"A RIGHT STRANGE MINGLING OF MIGHTIE BLOOD WITH MEANE": AN EXAMINATION OF TWAIN'S 1601

A Thesis

By

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ABSTRACT

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AN EXAMINATION OF TWAIN'S 1601. (October 1981)
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Mark Twain's short, bawdy piece, 1601, has aroused much critical controversy, but it has never been fully examined for its intrinsic merit and for its relationship to the Twain canon. Most critical work to date has either been bibliographical listings or psychoanalytical studies of Twain himself; there has been no close critical reading of the text.

An examination of the themes shows that 1601 is not merely a dirty, scatological burlesque, but a carefully composed tale which contains satire, a conscientious attempt at recreating Elizabethan speech, and a clearly defined form. Through 1601, Twain satirizes religion, the literary romantic tradition, the concept of royalty, and man's Moral Sense. All of these themes are present throughout Twain's more conventional works, yet many scholars have argued that 1601 has no literary merit.

This thesis recounts the history of 1601's surreptitious printings, discusses the most important critical reactions, makes a close reading of the text to illuminate themes and form, and explores the

relationship of 1601 to Twain's other works and to the works of his contemporaries.

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CHAPTER I

In 1876, between the publication of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain wrote a humorous scatological piece satirizing Elizabethan England. Called 1601 . . . Conversation as it Was by the Social Fireside in the Time of the Tudors, it was widely distributed, author anonymous, and provided diversion for printers, rich collectors, and those amused by bawdy literature. Even so, the text of 1601 is rarely anthologized, usually printed privately, not widely read, and the work receives little or no attention from Twain scholars.

It is perhaps amazing that any piece of Twainiana should be overlooked when scholars are constantly giving even the most trivial works and letters close scrutiny. 1601 has been relatively overlooked for several reasons--its scatological nature, the squeamishness of some literary critics, its seemingly small relationship to the Twain canon, and the unwillingness of some to dignify the salacious piece and "sully" the name of Mark Twain. The scant work that deals with the book has either been bibliographical and printing history, attacks or defenses of the subject matter, or psychological studies of Twain in light of the smutty nature of the contents. But this small book may be not merely a publishing oddity or the frustrated writing of a man bound by a dictatorial wife, a repressive society, and embarrassed literary executors and heirs. 1601 is important

because of its unbridled ribald humor--it shows Twain at his most basic, both in language and in theme. This thesis will not be another psychological reading of the author, but rather a close reading of the text, to concentrate on form and content rather than on morality, pornography, and sexual repression. Indeed, many of Twain's major themes are present in 1601: attacks on royalty, on religion, on the literary romantic tradition, and on the Moral Sense. An examination of these themes will help show 1601's place in the Twain canon, and, more broadly, in the tradition of bawdy literature and Southwestern humor.

Such a re-examination seems in order. Scholars have either overlooked, underplayed, or psychoanalyzed Twain through 1601; none have examined fully its intrinsic value and its extrinsic relationship to Twain's canon and to broader literary history.

1601 is told by Queen Elizabeth's cup-bearer in a section of his diary recounting a meeting attended by the Queen, Francis Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, Francis Beaumont, the Duchess of Bilgewater, the Countess of Granby, her daughter Helen, Lady Margery Boothy, and Lady Alice Dilberry. It is written in mock-Elizabethan English, with diction and spelling that attempt to recreate the flavor of the language of that time.

Fully two-thirds of 1601 is devoted to flatulence, and the rest to various discussions of sexual prowess. As the story begins, someone breaks wind and Queen Elizabeth attempts to find the "author." She questions, in turn, Shakespeare, Jonson, and the others present, until she finds that Raleigh is the culprit. He confesses that it

was one of his lesser efforts and proceeds to prove it by producing one of greater sound and smell.

The rest of the piece consists of stories of sexual prowess. Shakespeare cites Montaigne as an authority about the widows of Perigord, who wear male members on their head-dresses as a sign of widowhood. He also quotes Montaigne concerning an emperor who "did take ten maidenheddes in ye compass of a single night."[1] The Countess of Granby counters by pointing out that "a ram is yet ye Emperor's superior, since he will top above a hundred ewes twixt sun and sun, and after, if he can have none more to shag, will masturbate until he hath enryched whole acres with his seed."[2] Queen Elizabeth begins questioning the maiden Helen and the youth Francis Beaumont about sexual activity, and Beaumont manages to compliment the Queen on her own desirability.

Most of the rest of the piece consists of narration by the cup-bearer, who, according to a short prefatory note, feels he is better bred than these people and resents having to record their conversation. This conversation includes a dispute over the proper spelling of "bollocks," Boccaccio's story of a maiden outsmarting a lecherous priest, a reading by Shakespeare of part of Henry IV, another "outburst" by Raleigh, and an argument over the merits of various poets and painters.

In an aside, the cup-bearer decries the hypocrisy of the company, including Elizabeth's alleged affair with Raleigh, Shakespeare's illegitimate child, and the Duchess of Bilgewater's prolific sexual

activity. The story ends abruptly with Raleigh's short tale of a bishop's being outsmarted by a young maiden.

Twain wrote 1601 in the summer of 1876 at Quarry Farm, near Elmira, New York. It was a letter to his friend The Reverend Joseph Twichell, a man who had a liking for humor, even coarse humor, in spite of his ecclesiastical profession.[3] Twain says of the first mailing:

> It made a fat letter. I bundled it up and mailed it to Twichell in Hartford. And in the fall, when we returned to our home in Hartford and Twichell and I resumed the Saturday ten-mile walk to Talcott Tower and back, every Saturday, as had been our custom for years, we used to carry that letter along. There was a grove of hickory trees by the roadside, six miles out, and close by it was the only place in that whole region where the fringed gentian grew. On our return from the Tower we used to gather the gentians, then lie down on the grass upon the golden carpet of fallen hickory leaves and get out that letter and read it by the help of these poetical surroundings. We used to laugh ourselves lame and sore over the cupbearer's troubles.[4]

Accounts of how the piece came to be printed vary. Twain's version includes this unusual ploy by another friend, Dean Sage:

> However, in the winter Dean Sage came to Twichell's on a visit, and Twichell, who was never able to keep a secret when he knew it ought to be revealed, showed him the letter. Sage carried it off. He was greatly tickled with it himself and he wanted to know how it might affect other people. He was under the seal of confidence and could not show the letter to anyone--still he wanted to try it on a dog, as the stage phrase is, and he dropped it in the aisle of the smoking car accidentally and sat down near by to wait for results. The letter traveled from group to group

> around the car and when he finally went and claimed it he was convinced that it possessed literary merit. So he got a dozen copies privately printed in Brooklyn. He sent one to David Gray in Buffalo, one to a friend in Japan, one to Lord Houghton in England, and one to a Jewish Rabbi in Albany, a very learned man and an able critic and lover of old-time literatures.[5]

None of these copies is now extant, so the validity of this claim may be doubtful.

The more widely accepted version of the first printing is that Twichell kept the letter for four years, when John Hay, later Secretary of State, read the piece and shared it with his friend Alexander Gunn. In collaboration, and with Twain's consent, the pair had four copies printed in 1880. Only one copy is extant.[6]

The first hardcover edition was copied from Gunn and Hay's pamphlet. It was printed at West Point under the supervision of Lieutenant C.E.S. Wood, adjutant of the military academy. Twain had received so many requests for copies of 1601 that he asked Wood to amend the text to Elizabethan orthography and print fifty copies. Wood began what has become a common practice among printers--he made 1601 into a masterpiece of the printer's craft. Not content to make just the spelling seem authentic, he also used hand-set type printed on handmade linen paper soaked in weak coffee and allowed to mildew. The book was reportedly distributed among the crowned heads of Europe, as well as to American luminaries. The author of the piece was not identified.[7]

Although the work seemed to have the stamp of Twain's hand, it was also widely supposed to have been written by an English actor who

gave it to theater critic William T. Ball, or by Eugene Field as a practical joke on Twain. In 1906, Twain set these rumors to rest by claiming authorship in a letter to Charles Orr, librarian of Case Library, Cleveland.[8]

Since then, over fifty editions have been privately printed, usually in small numbers. Many printers use the piece as an exercise, and 1601 has gained a wider readership over the years. The most important edition is Franklin J. Meine's edition of 1939. He reproduces a facsimile of the West Point edition, and includes a section on sources and allusions, plus a short but useful bibliography.

Twain says he was inspired to write 1601 because of reading he was doing in preparation to writing The Prince and the Pauper. In his autobiography, he writes:

> I was reading ancient English books with the purpose of saturating myself with archaic English to a degree which would enable me to do plausible imitations of it in a fairly easy and unlabored way. In one of these old books I came across a brief conversation which powerfully impressed me, as I had never been impressed before, with the frank indelicacies of speech permissible among ladies and gentlemen in that ancient time. . . . I was immediately full of a desire to practice my archaics and contrive one of those stirring conversations out of my own head.[9]

Exactly what he was reading is not known for sure, but Walter Blair suggests it may have been "The FART; Famous for its Satyrical Humor in the Reign of St. Anne," and "The Second Part of the FART; or the Beef-eaters Appeal to Mr. D'Urfey," two bawdy poems included in

D'Urfey's Wit and Mirth, or Pills to Purge Melancholy, published in London in 1719. The plots of the poems resemble 1601 closely: a "fart" of unknown origin, a questioning of those present, accusal of a yeoman, and his proof that a lady was the culprit.[10] Howard Baetzhold suggests a similarity to certain tales in Marguerite of Navarre's Heptameron, a book patterned after Boccaccio's Decameron. Twain purchased the book in 1875, one year before the composition of 1601. Further, Raleigh attributes his final anecdote to "ye ingenious Margrette of Navarre."[11]

Critical reaction to 1601 has included total absence of any comment, dismissal of the piece as an interesting but ultimately unimportant work, censure on the grounds of bad taste, and praise for the work, especially for what it purportedly reveals about Mark Twain. Still, 1601 has received relatively little close critical attention; beyond bibliography, it has been all but ignored.

The first reaction came from those who read the original manuscript, notably Joseph Twichell, John Hay, and David Gray. Twichell and Hay found it amusing and were instrumental in the first secret printings. Hay called it a classic--a "most exquisite bit of old English morality."[12] The poet David Gray was even more effusive. In his autobiography, Twain recalls Gray's advice:

> He said, "Put your name to it. Don't be ashamed of it. It is a great and fine piece of literature and deserves to live, and will live. Your Innocents Abroad will presently be forgotten, but this will survive. Don't be ashamed; don't be afraid. Leave the command in your will that your heirs shall put on your tombstone these words, and these alone: 'He wrote the immortal 1601.' "[13]

Not everyone has agreed with Gray's assessment. The main detractor of 1601 is Van Wyck Brooks, who wrote the seminal and controversial study, The Ordeal of Mark Twain. His thesis is that Twain constantly wrote in rebellion against the Victorian repression of his wife, Olivia, and his editor, William Dean Howells. Brooks argues that Twain "let himself go" in 1601 in reaction to Olivia and Howells' censorship of his manuscripts. According to Brooks, Olivia read each day's output and changed specific words, and Howells found some of Twain's letters and pieces so frank and shocking that he considered burning them.[14] Brooks uses this to support his claim that Twain wrote 1601 in secret as a sort of escape valve for the pressure built up by Olivia and Howells, and that 1601 is proof that Twain abdicated his role as an artist. Brooks writes:

> Mark Twain's verbal obscenities were obviously the expression of that vital sap which, not permitted to inform his work, had been driven inward and left there to ferment. No wonder he was always indulging in orgies of forbidden words. Consider the famous book, 1601, that 'fireside conversation in the time of Queen Elizabeth': is there any obsolete verbal indecency in the English language that Mark Twain has not painstakingly resurrected and assembled here? He, whose blood was in constant ferment and who could not contain within the narrow bonds that had been set for him, the riotous exuberance of his nature, had to have an escape-valve, and he poured through it a fetid stream of meaningless ribaldry--the waste of a priceless psychic material![15]

Almost all succeeding criticism has been either a defense or a refutation of this statement by Brooks. John S. Van E. Kohn argues that it is the humor of 1601, and not its underlying psychological

implications about the author, that makes it important. He calls Brooks' statement "a fetid stream of sententious punditry."[16] Kohn says there is no "need to impute to a major professional humorist an ulterior motive, conscious or subconscious, for the composition of a sketch that has appealed to four generations of readers as a masterpiece of humor."[17]

Justin Kaplan agrees with Brooks, calling 1601 ". . . an escape from the restraints of juvenile literature, a covert way of scribbling dirty words on Tom Sawyer's fence."[18] Edward Wagenknecht, however, feels that Brooks' suppression theory is not adequate, since, as he says, every man suffers sexual and societal suppression in some form. He says Chaucer must have felt similar pressures, but Chaucer's "Miller's Tale" is not considered a "waste of a priceless psychic material." Wagenknecht says Twain includes these "dirty" words and situations merely to befunny--that 1601 is just part of being a complete humorist.[19] DeLancey Ferguson says that 1601's only purpose was "for the edification of a few chosen friends, and as such it served its purpose to admiration."[20] As for any literary merit, Ferguson sees little: "Beyond demonstrating that Mark knew all the short and vulgar words, and had a robust man's pleasure in a tale of bawdry, 1601 is of small importance."[21]

One critic uses Brooks' suppression theory to reach an entirely different conclusion--instead of decrying 1601 as meaningless filth, Martha Anne Turner lauds it as the true liberation of the artist:

> . . . the satire reveals conspicuously a side Twain fought to preserve. That he succeeded in giving expression to his ribald Anglo-Saxon nature, which both his editor-friend William Dean Howells and the purist influence of his wife tended to suppress, is significant. There was no literary emasculation of Mark Twain. What is of further importance, 1601 uncovered the man himself beneath the trappings of convention--the man who like Lincoln was descended from sturdy pioneer stock. Moreover, as an avowed opponent of sham and hypocrisy with an equal aversion to puritanism and censorship of the press, Twain deals all three a socking blow in 1601.[22]

The only critic who deals extensively and solely with the text--as opposed to 1601's psychological implications--is Walter Blair. In his landmark book, Mark Twain and Huckleberry Finn, Blair sees a connection between Twain's most famous work and his most infamous work:

> Still, 1601 has a relevance to that part of Huckleberry Finn written in 1876 which has been overlooked. No one seems to have paid much attention to Twain's revealing (and unusual) discussion of exactly what he considered particularly funny in his sketch. He says that into the mouths of the group 'I put . . . grossnesses not to be found outside of Rabelais, perhaps. I made their stateliest remarks reek with them, and all this was charming . . . delightful, delicious. . . .' This delight in incongruities between gross terms and stately language gains significance when one recalls that the sketch was written within weeks of the time when Twain launched the first great American novel in the vernacular--which, in its own way, exploits similar incongruities between Huck's vulgar speech and statelier styles.[23]

This is the bulk of criticism dealing with 1601. Other major Twain scholars have either mentioned it briefly in passing or ignored it entirely. Nearly all the critical work to date, except Blair's,

either expounds on or attempts to refute Brooks' suppression theory. Whether or not Brooks is correct--whether or not Twain was writing 1601 as a rebellion against Olivia and Howells--is not the most important factor. Twain may truly have been "scribbling dirty words on Tom Sawyer's fence." But it is not the business of this thesis to psychoanalyze an author who died over seventy years ago with a work written almost a century ago. It is a shame that Brooks dismisses 1601 as a "fetid stream of meaningless ribaldry," but it is more of a shame that so many have overlooked the work itself and have been sidetracked by Brooks' biographical and psychological reading. Kohn and Wagenknecht do move away from the psychological and cite humor as enough reason to accept 1601, but 1601 goes deeper than mere humor. The satiric themes are rife, yet they do not cite them, do not point them out, do not even acknowledge them. True, 1601 is humorous, but like most of Twain's work, it is humorous with a point. The dismissal of Twain as merely a humorist, a dismissal common to many critics, does not allow for the artistry and craft exhibited throughout the Twain canon. If 1601 is merely a long dirty joke, as these critics seem to suggest, it will not stand up to a detailed analysis of form and theme.

Turner adroitly turns Brooks' conclusions around to decide that, rather than showing the literary emasculation of Twain, 1601 shows his literary liberation. As with Brooks' argument, Turner may be correct. But there is no way to prove this. There is no way to exhume Twain and psychoanalyze him to see if he was suppressed or

liberated. With no proof, her argument remains idle speculation, no better or no worse than Brooks' argument.

The answer lies, as Blair suggests, in examining the text itself. Here is tangible proof that 1601 has merit. By following Blair's lead in examining the text rather than the author, this thesis will attempt to find the artistry of form and content in 1601, both intrinsically and as it relates to Twain's other works and as it relates to the broader category of bawdy literature. If 1601 is more than "the priceless waste of a precious psychic material," a close reading of the text, not an analysis of Twain, should be sufficient.

CHAPTER II

In the introduction to 1601, the cup-bearer calls the meeting in Elizabeth's chambers "a right strange mingling of mightie blood with meane."[1] This description applies not only to the company assembled that night, but also to 1601 itself: the incongruities are piled one on top of another and provide a common thread for analysis of the book. "A right strange mingling . . . " becomes a metaphor to illustrate form, language, satire, characterization, and humor.

The form of the supposed diary entry is a "right strange mingling" in itself. It is at once narrative, interpretation, drama, and a long dirty joke. The cup-bearer weaves all of these elements into the diary entry, with the main portion consisting of the verbatim conversation between the Queen and her subjects, presented in the form of a play. He interrupts the drama intermittently to add his own insights and observations.

The story also has the aspects of a real diary entry. It begins abruptly, with little prefatory matter beyond a list of those present, then plunges straight into a record of the meeting. About half-way through, the cup-bearer abandons his dramatic form and narrates the remaining action. He ends just as abruptly as he began, with no final words or conclusions, just as a real diary would do, giving the illusion that the cup-bearer would record each succeeding day's events. As it is, 1601 resembles a long dirty joke, almost a

"shaggy dog story." It rambles through various hilarious scenes, then ends abruptly, leaving the reader to realize he has been had.

The archaic spelling and syntax reinforce the feel of an authentic diary of the time. Though 1601 could not pass for an authentic early modern English text, the attempt has been made to "antique" the work and make it seem old. This is achieved mainly by the addition of a final -e to many words, inversion of normal word order, and the use of archaisms like "hath" and "seemeth." Reinforced with creative printing techniques, like the West Point press's use of coffee-stained, slightly mildewed paper, 1601 is a carefully forged piece of trickery; the "strange mingling" of diary form, dramatic presentation, and the cup-bearer's personal observations produce incongruities of form which are reconciled by satire, humor, and the cup-bearer himself.

The two most arresting aspects of 1601 are the subject matter and graphic language. Any work which deals with subjects like masturbation, sexual intercourse, and outbursts of flatus, and uses vernacular terms like "fart," "bollocks," "cunt," "shit," and "piss," would be controversial; to attribute these words and actions to Queen Elizabeth and her nobility is shocking, especially to a Victorian audience. After all, a society so sexually repressed that piano legs were covered out of an over-wrought sense of modesty would be scandalized by such a display of words, especially if spoken by a queen. Even today, some squeamishness persists; 1601 has yet to be included in Twain's collected works. Perhaps some holdover from Victorian sensibilities, specifically regarding the notion of decorum

among royalty, exists even today in our more open age of X-rated movies and uncensored literature. The Moral Sense, which makes 1601 "dirty" to the Victorians and to us, will be examined later, but a short word study will help to show that these words were part of the Elizabethan vocabulary.

The Oxford English Dictionary cites shit, piss, bollocks, and fart, but does not cite cunt.[2] However, Eric Partridge's A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English cites cunt, noting that it dates at least from Middle English (cf. Chaucer's queynt) and was Standard English until the end of the fifteenth century. After 1700, cunt was considered not only vulgar but also obscene, meaning that it constituted a legal offense in print.[3]

Shit was Standard English in 1600. It has been considered vulgar since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Piss was Standard English until about 1760, and bollocks was Standard English until 1840. Fart was considered Standard English until the eighteenth century, and the OED attributes it to Chaucer, Jonson, Swift, and Burns.

All these words, then, were Standard English in Elizabeth's time, with a stigma attached only to cunt. Whether Elizabeth actually used such language is not certain, but a writer interested in realistic speech could assume she might have. Past suppression of 1601 has been largely due to the prurient subject matter and these "dirty" words, but both have merit in literary terms. The cup-bearer, though a prude himself, is duty-bound to transcribe the events exactly as they happened. The fact that he does faithfully report the strange

goings-on that night in Elizabeth's closet might make him an early proponent of realism: life portrayed faithfully, nothing glossed over, using the vernacular. In the tradition of diarists, the cup-bearer pulls no punches and tells the truth as he sees it. Like Pepys and Boswell, the cup-bearer reveals truths, sometimes unpleasant, about sacred subjects, exposing them for what they are. This puts him at odds with writers in the romantic tradition. When compared with other narrators in the Twain canon, as will be done in the next chapter, one sees that the cup-bearer is a reporter of realism and a debunker of the romantic myth, like the more famous narrators Huck Finn and Hank Morgan.

Of course, before one can accept the pronouncements of a narrator, it must be decided if the narrator can be trusted. Who is the cup-bearer? What are his biases? Why is he attending this meeting and writing this diary?

The cup-bearer gives good pictures of Elizabeth, Raleigh, Shakespeare, and the others, but says very little about himself. He reveals himself most in little asides and comments between dramatic episodes. In his first such aside, after identifying those present, he writes:

> I, being Her Majestie's cup-bearer, had no choice but to remain and behold rank forgot, and ye high hold converse with ye low as upon equal termes, and a great scandal did ye world heare thereof. (1601, p. 33)

Thus, he is a servant, forced against his will to attend the meeting. He is also truly loyal to the Queen, though he does not seem to understand why she would stoop to "hold converse with ye low as upon equal termes." This phrase shows that he holds with the doctrine of the superiority of the nobility; the Queen, being God's anointed, is above mere mortals. He is confused by the Queen's revels with riff-raff, but he remains loyal and stays on through the distasteful meeting. He seems to be a bit snobbish towards all those present except the Queen. In the headnote to the diary, Twain provides this information:

> Mem:--The following is supposed to be an extract from the diary of the Pepys of that day, the same being cup-bearer to Queen Elizabeth. It is supposed that he is of ancient lineage; that he despises those canaille; that his soul consumes with wrath to see the Queen stooping to talk to such; and that the old man feels his nobility defiled by contact with Shakespeare, etc., and yet he has got to stay there till Her Majesty chooses to dismiss him. (1601, p. 32)

This passage, corroborated by the cup-bearer's own words, raises an important point. The cup-bearer does not hate "those canaille" because of deep-rooted feelings of democracy; his resentment comes from strict loyalty to a social code, a code he feels he rightly subscribes to. He, thinking he is of noble lineage, thinks he should be the Queen's consort, not her cup-bearer; "those canaille," being bourgeois writers and artists, should not even be present. This will color any comments he makes on class and nobility.

There is another reason the cup-bearer is so consumed with wrath. 1601 begins with these words:

> Yesternight took Her Majestie, ye Queene, a fantasie such as she sometimes hath, and hadde to her closet certain that do write plays, bookes and such like--these being Lord Bacon, his worship, Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Ben Jonson, and ye childe Francis Beaumont, which being but sixteen hath yet turned his hande to ye doing of ye Latin masters into our English tongue with great discretion and much applause. Also came with those ye famous Shaxpur. (1601, p. 33)

All these men are writers. The cup-bearer calls the meeting "a fantasie such as she sometimes hath"; he clearly cannot understand the fantasy. Is the cup-bearer, himself a writer of sorts, jealous of these successful authors? Indeed he has much criticism for them all, especially Shakespeare. He lists Shakespeare last, almost as an afterthought. He has nothing but disdain for Shakespeare's works, as evidenced by this comment:

> . . . Master Shaxpur did read a part of his King Henrie IV, the which it seemeth to mee is not of the value of an arseful of ashes, yet they praised it bravely, one and all.
>
> The same did read a portion of his Venus and Adonis to their prodigious admiration, whereas, I being sleepy and fatigued withal, did deem it but paltry stuffe. . . . (1601, p. 38)

The brunt of the cup-bearer's wrath falls on writers, especially the most popular writer, Shakespeare. Any discussion of art and literature will be affected by the cup-bearer's obvious jealousy of writers.

Given these biases, can the cup-bearer be trusted? Is he presenting the meeting as it happened, or is he censoring events and changing them to his own liking?

Certainly he cannot be accused of censorship; little else exists which he has not included here. He has a predilection towards prudery, but he has nevertheless included foul words in the interest of being an accurate reporter. It seems that he has overridden his own feelings and presented a true account of the meeting. Like a good diarist, he has set down events as they occurred, even at his own expense. This does not mean he is totally trustworthy; his biases must be taken into account when looking at his personal observations.

The "right strange mingling" of diverse elements helps fill 1601 with satire. In fact, "a right strange mingling of mightie blood with meane" could serve as a definition of travesty or burlesque--a lofty subject treated in a low manner. It would be giving the cup-bearer too much credit to say he is the creator of this satire, or even that he is aware of it. Any ironic statement the cup-bearer makes is unintentional. To find the creator of the satire, one must go one step back, to the author, or, more properly, to the implied narrator. This is where the satire of 1601 originates.

As dangerous as it can be to quote an author concerning his own work, it might be helpful to note Twain's own comments in his autobiography:

> So I contrived that meeting of the illustrious personages in Queen Elizabeth's private parlor and started a most picturesque and lurid and scandalous conversation between them. The Queen's cup-bearer, a dried-up old nobleman, was present to take down the talk--not that he wanted to do it but because it was the Queen's

> desire and he had to. He loathed all those people because they were of offensively low birth and because they hadn't a thing to recommend them except their incomparable brains. He dutifully set down everything they said, and commented upon their words and their manners with bitter scorn and indignation. I put into the Queen's mouth, and into the mouths of those other people, grossnesses not to be found outside of Rabelais, perhaps. I made their stateliest remarks reek with them, and all this was charming to me--delightful, delicious--but their charm was as nothing to that which was afforded me by that outraged old cup-bearer's comments upon them.[4]

If one can accept this passage, both the cup-bearer's reactions and the humor of the situation contribute to the satire, but the satire is not the cup-bearer's own creation. Ultimately, the cup-bearer is not an artist, but a device used by the implied narrator to make certain comments. The cup-bearer is a technician whose basic duty is to mechanically transcribe the dialogue among the principal characters. His comments, while interesting and relevant, are evidence not of his own artistry but of the design of an implied narrator who is manipulating him for the purpose of satire. The cup-bearer's work, the diary entry, is a disjointed, almost formless piece; it is the satire, woven in by the implied narrator, that raises 1601 to the level of art. It is at the level of satire and humor, two levels out of the hands of the cup-bearer, that 1601 realizes its merit. These elements call for close scrutiny.

Most obviously, the concept of royalty comes under attack. It is not Elizabeth specifically who is being satirized, but the concept of kingly superiority which has grown over the years. By Twain's time, kings and queens had become stately, symbolic figures, above

the immorality and venality of common men and women. This romanticizing (and dehumanization) of monarchs was fueled by romantic literature, by the natural veneration of the past, and by monarchs like Queen Victoria, who disdained any displays of emotion or humanity. If any specific monarch is being satirized, it is probably Queen Victoria; the contrast between 1601's naturalistic queen and the stern queen ruling when the piece was written is sharp and points out how totally dehumanized the monarchy had become. Placing the Queen of England in the midst of people breaking wind and talking graphically about sex alters the belief that kings and queens are somehow above other people. To let the Queen join in the revelry makes her nothing more than the most common of commoners. After all, she has convened this meeting. When the first foul eruption occurs, Elizabeth does not show disapproval; on the contrary, she gleefully attempts to make some fun of it:

> Verily, in mine eight and sixty years have I not hearde ye fellow to this fartte. Meseemeth by ye great sound and clamour of it, it was male, yet ye bellie it did lurke behind should now have fallen lene and flat against ye spine of him that hath been delivered of so stately and so vast a bulke, whereas ye guts of them that doe Quaff-splitters beare, stand comely, stille and rounde. Prithee, let ye author confess ye offspring. (1601, p. 33)

She goes on to inquire who "favored" the company:

> In God's name who hath favored us? Hath it come to pass that a fartte shall fartte itself? Not such a one as this I trow. Young Master Beaumont? But no,

> 'twould have wafted him to Heaven like down of goose's bodie. 'Twas not ye little Lady Helen,--nay, ne'er blush, my childe, thou'lt tickle thy tender maiden-hedde with many a mousie squeak before thou learn'st to blow a hurricant. (1601, p. 34)

She tries to interest Lady Helen and Francis Beaumont in one another, then tells a story she says she heard from Rabelais about a man with a double pair of "bollocks." Her final words in 1601 are "O Shit!" She is not only a participant in the revels, but the main instigator. Her "strange mingling" of carefully-wrought, ornate language and vernacular words like "fart," "bollock," and "shit" changes her--she is no longer the stately Virgin Queen of romanticized history. This is one of the results of a realistic treatment--romanticism is debunked and Elizabeth is shown as she might have been. As a result, she is more human--less the unapproachable monarch and more the "good old girl" having some fun. Royalty is being attacked, but not the Queen specifically. As an individual, she becomes symbol and proof of the truth of democracy--in spite of the honor afforded her as queen, she is still a human being.

In light of the cup-bearer's aristocratic snobbery and his loyalty to the Queen, it is unlikely that he is the author of this attack or even aware of the satiric implications. He would neither openly attack royalty nor want to make the Queen some sort of democratic symbol. Like other Twain narrators, the cup-bearer is not aware of the irony he narrates; the implied narrator, staunch democrat, scorner of inflated pomp, is supplying the satire.

Religion also comes under attack. Two of the bawdy stories concern clergymen and their failed attempts to obtain sexual favors. Raleigh tells this story about a maid, an archbishop, and an abbot:

> In sooth, when a shift's turned uppe, delay is meete for naught but dalliance. Boccaccio hath a story of a priest that did beguile a mayd into his cell, then knelt him in a corner to pray for grace that he bee rightly thankful for this tender maidenhedde the Lorde hadde sent him, but the abbot spying through ye keyhole did see a tuft of brownish hair with fair white flesh about it, wherefore, when ye priest's prayer was done his chance was gone, forasmuch as ye little mayd hadde but ye one cunt and that was already occupied to her content. (1601, p. 33)

Then the company talks about religion and the works of Martin Luther, never seeming to realize the "strange mingling" of the two topics. Again, the satire is aimed not so much at Elizabeth's society as at Twain's Victorian America. Elizabeth's religion embraces all of life; she talks with equal ease about a wayward archbishop and Martin Luther. From the standpoint of the Victorians, the combination is appalling; to them, religion was holy and separated from the sinful secular world. So while an archbishop may have seduced a maid in Victorian times, it would not be a topic for discussion, and would certainly not be broached by Queen Victoria. Through Victorian eyes, Elizabeth is hypocritical in her religion because she can move from the profane to the sacred in the same breath; through Twain's omniscient eye, it is the Victorians who are hypocritical, because they cannot embrace all of life as naturally as can Elizabeth.

What hampers the Victorians is what Twain calls the Moral Sense: a perversion of man's true nature which makes him realize (or think he realizes) sin. Twain treats the Moral Sense extensively in many of his works, and this will be further discussed in the next chapter. In 1601, the cup-bearer seems to be the voice of the prudish Victorian, or perhaps the embodiment of the Moral Sense. He is continually outraged at what he perceives to be the immoral behavior and hypocrisy of the group, an outrage which reaches its peak in this comment near the end of 1601:

> They talked about the wonderful defense which olde Nicholas Throgmorton did make for himself before ye judges in ye time of Mary, which was unlucky matter for to broach, since it fetched out ye Queene with a pity that he, having so much wit, had yet not enough to save his daughter's maiden-hedde sound for her marriage bedde, and ye Queen did give ye damned Sir Walter a look that made him wince--for she hath not forgot that he was her own lover in ye olden days. There was a silent uncomfortableness now, 'twas not a good turn for talk to take, since if ye Queen must find offense in a little harmless debauching, when pricks were stiff and cunts not loath to take the stiffness out of them, who of the company was sinless. Beholde, was not ye wife of Master Shaxpur four months gone with childe when she stood uppe before ye altar? Was not her grace of Bilgewater rogered by four lords before she hadde a husband? Was not little Lady Helen borne on her mother's wedding Day? and beholde, were not ye Lady Alice and Lady Margery there, mouthing religion, whores from the cradle? (1601, p. 38)

The contrast is between the naturalistic, almost animalistic behavior of the Queen and her company, and the prudish, repressed reactions of the proto-Victorian, the cup-bearer. He tries to attack the religion of Lady Alice and Lady Margery, as well as the others,

but he only manages to satirize himself and prudes like him. The members of the Queen's party are free from the Moral Sense, but the cup-bearer is bound by it. This is the germ of an idea which becomes almost all-consuming for Twain in his later years: the Damned Human Race.

Just as the bulk of the cup-bearer's wrath is aimed at writers, much of the satire of 1601 is aimed at writers, and, by extension, the entire literary romantic tradition. Thus, when Elizabeth wants to know who perpetrated the noxious odor, she says, "Prithee, let ye author confess ye offspring." (1601, p. 33) By saying "author," she indicts not just Raleigh's flatus, but also Shakespeare's plays, Bacon's essays, and Jonson's poetry.

In their denials, the authors make excuses in flowery, literary language, another "strange mingling"--flowery phrases to mask a decidedly unflowery act. Jonson answers:

> So felle a blaste hath ne'er mine ears saluted, nor yet a stenche so all-pervading and immortal. 'Twas not a novice did it, good your Majestie, but one of veteran experience--else hadde he failed in confidence. In sooth it was not I. (1601, p. 34)

His flowery language boils down to a simple "no." Bacon, the essayist and philosopher, answers:

> Not from my lene entrailes hath this prodigie burst forth, so please Your Grace. Nau't doth so befit ye greate as greate performance; and haply shall ye find that 'tis not from mediocrity this miracle hath issued. (1601, p. 34)

To this, the cup-bearer comments, "Tho ye subject bee but a fartte, yet will this tedious sink of learning ponderously philosophize." (1601, p. 34)

Both Jonson and Bacon answer very much in character, but the most characteristic denial comes from Shakespeare, who continues Elizabeth's "author" metaphor and makes punning reference to the Globe theater:

> In ye greate hand of God, I stande and so proclaim my innocence. Tho' ye sinlesse hostess of Heaven hadde fortold ye coming of this most desolating breathe, proclaiming it a worke of uninspired man; its quaking thunders, its firmament-clogging rottenness his own achievement in due course of nature, yet hadde I not believed it; but hadde said, 'ye Pit itself hath furnished forth ye stinke and Heaven's artillery hath shook ye globe in admiration of it.' (1601, p. 35)

The main thrust of the satire of these authors is their use of language. None of them can say what they mean in plain language; they must use flowery phrases and convoluted sentences. They speak not in the language of the people, but in the language of the poet. Their subject is not the glories of Arthur or the tragedy of star-crossed lovers, but Raleigh's prodigious fart. This "strange mingling" of fancy speech and low subject satirizes not only Jonson and Shakespeare, but also the entire romantic tradition of florid language and lofty subject. Further, this attack on the romantic tradition comes in a diary entry which exhibits qualities of literary realism: common subject, realistic detail, and vernacular speech. 1601 itself is the biggest affront to the romantic ideal, for it

shows the noble queen and her favorite writers as living, breathing human beings instead of romanticized heroes who can do no wrong.

Unknown to the cup-bearer, his diary entry, besides satirizing royalty, religion, and authors, also satirizes the cup-bearer. His prudish reactions to the events of the meeting are made fun of, and he is one of the primary targets of laughter. By extension, those squeamish readers who take offense at the off-color words and subject matter are also satirized. This applies to Twain's Victorian America as well as to the present. The reader who finds 1601 offensive is trapped like the cup-bearer, forced to listen to foul words from the mouth of England's Queen and some of her most beloved writers. Equally offensive to some is being forced to read these words from the pen of one of America's most beloved writers, Mark Twain. This is what Brooks and others find so disturbing about 1601: they focus only on the language and cannot get past that to see deeper meanings. Perhaps they also feel threatened by the satire on their own prudishness; people can laugh when satire is directed at others, but object when they find themselves as the target.

As has been suggested by several critics, 1601's greatest attribute is its humor. It is truly funny to those not offended by the frank language. Its humor would be easy to overlook amidst discussions of form, language, and satirical themes, but that would be doing the text an injustice.

Given that 1601 is indeed funny, admittedly a premise which some would not be willing to accept, why is it funny? What is it that

has made this short, rather disjointed book so amusing to so many for the past hundred years?

Foremost is the language and subject matter. Because of the limited use of such words and subjects, especially in Twain's time, it is funny to see them in print. The humor of the language goes beyond mere shock value, however. 1601 remains funny in our more liberal age, when audiences have become accustomed to the most graphic language and acts in both literature and film. The informing metaphor, "a right strange mingling of mightie blood with meane," again applies. The word "fart" is funny, but to have Queen Elizabeth say "fart" is even funnier, primarily because of the romanticized mystique which has been built up around her. The incongruity of these noble men and women using what we consider coarse language with absolute aplomb and skill makes 1601 hilariously funny. Lady Margery's denial, a mixture of stately language and the lowest subject matter, is a good example. When asked if she was responsible for the outburst, she replies:

> So please you, Madame, my limbs are feeble with ye weighte and drouthe of five and sixty winters, and it behooveth that I be tender with them. In ye good providence of God, an' hadde I contained this wonder forsooth would I have given ye whole evening of my stinking life to ye dribbling of it forthe with trembling and uneasy soul, not launched it sudden in its matchless might, taking my own life with violence, rending my weake frame like rotten rags. It was not I, Your Majestie. (1601, p. 34)

There is more to the humor than the deflation of the supremacy of nobility, however. It is not considered proper in polite company to break wind, and it is even more improper to begin a long discussion on the subject. Raleigh's naturalistic action and Elizabeth's naturalistic response go against all of our learned social behaviors, and the loosening of those norms makes for humor. Using Elizabeth and Shakespeare only heightens the humor because a long literary romantic tradition has worked to deify them. 1601 is funny precisely because we know it is "wrong" and "dirty"--the Moral Sense has made this forbidden, so of course we relish it. It is human nature to reach for the fruit we have been told we cannot have.

It is also human nature to laugh at the misfortunes of others. In 1601, the principal target of laughter is the cup-bearer. Seeing him in this awkward situation--forced to remain in a room beclouded by Raleigh's efforts and the whole company's shocking behavior--is funny. The prude among wild revelers is a classic device--Malvolio with Feste and Sir Toby Belch in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, for example. In his difficulties, the cup-bearer, like Malvolio, is both humorous and slightly tragic. As Twain writes in his autobiography:

> We used to laugh ourselves lame and sore over the cup-bearer's troubles. I wonder if we could laugh over them now? We were so young then!--and maybe there was not so much to laugh at in the letter as we thought there was.[5]

All these elements--clearly defined form, carefully wrought language, complex narrator, satirical themes, and ribald humor--are evidence that 1601 has intrinsic value, that it is not "a fetid stream of meaningless ribaldry--the waste of a priceless psychic material," as Brooks says. They also point to 1601's place among Twain's other works. A selective look at the Twain canon will show how well 1601 relates.

CHAPTER III

1601 is not an isolated "dirty" piece with no relationship to Twain's more famous works. Although each of an author's works has its own characteristics, there are usually similarities among works over an entire canon. A good author's style has a consistency which unifies all his work and becomes recognizable. In Twain's case, these recognizable elements include realistic treatment of subject matter, vernacular speech, complex narrators, and satiric themes; 1601 has all these elements, making it not an anomaly, but a sort of catalogue of themes found throughout the author's works.

The archaic language of 1601 bears resemblance to two Twain novels set in England's remote past: The Prince and the Pauper and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. As has been shown, Twain wrote 1601 after reading in old books to prepare for the writing of The Prince and the Pauper. Although this is a rather innocuous novel of mistaken identity with no parallels to 1601's bawdiness, the archaic language is similar. A sample of the speech shows this similarity:

> 'It is plain thou art mad, and I am loth to punish thee; but if thou provoke me, I must. Thy prating doth no harm here, when there are no ears that need to mind thy follies, yet it is well to practice thy tongue to wary speech, that it may do no hurt when our quarters change. I have done a murder, and may not tarry at home--neither shalt thou, seeing I need thy service.'[1]

The language is not as archaic as that of 1601; most of the spelling is modernized, and the main indicator of antiquity is the use of inverted word order and -th verb endings. Still, the similarity shows a consistency of style. The language of Connecticut Yankee, set in King Arthur's sixth-century England, is much the same, as shown in this speech by Clarence:

> 'Merlin, the mighty liar and magician, perdition singe him for the weariness he worketh with his one tale! But that men fear him for that he hath the storms and the lightnings and all the devils that be in hell at his beck and call, they would have dug his entrails out these many years ago to get at that tale and squelch it. He telleth it away in the third person, making believe he is too modest to glorify himself--maledictions light upon him, misfortune be his dole! Good friend, prithee call me for evensong.'[2]

Twain's attempt at recreating archaic speech is part of his fascination with language, a fascination which shows up in short pieces like "Simplified Spelling" and "That Awful German Language," and also in longer works where he recreates vernacular speech. Recreation of vernacular speech is a common thread that unifies much of Twain's work. Works as diverse as "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn have carefully-composed vernacular speech. Each is suitable to its setting and characters, as Twain points out in the explanatory note to Huckleberry Finn:

> In this book, a number of dialects are used, to wit: the Missouri negro dialect; the extremest form of the backwoods South-Western dialect; the ordinary "Pike-County" dialect; and four modified varieties of

> this last. The shadings have not been done in a haphazard fashion, or by guess-work; but pains-takingly and with the trustworthy guidance and support of personal familiarity with these several forms of speech.
>
> I make this explanation for the reason that without it many readers would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not succeeding.[3]

As the selection shows, Twain was conscientious in his attempts at recreating dialect: in Huckleberry Finn because he was familiar with the speech patterns; in 1601 and Connecticut Yankee because he immersed himself with the language. Either way, his use of the vernacular makes each piece more faithful to its setting, thus more realistic.

As to the question of frank subject matter, no Twain work quite matches 1601 for earthiness of vocabulary and tone; however, there are some that come close. Twain's locution at the Paris Stomach Club, an informal gathering of men who relished off-color jokes, is the most obvious. There, in the spring of 1879, he delivered the long-suppressed, now-famous speech, "Some Remarks on the Science of Onanism." The first speaker talked about the evils of fornication, then Twain followed with a speech which jocularly and punningly warns of the dangers of masturbation. A sample of the speech shows Twain in an uncensored, unbridled moment:

> My gifted predecessor has warned you against the "social evil--adultery." In his able paper he exhausted that subject; he left absolutely nothing more to be said on it. But I will continue his good work in the cause of morality by cautioning you against that species of recreation called self-abuse--to which I perceive that you are too much addicted. All great writers upon health and morals, both ancient

> and modern, have struggled with this stately subject; this shows its dignity and importance. Some of these writers have taken one side, some the other. Homer, in the second book of the Iliad, says with fine enthusiasm, "Give me masturbation or give me death!" Caesar, in his Commentaries, says, "To the lonely it is company; to the forsaken it is a friend; to the aged and impotent it is a benefactor; they that are penniless are yet rich, in that they still have this majestic diversion." In another place this excellent observer has said, "There are times when I prefer it to sodomy." Robinson Crusoe says, "I cannot describe what I owe to this gentle art." Queen Elizabeth said, "It is the bulwark of virginity." Cetewayo, the Zulu hero, remarked that "a jerk in the hand is worth two in the bush." The immortal Franklin has said, "Masturbation is the best policy."[4]

Paul Fatout, editor of the book of speeches in which this appears, notes that "compared to modern pornography, his contribution . . . appears remarkably restrained, almost decorous."[5] It might be added that the speech is also quite restrained in comparison to 1601. The language of the speech tends more toward euphemism than the frank language of 1601, but both pieces show a side of Twain's writings not seen in the more popular works. Of course, neither 1601 nor the Stomach Club address seems to have been intended for a mass audience, as Paine notes in his edition of Mark Twain's Notebook. He points out that Twain's suggestive writings were not intended for the general public, but for the private enjoyment of a few close friends. According to Paine,

> Mark Twain never wrote for publication anything salacious or suggestive or bordering on the indecent. He never wrote anything suggestive at all. What he said was straight from the shoulder. He was fed on strong meat, he had a robust imagination and a better

> command of the Anglo-Saxon English than any other man of his time, but when he 'let himself go,' as he did two or three times, it was for strictly private consumption.[6]

Another work Twain wrote for private consumption is "The Mammoth Cod," a letter he sent to some friends in the early 1900's in which he pretends to be a prudish man refusing the company of several men because their behavior is indecent. The centerpiece of the letter is a poem that refers to the size of animals' penises and compares them to the size of human penises. A sample from the poem gives the general idea:

> I thank thee for the Bull, O God!
> Whene'er a steak I eat.
> The working of his Mammoth Cod
> Is what gives us our meat![7]

Another of Twain's forays outside the bounds of accepted literary taste comes in Letters From the Earth, suppressed by Twain's heirs and unpublished until 1962. The piece is a letter from Satan to heaven, and includes this strikingly graphic discussion of sexuality:

> During twenty-three days in every month (in absence of pregnancy) from the time a woman is seven years old till she dies of old age, she is ready for action, and competent. As competent as the candlestick is to receive the candle. Competent every day, competent every night. Also, she wants that candle--yearns for it, longs for it, hankers after it, as commanded by the law of God in her heart.

> But man is only briefly competent; and only then in the moderate measure applicable to the word in his sex's case. He is competent from the age of sixteen or seventeen thenceforward for thirty-five years. After fifty his performance is of poor quality, the intervals between are wide, and its satisfactions of no great value to either party; whereas his great-grandmother is as good as new. There is nothing the matter with her plant. Her candlestick is a firm as ever, whereas his candle is increasingly softened and weakened by the weather of age, as the years go by, until at last it can no longer stand, and is mournfully laid to rest in the hope of a blessed resurrection which is never to come.[8]

As open as this is, it is still no match for 1601 in language and tone: the "candlestick" of Letters From the Earth is "cunt" in 1601. Twain does have writings in the same mold as 1601, but none equal 1601's graphic use of language.

More important from an artistic standpoint are the similarities of narration in 1601 and other works. The cup-bearer, through whose eyes we see the events of Queen Elizabeth's meeting, is one of the first extended examples of Twain's first person narrator, which comes to full fruition with Huck Finn. On a small scale, the cup-bearer gives a glimpse at what Twain would later accomplish by telling a story through the eyes of a limited narrator. When the cup-bearer relates his tale, colored by his own perceptions and prejudices, he is much like the naive Huck Finn, who tells his story without being fully aware of its broad implications. Just as the cup-bearer unwittingly satirizes the concept of royalty, Huck tells Jim about the nature of kings, and in his mixed-up perception of history, tells a good deal more besides:

> My, you ought to seen old Henry the Eight when he was in bloom. He was a blossom. He used to marry a new wife every day, and chop off her head next morning. And he would do it just as indifferent as if he was ordering up eggs. 'Fetch up Nell Gwynn,' he says. They fetch her up. Next morning, 'Chop off her head!' And they chop it off. 'Fetch up Jane Shore.' he says; and up she comes. Next morning 'Chop off her head'--and they chop it off. 'Ring up fair Rosamun.' Fair Rosamun answers the bell. Next morning, 'Chop off her head.' And he made every one of them tell him a tale every night; and he kept that up till he had hogged a thousand and one tales that way, and then he put them all in a book, and called it Domesday Book--which was a good name and stated the case. You don't know kings, Jim, but I know them; and this old rip of ourn is one of the cleanest I've struck in history.[9]

Huckleberry Finn abounds with examples of Huck's limited perception and unconscious irony; in fact, it is primarily because of Huck's narration that this is widely considered the best of Twain's works. In contrast to Tom Sawyer, for example, Huckleberry Finn is more alive, more ironic, and more vital. Twain's ability to use Huck as a spokesman grants a distance between narrator and implied narrator that does not exist in Tom Sawyer. In Tom Sawyer, the reader never loses perception of the omniscient narrator, who wryly comments on the action and its implications, and who occasionally intrudes directly on the story to reveal the creaky mechanics of the plot. In Huckleberry Finn, Huck as narrator absorbs the reader directly in the action and in his naive observations; the reader recognizes the naivete of those observations and also recognizes the hand of the implied narrator, distanced from the tale but still offering his wry comments, this time through an intermediary. The artistic possibilities afforded by the first person narrator raise Huckleberry Finn above the level of mere boy's

literature and infuse the book with a richness and vitality Tom Sawyer never even approximates. 1601, written just before Huckleberry Finn, using a similar style of narrator, might be considered a forerunner, or perhaps a warm-up exercise, to Twain's masterpiece.

There are also similarities to Twain's earlier narrators. The charm of "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" lies largely in the humorous narrator of the tale, Simon Wheeler. Like the cupbearer, Wheeler does not realize the full comedic implications of his story. Another early story, "Jim Blaine and His Grandfather's Old Ram," has Jim Blaine attempting to tell the story of his grandfather's ram, but getting sidetracked and telling a little about almost everything else. Much of the humor in The Innocents Abroad and Roughing It derives from the fact that the narrators of small pieces are unaware of the full implications of their stories. Like them, 1601's cupbearer is a fully realized narrator and a forerunner of Huck: they use the vernacular, comment on the action around them, and do not realize the full satiric impact of their statements.

Even more than language and narrator, the themes in 1601 show how integral to the Twain canon this short, bawdy piece really is. The objects of 1601's satire--royalty, religion, and the literary romantic tradition--emerge time and again throughout Twain's works.

Satire of the concept of royalty is a dominant theme in 1601, just as it is in Huckleberry Finn, Connecticut Yankee, and other works. In 1601, a ribald Queen Elizabeth represents royalty; in Connecticut Yankee, King Arthur disguised as a tramp; in Huckleberry Finn, two con men who call themselves a king and a duke. The satire attacks not the

specific monarchs, but people's concepts of those monarchs and, through those concepts, the very concept of royalty. The popular concept is of Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen: chaste, haughty, cold, and powerful. In 1601, she is a lusty, earthy purveyor of fun; she not only joins in the revels, but helps instigate them. The satire attacks people's image of her, not Elizabeth herself; if anything, she emerges as a more human character than before.

Similarly, it is the image of King Arthur that comes under attack in Connecticut Yankee. Hank Morgan deflates the romantic myth of Camelot, kinghthood, and the "Once and Future King," but Arthur still emerges as a sympathetic character. After Hank lampoons kings and queens and the entire concept of royalty, he still recognizes Arthur's greatness, although a greatness not usually attributed to him. The king, disguised as a tramp, carries a girl dying of smallpox to her mother, and Hank describes the scene:

> There was a slight noise from the direction of the dim corner where the ladder was. It was the king, descending. I could see that he was bearing something in one arm, and assisting himself with the other. He came forward into the light; upon his breast lay a slender girl of fifteen. She was but half conscious; she was dying of smallpox. Here was heroism at its last and loftiest possibility, its utmost summit; this was challenging death in the open field unarmed, with all the odds against the challenger, no reward set upon the contest, and no admiring world in silks and cloth of gold to gaze and applaud; and yet the king's bearing was as serenely brave as it had always been in those cheaper contests where knight meets knight in equal fight and clothed in protecting steel. He was great, now; sublimely great. The rude statues of his ancestors in his palace should have an addition--I would see to that; and it would not be a mailed king killing a giant or dragon, like the rest, it would be

> a king in commoner's garb bearing death in his arms that a peasant mother might look her last upon her child and be comforted.[10]

It is not the king, but the concept of royalty that receives the brunt of Hank's ire, as seen in this diatribe against people's passive acceptance of royalty:

> It was pitiful for a person born in a wholesome free atmosphere to listen to their humble and hearty outpourings of loyalty toward their king and Church and nobility; as if they had any more occasion to love and honor king and Church and noble than a slave has to love and honor the lash, or a dog has to love and honor the stranger that kicks him! Why, dear me, <u>any</u> kind of aristocracy, howsoever pruned, is rightly an insult; but if you are born and brought up under that sort of arrangement you probably never find it out for yourself, and don't believe it when somebody else tells you.[11]

Huck's king and duke are a different story. The two imposters make Huck and Jim wait on them and bow to them; Huck and Jim comply, even though Jim does not understand why royalty deserves special treatment, and Huck has figured out that they are not really kings, as he states in his narration:

> It didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars warn't no kings nor dukes, at all, but just low-down humbugs and frauds. But I never said nothing, never let on; kept it to myself; it's the best way; then you don't have no quarrels, and don't get into no trouble. If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn't no objections, 'long as it would keep peace in the family; and it warn't no use to tell Jim, so I didn't tell him. If I never learnt

> nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way.[12]

Like Elizabeth and Arthur, the king and duke are not the target of personal attacks, but through them the concept of royalty is attacked. To have two con men pose as royalty invites comparison between the two groups: con men become kings and kings become con men. Huck cannot tell them from real kings and concludes that the king and duke are "the cleanest I've struck in history."[13] In this conversation, we see how Twain, through Huck and Jim, manages to attack all kings and dukes:

> 'All I say is, kings is kings, and you got to make allowances. Take them all around, they're a mighty ornery lot. It's the way they're raised.'
> 'But dis one do smell so like de nation, Huck.'
> 'Well, they all do, Jim. We can't help the way a king smells; history don't tell no way.'
> 'Now de duke, he's a tolerble likely man, in some ways.'
> 'Yes, a duke's different. But not very different. This one's a middling hard lot, for a duke. When he's drunk, there ain't no near-sighted man could tell him from a king.'[14]

In the end, the king and duke are exposed as frauds, tarred and feathered, and ridden out of town on a rail, yet they retain a certain charm as colorful though larcenous characters. The real casualty is the concept of royalty, which takes a considerable beating in all three books.

Another common target of satire is organized religion. In 1601, church officials like Raleigh's abbot and archbishop are lampooned for their false piety and strong sexual appetites. Elsewhere in the Twain canon, preachers and other religious people fare no better. Sometimes the satire is gentle, like Huck praying in a closet for fish hooks, or the king impersonating a pirate to con country people at a camp meeting. Sometimes it is more biting, like the scathing attack on the Catholic Church in Connecticut Yankee or the indictment of God as created by man in Letters From the Earth.

The relatively gentle satire of Huckleberry Finn nonetheless has some barbs in it. Huck tries to follow the Widow's spiritual advice to be good, but abandons it and decides to opt for hell, especially since Tom Sawyer would be there. Later, he is so befuddled by the conflicting views of Widow Douglas, Miss Watson, and the rest of society that he truly believes he will go to hell for helping to free Jim. In the episode dealing with the Shepherdson-Grangerford feud, both families sit piously in church, guns propped up outside, then, filled with the sermon on brotherly love, go out and kill each other for a reason no one can remember.

In the later works, religion comes under much more bitter attack. In Connecticut Yankee, Hank Morgan's most formidable foe in his attempt to enlighten Arthur's England is the Church. Hank's forces represent learning, democracy, and freedom, while the Church stands for ignorance, autocracy, and oppression. Hank describes the Church's awesome power this way:

> There you see the hand of that awful power, the Roman Catholic Church. In two or three little centuries it had converted a nation of men to a nation of worms. Before the day of the Church's supremacy in the world, men were men, and held their heads up, and had a man's pride, and spirit, and independence; and what of greatness and position a person got, he got mainly by achievement, not by birth. But then the Church came to the front, with an axe to grind; and she was wise, subtle, and knew more than one way to skin a cat--or a nation: she invented 'divine right of kings,' and propped it all around, brick by brick, with the Beatitudes--wrenching them from their good purpose to make them fortify an evil one; she preached (to the commoner) meekness under insult; preached (still to the commoner, always to the commoner) patience, meanness of spirit, non-resistance under oppression; and she introduced heritable ranks and aristocracies, and taught all the Christian populations of the earth to bow down to them and worship them.[15]

Through his knowledge of mechanics and his own ingenuity, Hank manages to reform England almost totally: he starts newspapers, schools, telegraphs, and railroads. The Church, however, is too strong, too ingrained in the people, and raises up the knights to squelch the newly-established republic. The resulting apocalyptic battle leaves thousands dead and sends Hank back to his own century.

In Letters From the Earth, Satan talks of the difference between the Law of Nature and the Law of God and tells how man has confused the two. The attack on man's created religion is bitter and direct. Satan tells of man's confused notion of God and religion:

> Moreover--if I may put another strain upon you--he thinks he is the Creator's pet. He believes the Creator is proud of him; he even believes the Creator loves him; has a passion for him; sits up nights to admire him; yes, and watch over him and keep him out of trouble. He prays to Him, and thinks He listens.

> Isn't it a quaint idea? Fills his prayers with crude and bald and florid flatteries of Him, and thinks He sits and purrs over these extravagancies and enjoys them. He prays for help, and favor, and protection, every day; and does it with hopefulness and confidence, too, although no prayer of his has ever been answered. The daily affront, the daily defeat, do not discourage him, he goes on praying just the same. There is something almost fine about this perseverance. I must put one more strain upon you: he thinks he is going to heaven![16]

The most vehement satire in 1601 is its attack on the literary romantic tradition, an attack that continues unabated throughout Twain's works. Just as 1601 concentrates its attack on the romantic ideal, on writers, and specifically on Shakespeare, several other works do likewise. Much of the fun in Huckleberry Finn, for example, centers around Tom's bookish romanticism and Huck's twisted perceptions of the romantic tradition. The adventures in the beginning of the book--Tom Sawyer's Gang robbing the Sunday school picnic--and at the end--freeing Jim, making up a coat of arms, digging tunnels with case knives--all come from Tom's fascination with romances by Scott and Dumas. This lampoons Tom and all gullible readers of such romances, but the brunt of the attack falls on the romantic tradition itself. Huck's perception of that tradition, twisted due to his newly-acquired but under-developed reading abilities, is another satirical element. When Huck reads Emmaline Grangerford's poem "Ode to Stephen Dowling Botts, Dec'd.," he says, "It was very good poetry," and "If Emmaline Grangerford could make poetry like that before she was fourteen, there ain't no telling what she could a done by-and-by."[17]

Clearly, Emmaline's poetry is terrible, but Huck cannot see that. Indirectly, the entire body of sentimental poetry is being satirized.

Specific authors come under attack too. The foundering wreck where Huck and Jim encounter robbers is named the Walter Scott, perhaps an indication of Twain's low regard for Scott. In 1601, Shakespeare is a target; in Huckleberry Finn, Shakespeare's works are travestied. This is not so much an attack on Shakespeare or his plays, but more a gentle attack on the way Americans copied them in an attempt to appear "civilized" and "high-toned." The duke's garbled version of Hamlet's soliloquy is an example:

> To be, or not to be; that is the bare bodkin
> That makes calamity of so long life;
> For who would fardels bear, till Birnam Wood do come
> to Dunsinane,
> But that the fear of something after death
> Murders the innocent sleep,
> Great nature's second course,
> And makes us rather sling the arrows of outrageous
> fortune
> Than fly to others we know not of.[18]

The king and duke's production of Romeo and Juliet is another example: the fat bearded king dresses as Juliet and brays like a jackass.

Huckleberry Finn's biggest affront to the literary romantic tradition is also its main link to 1601: narration and language. Huck is illiterate, poor, and an outcast from society, but his common language and perceptions demolish the gilded surface of a hypocritical and cruel slave-owning society. Similarly, the cup-bearer shatters

the romantic ideal of England's golden literary age by showing Elizabeth, Shakespeare, and the others as they probably were instead of the romanticized figures they have become.

In Connecticut Yankee, Hank Morgan makes a point which shows a resemblance to the main thrust of 1601. In discussing the speech of the ladies and gentlemen of Arthur's England, Hank says:

> Still, I was sane enough to notice this detail, to wit: many of the terms used in the most matter-of-fact way by this great assemblage of the first ladies and gentlemen in the land would have made a Comanche blush. Indelicacy is too mild a term to convey the idea. However, I had read 'Tom Jones' and 'Roderick Random,' and other books of that kind, and knew that the highest and first ladies and gentlemen in England had remained little or no cleaner in their talk, and in the morals and conduct which such talk implies, clear up to a hundred years ago; in fact clear into our own nineteenth century--in which century, broadly speaking, the earliest samples of the real lady and real gentleman discoverable in English history--or in European history, for that matter--may be said to have made their appearance. Suppose Sir Walter, instead of putting the conversation into the mouths of his characters, had allowed the characters to speak for themselves? We should have talk from Rachel and Ivanhoe and the soft lady Rowena which would embarrass a tramp in our day. However, to the unconsciously indelicate all things are delicate. King Arthur's people were not aware that they were indecent, and I had presence of mind not to mention it.[19]

Hank Morgan is working to debunk the romantic legend of King Arthur with nineteenth-century Yankee pragmatism, and one of his targets is language and its place in the literary romantic tradition. He notices what the cup-bearer notices: that even the best bred talk like commoners, not like the romantic heroes literature has made them. Hank's idea of Scott's letting Rowena and Ivanhoe talk for themselves

is exactly what happens in 1601. What gets destroyed is the literary romance; its plausibility has been destroyed by eyewitnesses--Queen Elizabeth and King Arthur talk in a way that "would have made a Comanche blush," not in the high-toned language invented by Scott and others.

This raises another point: the Moral Sense. Hank says, "To the unconsciously indelicate all things are delicate." It is the Moral Sense which makes Elizabeth's language seem bad; to her, she is just expressing herself. It is not Elizabeth or Arthur being attacked, but the literary romantic tradition as clouded by the Moral Sense. This concept runs throughout Twain's works. When Huck decides to turn Jim in, he is reacting to the perverted Moral Sense that has told him slavery is right and those opposing slavery are sinners. "The Mysterious Stranger" is almost totally concerned with the Moral Sense: Satan instructs two young boys in the folly of man's perceived Moral Sense. Letters From the Earth is another primer on the subject, with letters from another character named Satan showing how man has created his own image of God, and pointing out how strange that image is.

There are other attacks on the literary romantic tradition in Twain's works: the attacks on Cooper in "Fennimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" and the discussion of Shakespeare in "Is Shakespeare Dead?" But the main attack on the whole tradition is Twain's general method--realism. By adopting the vernacular, treating the common man, telling a story rather than preaching, and trying to portray life realistically, Twain helped start a movement in America which

was refined by James, then adapted by Lewis, Anderson, Faulkner, Hemingway, and others. When Hemingway wrote in Green Hills of Africa that "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn,"[20] he was referring particularly to prose style, vernacular speech, and realistic attention to detail; 1601 is part of that realistic tradition, if only a small part. To claim that 1601 is a major cog in this machine of realism would be overstating the case; to deny it has any artistic validity, as many have done, would be a bigger mistake.

Certainly 1601 has a place in the long line of bawdy literature, a line which includes Aristophanes, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Rabelais, Shakespeare, and many others. In particular, the frank language and emphasis on flatulence recall Chaucer's "The Miller's Tale." Twain once said, some claim facetiously, that he wrote 1601 in response to an editor who decried the fact that we had no Rabelais. Twain says that he tried to fill the gap, but the editor returned the manuscript, terming it scandalous.[21]

Whatever the relationships to the European masters of bawdy, 1601 clearly grew out of the tradition of Southwest humor, a tradition that begins with the rough tales of the new frontier and is culminated in Twain's early works. George Washington Harris' Sut Lovingood, J. J. Hooper's Adventures of Simon Suggs, and the tales of Artemus Ward helped pave the way for Twain's brand of humor. In its rough language, contempt for Europe, and implied Americanism, 1601 is part of that long tradition. What sets it apart is its

particularly earthy language, a language common to the mining camps and frontier outposts, but a language which was not then commonly printed.

Twain's contemporaries--notably Howells, James, and Crane--have no literary skeletons similar to 1601. The sexuality of James' The Portrait of a Lady is repressed sexuality, and the "damns" and "hells" of Crane's Maggie: A Girl of the Streets do not approach the earthy language of 1601. Howells was shocked at some of Twain's letters, and even considered burning them, as one might expect from a man who said that he wrote so as not to embarrass a young girl reading in her drawing room. Only Walt Whitman seems to approach Twain in his wildness and celebration of the commonest language, but even Whitman has no 1601.

Twain was also a Victorian American, and through either his own censorship or Livy's or Howells', many pieces were never published in his lifetime. But he did write 1601, and the Stomach Club Speech, and The Mammoth Cod; whether that constitutes "covert scribbling on Tom Sawyer's fence" or a repression of artistic tendencies is not ultimately most important. What is important is that, even in his unprintable works, especially 1601, there is a certain artistry and craftmanship. Perhaps Paine's words about 1601 serve as a fitting ending for an examination of Mark Twain's most anomalous, most notorious work, a work which has been repressed, neglected, misunderstood, but still enjoyed. Paine writes:

1601 is a genuine classic, as classics of that sort go. It is better than the gross obscenities of Rabelais, and perhaps, in some day to come, the taste that justified Gargantua and the Decameron will give this literary refugee shelter and setting among the more conventional writings of Mark Twain. Human taste is a curious thing; delicacy is purely a matter of environment and point of view.[22]

NOTES

NOTES - CHAPTER I

[1] Mark Twain, 1601 . . . Conversation as it Was by the Social Fireside in the Time of the Tudors, ed. Franklin J. Meine, 2nd ed. (Chicago: 1939; rpt. New York: Lyle Stuart, 1961), p. 36.

[2] Twain, 1601, p. 36.

[3] Mark Twain, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, ed. Charles Neider (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959), p. 268.

[4] Twain, Autobiography, p. 269.

[5] Twain, Autobiography, p. 269.

[6] Martha Anne Turner, "Mark Twain's 1601 Through Fifty Editions," Mark Twain Journal, 12, No. 3 (1965), p. 11.

[7] Turner, p. 11.

[8] Turner, p. 12.

[9] Twain, Autobiography, p. 268.

[10] Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huckleberry Finn (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1960), pp. 96-97.

[11] Howard G. Baetzhold, Mark Twain and John Bull (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1970), p. 82.

[12] Albert B. Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York: Harper & Bros., 1912), vol. 2, p. 580.

[13] Mark Twain, Autobiography, pp. 269-270.

[14] Van Wyck Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1920), p. 227.

[15] Brooks, p. 227.

[16] John S. Van E. Kohn, "Mark Twain's 1601," Princeton Univ. Library Chronicle, 18, No. 1 (1957), p. 50.

[17] Kohn, p. 50.

[18] Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), p. 197.

[19] Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and His Work, 2nd ed. (1935; rpt. Norman, Okla.: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1961), pp. 150-151.

[20] DeLancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1943), p. 185.

[21] Ferguson, p. 185.

[22] Turner, p. 10.

[23] Blair, pp. 196-197.

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[1] Mark Twain, 1601 . . . Conversation as it Was by the Social Fireside in the Time of the Tudors, ed. Franklin J. Meine, 2nd ed. (Chicago, 1939; rpt. New York: Lyle Stuart, 1961), p. 33. Subsequent references given in the text parenthetically.

[2] Oxford English Dictonary, Compact Edition (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971).

[3] Eric Partridge, A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English (New York: Macmillan, 1961).

[4] Mark Twain, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, ed. Charles Neider (New York: Harper & Bros., 1959), p. 268.

[5] Twain, Autobiography, p. 269.

NOTES - CHAPTER III

[1] Mark Twain, The Prince and the Pauper, ed. Victor Fischer and Lin Salamo, Iowa Center for Textual Studies (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1979), p. 190.

[2] Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (New York: New American Library, 1963), p. 29.

[3] Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, ed. Sculley Bradley and others, Norton Critical Edition, 2nd ed. (1961; rpt. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1977), ii.

[4] Paul Fatout, Mark Twain Speaking (Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press, 1976), p. 125.

[5] Fatout, p. 125.

[6] Albert B. Paine, Mark Twain's Notebook (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935), ix-x.

[7] Mark Twain, The Mammoth Cod, ed. G. Legman (Milwaukee: Maledicta Press, 1979), p. 14.

[8] Mark Twain, Letters From the Earth, ed. Bernard DeVoto (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 42.

[9] Twain, Huck Finn, p. 124.

[10] Twain, Connecticut Yankee, pp. 206-207.

[11] Twain, Connecticut Yankee, pp. 53-54.

[12] Twain, Huck Finn, p. 102.

[13] Twain, Huck Finn, p. 124.

[14] Twain, Huck Finn, pp. 124-125.

[15] Twain, Connecticut Yankee, p. 55.

[16] Twain, Letters From the Earth, p. 15.

[17] Twain, Huck Finn, p. 85.

[18] Twain, Huck Finn, p. 111.

[19] Twain, Connecticut Yankee, p. 34.

[20] Ernest Hemingway, The Green Hills of Africa (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 22.

[21] Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York: Harper and Bros., 1912), II, p. 581.

[22] Paine, Biography, p. 581.

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