

The Variety of Satire Is Almost Infinite

It swings backwards and forwards, on an ellipse about the two foci of the satiric universe, the exposure of folly and the castigation of vice; it fluctuates between the flippant and the earnest, the completely trivial and the heavily didactic; it ranges from extremes of crudity and brutality to the utmost refinement and elegance; it employs singly or in conjunction monologue, dialogue, epistle, oration, narrative, manners-painting, character-drawing, allegory, fantasy, travesty, burlesque, parody, and any other vehicle it chooses; and it presents a chameleon-like surface by using all the tones of the satiric spectrum, wit, ridicule, irony, sarcasm, cynicism, the sardonic and invective.

A. Melville Clarke: *Studies in Literary Modes*, 1946, p. 32.
[Quoted by Arthur Pollard: *Satire*, 1970, pp. 4-5]

“...satire is not only a chameleon adapting itself to its environment, it is capable of apparent metamorphosis masquerading by parody in the very form it is criticizing.” [Pollard, p. 22]

“...satire is one of the means of relief necessary for us to go on facing problems of the highest import.” [Pollard, p. 10]

Folly: lack of good sense and foresight; excessively costly undertaking; fanciful structure; tragically foolish actions or conduct; evil. [Longman Dictionary, 1991.]

Vice: habitual shortcoming; habitual abnormal behaviour pattern in a domestic animal detrimental to its health or usefulness; moral corruption. [Longman Dictionary, 1991.]