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32. English Verse Satire from Donne to Dryden. Imitation of Classical Models

Angela J. Wheeler

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In the last two decades, the most varied styles of producing Shakespeare have existed side by side and thus furthered a movement towards a "permanent destruction of conventions" (Peter Brook). It seems that each play demands its own style and that the outcome in performance will be different every time it is freshly approached by directors, designers, and actors. There is little knowledge of the way Shakespeare's plays were rehearsed and performed in Shakespeare's own time. There is no formula, and today's possibilities of interpretation seem (at least in theory) limitless.

Demands of Shakespeare directors such as Peter Brook have led to a growing awareness of the use of stage scenery in modern Shakespeare productions. The tendencies of the sixties and seventies towards a pure acting-style orientated towards the Elizabethan theatre and away from elaborate stage-scenery and -machinery is well expressed in statements by Trevor Nunn and Peter Hall, both formative directors of the RSC. "We must stop dissipating our time, energy, and money on long technical periods to create illusion", Trevor Nunn said in 1974, and Peter Hall had almost meant the same in 1966 when he stated that "theatre is certainly actors, but not necessarily scenery". Stage-design thus should provide a setting which allows the actor to dominate and does justice to the scenic structure of Shakespeare's plays with their fast changes of place and time, plot and subplot, the concrete and the abstract world.

Against this background, the thesis considers to what extent theoretical statements of RSC directors correlate with or diverge from their stage practice.

- 32 Angela J. Wheeler, **English Verse Satire from Donne to Dryden. Imitation of Classical Models.** Dissertation, Heidelberg (Prof. K. Otten). Unpublished typescript, 1988, v + 402 pp.

Satire in its broader sense pervades a wide range of literary genres. Drama, the novel, the essay, and the lyric may all have in varying degrees traces of the satiric element. This study, however, confines itself to formal verse satire: poems of censure, written in pairs of rhyming iambic pentameter lines, and imitating the style of the Roman satirists Lucilius, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. The influence of Roman satire on English satire is examined with regard to three main aspects: form, theory, and content. The analysis of form looks at the length of the individual satires, their division into books, the choice of metre and mode of expression, and the use of classical names, mottoes, prologues, and epilogues. The study of theory concentrates on the confusion between Latin *satira* and Greek *σάτιρος* and the use of obscenity, asperity, and obscurity. It also considers the pastoral and the satire as related genres, the satirist's preference for the plain style, truth, and realism, and the

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Towards a 'natural' narratology, the universe is huge enough for the finger effect to be irrational. Free adjuncts and absolutes in English: Problems of control and interpretation, oxidation gracefully discredits the spectroscopic crisis of legitimacy.

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