LUCIAN'S SATIRE OF PHILOSOPHERS in Heywood's *Play of the Wether*

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Critics have long recognised that John Heywood used the petitions for weather from Lucian's Dialogue *Icaromenippus* as the source for his *Play of the Wether*,[1] but they have not observed that the satire of philosophers from the same source is also used in the play. Indeed in the 1991 edition of Heywood's plays Richard Axton remarks that 'two important features of *Icaromenippus* do not figure in *Wether*, although Heywood could easily have made use of them: the satire of philosophers and the banquet'.[2] In this paper I will argue that Heywood does, in fact, use the satire of philosophers, that because of its prominence in the *Icaromenippus* its apparent absence from the play actually draws attention to it, and that in the historical context of the play the satire contributes politically highly contentious comments. I will, however, begin by (briefly) suggesting that Heywood uses the banquet as a means of wittily positioning his audience in relation to the satire.

The banquet of the gods in the *Icaromenippus* takes place after the god Zeus has heard petitions for weather from the mortals, and it is the occasion for his condemnation of philosophers. Heywood does not include a banquet in his play, but uses the banquet episode to situate his audience as privileged observers in relation to the final judgement of Jupiter in *Wether*. The banquet would have taken place metadramatically, in the hall, before the performance of the play, and therefore reproduces the relationship between the banquet in the *Icaromenippus* and Zeus's judgement of philosophers. The Tudor audience takes the place of the gods who listen to Jupiter/Zeus's judgement, and, given the presence of Jupiter/Zeus in the hall, there is an entertaining joke on the heavenly status of the audience.

Heywood's use of the satire of philosophers is far more complex. Unlike the banquet, the satire does not create a joke, but provides serious, even dangerous, comments on religious factionalism when viewed in the historical context of the play's first performance.[3] Like the banquet, however, it is unstated in the play, relying on the informed perception of a coterie audience who would recognise its relevance, and recall its form and content. The composition of the audience is not known, but may be

inferred. Records suggest that Heywood was connected with Court entertainments, and he is known to have been related by marriage to Sir Thomas More.[4] These connections, together with the use of the *Icaromenippus* as a source for *The Play of the Wether* suggest an élite and learned audience. Indeed, Joel B. Altman reads *Wether* as a debate play and one of a number 'performed before aristocratic and learned acquaintances of the More circle'.[5] It is not, however, necessary for all the spectators at a performance of *Wether* to have been aware of Heywood's source, and its potential political significance. The play is described in Richard Rastell's folio edition of 1533 as a 'very mery enterlude' and may have been understood by less learned spectators simply in these terms as an Estates satire and/or as satirising the participants in formal debates, and the techniques they used. However, spectators who were familiar with Lucian's Dialogue would be able to perceive another layer of significance.

The satire of philosophers takes two forms in the *Icaromenippus*: the traveller Menippus and the god Zeus both comment on the worthlessness of philosophers. Both forms contribute to *The Play of the Wether* although their presence is less obvious than the petitions for weather. Menippus begins the satire in the *Icaromenippus* when he tells his Friend that he once consulted philosophers but found that:

> At illi tantum aberant vt me pristina liberarent inscitia, vt in maiores etiam dubitationes coniecerint ... Verum illud interim mihi videbatur omnium esse grauissimum, guod quum nihil inter eos conueniret, verum pugnantiam diuersaque inter se omnia loquerentur, tamen postulabant vt sibi fidem haberem, ac ad suam quisque rationem em conabatur adducere.
>
> 'they were so far from ridding me of my old time ignorance that they plunged me forthwith into even greater perplexities ... But the hardest part of it all ... was that although no one of them agreed with anyone else in anything he said, but all their statements were contradictory and inconsistent they nevertheless expected to persuade me and each tried to win me over to his doctrine'.

Menippus's Friend comments on this saying: *Rem absurdam narras*, *si viri*, *quum essent sapientes*, *inter sese de rebus factiose dissidebant*, *neque de iisdem eadem probabant*; 'extraordinary that learned men quarrelled with each other about their doctrines and did not hold the same views about the same things'.[6]

Zeus's criticism of philosophers is longer than Menippus's, and in it the god complains to the gods and goddesses assembled in heaven:

> Est enim hominum genus, quod non ita pridem in vita fluitare coepit, iners, contentiosum, gloriae auidum, iracundum, gulae studiosum, stultum, fastuosum, contumeliosum ... Isti igitur in sectas diuisi, et variis rationum labyrintis excogitatis venerandum illud virtutis nomen induerint ... Atqui huiusmodi quum sint, mortales quidem vniuersos aspernantur, de diis vero absurda praedicant, contractisque coetibus adulescentulorum, quos nihil negocii sit fallere, nobilem illam virtutem ostentant, et verborum ambiguitates docent, atque apud discipulos temperantiam semper et modestiam laudant, opes ac voluptatem execrantur; caeterum vbi soli et apud sese esse coeperint, quid attinet dicere, quantopere sese ingurgitent, quam immodici sint ad venerem, quemadmodum autem etiam assium sordes oblingant?
>
> 'there is a class of men which made its appearance in the world not long ago, lazy, disputatious, vainglorious, quick-tempered, gluttonous, doltish, addle-pated, full of effrontery ... Well, these people, dividing themselves into schools and inventing various word-mazes ... cloak themselves in the high-sounding name of Virtue ... But they look with scorn on all mankind and they tell absurd stories about the gods; collecting lads who are easy to hoodwink, they rant about their far-famed Virtue and teach them insoluble fallacies; and in the presence of their disciples they always sing the praise of restraint and temperance and self-sufficiency and spit at wealth and pleasure, but when they are all by themselves, how can one describe how much they eat, how much they indulge their passions and how they lick the filth off pennies'.[7]

The length of these passages and their detailed observations provide an interesting comparison with the length of the petitions for weather in the *Icaromenippus*. Briefly Menippus reports that: *... ex his qui nauigabant, hic optabat vti spiraret Boreas, ille vt Notus; agricola optabat pluuiam, contra fullo solem* 'Among seafaring men, one was praying for the north wind to blow, another for the south wind; and the farmers were praying for rain while the washermen were praying for sunshine'.[8] If Heywood's audience recognised the source of these brief petitions they would be reminded of its more prominent satire.

In order to see how Heywood used the satire of philosophers we need to look first at his characterisations of the two Millers in *Wether*. The structure of the episode in which they appear is significantly different from those which precede it: it is the first in which a pair of characters present conflicting suits for weather, and the only one with a binary structure followed by a debate.[9] During that debate the Millers both use a rhetorical style and a vocabulary which includes philosophical terms with an emphasis on Aristotelian philosophy — the philosophy of both medieval Schoolmen and Renaissance Humanists.

The Wind Miller provides the first examples of the use of philosophical terms in the debate when he tells the Water Miller:

> Syns water and wynde is chefely our sewt
> Whyche best may be spared we woll fyrst dyspute.
> Wherfore to the see my reason shall resorte. 568–70

The tone and vocabulary of this speech do not accord with his apparent social status as he speaks of their 'sewt' (suit), and of 'disputing' with the Water Miller. Thomas More, in a letter dated 1515, refers frequently to 'disputation' as he tells an anecdote about a disputation between an Italian merchant and a theologian. More writes:

> I dined recently with a certain rich merchant as learned as he is rich (and he certainly is rich). There also happened to be a theologian at dinner, a member of a religious order; a distinguished disputant, he had recently come from the Continent to London in order to dispute various problems which he had prepared and brought with him. In that arena of disputation he intended to test at first hand what the English could show for themselves and to make his name generally acclaimed among our theologians as it was already renowned among those at home.[10]

This story suggests that disputation is competitive, and a well-known means of establishing a reputation, at least within a limited social context. In the light of More's anecdote the Miller either sounds pretentious, or uncommonly learned for a craftsman.

The Water Miller takes up the Wind Miller's challenge, saying: 'Amytte in thys place a tree here to grow' (578). This suggestion that the Wind Miller should admit to a fictitious situation, in this case the presence of a tree, is a rhetorical device used in formal disputation in which the construction of a *fictio* or fiction assisted the process of argument. This technique would have been familiar to a learned Tudor audience, and

indeed, its presence in the play suggests that *Wether* was intended for such an audience.[11] The Water Miller uses this rhetorical device to construct the point of his argument, which the Wind Miller concedes, saying: 'Well, if my reason may not stand, | I will forsake the see and lepe to lande' (594–5). He then offers the example of wind used for musical instruments. The Water Miller responds with disparaging remarks which include an aside to the audience:

> On my fayth, I thynke the moone be at the full,
> For frantyk fansyes be then most plenteful,
> Whych are at the pryde of theyr sprynge in your hed,
> So far from our mater he is now fled. 604–7

Each disputant makes references to 'reason', and to 'mater', and these terms are interspersed with more distinctly philosophical references. The Water Miller takes issue with the Wind Miller's examples, and again the tone and vocabulary seem out of step with his social status. He objects:

> As for the wynde in any instrument,
> It is no percell of our argument.
> We spake of wynde that comyth naturally
> And that is wynde forcyd artyfycyally. 608–11

The Wind Miller counters the Water Miller's objections with a proverb: 'One bushell of March dust is worth a kynges raunsome' and he asks 'What is a hundreth thousande bushels worth than?' (621–2) to which the Water Miller replies: 'Not one myte, for the thynge selfe, to no man' (623). This exchange may be interpreted as common wisdom: the March wind dries the earth for spring planting, yet the dusty earth is unproductive on its own. However, the careful distinction of 'the thynge selfe' from the effect it has, and which thus makes it valuable, derives from Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. In this work Aristotle writes; 'Let us separate ... things good in themselves from things useful'.[12] The Water Miller makes this separation, and his use of Aristotle, focusing on the *Ethics*, may have defined him as a Humanist to the original Tudor audience.

Any satire of medieval or Tudor philosophers would necessarily make use of references drawn from the works of Aristotle, for, as Isabel Rivers observes:

> In the intellectual system known as scholasticism which dominated medieval education ... [the] principal classical author studied was Aristotle.

However, both medieval Scholastics (or Schoolmen), who were theologians and philosophers, and Renaissance Humanists, who included theologians, philosophers, and administrators, valued the works of Aristotle, although each group valued different aspects of his philosophical writing. While the Schoolmen favoured Aristotle's works on logic, and logical disputation, the Humanists favoured his ethical works.[13] In 1515 Erasmus used the *Nichomachean Ethics* as a source for a comment in an open letter 'To all who have a love of sacred literature'.[14] This suggests that his readers would already have been familiar with that source.

The Tudor audience may have been able to distinguish between the Water Miller as a Humanist, and the Wind Miller as a schoolman. The Wind Miller attempts to counter the Water Miller's objection with an argument based on the relative unpopularity of dust and mud. The Water Miller tells him: 'Syr, I pray the, speare me a lytyll season | And I shall brevely conclude the wyth reason' (636–7). His confutation includes his statement:

> ... now, syr, I deny your pryncypyll:
> Yf drought ever were, yt were impossybyll
> To have ony grayne. 650–2

The Wind Miller is not to be outdone, he tells the Water Miller:

> ... thou desyrest to have excesse of rayne,
> Whych thyng to the were the worst thou couldyst obtayne,
> For, yf thou dydyst, it were a playne induccyon
> To make thyne owne desyer thyne owne destruccyon. 678–81

The Wind Miller's use of 'induccyon' has its source in Aristotle's *Logic*.[15] This balances the Water Miller's reference to the 'thynge selfe' deriving from the *Nichomachean Ethics*. At the same time the patterns of chiasmus in the second line of the Water Miller's speech: 'Yf drought ever were, yt were impossybyll', and that in the last line of the Wind Miller's speech: 'thyne owne desyer thyne owne destruccyon', link the forms of argument used, and suggest the learned mind of the poet or rhetorician, rather than merely the wisdom of experience which would be more appropriate to millers.

The Millers' display of rhetorical skills together with their use of Aristotelian references and terms such as 'induccyon' establishes the presence of a philosophical context in this inconclusive debate. It is, therefore, possible to see that debate as a parody: two millers imitate the disputations of philosophers. This imitation by low–status characters may

satirise the scholastic tradition of philosophical debate, but it also appears to satirise the Humanists, since there appears to be little difference between the debating techniques displayed by the Millers, and no conclusion is reached. Such a satire could well have proved entertaining to a learned Tudor audience. However, given the religious and political context in which the play was created any dramatised debate may well have recalled to the minds of spectators the great debate over the King's divorce.

The date of the first performance of *Wether* is not certain, but its most recent editors suggest Shrovetide 1533.[16] By this time Henry VIII's demand for a divorce from Katherine of Aragon had led to the resignation of the devout Catholic Thomas More as Chancellor, and the pro–divorce reformer Thomas Cranmer had been recalled to England to take charge of the matter. The divorce divided English theologians into factions which supported or rejected the divorce, and polarised existing tensions in the Catholic Church. Heywood, like More, to whom he was related by marriage, was a devout Catholic and would have wanted to prevent the divorce, and I will go on to argue, in the next part of this paper that in the Millers' episode in *Wether* Heywood focused on the conduct of both factions and the response he felt their debate was likely to provoke. In order to address such a dangerous topic he used both instances of satirical condemnation of philosophers from the *Icaromenippus* as the means of commenting covertly, before a learned coterie audience, on the behaviour of the theologians of both factions, and their conduct of the debate.

In spite of the fact that *Wether* was probably intended for a coterie audience, explicit criticism of the factions would, nevertheless, have been dangerous. Heywood, therefore, used sources which were open to interpretation according to the erudition and political/religious orientation of individual spectators, while at a primary level the play may have been interpreted as little more than a traditional Estates satire. As well as Lucian, Heywood's sources included Erasmus, who had translated the *Icaromenippus* from the Greek in 1511, and whose opinions on theologians enabled Heywood to use the satire of philosophers to make politically sensitive comments. It was probably through his relationship to Thomas More that Heywood came to know both Erasmus's opinions and his translation of the *Icaromenippus*, since More and Erasmus were friends and their translations from Lucian's *Dialogues* were published together.[17] While Lucian provided Heywood with the material for his political comments, Chaucer provided Heywood with sources for those aspects of *Wether* which are clearly in the tradition of Estates satire.

Heywood uses Menippus's complaint (quoted earlier) to focus attention on the conduct of the theologians who were involved in the debate prompted by the King's demand for a divorce, and to characterise them as philosophers who did not provide knowledge but created confusion. Their debate becomes characterised as 'contradictory and inconsistent', and the comment of Menippus's Friend appears to *represent* Heywood's bewilderment at their conduct. However, Heywood begins this process of condemning the theologians by introducing into *Wether* allusions to traditional anti-clerical satire, such as that found in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Heywood's use of that traditional satire directs attention to the abuses of power and privilege which were the subject of constant complaint in the first half of the sixteenth century. There were continuing complaints about the misconduct of clergy at all levels. In 1512, John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, complained in his Convocation sermon, of 'the continual secular occupation, wherein priests and bishops nowadays doth busy themselves ... vnder the garment and habit of a priste they lyve playnly after the lay facion'.[18] Colet rebukes 'clerks and priests' for their 'secular and worldly living',[10] and reminds 'monks, canons, and religious men ... not to turmoil themselves in business, neither secular nor other.[20]

Heywood may have drawn on Chaucer's lively anti-clerical satire, since Chaucer, like Lucian, was newly published, but he would have been aware of criticisms from Catholics such as John Colet, Thomas More and Erasmus, who although they were devout Catholics, were nevertheless conscious that the Church was being undermined by clerical abuses of power and privilege. The *Icaromenippus* provided Heywood with the means by which he could comment on the misconduct of clerics. Zeus's condemnation of philosophers (quoted earlier) is expressed in terms which recall traditional anti–clerical satire and may be understood as a biting condemnation of corrupt clerics, including theologians. However, the condemnation of the Greek god may be interpreted in the Tudor context as God's condemnation of the contemporary abuses of power which were alleged against all ranks of clergy.

Heywood introduces anti-clerical satire through the agency of Mery Report the Vice. It begins when Mery Report greets the Merchant, and is extended when he greets the Ranger. The way the Vice interacts with these characters reflects traditional anti–clerical satire, and Zeus's condemnation of philosophers, and it provides the contexts in which the Millers' episode may be interpreted as commenting on theologians, by

establishing the possibility that various kinds of clerics are identifiable in the play.

Mery Report's encounter with the Merchant follows the Vice's entertaining exchanges with the Gentleman. Axton and Happé note that 'in the hierarchy of estates the audience would expect a figure of Clergy to follow the Gentylman'.[21] However, a Merchant arrives next to petition the god Jupiter for wind. Mery Report's greeting introduces the problem of interpreting a character's identity as the Vice apparently misidentifies the Merchant. Mery Report greets him cheerfully saying; 'Mayster Person, now welcome by my life! | I pray you, how doth my mastres your wyfe?' (329–30) This may be regarded as entertaining anti-clerical satire, as the Vice's 'mistake' directs attention to a confusion which should not have been possible. However, complaints had been made since at least the time of Chaucer about the wealth and unchastity of the clergy, and in 1512 John Colet, had condemned 'carnal concupiscence' asking:

> Hath not this vice so grown and waxen in the Church as a flood of their lust, so that there is nothing looked for more diligently in this most busy time of the most part of priests than that that doth delight and please the senses? [22]

He had also drawn attention to ecclesiastical rules 'that forbid that a clerk be no merchant',[23] and he was not alone in this concern. In 1529 'Parliament declared that clerics were forbidden to indulge in trading'.[24] The mercantile enterprises of clerics must have become a problem if they had to be legislated against in this way. So when Mery Report apparently mistakes a merchant for a parson he comments on both traditional and contemporary Tudor complaints concerning the greed and worldliness of priests, and the long-standing complaint that many of them kept concubines. This aspect of the 'mistake' may also draw attention to, and satirise, those supporters of radical reform who, like William Tyndale, advocated marriage as part of their rejection of Catholicism. Thomas More complained in 1529 that 'Tyndall holdeth that prestys must haue wyuys'.[25]

The Merchant takes Mery Report's greeting as an insult, but the Vice's greeting to the Ranger is more obviously insulting. The Ranger enters with a courteous salutation to the audience: ' God be here! Now Cryst kepe thys company'. As Richard Axton points out, this is the *Deus hic* greeting associated with friars,[26] and it draws an insult from Mery Report, who responds: 'In faith ye be welcome evyn very skantely' (401). While this may be no more than the conventional insolence of a Vice, the greeting and

insult taken together suggest the unpopularity of friars, and other minor peripatetic preachers such as pardoners.

The characterisation of the Ranger expands on anti–clerical satire as he bemoans his poverty in relation to the price of his meals when he is travelling. He asks:

> Alas for our wages, what be we nere?
> What is forty shyllynges or fyve marke a yere?
> Many tymes and oft where we be flyttynge,
> We spend forty pens a pece at a syttynge. 416–19

At 40d, (3s 4d) the cost of the meal is certainly an extravagance in relation to his pay of £2 or £3 a year, representing about 8% of his annual income,[27] and this may suggest either gluttony, or another source of income. The Ranger then tells Mery Report that 'wyndefale' is the main supplement for his low wages. This literally means wood blown down, but it may be taken to refer to the charitable donation of the faithful to friars, or to the fines and cost of indulgences exacted from the people by peripatetic preachers such as pardoners. The Ranger, moreover, is not a man to be denied his livelihood. He tells Mery Report that his petition to Jupiter is for more wind to blow down more wood, but adds:

> ... yf I can not get god to do some good
> I wolde hyer the devyll to runne thorow the wood
> The roots to turne up, the toppys to brynge under. 426–8

Thomas More uses a similar demonic image in his *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* to emphasise God's protection of the Christian faith. He writes:

> yet shall he neuer neither suffer it to be distroyed / nor the flocke that remaineth how many braunches so euer the deuyll blow off, to be brought vnto the scarcite either of faithe or vertue.[28]

The image also occurs in the Chester cycle play *Antichrist*, where the character of the Antichrist declares: 'Nowe wyl I turne, all through my might, |trees downe, the rootes upright',[29] and the association of corrupt clerics with Antichrist is ancient. In 1430 Alexander Carpenter quoted St. Bernard when he wrote that:

> there creeps today a putrid plague through the whole body of the Church ... they are Christ's ministers and they serve Antichrist ... To rout them out or to escape them is alike impossible ... For certain, such voluptuous carnal prelates and pastors are the cause of

> all the error and impiety now reigning throughout the entire world.[30]

As Heywood's characterisations of the Ranger and the Merchant reflect the traditions of anti-clerical satire and complaint, they contribute the missing clerical aspect to the play's Estates satire. The differences between them may be seen as representations of different kinds of clerics, the rich and powerful are represented by the Merchant, the peripatetic, of all kinds, by the Ranger. These characterisations take on added significance in the context of the religious controversy created by Henry's desire for a divorce. Although both the characters may be understood to represent self-serving clerics, the characterisation of the Ranger suggests that Heywood saw some of those self–serving clerics as being prepared to endanger the Church for their own profit.

If the audience was alerted to the underlying presence of clerics in *Wether* through Mery Report's challenges to the apparent identities of the Merchant and Ranger, they might have expected similarly revealing challenges to the Millers, but this does not happen. Instead, it is the absence of Mery Report's intervention which signals the significance of the Millers' episode. Nevertheless, before their parodic debate takes place the Millers are characterised in ways which suggest that they represent priests. The conjunction of these characterisations with the philosophical language of their debate, considered in the light of Erasmus's complaints concerning theologians, suggests that these characters represent the theologians of both religious factions who were engaged in the debate over the King's divorce. Although some aspects of their characterisations suggest a moral difference between them, this is constantly subverted as Heywood directs attention to the culpability of theologians from both factions when they engage in the contemporary, and damaging debate.

Observation of the Millers' vocabulary and social status, and the treatment they receive from Mery Report, provide clues to the priestly *alter egos* of the Millers. When each Miller enters he commands deference. Each speaks to the audience for twenty-seven lines, and Mery Report does not interrupt these opening speeches. This is in marked contrast to his insulting interruptions of earlier petitioners such as the Gentleman who greets the audience saying: 'Stand ye mery, my frendes everychone!' to which Mery Report responds arrogantly 'Say that to me and let the rest alone' (220–1). Such insulting language is consistent with Mery Report's status as the Vice, but in the specific context of the play, his arrogance is consistent with his 'appointment' as Usher to Jupiter. After his treatment

of the Gentleman, the Merchant and the Ranger, the deference Mery Report shows the Millers, in spite of their apparent low social status, suggests that they have special significance, while their long speeches are consistent with the characterisation of high or clerical status in medieval literature and drama since at least the time of Chaucer.

Although the Millers each speak of their trade, and each petitions for the weather best suited to the different kinds of mills they operate, the vocabulary of their speeches includes images and references which suggest a Christian significance. Both Millers refer to the grinding of corn, although they do so with differing emphases. The Water Miller, for example, asks '... what avayleth to eche man hys corne | Tyll it be grounde by suche men as we be?' (451–2) The corn to which both Millers refer may be understood as a metaphor deriving its significance from biblical sources such as the Parable of the Sower, in which Christ tells his disciples *semen est verbum dei* ('the seed is the word of God').[31] While the corn may be understood as the Word of God, in accordance with orthodox Catholic belief this required the instruction and exegesis of the Church before it could be assimilated by the faithful. Thus the image of grinding in the play may be interpreted as the preaching and exegesis of the Church by which the word of God becomes spiritual nourishment in the same way that corn must be ground before it can provide nourishment for the physical body. The conjunction of spiritual and physical nourishment is familiar from Christ's statement: *non in pane solo vivet, sed in omni verbo quod procedit de ore Dei* ('man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'),[32] and the association of grain and milling with the Christian faith had a long history in medieval visual art. Margaret Aston notes the existence of images of the Mill of the Host, such as that in a now missing twelfth–century window in Canterbury Cathedral,[33] while Miri Rubin describes images in which Moses was depicted pouring grain into a mill while Paul collected the flour. Rubin notes however that 'the late medieval image is a dense one, incorporating disparate sections of the Christian myth'.[34]

The Water Miller goes on to speak of the circumstances under which he and his fellow 'water millers' make their living when, and he does so in terms which were equally applicable to poor priests. He tells the audience:

> ... touchynge our selfes, we are but drudgys
> And very beggars, save onely our tole.
> Whyche is ryght smale and yet many grudgys.
> Yet, were not reparacyons, we myght do wele. 454–7

The tithes on which priests lived, like the millers' 'tole' (toll), caused great discontent among ordinary people, while the 'reparacyons', which the Miller speaks of in terms appropriate to milling, can denote repairs to the physical fabric of churches, but the term also means spiritual restoration or salvation. This suggests that the Miller may be interpreted as a good priest caring for the spiritual welfare of his parishioners. This impression is strengthened when the Miller continues:

> In thys and myche more so great is our charge
> That we wolde not recke though no water ware,
> Save onely it toucheth eche man so large,
> And ech for our neyghbour Criste byddeth us care. 462–5

When compared with the attitude displayed by the Wind Miller, the Water Miller could be understood to represent good priests who work in order to carry out the teaching of Christ, not for personal gain.

The Wind Miller's soliloquy suggests he represents bad priests as it includes allusions to vices consistently alleged against such priests since the time of Chaucer. The Wind Miller's complaint: 'Who wolde be a Miller? As good be a thefe' (523), would be understood by the original audience as an ironic commonplace,[35] but one which, in the historical context of the play may reflect the general discontent in society over the financial demands of the Church. As Susan Brigden observes:

> Tithe was only the first among many other dues which the citizens owed their clergy. In 1513 or 1514 the Londoners were provoked to send a bill before Star Chamber to protest against exorbitant exactions.[36]

The Wind Miller's speech goes on to satirise the pride, not simply of millers, but more significantly that which was being alleged against some theologians. He reminisces:

> ... in tyme past when gryndynge was plente
> Who were so lyke goddys felows as we?
> As faste as god made corne we myllers made meale.
> Whyche myght be best forborne for comyn weale? 524–7

The Wind Miller's question: 'Who were so lyke goddys felows as we?' suggests almost blasphemous pride, but the four lines taken together may have drawn the attention of the Tudor audience to complaints that exegesis (the making of 'meale') had become more important to the Church than the Word of God. Indeed, in 1515 Erasmus protested that theology

depended 'not so much upon what Christ laid down, as upon the definitions of professors and the power of bishops'.[37] Thus the Wind Miller may represent not simply greedy priests but those proud theologians who failed to distinguish between the value of their own interpretations and the original Word of God, and Heywood's representation of a proud and self–interested miller gains special significance in the context of the religious and political tensions of the 1530s as the characterisation directs attention to doctrinal conflict within the Church. Divisions were emerging, even between Humanists, over the need for exegesis, and by the time *Wether* was performed Erasmus's friend, Thomas More, regarded a group of English Reformers as heretics 'because they believed the Bible to be a superior authority to the Church'.[38]

We should bear in mind that at this time the only distinction Heywood and his contemporaries would have made between the factions involved in the divorce debate and their attitudes to the reform of clerical abuses would have been between conservative Reformers such as More and Colet, and radical Reformers such as William Tyndale and Simon Fish, and this is significant for our understanding of the relationship between the two Millers. By observing the cultural significance of the images and allusions in the soliloquies of the two Millers, we can discover their *alter egos* as priests, but any apparent moral difference between them disappears when Mery Report intervenes in their debate. Having heard their conflicting demands for weather he tries to reconcile them, saying: 'Come on and assay how you twayne can agre — | A brother of yours, a Miller as ye be' (546–7), but the Water Miller responds stubbornly:

> By meane of our craft we may be brothers,
> But whyles we lyve shall we never be lovers.
> We be of one crafte but not of one kynde. 548–500

Any possibility that the Water Miller might be considered morally superior to the Wind Miller is subverted by his rejection of brotherhood, which would have had familiar Christian connotations for the original audience. It is further subverted by his immediate willingness to enter into the debate on the relative merits of wind and water for milling, where he uses philosophical terms drawn from Aristotelian sources and a rhetorical style to match the Wind Miller. The reference to brotherhood also emphasises that although factions had polarised around the problem of the king's divorce, both factions remained, in the early 1530s, within the Catholic Church. At this point in the play the reference to brotherhood confirms

the priestly *alter egos* of both Millers, and they become clearly confirmed as theologians by their use of Aristotelian terms, when we note that in 1515 Erasmus had deplored what he called 'this newer kind of theology ... so much adulterated with Aristotle',[39] and in the same year More had complained that:

> among those who are called theologians there are some who give themselves up so completely to ... disputatious theology that ... they definitely neglect ... whatever is ... most worthy of true theologians.[40]

Once the Millers were recognised by the Tudor audience as representing the theologians of both factions, Lucian's satire would become a comment on them and their debate. Zeus's condemnation of philosophers as 'disputatious, vainglorious ... dividing themselves into schools and inventing word mazes'[41] names and condemns the theologians' faults, and the process by which factionalism took place. The comment of Menippus's Friend: 'extraordinary that learned men quarrelled with each other about their doctrines and did not hold the same views about the same things'[42] may represent Heywood's own bewilderment at the schism developing in the Catholic Church, while Menippus's complaint that he found the arguments of the philosophers 'contradictory and inconsistent' not only condemns the arguments of the theologians, but provides the context for Mery Report's disrespectful response to the debate.

This response provides a more accessible comment on the theologians and the effect of their wrangling. With an insulting interruption, Mery Report terminates the Millers' debate. He tells them 'Stop folysh knaves, for your reasonynge is suche | That ye have reasoned even ynough and to much' (710–11). This seems like a conventionally insulting intervention by the Vice through which he intends to degrade the debate, but which given the Millers' low status simply limits the parody. Although Heywood has briefly suggested a difference between the two Millers/priests through their soliloquies, the willingness of both Millers to enter into the debate confirms that the theologians from both factions may justifiably be regarded as 'knaves' whose reasoning resolves nothing, but rather creates exasperation and disrespect. Although the insult is the response of the Vice, it may also represent Heywood's prediction or observation of the reactions of lay individuals who are confused by the arguments of the factions.

It is clearly no accident that Heywood associates the Merchant, the Ranger, and the Wind Miller with petitions for wind, since they may be understood to represent various degrees of corrupt clerics who had been,

and continued to be the subject of anti–clerical satire and popular complaint. The association of wind with these characters may have reminded the Tudor audience of St Paul's complaint in his Epistle to the Ephesians that *circumferamur omni vento doctrinae in nequita hominum* ('we are carried about by every wind of doctrine among the worthlessness of men').[43] More used this reference in his *Responsio ad Lutherum* when he declared: 'From [the] church you must learn ... Otherwise you will be borne about in doubt and uncertainty by every wind of doctrine, and you will reduce everything to doubt'. By alluding to the same source through the naming and characterisation of the Wind Miller especially, Heywood draws attention to the uncertainty which the religious debate was causing, and the Wind Miller's admission: '... I fear our pryde | Is cause of the care whyche god doth us provyde' (528–9) may be understood as Heywood's assertion that it was the sin of pride among some clerics which was leading to conflict and weakening the authority of the Church.

The caution with which Heywood used Lucian's satire was demanded by the topic he was addressing and the comments he attempted to make as he pointed out the causes and consequences of religious factionalism. His technique was to create characterisations in the play which introduced satire as a topic through allusions to traditional forms of anti-clerical satire and complaint. Zeus's powerful condemnation of philosophers as 'quick-tempered, gluttonous ... full of effrontery', and his rhetorical question 'how can one describe how much they indulge their passions, and how they lick the filth off pennies', could be applied to the characters of the Merchant, the Ranger, and even the Wind Miller, but more importantly they express with more vehemence than traditional anti–clerical satire the complaints of Tudor society against those clerical abuses which were weakening the authority of the Church and leading to support for radical reform. Menippus's complaint concerning the conduct of philosophers that 'all their statements were contradictory and inconsistent', together with Erasmus's condemnation of theologians for their devotion to Aristotle, condemns the more immediate activities of theologians engaged in the divorce debate, as this is represented in the Millers' episode. Heywood's use of traditional, and therefore less remarkable forms of satire, provides entertainment, but, taken together with the promotion of the almost inconsequential petitions for weather from the *Icaromenippus*, they direct attention to the more noteworthy satire of philosophers from that Dialogue, and it is that satire which provides Heywood with the means of condemning

the theologians who were engaged in the divorce debate, and suggesting the reaction it would provoke.

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NOTES

1. These critics include Kenneth Walker Cameron *John Heywood's 'Play of the Wether'* (Thistle Press, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1941); Pearl Hogrefe *The Sir Thomas More Circle* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1959); Joel B. Altman *The Tudor Play of Mind* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978); Greg Walker *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).
2. *The Plays of John Heywood* edited Richard Axton and Peter Happé (D.S. Brewer, Cambridge, 1991) 48. All quotations are from this edition.
3. Axton and Happé suggest Shrovetide 1533 as the date of the play's first performance: *The Plays of John Heywood* xiv.
4. Axton and Happé *The Plays of John Heywood* xiii.
5. Altman *Tudor Play of Mind* 107.
6. *Lucian* translated A.M. Harmon, 7 vols (Heinemann, London, 1915) *2 Icaromenippus, or The Sky Man*, 277. All quotations are from this edition. The Latin text, probably the version known to Heywood, is taken from Christopher Robinson's edition of '*Luciani Compluria Opuscula ab Erasmo et Thoma Moro Interpretibus Optimis in Latinorum Linguam Traducta*' in Desiderius Erasmus *Opera Omnia* (North Holland Publishing Co., Amsterdam, 1969–) Series 1 Volume *1* 412. There are no significant differences of interpretation between the Latin translation of Erasmus and Harmon's English translation.
7. *Icaromenippus*, 317–18. *Luciani Dialogi* 420–421.
8. *Icaromenippus*, 311. *Luciani Dialogi* 419.
9. Although the episode of the Gentlewoman and the Launder has a binary structure, it does not include a debate. The structure of the Millers' episode therefore suggests a unique significance.
10. Thomas More 'In Defense of Humanism'. Letter to Dorp in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, edited Daniel Kinney, vol. 15 (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1986) 51.
11. Altman *Tudor Play of Mind* 116.
12. *A New Aristotle Reader* edited J.L. Ackrill (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1987) 386.

13. Isabel Rivers *Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry*, (Routledge, London, 2nd edition 1979) 126–7.

14. *The Correspondence of Erasmus 1514–16*, translated R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson (University of Toronto Press, 1976) 71.

15. In his *Posterior Analytics*, which forms part of his work on logic, Aristotle defines two kinds of arguments deductive and inductive, and he states: 'rhetorical arguments ... persuade ... either through examples, which is induction, or through enthymemes, which is deduction': Ackrill *A New Aristotle Reader* 39.

16. Axton and Happé *The Plays of John Heywood* xiv.

17. *The Correspondence of Erasmus 1517–18* translated R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson (University of Toronto Press, 1976) *4* 187.

18. *English Historical Documents 1485–1558* edited C.H. Williams (English Historical Documens 5: Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1967) 654–5.

19. Williams *English Historical Documents* 652.

20. Williams *English Historical Documents* 657.

21. Axton and Happé *The Plays of John Heywood* 293, note to line 329.

22. Williams *English Historical Documents* 653.

23. Williams *English Historical Documents* 657.

24. A.G. Dickens *The English Reformation* (Batsford, London, 2nd edition 1989) 124.

25. Sir Thomas More 'Dialogue Concerning Heresies in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* edited Thomas Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour and Richard Marius (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1981) *6:1* 303. See also Christopher Haigh *English Reformations* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993) 58.

26. Axton and Happé *The Plays of John Heywood*, note to line 400.

27. This seems, however, to be a low wage by Tudor standards when an agricultural labourer received 4d a day (£5 18s 4d p.a.). See Nigel Heard *Tudor Economy and Society* (Hodder and Stoughton, London 1992) 24.

28. Sir Thomas More 'A Confutation of Tyndale's Answer in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* edited Louis A. Schuster, Richard Marius and others (Yale University Press, London, 1973) *8.2* Book 6, 617.

29. *The Chester Cycle* edited R. Lumiansky and David Mills *EETS SS 3* (1974) Play 28 *Antichrist* 1.81–2.

30. G.R. Owst *The Destructorium Viciorum of Alexander Carpenter* (SPCK, London, 1952) 39.

31. *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* edited Robertus Weber (Deutsche Bibelgeselleschaft, Stuttgart, 1969), Evangelium secundum Lucam 8: 11. All translations are mine. See also John Colet's Convocation Sermon in which he declared that the bishops should 'sow the word of God'. Williams *English Historical Documents* 658.

32. *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem* edited Weber, Evangelium secundum Mattheum 4:4.

33. Margaret Aston 'Corpus Christi and Corpus Regni: Heresy and the Peasants' Revolt' *Past and Present* 143 (May 1994) 3–47, 30.

34. Miri Rubin *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1991) 312–13.

35. Axton and Happé in their edition of the plays note Heywood's debt to Chaucer (32), and *The Reeve's Tale* includes Chaucer's description of the miller 'A theef he was for sothe of corn and meale, | And that a sly, and usant for to stele': (3939–40): *Riverside Chaucer* edited Larry D. Benson (Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 1987). See also Richard Holt *The Mills of Medieval England* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988) 105.

36. Susan Brigden *London and the Reformation* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1989), 50-1.

37. *The Correspondence of Erasmus 3* 125. Heywood's debt to Chaucer may again be reflected here since Chaucer satirised the practice of 'glossing' in *The Summoner's Tale* where the Friar says 'I ne have no text of it, as I suppose, | But I shal fynde it in a maner glose' (1ines 1919–2).

38. John Guy *Tudor England* (Oxford University Press, 1988) 119.

39. *The Correspondence of Erasmus 3*, 124.

40. *In Defense of Humanism*, letter to Dorp 47.

41. *Icaromenippus* 317.

42. *Icaromenippus* 277.

43. *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, Epistula ad Ephesios 4:14.

44. Sir Thomas More 'Responsio ad Lutherum' in *The Complete Works of St Thomas More* edited John M. Headley (Yale University Press, New Haven: 1969) 5 599.