

Bradley J. Irish

---

## Envy, Leanness, and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

*One of the most famous lines in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar is Caesar's ominous claim that 'Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look' (1.2.193). Understanding the implications of this line requires appreciating the extent it activates the early modern discourse of envy. Because Shakespeare makes his Cassius dispositionally envious — an invention not found in Plutarch — comprehending the full import of the enviousness his 'lean and hungry look' entails is vital to grasping the playwright's characterization. Unpacking the association between leanness and envy in Renaissance literary culture reveals how Shakespeare's handling of his source had immediate thematic resonance for his audience.*

In a recent essay on *Julius Caesar*, Gail Kern Paster observes that the play's Romans exhibit a 'deep preoccupation with each other's innate dispositions and personal habits'.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most memorable testament to this fact is Caesar's ominous claim that 'Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look' (1.2.193) — a line that Ros King notes has 'become so familiar that we no longer enquire after its implications'.<sup>2</sup> This remark is sometimes said to reflect Cassius's own intense ambition — leanness and hunger signifying his grasping desire — and 'lean and hungry' has become a synonym for *ambitious* in the modern popular imagination.<sup>3</sup> More pointedly, the line is other times said to indicate his specific *envy* of Caesar's position, in anticipation of the more elaborate remarks on Cassius's envious nature later in the scene.<sup>4</sup> But while both these readings help explain the famous line, there has not, to my knowledge, been any commentary on how Cassius's depiction as lean actually participates in a robust discourse of envy that circulated in early modern England. This essay's purpose is to unpack the association of leanness and envy in the Renaissance imagination, to suggest that Cassius's leanness would have an immediate thematic resonance with William Shakespeare's audience that has perhaps been lost to many modern readers. Because

---

Bradley J. Irish ([bradley.irish@asu.edu](mailto:bradley.irish@asu.edu)) is an associate professor of English at Arizona State University.

the play explicitly comments on Cassius's envy — and because, as we shall see, this is an invention not found in Plutarch — appreciating the symbolic import of leanness is vital to understanding Shakespeare's method of characterization, and vital to understanding how audiences would have appreciated Cassius on the early modern stage.

To begin with the play itself: in act 1, scene 2, Caesar refers to Cassius's leanness three times in quick succession. The most famous quotation appears first, as Caesar specifically associates this feature (and its suggestion of Cassius's propensity to contemplate) with danger:

Let me have men about me that are fat,  
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights.  
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look:  
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous. (191–4)

When Antony rebuffs this suggestion, Caesar counters, invoking Cassius's leanness twice more:

Would he were fatter! But I fear him not:  
Yet if my name were liable to fear  
I do not know the man I should avoid  
So soon as that spare Cassius. (197–200)

The gravity of Caesar's stately position makes fearing another man officially untenable — though Caesar still recognizes, beneath his posturing, that Cassius is a formidable rival. So much so, in fact, that he immediately undercuts his previous dismissal with a telling anatomy of Cassius's character:

He reads much,  
He is a great observer, and he looks  
Quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays  
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music.  
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort  
As if he mocked himself and scorned his spirit  
That could be moved to smile at anything.  
Such men as he be never at heart's ease  
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,  
And therefore are they very dangerous. (200–9)

A series of observations about Cassius's behaviour culminates in a final statement about his disposition — that he is envious in the face of superiors. The

notion of 'behold[ing] a greater than themselves' specifies the meaning of what is implied by Caesar's earlier remark about Cassius's leanness: that not simply does his ambitious appetite demand being fed, but that he cannot stomach the thought of someone else possessing a superior fortune. The linkage between Cassius's leanness and his envy is further signalled when Caesar repeats the assertion that Cassius is dangerous, an assessment that comes to frame the entirety of the reported discussion. But the association, I suggest, would have been much more immediately apparent for Shakespeare's audience, who inhabited a literary and popular culture that frequently identified leanness with envy, as we will see shortly.

First, however, considering Shakespeare's borrowings from Plutarch is important. Shakespeare found ample precedent for Cassius's leanness in his source. Plutarch repeats Caesar's distrust of lean men three different times, in three different biographies. The *Life of Caesar* first describes the

time when *Caesars* frendes complained vnto him of *Antonius*, and *Dolabella*, that they pretended some mischief towards him: he aunswered them againe, as for those fatte men and smooth comed heades, quoth he, I neuer reckon of them: but these pale visaged and carian leane people, I feare them most, meaning *Brutus* and *Cassius*.<sup>5</sup>

This anecdote is repeated, with minor variation, in the *Life of Marc Antony*:

For it is reported that *Caesar* aunswered one that did accuse *Antonius* and *Dolabella* vnto him for some matter of conspiracie: tushe said he, they be not those fat fellowes and fine comed men that I feare, but I mistrust rather these pale and leane men, meaning by *Brutus* and *Cassius*, who afterwards conspired his death, and slue him.<sup>6</sup>

And a third account appears in the *Life of Brutus*:

For, intelligence being brought him one day, that *Antonius* and *Dolabella* did conspire against him: he aunswered, that these fat long hearded men made him not affrayed, but the leane and whitely faced fellowes, meaning that, by *Brutus* and *Cassius*.<sup>7</sup>

As will be shown below, Plutarch sets a classical precedent for the association of leanness and envy — so in some regard, Shakespeare's characterization of Cassius as envious is prompted by the source. But just as interesting are the alterations that Shakespeare makes. In Plutarch, Cassius's envy is only addressed obliquely and in passing. Prior to their alliance, a small rivalry exists between Cassius and Brutus

over who would be awarded Rome's 'chiefest Praetorshippe'; Plutarch speculates that 'this contencion betwext them come by *Caesar* himself, who secretly gaue either of them both hope of his fauour'.<sup>8</sup> As Plutarch tells it, Cassius was not happy with the eventual outcome:

*Caesar* after he had heard both their obiections, he told his frendes with whom he consulted about this matter: *Cassius* cause is the iuster, sayd he, but *Brutus* must be first preferred. Thus *Brutus* had the first Praetorshippe, and *Cassius* the second: who thanked not *Caesar* so much for the Praetorshippe he had, as he was angrie with him for that he had lost.<sup>9</sup>

We may infer here that Cassius is envious at Brutus's advancement — though that his animus (like that of Iago) is directed primarily toward the superior who overlooked him, rather than the actual rival, is interesting. A similar hint is perhaps present in Plutarch's pronouncement that Cassius 'would oftentimes be caried away from iustice for gayne' — that he 'made warre, and put him selfe into sundry daungers, more to haue absolute power and authoritie, then to defend the libertie of his contry' — but this sort of ambition is, at best, only a distant neighbour to true envy.<sup>10</sup> In fact, Plutarch actually downplays an episode of interpersonal rivalry with Caesar that may have otherwise contributed to a characterization of Cassius as envious: this contention, that Caesar 'had taken away his Lyons from him', involved the requisition of sporting animals that Cassius had housed (for his own use) in the city of Megara.<sup>11</sup> But while 'this was the cause, as some do report, that made *Cassius* conspire against *Caesar*', Plutarch maintains that 'this holdeth no water' and contends instead that Cassius 'euen from his cradell could not abide any maner of tyrans', a trait exemplified by a schoolyard anecdote in which the young Cassius 'gaue ... two good whirts on the eare' to the son of the dictator Sulla.<sup>12</sup> So while Plutarch acknowledges that Cassius was a 'hot, chollick, & cruell man' with a 'hotte stirring nature', nothing explicitly suggests that he was dispositionally envious — nothing to suggest the claim of Shakespeare's Caesar that 'Such men as he be never at heart's ease / Whiles they behold a greater than themselves' (1.2.207–8).<sup>13</sup> In other words, Cassius's envy is to a large extent a Shakespearean invention — but Shakespeare seized upon a suggestion in his source (Cassius's leanness) to aid in this characterization, by activating an association that already had great currency in his culture's imagination.

I have recently published a broad overview of envy in early modern culture, in which I argue that scholars have largely underestimated the emotion's centrality to the era's social discourse.<sup>14</sup> As the 'most hatefulest sin of all the seven deadly

ones', envy was a sentiment that encompassed not just covetousness, but also more general forms of malice and rancor, and was accordingly a crucial part of how interpersonal rivalry was conceptualized in Renaissance England.<sup>15</sup> Shakespeare certainly exploited the emotion's dramatic potential: according to one concordance, the word *envy* and its derivations appear 109 times in Shakespeare's corpus, and there are obviously countless instances in which his characters experience the stuff of envy but the word itself is not deployed. In *Julius Caesar*, the conspirators' relationship to Caesar is framed in terms of envy multiple times; before the assassination, for example, Brutus takes pains to ensure their cause seem 'necessary and not envious', lest they appear motivated by 'wrath in death and envy afterwards' (2.1.177; 163), while Antony, when cataloging Caesar's wounds, notes 'what a rent the envious Caska made' (3.1.174). And Wayne A. Rebhorn, in a classic article, demonstrates how the play's characters are entwined in emulous rivalry, a form of relations understood in the period as a species of envy.<sup>16</sup>

But my purpose here is to talk more specifically about how leanness features in the early modern discourse of envy — for the concepts were explicitly linked with great frequency in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. With the help of *Early English Books Online's* (EEBO) proximity searching, I have identified over one hundred such examples in documents from this timeframe, but there are undoubtedly many more.<sup>17</sup> (Indeed, because the association was so central to how Renaissance thinkers conceived of the emotion, the contexts in which it appears give a valuable cross-section of how envy was understood more generally in the period.)<sup>18</sup> In developing this motif, early modern writers took their cue from the classics. Though the Greek pairing of leanness and envy has been traced to at least the fourth century BCE, it was Ovid's famous portrayal of Envy as a gaunt, haggard woman (in *Metamorphoses*, book 2) that proved most influential in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.<sup>19</sup> In Arthur Golding's 1567 translation, the relevant lines are the following:

Hir lippes were pale, hir chéekes were wan, and all hir face was swart:  
 Hir bodie leane as any Rake. She looked eke a skew.  
 Hir teeth were furde with filth and drosse, hir gums were waryish blew,  
 The working of hir festered gall had made hir stomacke gréene.<sup>20</sup>

(In his 1626 edition, George Sandys offers 'Her body more then meger, pale her hew; / Her teeth all rusty; still shee looks askew').<sup>21</sup> Shakespeare, of course, was deeply intimate with Ovid — but even on the slight chance that he did not recall this particular episode from *Metamorphoses*, he would have undoubtedly encountered the association through the many references to it in Renaissance literary

culture.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the most familiar English imitation is Edmund Spenser's elaborate depiction of Envy in book 5 of *The Faerie Queene*, which in its long description memorably emphasizes the character's leanness:

With her dull eyes did seeme to looke askew,  
That her mis-shape much helpt; and her foule heare  
Hung loose and loathsomely: Thereto her hew  
Was wan and leane, that all her teeth arew,  
And all her bones might through her cheekes be red.<sup>23</sup>

But Spenser was not the only fan of Ovid's portrayal. In fact, many writers recall this account of envy, often explicitly attributing it to 'the Poet': Francis Rollenson, for example, notes that 'the Poet tels vs that Enuie is a Pale woman, and very leane, with Rowling eyes, Rustie teeth, Breastes full of gall, and a Tongue sprinkled ouer with poison', while Samuel Otes reminds that 'the Poet describeth envy ... with a pale face without bloud [and] with a leane body, without any iuyce in it'.<sup>24</sup> (Sometimes, the attribution is expanded to poets generally, reflecting Ovid's literary influence: 'Enuie is imagined of the Poets to dwell in a darke Caue, beeing pale and leane'.)<sup>25</sup> In such allusions, being lean is inevitably among the first characteristics mentioned: clearly, for early modern English writers, the primary features of Ovid's Envy were her paleness and leanness. Even when 'the Poet' is not explicitly invoked, Ovid's 'old, lean, shriveld Witch of Envy' is clearly implied, as in description of the figure as 'Olde, croked, withered, hauing a pale and leane face', as 'a leane meagre thing, full of malicious mettle, but [with] almost no flesh', or with a 'countenance pallid, meagre and leane'.<sup>26</sup> Other times, the gender is swapped: writers note that envy is 'a wonderful lean old man, with a pale and meagre face', or that it has 'the shape of a lean and dry Man devoured by his Cares'.<sup>27</sup> But whatever the case, there was overwhelming consensus that the figure of envy was meagre, as Geoffrey Whitney describes in the poem accompanying his emblem of *Invidia*: 'This, Enuie is: lean, pale, and full of yeares, / Who with the blisse of other pines awaie' (Figure 1).<sup>28</sup>

Ovid's depiction of a lean envious woman was influential enough to shape how envy was understood more generally in the period — and indeed, leanness became a key reflection of how the emotion was thought to operate. Theorists routinely made comments like 'Enuie is a griefe arising of other mens felicitie [that] maketh a man to looke leane, swart, hollow eyed, and sicklie', or 'envy [doth] consume a man to be a liuing Anatomy, a Skeleton, to be a leane and pale carcasse'.<sup>29</sup> Poets also took their cue from Ovid's portrayal:



Figure 1. STC 25438, page 94, image 6914, used by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Enuie, that foule disease, that fretting canker,  
 That breaks the gall, and gnawes the very bones,  
 Makes fat-backs soon grow slender, leane, and lanker.<sup>30</sup>

A modern reader might reasonably assume that such examples are simply a reflection of literary embellishment — but statements made within a medical and physiological context similarly suggest that early moderns understood dispositional envy to have a physical correlate. ‘Envy’, one source reports, ‘swells the Hypochondries, which by drinking up the Nourishment of the neighbouring Parts, makes the whole Body *lean* and *meager*’.<sup>31</sup> In this light, John Davies’s *Microcosmos* (1603) offers a verse rendition of how envy works upon the body:

Envie therefore the hart doth macerate,  
 Because the Tongue dares not the grieffe disclose,  
 That makes the grieffe still on the hart to grate,  
 Which the leane looke alone in silence shoes,  
 Yet eies shrink in (as loth to tell the woes).<sup>32</sup>

Other writers similarly concurred that ‘if the mind be affected with enuie, it maketh the body and face leane and wan’.<sup>33</sup> Richard Saunders, for example, notes in his book on palmistry that the first characteristic of an envious man is a ‘Body Meager, and lean’.<sup>34</sup> A treatise on physiognomy argues that in ‘those that are extraordinary lean jaw’d, it signifies malignity and Envie’.<sup>35</sup> And Thomas

Gainsford likewise suggests that ‘Envy breedes a frowne in the forehead, a leere in the eye, wrinkles in the face, leanness in the body’.<sup>36</sup> Finally, the common association between envy and leanness made for a convenient metaphor when discussing other matters in a medical context: one treatise argues that coffee, for example, ‘renders them that use it as *Lean* as *Famine*, as *Rivvel’d* as *Envy*’, while those that are ‘leane as a rake [and] in all respects resembling the physiognomie and shape of *Enuie*, described by *Ouidius*, must in any wise banish *Tobacco farre* from them, as a thing most pernicious’.<sup>37</sup>

Ovid, therefore, enormously influenced how early modern England understood the notion of envy, and how the emotion came to be associated with leanness. But the link between leanness and envy was not merely an elaboration of the Greek and Roman tradition: in fact, Renaissance thinkers equally found biblical precedent for the notion. The passage in question occurs in Genesis 41:1–4, amidst a description of the Pharaoh’s prophetic dreams:

And two yeeres after, Pharaoh also dreamed, and beholde, he stood by a riuier, And loe, there came out of the riuier seuen goodly kine and fat fleshed, and they fed in a meadow: And lo, seuen other kine came vp after them out of the riuier, euill faouered & leane fleshed, and stood by the other kine vpon the brinke of the riuier. And the euill faouered & leane fleshed kine did eate vp the seuen wel faouered and fat kine: so Pharaoh awoke.<sup>38</sup>

Exegetes came to understand these lines as a commentary on the pernicious nature of envy, a reading that became commonplace: John Crook, for example, notes that ‘most men and women live like Pharaoh’s lean kine, onely to eat up the fat, and to envy those that are not so lean-soul’d as themselves’, while Richard Allestree argues that ‘the ugly Passions of Anger and Envy, have, like Pharaoh’s lean Kine, eat up the more amiable, of Love and Joy’.<sup>39</sup> William Mason, in fact, neatly combines both Ovidian and biblical authority: ‘I behold Envy (as the Poet describeth her) to haue a pale face without blood, a leane body, without moysture (like one of Pharaohs leane Kine), squint eyes, foule or black teeth, a heart ful of fall, a tongue tipt with poison’.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, because envy (as one of the seven deadly sins) was understood as a theological vice — it was ‘thorow enuy’ that ‘death [came] into the world’, for when the devil ‘saw that man was in happy & good estate ... he tempted man, and ouercame hym’ — the emotion was commonly explored in a theological context more generally, where its association with leanness was routinely expressed.<sup>41</sup> ‘God’, John Wall says, ‘doth abhorre such as are leane with enuie, and pale with mallicious wickednesse’, while sermons



lamented 'how pale and lean do our souls sometimes look with envy at others'.<sup>42</sup> The anonymous author of *Two Guides to a Good Life* (1604) memorably describes how envy perverts us from our natural state of perfection:

Consider likewise that enuie is the transformer of men from the perfection of their first creation: in their first creation, they are amiable, mild and gentle, but through enuie they growe sterne, rough and impatient, hauing their eies sunke into their heades, their browes wrinkled, their cheeks pale and wanne, their teeth grinning like dogges, their tungs hissing like serpents, their ioynts trembling, and their whole body leane and vnsightly.<sup>43</sup>

Indeed, some 'pine themselves lean, whilst they behold the fatnesse of their neighbours portion, [thus] the spirit that dwells in them lusteth after Envy' — while the good Christian, on the contrary, 'sees the covetous prosper by usury, yet waxeth not leane with envie'.<sup>44</sup> And unsurprisingly, enviousness became a common ground for theological critique, as in the anonymous attack on 'Conventicle-leaders' whose 'meager vissages and thin jaws ... are but results of their pale envy and black melancholy, like *Pharaoh's lean kine*'.<sup>45</sup>

Religious discourse, like medical discourse, is thus a common venue in which we find the early modern linkage between leanness and envy. But, as suggested above, we see this association in virtually any literary context where the discussion of envy regularly takes place, so highlighting such occurrences actually gives a useful sense of how the emotion was talked about more generally in the period. Early modern writers, for example, often attributed attacks against their works to the envy of their opponents — so we find a critic described as 'leane and hidebound with hart-fretting enuie', while a detractor is said to have been 'bred up and suckled with sour Sustenance from the lank and flaggy Dugs of his lean and meager Mother Envy'.<sup>46</sup> Envy and backbiting were thought to circulate particularly among ambitious courtiers, and were commonly cited in anti-court literature; to hear, then, that 'there is in Princes Courts a lean-faced Monster / Term'd Envy' is unsurprising.<sup>47</sup> Poets lamented that the virtuous were particularly targeted by malicious envy, 'leane envie / Waites ever on the steps of vertue advanc'd' and 'immortall vertue euer lincked is, / With that pale leane fac'd meager-hewed enuie'.<sup>48</sup> For this reason, envy is routinely invoked in the context of elegy, as many poets suggest that their deceased subject enflames envious thoughts in either worldly observers or supernatural forces; one elegiac subject, then, is undercut because 'Enuy and Death conspired both togeather ... two leane-fac'd fiends', while another elegy invokes the power of 'leane Enuie with her poysoning beame'.<sup>49</sup> More generally,

envy featured heavily in the quips and proverbs that filled literary anthologies, usually some variation on the commonplace that ‘the envious man growes leane to see others fat’.<sup>50</sup> And finally, envy is a superb engine of human conflict, so it was regularly deployed by the era’s dramatists. Indeed, to dispel any doubt regarding Shakespeare’s awareness of this motif, we need only turn to *King Henry VI, Part 2*, where Suffolk curses his enemies ‘with full as many signs of deadly hate, / As lean-faced Envy in her loathsome cave’ (3.2.314–15).<sup>51</sup>

As I have shown, there was a robust connection between the ideas of envy and leanness in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English literary culture. Many of the examples I cite, of course, post-date *Julius Caesar*. But many do not, and ample evidence exists that this motif would have been widely available for Shakespeare’s audience, most of whom likely would have immediately associated Cassius’s ‘lean and hungry’ look with the discourse of envy, the dispositional feature that culminates Caesar’s assessment of his rival. Since Shakespeare, we have seen, actively alters his source to make Cassius more envious than he appears in Plutarch, it seems reasonable to suggest that the playwright actively invoked the cultural association of leanness and envy in his famous line, which must be understood in this context to be fully appreciated today.

Only one final wrinkle needs to be addressed. As we may infer from the numerous examples provided above, the idea of paleness is also extremely common in the Renaissance discourse of envy; after leanness, paleness is perhaps the most regularly cited physical characteristic attributed to the envious figure. Shakespeare, as we saw above, would have encountered the terms pale and whitely explicitly linked with lean in Plutarch — so why, we might wonder, is his Cassius not also described as pale, to make the association with envy that much stronger? While it may initially seem like a missed opportunity, I think that this restraint is a reflection of how deftly Shakespeare was able to handle both his source and the thematic associations that it activated. To make the envious Cassius both lean *and* pale would risk flirting with cliché, and risk making him simply an avatar of Ovid’s infamous figure. So, while Shakespeare seems to have been happy to invoke the cultural associations of leanness and envy, he wisely suppressed a suggestion from his source that would have made the characterization of Cassius heavy-handed and inelegant. By instead substituting hungry, he implicitly furthers the conceptual linkage with envy — as when Thomas Nashe in *The Unfortunate Traveller* notes that ‘those that enuie are hungrie’ — but also characterizes Cassius more broadly as ambitious — a trait associated in the period with appetite and hunger, as we find in mentions of ‘insatiable ambition, whiche by falling was alwayes made more hungrie’, or of the man who ‘with an hungrie

gorge fed on the poisonfull baites of bitter sweete ambition'.<sup>52</sup> A lesser dramatist, I suspect, would have given Cassius a 'lean and pale' look — but I think posterity has confirmed that Shakespeare's instincts were probably correct.

## Notes

---

- 1 Gail Kern Paster, 'Communities: *Julius Caesar*', in *Shakespeare and Emotion*, ed. Katharine A. Craik (Oxford, 2020), 94–108, 98, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108235952.008>.
- 2 All quotations from William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. David Daniell (Surrey, 1998); Ros King, "'A Lean and Hungry Look": Sight, Ekphrasis, Irony in *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V*', *Shakespeare Survey* 69 (2016), 153–165, 153, <https://doi.org/10.1017/SSO9781316670408.013>. King, the scholar who has given this line the most consideration, draws on the 'physiology of sight' to provocatively argue that 'Caesar's disquiet ... becomes a shrewder anxiety about what Cassius *does* rather than a merely superstitious fear about what he looks *like* and what his appearance might presage', *ibid.*, 153.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 157. King notes that the line signifies (among other things) Cassius's 'narrower, personal ambition' and 'political aspiration'. For the phrase being used generally in terms of ambition, see Clifford Dowdey, *Lee's Last Campaign: The Story of Lee & His Men Against Grant, 1864* (Lincoln, 1993), 10; Eric J. Cassell, *The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Medicine* 2nd edn, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195156164.001.0001> (Oxford, 2004), 166; and Amelia Faye Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked: Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-Century English Prints* (Newark, 2008), 47.
- 4 See Mildred E. Hartsock, 'The Complexity of *Julius Caesar*', *PMLA* 81 (1966), 56–62, 56, <https://doi.org/10.2307/461308>. See also Wayne A. Rebhorn, 'The Crisis of the Aristocracy in *Julius Caesar*', *Renaissance Quarterly* 43.1 (1990), 75–111, 83, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2861793> which associates Cassius's leanness with the related notion of emulation.
- 5 Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes* (London, 1579; STC: 20066), 792.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 975.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 1058.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.*, 1068.

- 11 Ibid, 1058.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid, 1068; 1059.
- 14 Bradley J. Irish, 'Envy in Early Modern England', *ELH* 88.4 (2021): 845–78, <https://doi.org/10.1353/elh.2021.0034>.
- 15 Thomas Philpot, *The Creples Complaint* (London, 1662; Wing: P2124A), 14.
- 16 See Rebborn, 'Crisis of the Aristocracy in *Julius Caesar*'. For the relationship between envy and emulation, see Irish, 'Envy in Early Modern England', 865–9.
- 17 As will become apparent, I have focused below on examples which explicitly link envy with the word lean, as this was by far the most common verbiage in the period. There are, however, also examples which employ synonyms, as in depictions of 'meager and bloud-wasted Enuie' or 'marrow-eating envie', in the description of a witch with 'cheeks as thin / as Envies self', or in the proverbial observation that 'Enuie waste[s] the man' as 'rust consumeth the yron'. See Thomas Adams, *The Devills Banket* (London, 1614; STC: 110.5), 97; Richard Brathwaite, *Times Treasury* (London, 1652), 47; Robert Dixon, *Canidia* (London, 1683; Wing: D1745), 24; Robert Cawdry, *A Treasure or Store-house of Similies* (London, 1600; STC: 4887), 249. Note that the related concept of jealousy is sometimes associated with leanness, as in the statement that 'iealousie ... made her looke leane, pale, and wan' or the reference to 'that leane Italian diuell, ieaousie'. See Anonymous, *The Ancient, Famous and Honourable History of Amadis de Gaule* (London, 1619; STC: 544), 36, and Gervase Markham, *The Dumbe Knight* (London, 1608; STC: 17399), G4. The complex relationship between envy and jealousy in the early modern period goes beyond the scope of this paper, and has not been satisfactorily explored, but see Bradley J. Irish, *Emotion in the Tudor Court: Literature, History, and Early Modern Feeling* (Evanston, 2018), 71–3, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv3znz47>. In broad terms, they were often seen as distinct, intimately related concepts, but were sometimes used as near-synonyms, as when Milton's Satan (after first apprehending Adam and Eve) 'turned / For envy, yet with jealous leer malign / Eyed them askance'. See John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Alastair Fowler (New York, 2007), 4.502–4.
- 18 For envy generally in the period, see R.B. Gill, 'The Renaissance Conventions of Envy', *Medievalia et Humanistica* 9 (1979), 215–30; Lynn S. Meskill, *Ben Jonson and Envy* (Cambridge, 2009), Chapter 2, 42–74; Lara Dodds, 'Envy, Emulation, and the Gendering of the Passions in *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*', *English Literary Renaissance* 48.3 (2018), 368–94, <https://doi.org/10.1086/699031>; Irish, *Emotion in the Tudor Court*, Chapter 2, 55–92; Bradley J. Irish, 'The Varieties of Early Modern Envy and Jealousy: The Case of *Obtrectation*', *Modern Philology* 117.1

- (2019), 115–126; and Bradley J. Irish, 'Envy, Beelzebub, and *Paradise Lost*', *HLQ* (2022) [Forthcoming].
- 19 Matthew W. Dickie, 'Ovid, Metamorphosis 2.760–64', *The American Journal of Philology* 96.4 (1975), 378–90, 380, <https://doi.org/10.2307/294495>. Dickie notes that Lucian (when describing a painting by fourth century BCE artist Apelles) suggests that 'a male figure who was pale, misshapen and keen-eyed and who had the look of those who have become skeletal as the result of prolonged illness' is meant to represent Phthonos (Envy).
  - 20 Ovid, *The XV Bookes of P. Ouidius Naso, Entytuled Metamorphosis* (London, 1567; STC: 18956), f27v. Ovid's original has 'leanness in her whole body' ('macies in corpore toto'). Though Golding doesn't retain this sense in his translation, several lines later Ovid similarly notes that 'with the sight of men's successes she pines away' ('intabescitque videndo successus hominum'). See Ovid, *Metamorphosis, Volume I* (New York, 1916), 2.775; 790–1.
  - 21 Ovid, *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished by G.S.* (London, 1626; STC: 18964), 41.
  - 22 On Shakespeare and Ovid see, for example, Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford, 1994), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198183242.001.0001>, and A.B. Taylor, *Shakespeare's Ovid: The Metamorphoses in The Plays and Poems* (Cambridge, 2006). Also worth noting is that *Metamorphosis* Book XV, which describes the death of Caesar, seems to have provided Shakespeare with several cues in the play; see Martha Hale Shackford, 'Julius Caesar and Ovid', *Modern Language Notes* 41.3 (1926), 172–4, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2913912>.
  - 23 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene Disposed Into Twelue Bookes* (London, 1596; STC: 23082), 349.
  - 24 Francis Rollenson, *Twelve Prophetical Legacies* (London, 1612; STC: 21265), 242; Samuel Otes, *An Explanation of the Generall Epistle of Saint Iude* (London, 1633; STC: 18896), 241.
  - 25 N.L., *Politeuphuia* (London, 1598; STC: 15685.5), 22.
  - 26 William Berkeley, *Diatribae: Discourses Moral and Theological* (London, 1697; Wing: B1974), 57; Anonymous, *Delectable Demaundes, and Pleasaunt Questions* (London, 1566; STC: 5059), f97v; Thomas Adams, *The Happines of the Church* (London, 1619; STC 121), 160; Thomas Dekker, *Troia-Noua* (London, 1612; STC: 6530), B4.
  - 27 William Salmon, *Polygraphice* (London, 1673; Wing: S445A), 49; Louis Moréi, *The Great Historical, Geographical and Poetical Dictionary* (London, 1694; Wing: M2725), H.h.
  - 28 Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblemes, and Other Deuises* (Leiden, 1586; STC: 25438), 94.

- 29 William Vaughan, *Naturall and Artificial Directions for Health* (London, 1600; STC: 24612), 51; Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford, 1621; STC: 4159), 136.
- 30 John Stradling, *Diuine Poemes In Seuen Seuerall Classes* (London, 1625; STC: 23353), 39.
- 31 John Scott, *The Christian Life Part III* (London, 1696; Wing: S2056), 309. The hypocondries are 'either of the two regions of the upper abdomen located beneath the ribs on either side of the epigastrium'. *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, 'hypo-chondre', *n*.
- 32 John Davies, *Microcosmos: The Discovery of the Little World* (London, 1603; STC: 6333), 196.
- 33 John Downname, *The Second Part of The Christian Warfare* (London, 1611; STC: 7318.5), 131.
- 34 Richard Saunders, *Palmistry, The Secrets Thereof Disclosed* (London, 1663; Wing: S751), 153.
- 35 Marc De Vulson, *The Court of Curiositie* (London, 1669; Wing: V751), 176.
- 36 Thomas Gainsford, *The Rich Cabinet Furnished With Varietie of Excellent Descriptions* (London, 1616; STC: 11522), 42.
- 37 Well-willer, *The Women's Petition Against Coffee* (London, 1674; Wing: W3331), 2; Edmund Gardiner, *The Triall of Tabacco* (London, 1610; STC: 11564), 13. Gardiner's remarks are lifted almost verbatim from Levinys Lemnius's *The Touchstone of Complexions* (London, 1576; STC: 15456), in which those with a particular type of 'drye complexion' are described as 'leane as a Rake ... in all respects resembling the Physogonomy and shape of Enuye, described by Ouid', f66v; 69.
- 38 Gn 41: 1–4, *The Bible Translated According to the Ebrew and Greeke* (London, 1599; STC: 2173).
- 39 John Crook, *Truth's Principles* (London, 1662; Wing: C7217), 16; Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling in Two Parts* (London, 1673; Wing: A1141B), 184. See also Thomas Philpot, *The Creples Complaint* (London, 1662; Wing: P2124A), 14, ('they all looked like Pharaoh his leane kine, as all malicious men will do that pine away with repining at other mens prosperity') and Richard Alleine, *Vindiciae Pietatis* (London, 1665; Wing: A1005), 350 ('these lean kine and thin ears of envy and contention will eat up all your good fruit').
- 40 William Mason, *A Handful of Essaies* (London, 1621; STC: 17624), 124.
- 41 Nicholas de Hannapes, *The Ensamples of Vertue and Vice* (London, 1561; STC: 12742), Q.8v–R1.
- 42 John Wall, *Alae Seraphicae* (London, 1627; STC: 24985), 141; John Murcot, *Several Works of Mr. John Murcot* (London, 1657; Wing: M3083), 447.

- 43 Anonymous, *Two Guides to a Good Life* (London, 1604; STC: 12466), F7.
- 44 William Bartholomew, *The Strong Man Ejected by a Stronger Than He* (London, 1660; Wing: B979), 11; William Habington, *Castara* (London, 1640; STC: 12585), 171.
- 45 Anonymous, *The Life and Death of Ralph Wallis* (London, 1670; Wing: L2008), 38.
- 46 Anonymous, *Master Broughtons Letters* (London, 1599; STC: 3864), 17; Anonymous, *Raillerie a La Mode Consider'd* (London, 1673; Wing: R140), 51.
- 47 George Powell, *Alphonso, King of Naples* (London, 1691; Wing: P3047), 36.
- 48 Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Comedies and Tragedies* (London, 1647; Wing: B1581), Bbbbb2v; Richard Linche, *Diella Certaine Sonnets* (London, 1596; STC: 17091), E2v.
- 49 Anonymous, *An Italians Dead Bodie* (London, 1600; STC: 19154.3), B4v; Gervase Markham, *Devoreux* (London, 1597; STC: 19793), f26v.
- 50 Richard Barckley, *The Felicitie of Man* (London, 1631; STC: 1383), 626.
- 51 William Shakespeare, *King Henry VI, Part 2*, ed. Ronald Knowles (London, 1999).
- 52 Thomas Nashe, *The Vnfortunate Traueller* (London, 1594; STC: 18381), 11v; John Bishop, *Beautifull Blossomes* (London, 1577; STC: 3091), 93; William Fulbecke, *An Historicall Collection of the Continuall Factions, Tumults, and Massacres of the Romans and Italians* (London, 1601; STC: 11412), 19.

