually oblige him by throwing him into the sea in verse 15.

[233] Wolff notes that the pi'el of the root חשב is uniquely applied to an inanimate object here. See Wolff p.106. As well as forming a pun with the Niph'al infinitive construct of שׁבר, Sasson also argues the phrase serves an onomatopoeic function. The words capture 'the sound of the planks cracking when tortured by raging waters.' Sasson, p. 97.

which elsewhere means a deep sleep generally caused by divine intervention.[234] As well as forming a pun with ירד, this word indicates an almost supernatural event. The fact that Jonah is able to sleep through such a cataclysm is an indication of his inhuman indifference to the events happening around him. Jonah's inaction, in comparison to the sailors' desperation, is the basis for another indictment against his character.

The rest of the chapter continues to satirise the prophet by placing his actions in juxtaposition with the response of the heathen sailors. Once Jonah has been found by the captain he is commanded to arise and to call out to his God. Ironically the captain's command to Jonah echoes the prophetic call at the start of the book, where Jonah is commanded to arise, to go and to cry out against Nineveh. The remaining actions of the sailors exemplify their positive portrayal. Firstly, they try everything to save the ship, beginning by casting lots to find out the cause of the problem in verse 7. This action is used twice elsewhere in the Old Testament.[235] It is clear that within the constructs of the narrative this is an appropriate way to identify a culprit in the middle of the storm. Once Jonah is shown to be the cause of the tempest, he reveals his identity to the sailors in verses 8-10. The sailors are right to seek his counsel for a solution to their ever worsening situation. Jonah knows and thus declares in verse 12 that the only way to calm the sea is for the sailors to throw him overboard. The sailors could have rid themselves of Jonah firstly when the lot fell upon him and secondly when Jonah declared the solution to calming the storm. However, their patience to seek an alternative solution proves their bravery in comparison to Jonah's cowardice. If Jonah knew that his personal sacrifice was necessary

[234] It has been debated whether or not Jonah is truly asleep here. Elsewhere the word is deployed to mean a deep sleep. Its most famous use is in the book of Genesis when Adam is put under a deep sleep for YHWH to remove his rib to make Eve in Genesis 2:21. For more information see M. Oeming, 'רדם', in *TDOT* 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), pp. 337-340.

[235] Lots are used to reveal Achan as the one who stole banned items in Joshua 7:14-18. Also, in 1 Samuel 14:41-2 lots are used to prove Jonathan's guilt in eating honey from his staff.

for the salvation of the others, then forcing the hand of the sailors instead of willingly offering himself shows his lack of courage. His nonchalance towards the situation is made apparent in verse 10, where it is revealed that Jonah has already told the sailors of his reason for being on the voyage.

To try and save the life of the prophet, the sailors attempt to row back to dry land in verse 13.[236] The selflessness of the sailors satirically illuminates the selfish acts of Jonah. In verse 14 the sailors cry out to YHWH. This contrasts with Jonah's silence towards his own self-professed deity in verse 9. Finally, after Jonah has gone overboard, the sailors respond in fear to YHWH. This language mirrors Jonah's claim in verse 9 that he fears YHWH. Whilst Jonah's claim appears to be just words, the sailors worship is גדל and they prove their trust by sacrificing to YHWH, as well as making vow offerings. Furthermore, twice previously in the narrative the sailors are shown to be afraid. In verses 5 and 10 the root ירא is repeated. It is only when YHWH is revealed through Jonah that the sailors direct their fear to the right object. In comparing the two sets of characters, it is clear that Jonah is satirically undermined by the actions of the pagan sailors. In response to the calamity of the storm the sailors' responses are all commendable to the Israelite reader of the book. In stark contrast, the Hebrew prophet is shown to be consistently apathetic to his situation with no desire to help anyone. The only thing he is able to do correctly is to recite a truthful description of his God's character.

The final satire that is created within the first chapter of the book concerns Jonah's own statements. Throughout the book of Jonah, the protagonist's words appear to

[236] Sasson notes the danger of undertaking this course of action. Ancient sea manuals show that sailors were discouraged from rowing back to land in a storm as this caused the ship to be wrecked against coastal rocks. This emphasises the unwillingness of the sailors to take the life of the disobedient prophet. See Sasson, p. 142.

contradict Jonah's actual beliefs shown through his actions. This is most apparent in the soliloquy in chapter 2. However, the phenomenon underlies each of Jonah's lines throughout the whole book. Verse 9 is the first example of Jonah's words becoming a parody of the prophet's own actions. There, Jonah makes a clear declaration about his own identity as well as YHWH's. Jonah's understanding of his deity and his own relationship to YHWH create a pertinent satire against Jonah's actions throughout the whole chapter. In verse 8 the sailors ask him four questions concerning his identity, of which Jonah only answers the last. His response is threadbare, only divulging the minimal amount of information needed. Jonah first identifies himself as a Hebrew. Whilst it is curious that he does not use the term Israelite, [237] what is more important is what he asserts about YHWH. Jonah says three important things about his deity which appear to contradict his actions. Firstly, Jonah calls YHWH the God of Heaven. The object of the clause is moved to the beginning of the sentence to emphasise the name of the deity. The term 'God of Heaven' is an important title to prove the supremacy of the Israelite God.[238] Jonah uses this epithet to justify YHWH's position as the supreme deity for the sailors, who are used to a pantheon of different gods. Secondly, Jonah claims that he fears YHWH. The verb ירא has already been shown to parody the response of the sailors. Furthermore, it parodies Jonah's own actions. Consistently through the book there is little evidence that Jonah fears YHWH. The irony of his claim is further substantiated by the relative clause. There he expands his description of YHWH to claim that it was YHWH who made the earth and the sea. If Jonah knew this truth previously, then his attempt to flee YHWH's presence can only make sense in two ways.

[237] Elsewhere in the Old Testament the term is used mainly in situations with foreigners. Alongside this fact the term Israelite is normally constructed as בן ישראל or 'son of Israel.' Therefore it would be far easier for the sailors to understand the term Hebrew as a racial marker. For more information, see Wolff, pp. 114-5.
[238] The term is commonly used within the exile to assert YHWH's dominance over foreign deities. Often the phrase is rendered in the Aramaic parts of the Old Testament. See Daniel 2:18 and Ezra 5:11.

Firstly, that Jonah by this point has learnt through his experience in the storm the truth of this statement and has arrived at a point of repentance.[239] However, if this were the case then he would have willingly jumped off the ship to the mercy of his deity. The fact that Jonah still requires the sailors to commit an act of murder before he will surrender implies that the author put these words in Jonah's mouth for another reason. The second plausible explanation for Jonah making this statement is that Jonah's speech becomes a parody of himself. What he claims and what he is able to believe are not in agreement. The words echo an Israelite credal formula.[240] This suggests that Jonah's knowledge differs from his understanding. Jonah can recite credal statements about YHWH, but without any application; his belief in these statements is shown to be false. This satire is substantiated in Jonah's second line in verse 12. In it he makes a truthful assertion that the storm is his fault and to bring about restoration requires the sailors to throw him overboard. If Jonah had come to a point of repentance then there would be no necessity for the sailors to throw him overboard. It is precisely because he does not believe in the statement or hopes that there is another way out that means he allows the sailors to try and row back to shore. Jonah's words again form a parody of his own beliefs, intensifying the critique against this cowardly prophet who speaks the truth but does not believe it himself.

The first chapter of Jonah deploys three distinct parodies which all satirically function to undermine the principal character of the book. When Jonah is placed opposite the characters of Elijah and the sailors his disobedience is emphasised and the critique against him is intensified. Lastly, Jonah's speech is at odds with his actions in the book. This

[239] This view is taken by Stuart as he argues that Jonah gives up his flight at this point as he realises that he cannot escape. See Stuart, p. 461.
[240] It holds parallels to Psalm 95:5 and 135:7 as well as Numbers 11:31.

begins the process of portraying Jonah as a hypocrite. He is someone who says the right things but acts in an opposite manner. This portrayal is continued in chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Unbelievable Words

The second chapter of Jonah is a mixture in the Hebrew text of 3 verses of narrative, explaining Jonah's adventure in the fish, and 8 verses of poetry, portraying Jonah's words as he prayed inside the belly of the fish. The narrative is short and explains how YHWH sent the fish to swallow Jonah and eventually bring him safely to dry land. The narrative functions very simply using the fish as YHWH's agent.[241] For the reader, Jonah finally acts in a positive manner, praying (פלל) to YHWH. However, as shown by chapter 4, this prayer does not necessarily indicate a word of repentance. The root פלל is used in chapter 4:2 to indicate Jonah speaking to YHWH. In the case of chapter 4 Jonah needs to talk to YHWH to complain against his lack of action in smiting Nineveh. Even Jonah's positive actions are later satirised by this book as a backhanded compliment. The narrative then finishes, after Jonah's Psalm, by YHWH commanding the fish to spit Jonah out onto dry land. The main point of the rest of the chapter is to hear the prayer of Jonah inside the fish. In examining his words, the book uses it to continue to satirise the prophet, using his own speech to intensify its indictment of him.

[241] The fish does change gender between verses 1 and 2 (2 and 3 in the Hebrew). From now on the Hebrew verses will be displayed in brackets. Whilst this is an interesting feature, it does not serve a satirical purpose. For more information on the arguments explaining the change see Sasson, pp. 155-6. The fish is important for commentators who argue that supernatural events are an important feature of Israelite satire. See Marcus (1995), pp. 97-100.

As has already been stated, the authenticity of chapter 2 to the original account has come under scrutiny. The debate over the insertion of 'Jonah's Psalm' revolves around three major concerns. Wolff lays out these three points and the arguments for them:[242]

1. The situation of Jonah's prayer is inappropriate for its place in the narrative. Jonah is singing a prayer of thanksgiving, which should be sung after his salvation. Wolff suggests 'this song is better fitted for the temple than for the fish's belly.'[243]

2. The language of the Psalm differs greatly from the narrative. The Psalm has so little written language in common that it is clearly from a different source. The exclusion of common expressions and adjectives, particularly גדל, show that the writer of the Psalm had different concerns to the writer of the prose.

3. The character of Jonah, depicted through the words of thanksgiving as a humble servant in the Psalm, does not match the character portrayed in the rest of the book.

Modern commentators who advocate a unified composition follow the research of George Landes who rejected the three points.[244]

The situation of the Psalm is only an issue if one reads the fish as part of Jonah's problem. Landes argues that the fish is a medium of salvation and therefore Jonah is right in singing a psalm of thanksgiving as God has saved him from the depths. With the Psalm's use of Sheol in verse 2 (3), Landes argues Jonah's jump into the sea was a journey down to the grave. He uses an example of the Sumerian myth of the descent of Inanna to the

[242] Wolff, pp. 128 – 131.
[243] Wolff, p. 129.
[244] See T. A. Fretheim, *The message of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), p. 58-60 and L. C. Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (New International Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 197-200.

underworld to illuminate that three days and nights is an ancient Near Eastern idiomatic timeframe for returning from the underworld. Landes argues that if this is the case, Jonah is perfectly correct in praising God when returning from the ocean's depths, as the fish is the vehicle for his return.[245] Landes' argument is not free from criticism. Day critiques Landes' argument, claiming that 'Jonah had no certainty that he was ever going to get out of the fish.'[246] This is a valid argument against the Psalm's authenticity, but Jonah's situation change has to be an improvement. While he is in the sea Jonah is dying and has no chance of survival. At least in the fish he has his life which is cause for thanksgiving. This argument is noted by other scholars, who consider the two themes of lament in the first half and thanksgiving in the second half of the Psalm. Bolin argues this is common-place in biblical literature, citing Isaiah 38, Psalm 22 and Psalm 116 as evidence.[247] Furthermore, Watts notes that Psalmic poems often occur in the Old Testament slightly out of chronological order especially to thank God for a promise yet to be fulfilled. A lament is used first, setting up the situation for thanksgiving, which comes in the second half of the Psalm. Watts uses the examples of Hezekiah's prayer in Isaiah 38, Daniel's praise for his visions in Daniel 2, and Hannah's song before the birth of Samuel in 1 Samuel 2.[248] The example of Hannah is particularly important because, as Perry notes, it shows a comparative use of the Hithpa'el of פלל[249] used to describe Jonah's prayer in 2:1 (2) as a prayer of thanksgiving.[250] Elsewhere

[245] G. M. Landes, 'The Kerygma of the Book of Jonah: The contextual Interpretation of the Jonah Psalm.' *Interpretation* 21 (1967), pp. 10-11.
[246] J. Day, 'Problems in the Interpretations of the Book of Jonah', in *In Quest of the Past – Studies on Israelite Religion, Literature and Prophetism* (Oudtestamentische Studiën, vol. 26; Leiden: Brill, 1990), p. 40.
[247] T. M. Bolin, *Freedom beyond Forgiveness* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament series, 236; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 101-102.
[248] See J. D. W. Watts, '"This Song" Conspicuous Poetry in Hebrew Prose', in, A. S. van der Wonde (Ed.) *Verse in Ancient Near Eastern Prose* Ed. J. C. de Moor and W.G.E. Watson (Verlag Butzon und Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1993), pp. 352-255.
[249] See 1 Samuel 2:1.
[250] See T. A. Perry, *The Honeymoon is over, Jonah's Argument with God* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006), pp. 16-17.

in Jonah 4:2 it appears in its common form as a prayer of petition. Thus, the situation of the Psalm being said in the belly of the fish would fit if the fish is the vehicle of Jonah's salvation.

The issue of language is one that is argued on the basis of exclusion. Wolff notes: 'There is no mention of the storm and the roaring of the sea, or of Jonah's flight and the great fish; nor is there any confession of guilt or any plea.'[251] Landes accepts these arguments and argues that the language of the Psalm shows it was pre-existent to the prose and was inserted by the later prose writer.[252] This chapter has already shown that this is not an issue, as it retains the importance of chapter 2 to the original form of the text. However, it is important to note further some linguistic similarities. The similarities do not have enough weight on their own to confirm the Psalm was written by the same author as the prose, but they strengthen the relevance of the Psalm to the narrative, thus explaining why a writer or redactor would include the Psalm at this juncture of the book.

The linguistic composition of Jonah 2 has caused scholars to question its authenticity. One criticism of relevance is that Jonah's Psalm lacks the aforementioned Aramaisms which are apparent in the rest of the book. Instead the Psalm is a collection of verses from the book of Psalmic traditions.[253] However, this would imply an earlier authorship of the Psalm, not a later one, and therefore it is unlikely to be written later than the rest of the book. It is most likely that either the author or a redactor inserted an earlier Psalm to give voice to the situation of the character. This is similar to Hezekiah's prayer in Isaiah 38. The issue of the lack of the narrator's favourite word גדל is explicable by its

[251] Wolff, p. 129
[252] Landes, p. 9
[253] See Vawter, p. 99 for a full comparison.

literary form. It is not describing a scene or a story and therefore the adjective is surplus to requirement. Instead, the poetic nature of the piece means that description is not needed. The only noun that receives any description in the Psalm is 'the holy temple' in verses 4 and 7.

Jonathan Magonet conducted a literary study of the book of Jonah and makes some interesting points about the Psalm.[254] The actions of the Psalmist are in line with the actions of the prose, most notably the continuation of the verbs 'to descend' and 'to call' that are present in chapter 1. For the narrator in chapter 2 the descent of Jonah is as much a part of his flight from God as his geographical location. The command to rise (קום) to go in 1:2 is juxtaposed with Jonah's actual response which was to rise (קום) to flee. Mirroring this rising, his flight then starts a downward trend as he tries to flee YHWH's presence. First he goes down (ירד) to Joppa (vs. 3), then he goes down into the ship (vs. 3) and finally he descends to the inner part of the ship (vs. 5). For the prose writer the final descent of Jonah was into the sea itself. Thus, it is important to note that the same word (ירד) is used in Jonah 2:7 in the descent to his earthly prison. In the same way the verb 'to call' (קרא) is fundamental to the prose of Jonah. For the narrator, crying out is a right, desired action. Jonah is required to call to the Ninevites (vs. 2); and the sailors, who are depicted as good men throughout, cry out to their gods in distress (vs. 5). Although they are calling to the wrong god, their action is correct and is reflected in Jonah's failure to call out. Instead, Jonah has fallen asleep in his deep part of the ship. The sailors' request to Jonah to arise (קום) echoes YHWH's command in verse 2, so Jonah needs to arise and then act in the right way. In the ship Jonah is required to call out to his God. Thus, when the Psalm in chapter 2 begins with the verb קרא,

[254] J. Magonet, *Form and Meaning – Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah* (Bible and Literature series, 8; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), p. 14.

Jonah is finally responding to God in the right way. So, we see that the language of the Psalm holds similarities which show that the Psalm is relevant in its place within the book of Jonah. The idea that Jonah, through the Psalm, is responding to God in the right way brings us to Wolff's final critique: the character of Jonah himself.

Jonah is a consistently disobedient character, who unlike prophets such as Moses or Jeremiah does not just struggle with his calling, but instead rejects outright God's request for prophecy and flees. His flight is curtailed by God's intervention with a storm and Jonah is dragged back across the Mediterranean in the belly of a fish. When he finally arrives in Nineveh his prophecy is short and, one could argue, half-hearted. His prophecy amounts to five words in Hebrew and his claim that judgement won't arrive for forty days implies Nineveh's destruction will not occur for quite some time.[255] Finally, when the Ninevites repent, instead of rejoicing, Jonah spends a whole chapter petitioning God not to turn aside his judgement. Even after he is taught a lesson by God, the narrative finishes and it is not made clear whether Jonah learnt anything or not. In the midst of this character assassination it is understandably difficult to reconcile Jonah to the voice of thanksgiving present in the fish's belly, which shows Jonah understands God's salvation. Jonah is unable to comprehend salvation for anyone but himself. This intensifies the indictment against Jonah's character. Jonah's changeable nature is fundamentally important for any critique to occur. This would explain why the Psalm is inappropriate in the context of the book. However, if the Psalm alongside Jonah's other utterances are viewed as satirical then it provides an explanation why his words do not fit his actions.

[255] This is contrasted to the LXX which includes three days; here Jonah's prophecy is more imminent.

Whilst Jonah's character is changeable and inconsistent, his speech is the exact opposite. Out of the mouth of Jonah come some of the finest credal statements in the whole of the Old Testament. As has already been shown in chapter 1, Jonah's speech has a satirical function intensifying the indictment against Jonah's character. There is no reason to assume that this theme does not continue in chapter 2. The prophet's longest speech from inside the whale is riddled with ironic statements. James Ackerman addresses many of these ironies in arguing the poem performs a satiric function.[256] He argues that the song's authenticity is proved precisely because it is inconsistent with the rest of the narrative. His list of ironies are summarised here:

1. The shift from a Psalm of lament to one of thanksgiving causes a poetic dissonance between Jonah's perception of reality and the narrative of the previous chapter. This problem which has plagued scholars for generations is a purposeful error by the author to show that Jonah himself is at fault. The disobedient prophet is unable to comprehend what is the right thing to sing in this situation and so his song is a pastiche of different Psalmic phrases. This point in highlighted by the *Leitwort* of the Psalm. Jonah's assertion that he is calling out (קרא) to YHWH creates an immediate irony. Jonah was completely incapable of this action in chapter 1 despite being commanded by both YHWH and the captain of the ship. As has already been stated, it also produced a parody with the sailors who cried out at the first opportunity.
2. Jonah appears to perceive in the Psalm that it was YHWH who caused him to be in this predicament. He states that it was YHWH that cast him into the sea.

[256] J.S. Ackerman, 'Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah', in *Traditions in Transformation – Turning Points in Biblical Faith*, Ed. B. Halpern and J. D. Levenson (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1981), pp. 213-246.

Ackerman argues that the shift in vocabulary here from hurl (טול) to cast (שלך) is because of the Psalmic nature of the text. The hiph'il of the verb שלך is used three times in Psalmic texts for YHWH's action in throwing people down to the depths.[257] Furthermore, it was not YHWH who sent Jonah away from his presence as implied by verse 4 (5) of the Psalm. Instead Jonah was the agent in his own flight. It was his own descent which metaphorically leads him to Sheol,[258] not the will of YHWH.

3. Jonah's assurance that he will be restored to the divine presence, particularly his return to YHWH's holy temple in verses 4 and 5, has no basis for confirmation. Nowhere in the Psalm is Jonah repentant nor does he seem willing to return on his mission to Nineveh. Indeed his promises in verse 9 (10) of the Psalm are a direct parody of the actions of the sailors. It was the sailors who understood that their salvation from the storm belongs to YHWH. Thus, they offered sacrifices and votive offerings as a form of worship. Instead, Jonah only promises to do these things once his position in YHWH's presence has been restored.
4. The final irony in the Psalm revolves around the Jonah's understanding of the word חסד. In verse 8 (9), Jonah claims that those who follow idols forsake their חסד.[259] The book of Jonah is principally about foreign people's abandoning their gods or their evil ways to follow YHWH. Both the sailors and the Ninevites turn to follow YHWH to become part of his חסד. The irony of Jonah's claim in the

[257] See Psalm 51:11 (13), 71:9 and 102:10 (11).
[258] Here Ackerman agrees with Landes that the descent of Jonah symbolises a descent to the underworld or Sheol in Israelite understanding. This is why Jonah claims that he is in the belly of Sheol in verse 2 (3) of the Psalm. See Ackerman, p. 223.
[259] The word is generally translated as 'steadfast love.' However, it forms many different functions with a range of Hebrew texts. For more information, see H. J. Zobel, 'חסד', *The TDOT* 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 44-64.

Psalm is magnified by his knowledge in 4:2 that YHWH is full of חסד. Yet, despite this knowledge, Jonah is unable to comprehend the truth of this statement when applied to a foreign people deserving YHWH's judgement.

5. Jonah's final statement is the ultimate irony. Jonah asserts the ultimate truth for the author that deliverance belongs to YHWH. Ackerman argues that Jonah accidentally says the secret key words that enable him to be released from the fish. The statement however is again laced with irony if applied to chapter 4. If Jonah believes that deliverance does belong to YHWH then there would be no need to complain in chapter 4. It is precisely because he does not understand the truth of this statement that the satire of the prophet is complete. His words, when put in juxtaposition with his actions, prove that Jonah does not comprehend the meaning of the truths he continues to utter throughout the book.

Ackerman's research provides a good foundation for understanding the satire present throughout this chapter. Although he never explicitly identifies what he is doing, Ackerman places Jonah's words and actions in contrast. The differences between the two show how the Psalm creates a satire of the prophet's own understanding.

Whilst Ackerman's analysis is very thorough in identifying satire through the irony of chapter 2, there is still further work that can be undertaken by examining the components of Jonah's Psalm. It has already been noted that the Psalm is a pastiche of different

Psalms. The connections between Jonah soliloquy and the Psalter are shown in the table below:[260]

Phrase in Jonah	Corresponding passages in the Psalms	Strength of correlation
Verse 3b (4b) – All your waves and your billows passed over me	Psalm 42:7 (8)b	Exact quotation
Verse 4a (5a) – Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight'	Psalm 31:22 (23)	Strong correlation - Verse גרז used in Psalm instead of גרש to indicate 'being driven'.
Verse 8 (9) – Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love	Psalm 31:6 (7)	Quotation of the phrase: משמרין הבלי שוא.
Verse 2 (3) – I called out to YHWH, in my distress and he answered me	Psalm 116:1 and 120:1	Identical vocabulary, but a different word-order.
Verse 6b (7b) – Yet you brought my life up from the pit	Psalm 103:4	Change in vocabulary, Psalm 103 uses גאל (redeem) instead of עלה.[261]

[260] This table is indebted to the meticulous work of Jonathan Magonet. See Magonet, pp.44-50.
[261] The use of the verb עלה to ascend is unsurprising at this point as it counterpoints Jonah's descent in chapter 1.

Verse 7a (8a) – When my life was fainting away	Psalm 142:3 (4) and 143:4	Strong correlation- Both Psalms use the word רוח (spirit), whilst Jonah prefers נפשׁ (soul).
Verse 9a (10a) – But with a voice of thanksgiving will I sacrifice to you	Psalm 116:17	Loose correlation – Psalm reads – To you I will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving
Verse 9b (10b) – Salvation belongs to YHWH	Psalm 3:8 (9)	The Psalm inverts the phrase with the definite article used in front of salvation.

The table above shows that Jonah's Psalm was indebted to the language and phrasing of the Psalter. However, despite identifying the connections between the two, making conclusions over how the author of Jonah's Psalm used the Psalter is difficult. Jonah's song is such a random assortment of different Psalmic words and phrases that there is no specific parody of any single Psalm. Instead the correlations within the song to the Psalter allude to a Psalmic style of communication. Jonah, by his upbringing within Israelite religious society knows many credal statements about YHWH. His words are like a song, sung in the temple that he wishes to return to. By parodying this style of worship, the Psalm intensifies the satire against the prophet's own character. He knows the right words to say, but cannot ever comprehend the magnitude of their meaning. This is the

principal way satire is used within the Psalm. Like the previous statements of the prophet in chapter 1, the words of Jonah are a direct contradiction of his own beliefs and actions.

It is worth noting that the Psalm also serves another literary purpose within the book. Without the Psalm, there is no indication that Jonah shows any repentance at all. The Psalm functions to give a reason why YHWH saves the prophet; and why Jonah is now ready to accept his second call at the start of chapter 3.

Chapter 3: The Most Effective Prophet in History

If chapter 2 focuses on the words of Jonah inside the great fish, then chapter 3 returns wholeheartedly back to the narrative. The chapter is set in parallel with chapter 1 due to their similar introductions. Juxtaposition is created between the two incidents as Jonah takes the right path towards Nineveh instead of fleeing in the other direction. The introduction to chapter 3 mirrors Jonah's call in chapter 1. The first two verses are identical apart from two minor changes. Firstly, Jonah's family name 'son of Amittai' is replaced by the word שנית, meaning 'a second time'. Secondly, the reason for the prophecy is omitted. Instead YHWH asserts to Jonah that he must deliver the message that YHWH himself is giving him. On the simplest level, these two similarities place the two chapters in parody with one another. Jonah's choice to arise and go, as opposed to rising and fleeing, results in a miraculous event arguably greater than the fish's intervention in chapter 1. The magnitude of Jonah's success in the level of repentance of the Ninevites intensifies the critique of Jonah's failure to go in the first place.

The amazing response of the Ninevites functions satirically to criticise the prophet again. There are two internal parodies that are present within chapter 3. Firstly, the laziness of Jonah contrasts with the disproportionate results of his prophecy. Secondly, Jonah's actions are parodied by the degrees of repentance of the NInevites. Intertwined within these two parodies in chapter 3 is the speech of the prophet. As in the chapters 1 and 2 the words of Jonah form an important imbalance between the prophet's words and his understanding of what they mean.

When Jonah finally does travel to the city in chapter 3, the author continues his practice of using hyperbole. The city of Nineveh has already been called 'great'[262] in chapter 1, and this is repeated throughout chapter 3. The author uses a literary device to make the city grow in the mind of the reader. He builds up his description of the city, each time making it appear larger and larger. In verse 2 of chapter 3 he repeats his introduction that Nineveh is a great (גדולה) city. When it is subsequently described in verse 3, the city is called a very great city.[263] Finally, the measurements of the city are described as מהלך שׁלשׁת ימים at the end of verse 3. This curious phrase has been interpreted several ways by scholars.[264] However, whatever the phrase may mean, it clearly forms a literary function by parodying

[262] The author throughout the book of Jonah used the term גדל to magnify the parameters of this 'tall tale'. It seems that the adjective is applied to as many nouns as possible in chapter 1. The city of Nineveh, the wind of YHWH, the storm, the fear of the sailors, and the fish are all described as great. This creates a heightened dramatic effect as the importance of each event appears to increase in proportion to the magnitude of the objects around it. For more information about how גדל is used in the book see Magonet, pp. 31-33.

[263] Literally 'a great city to the God.' Here the word אלהים is used as a superlative.

[264] The LXX renders the passage 'of about a journey of three days.' Commentators have offered other suggestions. Stuart argues that the term means 'requiring a three day visit'. He bases this argument on Wiseman's idea about the ancient oriental practice of hospitality. See Stuart, p. 487-8. This suggestion does not seem contextually correct. There is no reason that the author would comment on diplomatic practice in such an obscure way at this point in the narrative. Jonah is not received in the city and if this practice is normative then Jonah clearly breaks it in the next verse. Some like Wolff and Sasson think the phrase should be understood to mean, as the Hebrew suggests, that the city takes three days to walk around. This makes the Nineveh's dimension larger than any known ancient city with a diameter of 40/50 miles. Whilst the description may be referring to the surrounding area and suburbs of the city, the far-fetched nature of its enormous size fits easily within the author's grandiose narrative. See Wolff, p. 148 or Sasson, pp. 230-1.

Jonah's activity to the size of the city. Jonah's arrival and prophecy in verse 4 is half-hearted and short. The brevity of his journey into the city matches the sparseness of his speech. Whilst the city is three days journey in size, Jonah can only be bothered to go one day's journey in his prophetic mission. The gratuitously large nature of the city belittles the effort of the prophet when he is finally undertaking his call from YHWH. Jonah's effort is exemplified by his final prophecy which amounts to five words in Hebrew:

עוד ארבעים יום ונינוה נהפכת.[265] The lack of urgency shown by the prophet is satirised by the immediate response of the people of Nineveh. Verse 5 uses three indicative third person verbs to create the effect of a rapid turnaround by the Ninevites. Straightaway they believed[266] in God.[267] Their belief is immediately realised in practical action as they called a fast and put on sackcloth as a sign of repentance. The minimal effort of the prophet is met with an immediate response to his words. Furthermore, this response is not just immediate, but total in including everyone in the city. This is made explicit at the end of the verse 5 by using two antonyms to create a sense of wholeness. From the greatest to the least, everyone repented. Verse 6 then intensifies the response to include the king of Nineveh[268] within the response to YHWH. Jonah's prophecy has affected the head of the

[265] In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown.

[266] The verb אמן is used here, differing from the sailors who feared YHWH. The two words do have slightly different nuances. However, in the context of the book it fits that the sailors fear YHWH as it forms as continuation of their original fear of the storm. The Ninevites do not have that original fear but still turn to follow. The responses of both parties imply that the two terms are used quite synonymously in the book. The use of אמן does also form a pun with Jonah's father's name.

[267] Interestingly they did not believe Jonah, possibly showing the prophet's passivity in the whole process. The use of the generic term for the deity and not the divine name (YHWH) here is probably because of the foreign nature of the Ninevites. This shows they did not convert to Judaism but instead undertook a moral repentance. This is not YHWH dealing with his covenant people, but with an alien people to whom the tetragrammaton has not been revealed. It is for this reason אלהים is used throughout the rest of the chapter.

[268] There has been a lot of debate over who the author is referring to here. There was probably not a king over the city at that time as the king would rule the whole Assyrian empire. However, there would clearly be an official who would be ruling over the affairs of the city. Whether the term מלך would apply to him is debatable. However, within the constructs of the story it makes perfect sense to have a king of Nineveh. The

city itself. This author then moves to extreme lengths to emphasise the complete response of the city to Jonah's message. The fact that the animals in the city are included in the fast and are made to put on sackcloth creates a ridiculous scene. Jonah's prophecy, despite its brevity, has the greatest effect ever. Whereas many of the Israelite prophets appear to have struggled to get their message heard, Jonah is arguably the most effective prophet in history. Thus, the book criticises Jonah's actions again through another internal satire. Jonah's effortless actions are mocked by how well the people respond.

These same actions are criticised again when Jonah is placed in contrast with the Ninevites. Like the sailors in chapter 1, the Ninevites are portrayed as righteous foreigners. Accepting that their evil is the reason why Jonah has to go and prophesy, in contrast, throughout chapter 3 their actions reflect a radical turnaround in attitude. The sailors are placed in a situation where their natural fear forms a catalyst for their worship of YHWH. In contrast, the Ninevites' change of heart is even more unbelievable as they respond to the shortest prophecy of all time. In examining the actions of the Ninevites, the dramatic nature of their conversion illuminates the deficiencies of the prophet's own actions in returning to follow YHWH. In three ways Jonah's own repentance is parodied by the outrageous actions[269] of the Ninevites:

1. The Ninevites' repentance is characterised by their desire to turn. The verb (שוב) is used in verse 8 in the rallying cry of the King of Nineveh. It is then repeated twice in verse 9 as the king appeals to God to turn aside from

grand city that the author has created would have no other leader but a king. The repentance of this almost mythical place requires the response of a king to complete its miraculous rejection of its previous ways.

[269] The Ninevites' actions are unique in the Old Testament. Whilst they use traditional forms of repentance in donning sackcloth and fasting, their inclusion of the animals is extreme. The author uses this absurd act to reiterate the lengths to which the Ninevites go in seeking God's favour. Marcus argues that the animals form a vital role the creation of the fantastic necessary for satirical writing. Like the fish in chapter 1 and the worm and the plant in chapter 4, the animals' portrayal makes the tale unbelievable. See Marcus (1995), p. 99.

judgement. At the start of the verse it is placed in pragmatic apposition with the verb נחם. Turning away from evil is the primary way for the Ninevites to prove that they are repentant. The word then forms a verbal link to the actions of the deity. The Ninevites hope that their change in direction will cause YHWH to turn away from his anger. The swift change in direction by the Ninevites satirises the slow change in direction of the prophet. As has already been shown, Jonah flees in the opposite direction away from his call in chapter 1. Whilst the Ninevites turn back to YHWH of their own volition, Jonah is forced kicking and screaming to return to the place of his calling. The divine intervention of a great fish is the catalyst in Jonah's return. The absence of the verb שוב in any of Jonah's actions shows the prophet's unwillingness to repent of his mistake in running away from his call. Even in his Psalm, Jonah never shows a desire to turn back to following YHWH. Instead his return from the depth is instigated by the deity himself.[270]

2. The Ninevites' action of calling out (קרא) in chapter 3 forms a similar parody to the sailors of chapter 1. As has already been argued, the sailors' eagerness to cry out to their deities satirises Jonah's indifference to seeking the help of YHWH. This satire is reinforced in chapter 3, as again the Ninevites are willing to cry out immediately to seek redemption. Firstly, in verse 5 they call (קרא) a fast as the primary response to believing in Jonah's god. However, in Hebrew the normal way to institute a fast would be by using the verb קרא.[271] Secondly, in verse 8, the people cry out to God in a mighty way. Like the sailors, crying out is

[270] See chapter 2, verse 6 (7).
[271] See H. D. Preuss, 'צום', in *TDOT* 12 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), pp. 297-301.

portrayed as a legitimate way to try and attract a deity's attention to the plight of the caller. Jonah in chapter 1 completely fails to do this simple action. Whilst he does appear to cry out in chapters 2 and 3, it has already been shown that his words in chapter 2 are ironic and his prophecy in chapter 3 is minimal. When he is set in comparison with the Ninevites, Jonah is again found to be deficient in his lack of action.

3. A small point to note is how chapter 3 portrays the king of Nineveh. The king goes from royal robes to sackcloth and ashes. His actions are portrayed as the epitome of repentance. Even the greatest in the city humbles himself to seek the favour of Jonah's God. The author uses a neat little incident to show the extent of this man's journey. Verse 6 says that the king arose (קום) from his throne, and replacing his royal robes for sackcloth, then sat (ישב) in ashes. The two actions of arising and sitting act to form a small parody of the prophet. The verb קום has been shown within the narrative to act as a catalyst for action. Jonah arises before he flees in chapter 1 and before he goes to Nineveh in chapter 3. The king's immediate rising to respond in an extravagantly positive way points again to Jonah's failings. The concept of sitting in ashes mirrors Jonah's later sulk whilst he is sitting under the plant in chapter 4, verse 5. One is sitting seeking mercy, whilst the other sits expecting judgement.[272]

Jonah's words, as in chapters 1 and 2, act as another indictment against the prophet. His prophecy has already been shown to be short as well as half-hearted. However, as in

[272] Whilst this is a neat little argument, it is slightly tenuous due the broad range of meanings of the root ישב. Its principal meaning is to sit, however it has a wider linguistic range incorporating the concept of abiding or dwelling.

previous statements, the irony present in Jonah's words functions as a satirical indictment of Jonah's actual beliefs. Despite being only 5 words long, Jonah's prophecy contains two important ironies:

1. Jonah uses the timeframe of forty days as the parameter of the Ninevites' judgement. If Jonah really understood that the Ninevites would be destroyed in forty days then it makes little sense for him to retreat outside of the city to watch the subsequent firestorm. Whilst the LXX version of three days makes more sense, Jonah does not seem to trust his own words to be accurate.[273]

2. Jonah misconceives the meaning of his own prophecy that the Ninevites will be overthrown. Sasson argues that the word נהפכת retains a dual-meaning in the text. In the context of the narrative both Jonah and the NInevites understand the word to mean an inevitable destruction. Thus, most commentators translate the word to mean 'overthrow'. However, Sasson argues the word also functions to mean 'overturn' or 'reform'.[274] For this reason Jonah's prophecy is entirely accurate as the Ninevites change their ways and turn back from their evil behaviour. This makes the prophecy ironic as it is one the prophet himself does not understand. Jonah proves this in chapter 4 as he waits for the destruction which never comes. Again the prophet's speech appears to form a parody of Jonah's own beliefs and actions.

Thus, in chapter 3 internal satire continues to be used by the author further to indict the protagonist of the story. Jonah's lacklustre effort is parodied by the outcome of his prophecy. Furthermore, the character of Jonah is criticised when his actions are contrasted

[273] This argument is raised by Marcus who understands it as being parodic in nature. See Marcus, pp. 125-6.
[274] For Sasson's complete arguments about the etymology of the word see Sasson, pp. 231-7 and pp.264-7.

with the righteous foreigners. Lastly, Jonah's speech again does not match the prophet's own beliefs about what will happen to Nineveh. This continues to undermine the consistency of Jonah's character. Despite these internal satires there is also one major cross textual analysis to be examined. The very theme of a city coming under God's judgement immediate places Nineveh in contrast with Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus, the text of Jonah chapters 3 and 4 can be compared to Genesis 18 and 19.

The thematic link between Genesis 18:16-19:29 and Jonah chapters 3 and 4 is obvious. There are no other accounts in the Old Testament that deal with the destruction of a city as judgement by YHWH. Magonet argues that linguistically it is impossible not to draw comparisons between the stories.[275] The link is created by the verb הפך: Jonah prophesies that Nineveh will be overthrown, whilst Sodom and Gomorrah are overthrown in Genesis 19:25. The cause of the cities' destruction is similar, although not identical.[276] The evil ways of the Ninevites reflects the grave sin and great outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18:20. Furthermore, both stories contain an external third party who discusses the incident with the deity. Both these protagonists attempt to watch the city from a high vantage point, to witness the expected destruction. These similarities indicate that the Jonah narrative echoes the earlier Genesis account. By placing the two stories in contrast the character of Jonah is made into a parody of Abraham.

With the parody created, it is the actions of the patriarch and the prophet which are distorted to criticise the character of Jonah. In the Genesis account the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are set within the context of Abraham's promise of Isaac and Lot's conception of the Moabites and Ammonites. It is ironic that the destruction of the two

[275] See Magonet, p. 65.
[276] Marcus notes that the evil of the Ninevites matches the evil of humanity in Genesis 6. See, Marcus p. 131.

cities is sandwiched between two narratives concerning origin.[277] Wenham argues that the two chapters of Genesis 18 and 19 are written palistrophically with the second chapter mirroring the first.[278] The two chapters are placed in juxtaposition by the author who parallels the hosting of the angels by both Abraham and Lot. When placed in contrast, the story in Jonah forms an inversion of Genesis narrative. The conversation between YHWH and Abraham precedes the judgement narrative in Genesis. In comparison Jonah's speaks with his deity only once the city has been spared destruction. Whereas Abraham pleads YHWH to spare the city, Jonah is angry that YHWH is merciful. The contrasts between the two characters are stark. Although Abraham has a vested interest in the cities due to Lot's presence there, his action of intercession for the city goes far beyond what is reasonable. His manner with the deity is bold yet submissive. Each time he barters with YHWH his request is prefixed by a platitude. Jonah's attitude is the complete opposite. His reaction to YHWH's mercy is great displeasure and anger. His subsequent speech contains none of the platitudes of Abraham. Instead he uses YHWH's inaction to justify his flight in chapter 1. By reacting this way, Jonah becomes the anti-type of the patriarch, seeking YHWH's judgement instead of appealing to his mercy.

In chapter 3, the author creates three more satirical parodies which function so as to further undermine the character of Jonah. Firstly, Jonah's lazy prophecy is satirised by its outcome. Secondly, there is an internal comparison between the swiftness of the Ninevites' repentance and the reluctance of Jonah's own return to God. Lastly, the compassion of

[277] Lot becomes the patriarch of Moab and Ammon, whilst the promise of Isaac forms an integral part of the origins of Israel.
[278] For more information about the structure of the two chapters and their comparisons to the flood narratives see, G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50* (WBC 2; Waco: Word, 1994), pp. 40-65.

Abraham contrasts with the annoyance of Jonah when the two stories of destruction are juxtaposed. The final examples of satire come in the last chapter of the book.

Chapter 4: Mercy is not Enough

The final chapter of the book shifts the narrative onto a conversation between the protagonist and his deity. The first four verses portray Jonah's immediate reaction to YHWH's relenting of destruction. The story is then relocated to outside of the city where Jonah sits to wait for the destruction of a city that he fears will be preserved. The chapter has two major inconsistencies which create an ironic effect to further the portrayal of an incompetent, angry prophet.

1. Jonah does not appear to have decided whether or not YHWH is going to destroy the city or not. In verses 1-4 he seems to understand that YHWH has relented from smiting the city. After he make his credal assertion in verse 2, he even concludes that YHWH is a God who relents (נחם) from bringing evil. It is difficult to understand why Jonah then travels outside of the city to watch what is going to happen to the city. If Jonah knows that it will be destroyed, then this action is futile. This implies that Jonah does not even believe his own words that YHWH will relent from his judgement, showing further the incongruity between Jonah's speech and his actions. Jonah again becomes a parody of himself. However, the narrative also requires Jonah to be in the vicinity of the city for God to set up the parallel between the plant and the Ninevites. This provides an explanation for the inconsistency as Jonah is required by the constructs of the story to remain in close proximity to the city.

2. In verse 5, Jonah makes a booth to create some shade for himself. It is curious then why Jonah seems so dependent on the shade provided by the קיקיון plant. When the plant is killed by the worm, Jonah's complaint implies that the booth no longer gives him the required shade. This curiosity is not easy to explain. However, if Jonah's construction of his booth is a narrative device, then it provides the contextual basis for the author's relocation of the prophet. Jonah must have attempted to set up a dwelling if he was planning to watch the destruction of the city. It is then ironic that Jonah requires the קיקיון plant for shade, implying that Jonah's construction is insufficient. This undermines Jonah's own ability even to provide a dwelling to watch the city's destruction.

These two inconsistencies lay the foundation for a set of three parodies within the chapter which continue to undermine the character of Jonah. Firstly, the parody of the Elijah is fully realised within this chapter. Secondly, Jonah's two speeches continue to undermine his actions. Lastly, Jonah's anger becomes an inversion of YHWH's compassion.

Bruce Vawter argues that the fourth chapter of the book produces a prophetic parody of Elijah. The comparison has already been shown to be apparent in Jonah's introduction in chapter 1. Vawter places chapter 4 in contrast with Elijah's flight from Jezebel in 1 Kings 19. The similarities between the two narratives are obvious. Firstly, the residences of the two prophets are identical as they both sit under a tree or plant for shade. Elijah resides under a broom tree (רתם), whilst Jonah sits under the קיקיון plant. Secondly, the suicidal wishes of both of them are vocalised by the two prophets. In 1 Kings 19:4 Elijah asked YHWH to take his life away. Likewise, Jonah appeals for YHWH to kill him three times throughout chapter 4. In verses 3, 8 and 9 Jonah asks YHWH to take his life as he would rather die than live.

Lastly, in both accounts the narratives are used to facilitate a conversation between YHWH and his prophet. Both conversations are framed by a repeated question from the deity. In Elijah's case, his theophanic experience on Horeb is framed by the question 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' It appears before the theophany in the cave on Horeb in 1 Kings 19:9. It is then repeated after YHWH has revealed himself in the still small voice, which again asks Elijah what he is doing at Horeb in 19:13. For Jonah, his interrogation is based upon whether or not Jonah's anger is justified. The question again frames the main dramatic incident of the story. In Jonah 4:4, YHWH's response to Jonah's affirmation of his character and his subsequent death request is to ask whether Jonah's anger is good or desirable. The same question is again repeated after Jonah's loss of his קיקיון plant in verse 9. The three words (הֵיטֵב חָרָה לָךְ) are repeated by YHWH to Jonah concerning his anger at the death of his plant. These two sets of questions place the two prophets into identical scenes. The drama of both chapters functions as a catalyst to create a divine dialogue for both of the prophets. These three similarities between the two chapters show that it is legitimate to read these passages alongside each other. Jonah's action, words and conversation, by their resemblance to the passage in 1 Kings 19, form a prophetic parody of his forerunner Elijah.

Unfortunately, Vawter does not examine the reason for the parody in the text of Jonah. If he had done this he would have noticed the satirical intent underlying the comparisons created between the two prophets. As has already been shown in chapter 1, by contrasting Jonah with an obedient prophet like Elijah, the text immediately criticises his flight. Jonah becomes the anti-type of a prophet, running away from his call in the opposite direction. The continuation of this contrast in chapter 4 again critiques Jonah within a different context. Jonah's sulk in chapter 4 is contrasted with Elijah's portrayal as a prophet in dire

need. By echoing Elijah's call for YHWH to remove his life, Jonah compares his own situation with that of Elijah's. However, the severity of Jonah's situation in comparison to Elijah makes a mockery of Jonah's choice of words. Whereas Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel who wants to kill him, Jonah's life is not in danger whatsoever. The nature of his plight almost justifies Elijah's desperation. He has spent most of his prophetic life hiding from people who want to kill him.[279] In the particular context of 1 Kings 19, Jezebel has just directly threatened his life in verse 2 in response to his killing of the prophets of Baal at Carmel. His subsequent request to YHWH to take away his life is understandable, considering his situation. In contrast, Jonah's only flight has occurred 3 chapters earlier, as he tries to escape the divine presence. His situation is not fraught with danger. Instead his request is only in response to his anger concerning YHWH's mercy to the Ninevites. The ludicrous nature of his request is further emphasised later in the chapter. In response to the death of his קיקיון plant in verse 7, Jonah exclaims that its death makes him angry enough to die in verse 9. Whilst it is important to note that there was a degree of true anguish that Jonah felt following YHWH's relenting of judgement, when his situation is juxtaposed to Elijah's his complaint is undermined. To the reader, his response to YHWH's mercy is melodramatic and somewhat ironic, considering the mercy he has already received at the hand of his own deity. Thus, the parody functions satirically by creating a comparison between the prophets which undermines Jonah. The character of Jonah is shown to be deficient when his dissatisfaction is contrasted to the plight of a truly marginalised prophet.

The second parody contained within the chapter is the continued implausibility of Jonah's speech. This chapter has already shown that the prophet makes credal assertions

[279] The narrative of 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 2 portrays Elijah as a prophet who is constantly ostracized from his community. He spends time with widows more than kings and when he does interact with the royalty of his day he is accused and persecuted by them.

which do not match his own actions. Instead, Jonah's words are satirically undermined by his own actions. This phenomenon continues throughout this final chapter in Jonah's last two speeches.

At the start of chapter 4 Jonah gives his primary reason for his displeasure at YHWH's mercy. In doing so he voices a fundamental Israelite statement about the character of YHWH. In 4:2 Jonah's states the reason for his flight was because he knew that YHWH was 'a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.' Robert Dentan wrote an article dissecting this statement about YHWH from its original context in Exodus. He argues that it is one of 'Israel's central creeds'.[280] Its multiple occurrences within the Hebrew canon within a variety of different texts indicate its importance across genre.[281] Jonah's exact words concerning YHWH's turning and relenting in combination with this statement parallels the text in Joel 2. In Joel, the prophet claims in verses 2:12-14 that the people of Israel need to turn (שוב) to YHWH by fasting, weeping and mourning. Joel then argues that YHWH's character, expressed in this credal statement, is the reason why the Israelites should return. If the people act in this way, then maybe YHWH will respond by turning (שוב) and relenting (נחם). The book of Jonah portrays the Ninevite response as an echo of this command. The Ninevites turn to God then asks him to turn and relent. Alongside this they call a fast on two separate occasions in chapter 3. The presence of sack cloth represents mourning, thus proving that the Ninevites' response corresponds to

[280] R. C. Dentan, 'The literary affinities of Exodus xxxiv 6f' in *Vetus Testamentum* 13 (1963), p. 50.
[281] The phrase is coined in various different guises in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Numbers, Psalms, 2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Joel and Nahum. For a full list of references and their exact phrasing of the creed see Sasson, pp. 280-1.

the actions Joel suggests. Thus, by Joel's reasoning, YHWH's relenting is an appropriate response to the repentance of the wicked city.[282]

For Jonah then to argue at the start of chapter 4 that he knew that YHWH would relent throws the text into confusion. By asserting that the reason for YHWH's action is his character, Jonah's anger seems to be misplaced. He is unhappy that YHWH is merciful to the Ninevites.[283] Jonah's actions in fleeing, prophesying judgement, and responding in anger to YHWH's mercy, indicate that he does not require YHWH to be merciful. Instead he desires a deity who destroys the deserving. By uttering this fundamental Israelite statement Jonah's actions become entirely ironic as well as vindictive. It is an inverse prophetic principle that Jonah flees his calling because he does not want YHWH to save the city. His prophecy in Nineveh implies that he wants YHWH's judgement to come upon the city. His anger at YHWH's mercy highlights that although he says YHWH is merciful, what he desires is the opposite. Despite knowing and being able to recite this central creed, Jonah does not want to believe it. Again through his words Jonah's speech forms a parody of his actual beliefs and actions. This chasm between Jonah's words and his beliefs is substantiated by the hyperbolic request for death. The fact that this issue upsets him to the point of wishing his own death adds to the ridiculous nature of Jonah's anger. Whilst this portrayal fits into the grandiose nature of the book, it also functions as a form of mockery against the prophet's portrayal. Jonah is in this state because he doesn't want YHWH to save the

[282] This text also echoes Jeremiah 18:7-10 which applies the same promise to the nations. If they turn to YHWH, then he will turn and relent from judgement. It appears the book of Jonah is applying these two promises to an actual people group to illicit a response from its protagonist. The Jeremiah reference does omit the credal assertion of YHWH's character.

[283] Interestingly the reason behind his displeasure at YHWH's mercy is not made explicit. Thus, it is difficult to conclude that Jonah represents a purely nationalistic school of Israelite thought. The concern of chapter 4 is entirely focused on the mercy of YHWH in relenting. Jonah does not specify that his displeasure is based on the identity of Ninevites. The subsequent botanic illustration does not suggest that YHWH's mercy is dependent on nationality at all.

Ninevites. This piece of satire is emphasised in Jonah's final statement at the end of chapter 4.

Jonah's response to the death of his קיקיון plant is just as melodramatic as his first statement in chapter 4.[284] Essentially his words are a repetition of his earlier assertion that he is angry enough to wish for death. This repetition places the two incidents in parallel. YHWH uses this parallel to undermine Jonah's original wrathful position. The difference between the two incidents indicates that the context of the second statement is an inversion of the first. In the first incident, Jonah is angry due to the survival of the Ninevites, whilst in the second his ire is incensed by the death of the plant. By implying that the two incidents are similar, YHWH proves that Jonah's position is untenable in verses 10 and 11. As Jonah pities the plant in verse 10, so YHWH pities the Ninevites in verse 11. In both cases the verb חוס is used to set up this comparison. Jonah's anger is a satire of YHWH compassion. The final nail in the character assassination of the story's protagonist is delivered through his apparent concern for a plant over one hundred and twenty thousand people. His silence at the end of the book is indicative that the character of the prophet has been destroyed by the multiple satires that have undermined his portrayal.

Conclusions concerning the Analysis of the Text

This chapter has shown that the book of Jonah is inundated with a series of parodies that function satirically to undermine the character of Jonah. There are six major satires

[284]It is worth noting that Jonah's anger at the salvation of the Ninevites again places him in contrast with the people of Nineveh. Davies notes that Jonah's anger displays his inability to see an evil thing (רעה). In comparison the Ninevites perceive their own evil in chapter 3:8 and thus repent. See G. I. Davies, 'The Uses of R`` Qal and the Meaning of Jonah IV 1.' *Vetus Testamentum 27* (1977), p.110.

that occur at various points within the text.[285] Jonah is set in contrast to other characters who are internally portrayed within the book or who are present in other external biblical narratives. By contrasting Jonah to the characters of the sailors, the Ninevites, Elijah, Abraham and ultimately YHWH himself, the character of the prophet is indicted at every turn. In his speech, Jonah creates a parody of his own actions and beliefs. The same character can say one thing but his actions indicate that he believes the opposite. All these parodies combined show that satire is a fundamental feature of the book's literary makeup. The six satires are interwoven into a narrative which questions important theological principles concerning the nature and character of YHWH and how he responds to nations around Israel.

Analysis of Previous Arguments concerning the Satirical Nature of Jonah

The book of Jonah has been identified as satire by many different scholars over the years. It was first suggested by Thomas Paine in his *Age of Reason*. As scholars have found it notoriously difficult to assign Jonah to a specific genre there is enough room to speculate that Jonah could function within its own unique genre.[286] Some scholars have mentioned the satirical qualities of the book without thrashing out a defined understanding of satire.[287] However, within recent years the arguments concerning satire have been refined. The analysis of the satire present in the book has been conducted with a large degree of care

[285] It is worth noting at this point that a seventh parody has been suggested by Kim who reads the book of Jonah alongside the account of Jeroboam II in 2 Kings 14. Whilst, Kim makes some good suggestions, it is unclear who is being parodied in the text. He seems to argue it is both Jonah as well as the King of Nineveh. It is for this reason that it is hard to sustain this as a plausible satire. See, H. C. P. Kim, 'Jonah Read Intertextually', in *JBL* 126 (2007), pp. 504-7.

[286] Scholars have argued that the book functions as an allegory, a parable, a midrash, or even as a wisdom text. For an overview of these arguments see Day (1990), pp. 37-9.

[287] It is for this reason that many scholars have suggested the book might be satire. However, most of these comments are not justified or form part of a wider argument. For pertinent examples see: R. P. Carroll, 'Is humour also among the prophets?' in *On Humour and the Comic in the Old Testament* Ed. Y. T. Radday and A. Brenner (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), p. 180-1;

and depth. This study is indebted to many of the previous examinations of the satire in the book in understanding the scope of internal and external parodies that can be found within the book. However, the conclusions of previous scholars need to be examined in order to assess properly whether the book can be assigned to an independent satiric genre. Further conclusion then can be made over the way satire is deployed by the author of the book as well as defining who the book is satirically attacking.

If satire has been shown to be present so widely throughout the book as this chapter suggests, then logically the next step is to question whether the book was written as a specific satire. This chapter has shown that the character of Jonah is the main object of critique when a satirical lens is placed to the text. By comparing the prophet to both internal and external characters, his actions undermine his portrayal. Jonah is not a false prophet but an ignorant and incompetent one. His actions provide a parody of the few words that he does utter throughout the work. Behind each speech is the conception that Jonah does not really understand the meaning of the words he is speaking. Satire functions within the book as a device by which to undermine the comic protagonist. If the satirical elements of the book target Jonah, then to assign the book to a genre of satire must mean that Jonah represents an external figure, group or ideal that is being explicitly attacked by the author. Taking this next step is extremely difficult and it is the reason why it is hard to prove that Jonah belongs to a pre-Hellenistic satirical genre.

Holbert argues correctly that Jonah is at the centre of the satire. However, his argument that the book is written as a satire fails as he struggles to identify the target which Jonah represents. He concludes that the book is 'an attack on Hebrew prophetic

hypocrisy.'[288] The specific group that Jonah is targeting is unidentifiable. Therefore Holbert assumes that Jonah is a polemic against a natural religious phenomenon: The groups of hypocritical prophets who claim divine insight but lack the substance to back up their prophecies. This suggestion is highly problematic, as there is little evidence to suggest when or where such a group existed. The conclusion is so unspecific that it is very difficult to agree with Holbert's position. Furthermore, the portrayal of Jonah is the antithesis of Holbert's ethereal group of hypocrites. Instead of asserting divine knowledge, Jonah is the opposite as he appears reluctant to prophesy. Jonah's indifference in chapter 3 depicts someone who is not trying to deceive the people of Nineveh into false belief. Instead, Jonah appears to desire that the people will not to listen to him and he therefore desires their destruction.

In contrast Marcus argues that the book belongs to a satirical genre by its literary form.[289] He concedes that the specific target the book is attacking is not recoverable.[290] He argues against several viewpoints which other commentators have suggested are the main object of the polemics in Jonah.[291] Marcus systematically rejects that the book is a satire concerning universalism, repentance, prophetic truth, God's mercy or the tension between God's mercy and judgement. In rejecting these five different themes within the book, Marcus is left to conclude that the satirical function of the book is to attack the profession of the prophet. He argues that the character of Jonah represents a type of prophet rather than an individual. By consistently satirically undermining the character of Jonah, the

[288] Holbert, p. 75.
[289] See Marcus (1995), p. 144-5.
[290] Ibid, p. 147.
[291] Marcus does not believe that the book is fundamentally a polemic concerning universalism, repentance, prophetic truth, God's mercy or the tension between God's mercy and judgement.

author is by extension critiquing a type of a wayward Israelite prophet.[292] The single and main problem with Marcus' argument is that it is all based on speculation. As has already been shown, it is fundamentally difficult to agree that the ultimate purpose of the book is to attack a group or type of prophet that we have little evidence for.[293] Whilst it is also impossible to prove that Marcus is conclusively wrong, there are several pieces of evidence which undermine his theory. Firstly, if the main concern of the book is to critique a type of prophet, then the fact Jonah is never explicitly called a prophet causes difficulties. Whilst it is made implicitly clear that Jonah functions as a prophet, the lack of the title נביא makes it difficult to identify this attribute of Jonah to be the main force behind his constant critique. Secondly, the book is not solely concerned with YHWH's relationship with the prophet. The extraordinary events concerning the city of Nineveh and the book's final conclusion concerning YHWH's mercy to them point to the fact that the actions and words of the prophet are not the sole literary concern. The positive action of YHWH overwhelms the negative portrayal of the prophet. The book is as much about asserting and testing YHWH's judgement of the nations[294] as it is concerned with attacking the characters of the prophets.

Conclusion

The wide range of theories concerning the genre of the book of Jonah reflects the range of themes present within the book. It is therefore problematic to narrow the book down to a single theme to assign the book to a literary genre. Jonah is a concoction of lots

[292] Ibid. pp. 161-5.
[293] It is for this reason that Miles recognises parody in the book rather than satire. He notes that it is impossible to truly identify satire unless one has a detailed knowledge of the time and culture when the book was written. The limitations in our own knowledge of the time period are precisely the problem in verifying the text as purely satirical. See, J. R. Miles, 'Laughing at the Bible: Jonah as Parody', in *On Humour and the Comic in the Old Testament*, Ed. Y. T. Radday and A. Brenner (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), pp. 204-205.
[294] This is most clearly shown by the relationship of chapters 3 and 4 to the prophecies of Joel 2 and Jeremiah 18.

of different explorations concerning characters, theological truths and testing previous prophecies. This chapter has shown that satire is a fundamental part of the literary nature of the work. The book contains six major parodies against the character of the prophet which act to undermine his words and actions. The final satire of Jonah's words to his action not only causes a wonderful comic effect but serves to show the difference between knowledge and understanding. As a literary device, satire contrasts the prophet both with internal as well as external characters. The author creates linguistic links between Jonah and the objects of parody, often using mimicry of phrases or puns to create these links. The character of Jonah is always shown to be the object of critique as his actions diverge negatively away from the other characters. In summation, Jonah always seems to do the wrong thing.

This attack against Jonah has all the hallmarks of a character-based satirical style. It is through the characterisation of the protagonist that the author is able to create a multi-faceted attack which functions to undermine Jonah. Like the satire deployed by Aristophanes, character-based satire relies on the words, actions and interaction of a character to build a sustained critique. The book of Jonah also holds many similarities to the hypocritical satire of Chaucer. This chapter has shown that Jonah's words do not correlate to his actions. By placing righteous language into the month of the prophet, Jonah is shown to be a hypocrite when he flees, prophesies and complains. Like Chaucer's pardoner, this proves to be the most powerful indictment that the author could deploy.

However, whilst satire is ultimately prevalent throughout the book, it is very difficult to assign the whole work to a satiric genre. This theory is dependent on identifying whom the prophet represents. The scholars who have argued that the book is satire can only

blindly theorise over the identity of the object of critique behind the book. The lack of substantial evidence to assert any of their postulations means that until a target can be verified, assigning Jonah to a satiric genre is untenable. Alongside this problem is the fact the book is clearly about more than just the prophet himself. The book of Jonah is too interested in YHWH's dealing with a foreign nation to relegate this theme away from the book's central concerns. Thus, the book of Jonah seems to use satire only as a device to explore many of the books major themes. The book is clearly satirical but, until an external target can be found, it cannot be called a satire.

Chapter 4

'With Whom Will You Compare Me?' Satire in Idol-Production Polemics

Outside of biblical narrative, satire finds a natural home within the prophetic books of the Old Testament. The prophets themselves deliver consistent messages of rebuke against a number of different targets. As has been previously shown, satire is fundamentally an agent of critique. Thus, it is likely that satire can be found within the prophetic texts. In this guise, satire will always be deployed as a device. It cannot form its own independent genre as the attack always forms part of a wider material that is prophetic in design. The prophetic genre is primarily concerned with communicating the message of God to a specific context. This message can be encouraging as much it could be a criticism. However, satire is easier to identify within these texts as the object of critique is always clearly given. Thus, this chapter aims to ascertain different examples of satire within the prophetic texts and to analyse the different ways that satire is deployed. In doing so it will show that satire forms a parasitical sub-genre within the prophetic idol critiques. This is unconsciously used by the author as one of many styles of attack.

Idols and their production are constantly attacked by the Hebrew prophets. The offensive against idolatry appears consistent with the Decalogue commands of Exodus and Deuteronomy. Dohmen conducted a wide study of every occurrence of an attack against cult images in the Old Testament. He identified five genres in which they appear in the Old Testament, ranging from incidental caveats in narratives to prophetic polemics. Dohmen focused the majority of his study on the legal statutes prohibiting idols, which he called

Bilderverbot.[295] He argued that the practice arose in the 6th Century BCE with the rise of absolute Yahwistic monotheism.[296] However, Michael Dick, in an excellent article, notes that Yahwism could have been aniconic[297] as far back as the 9th or 10th Century, with the ark taking on the role of the cultic image.[298] Whenever the practice was established, it is clear that by the time of the exilic prophets Yahwism had at least become aniconic, if not entirely monotheistic.[299] The evidence for this is the wide range of prophetic texts which decry the presence of idols. Deutero-Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk and two of the exilic Psalms (115 and 135) all contain prophetic parodies undermining idol worship.

Isaiah 44:9-20

The book of Isaiah contains the largest number of idol critiques within the prophetic works. Isaiah 44:9-20 is one of the longest and most vehement assaults on idol production. It uses mockery to emphasise the stupidity of creating and worshipping idols. This passage is one of the best examples of satire being deployed in Israelite writing. It is for this reason it provides a good paradigm with which to compare other examples of literary satire in the Hebrew canon. It is preceded and followed by three shorter snipes at idols in Deutero-Isaiah: 40:19-20; 41:6-7 and 46:6-7. The consistencies in the theme of the four passages

[295] See C. Dohmen, *Das Bilderverbot: Seine Entstehung und seine Entwicklung im Alten Testament* (BBB 62; Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1987), pp. 35-37.
[296] This seems a plausible suggestion. However, there are earlier texts implying the rejection of cult images in Hosea from the 8th Century. See Hosea 8:4-6, 11:2, 13:2 and 14:4.
[297] A term that Dick defines as meaning, 'a term referring to cults where there is no iconic representation of the deity serving as the central cultic symbol.' See M. B. Dick, 'Prophetic Parodies of Making the Cult Image', in *Born in Heaven, Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* Ed. M. B. Dick (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999), p. 3.
[298] However, Weeks suggests that the ark itself was plausibly a type of cultic image. He argues that idol production was still an accepted concept at the time of the Deuteronomic Historian, as evidenced by the cultic images present in Judges 17 and 18. See S. Weeks, 'Man made Gods? Idolatry in the Old Testament' in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity*, Ed. S. C. Barton (T & T Clark theology London: T & T Clark, 2007), pp. 7-11.
[299] For recent arguments concerning Israel's monotheism, particularly at the time of Deutero-Isaiah, see H. Clifford, 'Deutero-Isaiah and monotheism' in *Prophecy and Prophets in Ancient Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar,* Ed. J. Day (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), pp. 270-273

imply that these texts are from one source, although their authenticity is debated by scholars.[300]

If verses 9-20 can be shown to be satirical of the trial speech in verses 6-8 and 21-23 then the relationship between the texts will be affirmed. This will lead to three possible conclusions: firstly, that verses 9-20 are an original part of the prophecy; secondly, that the author of 9-20 was writing after the trial speech and thus simply imitated it to create his parody; or thirdly, that the final redactor was highly astute in combining these two passages in order that verses 9-20 would satirise the text around it. The third suggestion is the least likely as it requires the redactor to have had access to a large array of texts to be able to create such a satire. One's preference for the first or second conclusion depends on whether one can accept the changes of style in 9-20 as an acceptable authorial shift.[301]

The unity of 44:9-20 has been questioned by Wolfgang Roth, who argues that before their redaction, all the Deutero-Isaiah passages were derived from different sources dependent on the type of idol they were attacking.[302] However, this chapter will show that the presence of the different types of idols and craftsmen is important in creating a holistic

[300] See J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55* (AB 19A; New York: Doubleday, 2002), p. 240. The obvious reason for arguing that Isaiah 44:9-20 is a later addition is because it splits two sections of divine speech in the first person. The shift to a third-person description indicates an insertion, as it is sandwiched between two coherent texts. However, Spykerboer argues that verses 9-20 are necessary to understand 44:6-8 and 21-23.; see H. C. Spykerboer, *The Structure and Composition of Deutero-Isaiah with Special Reference to the Polemics against Idolatry* (Dissertation, University of Groningen, 1976), pp. 119-125. This argument will be picked up later in this section.

[301] The lack of the tetragrammaton, the divergent and problematic poetic metre throughout this section, and the continuity of verse 8 with verse 21 suggest that this passage is not original. See R. N. Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (New Century Bible; London: Oliphants, 1975), pp. 98-9. The question of whether this passage is prose or poetry has been tackled by Dempsey. She suggests a plausible solution to show that the whole text can be understood as poetry; see D. Dempsey, 'The Verb Syntax of the Idol Passages of Isaiah 44:9-20' in *Imagery and Imagination in Biblical Literature: Essays in Honor of Aloysius Fitzgerald,* Ed. L. Boadt and M. S. Smith (CBQMS 32; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2001), pp. 145-156. However, her suggestion does not solve the problem of the transformation in poetic style from verses 8 to 9.

[302] See W. M. W. Roth, '"For Life He Appeals to Death" (Wis 13:18): A Study of Old Testament Idol Parodies' in *CBQ* 37 (1975), pp. 21-47.

polemic. The different occupations do not prove the presence of different sources but instead show that the author was trying to condemn all idol production.

Isaiah 44:9-20 has been rightly identified as a piece of satire by both Westermann and von Rad.[303] However, neither commentator identifies why the critique is satirical in nature, although, von Rad notes that the comic nature of the text instils laughter in the reader. More recently, scholars have completed more detailed analysis of this text. Spykerboer conducted a study particularly focusing on the structure of these texts, whilst Holter specifically examined the language used to create the polemic in his doctoral thesis.[304] Most recently an article has been published by Rudman focusing especially on the parody deployed by Deutero-Isaiah in his critique.[305] The passage is a clear attack against idol production. Unlike Psalms 115 and 135, which attack the idol itself, Isaiah's critique appears to be targeted at the craftsmen responsible for the idol's creation.[306] By understanding the satire prevalent in this text, this chapter will show the comparisons that the author is setting up in his writing. The targets of the polemic are obvious, as the prophet's speech identifies them as the central characters of the passage. Thus, to understand the satire present in the text, this chapter will examine the passage by honing in on the protagonists of the text to see how they are consistently criticised.

[303] Westermann's title for this passage is 'a satire on the manufacture of idols'; see C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66* (Old Testament Library; London: SCM, 1969), p. 144. Von Rad argues that it is a satirical tract that has comparisons to both Horace and Herodotus; see G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (London: SCM, 1972), p. 179.
[304] This was later revised and published as K. Holter, *Second Isaiah's Idol-Fabrication Passages* (BBET 28; Frankfurt: Lang, 1995).
[305] D. Rudman, 'The Theology of Idol Fabrication in Second Isaiah' *OTE* 12 (1999), pp. 114-21.
[306] However, some commentators have mistakenly suggested the critique is of the idols themselves. Whybray argued that the passage contrasts the idols with the true God. Our discussion will show that although God is the object of parody, the satire itself is not of the idols but of their makers; see Whybray, p. 98. This creates an interesting dilemma, as the expectation would be to contrast YHWH in a Carmel-like contest against the other Near-Eastern deities. However, by contrasting God with the idol-makers the rejection of the other gods is implicit and emphasised. God does not need to compete against the other deities when he can undermine their very foundation, their creators.

The text itself can be split into four parts according to the subject of each:[307]

Isaiah 44	Protagonist of the text	Number of the verbs[308]	Structural Component
Verses 9-11	The Idol-maker and his associates	Singular and plural	Introduction
Verses 12-13	The Metalworker and the Carpenter	Singular	Development
Verses 14-17	The unnamed craftsman (possible the carpenter of the previous verse)	Singular	Climax
Verses 18-20	The collective group of idol-producers	Plural and singular	Summary

The passage begins just as it ends – with a collective term for idol-producers – before examining specific types of craftsmen. The satire is created in the first few verses before being intensified through the portrayals of the ironsmith and the carpenter. It reaches its climax in the actions of the unnamed artisan of verses 14-17. The final section of verses 18-20 provides the concluding indictment of the idol producers, summarising the mockery of the previous verses. Whilst the object of critique is obvious in this passage, the source of

[307] Commentators have split the text up in various different ways. Westermann separates the text into two, as the first part is a general verdict, while the second half – from verse 13 – forms a summary; see Westermann, pp. 147-8. On the other hand, Blenkinsopp argues that the text should be divided into three sections according to whether he thinks the text is poetry or prose; see Blenkinsopp, pp. 238-239.

[308] The change in number has caused difficulties for scholars. Elliger struggles with this problem and argues it may be caused by a fractured text. See K. Elliger, *Deuterojesaja* (Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testament 11; Neukirchen-Vluyn : Neukirchener-Verlag, 1978), pp. 417-20. This chapter will show how the change in number is used by the author of this passage to construct a detailed satire of a collective group.

the parody is not as clear. There are several clues in the language of verse 9 to indicate that the crafter of idols is being set in parallel with God himself. The word יצר is used to describe the idol producers. The use of this relatively uncommon word resembles the creation language of Genesis 2:[309] there, God forms (יצר) man (verses 7 and 8) and the beasts (verse 19). The creation language present throughout the rest of Isaiah 44 highlights the author's emphasis on the created order.[310] In 44:2 the same verb יצר is used to describe YHWH's creation of Israel. The creation terminology is developed by the word תהו in verse 9, one of Deutero-Isaiah's favourite words.[311] This echoes the chaotic, primordial emptiness present before God speaks in Genesis 1:2. Whether or not the author of Deutero-Isaiah was aware of the Genesis text, the parallels show that the idol-maker's actions are portrayed as an inversion of the created order. The idol-maker forms god, while God is portrayed as forming man. Likewise, in Isaiah 40:17, the word תהו is used to describe the nations who are being compared to God. This text claims that they are nothing when set in contrast to God. Whilst the speech in Isaiah 40 goes on to juxtapose God with the idol itself, it is conceivable that chapter 44 is transitioning this contrast to the idol-maker. Thus, the language of verse 9 makes it clear that the idol-fabricator is a poor imitation of God himself.

[309] The root יצר is used very little outside Deutero-Isaiah and its related material. When it is used there is always some echo of creation. It is consistently used of the actions of the potter. Otzen argues that the term is only deployed in a theological context to symbolise the divine Creator moulding creation. See B. Otzen, 'יצר yāṣar', in *TDOT*. 6 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 253-265. Holter notes that פסל and יצר are rarely combined in idol critique, only appearing again in Habakkuk 2. Thus, its use as a technical term for idol production in this passage may be because it serves as a device to create the parody with God, by the use of specific divine creation vocabulary. See Holter, p.132.

[310] Further allusions to Genesis 1:26 can be seen in Isaiah 40:18-25 and 46:5. See Holter, p. 95 for further details.

[311] Holter identifies that the word is used 7 times in Deutero-Isaiah, which is nearly half of its uses in the whole of the Old Testament. See Holter, p. 140.

The context of the passage emphasises God's identity as the source of the parody. Although, as previously noted, the authenticity of the text is debated by scholars,[312] verses 9-20 do provide an answer to the question posed in verse 8: is there any God besides me? This is consistent with the other idol critiques in Isaiah. In both Isaiah 40:19-20 and Isaiah 46:6-7 the polemic against the idol follows a rhetorical question concerning God's identity or likeness.[313] Thus, each time the idols are considered by the prophet it is only in the context of a comparison with God himself. Watts' analysis of the text places verses 9-20 into the mouths of the witnesses of verse 8; he argues that it is the 'heavens' and the 'earth' which are dialoguing in these verses to make the indictment against the idols.[314] Despite the limitations of his argument, it does highlight that verses 9-20 would fit neatly into a court scene. Westermann places verses 9-20 within a larger trial-speech of verses 6-8 and 20-23. He argues that these verses form a taunt-song within the larger trial.[315] If it is YHWH who is on trial in the wider context of verses 6-23 then Watts' suggestion highlights that verses 9-20 provides the evidence to defend YHWH in his trial. Ironically, the evidence to justify God's position is the defamation of others who might be compared to him. This is true whoever the witnesses of verse 8 are proved to be. Furthermore, the text continues in verse 21 to affirm that God himself formed (יצר) Israel. The repetition of the verb יצר in verses 21 and 24 shows that, again, while the Idol producers form a god, it is YHWH who forms Israel, his servant. All this evidence of language and context proves that there is a parody created in verses 9-20, contrasting the idol-makers with God. Once this parody is

[312] The fact that the passage fits its context shows that the redaction is appropriate to said context, even if it is a bit clumsy. Therefore, the passage is dependent on verse 8 even if it is not authentic.
[313] The only exception to this is the reference in Isaiah 41:6-7. This is a very difficult passage that will be examined later. However, it does not appear to fit any context relevant to the verses around it.
[314] Watts argues this from the presence of the earth and the heavens in 44:23. Although this is an imaginative suggestion to explain the change in voice throughout these verses, his analysis is far-fetched and lacks substantiation. See J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66 (Revised)* (WBC 25; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), pp. 680-9.
[315] Westermann, pp. 138-144.

defined, the author of these verses uses the contrast to form a polemic and therefore a satire against the ones who form the idols. This satire is constructed in all four sections of the text, even if the idol-makers themselves slightly change their guise throughout the passage.

The Idol-maker

In the first section of the text, verses 9-11, the foundation for the satire is laid. As has been already shown, the idol-maker is portrayed as an imitation of God. The satire is dependent on seeing the idol-maker's actions as an inversion of the created order. God makes man while the idol-makers are humans producing gods. This has already been shown by the juxtaposition of the two characters, but it is emphasised by setting both characters in trial scenes. YHWH has already shown to be in court in the previous verses, so it is natural for the author of verses 9-11 to place the parody into a similar arena. The parody is created in the evidence given, the verdict and sentence of the court. Both defendants require witnesses (עד) to justify their position. YHWH's witnesses are called in verse 8, while the idol-makers' witnesses appear in verse 9.[316] The repetition of the noun and the change in possessive suffix from the first person singular for God and the third person plural for idol-makers places the two trials in parallel.

With the parody founded upon these similarities, the critique is produced by the key differences. Fundamental to the passage is the fact that YHWH is vindicated when he enters the legal arena. The evidence for this justification is both YHWH's attributes as well as his

[316] The identity of the witnesses is debated, with North arguing that the idol-makers are the witnesses for the idols. However, this is an inversion of the natural reading of the text. A better reading would be that the witnesses are the same as the delightful things (חמודיהם) earlier in the verse; the agreement of the suffix is evidence of this. Thus, the witnesses are presumably the idols themselves. See C. R. North, *The Second Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), p. 140 and Holter, p. 135-6.

actions. Verses 6-8 provide an assertion about YHWH's identity, while 21-23 proves YHWH right by his activity. In stark contrast, the idol-maker's conviction is obvious. Like YHWH, his character and his deeds are assessed.[317] His witnesses are unreliable (verse 9); they are undermined by a consistent Isaianic disability of having neither sight nor knowledge.[318] This character assassination of the witnesses firstly indicts them, but it also discredits the idol-producer himself. This evidence is substantiated by verse 10, which shows the fruitlessness of the idol itself, leaving the idol-fabricator without a case for their vaildity. At the pinnacle of this section comes the verdict, in verse 11aβ: the craftsmen are only human. The plural forms used here show that the first half of this section is using a collective singular. The author is able to use the more familiar title for the idol-producer[319] as this section is not used in the formation of the parody with God. This verdict is the clearest statement of attacking the legitimacy of idols and therefore their deities. For the writer, the created order has been inverted. The craftsmen are only human and therefore they are unable to create the divine.

The resolutions of the two trials show perfectly the divergent paths of the parody needed to found a satire. The outcomes of the two trials intensify the critique of the idol-maker: whilst YHWH is to receive glory (verse 23) and his servant rewarded, the opposite is true for the idol-maker, his witnesses and his associates, who are all put to shame (יבשׁ from the root בוש). The triple repetition of the verb יבשׁ, an antonym of God's פאר in verse 23, highlights the utter dejection of the idol-maker and his cohort. It frames the whole scene and as Holter suggests, 'it apparently serves to bind the passage together and to emphasize

[317] This is explored as the satire is developed in later sections of the passage. The portrayal of the metalworker and the carpenter illustrates this comparison of character and product.
[318] The repetition of בל links these two verbs to יצל in the previous clause. This hendiadys of not being able to see (ראה) or know (ידע) is consistently used in Deutero-Isaiah.
[319] The term חרשׁים is elsewhere used by Deutero-Isaiah in 40:19-20, 41:7 and 45:16.

its accusing character.'[320] The severity of this verdict is underlined by the grammatical structure of verse 11b. The end of the verse is dominated by four third-person plural imperfect verbs; they are fired in rapid succession, only divided by the collective subject (כלם).[321] The absence of any conjunctive between these verbs creates a static effect which serves as a form of intensification. After being found guilty, all the idol-makers are firstly brought forward for their punishment (פחד and עמד), their reaction is then shown (קבץ)[322] before they are finally sentenced (בוש). The foundation for the satire is then complete.

These few verses can stand as a satire in their own right. Through the use of the trial scene, the idol-makers become failed imitators of YHWH. The text changes from the singular to the plural to create an effect of totality: all idol-makers come under this polemic. From this foundation the satire is then refined through the portrayal of two different characters in verses 12 and 13.

The Metalworker and the Carpenter

The satire focuses on the two main types of idol-makers to develop its critique into an intricate polemic. By decrying both the ironworker and the carpenter, the author extends his critique to encompass the whole collective of craftsmen. In the previous section he has undermined the idol-former in the courtroom by attacking his witnesses; by concentrating on the two artisans in verses 12 and 13, his case is supplemented by the defamation of their character and the inadequacy of their produce. The satire is interwoven with the portrayal of the metalworker in verse 12 and the actions of the carpenter in verse 13.

[320] See Holter, p.132.
[321] Spykerboer argues that the form כל combined with third person plural suffix is only used in Deutero-Isaiah to show the nothingness of the nations. Thus, it use here would appear consistent. See Spykerboer, p. 120.
[322] The response of fear is mirrored by the command not to fear in verse 8.

Both verses use a great deal of technical language. Firstly, the two protagonists are associated with each other: the first words in both verses identify them as craftsmen (חרש), one of metal and the other of wood. Secondly, the passage uses three hapaxes that we can translate from their context as various specialist tools.[323] Thirdly, the word מעצד is difficult, as its only other occurrence in Jeremiah 10:3 places it in the hand of the woodworker.

Technical language adds authenticity to the texts. There is very little information to confirm whether or not this passage is actually an accurate portrayal of the process of idol-making; however, the complexity of the language used gives the impression that it has greater authority for the ignorant reader, both now and for the original audience. The positive affirmation of the skills of the craftsmen is important to the subtlety of the satire. God is not being contrasted with inexperienced apprentices but with masters of their arts.

The metalworker is characterised as competent yet, most importantly, fallible. The opening phrase of the verse is difficult as it appears to omit a verb.[324] However, the author uses the repetition of פעל to complement the noun כח. This construction creates the effect that the protagonist excels in his field. Nevertheless, this competency cannot compare to the excellence of God. The craftsman is bound by his limitations: without his food there is no strength and without water he grows faint. The verb יעף indicates that this text can be set in parallel with Isaiah 40:28-31. Despite his qualities the metalworker is only human and will therefore grow faint. In contrast, YHWH will not grow weary (יעף - 40:28) and is the

[323] שׂרר, מקצעות, מחוגה are all difficult to translate, but it is clear that they are technical language. For information about how the versions translate these words, see Blenkinsopp, pp. 239-41. The qualifications of the carpenter in verse 13a mirrors the technical language used to legitimise the metalworker in verse 12a. Both verses retain the same structure of technical language followed by critique. This forms a proverbial couplet with the verses intended to be read in parallel.

[324] There have been several suggestions to deal with this problem. Dick suggests emending the conjunction of פעל from a ו to a י. This provides an attractive, natural reading of the text. For alternatives see Blenkinsopp, p. 239.

source of strength (כח 40:29, 31). The metalworker's fundamental failing is in his fragility. The satire present in this text points to an understanding that YHWH's defining characteristics prove his superiority over humanity. If the craftsman is only human then by implication his work is limited by his identity; however industrious and proficient he is, the idol-maker is never able to create anything beyond his mortal station. Thus, when set in contrast with God, it is the fatigue of the metalworker which condemns him.

Whilst it is the limitations of the metalworker himself which imply that his creations are flawed, it is the produce of the carpenter that is directly attacked in verse 13. Again the text begins by legitimising his professional credentials through the technical expressions used in the first half of the verse. The critique of his works is delivered in the form of a back-handed compliment: he makes the wood to be like the image of man that is beautiful. The use of the comparative כ indicates its underlying insult. At best the carpenter is able to create a product that is like an image. He is not even close to being capable of making a real human being, let alone a deity. Despite its beauty, it is an image at best. This is set in contrast to God, who in the rest of Deutero-Isaiah affirms that it is he who creates the heavens and the earth,[325] the starry hosts,[326] light and darkness,[327] and finally his servant Israel.[328] The contrast is best shown in Isaiah 44:24b where YHWH asserts his identity as the creator of everything. Outside of Deutero-Isaiah, the most natural texts for juxtaposition are the creation narratives. In the first account, God's creation of man is the pinnacle of creation, earning the epithet of the sixth day: 'very good'.[329] Unlike the carpenter, who makes a figure of a man, God forms man in his own image, whilst in Genesis 2, YHWH forms

[325] Cross reference Isaiah 40:22, 42:5, 44:24, 45:18, 48:13, 51:13, 16.
[326] Is 40:26.
[327] Is 45:7.
[328] Is 43:1, 44:2, 44:24, 49:5, 15.
[329] Genesis 1:27-31.

humanity out of the dust. The carpenter can make timber into an image, but YHWH creates and breathes the form into life.[330]

Thus, through the portrayal of the two complementary characters, the author develops the satire. Still using the framework of a trial scene, the two characters provide a double-edged indictment against the idol-fabricators. When set in contrast to YHWH, they are a poor imitation. The metalworker shows that his character is not strong enough to be comparable to the divine. Thus, this leads naturally to proving through the carpenter that their work is intrinsically flawed. Thus, the evidence against the idol-makers is complete. Their witnesses, character and work are, by contrast to YHWH, shown to be insufficient.

The Unnamed Craftsman

Verses 14-17 form their own independent section within the overarching structure of the critique. However, there is an immediate issue of trying to identify the protagonist of these few verses. On one level the text appears to proceed naturally from verse 13. Therefore, the identity of the craftsman is the carpenter of the previous verse. However, this breaks the completed couplet of verses 12 and 13. Furthermore, the carpenter is not mentioned throughout the rest of the verses, and his presence is only implied by the discussion of different types of trees in verse 14. This is problematic, as the actions of verse 14 - cutting, taking and planting - are not the work of a craftsman: it is a forester who cares for the welfare of the trees, while the carpenter fashions the timber. A strong solution to this problem is that verses 14-17 form an extrapolation from the original theme of the woodworker: the narrator focuses specifically on one character which he uses for the climax of the satire. Whilst the first half of the satire is set within a legal context, these verses shift

[330] Genesis 2:7.

to the workshop of the idol-maker. It forms the pinnacle of the satire as it is the author's most severe attack.

These verses mock the underlying stupidity of idol-production. The parody moves from comparing the idol-maker with God, to an internal parody of the idol itself.[331] The juxtaposition in these verses is the two uses of the lumber. It is for this reason that the introduction to the different types of trees is important in verse 14. The Hebrew in this verse is clumsy.[332] The verse begins with an infinitive (לכרת), which has led commentators to emend the text to include an indicative verb.[333] It then proceeds to mentions three different types of wood: ארז (cedar),[334] תרזה (cypress), and אלון (oak). This list introduces this section's emphasis on the material used in making wooden idols, thus shifting the parody from the idol-maker to his materials. The actual list itself echoes the Babylonian *mīs pī* rite.[335] If, as Dick suggests[336], the materials listed here are due to an Israelite knowledge of the Babylonian ritual, then it suggests that a more direct satire is being created here. However, the problems already shown with the terms that are used in verse 14 make this comparison difficult to substantiate. Undoubtedly, the text has moved to satirise the wood itself in the second half of the passage. An affirmation of this is in the final conclusion in verse 19, 'shall I fall down before a block of wood?'

[331] It is the change in parody that shows why this section should be seen independently from verse 13. While in verse 13 the vehicle for critique is the comparison of the idol-maker with God, this section changes to focus on the material used in idol-production. However, verse 13b does provide a natural link between the two sections: the critique moves from the carpenter in 13a to his produce in 13b to the materials in 14.
[332] See North, p. 138. Commentators often do not translate this verse literally, in an attempt to link the carpenter of verse 13 to the actions of verse 15. An example of this is Blenkinsopp, p. 239.
[333] See D. W. Thomas, 'Isaiah XLIV. 9-20: A Translation and Commentary', in *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer*, Ed. A. Caquot and M. Philonenko (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1971), pp 324 and Holter, p. 135.
[334] The text seems to be confused between ארז and ארץ as it appears twice in the verse. 1QIsa is consistent, using ארץ on both occasions. For information on the differences see Dick, pp.28-9.
[335] Meaning 'The opening of the mouth'. For more information on the links see Clifford, p. 269.
[336] Dick, pp. 42-3.

Verse 15 contains the main critique of the passage; its two contrasts are then repeated and elaborated upon in verses 16 and 17. The crux of the satire is shown by the two uses of one material: on the one hand it is used as fuel for the fire, on the other it forms the components of a deity. The structure of verse 15 intensifies this contrast: it uses three short clauses which build upon each other to describe the normal use of wood as fuel for warmth and cooking. This is then paralleled by two clauses in 15b which form a hendiadys. The maker uses the same wood to form a god/idol which he bows down to. The text's polemic is grounded in the stupidity of using the same substance for the mundane and the sacred. A parody is created by undermining the idol itself, as its origins are no more sacred than the wood used to make a fire. In the repetition in verses 16 and 17 the scene is developed. Verse 16 uses normality to intensify the critique: the artisan uses the fuel for both cooking and warming himself. A small soliloquy is spoken by the protagonist. The words of the speech are irrelevant but the act of speaking serves to form a contrast to the prayer of verse 17: as the man talks to himself at the fire, so he speaks to the idol in prayer. The sub-text is that the prayer of deliverance in verse 17 falls on silent ears; the god has no more capacity to hear than the fire in verse 16. Dick notes that the author also deploys a pun to intensify the satire. In verse 16 half the wood is used to roast (צלה) the meat, while in verse 17 the craftsman prays for the idol to deliver (נצל).[337] Repetition with intensification shows that this section forms the climax of the satire in the passage. Here the foolishness of the idol-maker makes him the target of mockery. His actions are reduced to their basest level by the author and shown by comparison to be absurd. The satire has reached completion by the use of a variant parody. There is no need for a comparison to YHWH in this passage as the idol-maker's own actions create a severe satire of himself.

[337] Dick, p. 29.

It is worth noting that both Dick and Weeks argue that the author is portraying a greatly skewed picture of idol-production in this passage. Their arguments seem justified, that the author of this passage has missed the point of how idol production was understood to work.[338] The portrayal of the idol-maker is simple and does not include any ritual. However, it is clear that the intent of the author is to reduce idol-production to its simplest form. The ridicule is created by revealing to the idol-maker the essence of his craft. At its core, idol-production is making an image of a deity, which raises the idol-producer to the role of creator. Furthermore, a biased characterisation of the idol-fabricator does not deny the subtlety of the satire created. The parody will have been constructed within the constructs and presuppositions of Yahwism at the time, for this was precisely the audience to which the passage was written. A satirist can only work within the parameters of his audience's context. Thus, if he is writing to an aniconic-religions group, then his comparisons are justified and not flawed, contrary to what Dick suggests.[339]

The Final Nail in the Coffin

The final section of the text (verses 18-20) acts as a summary of the whole passage. The passage shifts back to the plural number to show that the author is drawing conclusions about all the idol-makers. This ultimate critique is mixed with an air of pity at the ignorance of the idol-makers. Verse 18 shows that they are not capable of comprehending the foolishness of their actions. The language of the verse includes a set of verbs which all imply unawareness. Some favoured Isaianic statements are deployed: the idol-makers cannot know (ידע) or understand (בין), their eyes and hearts are blocked (טח)[340] from seeing (ראה)

[338] See Dick, pp. 42-45 and Weeks, pp. 11-13.
[339] Dick, p. 45.
[340] A hapax; see Blenkinsopp, p. 239.

and discerning (שׂכל) by an unknown subject, presumably YHWH. Verse 19 continues this language before bringing back the artisan of verses 14-17. The singular is preferred as verse 19 conflates the actions (from verses 15 and 16) of the craftsman into a speech. The fundamental critique is magnified by the revelation at the end of the verse of what the idol is. Structurally verse 19c places the first person verbs at the end of each clause. Thus, 'the remainder into an abomination I will make,' and 'to a block of wood I will bow down.' The emphasis of each clause is placed upon the abomination and the block of wood. This is the final conclusion of the passage. The idol-makers are fundamentally flawed as they cannot comprehend that they are making gods from blocks of wood. This, ultimately, can be no better than an abomination.

However, the passage is concerned more with the idol-maker than it is with the idols. The satire has been shown to be primarily about him. A double parody has been used to create this intense critique of the idol-maker. Like any satire, the text does not necessarily seek to correct the idol-maker's behaviour beyond revealing his mistakes. Thus, like a great deal of satire, the reader is left to pity the plight of the craftsman. Verse 20 concludes the nature of his predicament: the idol-maker cannot ultimately find deliverance of salvation as he cannot comprehend the lie inherent in his endeavours.

This passage is a wonderful example of a sub-genre of satire being present within a wider text. The verses create a complex satire that attacks one principal target: the idol craftsmen. Since it is a polemic against all who create idols, the external target is immediately apparent: the text is not critiquing a fictional group of characters but any idol-maker in the real world. Its satirical style resembles that of 'The Satire of the Trades'. Like the Egyptian work, the text holds one truth to be self-evident: God is the one who

creates.[341] The satire then uses a variety of objects to undermine all the different idol producers who might be compared to the divine. When the text has eliminated all the competition, satire has become a tool to prove the underlying self-evident truth. This is a version of simplistic satire, but one that is beautifully crafted. The comparison to YHWH and the particular use of a trial scene show how a satiric reading of the text justifies the positioning of the passage within the wider context of Isaiah 44. Like the Psalm in Jonah 2, this is further evidence of how a satiric reading can offer a more unified reading of a text.

Isaiah 40:19-20

Aside from the main passage of 44:9-20, there are three other short snipes at idols in the rest of Deutero-Isaiah. The three passages are obviously connected, with most commentators placing them in the same tradition or redactor as 44:9-20. The independent thematic link between these three is stronger than their link to chapter 44; their target is different from the attack in chapter 44. Although a craftsman is mentioned in all three texts, it is the idols themselves that are being attacked. They all lack the subtlety and the nuance of the longer passage, relying on a simple attack on the idols' inability to move independently. The structure is identical in all three snipes: it begins with an introduction of the materials and the craftsmen. It is then followed by the creation and finishing of the idol before the critique is reached by showing that the idol cannot move from the place where it is set. Furthermore, all three passages appear to contain peripheral characters whose actions supplement the craft of the protagonist. In Isaiah 40:19-20 the mysterious תרומה המסכן chooses the wood and finds a skilled craftsman. In Isaiah 41 the craftsmen appear in

[341] This is in comparison to the single self-evident truth of 'The Satire of the Trades': that being a scribe is the best occupation for a man.

the plural and the metalworker encourages the goldsmith. Finally in Isaiah 46:6-7 there is an unnamed patron who is instigating the whole process.

Isaiah 40:19-20 is particularly problematic, with the Hebrew causing difficult translation issues. As has been already noted, verse 19 appears to be included to offer a comparison to God in answer to the question of verse 18. The idol (פסל) is identified as the object of critique straight away in the announcement in verse 19. The authenticity of the text is also debated; however, it does fit into the context of the passage, albeit a little clumsily. Duhm retains its position here, but inserts the second polemic in 41: 6-7 to follow immediately.[342] This argument will be examined later in the chapter. The structure of 40:19-20 mirrors the same pattern as the critique of the iron and metalworker in 44:12 and 13. This suggests that there is a formula in the text for making the polemic. The protagonist is introduced, then legitimised through the use of specific vocabulary. Like chapter 44, this terminology causes biblical scholars problems as many of the terms are hapaxes or are only used in idol passages.[343] This is no different in 40:19-20.

The protagonist is the craftsman (חרש) [344] who casts an idol. The picture is developed through the introduction of the associated gold specialist. The text's attack is based upon the premise that the idols are immovable. There are two specific places in the text where this is apparent: firstly, in the difficult phrase at the end of verse 19, and secondly, in the conclusion at the end of the verse 20. If the translation of ורתקות כסף in verse 19 is silver chains, then it implies that the idol is not just trapped by its own limitations, but is

[342] See B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia* (Handkommentar zum Alten Testament 3; Göttigen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1922), p. 275. See also, Westermann, pp. 66-7 and Blenkinsopp, pp. 191-2. Other scholars have argued that this insertion is out of place in following 40:20. See Torrey, p. 315.
[343] This problem highlights the value of Holter's work. With an independent vocabulary created through these passages, his study is invaluable in navigating the linguistic issues.
[344] Cross reference the two craftsmen of 44:12-13.

imprisoned by its very creators. The word ורתקות is a hapax. This matter is further complicated by the verb צורף; this has been variously translated as cast[345], bind[346] or solder.[347] It is very difficult to translate and commentators have opted to emend to רצף or ירצף, following the Targum and the Vulgate.[348] Taking account of these difficulties, there are two conclusions that can be drawn about this clause: firstly, that the author is trying to describe a technical process that is unknown to us now, and secondly, that he is attempting to undermine the idol by claiming that it is incarcerated. The second option is favoured as it shows agreement with verse 20.

The critique of these verses is explicit, making the satire quite awkward. The text only creates a parody by context: the idols are compared to God only by the position of the text after the question of verse 18. There is no imitation present in the language of the verse 19-20, suggesting that the author is not placing the idols in direct contrast to God. With the textual issues already shown, this passage is less of a satire and more a direct criticism.

Isaiah 41:6-7

Isaiah 41:6-7 continues where 40:19-20 leaves off. The link between the two is obvious, although 41:6-7 places the critique in a different context. This is why many commentators follow Duhm and reinsert the text to follow 40:19-20. The critique is identical, again concluding at the end that 'they (the idol-producers) strengthen it with nails so that it cannot move.' The verb מוט is repeated is in 40:20 and 41:7. The undermining characteristic is again proven. If this passage is moved, then the satire of these verses is

[345] See Blenkinsopp, p. 189.
[346] See Whybray, p. 56.
[347] From the Arabic root *rtq*.
[348] The phrase is omitted in the Septuagint. For more information see Blenkinsopp, p. 189.

likewise limited. If the passage is retained in its current position, then the satire is still undeveloped. The structural formula of idol critique is again shown in these verses. Firstly, the passage introduces a number of professionals; it then uses technical language to describe their actions, before concluding with insults about the idol itself. It is for this reason that it can form an independent passage from 40:19-20. The identical formula used means that they are from the same tradition but are not dependent on each other. However, the context of chapter 41 is the most unconvincing of all the rest of the idol critique passages in Isaiah. The other three passages all follow a question of comparison to YHWH, thus, showing YHWH to be the object of imitation. Chapter 41 does assert YHWH's identity in verse 4; however, verse 5 does not make a natural connection to an idol critique. Verse 8 begins with a conjunction implying a link between the idols and Israel, YHWH's servant; however, the link between the two is unconvincing. There is no interrelationship of theme or language. It is for this reason that the passage lacks satire, like its associated passage on 40:19-20. Furthermore, it is understandable why it is easy for commentators to edit this text so that it can be combined with 40:19-20 because of their similarities.

Isaiah 46:6-7

The final idol critique in 46:6-7 is more complex and developed than the other two shorter attacks. It forms a bridge between the simplistic polemics of 40:19-20 and 41:6-7 and the complex satire of 44:9-20. Its context is the most natural place in Isaiah where one would expect to find an idol critique. Verses 6 and 7 are an ideal climax to the themes of the first five verses. The idols of Bel and Nebo have already been identified in verse 1. The passage then asserts YHWH's credentials, calling Israel to remember God's actions, in verses 3 and 4. There is a small juxtaposition between the idols of Bel and Nebo (verses 1 and 2)

and YHWH's dealing with Israel (verses 3 and 4): whilst the idols are carried by beasts which cannot bear the burden, YHWH bears Israel through old age. The repeated use of the verb נשׂא and its cognates in all four verses proves the contrast that the author is trying to make. This parody lays the foundation for the main satire in verses 6 and 7: while YHWH carries (סבל) Israel,[349] the idols are carried (סבל) into their final resting place in verse 7. Whereas the other two idol critiques do not contain any parody, in these verses the actions of YHWH are set in parallel to the inactivity of the idols.

The thematic consistencies in the first seven verses have caused difficulties for the scholars who want to place this text as a later interpolation from the same source as the other idol critiques.[350] Like 40:19-20 and 41:6-7, this passage's fundamental attack is based on the immovability of the idols.; however, Isaiah 46 expands upon this simple polemic. The two similar parodies of carrying and bearing intensify the uselessness of the idol in comparison to an active deity who supports his subjects. The idols' immovability is compounded by their inability either to answer or save at the end of verse 7. This makes them a poor parody to YHWH who, by implication and context, is able to do these things. Thus, unlike chapters 40 and 41, chapter 46 uses satire to create a more elaborate and intense critique of the idol. Although it is not as developed as chapter 44, it shows that satire can be used as part of a simplistic attack against idols. In identifying satire within these texts, chapter 46 provides a bridge between the simplistic attacks of 40 and 41, which lack the subtlety needed to use satire, and the complex, intricate attack of chapter 44.

If the four passages are written from a similar source, then several conclusions can be made concerning satire and its use. Firstly, satire has shown to be present in these

[349] The root is repeated twice in verse 4.
[350] See Duhm, pp. 352-3 and Whybray, p. 115.

attacks to a varying degree. The texts use a satirical technique, mainly in chapters 44 and 46, to attack a clear external target. Secondly, the variant levels of satire used within these texts show that the author was not aware that he was writing with a satirical intent. The lack of satire in chapters 40 and 41 shows that satire was not a conscious motivation in the writer's intent. Instead, satire was produced as a natural component which intensified the critique that the writer made against both the idols and their producers. Satire was therefore not the intent but a style available to the author to create intricate polemics. The variety in the strength of the satire goes further in substantiating the argument that the satire was incidental as opposed to purposeful. Thirdly, satire does form its own sub-genre in the passage in chapter 44, supporting the aims of the predominant genre of prophecy. Lastly, in the cases where satire has been proven to be a part of the text, the presence of satire demonstrates an interrelationship between the idol-critiques and their wider context. Chapter 44:9-20 must have been written in awareness of the text around it for the strength of its parody to have any effect. Although this does not prove that this passage is original, it does provide a connectivity which justifies its position within the wider book.

Alternative Idol Polemics

Aside from the polemics against idols present in the book of Isaiah, there are several other attacks against idols in the Old Testament: in the canonical books of Jeremiah, Habakkuk and Psalms. There are also important critiques in the apocryphal works of Bel and the Dragon and Wisdom of Solomon. Like the short attacks in Isaiah, these critiques focus upon the idols themselves.

Jeremiah 10 and 51

The first passage in Jeremiah 10 is an interesting polemic. The first 16 verses are an assertion of YHWH's greatness in comparison to the weakness of the idols. The authenticity of this text was denied by many scholars due to the thematic inconsistencies of this passage compared with the rest of the book, as well as its similarity to the idol critiques of Isaiah.[351] This view is compounded by the fact that Jeremiah 10:1-16 contains two major textual issues. Firstly, the MT version differs significantly from the LXX. Secondly, there is a very curious Aramaic verse in the middle of the MT text. This has caused scholars to doubt the integrity of the MT text. Recently, this view has been rejected by scholars who firstly see Jeremiah's authorship as being more plausible and secondly argue that the MT is more consistent than previously believed.[352] These arguments aside, the literary construction of the MT shows that there is a satirical undertone to the whole poem.

There is a clear difference between this passage and the critiques in Isaiah: whilst the Isaianic passages concerning the idols and their creators are self-contained sections, the critique in Jeremiah 10 is intertwined within a poem specifically praising YHWH. The poem flits between two subjects: YHWH and the idols. Verses 1-5 target the idols as a stumbling block; they are then referenced again in verses 8-9, and then once more in verses 14-15. This attack is interspersed between sections of the poem which glorify YHWH, his works as well as his character. Verses 6-7, 10-12 and 16 shift from examining the idols to praising the

[351] This view is particularly popular to among nineteenth and early twentieth century commentators. It was thought that the passage was an addition taken from the same source as the idol critiques of Isaiah. See B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia* (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament; Tübingen: Mohr, 1901), p. 97-100, or J. Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB 21; New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 79-80.

[352] This position was first defended by Weiser who saw verses 1-5 and 8-9 as being authentic. See A. Weiser, *Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia* (Das Alte Testament Deutsch; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), p.67. After Weiser, commentators such as Lundbom and Kelley argued that literary features showed the text's authenticity to the hand of Jeremiah. See J. R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1-20* (AB 21A; New York: Doubleday, 1999), pp. 578-582 and P. C. Craigie, P. H. Kelly, and J. F. Drinkard Jr, *Jeremiah 1-25* (WBC 26; Dallas: Word, 1991), pp. 157-158.

deity. Although the LXX's rearrangement makes the idol into the subject of a defined section,[353] the critique of the idols still reappears in verses 14-15. This is not an elegant satire with an inferred object of parody; instead, the author creates a satirical effect by placing the two subjects in juxtaposition throughout the passage. Stylistically, this is a very different structure from the critiques of Isaiah.

The satirical effect created by author is dependent on the contrast created between the idols and YHWH. Margaliot restructured the text into four sections to highlight four different comparisons between YHWH and the idol-gods.[354]

Contrast	The Idols	YHWH
Power and Weakness	Verses 3-5	Verses 6-7
Life and Death	Verses 8-9	Verse 10
The Ability to Create	Verse 11	Verse 12-13
The Worshippers	Verses 14-15	Verse 16

The constant contrast between the deficiencies of the idols and the power of YHWH creates an internal satirical effect. The idols are clearly shown to be preposterous throughout this passage. The language used in verses 3-5 is highly comparable to the critiques of Isaiah. The inability of the idols firstly to move,[355] but then to do anything at all, is the proof that they are inadequate. In verse 5 the idols are compared to a תמר in a cucumber field. This word is normally translated 'post' or 'scarecrow', from the context of

[353] The LXX omits verses 6-8 and verse 10. Verse 9 is moved to within verse 5 to give a defined coherent section attacking the idols. For more information see R. P. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (OTL; London: SCM, 1986), pp. 254-7.
[354] See M. Margaliot, 'Jeremiah X 1-16: A Re-examination' in *Vetus Testamentum 30* (1980), pp. 299-301.
[355] The rare verb פוק, used here in the hiph'il, means 'to stagger'. It is a different verb from the one used for movement in the idol critiques in Isaiah.

this verse and its similarity to a verse in the epistle of Jeremiah. However, it is problematic, as elsewhere it means a date or palm tree.[356] Whatever the translation, it is clear that the idol is compared to an inanimate object whose only place is to be left in the field. It is for this reason the Lundbom compares this passage to Horacian satire of Priapus, the garden god of scarecrows.[357] This weakness is contrasted to the immense power of YHWH. The strength of the juxtaposition between the two characters is almost outrageous. Verses 6 and 7 begin and end with the repeated phrase 'there is none like you'. The repetition of גדל, in combination with גבור, in verse 6 exaggerates the platitudes towards YHWH. Verse 7 goes on to glorify YHWH even further, asserting YHWH's place as the 'king of the nations.' The satire is shown by the method of insulting the idols: by contrasting the idols' weakness to the power of YHWH, the idols are undermined as they become a imitation of YHWH.

Margaliot's three other sections substantiate this parody. In verses 8-9, the idols are stripped down to their base elements. The construction of the verses may be quite awkward, with the ו at the start of verse 8 causing difficulties, as the subject of the verse is not revealed until the second clause. However, the focus of the verses is on the three materials used to make the idols. This is clear from the repetition of מעשה in verse 9, revealing to the reader the fundamental premise that the idols are the works of man. This is compared to the description of YHWH in verse 10 where he is called 'true', 'living' and 'king everlasting'.

Verse 11, the most interesting verse of the entire passage, attacks the gods who did not create the heavens and the earth. In context, one can presume that 'the gods' refer to

[356] For more information on the issues of translating תמר, see L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament Volume 4* Translated and Edited by M. E. J. Richardson (Boston: Brill, 1999), p. 1757.
[357] See Lundbom, p. 586.

the idols that represent them. This assumption is difficult, as the verse is curiously written in Aramaic. This phenomenon is unique to this passage. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, Aramaic is only used in the books of Daniel and Ezra.[358] It is for this reason that commentators have argued that this verse is a later addition.[359] However, both Margaliot and Overholt argue that this verse is integral as the cornerstone of the poem's structure.[360] These arguments aside, the verse is one of the most beautifully constructed in the whole of the Old Testament. It contains a double chiasm, centred upon the two verbs עבד and אבד and framed by the second pun of אלהיא and אלה. The gods are firstly claimed to be false creators, before the verse reveals their ultimate fate. This critique is paralleled to YHWH in verses 12 and 13. It is precisely this ability to create which justifies YHWH's position. The awkward nature of verse 11 is shown, as there is no shift in the subject at the start of verse 12; it is assumed that it is YHWH, which is why the LXX and the Syriac insert 'Lord'. Verse 12 uses three clauses to emphasise YHWH's role in creating the entire cosmos. YHWH's power is substantiated with his continued control over the earth and its weather systems in verse 13.

The last section attacking the idols in verses 14 and 15 performs a double duty in the text. Margaliot places these verses strictly in contrast to the worshippers of YHWH in verse 16. The idol-makers are described as worthless in verse 15. This makes them a direct contrast to the worshippers of YHWH, who are called 'the tribe of his inheritance.' Whilst this comparison is valid, the idol-makers also form a contrast to the creative power of YHWH in the previous verse. The comparison to the divine would seem more appropriate in verse

[358] There is another small reference in the book of Genesis. Two words of Aramaic can be found in Genesis 31:4.
[359] See Duhm, p. 98 or Bright, p. 80.
[360] See Margaliot, pp. 300-302 and T. W. Overholt, 'The Falsehood of Idolatry: An interpretation of Jer. X. 1-16', in *Journal of Theological Studies 16* (1965), pp. 5-6.

16 as well; there, the subject of the verse is still YHWH who is 'the one who formed all things'. Verse 14 begins by critiquing man's intelligence. It is intellect which is central to YHWH's power to create in verse 12; he is dependent on both his wisdom and understanding to bring about creation. These words are synonymous with 'the knowledge' that mankind uses stupidly in verse 14. Here, the juxtaposition retains similarities to the attack of Isaiah 44. It is the work of the idol-makers which is critiqued. Unlike YHWH who controls the רוח in verse 13, the work of the craftsmen is false and contains no רוח. Verse 15 concludes that it is הבל and that they, like the gods of verse 11, will perish.

These comparisons, in all four of Margaliot's sections of the text, function in two ways within the poem. Firstly, they intensify the critique against the idols. Their insufficiency is made apparent when they are placed in contrast to YHWH. Secondly, by contrasting him to the other gods and their idols, it increases the glorification of YHWH. Whether or not this passage functions as an independent satire depends entirely on which of these purposes are primary within the poem. The answer to this question can be found by identifying the principal protagonist in the text. Since the passage concludes with an exultation of YHWH in verse 16, the implication is that glorifying the deity is the fundamental reason for the poem. YHWH is, therefore, the main subject. The idols and the gods form a poor imitation of YHWH to further legitimise YHWH's greatness in comparison.

It is difficult to argue that the passage functions as a satire, due to the explicit presence of the object of parody. YHWH is present throughout the passage, which is not a normal feature of satirical works. The passage is not an exclusive critique of the idols and, therefore, it cannot be defined solely as a satire. However, it is clear that the polemical aspect is important to the author and thus the text retains many satirical features. One

could argue that this poem is a hymn of praise which deploys a satirical effect to undermine the protagonist's competitors.

Verses 12-16 are repeated verbatim in Jeremiah 51:15-19. The only difference in the MT is the omission of a ה at the end of the verb עלה in verse 16 and the word 'Israel' in verse 19. However, the other manuscripts suggest emending these to match the text of chapter 10. It is generally agreed that this section has been copied to fit into the greater theme of chapter 51. The context of the chapter is the prophecy of YHWH's defeat of Babylon. Thus, it seems appropriate to quote the earlier passage from chapter 10 which asserts YHWH's dominance over the idols. By placing these verses into chapter 51, they have no further satiric function. The constant theme of warfare, which precedes and follows this section, does not correspond well to the critique of the idols. There is no new mimicry created through its new position in the text. This repetition of the text goes to show how creating literary satire was clearly not a concern of the final author of Jeremiah 51; the affirmation of YHWH's power over the nation is the fundamental theme of the text. If satire is used, then it is an incidental device within a larger literary framework.

Habakkuk 2:18

The last prophetic attack against the idols in the Old Testament is in the book of Habakkuk; one of the woe oracles in Habakkuk 2 forms an attack specifically targeted at the idols. All five woe oracles attack people who are committing certain practices with which the prophet does not agree. The last attack in the set focuses on those who try and encourage the idols to speak in verse 19. It is preceded by a verse which is an anomaly to the rest of the passage: verse 18 introduces the concept of the idols outside of the structure defined by the previous four oracles. Smith notes that the oracles start with an introduction

to sin using הוי followed by a participle. They then announce the judgement of the sinner before stating the reason for this judgement.[361] With verse 18 breaking this mould, scholars have suggested that it should be shifted to follow verse 19 or that it is a later addition.[362]

The critique is based upon the lifelessness of the idol, specifically targeting its inability to speak. It is hard to argue that this passage is particularly satirical; whilst it is clear that a comparison can be made to YHWH, who does speak, the contrasts are not strong. There are also no linguistic consistencies to suggest that the two are being set in juxtaposition. Like the previous four oracles, the attack is a simple judgement and does not contain any satire. This passage mirrors the critiques of Isaiah 40 and 41: the idol is condemned by its very nature.

Psalms 115 and 135

The final occurrence of idol critiques within the biblical canon is in the non-prophetic book of Psalms. Whilst these passages are not prophetic in nature, the similarities to the other idol critique mean that they function in a similar way to the prophetic material. The attack is repeated twice in slightly variant forms in the post-exilic Psalms. It is a polemic entirely targeted at the idols themselves. Whilst the idol-maker and worshipper do appear in the final verse of each critique, it is the idol who is the main subject of each section. It is generally argued by scholars to be a satirical passage;[363] however, there is little explanation as to why it is satirical and how the satire functions in these Psalms.

[361] See R. L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC 32; Waco: Word, 1984), p. 110.
[362] See J. J. M. Roberts, *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), p. 126.
[363] See H. J. Kraus, *Psalms 60-150* Translated by H. C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), p. 380.

Psalm 115's attack occurs at the beginning of the poem. Verse 2 introduces a comparison within a conversation between Israel and the nations. The nations question Israel on the location of their deity; Israel's response is to assert its God's ascendency by claiming he dwells in the heavens, in verse 3. The attack on Israel's God provides the context for a counter-punch against the supposed gods of the nations. It is for this reason that Goldingay argues that the passage places the gods of the nations in direct contrast with YHWH.[364] Whilst God dwells in the heavens, the idols which represent the foreign gods' presence on earth are proved to be false. The comparison between the deities is shown in the outcome of the worshippers in verses 8 and 9. The same verb בטח is used to describe those who follow the idols and those who worship YHWH. This shows that the contrast is a legitimate way to understand the text; however, it does not provide a strong basis for satire. If one views the idol critiques in Psalm 115 through a satirical lens, then a different contrast becomes apparent. The attack on the idols in verses 4-8 is not based around their deficiencies in comparison to YHWH. Nowhere in the rest of the Psalm is YHWH explicitly able to do the things that the idols cannot; although YHWH is able to act in these ways elsewhere in scripture, he is not the object being satirised here. Instead, the idols are attacked as they are unable to act in the way their own image suggests. The idols become a parody of their own representation.

Verse 4 introduces the characters who are being satirised; the Psalm shifts from the focus on the Israelite deity in verse 3 to the images of the gods, presumably of the nations. Verse 4, whilst not specifically vehement, provides a description of the idols which places them into an aniconic worldview: the idols are created by humans who make them out of

[364] J. Goldingay, *Psalms Volume* 3*: Psalms 90-150* (Baker Commentraries on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), p.330.

silver and gold. This is the precise assumption that is needed for the subsequent satire to have any effect. This statement of apparent fact means that the idols are nothing more than images.[365] Verses 5-7 are the heart of the attack. The verses consist of seven critiques concerning the seven actions that the idols are unable to do. The first two verses use an identical repeated formula: *body part – verb of possession – conjunction with negative marker – verb of inability.* The Septuagint retains this structure throughout the entire critique. In the Masoretic text, verse 7 deviates slightly from this grammatical construction, using a suffix of possession instead of the verb in its first two insults. The last slur in verse 7 is simplified to a straightforward statement. 'The idols have no sound in their throat.' An explanation for these changes is that the first four attacks focus on the facial features of the idols. The fifth and sixth attacks then focus on the wider body appendages. The final jest forms a summary of the whole insult. Each of the seven attacks function by undermining the idol's ability to act through the way they are portrayed. The idols' inabilities are a satire of their own image. Having undermined the idols, the final attack of the passage is on those who follow and trust in the idols in verse 8. The psalmist warns that by trusting in idols the worshipper is integrated into the limitations of his object of worship. This statement functions to form a link between the satire of verses 4-7 and the command to trust YHWH in verse 9-11. Its purpose is also to increase the critiques of the idols themselves. Not content with just showing the insufficiency of the idols themselves, the Psalmist implies that the idol's illegitimacy flows further onto their worshippers.

[365] It is important to note that the author of this Psalm does not necessarily have a strong understanding of the ritual practice behind idol production. Whether this lack of understanding is through ignorance or a purposeful omission is irrelevant. The role of verse 4 is to describe the fundamental characteristics of the idols which are essential for the satire to function.

This satire is a neat little attack on the idols themselves. By creating a parody of their own image, the author portrays his fundamental assumption about idols. The idol has no life or breath within, and so it becomes easy to satirise the idol by its own image. The fact that this attack is repeated in a shorter form within Psalm 135:15-18 shows the neatness of the satire.[366] The passage is worthy of repetition and fits an Israelite worldview concerning the limitations of crafting a representation of one's deity. The satire itself is short but tidy: the use of repeated formulas that build upon a simple premise makes the attack brief but pertinent. Its presence in Psalmic literature shows that satire can be present in any type of criticism across style and genre.

Wisdom of Solomon 13

The idea of idol critique is not confined to just the canon of the Old Testament: there are two important apocryphal works that continue the tradition of undermining the idols. Firstly, in the Wisdom of Solomon we find a similar idol critique to the attack in Isaiah 44:9-20. Secondly, in the short tale of Bel and the Dragon there is a unique idol polemic integrated within a narrative text. Whilst neither work belongs to a prophetic genre, the identical subject matter means that they are important to understanding this theme in wider literature. The fact that this form of critique migrated into wisdom literature indicates the unconscious way that satire was used within the framework of idol polemics.

[366] Psalm 135 forms a pastiche of a great deal of different Psalmic material and ideas. It is understandable, then, that the idol critique is repeated within the context of this Psalm. Its similarities in themes and purpose to Psalm 115 are clear; for example, the repeated cry at the end of the Psalm for Israel to bless YHWH echoes the call in Psalm 115 to trust him. For more information on the comparisons between the two Psalms see A. Weiser, *The Psalms* (OTL; London: SCM, 1962), pp. 788-90.

The Wisdom of Solomon is an apocryphal work to both Jewish and Christian traditions.[367] This piece of wisdom literature[368] was written at some point in the Second Temple period;[369] whenever it is dated, it is clearly subsequent to the texts of Deutero-Isaiah and Jeremiah. This is important as the book contains an idol polemic which is an elaboration of the critiques of the aforementioned works. Like the satires previously analysed in this chapter, the Wisdom of Solomon attacks the lifelessness of the idol. The attack occurs over three chapters from 13:10-15:17. The length of this polemic means that a detailed analysis of the satire would require a longer, more detailed study; however, an overview of this text shows how it retains similar features to its prophetic forebears. The author uses three different situations to reiterate one major point: the idols are made of common material and therefore have no legitimacy for worship. The author's misunderstanding of the idol-making process echoes the ignorance of the polemics of Isaiah and Jeremiah.[370] The attacks in the book are thus reflections of these two prophetic works. In particularly, the polemic in Isaiah 44:9-20 forms the foundation for the three attacks constructed in the Wisdom of Solomon.

In the thirteenth chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon, the book shifts onto an idol critique. The critique interrupts a discourse on wisdom and God's involvement in Israel's history. The concept of idol worship appears so abhorrent to the author that he spends

[367] It should be noted, though, that the Catholic and Orthodox traditions count the work as canonical.
[368] The book has been generally assigned to the wisdom tradition of Proverbs, Qoheleth, Job and Ben Sira, although some scholars have argued the book form a midrash. For more information, see L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffied: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 39-47.
[369] Scholarly opinion ranges from the 3rd century BCE to the 1st century CE. For an overview of the different arguments see C. Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse ou la Sagesse de Solomon vol.* 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1985), pp. 141-6.
[370] Michael Dick's critique of the polemics of Deutero-Isaiah seems to apply also to the Wisdom of Solomon. The author has failed to grasp the process of divine indwelling inspired by the 'opening of the mouth' rituals of both Egypt and Babylon. However, like the satire of Isaiah 44:9-20, the presupposition for the author is that the idols cannot contain any divine essence. If this is the expectation of the writer's audience, then creating a satire to illustrate this point is wholly appropriate within this context.

three chapters attacking this practice before returning to his original theme in chapter 15:18. The context of this tirade appears to be appropriate, as the author moves to attacking those who worship creation, as opposed to the creator, in 13:1-9. However, the length of the attack may suggest that the section on idol worship may be a secondary redaction. The attack is split into three different components, each marked by characters of three different professions: in 13:11-19 it is the carpenter who is shown to be ridiculous, whilst in 14:1-7 and 15:7-13 the author mocks the voyager and the potter respectively. Interspersed between these short portrayals are theories by the author concerning the nature of idol worship. This analysis of the origins of the practice is unique. However, the late dating of this text shows that the writer has a wider range of influence than the authors of the earlier polemics. The influence of the wisdom tradition as well as possibly wider Hellenistic literature means that the author can elaborate on Isaiah's theme.[371] Therefore his critique is more detailed than its counterpart in Isaiah. The link between the two texts is established immediately by the central character of chapter 13. The carpenter's action in verses 11-19 is an expanded form of Isaiah 44:14-17, although this thesis has already shown that it is probably not the carpenter of verse 13 who is being described in these verses. However, it is an easy link for the author of the Wisdom of Solomon to make in assuming that it is the carpenter who is the subject for these verses. The similarities in their actions in the subsequent text prove the link between the two texts.

The author uses intricate language to describe the carpenter's actions in chapter 13:11-19, yet the premise of the satire is exactly the same as of the unnamed artisan of

[371] Depending on when the book is dated, it may be even influenced by Roman satirists. Grabbe argues that comparisons can be made to the work of both Horace and Juvenal: he compares the aforementioned satire of Priapus by Horace to the idol critiques in this book, as well as Juvenal's satire of Volusius to the writer's attack on animal images. See Grabbe, pp. 58-9.

Isaiah 44:14-17: the carpenter uses the same wood to make vessels (verse 11), to cook his food (verse 12) and to make an idol of a man or an animal (verses 13 and 14). The maker then bows down to the idol and worships it. The attack is then continued by a second scenario in chapter 14; here, the author's target shifts from the creator of the idols to the voyager on a boat. The same device is used to undermine his trust in the idol for protection; in this case, the man calls to a piece of wood which is more rotten than the ship that carries him (14:1). The passage goes on to ridicule the idea that the traveller would trust in a little piece of wood (verse 5).

Before examining its last character, the passage assesses the origins of the idols in 14:12-15:6.[372] The conclusions of the author are reflected in the later Pauline epistle to the Romans.[373] The final satire is mediated through the character of the potter in 15:7. The premise for the attack is identical to that of the carpenter: the potter makes different types of vessels, some for sanitary uses and others for the contrary (15:7), and with the same clay he then forms and moulds an idol (15:8). The attack is satirical as the author claims that the potter is ignorant of the God who moulded him (15:11). It is a different character but the same satire: for the author, it is ridiculous for a man to claim he can create gods when it is God who created man. The attack is then concluded with the author integrating the Psalmic idol polemic into the text, as verse 15 goes on to note that the idols are unable to use the body parts that they have been given. This echo of Psalms 115 and 135 shows that the author has fused together the idol polemics of the Old Testament then elaborated it to create this attack. The Wisdom of Solomon combines the different ways satire is used in

[372] Grabbe argues that the author's central idea of the creation of the idols is Euhemeristic. Thus, he implies that this text is dependent on earlier Greek sources. See Grabbe, p. 59.
[373] For more information of the comparisons between these two works see, J. A. Lindbaugh, 'Announcing the Human: Rethinking the Relationship Between Wisdom of Solomon 13-15 and Romans 1.18-2.11', *New Testament Studies* 57 (2011), pp. 214-237.

idol polemics throughout the Old Testament canon and it creates one long and final critique of the idols.

Bel and the Dragon

In contrast to the other idol polemics, the story of Bel and the Dragon forms a completely unique attack against the idols. Unlike the others, which are either a prophetic message or a simple attack, Bel and the Dragon weaves its critique into a short narrative. The critique is only ever mediated by the actions of the characters in the story. In this way, its links to the previous attacks are only thematic. Given this unique nature, arguably this is the closest example we have to a book that is written as a satire.

The Greek text of this Second Temple story occurs in two major manuscripts: the Old Greek and Theodotion. Scholars believe the text was translated from either an earlier, yet missing, Hebrew[374] or Aramaic version.[375] Despite the brevity of the tale, the author[376] divides the tale into three separate acts: in the first, Daniel, the protagonist of the whole tale, reveals the deception of the priest of Bel to the new king Cyrus; in the second, he destroys the dragon or serpent by feeding him a lethal concoction; in the last, Daniel is flung again into the lion's den only to be saved from death by a teleporting prophet. The first two acts specifically undermine the practices of, firstly, idol worship and, secondly, zoolatry. By having the hero of the pericope destroy both and then being saved himself in the final act, the author satirically attacks both practices.

[374] Moore believes it was originally written in Hebrew, as the linguistic difficulties in the text imply that the Greek text has been translated. See C. A. Moore, *Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions.* (AB 44; New York: Doubleday, 1977), p. 143.

[375] Zimmerman originally argued along similar lines to Moore to presuppose an Aramaic version of the work. See F. Zimmerman, 'Bel et Draco', *Vetus Testamentum* 8 (1958), pp. 438-40.

[376] There have been various suggestions as to the authorship of the book. There is a range of dates and places that scholars have attributed to the book. For a list see, C. Bergmann, 'The Ability/Inability to Eat: Determining Life and Death in Bel et Draco.', *Journal for the Study of Judaism 35* (2004), pp. 262-83.

The satire present in the tales revolves around the motif of eating. The author uses this literary theme throughout the tale. Every character who eats something throughout the tale receives destruction or salvation:[377]

Character	**Verse Reference**	**Item consumed**	**Result of the consumption**
70 Priests of Bel and their wives and children	10-22	Secretly they eat the food that was supposedly consumed by the idol of Bel.	Daniel uses ashes to unveil their deception. The King slays the priest whilst Daniel destroys the idol.
The Dragon or Serpent	23-27	The Dragon eats the lumpy concoction that Daniel makes out of pitch, fat and hair.	After eating the poison, the dragon bursts asunder.
Daniel	30-42	Daniel eats the dinner given to him by Habbakuk the prophet. The prophet is teleported from Israel to	The provision of food forms a literary function to remind Daniel that God has remembered him. It acts as a sign of

[377] The table above is indebted to the work of Claudia Bergmann, who suggested this motif as the key to understanding the links between the three acts of the story. See Bergmann, pp. 267-281.

		Babylon by the angel of the Lord to deliver Daniel's food.	God's deliverance.
Lions	30-42	They do not receive their normal portion of food whilst Daniel is in their den. They ironically eat the enemies of Daniel after Cyrus has removed him from the lion's den.	The lion's meal becomes an agent of destruction. Their refusal to eat Daniel, in comparison to their quick devouring of his enemies, makes them into a device to show God's provision and justice.

It is very easy for the reader to realise that the story is attacking the two practices of idol worship and zoolatry. The idol of Bel can be understood both specifically as a representation of the Babylonian god Marduk and generically as a representation of all idols. Daniel's revelation to Cyrus of the deception of the priest serves to undermine the whole practice of idol worship.[378] The dragon can be understood as specifically representing Tiamat,[379] or alternatively as an avatar of the practice of worshipping sacred

[378] In particular, focusing on the idol's inability to eat for itself reflects the satire of Psalms 115 and 135.

[379] It was Gunkel who first related this story to *Enûma Eliš*. Daniel's method of killing the dragon linguistically parallels Marduk's use of wind to destroy Tiamat. Zimmerman argues that the Greek word μάζας, is a mistranslation of the Aramaic סערא. Thus, the wind in *Enûma Eliš* becomes the barley cakes or lumps in Bel and the Dragon. It is thus ironic that Daniel first exposes the representation of Marduk. He then uses very similar tactics to the same god to destroy the serpent. See H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895) and Zimmerman, p. 439.

animals. If these links can be verified, then there is no reason not to argue that this text functions as a satire.

Clearly this narrative satire differs in its style from the rest of the idol critiques. Like the story of 'The Tower of Babel', its narrative style functions in the form of a situational satire. Every detail in the story creates an overarching narrative through which the satire can be created. The brevity of the work and the absence of an ulterior motive suggest that this story can fall within its own independent genre of satire. However, the late date of its writing does mean that, unlike any text in the Old Testament, there is sufficient ground to suggest it could have had Hellenistic influence.

Conclusion

Throughout the many idol polemics that are present in the Old Testament and in its wider literature, satire forms an integral part of the manner in which the prophets attack this practice. However, in the material in the Old Testament, satire is deployed in a variety of different ways. Some texts, like Isaiah 44:9-20, use complex satirical techniques. It attacks the practice on many different levels, utilising different targets to build a neat attack on the crafters of idols. Other texts are more obvious in the creation of a satirical attack. At its simplest level some texts appear to use little or no satire at all to attack the idols. By the later Second Temple period, the satirical technique of idol-criticism had been elaborated upon in Wisdom of Solomon and almost refined into a satiric genre in Bel and the Dragon.

This difficulty in defining the extent of satire within these passages illustrates the fluidity of the term 'satire'. A text can deploy satirical features within narratives or poems which are concerned with very different things, all without the author explicitly

understanding what satire is. Applying modern literary definitions back into ancient texts is very difficult when the ancient writers did not have a specific conception of the techniques they were using; however, it is undeniable that in creating idol critiques it was easy for the author to utilise a technique that we now identify as satire. The satire always functions as a form of mockery which heightens the critique of the polemic.

In the idol critiques themselves, satire is mainly deployed through a method similar to 'The Satire of the Trades.' It is a simple satire that distorts its depiction of idols, their makers and those who worship them to show their illegitimacy in comparison to YHWH. Using a satirical reading of the text enables one to better interpret the links between the idol critiques, which appear as independent sections, and their immediate context. This does not give an undeniable proof that the critiques were an original part of the text. However, it does show that they have relevance in their position within the wider text around them. This at least suggests that the redactors who have inserted them into the text have more proficiency than is often credited to them.

Identifying satire in the idol critiques within prophetic writing is the tip of the iceberg: the natural critical element of prophetic writing means that satire can conceivably be found in multiple other places. There is scope for a wider study into satire within other prophetic texts to investigate this phenomenon further.

Chapter 5

Where is wisdom to be found?: Satire in Wisdom Literature

Seeing the presence of satire in the idol polemic within the Wisdom of Solomon suggests that satire can be found in the genre of wisdom literature. The three books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes are all fundamentally related in genre and theme; they are all works concerned with understanding the nature of the world and mankind. The term wisdom is the uniting concept: all three books are texts that examine the value of wisdom in its various forms and guises. However, the unique stylistic nature of each text creates a distinctive flavour to each book. The book of Proverbs has a traditional wisdom structure. It cites the author of the statement before dispensing instruction to a marked recipient. This didactic formula mirrors the Egyptian and Mesopotamian instruction literature. The book of Job combines a narrative with a poetic dialogue as a medium for discussing wisdom themes. In contrast to both of these is the unique book of Ecclesiastes. Here, Qoheleth gives a lengthy homily concerning the nature of the world.

The wisdom genre itself is an intriguing place to search for satirical intent. Despite the lack of narrative, satire can still function within the constraints of this genre. This chapter aims to assess whether the authors of these works deployed a satirical component as part of their writing. Within this, it will also analyse whether any of these three works can be reclassified into a sub-genre of wisdom satire.

Proverbs 1-9

The book of Proverbs is the most conventional of all the Hebrew wisdom books. The structure of the book is made up of three major sections:

1. The discourse of Solomon in chapters 1-9.
2. The 375 individual proverbs of Solomon in chapters 10-22:16.
3. An assortment of Proverbs from different authors in 22:17-31:31.

It is important to analyse the satirical nature of the book, as Johnny Miles has suggested that the first nine chapters can be legitimately read as a satire against King Solomon.

Miles begins his argument by conducting a survey of previous scholarship of Proverbs 1-9.[380] He draws upon the work of various scholars in what is a good introduction to the scholarship of Proverbs 1-9. He begins by identifying that Proverbs 1-9 was mostly neglected by scholars until the 20th century. He then summarises the historical-critical approaches of source criticism,[381] genre studies[382] and redaction criticism.[383] After this, he

[380] See J. E. Miles, *Wise King – Royal Fool: Semiotics, Satire and Proverbs 1-9* (JSOTSup, 399; London: T & T Clark International, 2004), pp. 3-14.

[381] Here he assesses the relationship between ancient near-eastern instruction texts and Proverbs 1-9. He summarises the work of Whybray, who argued for Egyptian dependence and Albright, who suggested Semitic parallels. In the end, Miles rejects their conclusions as lacking in evidence and follows Weeks, who argues that these texts arose in their own cultures adapting to the specific needs of their societies. See R. N. Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs: A survey of Modern Scholarship* (HBInt, 1; Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 6-14, W. F. Albright, 'Some Caananite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom', in M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas (eds.) *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: presented to Harold Henry Rowley by the Society for Old Testament Study in Association with the editorial board of Vetus Testamentum, in celebration of his sixty-fifth birthday, 24 March 1955* (VTSup, 3; Leiden: Brill, 1955), p. 7-11 and S. Weeks, *Early Israelite Wisdom* (OTM; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 8-18.

[382] Drawing on the work of Whybray, Kayatz and Lang, Miles argues that the genre is dependent on the Instruction tradition. In Proverbs 1-9 there are ten discourses or wisdom poems asserted by all three scholars. Miles goes further to discuss the social background of these chapters. He summarises the three theories that the chapters were written by a royal court, a scribal school or a family/clan. However, he concludes that none of the suggestions led to any certain conclusion. What is critical to the question of genre is whether or not chapters 1-9 are interpreted as a general introduction to the book. See, R. N. Whybray, *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs* (JSOTSup, 168; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), pp. 11-18, C. Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1-9: Eine form- und motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung unter Einbeziehung ägyptischen Vergleichmaterials* (WMANT, 22; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1966), pp. 14-17 and B. Lang, *Die weisheitliche Lehrrede. Eine Untersuchung von Sprüche 1-7* (SBS, 54; Stuttgart: KBW Verlag, 1972), pp. 31-33.

[383] Following his analysis of the other areas of historical criticism, Miles rejects the conclusions of redaction criticism. He argues that the three-fold atomisation of the text deployed by Whybray and Fox only leads to

examines three literary-critical approaches of rhetorical criticism,[384] literary-historical criticism[385] and discourse analysis.[386] Through this study, he concludes that neither the historical-critical method nor any literary approach has provided an explanation for the poetic form and function of the text.[387]

Miles offers an alternative approach for examining the text: one based upon semiotics. After summarising semiotic history and theory, Miles argues that semiotics offers a synthetic approach to the text. This enables the scholar to marry the historical-critical emphasis on textual integrity with the literary-critical concern of a reader-response to the text. Semiotics focuses on reading signs within the text that indicate the presence of an ideology in opposition to the obvious reading. Miles argues that Proverbs 1-9 functions as a prologue whose purpose is to criticise rather than to praise Solomon, its author. Linguistically, the chapters use a series of lexemes which function as wordplays to critique its author. The first and obvious wordplay is the link between the genre-indicator of משל to

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possible conclusions. Miles argues that all the historical critical methods are unable suitably to analyse the poetic qualities due to their interpretative strategy. See Miles, pp. 9-11, Whybray (1994), pp. 29-32 and M. V. Fox, *Proverbs 1-9* (AB 18a; New York: Doubleday, 2000), pp. 44-9.

[384] In analysing a rhetorical approach, Miles examines the work of Phyllis Trible. He argues that although Trible attempts to treat Proverbs 1-9 in a poetic context, ultimately she is too distracted by its rhetoric to assess properly its poetic qualities. See Miles, pp. 11-2 and P. Trible, 'Wisdom builds a Poem: The Architecture of Proverbs 1.20-33', *JBL* 94 (1975), pp. 509-18.

[385] Miles examine Claudia Camp's work analysing feminine perspectives focusing on the centrality of the wise and foolish women as interpretations of post-exilic social conventions. Camp argues that the presence of the women proves that the basic institution of post-exilic Israel has become the family rather than the royalty. See Miles, p. 12 and C. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (BibLit, 11; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985), pp. 239-54.

[386] Miles examines the two genre-inspired voices that Newsom and Brenner have argued appear in dialogue within Proverbs 1-9. Brenner tentatively suggested the presence of a masculine (M) and feminine (F) voice in these chapters. Miles summarises a threefold critique to this approach, the most convincing being the fundamental difficulty in dissecting the two voices with no obvious indicators within the passage itself. This allows Miles to conclude with the most common critique of the literary-critical method: the subjectivity of the method enables the reader to perceive the text like a mirror, allowing the viewer to see the text how they desire. See Miles, pp. 12-4, C. A. Newsom, 'Woman and the discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1-9', in P. L. Day (ed.), *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (Guides to Biblical scholarship. Old Testament series; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), pp. 142-60 and A. Brenner, 'Proverbs 1-9: An F Voice?', in Brenner and van Dijk-Hemmes (eds.), *On Gendering Text: Female and Male Voice in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 113-30.

[387] Miles, p. 14.

the ascribed author שלמה. Thus, the purpose of the chapters is not the glorification of Solomon as a wise king; instead, they function as a mockery of a man whose actions have negated his divinely imparted wisdom. Solomon is not the wise king; rather, he becomes the royal fool.

Miles constructs his argument upon the differences between the Deuteronomistic portrayal of Solomon in 1 Kings 1-11 and the wisdom he proposes in Proverbs. There are two main areas of discontinuity between the two texts, which shows satiric intent in the latter. Firstly, Solomon's foolishness is proven by his inability to govern properly with righteousness, justice and equity. Miles argues that Solomon's royal ideology has departed from both the Torah of Genesis – Deuteronomy and the poetic *torah* of instruction shown in Proverbs 1-9. Secondly, Solomon's sexual indiscretions prove his preference for the seductive woman of folly rather than lady wisdom. The erotic context of Proverbs 5 reflects Solomon's rejection of the wife of his youth, wisdom, for the attractive woman of folly. Much of Miles' analysis is based upon continuous wordplays, which he identifies throughout all of these chapters. Indeed, he finishes by noting the ironic similarity between the name שלמה to the Hebrew word for 'fool' – שלמאל.

There is much to be admired in Miles' argument. He begins with a good definition and understanding of what satire is[388], he constructs a very strong methodology, and attempts to bridge the gap between the two fields of historical criticism and literary criticism. Satire and semiotics offer a good alternative approach to identifying both authorial intention and reader interpretation within the text of Proverbs 1-9. His analysis of

[388] Miles examines different proponents of satirical theory as well as summarising previous scholarship linking satire with the Old Testament. He notes four components of satire as attack, play, laughter and judgement. These can be summarised within the definition of comic imitation and critique that this thesis has proposed. See Miles, pp. 28-31.

Proverbs 1-9 appears to identify the base components that would suggest satire; in this it retains a degree of validity. If Miles' conclusions are true, then his argument challenges the presupposition that the wisdom writers of the Old Testament understood Solomon to be the pinnacle of earthly wisdom. Instead, by attributing the book to Solomon, the author creates a critique against the protagonist. If this is the case, it brings into question the other wisdom books which also claim a Solomonic authorship. This chapter will later analyse Ecclesiastes to examine whether or not attributing Solomonic authorship functions critically rather than positively.

Despite these positives, Miles' work is not without limitations:

1. The link between semiotics and satire is not apparent. Miles spends a whole chapter summarising the work of semioticians Umberto Eco and Michael Riffaterre. He establishes his methodology through which he proceeds to analyse Proverbs 1-9. In doing so, he argues that sign theory provides an approach that acknowledges both the value of the text and the reader. This argument proceeds from a poetic understanding of Proverbs 1-9. However, the fundamental issue in attempting this methodology is that, in joining two approaches together, Miles achieves neither one nor the other. Satire either functions as the purpose of the text in response to Solomon's Deuteronomistic portrayal or, alternatively, satire is something that the reader imposes upon the text by attaching a sense of irony to the words of the author.

2. Miles overemphasises the negative portrayal of Solomon within the Deuteronomistic sources. If Proverbs 1-9 is going to be classed as satire, then

Miles must be correct in asserting that 1 Kings 1-11 is an attack against the Solomonic kingship. He makes his argument by deconstructing the narrative to show that Solomon's actions both defy Deuteronomic law and portray limited wisdom.[389] Thus, whenever Solomon's wisdom is praised, it is spoken with an ironic tone. Whilst there is definitive critique within the final part of the narrative, the overwhelming portion of the Solomonic narrative has traditionally praised his action and character. Miles' argument also takes each part of Solomon's rise to power; in every case, Solomon is shown to have either disobeyed Deuteronomic law or shown a brutal royal ideology rather than a loving caring wisdom.[390] There are several fundamental problems with this reading of the text. Firstly, Miles' approach requires the reader to understand some key positive statements to be written with a sarcastic tone. Thus, he requires every Solomonic compliment to be inverted to become back-handed. This sarcasm is not attested elsewhere in Deuteronomistic writing. This leads to the second problem, namely that the critique is not explicit within the narrative itself. Elsewhere the Deuteronomist is quite clear when he is critical of the actions of the ruler. The standard phrase: '(insert name) did evil in the sight of the LORD' is used elsewhere to signpost a polemic against a monarch.[391] Thirdly, this negative portrayal of Solomon's early reign is not perceived by other

[389] Ibid, pp. 40-6.
[390] Miles' reading of 1 Kings 1-10 inverts the positive assertions concerning Solomon and his wisdom: instead of being a loving, kind and wise ruler, Solomon is shown to be a despotic dictator. However, each narrative comment that, according to Miles, apparently places suspicion upon Solomon's character also seems to have a natural explanation. The killings of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei are all justified in 1 Kings 2.
[391] The phrase is used to describe Solomon in 1 Kings 11:6 in his old age. The implication is that earlier in his reign he did follow after him.

scholars. Lastly, Miles' negative attack on Solomon's early practice contradicts traditional views of Solomonic wisdom.

3. Miles is not confident in his own conclusions. In offering this alternative reading for Proverbs 1-9, Miles finishes his work with an epilogue. In this, he encapsulates the problem with moving towards a reader-based focus on the texts. By trying to combine this with an objective critical approach, Miles shows the difficulties inherent in offering satirical readings of a text. Satire inverts the obvious reading of the text. However, without external evidence substantiating the critical approach of the author it can only ever offer a reasoned alternative to the traditional reading. It is for this reason that Miles can only offer an epilogue and not a definitive conclusion.

Miles offers an interesting re-reading of Proverbs 1-9, and his argument that it can be understood through semiotics as a satirical prologue to the book is not completely unfounded. However, his analysis is open to major criticism as he is unsure of his own conclusions. Miles' work is a good example of both the opportunities and the dangers offered by a satirical reading of the text. On the one hand, a satirical reading will invert the obvious or apparent reading, presenting the scholar with an alternative. Within a reader-based methodology this enables the scholar to understand it in an auxiliary manner to its traditional interpretation. On the other hand, it shows the dangers of imposing satire on something that is not the original authorial or editorial intent.

Job

The book of Job was written to examine the issue of righteous suffering. It consists of three chapters of narrative and thirty-nine of poetic discourse between a variety of different characters. The central protagonist, Job, provides the narrative glue joining the whole book together. He is the puppet of the divine interplay in the narrative of chapters 1 and 2. The book then shifts to a dialogue between Job and his three friends: Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. The majority of the book is an account of this conversation, which consists of a series of speeches started and finished by the protagonist. Intertwined within Job's complaint are the views of his three friends: Eliphaz and Bildad both speak three times, whilst Zophar addresses Job only twice.[392] Once the conversation appears to have been completed, the book changes track entirely. Chapter 28 forms an anomaly in the book which has caused scholars a great deal of grief in providing an interpretation of Job's soliloquy concerning the nature of wisdom.[393] Chapters 29-31 form the basis for Job's final defence of his position. Before YHWH's final answer to Job in chapters 38-41, there is a small interlude in chapters 32-37, where the previously un-introduced character of Elihu rebukes Job and his three friends. Finally the book concludes with the narrative of Job's repentance and acceptance of YHWH's domination over all things. YHWH responds by

[392] It is assumed by many scholars that Zophar must have had three speeches. The problem is compounded by the inconsistency of Job's words in parts of chapter 27. Therefore, in attempting to complete this literary cycle, scholars have suggested different solutions to this problem. That these are a complete set of cycles was first suggested by Kennicott in the 18th century. See B. Kennicott, *Remarks on Select Passages of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1787), pp. 169-70. Since then, there have been various other suggestions. Examples of different solutions to the problem can be found in modern commentaries such as N. C. Habel, *The Book of Job* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), pp. 383-9, or D. J. A. Clines, *Job 21-37* (WBC 18A; Waco: Word, 2006), pp. 651-63. An alternative to the triple cycle theory is offered by D. Wolfers, 'The Speech-Cycles in the Book of Job' *VT* 43 (1993), pp. 385-402.

[393] The traditional wisdom text that appears in Job's mouth here is inconsistent with the rest of his speech. This is especially apparent when he claims in verse 28 that 'the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.' Commentators either dismiss this text as secondary or alternatively re-edit the text to place the speech in the mouth of a different speaker. See Clines (2006), pp.889-926.

rebuking Job's three friends and restoring Job to a heightened place of prosperity in chapter 42.

The disjointed nature of the book and the dual media of poetry and prose have caused many scholars to suggest that the book can be deconstructed into various different parts.[394] Firstly, scholars have sometimes suggested that the prose and the poetic sections arrived from different traditions.[395] Secondly, the presence of self-contained sections, such as the speech of Elihu, suggests the hand of a redactor.[396] Lastly, Zophar's missing speech, alongside the difficulties of chapter 28, has enabled scholars to offer different suggestions to emend the text to make the book more readable. These deconstructions point to the book being made up of a variety of different styles and genres within its final form. Therefore, it makes sense to search for Israelite satire within a work of such diversity of form, content and context.

[394] For a summary of a deconstruction see M. H. Pope, *Job* (ABC 15; New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp. xxiii-xxx.

[395] It is not difficult to see the tension between the two. The prose prologue section finishes with Job retaining a defence of his deity's actions in 2:10. His words throughout the poetic dialogue appear to contradict this position. Whilst 2:11-13 act as a narrative to set up the conversation commencing in chapter 3, there is a clear discontinuity between the two chapters. Likewise, at the conclusion of the book, the prose narrative of chapter 42 portrays a restoration which is incongruous with the conclusion of the dialogue. YHWH nowhere indicates that he will revive Job's fortunes, although the protagonist does repent. It is for this reason that scholars have argued that the book is derived from different sources. For more information, see D. Lawrie, 'How Critical is it to be Historically Critical? The Case of the Composition of the Book of Job' *JNSL* 27 (2001), pp. 121-46; J. W. Watts, 'The Unreliable Narrator of Job', in S. L. Cook , C. L. Patton and J. W. Watts *(eds.), The Whirlwind: Essays on Job, Hermeneutics and Theology in Memory of Jane Morse (JSOTSup, 336;* Sheffield*:* Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 168-180.

[396] The Elihu speeches are easy to assign to a later redactor due to their dissonance with the rest of the story. Elihu makes his appearance and is subsequently ignored. Job offers no answer to him nor is he rebuked by the deity at the book's conclusion. That the Elihu speeches are a later addition was first suggested by Stuhlmann in the 19th century. See M. H. Stuhlmann, *Hiob, ein religiöses Gedicht aus dem Hebräischen neu übersetzt, geprüft und erläutert* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1804), pp. 14-24, 40-44. For opposing views concerning the authenticity of the speeches, see L. J. Waters, 'The Authenticity of the Elihu Speeches in Job 32-37', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (1999), pp. 28-41 and J. B. Curtis, 'Why were the Elihu Speeches added to the book of Job?', *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies* 8 (1988), pp. 93-99. An alternative reading is offered by Clines in D. J. A. Clines, 'Putting Elihu in his Place: A Proposal for the Relocation of Job 32-37' *JSOT 29* (2005), pp. 243-53.

The genre of the book is widely debated by scholars. The unique structure of the book within the biblical canon makes it difficult to assign to a specific ancient genre. It is clearly concerned with the concept of wisdom, which appears to be a central theme. However, simply to denote the work as a piece of wisdom literature ignores its narrative attributes. The concept of wisdom is analysed within the structure of a story and the discourse between the main characters. In this way it differs from the more formulaic structure of instruction in Proverbs or the Mesopotamian and Egyptian wisdom texts. From this we see tension between *form* and *content*, two of the fundamental criteria for assigning texts to genres. Dell argues that these two criteria have to be combined with context to ascertain a book's genre.[397] She also highlights that there is a distinct difference between genre on micro and macro levels. She argues that many scholars make the mistake of using a smaller genre within the text as the dominant factor in assigning the book to an overall genre.[398] She makes good arguments to outline the continued difficulty of identifying a predominant genre within the whole book of Job. It is for this reason that there have been a variety of suggestions assigning Job to different genres: traditional wisdom,[399] lament,[400] comedy,[401] or tragedy.[402] This chapter will examine Dell's claims that the book belongs to a new genre of parody.

[397] See Dell, pp. 73-88.
[398] Ibid. Pp. 88-90.
[399] Baker believes that the book is the supreme masterpiece of wisdom literature. His arguments are based upon the content of the book: wisdom appears to be such a dominant theme within the book that there is no alternative to assigning it to a wisdom genre. The main problem of this argument is that it limits the assessment of genre solely to thematic content, and does not provide an explanation of divergent forms and contexts. See J. A. Baker, 'The Book of Job: Unity and Meaning', *JSOT* 2 (1978), pp. 17-26.
[400] This is argued by Westermann, who draws on key words and phrases to construct his argument. See C. Westermann, *The Structure of the book of Job* trans. C. A. Muenchow (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 12.
[401] Whedbee argues that Job contains enough features of comedy, alongside the overarching U-shaped narrative, that are required for the book to be classified as comedy: the book starts well, is downtrodden in the middle before creating a happy ending. However, this viewpoint requires a focus on the dramatic events

The book offers two possible types of satire within its literary structure. The first is internal: the formation of dialogue and debate enables the characters to create satires to undermine the words of their vocal adversaries. This was first suggested by John Holbert in relation to Zophar's second speech. This chapter will expand upon his argument to show that there is a degree of satire that flows between the conversations of the main protagonists in the book. Many speeches use the technique of satire as part of their strategy to undermine the arguments of the previous speaker. The second is external; this idea is built upon Dell's theory that the book is written as a parody. In analysing whether or not the book is engaging and reproducing external viewpoints in its portrayal of its characters, this chapter will then assess whether these parodies form a polemical function needed to form a satire. If this is the case, then an alternative genre for the book may be proposed.

Internal Satires

John Holbert argues that Zophar's second speech in Job 20 is an example of a satiric attack on the previous statements by Job.[403] Obviously, Job is the target of Zophar's attack, as chapter 20 is in the middle of the dialogue between Job and the three friends, and his words are a direct response to Job's speech in chapter 19. However, the satiric attack is based upon a collation of Job's previous statements. Holbert constructs his argument upon

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of the book, which only form a short part of the whole. Since the book is primarily dialogue, it is difficult to agree with Whedbee's conclusions. See J. W. Whedbee, 'The Comedy of Job' *Semeia* 7 (1977), pp. 1-39.

[402] The comparison with Greek tragedy is more credible than the suggestion of comedy. The dark nature of the book indicates a tragic, rather than comic, work, despite the restoration at the end. However, there is still too little focus within the book on characterisation and action for the book to be placed within a strict narrative genre.

[403] In J. C. Holbert, '"The Skies will Uncover his Iniquity": Satire in the Second Speech of Zophar (Job XX)' *VT* 31 (1981), pp. 171-9.

Zophar's use of certain terms and themes. The following table shows the allusions that Holbert identifies:

Word and theme	Appearance in Job's speech	Appearance in Zophar's speech
Dream, night vision (חלם, חזיון לילה)	7:14	20:8
Eye that will not see (עין שור)	7:21	20:9
Death and return to dust	10:9, 19:25	20:11
The heavens (שמים) act as a witness for Job	16:18-9	20:27
Job works without profit	7:1-2	20:18-9
Job is in trouble (עמל)	3:10, 20, 7:3	20:22
God is battling against him	19:7-12	20:23-25
Darkness and terror are constantly with him	3:25-6, 9:34, 10:20-22, 13:21, 17:11-6	20:25-6
Job has no ease (שלו) in his belly	16:12	20:20
God's frights (אמים) are always near him	8:21, 9:34	20:25

In this way Holbert argues that Zophar is trying to hoist the protagonist by his own petard. By twisting his words in this way Zophar's satire acts as an indictment against Job's own case.

Whilst Holbert's comparisons within the text prove that there is a satirical edge, there is not enough parallelism throughout the chapter to show the chapter functions solely as a satire; the speech lacks the consistency needed for satire to be the overarching purpose. In terms of content, there is no satire at the beginning or end of the chapter. Furthermore, there is no mimicry of Job in form or style. Zophar is twisting Job's words, but this attack is only part of his critique; whilst he is clearly concerned with rejecting Job's worldview, Zophar spends a larger part of his speech asserting the reality that judgement will fall on the wicked. It is for this reason Clines identifies that the genre of the speech not as satire but as a *disputation speech*.[404] He argues that the primary motif of the speech is an appeal to ancient tradition.[405] This means that Zophar's intent is not solely to criticise Job; instead, his purpose is to draw Job out of his stupor in a way that mirrors Zophar's first speech in chapter 11. He reasserts to Job the standard formula of judgement on the wicked. As Gordis notes, 'Zophar proceeds to describe the short-lived prosperity of the wicked and the inevitable doom that comes both upon the sinner and his progeny.'[406] Thus, it is more plausible to argue that the chapter deploys a satirical component to its assertive function.

If chapter 20 is the sole chapter in the book which uses satire within a larger dialogue, then it is difficult to argue that the author intended to use a satirical technique.

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[404] D. J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20* (WBC 17; Waco: Word, 1989), p. 481.

[405] In this he follows Habel who first suggested this formula. See Habel, p. 331. See also, B. H. Kelly, 'Truth in Contradiction: A Study of Job 20 and 21', *Interpretation* 15 (1961), pp. 147-56. Whybray argues that Zophar's appeal to ancient tradition follows Bildad in 8:8-10 and Eliphaz in 15:8-10. See R. N. Whybray, *Job* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), p. 98.

[406] R. Gordis, *The Book of God and Man: A Study of Job* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 264.

However, this type of internal satire can be legitimised through evidence of further examples of this kind of technique within the book of Job. Satirical devices are intertwined into one other main speech within the book, namely within the first divine speech in chapters 38-9. These chapters form YHWH's answer, long-awaited by Job, to the latter's situation. YHWH speaks to Job from a whirlwind. In this response, the deity linguistically draws on Job's own language as the basis for his critique of Job's complaint. YHWH argues that Job's insignificance gives him no right to subject YHWH himself to trial.[407] Like Zophar in chapter 20, YHWH selects a variety of terms, deployed by Job, as the basis for his argument. In the case of YHWH, he draws on the natural terms that Job has mentioned throughout his previous speeches. The table below shows the evidence for this:

YHWH's Speech	Word or Theme	Hebrew Word	Appearance in Job's Speech
38:1	Whirlwind	סערה	27:20
38:2	Darkness	חשׁך	3:4,3:9,5:14, 10:21, 26:10
38:8	Sealing of the Waters	סכך ים	26:10
38:14	Clay	חמר	4:9, 10:9
38:19	Light and Darkness	אור וחשׁך	Consistent parallels

[407] There has been a large amount of debate concerning the nature of God's response to Job. The traditional view is that YHWH asserts his authority over Job, leaving the protagonist lost in insignificance. For example, see J. G. Janzen, *Job* (Interpretation; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 225. Clines argues that the speech is a deflection so that the deity does not have to answer Job. See Clines, *Job 38-42*(WBC 18B: Waco: Word, 2011), pp. 1135-6. Terrien argues that the speeches are a deflection away from the issue of righteous suffering. YHWH opens Job's eyes to see that the issue is the latter's egocentricity; by showing him the extent of creation, Terrien argues that the deity humbles the protagonist. See S. Terrien, "The "Jahve Speeches and Job's Response", *RevEx* 68 (1971), pp. 501-12.

			throughout Job 3
38:22	Snow	שלג	6:16, 9:30, 24:19
38:24	The East Wind	קדים	27:21
38:31-2	Orion/Pleiades	כסיל כימה	9:9
39:5	Wild Donkeys	ערוד	6:5, 24:5

The evidence above shows a very similar pattern to the speech of Zophar in chapter 20. The chapter is not inundated with similarities; however, there are enough comparisons in vocabulary to conclude that YHWH's speeches draw on the language of the complainer in the former's construction of a response. YHWH uses the themes and metaphors that Job created to make the underlying point that Job does not have the depth of understanding to comprehend the world. These are intertwined with new concepts and ideas that reassert the insignificance of the protagonist; Job is shown to be small in his ability to comprehend the greatness of creation. Like Zophar, YHWH creates his argument by twisting the very words used by Job. It is for this reason that commentators have tended towards assigning an ironic tone to these chapters.[408] A satirical undertone is a significant part of YHWH's examination of the natural world. Job has no right to illustrate his suffering using concepts about which he has little understanding.

The intertwining of Jobean ideas with new natural concepts shows that the speech uses satire only as a part of the response. Similarly to Zophar's statements, YHWH's speech does not have satire as its fundamental purpose; YHWH is not trying to mock and ridicule his servant, but instead is asserting his dominance, which goes beyond question. This is best

[408] This has been suggested by Terrien. See Terrien, p. 503.

shown through the menagerie of beasts referred to in YHWH's first and second speeches. Whilst the wild donkeys of 39:5 are mentioned by Job in 6:5 and 24:5, the majority of the animals mentioned by YHWH are never referenced in any of the earlier speeches. Likewise, in YHWH's second speech in chapters 40-1, he uses Job's reference to Leviathan in 3:8; however, whilst Job's mention of the creature is a minor utterance, the vast majority of YHWH's speech is an expansion of this concept. Job has no right to talk about the Leviathan when he cannot catch it, let alone comprehend it. YHWH satirises Job's ignorance about the very creature he mentions. Satire is clearly not the main purpose of the speech. The excursus about Behemoth in chapter 40 shows that YHWH is concerned with belittling Job by discussing creatures beyond his understanding. Satire therefore forms only part of the deity's attack.

Both Zophar and YHWH have been shown to use and twist the words of Job in their responses to him. Both seek to argue against and criticise the protagonist of the story. Each speech uses satire as part of their attack. They pick up the language of Job's complaint in order to undermine him. The satire is never strong enough in either speech to define its genre; instead, it functions as a tool in the construction of the attack against Job himself.

External Satires

As has been already shown, the genre of the book of Job has caused scholars multiple problems over the years; the book does not fit simply into a literary category similar to any other works of the Old Testament. It is for this reason that Katharine Dell suggested that the book belongs to a whole new genre which she entitles 'sceptical

literature'.[409] She argues that the author's purpose was to question earlier wisdom, hymnic, legal and Psalmic texts; by quoting them in the mouths of his characters, the author is sceptically undermining their significance. Dell argues that the principal literary genre deployed by the author is parody:

> 'A more suitable genre for *Job* than traditional classifications, one which characterizes this misuse of forms technique in order to convey a radical message, is 'parody', a genre which is by its nature parasitic and makes deliberate improper use of other genres. By his use of parody the author deliberately stepped outside literary conventions to make a protest.'

Dell, in her arguments, appears to conflate the ideas of satire and parody.[410] She rightly broadens her definition of parody from the comic to include serious criticism[411]; however, she does think that parody is bound to criticism. This makes her definition of parody closer to a satire. The fundamental functions of parody can be as much to praise its target as to attack it. This deficiency of definition is shown by Kynes who argues that parody is often used to glorify its original instead of critiquing it.[412] The main attribute in an understanding of parody is its ability to mimic the original. As Dell requires her parody to act as a critique to cause scepticism in the reader, it implies that she actually understands Job as a satirical work rather than a parodic one. She argues that the book uses a series of parodies of form, which function to question, and therefore undermine, traditionally-held Israelite beliefs. This would make Job one of the first satires, a book that uses a narrative dialogue to undermine previously-held beliefs concerning the nature of universal justice.

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[409] Dell, pp. 213-4.
[410] Ibid, pp. 148-53.
[411] Dell, p. 149.
[412] W. J. Kynes, 'Beat Your Parodies into Swords, and Your Parodied Books into Spears: A New Paradigm for Parody in the Old Testament', *Biblical Interpretation* 19 (2011), pp. 280-9.

Dell argues that the book is inundated with parodies. Her evidence is the consistent misuse of forms[413] in the speeches of the book. Form criticism becomes her main method for identifying the mimicry needed within the dialogues of the book to indicate the presence of parody. Using the work of Fohrer[414] and Gordis,[415] Dell argues that the forms of most of the speeches in the book deliberately mimic the forms of other biblical texts. The mimicry, however, is not exact. In every case, the passages are used antithetically. For example, Dell compares Job 13:20-2, a passage where Job desires to be free of the hand of God, to passages where the writer wants the opposite, a desire to see God's face.[416] The table below summarises Dell's examples of Jobean speeches matching and misusing the form of other texts:

Passage in Job	**Form**	**Comparison in Biblical Literature**
3:11-26	Lament[417]	Psalm 74:10-11, 79:5-10, 88:4-5
6:8-10	Lament	Psalm 55:6-8
7:7-21, 14:1-12	Hymn	Psalm 8
9:5-10	Hymn	Amos 5:6-9, Psalm 104
9:25-8	Complaint	Jeremiah 20:7-9

[413] Dell uses the term 'misuse' rather than 'reuse'; she argues that misuse is the repetition of a form with a different content, whereas 'reuse' retains the content and the form of the original, transplanting it into a different context. See Dell, p. 110.
[414] G. Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob* (Kommentar zum Alten Testament; 16, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1963), pp. 52-69.
[415] R. Gordis, 'Quotations as a Literary Usage in Biblical, Oriental and Rabbinic Literature', *HUCA* 22 (1949), pp. 109-43.
[416] Dell, p. 129.
[417] Dell draws on the work of Westermann, who argues that the lament forms in Job transform into disputation speeches. See Westermann, p. 20.

10:2-12	Deliverance	Psalm 139
10:13-7[418]	Hymn	-
11:7-19	Hymn	-
12:7-12	Praise	Psalm 98:7-9
12:13-25	Hymn	Psalm 107
13:20-2	Devotional	Psalm 27:4, Proverbs 10:7-9
14:13	Remembrance	Psalm 55:6-7
14:18-22	Deliverance	Psalm 28:6-8
16:7-14	Attack	Psalm 94:18-9
21:7-13	Prosperity	Psalm 10:5-6, 73:3-9
21:23-6	Fate of the wicked	Ecclesiastes 8:14, 9:2
23:8-9	God's absence	Psalm 23
26:5-14	Praise	Isaiah 40:9-11
31	Legal Appeal	Micah 6:3-5, Psalm 46
38	Interrogations of the cosmos	Isaiah 40:12-26

Dell's arguments have a large degree of strength, as they provide an explanation for many of the difficulties in the book of Job. If scepticism is the main focus of the book, then it explains why a divine answer is never given to the protagonist. Furthermore, it explains why the book never reaches any conclusions concerning the nature of suffering. Therefore,

[418] This is a suggestion made by Fohrer. Dell sees little evidence for 10:13-7 and 11:7-19 being hymnic forms. See Dell, p. 128.

the book is an attack against those who claim divine wisdom as a solution to life's problems. It undermines the normative ways in which Israel has previously understood divine retribution to the wicked. In this way it holds many similarities to Hellenistic literature of the 4th century BCE. Thus, she states, 'the scepticism conveyed by the author of *Job* resembles the 'suspending of belief' practised by the early Greek sceptics.'[419]

Whilst Dell's work is thorough in her observation of genre issues and in construction of an alternative reading of the book of Job, there are several deficiencies in her argument:

1. Her argument is based solely upon form criticism. Without any indication of content comparison, form is insufficient on its own to verify the substantial textual links required to confirm dependency between two texts. The main problem is that many of Dell's parodies are based more on thematic links than on comparisons in form. Granted, some of her parodies are exceptionally strong in the parody of form, and form combines with content to make clear textual links between two passages. For example, Job 7:17-8 inverts the form of Psalm 8:4 beautifully; it redefines the question: 'What is man that you are mindful of him?'[420] However, other parodies are not based on a twisting of the form but are merely juxtaposed by theme. For example, Job 10:2-12 does not parody any of the forms or phrases of Psalm 139;[421] instead, Dell's argument about misuse of form is entirely based upon the fact that both texts are concerned with God's formation of mankind. The book of Job and its speeches are dealing with such large themes that it would not be hard to find parodic comparisons in the rest of

[419] Ibid, p. 215.
[420] Ibid, p. 126.
[421] Ibid, p. 126.

the canon of the Old Testament. Thus, whilst Dell makes excellent textual links, not all of her parodies appear authentic, as they are not based upon a misuse of form, but rather of theme.

2. There is a lack of consistency throughout the whole book of Job. Using Dell's argument, there is a large amount of redundant text within the book. If the main overall genre of the book is meant to be scepticism mediated by parody, there are large portions of it that do not fit into her theory. Any text which does not fit her theory is discarded. This is easier for some texts like the Elihu speeches and Job 28; however, it is more difficult with the third cycle of speeches. Notably absent is what Dell thinks of the speeches of the three friends that are interspersed between Job's words. It is impossible to assign these to a secondary redactor, as Job clearly responds to the words of his friends. Without showing how these speeches fit into a parodic reading, it is difficult to assign the overall genre of the book to sceptical literature.
3. Her construction of an alternative genre is too simplistic. One of the joys of the book of Job is that it weaves together a unique narrative form in ancient Hebrew literature with the wisdom themes present in post-exilic Hebrew writing. Thus, to confine the book to a single overall genre does injustice to the book's complexity of purpose and design. Job remains a multifaceted gem in the way that different forms are combined to reflect a multitude of different themes. Parody and satire function as only part of both the form and the content.

Despite the difficulties listed above, Dell's opus is still an excellent work. Her conclusions concerning the presence of parody within the speeches of Job are not conclusive but they are convincing. They make the point that the author was capable of misusing established forms to undermine. This is a form of satire. Whilst Dell's argument may not be strong enough to conclude the whole book was satirical, it does indicate the presence of satire targeting external texts within the book of Job.

Dell's work is limited to the speeches of Job. If the author of the book was trying to be sceptical about established wisdom, then it makes more sense to look for parody in the speeches of the three friends. Since all three friends are consistently portrayed in a negative light throughout the book, it implies that they could be used as literary vehicles for conventional wisdom. Satire would be present as their viewpoints are rebuked at the end of the book in 42:7.

The speeches of all three friends are a representation of different facets of orthodox wisdom. This is apparent by their reuse of standard Psalmic or proverbial forms. Therefore, through form criticism it is possible to associate the words of Job's friends with a standard wisdom position of divine retribution. The concept that God functions as the universal arbiter is not unique to wisdom literature; this idea is contained in various forms within most of the texts of the Old Testament.[422] However, the portrayal of the three friends

[422] The theology of retribution in the Old Testament has been analysed in its various forms across a variety of texts. Koch argues that the Old Testament is more concerned with God as a force of fate rather than as an individual judge. Thus, Koch uses the phrase 'fate-determining deed'. This theme is so prevalent within Israelite thought that it is nearly impossible for any scholar of the Old Testament not to examine it. Views on the nature of how it was interpreted in Israelite thought vary. Thus, various commentators have argued slightly different approaches as to how integrated it was within Israelite wisdom ideology. For example, Lindblom argues that it is prevalent in all areas of Israelite philosophy and teaching. Alternatively, von Rad criticised these scholars who argued that Israelite wisdom was locked in a rigid doctrine of retribution. See K. Koch, 'Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?' *ZTK* 52 (1955), pp. 1-42, J. Lindblom, 'Wisdom in the Old Testament Prophets' in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: presented to Harold Henry Rowley by the Society for Old Testament Study in Association with the editorial board of Vetus Testamentum, in*

functions as a stylised, extreme form of this idea. Their worldview argues that every blessing or curse can be explained as a reward or punishment for righteous or wicked actions. Within it, the deity functions as the personification of justice. This removes any sense of God's choice in any matter as he becomes subject to the enactment of this retribution; it reduces God into a karmic force. Whilst this idea can be found in the words of Bildad and Zophar, it is the speeches of Eliphaz which are most obviously a parody of this extreme wisdom view.

In the first speech of Eliphaz there are a variety of forms present that match different wisdom texts. Thus, Eliphaz's words parody a standard proverbial wisdom form. Clines notes that different parts of his speeches stem from different wisdom traditions. He argues that in both form and content each strophe derives from a proverbial or hymnic form.[423] When he speaks in chapter 4, Eliphaz's first words immediately address Job in verses 1-6; he gives credit to the suffering protagonist for his past behaviour, before exhorting him to remember his own previous counsel. Then, in verse 7, he proceeds into a standard defence of theodicy. This theodicy is defended by three metaphorical instructions, which parody the form of wisdom proverbs. Verse 8 deploys agricultural imagery in a way that mirrors Proverbs 22:8. Verse 9 argues that it is the breath of God that acts as a force of wrath upon the wicked. The verse uses a hendiadys of the two words for breath in the couplet form of this verse: the two Hebrew nouns נשמה and רוח are used synonymously. A version of this statement occurs in Psalm 18:16 (15). The verse retains the hendiadys within the context of YHWH's control over the sea. Verses 10 and 11 then combine 5 different Hebrew leonine terms; as Pope notes, this is a common image used in wisdom literature.

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celebration of his sixty-fifth birthday, 24 March 1955, ed. M. Noth and D. W. Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 1960), p. 199 and G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* translated by J. D. Martin (London: SCM, 1972), p. 129.

[423] Clines (1989), pp. 119-21.

Pope suggests Psalms 17:12, 22:14, 21 (22), 34:10 (11) and Proverbs 28:15 as viable examples of comparisons of form.[424] A more pertinent source for parody can be found in Psalm 58:6, where the wicked are called young lions (כפירים). Both verses call for God to judge the wicked by the tearing out of the teeth of the young lion. Eliphaz, in his opening gambit, has become a parody of a traditional wisdom voice.

This link to Proverbial and Psalmic material can be further shown in the rest of Eliphaz's first speech. Job 5:2-5 has the form of an indictment against the foolish man (אויל). It matches the form of the attacks against the fool that are ever present in the book of Proverbs.[425] Job 5:8-11 uses an exhortation form in praise of God. Verses 9 and 10 contain doxologies which establish God's continued action within creation. In terms of form, they represent a standard Psalmic praise of the actions of YHWH. The content of verse 9 can be paralleled in praise Psalms: the wondrous things (נפלאות) of verse 9 are directly found in Psalm 40:5 or 72:18. In verse 10, God hydrates the land and the fields, with vocabulary reminiscent of Psalm 147:8. These linguistic parallels suggest a form-critical link between the second section of Eliphaz's speech and the natural language of a standard wisdom position.

It is in the final section of Eliphaz's first speech that there is the most obvious link to the traditional wisdom logic. In his conclusion, Eliphaz argues that there is an innate justice within the world: verses 11-27 conclude that God will act justly towards the poor and needy, whilst the crafty will be trapped. Eliphaz uses two devices in his conclusion to reiterate what he considers to be a fundamental truth in the cosmic order of the world: firstly, in verses 10-20 he asserts that God is active in creating divine justice, and secondly, in verses

[424] See Pope, p. 36.
[425] The noun אויל is used 12 times in the book of Proverbs. See 7:22, 10:14, 11:29, and others.

21-6, he uses a series of second-person singular imperfects to reiterate that Job can trust that his life will work out in the future. In both content and form, the conclusion to Eliphaz's speech replicates a traditional wisdom position. In this way the passage mirrors alternative poetic texts, such as Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2, or multiple Psalms including 9, 72, 75, 91, 94, 107, 109, 113, and 140.[426]

It would be clear to anyone familiar with Israelite literature that Eliphaz's words make him to be an ideological avatar. He is the defender of divine justice, trapped within a rigid worldview that makes him unable to understand Job's plight. This argument is supported by Gibson; after conducting a study of Eliphaz's first speech, Gibson believes that the words of Eliphaz represent the voice of the author's teacher. Whereas Job's words reflect the voice of the author, Eliphaz cannot deal with the challenges placed on his theology by the extreme nature of the Jobean narrative. Thus, 'Eliphaz is, when the crunch comes, too timid for Prometheus' role and forces himself back on the consolations of an orthodox faith.'[427] Eliphaz is the voice of orthodoxy itself.

This position is reinforced within Eliphaz's second and third speeches. In his second, shorter speech in chapter 16, Eliphaz moves away from a sympathetic approach to the protagonist. Instead of reasserting hope for his friend in need, Eliphaz changes his tone to attack Job in two ways. In verses 1-16, fed up with Job's complaints, he attacks Job's credentials: Eliphaz assumes that Job is both immoral (verses 1-6) and insignificant (verses

[426] Eliphaz's words most clearly match the retributive calls of the Psalmists. Limiting the Psalmic theology of retribution into a simple phrase is naive. Kuntz conducted a detailed study of the retribution motif in wisdom Psalms. He concluded that there are three different nuances applied to divine retribution in the Psalms. He has three categories: traditional, realistic and futuristic. Each view differs slightly on how and when the retribution will be meted out to the wicked; however, the principle remains the same, that the righteous will be rewarded, whilst the wicked will be punished. See K. Kuntz, 'The Retribution Motif in Psalmic Wisdom', *ZAW* 89 (1977), pp. 223-33.

[427] J. C. L. Gibson, 'Eliphaz the Temanite: Portrait of a Hebrew philosopher 1', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 28 (1975), p. 272.

7-16). Both of these attributes make him unworthy of speaking wisdom claims. Secondly, Eliphaz changes emphasis from his first speech: instead of encouraging the needy, he looks at the alternative side of divine justice, namely the punishment of the wicked. From verse 20 to the end of the chapter, he declares that the wicked will receive their rightful punishment. This functions as an implied critique of Job, assuming him to be guilty. Thus, his trials are a punishment. Clines argues that the two sections of the speech both derive from two separate wisdom forms. Firstly, he argues that there is a *wisdom disputation speech* form in the rhetorical questions of verse 2-3 and 12-3. Secondly, the latter part of the speech matches a *wisdom instruction* form, prevalent in Eliphaz's conclusion regarding the ultimate fate of the wicked.[428] Eliphaz's first speech creates the link with a traditional Israelite wisdom perspective, and then the link is firmly established in his second speech.

Eliphaz's description of the wicked in the latter part of his speech is consistent with so much other Israelite literature that it is easy to show that the form and content of his speech continue this association. The thematic assumption that divine justice enacts punishment upon the wicked is claimed in multiple wisdom and non-wisdom sources. The majority of references occur in Psalms and Proverbs.[429] The very first Psalm warns about associating with the רשׁעים. The conclusion of the Psalm makes it clear that the way of the wicked will perish. Whilst many of the other Psalms call for God to punish the wicked and to rescue the Psalmist from danger, there is an underlying assumption that this judgement will come to pass. Other Psalms are more explicit in stating that the wicked face retribution; this can be seen in Psalm 7:14-6 (15-7), 9: 5-6 (6-7) and 17 (18), 34:21-2 (22-3), 37:10-3 and

[428] Clines (1989), p. 345.

[429] Outside of the wisdom texts, this theological doctrine can be identified throughout the Old Testament. An alternative place where it is prevalent is in the book of Deuteronomy. There, YHWH's abundant blessing of those who show love to him is matched by his third generational punishment of those who hate him. For more information, see J. G. Gammie, 'The Theology of Retribution in the Book of Deuteronomy', *CBQ* 32 (1970), pp. 1-12.

20, 68:2 (3), 75:8-10 (9-11), 91:8, 97:10, 106:18, 112:10, 119:119, 129:4, 145:20, 146:9, and 147:6. Aside from the references in Psalms, this phenomenon can also be found in Proverbs. At the centre of a Proverbial wisdom position is the underlying presupposition that the world is governed by karmic retribution. Throughout all the different sections of Proverbs, there is a consistent message that the wicked will be punished. In the first section of the book, there are multiple references to this assumption.[430] However, it is in the proverbs of Solomon that this premise finds its natural home: the wicked appear multiple times within the three hundred and seventy-five proverbs. The proverbs always juxtapose the wicked with the righteous to create diametrically opposing outcomes: whilst the righteous will prosper, the wicked will face an untimely end. The multitude of these references shows how Eliphaz assumes a natural Hebrew wisdom position concerning the wicked.

Eliphaz's final speech functions as a personal comment to his friend Job. Eliphaz is restricted in his ability to comprehend a situation outside the parameters of his worldview of divine retribution. So, in his final speech, he returns again to the assertion that Job must have committed a series of iniquities which justify his punishment. Whilst this speech contains fewer parodies of form, the repetitive nature of Eliphaz's words shows how he is trapped within his own ideology; he is unable to shift or adapt his position in response to either Job's words or his plight. Therefore, his final words to his friend are the logical conclusions of a position of divine judgement. Firstly, Job must have done something to warrant this affliction (verses 1-11). Secondly, God, will enact justice on the wicked (verses 12-20). Finally, Job must turn to God and he will deliver him (verses 21-30). In each section, Eliphaz draws upon previous texts to create his final comment. Clines argues that Eliphaz's

[430] See Proverbs: 2:22, 3:33, 4:19, and 5:22.

last speech, like his second, is in the form of a *wisdom disputation speech*.[431] Eliphaz repeats the technique of using rhetorical questions as the basis to impart a theologically rigid view of the world.

Eliphaz's attack against Job at the start of the speech contains three direct criticisms. Two of these accusations mirror two of the social justice laws of Exodus 22. The first, in verse 6, claims that Job has taken the clothes of his brothers as a pledge and not returned them. The second, in verse 9, proposes that Job has neglected the widows and orphans in society. The specific nature of the first claim creates the link to the Exodus text and the commandment in Exodus 22:26-27. The two laws upon which Eliphaz draws are distinctive in that they are the only laws of the chapter that clarify the response of the deity. Exodus 22:22-4 supports the notion of retribution: abuse of widows and orphans leads to them crying out to God, who in turn punishes the abuser with his death, which ironically makes a widow of his wife and orphans of his children. If the Jobean narrative of the first two chapters is incorporated into this punishment, then it creates the irony that Job's punishment is inverted. It is not his wife who is widowed, but Job who becomes a widower. His children are not made fatherless, but Job is left childless. Whilst Exodus 22:26-7 does not go as far as divine retribution, it is significant as the only other command that talks about the cry of the victim being heard by the deity. Therefore, by using these two accusations, Eliphaz continues to ally himself to the worldview of divine justice.

The second section of the speech reiterates much of what of what Eliphaz has already said concerning the wicked. He attempts to engage with Job's argument that the

[431] Clines (2006), p. 549.

wicked do indeed prosper (verses 18). However, in the end he reverts to the original presupposition of his second speech that the wicked will receive punishment.

The last section, beginning in verse 21, concludes Eliphaz's association with the school of divine justice. In it, he provides the only consolation available to his understanding of the world. The only response that his position can suggest to suffering and tragedy is repentance. There is nothing that Job can do to alleviate his pain except to accept his guilt and seek God's forgiveness. His position is neatly summarised in verse 21: 'Agree with God, and be at peace; thereby good will come to you.'[432] Eliphaz's view of the world is simplified into this straightforward equation: please God = good rewards. He proceeds to extrapolate upon this statement using the language and form of prophetic repentance speeches. Verse 23 contains Eliphaz's primary call for Job to return (שוב) to God, to be built up (בנה) and to remove (רחק) iniquity from his tent; these three verbs are commonly used in the mouths of prophets who are calling their audience to repentance. Most importantly, the word שוב is the standard term for the movement of changing from facing away from God to turning back towards him. It is used in multiple prophetic formulas across different times and contexts. In Isaiah, the term is used in a command form by both the prophetic and divine voice across the different Isaianic texts; the command can be found in Isaiah 19:22, 31:6, 44:22, and 55:7. Furthermore, the word is used consistently in the book of Jeremiah with the association of repentance. Its repetition in Jeremiah 3 and 4 creates a progressive emphatic literary effect, and it is most famously twinned with the concept of restoration in Jeremiah 15:19 and 18:11. This association is seen in multiple prophetic texts: Hosea 14:11, Joel 2:12 and 13, Zechariah 1:3, and Malachi 3:7. Through this statement, the author of Job continues to reassert Eliphaz's position as the one of

[432] Job 22:21.

retribution. In the rest of his speech, Eliphaz goes on to proclaim how Job's life will find meaning in repentance and deliverance, despite his lack of innocence.

Therefore, by applying Dell's methodology to the speeches of Eliphaz, rather than to Job, a different parody an be identified. It is possible to highlight facets of Eliphaz's words that match the form and content of other wisdom and prophetic texts. These similarities form a pastiche, which combines to portray Eliphaz as the representation of an ideological position. He is the anthropomorphic embodiment of an extreme philosophy of divine retribution. With this parody established, it is easy to see how this position is undermined throughout the rest of the book.

Firstly, his words never provide any comfort to the protagonist. The narrative section of the text defines the purpose of the visit of the three friends as to lament with Job and comfort him.[433] Job response to all the friends' speeches in the book show their failure to complete this task. Eliphaz's words never reassure, subdue or placate the protagonist; instead, Job's response to each speech intensifies his own anger. After Eliphaz's first speech, Job begins whimsically by asserting the position that his punishments outweigh any crimes he has committed; whilst he does not directly engage with Eliphaz's argument, he counters it with a defence that his plight is unjust. After Eliphaz's second speech, Job's reply is marked by anger; he is fed up with the insufficiency of Eliphaz's words and his response attacks him and his words directly. Job claims that his friends are 'miserable comforters'[434] and that their words are windy.[435] The protagonist's words function as a literary critique of the limited comfort of Eliphaz's position: he is unable to comprehend Job's experience,

[433] Job 2:11-3.
[434] Job 16:2.
[435] Job 16:3.

which falls outside of his well-defined parameters of justice and retribution. Therefore, Eliphaz's words never comfort, and they can only be interpreted as a consistent accusation against Job's mythical crimes. The final response to Eliphaz shows Job's exasperation at the sympathies of his comforters. Job does not dignify Eliphaz with a personal response, but instead expresses the desire to present his case before God. Thus, the first and primary critique of Eliphaz, and indeed of the other friends, is that they failed in their primary purpose of comforting Job. The philosophical position of divine retribution is shown to be insufficient due to its inability to offer comfort to those in need.

Secondly, Eliphaz's position is undermined by the fact that the friends appear to lose the dialogical debate: Job has the final word on everything. Job seems to be victorious as the friends have been unable to find an adequate response to his situation. Job's plight continues long after the friends disappear from the narrative. The rebuke at the end of the book, whilst it may lack authenticity, affirms this situation. God rebukes the three friends for not being able to adapt their position and understand the plight of the sufferer, and claims that their words are not right.[436] This statement vocalises what is implicit throughout the whole book. Both Job's situation and his words act to challenge the very real problems of a philosophy of karmic divine justice. The interplay between Job and his friends functions to undermine a worldview that reduces the causes of suffering to be indexed to the morality of an individual.

By establishing that Eliphaz's position is rebuked through the book, satire can be shown to be present in his speeches. Form criticism associates his words with a wisdom tradition that views the world in terms of simplistic justice or reward for the actions of an

[436] Job 42:7.

individual, namely that if you are good or please God, then things will be well, whereas if you do wrong or displease God, then you will be punished. The illegitimacy of this position is shown by the inversion of the situation: instead of starting with the crime, Job and his friends attempt to analyse the punishment. Through this, the traditional wisdom viewpoint of Eliphaz is shown to be insufficient. This literary construction is satirical at its very core: the narrative recreates a parody of a recognisable position, then intertwines it into a situation which proves it to be illegitimate. This is a form of satire placed within a larger narrative structure. The author of the book of Job is shown to be using the technique of satire to create a clear external critique.

However, it would be unwise to reduce the whole book to be a vehicle for the author to make this one criticism. The satire incorporated into the narrative functions as part of a larger question of how God, suffering and the world can co-exist. In this way, it could be one of Dell's micro-genres: it is something that is prevalent and important within the narrative construction of the book, but is not strong enough on its own to explain the book's overarching nature. The satire attacks only those who seek to offer a simple solution to the question and to reduce God into nothing but an arbiter.

In analysing the book of Job, satire has been shown to be present in two major ways. Firstly, beginning with the work of Holbert, there are simple verbal interplays that appear within the speeches of both Job's friends and God. These function at a basic satirical level of mimicry deployed to undermine. It is a highly effective rhetorical technique to undermine an opponent using his own vocabulary. Secondly, satire is shown to be present through a form-critical analysis of the words of Job and Eliphaz. Through the associations made with other biblical texts, it can be seen that the author uses the words of his characters to

undermine external arguments. In particular, the speeches of Eliphaz, and probably of the other friends, are used to critique a simplistic view of divine justice and retribution. Whilst a satirical methodology does not offer a new genre for this complicated work, it does again highlight the fact that satire was a viable literary technique deployed by ancient writers.

Ecclesiastes

In the examination of satiric suggestions in Proverbs and Job, satire has shown itself to be present even if it is elusive. Satire appears to function to a certain degree in both works, either by providing an alternative reading to the traditional understanding, or by functioning internally to facilitate the main purpose of the work. However, by utilising the lessons learnt in applying a satirical method to those works, this chapter will finally use Miles' methodology to suggest a satiric presence in an another wisdom book, Ecclesiastes.

The book of Ecclesiastes is an anomaly within the biblical canon. It records the words and wisdom of Qoheleth, the mysterious speaker. To differentiate between the two, the book will be referred to as 'Ecclesiastes', whilst the titular character will be referred to as 'Qoheleth'. The name Qoheleth has caused scholars multiple problems, particularly with its feminine ending.[437] The book introduces the author through two vague statements in its first chapter. Firstly, the speaker identifies himself as קהלת, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Halfway through the first chapter, this introduction is elaborated to describe him as king over Israel in Jerusalem. These cryptic introductions imply that the author is surreptitiously attributing the book to Solomon. The term 'son of David', although it could

[437] The name is thought to have derived from the root קהל, meaning 'to gather' or 'to assemble'. It is for this reasons that the Greek name 'Ecclesiastes' was assigned to the book. There have been suggestions that the title functions as a proper name, or that it is an authoritative title. At various points in the text, Qoheleth is used with the definite article, suggesting that it is a title; at other points the definite article is missing, suggesting that it is a name. For a summary of different arguments concerning the name, see R. E. Murphy, *Ecclesiastes* (WBC 23A; Dallas: Word, 1992), pp. xx-xxii.

refer to the Davidic line, is only ever used of David's direct progeny elsewhere in the Old Testament. Seow highlights that the term is used for Solomon in the majority of cases, with only three exceptions for David's other children.[438] The assumption that Qoheleth is intended to be Solomon is substantiated through the second introduction: given the splitting of the kingdom after Solomon's reign, only Solomon or David could have ruled the kingdom of Israel from Jerusalem. Therefore, the book creates a set of parameters that means that the only person who can be identified as the author is Solomon. It is for this reason that scholars agree that the book implies a Solomonic authorship.[439]

Although Solomon is clearly intended to be interpreted as the author of Qoheleth, dating the book to the Solomonic period is fundamentally flawed. The presence of multiple Aramaic and a few Persian loan words shows that the book was probably written in the Persian period at the earliest.[440] The latest possible period in which the book could have been written is the beginning of the second century BCE due to its presence within Qumran fragments and its quotation in Ben Sira. There is great debate as to whether it was written in the Persian or Hellenistic period, depending on how much Greek thought is considered to be included within the book's philosophy.[441] If the satire within the book matched early

[438] C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes* (ABC 18C; New York: Doubleday 1997), p. 97.
[439] Renan also suggested that the name Qoheleth functions as a cryptogram for the name Solomon. Zimmerman went further to argue that Qoheleth was a mistranslation of the Aramaic *knšh*. This word has the same numerical value as Solomon. Thus, it provides an explanation for the feminine ending. See E. Renan, *L'Ecclésiaste traduit de l'hébreu avec une étude sur l'âge et le caractère du livre* (Paris: Levy, 1882), pp. 13-15 and F. Zimmermann, 'The Aramaic Provenance of Qohelet' *JQR* 36 (1945-6), pp. 17-45.
[440] See R. N. Whybray, *Ecclesiastes* (OTG. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), pp. 15-22.
[441] Whitley argues that Qoheleth was dependent on different Greek philosophies for the construction of his wisdom. He particularly maintains that parts of Ecclesiastes are dependent on Stoic or Epicurean thought. Thus, he puts a case for a later dating for the book, after Antiochus IV Epiphanes. However, the connections he makes are not strong enough to sustain this viewpoint. Seow counters these claims in an opposing argument that dates the book in the Persian period. His argument is built upon linguistic grounds, noting the omission of any Greek loan words or terms that were adopted by Semitic languages during the Hellenistic period. For more information concerning the debate, see C. F. Whitley, *Koheleth* (BZAW 148; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1979), pp. 165-9, C. L. Seow, 'Linguistic Evidence and the Dating of Qohelet,' *JBL* 115 (1996), pp. 643-6, or Murphy, pp. xxii-xxiii.

Hellenistic satire, then this would be an important factor in dating the book; however, if there is satire within Ecclesiastes, then it is of a very different style from the work of Aristophanes or Menander. Whilst Greek satire focuses on the creation of humour to make its political criticism, satire in Ecclesiastes would be inherently darker due to its depressing theme.[442] Therefore, for the sake of a satirical understanding of Ecclesiastes, the exact dating of the book does not greatly matter. However, what is fundamentally important is the question of why a later author would attribute the book to the voice of Solomon.

The tradition of Solomonic authorship is well-established within Hebrew wisdom literature. As has already been seen in the book of Proverbs, there are multiple works that are traditionally attributed to Solomon due to his supposed wisdom. This phenomenon is seen throughout Hebrew literature, including parts of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs[443] and the Wisdom of Solomon. As we have seen earlier, Miles argues against the traditional reason for this, contending that the work was not attributed to the king in tribute to his perceived wisdom; instead, its motivation in Proverbs 1-9 was to critique Solomon's failures. The limitations of his thesis have been discussed earlier; however, this same theory is better suited to the book of Ecclesiastes. Whilst Proverbs 1-9 appear to be a simple instruction text, Ecclesiastes contains enough narrative elements to affirm a satirical interplay.

[442] Using the Roman categories of satire, most Greek satire matches the Horatian school of satire. In comparison, Ecclesiastes, if found to be satirical, would be Juvenalian due to its nature and humourless content. Hengel makes a comparison with the philosophical genre of diatribe, which was created by Bion of Borysthenes in the early part of the third century. However, Hengel's subsequent link to the polemical political satire of Menippus of Gadara has nothing to substantiate it. See M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (Volume 1; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 84.

[443] Although not a wisdom book, Song of Songs is attributed to Solomon due to his reputation for writing songs as well as his experiences of love. This is shown in 1 Kings 4:32 (5:12), where it is claimed that he wrote one thousand and five songs.

Ecclesiastes differs from the other wisdom texts attributed to Solomon by the narrative elements that describe its elusive protagonist. The book uses a first-person soliloquy as its primary literary form. It creates a small narrative as a literary vehicle to justify the words of its protagonist. Ecclesiastes relies on the fact that its main character has applied an empirical methodology to attain fulfilment in life. The book contains a small amount of third person narrative in the title in the first verse and the final section at the conclusion of the work.[444] However, what is more important is the narrative created by the first person speech of Qoheleth himself. Interspersed between his wisdom speeches, Qoheleth reveals to the reader facets of his personal history that act as justification of his credentials as well as a revelation of his method for understanding life.

After the first *disputation speech* concerning the cyclical nature of the world, the book shifts, in verse 12 of the first chapter, into the first person narrative. Qoheleth begins by introducing himself as the king of Israel in Jerusalem. He then explains to the reader about his enterprise to seek and to search out wisdom by observation. Arguably, Qoheleth is applying a scientific, empirical methodology in an attempt to find wisdom and meaning in life. He then proceeds, in the next few verses, to describe additional details concerning the different experiments he conducted. In the next verses of chapter 1 (16 and 17), he retells how he tried to understand both wisdom and folly.

In the following chapter, within the largest stretch of narrative in the book, Qoheleth describes his search for meaning in pleasure. At the start of chapter 2, Qoheleth lists the different places where he searched for meaning. Firstly, he explains the worthlessness of

[444] This final section is considered by many to be a later addition. This is understandable, as the final section in 12:9-14 seems to contradict the conclusions of Qoheleth earlier in the book. The final statement, reasserting that the reader should fear God and his judgement, appears to be one of orthodox wisdom, contrary to Qoheleth's conclusion that everything is vanity. An explanation for this response will be proposed later, in reaction to a satiric reading of the text.

laughter (verse 2), followed closely by the limitations of drinking (verse 3). In verses 4-6 he describes the different construction projects that he undertook. Finally in verses 7 and 8 he lists possessions that he has accumulated. Throughout the rest of the book, Qoheleth continues to describe what he has observed. He uses the two verbs ראה and מצא to report his findings concerning the nature of the world.

This narrative functions in two ways within the constraints of the book. Primarily it serves to legitimise the wisdom of the protagonist. By showing his methodology, Qoheleth reveals that his qualification for dispensing wisdom is the range of experiences he has had. Therefore, Qoheleth's revelation of his history is fundamental in creating a character whose wisdom may be trusted. However, secondary to this purpose, the narrative also strengthens Qoheleth's association with Solomon: each component of Qoheleth's story has a mirror in the Solomonic narrative in 1 Kings 1-11.

Firstly, Solomon's association with wisdom is the clearest narrative connection made between the two stories. Solomon is famous for his receipt of wisdom in the narrative in 1 Kings 3. Within that story Solomon does not ask directly for wisdom (חכם), but for a discerning heart to hear justice (verse 9); however, God gives to him a wise heart (verse 12). This wisdom is then proved through his judgement over the situation of the two women and the baby. Thus, the final verse of the chapter attests that the people feared Solomon because they saw the wisdom of God in him. The greatness of Solomon's wisdom is confirmed in the subsequent chapter: 1 Kings 4 concludes a section of the narrative before moving on to Solomon's building of the temple. The final few verses act as a summary of Solomon's achievement in achieving prosperity in Israel: verses 29-34 (5:9-14) repeatedly uses the root חכם in various different forms to create an emphatic assertion of Solomon's

wisdom, and indeed the root appears seven times in both verb and noun forms within six verses. The verses argue that God gave Solomon a gratuitous amount of wisdom in verse 29 (5:9); that his wisdom was greater than his peers in verses 30 and 31 (5:10 and 11); that he created proverbs and songs concerning his understanding of the natural world in verses 32 and 33 (5:12 and 13); and finally that all the kings of the region came to seek his wisdom in verse 34 (5:14). The mention of proverbs and songs creates his natural association with the books of Proverbs and Song of Songs. Solomon's wisdom is finalised in the pericope of the visit of the Queen of Sheba in 1 Kings 10. After testing and questioning from the queen, the narrative functions to affirm Solomon's greatness and particularly his wisdom. The noun חכם occurs three times within the queen's summation of Solomon's character in verses 6-8. It is his wisdom which is the defining feature of his kingdom and kingship. These references are the reason why Solomon becomes a traditional representation of wisdom and the attributed author of wisdom literature. The difficulty within the Ecclesiastes text is that Qoheleth does not just seek after wisdom but also considers folly in chapter 2 verse 12.

Secondly, there are two other narrative connections that are made between the two texts in Qoheleth's seeking after fulfilment in pleasure. Firstly, Qoheleth's construction projects reflect the large bulk of the Kings' narrative, which focuses on Solomon's building of the temple, his palace, and various city walls. 1 Kings 5-9 primarily talks about Solomon's planning, building and dedicating of the temple. Whilst this is not mentioned in the list of Qoheleth's construction projects, there is very little in Ecclesiastes which correlates to the temple worship of YHWH. Both narratives are consistent in creating the effect that both Solomon and Qoheleth were noted for their architectural legacy. In Ecclesiastes 2:4-6, Qoheleth describes how he made great works: houses, vineyards, gardens, parks, pools and

forests. Secondly, Qoheleth boasts about the material wealth that he acquired, as a means to show the inability of materialism to provide fulfilment in life. This mirrors the supposed wealth of Solomon portrayed in 1 Kings. In the account from the Deuteronomist, Solomon's wealth appears to match his wisdom. There are three major accounts of Solomon's wealth in 1 Kings 4:22-8, 1 Kings 10:14-29 and 1 Kings 11:1-3, all quantifying his wealth in terms of the different possessions that he has accumulated. 1 Kings 4 displays Solomon's wealth in terms of how many livestock and animals he owns. This directly reflects Qoheleth's statement in Ecclesiastes 2:7, where he claims that he has more herds and livestock than any in Jerusalem before him. 1 Kings 10 uses gold and silver to identify Solomon as a rich man, describing multiple different articles that Solomon acquired, which are primarily made of gold. Likewise, Qoheleth shows his wealth in terms of silver, gold and many treasures in Ecclesiastes 2:8. Lastly, in 1 Kings 11:1-3, Solomon's wealth is portrayed in the number of his wives, princesses and concubines. Whilst this is not used in a complimentary manner in the Kings narrative, it is directly mirrored in Qoheleth's claim that he acquired many concubines in Ecclesiastes 2:8. These direct connections show that the author of Ecclesiastes intended Qoheleth to be Solomon himself.

By using a first person narrative technique, the author of Ecclesiastes creates an impression that Qoheleth is speaking near the end of his life: each time he speaks, Qoheleth speaks in the past tense, drawing up memories of experiences that define his wisdom. The whimsical nature of his speech creates a literary effect of an old man passing on his knowledge at the end of his life. This is substantiated by Qoheleth's conclusions at the end of the book. In 12:1 he calls on the listener to remember his creator in the days of his youth before the days of trouble come. Again, this creates the impression that Qoheleth is

speaking as an old man dispensing his wisdom at the end of his life. It is this narrative effect which differentiates the Ecclesiastes narrative from the one in Proverbs: unlike the former, the latter uses an instruction narrative to create the literary effect of a father passing knowledge to his son. By establishing a connection between Solomon and Qoheleth, the author of Ecclesiastes uses the character of Qoheleth to represent the ageing king Solomon.

The Deuteronomistic narrative explicitly condemns Solomon's actions at the end of his life. As has been already stated, 1 Kings 11:1-5 criticises Solomon for following the various gods of his wives. Thus, it concludes in verse 6 that Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD. Solomon is as infamous for his decline as he is famous for his wisdom. If Qoheleth is portraying Solomon at the end of his life, then there is an implicit critique that undermines his character; Solomon is not speaking in the height of his wisdom but at the tragic end of his reign. With this narrative connection established, it is therefore possible to understand that the book functions to critique the words of the protagonist. There are several factors that suggest that the author is criticising the words of Qoheleth rather than commending them.

Firstly, the foundational philosophy of Qoheleth is inherently negative and nihilistic. The message of Ecclesiastes has confounded religious readers for generations. It is essentially an extremely depressing diatribe concerning the meaninglessness of everything in life. The prevailing theme is based around an understanding of הבל.[445] Qoheleth repeats this word multiple times throughout his speech. His first statement uses the root five times to make an emphatic introduction of his primary theme. Twice he uses the superlative form

[445] Every commentary on Ecclesiastes spends a vast amount of time discussing the meaning of this word due to its centrality in Qoheleth's thinking. For a basic summary of the different ideas and arguments over its meaning, see T. Krüger, *Qoheleth* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), pp. 42-44.

of a singular noun in construct with its connecting plural form.[446] There is no doubt as to the underlying theme of the whole work. Qoheleth continues to use the phrase throughout the rest of the whole book; in particular, he deploys the word in construct with the phrase 'striving after the wind'.[447] The word הבל literally means 'vapour' or 'breath'; it gives the impression of hot air rising. The word has an ephemeral quality, which has enabled translators to suggest 'vanity' or 'meaningless' as a valid translation. After proposing this opening thesis, Qoheleth produces the evidence throughout the rest of the book to verify its truth. The fact that the result of each of Qoheleth's endeavours leads him to the same depressing conclusion implies a critique of his actions. When the Kings narrative is imposed upon Qoheleth's words, it shows the pointlessness of his misdemeanours; his philosophy becomes a critique of his lifestyle. The fact is that his wealth, his possessions, his architectural legacy and even his wisdom provide him with nothing more than הבל. This undermines the thoughts of Qoheleth, and therefore Solomon, through the connection that has already been shown.

Secondly, the critique of Solomon's later life is best shown within the words of Qoheleth himself. In 4:13, Qoheleth states that it is better to be a poor wise youth than an old but foolish king. This acts as a summary of the Solomonic narrative. The irony of his words cannot be lost on the reader, who knows that Solomon was famous for his wisdom in his youth but chastised for his folly and wealth in his later life. The hoarding of wealth is then attacked by Qoheleth in 5:8-20, one of his longest sections. He makes some scathing remarks concerning the rich, claiming that they will not gain satisfaction (verse 10); their

[446] The Masoretic text contains the unique construct form *hăbēl* instead of the expected *hebel*. This is probably an Aramaized form, again showing Ecclesiastes' dependency on that language. See Seow (1997), p. 101.

[447] The alliterative phrase רעות רוח poetically reasserts the transient nature of Qoheleth's message. The image of chasing after the wind beautifully illustrates a sense of pointlessness, which is integral to Qoheleth's thought.

goods have no benefit (verse 11); and their abundance will give them no rest (verse 12). If Qoheleth is intended to represent Solomon, then he is attacking his own status. The irony of Qoheleth's wisdom is further shown in chapter 8, when he talks about obedience to the king; in verses 2-5, Qoheleth extols the virtue of following the instruction of the king. These words are challenged by the rebellion of Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:26-40. Here, Jeroboam's disobedience is divinely sanctioned as a punishment to Solomon's apostasy.

Thirdly, the inconsistencies within the narrative create a sense of confusion within the words of Qoheleth.[448] Previously, any inconsistency within Ecclesiastes has sometimes led to the conclusion that different sources had been redacted together.[449] This redaction explanation is easy to apply with distinctive sections like chapter 12:9-14; however, when the inconsistencies are intertwined within the main bulk of the narrative, the exercise of redaction criticism becomes a lot more difficult.[450] It is for this reason that many scholars have taken a different approach to the problem. Michael Fox identifies many of these interpretations and provides an alternative approach.[451] He examines the three themes of toil and pleasure, the value of wisdom, and justice and theodicy. Fox uses an etymological approach in an attempt to dissect the different terms that Qoheleth deploys to create his apparent contradictions. Fox's work is excellent at examining the details of each contradiction. His analysis of the text enables him to summarise in detail the problems

[448] The contradictions within the book have been pointed out by commentators as far back as Ibn Ezra and Spinoza. See Krüger, pp. 14-9.

[449] There are a variety of different redaction-historical approaches suggested for Ecclesiastes. Firstly, Crenshaw argues for a biographical redaction. He believes that there is one author from whom all the texts are taken; the inconsistencies form the changing views of one author whose different texts were later fused together to form one work. Alternatively, Fischer argues the existence of a Qoheleth school, which creates the inconsistencies through a process of repeated glossing. See J. L. Crenshaw, *Ecclesiastes* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), pp. 48-9 and A. A. Fischer, *Skepsis oder Furcht Gottes? Studien zur Komposition und Theologie des Buches Kohelet* (BZAW 247; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), p. 252.

[450] Thus, there has been a movement away from any redaction of the book – aside from the title in 1:1 and the epilogue in 12:9-14 – in modern scholarship. See Krüger, p. 12.

[451] See M. V. Fox, *Qoheleth and his Contradictions,* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), pp. 9-28.

inherent within Qoheleth's conclusions. This study allows him to lessen the tension between some of Qoheleth's statements. However, he is unable to eliminate all of Qoheleth's contradictions, and for this reason, Fox argues that there is no conclusion to explain these inconsistencies. Instead, 'Qoheleth's contradictions state the problems rather than resolving them, and the interpreters likewise must leave many of the observations in tension.'[452]

A satirical reading of the text offers an explanation for these inconsistencies. The author purposely creates the inconsistencies within the text as a narrative critique against its main character. Contradictions within his speech function to undermine his supposed wisdom. This is particularly apparent in his confusion over the purpose of wisdom; Qoheleth cannot seem to decide whether or not wisdom has any advantage at all. For this reason he makes contradictory statements concerning wisdom. When he first considers wisdom, in 1:16-7, Qoheleth claims that the acquisition of wisdom serves no purpose; he boasts about the wisdom he has accumulated, but alongside his understanding of folly, he claims that this is a striving after the wind. In his next examination of wisdom in 2:13-6, Qoheleth argues with himself over the value of wisdom. He notes that wisdom is better than folly in 2:13. This may seem good in the short term; however, the wise and the foolish are both united by their mortality. Furthermore, death does not just bring a termination of life but also an end to remembrance (2:16). This statement itself is wholly ironic within a book celebrating the wisdom of a dead man. His confusion concerning wisdom is compounded at the end of the chapter in 2:26. There, wisdom appears to be a gift from God to those who please him. This is more advantageous for the sinner, who has to work to gather wealth, than for the righteous man. Yet again, Qoheleth concludes that this is הבל.

[452] Fox, p. 11.

After briefly considering other subjects, Qohleth returns to this theme of wisdom in chapter 7. Here, Qoheleth seems to be in a quandary over the benefits of possessing wisdom: in verse 4 it appears to inhibit pleasure, as the heart of the wise inclines to the house of mourning, yet in verse 11 he notes that wisdom is a good thing and causes benefit. This is substantiated by his claim in verse 19 that wisdom makes the wise powerful. In verses 23-24, Qoheleth explains that his task to search out wisdom is ultimately futile. This exemplifies the constant confusion of Qoheleth concerning this topic. Finally, in chapter 9, Qoheleth again sees the merits and failings of wisdom. Within a short anecdote in 9:13-18 he tells of a poor man's wisdom proving the salvation of his city. This seems to be a positive reassertion about the advantages of wisdom, although he retains the caveats that nobody remembers the poor man (verse 15) and that the poor man's wisdom is despised (verse 16). All these examples function to show a convoluted portrayal of wisdom by Qoheleth's throughout the whole book.

The suggestion that the inconsistencies within the narrative are actually the portrayal of a disturbed soul goes back as far as Galling.[453] However, Galling never interpreted this as a literary device used by the author; rather, he understood Qoheleth as a psychological unwell soul. Instead, a satirical reading of the text offers the explanation that the perceived inconsistencies with the text serve to undermine the supposed wisdom of its protagonist.

By interpreting Qoheleth as a literary figure rather than the author of the book, a satirical reading of the text is possible. Qoheleth becomes the literary embodiment of the ageing king Solomon dispensing his wisdom at the end of his reign. This offers an alternative

[453] See K. Galling 'Kohelet-Studien' *ZAW* 50 (1932), p. 276-99.

reading of the book of Ecclesiastes that shows Qoheleth's words to be critical of his own character. Like the pardoner in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the fundamental critique is delivered by the speech of the protagonist. Thus Qoheleth becomes the confused and hypocritical Solomon speaking at the end of his reign.

A satirical reading of Ecclesiastes provides an explanation as to why the epilogue at the end misinterprets the main themes of the rest of the book. One of the main characteristics of satire is that is can easily be misunderstood without an appreciation of context. Thus, it is plausible for the redactor to misinterpret the critique running through the book. It is for this reason of satire that he then writes an epilogue that is both complementary to Qoheleth and incongruous with his main philosophical points. The redactor appears to ignore what Qoheleth says and thus concludes with an orthodox statement of theodicy. If he did not interpret the satire within the texts, then it becomes understandable why he would revert to traditional statements of wisdom.

Conclusion

This final chapter has analysed three wisdom books in the search for satire. It has examined Miles' argument that Proverbs 1-9 forms a satire against King Solomon. The theories of John Holbert and Katharine Dell became the basis for seeing internal and external satire in the book of Job. Using the work of these three scholars, this chapter has suggested alternative areas of satire in both Job and Ecclesiastes.

The arguments of all three scholars have been verified to varying degrees. Miles utilises a satirical reading to offer an alternative perspective on the Solomonic authorship of Proverbs 1-9. His reading does offer an interesting attempt to bridge the gap between

authorial intent and the perspective of the reader; however, his argument is ultimately limited by his own lack of conviction in his conclusions as well as by an overemphasis on a negative reading of both Proverbs 1-9 and 1 Kings 1-11. Instead of claiming that the whole section of Proverbs 1-9 acts as a satire, it would be more plausible to suggest that the claim of Solomonic authorship acts as satire against the ageing king. This chapter has proposed that a better place for this argument would be in the book of Ecclesiastes. It would be far too extreme to suggest that the whole of Ecclesiastes functioned as a satire; that would ignore the wider struggle that occurs in the book. Ecclesiastes is wrestling with too many philosophical ideas to be simply assigned wholesale to a satiric genre. However, a satirical reading of the book would help to provide a solution for many of the inconsistencies present within the text. This chapter has argued that the cryptic suggestion within the text, that Qoheleth is meant to be Solomon, functions negatively as a satire. The literary setting of the work, the better correlation to the negative parts of Deuteronomistic portrayal of Solomon, and the numerous links between the two characters, all act to undermine the wisdom of Qoheleth and, therefore, Solomon. The inherent contradictions thus become a literary device to undermine the wayward king, whose wisdom has lost all meaning. This also offers an explanation for the inappropriate editorial at the end of the book, as the editor misses the satiric undertones of the book.

In contrast to Miles, both Holbert and Dell provide stronger arguments in their suggestion of satire. Holbert's identification of satire in the speech of Zophar is correct, but is very simplistic in its form. If Zophar was mimicking the words of Job in his own speech, then this is satire at its most basic level; using the language of one's opponent in one's rebuttal intensifies one's critique against them. However, this chapter has suggested that

an alternative place in which to find this phenomenon is in the divine speeches at the end of the book, where satire becomes one weapon in the divine arsenal in subduing the complaint of the protagonist. Dell's argument is much more detailed and convincing, as she argues that the book of Job should be classified as a piece of sceptical literature. This chapter has shown that her focus on parody as a vehicle for critique associates her argument with satire. Her theory, based on the misuse of form, is limited in that she only focuses on the speeches of Job. This chapter has utilised her method to show that satire could also be found in the speeches of Eliphaz. Using form-critical comparisons, Eliphaz's speeches represent a philosophical position of divine retribution, which can also be seen in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. HIs inability to comfort Job, the anger of Job's response and the divine rebuke at the end of the book all show how this position is undermined by the author of Job. Satire becomes one of Dell's mini- or sub-genres within the book. However, this sub-genre cannot be used as genre marker for the book in its entirety, as there are too few passages that have been shown to contain satire to justify the whole work being a satire.

Satire has again been shown to be present in a variety of forms and within a different genre of Hebrew literature. As elsewhere in the Old Testament, the inconsistent style and form of the satires within the wisdom texts means that it is very hard to prove that it was consciously being deployed. However, like prophetic texts, satire's critical nature makes it an ideal device for wisdom writers. The fact that wisdom texts often rely on negatively interacting with the world around them, as well as other wisdom texts and ideas, means that satire finds a natural home within them.

Chapter 6: Final Conclusions

This thesis started by highlighting the inherent difficulty of dealing with satire as it is such an elusive concept. Its first aim was to provide theologians with a strong definition of what satire is. It established this definition by reducing satire to its fundamental component parts of mimicry and critique. After proving these facets to be the basis of satire, it then went on to show the breadth of material where satire can be found. By conducting an overview of its history, satire is shown to be able to transcend form and genre. It has evolved from being a literary device into being a genre in its own right in modern literature. Most notably, modern satire's purpose has moved from simple targeted polemic into criticism for the sake of criticism, attacking everything and everyone. Satire can be used in multiple ways and in multiple forms and styles. In establishing this definition, the method for identifying satire becomes these two markers of imitation and critique. A text needs to identify both of these things to be proven to be satirical.

These methodological concerns all show that fundamentally satire has to be treated with a large degree of caution. Satire's ability to transcend form enables it to be found in a variety of different places. As it only requires two basic attributes, it is present throughout the history of literature as well as across all media of human expression. It is for this reason that an emphasis has to be made on finding the target of critique in identifying a satiric text. Satire's fluid form makes it too easy to label multiple texts as satirical before the target of critique is ever found. A method of identification by form often leads to scholars into fabricating a target of critique, as in the case of David Marcus and his group of 6th Century prophets. Alternatively, it leads scholars to assign a target of critique that is unsuitable to the text. This is the mistake of David Valeta in his suggestion that Daniel 1-6 is satirising

Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The scholar must proceed with caution when looking for satire, especially within ancient literature. However, this does not mean that satire cannot be found or that a satirical reading of ancient texts cannot be deeply useful for understanding them.

When looking at satire in the Old Testament, it is very important to distinguish between internal and external satire. Internal satire is used to criticise something or someone within the text itself. Although comparison can be made with external figures, internal satire is a literary device whose purpose is to critique something within the narrative. This internal polemic is often translated into an external attack, as the object being criticised within the narrative represents an external target. An external satire is one that has a recognisable and identifiable parallel with a real life object. A book can only be considered to be in a genre of satire if a clear external target is found. If making a polemic is the primary purpose of the text, then a work can be justifiably labelled as a satire. This thesis has shown that throughout history satire has developed into its own defined genre.

There are no books of the Old Testament that fit into these criteria. It would be very surprising to find a work that could be placed into a genre of satire as the Old Testament predates a defined understanding of what satire is. However, despite this satire can be found in smaller sections of the Old Testament. This thesis has shown the existence of multiple external satires within larger works of narrative, wisdom and prophecy.

The Tower of Babel is the first example of satire being present within an alternative genre. The subversive attack against the Babylonian empire that is an undercurrent in the whole story shows that satire functions symbiotically with the main purpose of a text. The story of the Tower of Babel is primarily an epic narrative designed to explain the

geographical separation of the nations and the diversity of language. However, by constant undermining of the Babylonians, their empire and their architecture, satire forms a sub-genre within the text. Satire's purpose of critique is symbiotic as it helps the text achieve its main purpose whilst using the narrative to complete its own nefarious designs. Often it is suggested that satire is a parasitical force. It attaches itself to a text to feed off it in order to exist. This is an unfair picture. The host genre or text always benefits from the presence of satire in achieving its alternate purpose.

This same phenomenon can be seen in alternate genres within the Old Testament. Within wisdom literature, this thesis has built on the work of Katharine Dell to show that the book of Job wrestles with external views of divine arbitration. Through the speeches of both Job and Eliphaz and the clear misuse and use of Psalmic and Proverbial form, the writer clearly attacks those who understand God's justice as a karmic principle. Again, this functions alongside greater philosophical and wisdom questions within the book. There is not enough evidence to show that the whole book is a satire as it is concerned with more than just attack. The divine reply at the end of the work provides a solution, albeit not an overly convincing one, to Job's problem. This is not a characteristic of satire. Satire seeks to undermine not correct. It is for this reason that again satire in Job functions as a sub-genre within the wider wisdom framework.

The idol critiques in the prophetic texts use satire in a similar fashion. Within these texts the external targets are easily identifiable. Sometimes it is the idol worshippers, more often it is the creators of idols whilst other times it is the idols themselves which are attacked. In each case, the attack forms either a short excursus or functions only ever as part of the prophetic message. For this reason, scholars have often argued that these

critiques are a later addition to the text. By analysing them through a satirical lens, this thesis has shown that their position within the context of the prophetic message makes more sense than is often supposed. In particular, Isaiah 44:9-20 thrives as a satire in its relationship to the text around it. The critique is based upon the inversion that God forms man as opposed to the idea that men can form gods in the creation of idols. The function of these critiques is as an auxiliary concern of the prophet. Never are they the main focus of the text, thus suggesting that they act within a textual sub-genre. Only in the apocryphal work 'Bel and the Dragon' does satire play a central role in the text. This work could therefore be placed into an independent genre of satire. All these examples show that external satire is present in the Old Testament. Satire is able to transcend form and genre to be present in a range of different works. In each case of external satire it forms a sub-genre within the text acting to supplement the overarching purpose of its host genre.

The idol critiques show the creation of satire was not a conscious aim of the writer. The fact that the idol polemics ranged from being simple insults to complicated satires show that satire was just one weapon of the author. The writer's purpose was not to create something to be a satire. Instead satire was subconsciously used as part of the arsenal of criticism against the idols. If all the critiques were satirical, then it would be possible to show that there was an ancient convention of satirical writing. However, the fact that some of the criticisms contain no satire at all shows that satire was not a concern of the author. This problem, combined with the lack of a Hebrew term for satire, shows us that the concept of satire was not understood by the Hebrew writers. This suggests that writing satirically is an innately human attribute. Before it was ever conceived, satire could be written as the process of imitation, for criticism is one that has always been effective. This

explains the presence of texts such as 'The Satire of the Trades' as well as all the external satires that this thesis has suggested. Human beings naturally write satirically.

This thesis is limited in its ability to identify every external satire that may be present in the Old Testament. However, it does provide a paradigm for the identification of an external satire. Scholars must begin by proving and justifying a legitimate target of critique if they want to suggest an external satire. This is the mistake already shown by those who favour a form critical method of identifying satire. Their final conclusion over the target of satire becomes fantastical or deeply unconvincing.

Alongside external satire, this thesis has also proved the existence of internal satires within the works of the Old Testament. Internal satires are mainly prevalent within biblical narratives. They function as a literary device. Satire is used by the author as one technique in the creation of beautifully intricate stories. It is this phenomenon that Marcus and Valeta often identify in the narratives that they examine. It can be seen particularly in the book of Jonah. This thesis has shown that there are six satires in Jonah which act as an internal critique of the protagonist. When Jonah is contrasted to alternative characters, both within the book and outside of it, he is always undermined by the comparison. Within the pericope, Jonah's disobedience and lacklustre repentance is highlighted when he is contrasted to the sailors and the Ninevites. His professional aptitude is undermined when his story mirrors the external characters of Elijah and Abraham. The narrative used a combination of situation, action and words to create this contrast. Jonah becomes a poor parody of both the obedient prophet Elijah as well as the compassionate patriarch Abraham. The fifth satire contrasts Jonah's anger, sulking and desire for the destruction of Nineveh with YHWH's mercy at the end of the book. Lastly, this thesis has suggested that

Jonah's words form a parody of his actions. Whenever Jonah opens his mouth, he recites either Israelite credal statements or prophetic words. If Jonah's speech was taken out of the context of the narrative, then his portrayal would be overwhelmingly positive. However, by giving his protagonist the right things to say, the author creates hypocrisy when Jonah acts in the opposite manner to what is expected. This final satire causes the greatest indictment as Jonah, like Chaucer's pardoner, he is shown to be a hypocrite. These six satires all function within the narrative to attack its protagonist. As an external representation is hard to find and justify, though one may have existed, Jonah can only be an example of internal satire.

Internal satire can be added to the many different devices that Hebrew narratives use in the creation of their stories. It is an effective way for the writer of any story to highlight the flaws in any character that they are portraying. It is a useful tool for the authors of Hebrew narratives who were often concerned with attacking the failings of many of the key characters in their stories. This can be seen in the story of Balaam, the tale of the man of God and the lying prophet, and the self contained pericopes in Daniel 1-6. It may be possible to find the device in many other texts of the Old Testament that this thesis has not been able to consider.

Identifying this device enables the scholar to be drawn into the world of textual interplay. It is fundamentally important when reading any Hebrew narrative to be examining the way it creates contrast to characters, events, situations or landscapes that are both within and outside of their immediate context. In seeing the importance of internal satire, it challenges the scholar to continue the work of previous scholars to find authentic textual comparisons.

Behind every argument that this thesis has examined, considered and made is the question of authorial intent verses a synchronic reading of the text. For the most part, external and internal satire is within the sphere of authorial intention. Satire has been shown to be a component part of what the author intended. For external satire, the target has been chosen by the author and the text is intended as a critique. Internal satire functions purposely within the narrative as a device of the author. Satire, even unconsciously, was written into the text by the author. In contrast, there are texts in the Old Testament where a satirical reading of the text is not as easily substantiated as being the intent of the author. However, by reading the text satirically it provides a different perspective on some of the problems that are inherent within the text. An example of this is Miles' suggestion of satire in the book of Proverbs. It is difficult to justify his conclusions as the clear intention of the writer of the book. However, by asserting that Proverbs 1-9 can be read as a satire against King Solomon, the reader can understand the book in a different way. Positive assertions become sarcastic negative critiques. A different perspective can also be offered in the book of Ecclesiastes. Here a satirical reading would suggest that the subtle claim to Solomonic authorship functions critically. By attributing the book to the failing aged king portrayed at the end of the Deuteronomistic account in 1 Kings, the book portrays a man of confused wisdom finding no meaning in anything. This focuses on the crafted character of Qoheleth in his written form rather than finding meaning in what he says. This literary component would therefore provide an explanation for many of the inconsistencies of the book. There is not enough evidence to show that this was the primary intention of the author, but a satirical reading does offer a different perspective on how to understand the book.

Understanding the history of satire enables the scholar to read the Old Testament alongside different types of satire throughout history. This thesis has used the style of some of the most famous satirical works as filters for a satirical lens. Reading the Old Testament in combination with these works enables the scholar to see comparisons which show the different ways that satire was deployed in the Old Testament. The categories of simple satire, character-based satire, hypocritical satire and situational satire showed the different styles of satire that were found in the Old Testament. These were all useful in differentiating the varied emphases that each different satire used.

Lastly, a satirical reading offers the scholar a new perspective on textual unity. By reading a text as a satire it provides a new explanation for why a difficult text is placed in an awkward context. Whilst this is not an irrefutable proof of textual unity, it does at least imply that if the passage was redacted into its place, then the redactor was more competent than is often implied. Two pertinent examples of this are in Isaiah 44:9-20 and in Jonah 2. By claiming that both texts are intended to be read satirically, an explanation is given for their awkward placing in the text. In Isaiah 44:9-20, a satirical attack against the idols makes sense within the surrounding trial speech. Part of YHWH's justification of himself is by contrasting his worth to the idols around him. As God is legitimised by his formation of mankind, the idol-makers are undermined by their inability to create a god of worth. In Jonah 2, Jonah's Psalm of thanksgiving that is being said before his deliverance becomes a satirical attack against the character of the prophet. The beautiful pastiche of Psalmic material which the prophet constructs shows Jonah to be the prophet who knows the right words to say. However, his actions in the rest of the book prove him to be a hypocrite. A

satirical reading offers an explanation which enables the scholar to understand the text better in its final form.

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