A Study

of Ben Jonson's Poetic and Moral Ideals

with particular reference to the complimentary poems.

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ABSTRACT

Jonson's definition and discussion of poetry emphasised that poetry was an imitation of life. There were several aspects to this. Poetry was for Jonson, as for Sidney, the imitation of a higher realism, but he, unlike Sidney, thought that this must be presented in terms of and with the appearance of real life. Jonson required a more realistic and objective imitation than Sidney, who had emphasised the poet's imaginative freedom.

Among his requirements for the poet, Jonson also stressed the importance of study. He did, nevertheless, admit the prior necessity of ability and of training, and the importance of inspiration for perceiving and presenting the Truth. His idea of study was taken partly from Horace, but largely from Cicero and Quintilian. Cicero had required the orator to have a knowledge of all important subjects and arts; and Quintilian, that he at least be acquainted with his subject; Jonson's requirement for the poet conflates both of these. Though poetry had an ancient association with learning, it was not factual information but a true understanding of life which the poet must convey; all his study was directed to discovering and promoting the best manner of life. Since the poet must teach the good life, he must also be a good man. He must, in fact, be good, learned, and skilled in his art. And it was his art which utilized his ability, his learning, and his skills to the best advantage.

Jonson turned to the past for his standards at a time when the Classics were regarded as the highest literary achievement. His point of view was typical of the Renaissance, but the assurance and the purposefulness with which he drew from the past was a promise of neo-classicism. He searched there for Truth and Wisdom, and took thence, particularly from the Stoics, his ideal of man. He also sought models of expression, but he transformed what he took and made, for example, the classical into the English epigram. What was taken from the past was used for the present. The past often became a standard, and Jonson used historical and mythographical figures to convey his moral and literary ideals, and to measure the achievement of the present. His use of the past did not, however, imply that it could not be surpassed, for, under the influence of Vives and Bacon, he clearly believed in the possibility of progress.

Jonson's poems to friends and associates present a 'pictura', an image of his ethical and literary ideals. They often define an ideal of character and its relationship to literature and society; the epigram permitted Jonson to express this with brevity, clarity, and conciseness. Poems to great poets and scholars, such as Donne and Selden, are the occasion for reflections on humanistic values concerning the importance of character in the search for Truth, the need to achieve a true understanding of life and of the past, and the significance of friendship in the social order. Jonson's patrons also receive verses which are a celebration of his values. A poem to Lady Bedford shows how he envisaged life in terms of his ideals; a poem to Pembroke, that he saw some special affinity between the 'pictura' and the epigram. Jonson's relationship with the Sidneys, the most brilliant and accomplished patrons of the age, led him to praise and compliment various members of the family, but always in terms of their common humanistic values.

The great public figures of the age are likewise envisaged in terms of Jonson's values, though always on the basis of their real accomplishments. They represent an ideal of the soldier and of the statesman. The poems to contemporaries depict faithfully the life of their subjects and also hint at contemporary issues; they show that Jonson exercised discernment in his choice of people to praise, and of qualities to praise in them. Yet, he himself admitted to having praised unworthy men. Those, however, who might have been regarded as unworthy are praised for genuine qualities and achievements; Jonson gives an estimate of them which was valid at the time of composition. Jonson integrated many elements into his poetry: praise and instruction, the person and the 'pictura', moral and factual truth, the universal principle and the particular example.

The poetry which dates from after 1616 shows changes from the earlier practice. Jonson ceased to define a 'pictura' and turned to more particular subjects. He also abandoned the epigram for genres which allow longer and more expansive treatment; the development of his mode of lamenting death and of praising fellow poets shows this development. His praise combined the old values and discernment with the new ideal of the virtuoso, but with a faltering confidence in the value of human effort and poetry.

Jonson's belief that poetry should 'express' the life of man led him not only to imitate contemporary manners but to reflect the social and intellectual currents of the age, both of which he employed in his attempt to make life understood.

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Preface

All quotations from the body of Jonson's work are from the magnificent edition by C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson. I have also used their introduction and notes extensively; my gratitude, like that of all scholars of the English Renaissance, must be expressed for their work of a lifetime. The contemporary spelling and punctuation of all quotations from Renaissance sources has been retained, except for the usual modernization of the i/j and u/v usage. The Bibliography, finally, brings together the books and articles, whether quoted or not, which were found useful in compiling this thesis.

A Key to Abbreviations

Ep.	Epigrammes.
For.	The Forest.
Und.	The Under-wood.
Disc.	Timber, or Discoveries.
Convers.	Conversations with Drummond.
Ung. V.	Ungathered Verse.

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I

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson was a man of his age. There are always some men who are particularly representative of their times because they bring together or sum up many of its salient features and movements. Such men can in a striking way stand as an index of their age because they are, like Milton, the culmination of a tradition, like Sidney, an important stage in the development of a culture, or, like Bacon, a sign of things to come. They combine with their personal qualities and accomplishments something that typifies an important aspect of the values and experience of their contemporaries, and become therefore a sign of their times. Ben Jonson was one of these.

His life and work reflect the colour, values, and the men and women of a period which spanned from the last years of Elizabeth through the reign of James to the first half of the reign of Charles. His poetry is in large measure a mirror of that period of English history. The colour of Jacobean London was particularly well captured by his keen eye and retentive memory and held in the poetry which he made from what he had seen. The values which had been formulated by ancient Greece and Rome and which had been restored by a self-conscious and self-proclaimed re-birth of learning were those from which he took the literary and ethical principles of his work. Those men and women who became his friends and patrons, or who stood out for their service

to their society, and those who dissipated their humanity in ignorance and folly are the population of his verses. He brought together and gave a form to all these elements from his own life which he believed caught and expressed something which was universal and permanent in human experience and would ensure an immortal appreciation. The aims, the principles, and the success or failure of this endeavour are the object of this study.

Jonson was a man of a great breadth of experience.[1] In his time, he had been a student at Westminster, a bricklayer, a soldier, an actor, a poet, a playwright, a scholar, a man about town who knew the taverns and the seedy byways of London as well as the court and some of the great houses of the land. He had married, perhaps even twice, had strayed, had fathered legitimate and also, it seems, illegitimate children, and had suffered the early loss of his first and second born.[2] He had been honoured by both Oxford and Cambridge; he had killed two men, and been imprisoned several times on charges of sedition, recusancy, and manslaughter; he had experienced a sincere change of religion and an equally sincere return after twelve years to the fold of his birth. He won and kept the friendship of a good many of the outstanding poets, scholars, patrons, and statesmen of his society; yet he knew intimately its fops, fools, frauds, and tricksters. The gusto and variety of his life is reflected in his verses, which span the social spectrum, and capture both what was noble and what was despicable in his contemporaries, what was great and what was petty about his age. His evident intention to reproduce the life of his time is clearly linked with the principles and the purposes of his poetry.

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1. All references to Jonson's life and work are taken from Ben Jonson, ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson (Oxford, 1925-52), hereafter cited as H & S.
2. This perhaps needs special justification, see Convers. 287-94, and H & S. xi. 574-6.

Jonson was also a man of considerable learning. He often retired from the intriguing spectacle of life and turned his energies to reading and study; Aubrey records that after a bibulous evening he would "tumble home to bed, and, when he had thoroughly perspired, then to studie."[3] The recognition of both universities and the friendship of Camden, Cotton, Bacon, Selden, Donne, Digby and others, almost all of them intellectual leaders of their age, testify to the distinction he had attained in the world of letters.

He devoted much of his study to the works of antiquity, and was so familiar with and immersed in them that as well as evoking his own times, he could draw from the records of the Ancients a vivid picture of their age: "he so represents old Rome to us," wrote Dryden, "in its Rites, Ceremonies and Customs, that if one of their Poets had written either of his Tragedies, we had seen less in it then in him."[4]

The fruits of his study and learning are actually found everywhere in his work: he clearly thought about the due relationship of his learning to literature. His evident intention to employ the knowledge and understanding which he had acquired from his efforts is important if we are to grasp his conception of his art.

Jonson's poetry is open to the charge of being too involved in the present and too indebted to the past: both too topical and too classical. There is in his work a curious combination of energy snatched from the movement of every-day life and erudition amassed from the perusal of the Ancients, a combination which evidently had something to do with the aims of his work, with his conception or theory of poetry. The way in which he brought together what he drew from the present and appropriated from the past indicates that this

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3. Brief Lives, ed. Oliver Lawson Dick, 3rd ed. (London, 1958), p. 178.
4. Of Dramatick Poesie, an Essay (London, 1668), p. 50.

convergence was conscious and deliberate, and a consequence of ideas which he held about the role of the poet and poetry in his age. The convergence of elements from the observation of life and the study of books, from the present and the past, is too pervasive, constant, and consistent not to have been part of a plan or a theory of which Jonson was aware and to which he applied himself. It is clearly linked with what he was trying to achieve in his poetry.

I shall try to elucidate some of the principles which lay behind Jonson's poetry: his conception of the matter and business of poetry, his view of its relationship to contemporary life, his attitude to learning and its value for poetry, his understanding of the role and usefulness of the past for his work and his times.

These aspects of Jonson's thought and work will be studied with special reference to his complimentary poetry. The poems addressed to his contemporaries embody in a special way the poetic and ethical principles which were the basis of Jonson's thought. They have a contemporary reference, and at the same time reveal to the student their debt to the study of Antiquity: they owe as much to the lamp as to the light of day. Most of the complimentary poems, which form the bulk of his non-dramatic and non-satirical work, are in the form of epigrams, a genre which Jonson singled out for special attention; this tells us something about the priorities which he set for his poetry. The friends and associates who find their way into his poetry are depicted in terms of clear and consistent ideals and tell us a good deal about his values. The great soldiers and statesmen who served during the first third of the seventeenth century are also well represented in his verse, and are drawn in the light of their achievements and with an eye to the principles and significance of their

lives and actions; these men illuminate the relationship between his values and the history of his age. The life and the people of an era are depicted in Jonson's verses, and so his work can be expected to reflect the changes and the developments of both personal and social history during that time. The complimentary poems are a valuable indicator of the thought, values and attitude to contemporary society of a man who is more known for his negative than positive statements about humanity.

Yet, this study must not be seen simply as corrective, as attempting to reveal the more agreeable and affirmative aspects of Jonson's achievement in order to balance the vivid and trenchant impression of his satirical drama and poetry. That would be to relegate the complimentary poetry to second place, whereas it should, in some respects at least, be given first place. If the drama generally presents a one-sided view of life, the poetry is more balanced and complete. It reflects the whole of life: the good must be taken with the bad. And it is not only its fullness which gives it particular merit and requires special consideration, for all poetry of praise is a statement of values and, even if we admit the possibility of flattery or a failure of judgement, must be based on a creed or a code of conduct. It is of necessity an affirmation not only of merit but of standards. These must precede any attempt at satire, just as a statement of values, either explicit or implicit, is prior to any criticism. Jonson's poetry of praise must be taken therefore as an affirmation of his values, and the satire and criticism must be seen as being the consequence of the neglect and disrespect which was shown to them.

The point of this study, in sum, is to suggest that many of the qualities of Jonson's poetry were a consequence of a rational

a conscious and consistent theory of what poetry was and should do, and to illustrate how that rationale informs, strengthens, and justifies, and how it develops in, the complimentary poetry.

II

POETIC THEORY : THE IMITATION OF LIFE

Ben Jonson was both a poet and a critic: a poet whose understanding of poetry was theoretical as well as practical. He had studied the classical critics "among whom Horace, and (hee that taught him) Aristotle" (Disc. 2510-1) as well as Cicero and Quintillian, and on the evidence of his borrowings in the Discoveries had also read many Renaissance critics. His breadth of classical and Renaissance culture enabled him to see contemporary literature in a wide context and his singular conviction and application enabled him to bring this culture to bear on his own work. He thought about the aims and principles of his own poetry: he was therefore a self-conscious poet. His criticism and his poetry are complementary; they illuminate one another; they are consistent. The critical and poetic faculties were for him closely allied, for to "judge of Poets is only the facultie of Poets; and not of all Poets, but the best" (Disc. 2578-9). He was finally a poet of considerable judgement in life and poetry. The same qualities are found in both his criticism and poetry: learning, breadth of culture, self-consciousness, judgement. His work is remarkably of a piece.

Jonson's critical comments are, however, fragmentary. His most ambitious attempt at literary criticism, his Aristotelian commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry, written in 1604 and apparently

revised after 1614, perished in the fire of November, 1623, which consumed most of the work he had done since sending his work to the printer in 1612.[1] What remain are random comments in his poetry, in the Discoveries, in his conversations with Drummond and in the prefaces and dedications of his individual works. These were made over many years. They are sometimes off-hand judgements, and are often only occasional reflections on particular aspects of poetry which concerned him. Even the more comprehensive discussion of poetry in the Discoveries is limited to a few definitions and a discussion of some aspects of drama. In order to understand Jonson it is necessary to piece together statements from many sources, and to expose and clarify some basic assumptions which he himself does not make explicit. When taken together and elucidated by critical commentary, these present a surprisingly complete and consistent picture of Jonson's critical opinions.

Jonson's definition of the poet is on the surface a conventional Renaissance one:

> A Poet is ... a Maker, or a fainer: His Art, an Art of imitation, or faining; expressing the life of man in fit measure, numbers and harmony, according to Aristotle: From the word ποιεῖν, which signifies to make, or fayne. Hence, hee is call'd a Poet, not hee which writeth in measure only; but that fayneth and formeth a fable, and writes things like the Truth. For, the Fable and Fiction is (as it were) the forme and Soule of any Poeticall worke, or Poeme.
>
> (Disc. 2346-55)

This, according to Saintsbury, is "the stock definition of 'making', and its corollary that a poet is not one who writes in measure, but one who feigns - all as we have found it before, but (as we should expect of Ben) in succincter and more scholarly form".[2] Another difference is

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1. Und. XLIII, ll.89-91; Sejanus, "To the Readers", ll.15-8; Convers. 82-8; see also H & S, I, 73-5.
2. George Saintsbury, A History of English Criticism: being the English chapters of A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe, revised, adapted, and supplemented (Edinburgh and London, 1911), p. 86

more difficult to ascertain. It is important to determine what exactly Jonson meant by this traditional definition and conventional terminology, for critics often use the same words to mean different things. Words such as "make", "fain", and "imitation" need precise definition, and extensive commentary before they can be properly understood. Likewise, the exact meanings of an apparently conventional definition might vary widely; the definition of the poet as "maker", for example, which was ultimately derived from the Greeks, was construed variously by Italian critics throughout the Renaissance. The doctrine of poetic imitation also had a complex history and by Jonson's time was capable of several interpretations. Their antiquity had given these conventional theories a wide area of reference and association; within their history there was furthermore considerable divergence and disagreement. Jonson could have drawn his theory from many different sources. We must, moreover, not only examine what Jonson meant by traditional terms, and how he interpreted a conventional definition, but also what he may have added to it. To be understood fully, therefore, his definition must be examined in the light of the Renaissance critical tradition, for it is only by comparison and cross-reference that his meaning becomes clear.

This can be done quite simply, by comparing Jonson's critical commentary with that of another poet and critic who was his immediate predecessor, Sir Philip Sidney, whose An Apologie for Poetrie, or as it was variously called The Defense of Poesie, was first printed in London in 1595, just as Jonson was beginning his dramatic career.[3] Written in 1581-3, it had circulated in manuscript before its

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3. H & S, I, 6-8.

publication and was known to Jonson.[4] It is very useful for defining the place and the nature of Jonson's criticism.

A glance at the work of Sidney and Jonson, and this applies as well to their creative as to their critical work, reveals a basic difference in spirit between them. Sidney was a courtier; indeed in many ways he was a living representative of the ideals defined in Castiglione's The Courtier. And though the learning which he incorporated into the 'Apology' was substantial, it is presented with grace and lightness, with due sprezzatura. The 'Apology' is, consequently "not a pedant's encyclopedia, but a gentleman's essay," an essay which also freely makes use of wit, irony, parody and paradox to support and embellish its argument.[5] The claims which Sidney made for poetry were, moreover, made with the exuberant spirit of the Italian Renaissance. Sidney drew his material largely from Italian sources, though he assimilated it so completely that few direct borrowings can be traced: this suggests that he owed more to discussion of the issues, those alluring conversations among the cognoscenti so often portrayed in the literature of the period, than to his solitary study.[6] There was

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4. An Apology for Poetry, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd, Nelson's Mediaeval and Renaissance Library (n.p. 1965), pp. 1-4; all subsequent references will be to this edition; for the influence of the 'Apology' on Jonson see H & S, I, 10, 291, 335, II, 446n., XI, 281-2, 284.
5. William K. Wimsatt, Jr. and Cleanth Brooks, Literary Criticism: a short history (New York, 1957), p. 167. See A. C. Hamilton, "Sidney and Agrippa," RES, n.s. VII (1956), 151-7. Arthur F. Kinney's "Parody and Its Implications in Sidney's Defence of Poesie," SEL (1972), 1-20, is useful but short-sighted.
6. Joel Elias Spingarn, A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance, 2nd ed. (New York, 1908), pp. 268-74 and Shepherd, pp. 42-6, 61-75, et passim.

little of the courtier in Jonson and nothing of sprezzatura in his work. Jonson sought, not the graceful touch of the courtier, but the weight and authority of the scholar. His wit was more terse, lively and mordant than Sidney's. His spirit was more sober; his scholarship, more strict and rigorous; and he drew from northern rather than Italian sources for many of his ideas on comedy and tragedy.[7] Jonson's borrowings are usually more direct and easily traceable than Sidney's, but though he remained more faithful to his sources, he made his borrowings his own.[8] Both Sidney and Jonson were Renaissance humanists, but Jonson, in sum, tended to the scholarly rather than the courtly tradition of Renaissance letters.[9]

Their difference in spirit and method led to telling differences in their definitions of poetry. Sidney had given two definitions of poetry: "an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word mimesis, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth - to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture - with this end, to teach and delight" (p. 101), and again "that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching" (p. 103).[10] These are also perfectly conventional definitions which employ a conventional terminology; in fact, they are in some important respects similar to Jonson's

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7. He drew from the Dutchman, Heinsius, and the Bohemian Jesuit, Jacobus Pontanus, see Wimsatt and Brooks, p. 177.
8. This is true not only of the Discoveries, which is after all a commonplace book, but of the dedication to Volpone, see H & S, IX, 682-6.
9. These were, of course, not completely separable and Jonson, especially with his masques, had close associations with the court.
10. All references to the body of the 'Apology' will be included in the text: the page number will follow the quotation; those to Shepherd's introduction and notes will be placed in footnotes.

definition. Yet, this apparent similarity conceals a fundamental difference in their conception of poetry.

While Sidney's definitions are, like Jonson's, conventional, they do show an important difference of source and emphasis. Sidney's definition is eclectic. Though he, like Jonson, cites the authority of Aristotle, his words "representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth" are not strictly Aristotelian; his "to teach and delight" is Horatian, and his notion of a "speaking picture," also used by Horace, is an ancient commonplace. Jonson's verbs, to "make, or fayne" are closer to the prescriptions of Aristotle. Though Jonson accepted, and used the notions that poetry is a speaking picture and that it must teach and delight, he did not incorporate these extraneous elements into his definition of poetry.[11] He is, indeed, more scholarly and more strictly Aristotelian than Sidney.

Both Sidney and Jonson held a moral and didactic theory of poetry. Sidney's definitions, and particularly the second, clearly state this moral and didactic basis and are in keeping with his argument throughout the 'Apology' that poetry is the best means of leading men to virtue. Jonson's definition, which describes poetry as "expressing the life of man" is also moral.

Aristotle had held that poetry imitated human "action and life," but Horace in The Art of Poetry had more specifically

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11. See the second prologue to Epicoene.

> The ends of all, who for the scene doe write,
> Are, or should be, to profit, and delight.

Jonson endorsed the notion of poetry as a "speaking Picture" in his discussion of painting and poetry at Disc. 1509-12.

required that the poet take his work from the observation of life; in Jonson's translation:

> And I still bid the learned Maker look
> On life, and manners, and make those his booke:
> Thence draw forth true expressions.
>
> (ll. 453-5)

The link between poetry and 'life', then, had classical authority, but Jonson tended to interpret life in a moral sense, and his words "expressing the life of man" must be supplemented by his remark in the dedication to Volpone, that it was "the principall end of poesie, to informe men, in the best reason of living" (ll. 108-9). His view of poetry was essentially didactic. Both Sidney and Jonson seem to have attributed this didactic theory to Aristotle, but it had actually been disseminated in the Horatian formula, that poetry teach and delight. Hence it was generally believed that Horace was largely based on Aristotle, a notion which led to Jonson's assertion that Aristotle had taught Horace, and to his Aristotelian commentary on The Art of Poetry.[12] What we have, however, is a Horatian interpretation of Aristotle. Jonson's definition of poetry was, therefore, more strictly Aristotelian than Sidney's, but his theory of poetry shared some of the same misconception about Aristotle's theory. This greater strictness, however, does mark a movement from the eclecticism of Sidney to a more pure and solid, if somewhat Horatian, Aristotelianism.

Both Sidney and Jonson define poetry as imitation. What did poetry imitate? Sidney thought that the ultimate object

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12. Allan H. Gilbert and Henry L. Snuggs, "On the Relation of Horace to Aristotle in Literary Criticism," JEGP, XLVI (1947), 233-47.

of poetic imitation was the divine order of nature, an order which had a rational basis and could therefore be perceived by human reason.[13] Poetry was superior to the other arts and sciences because it could present this order, which Sidney called "the general reason of things" and regarded as universal and permanent truth, in the form of particular images. Jonson endorsed this understanding of poetic imitation in this borrowing from John Hoskins: "The order of Gods creatures in themselves, is not only admirable, and glorious, but eloquent: then he who could apprehend the consequence of things in their truth, and utter his apprehensions as truly, were the best Writer, or Speaker" (Disc. 2129-33).[14] Thus the imitation of a divine order, of universal and permanent truths, provided an ideal basis for poetry.[15] This ideal basis was in turn the basis of the moral and didactic function of poetry - for it was because he taught enduring moral Truths appertaining to the place of man in the order of nature, that the poet fulfilled his responsibilities as a poet.

Jonson clearly defined the poet's relationship to this order. His quotation from Hoskins spoke of the poet's obligation to grasp the 'true' significance and order of things, and to express these insights 'truly'. Jonson himself in the dedication to Volpone spoke of the poet who "comes forth the interpreter, and arbiter of

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13. Shepherd, pp. 52-65.
14. See also Disc. 986-7, 1373-5.
15. See Daniel G. Calder, "The Meaning of 'Imitation' in Jonson's Discoveries," Neuphilologisch Mitteilungen, LXX (1969), 435-40.

nature, a teacher of things divine, no lesse than humane, a master in manners; and can alone (or with a few) effect the businesse of mankind" (ll. 27-30). He also added that the comic poet must "imitate justice, and instruct to life" (ll. 121-2). These statements define the moral basis of poetic imitation, and the relationship of the poet to the order of nature: it was his duty to discover, to interpret, and to teach it. His function was to elucidate the plan of nature for humanity, to mediate between a moral order perceived by reason and human experience. Thus it was his duty to reveal the moral significance of human actions. He did this, not by presenting difficult abstractions as the philosopher, but, as Sidney pointed out, by means of a sensuous image, the play or poem. This conception of the role of poetry was, again, fundamentally Aristotelian.[16]

Jonson's definition, in addition to describing poetry as imitation, described the poet as one who "writes things like the Truth." At first sight, this is difficult to reconcile with the belief that the ultimate object of poetic imitation is universal and permanent Truth, for it implies that poetry is only productive of things which are 'like' the Truth. 'Likeness' seems to replace the notion of a 'true' representation of the order of nature. The apparent difficulty hinges on the meaning of 'Truth' in this context. In the second prologue to Epicoene Jonson makes a distinction which clarifies the meaning of his definition:

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16. See S. H. Butcher's Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, 3rd ed., London, 1902, pp. 116-28, 150-4, 180; Gabriel Bernhard Jackson, in Vision and judgment in Ben Jonson's Drama (New Haven and London, 1968) illustrates how the moral order is revealed in Jonson's plays.

> Then, in this play, which we present to night,
> And make the object of your care, and sight,
> On forfeit of your selves, thinke nothing true:
> Lest so you make the maker to judge you.
> For he knowes, Poet never credit gain'd
> By writing truths, but things (like truths) well fain'd.

Jonson is attempting to discourage the tendency to find satirical portraits of living contemporaries in his work by distinguishing between what is true and what only appears to be true. He is arguing that verisimilar fiction is not to be confused with the depiction of actual people or events. Clearly, the Truth which is involved here is not the immortal Truth of nature but the truth of fact, and Jonson is saying that he has not presented facts but the appearance of facts, not something which has happened but something which could happen. In other words, Jonson is defending the 'verisimilitude' of his poetry.

This requirement had classical authority. Aristotle emphasised that both plot and character conform to laws of necessity or probability.[17] Horace had bid his poet use the actions and language of actual life and keep near the truth.[18] But it was without any strict classical precedent that Jonson made it part of his definition of poetry.[19]

A comparison with Sidney elucidates the significance of this change. Both Jonson and Sidney had defined poetry as imitation and had stressed its moral basis, but while Sidney had

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17. Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, trans. Ingram Bywater, with a preface by Gilbert Murray (Oxford, 1920), pp. 43-9 and 55-8.
18. See Jonson's translation of the 'Art', ll. 453-5, 507-8.
19. This has led to a misunderstanding of Jonson's theory of poetry, see English Literary Criticism: the Renascence, 2nd ed. (London, 1951), p. 325, and Daniel G. Calder, "The Meaning of 'Imitation' in Jonson's Discoveries," op. cit. who corrects this misconception.

emphasised the making of images of moral ideals, Jonson had required the making of a verisimilar fiction. This difference reveals a divergence in their conceptions of poetry. Sidney, on the one hand, had stressed its subjective and imaginative aspects, that poets were "makers of themselves, not takers of others" (p. 131), and had permitted the poet great freedom of imagination, even allowing him to make new and better forms than were found in nature (p. 100). Jonson, on the other hand, was concerned with the poetic image as an accurate representation of real life. He curbed the imagination of the poet by requiring him to remain faithful to the appearance of reality, to an imitation which is more realistic and objective than Sidney's.

A source for this divergence can be found in Aristotle. In the Poetics, he had written that the proper matter of poetry was "not the thing which has happened, but a kind of thing which might happen, i.e. what is possible as being probable or necessary."[20] This established the fictional nature of poetry and was incorporated into English criticism by Sidney, who wrote that the poet presented "what ought to be and what should be," or "conjectured likelihood." (p.110). Yet, Sidney in attempting to define and defend the fictional nature of poetry exploited the imaginative possibilities inherent in this statement, and went further in his claims than Aristotle. Moreover, he fused it with Platonic and neo-Platonic elements in his suggestion that the poet imitated an 'idea' in his mind and could produce a "golden" world far superior to this actual

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20. Bywater, p. 43.

"brazen" one.[21] Jonson, however, remained closer to Aristotle. The stricter Aristotelianism of Jonson's definition and conception of poetry extended to a greater empiricism, an empiricism which is associated with Aristotle, who wrote to justify the knowledge derived from the senses in opposition to Plato's theory of substantial 'Ideas'.[22] Jonson shows little of Sidney's Platonism; the observation evident in his work shows how he scrutinized actual life for his matter.

Aristotle, moreover, had permitted the poet to use actual events in his work, for if the poet "should come to take a subject from actual history, he is none the less a poet for that; since some historic occurences may very well be in the probable and possible order of things; and it is in that aspect of them that he is their poet."[23] This is in fact what Jonson has done in his tragedies: interpreted the historical events so as to reveal their moral significance.[24] And in so doing he maintained an extraordinary fidelity to the facts. Sidney, while demanding that tragedy be based on history, affirmed that "a tragedy is tied to the laws of Poesy, and not of History; not bound to follow the story, but, having liberty, either to feigh a quite new matter or to frame the history to the most tragicall conveniency" (p. 135). Their attitude to tragedy pinpoints the difference between Sidney and Jonson: on the one hand there is an emphasis on the imaginative possibilities

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21. Irene Samuel's, "The Influence of Plato on Sir Philip Sidney's Defense of Poetry," MLQ, I (1940), 383-91 must be supplemented by F. Michael Kronse, "Plato and Sidney's Defense of Poetry," Comp. Lit, VI (1954), 138-47.
22. See Butcher, op. cit., p. 150-3, 159.
23. Bywater, p. 45.
24. Joseph Allen Bryant, Jr. "The Significance of Ben Jonson's First Requirement for Tragedy: 'Truth of Argument,'" SP XLIX (1952), 195-215.

of fiction and on the other a concern for verisimilitude and realism which can lead to the utilization of actual events in poetry.

This deliberate attempt to bring poetry closer to contemporary life was the product of a development in Jonson's poetry. His earliest extant comedies are similar to the romantic comedies of contemporary Elizabethans. The history of Everyman in his humour, in fact, shows a significant departure from such practice: the quarto (1601) was set in Italy and had an Italian personnel but the revised folio version was set in England with a distinctly English set of characters. Furthermore, Jonson provided a critical justification for this change in his preface to the folio version, where he wrote that comedy should describe "deedes and language, such as men do use" and present "an image of the times". Comedy was not only to have the appearance of real life but also to be topical.

Yet, poetry could not always be made out of the record of life. Comedy, moreover, was in no way tied to history, and was expected to be fictional.[25] The matter of comedy was conventionally drawn from what Sidney called "the common errors of our life", and presented certain well-known types (p. 137). Jonson, however, made both the plots and characters of his comedies out of the material of real life. The realism of his comedies did not pertain only to a realistic presentation, but

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25. William Nelson, "The Boundaries of Fiction in the Renaissance: A Treaty Between Truth and Falsehood", ELH, XXXVI (1969), 30-58, esp. p. 57.

also to the exploitation of current issues, the schemes of alchemists, of financial "projectors", of newsmongers. He made use of contemporary life. Even here Jonson moved toward a comedy which was, if not actually factual or historical, realistic and verisimilar. This represents not only a more strict and objective theory of imitation, but a movement from the imaginative literature of Shakespeare and the Elizabethans to a more realistic, a more verisimilar literature.[26]

This movement is also evident in the non-dramatic poetry. The bulk of Jonson's poetry is occasional and, like the drama, presents an image of the times. The characters, manners, and life which it depicts are taken directly from the court, from the English countryside, from the aisles of St. Paul's, from the houses and byways of Jacobean London.[27] His poems are about the present and rarely turn to celebrate the past for its own sake or without reference to the present. His satirical poetry also represents a development toward real life, for whereas Sir John Davies had given his epigrams Latin titles, such as "In Philomen," "In Fuscum" and so on, Jonson has given us

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26. See L. J. Potts, "Jonson and the Seventeenth Century," English Studies, II (1949), 6-24, esp. p. 11.
27. Esther Cloudman Dunn's Ben Jonson's Art: Elizabethan Life and Literature as reflected therein, Smith College Fiftieth Anniversary Publications (Northampton, Mass., 1925) and N. H. N. Zwager's Glimpses of Ben Jonson's London (Amsterdam, 1926) show how the life of the times was reflected in Jonson's drama and poetry.

"My Lord Ignorant", "Lieutenant Shift", "Doctor Empirick", "Sir Cod the Perfumed". These, though anonymous, denote recognizable English characters.

The way in which Jonson turned to life for his matter is particularly evident in his numerous complimentary poems. These have a clear and direct reference to contemporary history. The complimentary poems, however, present certain problems, for, in matters of praise or compliment, questions of probity and accuracy must be added to those of realism and verisimilitude. Because their subjects were known contemporaries whose lives and actions could be compared to the terms of the poet's praise or compliment, they were open to accusations of flattery and untruthfulness. The "facts", the historical record ~~of~~ which was accessible to Jonson's contemporaries and is still accessible to us, demand to be considered in relations to these poems: their relationship to the facts is, indeed, important for understanding Jonson's concept of poetic praise. It might be expected that the scholar who assiduously drew an accurate picture of Roman times would be equally scrupulous with regard to his own, for the tragedies and the complimentary poems have a similar reference to history, whether past or contemporary. Whether or not the complimentary poems are accurate will be considered below, but for the present it can be said that they represent another way in which Jonson fashioned his poetry out of contemporary life, and so brought poetry closer to real life

This was a significant development. The relationship between art and reality, between fiction and history had been a thorny and controversial problem since classical times. Sidney had to grapple with it in the 'Apology': his distinction between fiction and falsehood and his belief that poetry was tied to universal rather than to factual truths enabled him to justify poetry. But the poetry he justified was an Elizabethan poetry, complete with artificial conventions and imaginary creatures. Jonson, however, moved towards a verisimilar fiction, and his definitional poetry and prologue to Everyman in his humour shows that he was conscious of this movement. Jonson, therefore, showed, both in his drama and poetry, how fiction could be made out of the material of real life. This movement was ultimately to lead to the verisimilar fiction of the eighteenth and following centuries.

Several reasons can be suggested for the way in which Jonson brought poetry closer to actual life. There was, first of all, the precedent of Martial, Horace, Juvenal, the classical poets who most influenced Jonson, who had written about their own lives and times. Jonson followed them not only by imitating their work but by following their example and depicting contemporary life in his poetry.

The classical precedent seems also partly responsible for a greater respect for actual life than characterized Sidney. Sidney's religious bias is evident in his famous statement: "Our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected will keepeth us from reaching unto it" (p. 101); he also spoke of the "heavenly poesy" of David, who showed himself, even before the coming of Christ, "a passionate lover of that unspeakable and everlasting beauty to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith" (p. 99).[28] Even if allowance is made for the rhetoric of these statements, they reveal an attitude to life which was distinctly religious. Jonson also accepted a view of the world which was essentially religious and his own religious history and the "humble Gleanings in Divinitie" (Und. XLIII, l. 102) show that he took the interest in religious matters that was typical of his age.[29] His Christian humanism - his belief in the framework of Salvation - is most evident in his personal poems on death, on the deaths of his children (Ep. XXII and XLV).[30]

Yet, apart from such poems on death and a few religious lyrics, Jonson's religious beliefs rarely find their way into his poetry or literary criticism. His view of life is secular; the order of the world which he envisaged was one which could be perceived and arrived at purely by means of human attributes.[31]

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28. cf. Jonson on Hebrew poetry, Disc. 2381-5.
29. See Convers. 249-51, 314-6, 690; see also H & S, I, 65-7.
30. See also Ep. XXXIV, and David W. Kay, "The Christian Wisdom of Ben Jonson's 'On My First Sonne'," SEL, XI (1971), 125-36.
31. O. B. Hilberry, Ben Jonson's Ethics in Relation to Stoic and Humanistic Thought (Chicago, 1933).

The religious implications of this order, the specifically Christian view of the fall and redemption of man, is only occasionally adumbrated. The inference is that though Jonson accepted the religious framework of life, he tried in his poetry to deal with life in purely human terms, in terms of what could be known by the exercise of reason and achieved by the exercise of the will. This led Jonson to accept and have a greater respect for what Sidney had called these "clayey lodgings", "this dungeon of the body", this "foolish world". (pp. 104, 111).

Something of the intellectual current of the age is also reflected in Jonson's verisimilar fiction. The scientific movement was well under way and Bacon, whom Jonson knew and read, was popularizing the empirical method in England. The observation of his poetry clearly finds its counterpart not only in the organic method of Aristotle, but also in the observation of scientific phenomena. It can in fact be argued that Jonson's realistic fiction is a consequence of an inductive method. What is more significant, however, is the underlying attitude to external nature, to the world which is perceived by the senses.[32] Jonson does not disregard it, like Sidney, in favour of a higher truth, but employs it as the matter of his poetry.

Yet, Jonson did not totally depart from the theories of Sidney and a Renaissance epistemology. If he reflected the growth of empiricism, he also believed that nature was rationally

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32. See Potts, "Jonson and the Seventeenth Century", op.cit., pp. 13-24.

ordered and that it was the poet's duty to interpret this order, to mediate between life and Truth. Where he differs from Sidney and reflects contemporary intellectual currents is in his attempts to relate these fundamental truths to the phenomena of contemporary life. In one place, Jonson brought together these ideas on the nature of poetic imitation: "the true Artificer will not run away from nature, as hee were afraid of her; or depart from life, and the likenesse of Truth; but speake to the capacity of his hearers." (Disc. 772-5) This was said in relation to dramatic actions and language which "fly from all humanity" as the "scenicall strutting, and furious vociferation" which characterized the "Tamerlanes and Tamer-Chams of the late Age" (Disc. 775-9), but it could be applied to all his poetry. This shows his own awareness of the direction he was giving poetry, but, more than that, it expresses in a striking and attractive manner the aim of this change: to bring poetry closer to "humanity." The Christian humanist who devoted all his energies to understanding and elucidating 'life' speaks to us here. He has, moreover, brought together three elements which we have been discussing: nature, life, the appearance of Truth. All were required for poetry. The poet, in fact, was to present the universal and permanent truths with a regard for and with the appearance of reality. This was the way in which Jonson's poet was to mediate between man and nature; by relating universal moral truths to the experience of life he was revealing the moral significance of human actions. He was, in fact, making these fundamental moral values 'relevant'.

This was the function of the poet: to elucidate life. In forming his conception of poetry, Jonson clearly had in mind the needs of his audience, "the capacity of his hearers", for it is to them that his word is addressed. In setting out to instruct them in human values and in the best manner of life, Jonson was fulfilling the high office of a poet. He devoted his life and energies to making 'life' understood.

III

STUDY

Of Jonson's five requirements for a poet, that for study is in many ways the most noteworthy, for it was an addition to those required by Sidney: ability, art, imitation, and exercise (pp. 132-3). Its addition suggests that it was of some special importance to Jonson; indeed, Jonson described it as "that, which wee especially require" in the poet (Disc. 2482-3). It was neither a new nor original requirement, for many critics, in answer to Plato's charge that the poet had no knowledge of what he imitated, had argued that learning was essential for the poet;[1] Jonson, however, emphasized it to an unusual degree, and made it an important part of his own life and work. This prominence indicates its importance for grasping Jonson's thought about the nature of poetry.

Jonson prescribed "an exactnesse of Studie, and a multiplicity of reading, which maketh a full man, not alone enabling him to know the History, or Argument of a Poeme, and to report it: but so to master the matter, and Stile, as to shew, hee knowes, how to handle, place, or dispose of either, with elegancie, when need shall bee" (Disc. 2483-8). Though this description with its emphasis on an exact study, a wide and various reading, and a thorough assimilation

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1. For a brief survey of this controversy see Allan H. Gilbert's anthology, Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden (New York, [1940]; Detroit, 1962), pp. 46, 108-10, 138, 357, 388-90, 489, et seq.

and mastery of the subject is in itself quite comprehensible, it suggests many questions. What kinds of study and reading is the poet expected to undertake? The reference to the full man is suggestive of the values of Renaissance humanism, but Jonson did not explore or elucidate this relationship. How is study related to and distinct from the other requirements? This chapter will attempt to elucidate these aspects of the poet's study by first of all defining and differentiating the three prior requirements, and then examining the concept and implications of the study which Jonson required of his poet.

Natural ability is the first requirement. Jonson describes it at some length under the category ingenium:

> First, we require in our Poet, or maker, (for that Title our Language affordes him, elegantly, with the Greeke) a goodnes of naturall wit. For, whereas all other Arts consist of Doctrine, and Precepts: the Poet must bee able by nature, and instinct, to powre out the Treasure of his minde; and, as Seneca saith, Aliquando secundum Anacreontem insanire, jucundum esse: by which hee understands, the Poetical Rapture. And according to that of Plato; Frustrà Poeticas fores sui compos pulsavit: And of Aristotle; Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixturâ dementiae fuit. Nec potest grande aliquid, & supra caeteros loqui, nisi mota mens. Then it riseth higher, as by a divine Instinct, when it contemnes common, and knowne conceptions. It utters somewhat above a mortall mouth. Then it gets a loft, and flies away with his Ryder, whether, before, it was doubtfull to ascend. This the Poets understood by their Helicon, Pegasus, or Parnasus; and made Ovid to boast:
>
> > Est, Deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo:
> > Sedibus aethereis spiritus ille venit.
>
> And Lipsius, to affirme; Scio, Poetam neminem praestantem fuisse, sine parte quâdem uberiore divinae aurae. And, hence it is, that the comming up of good Poets, (for I minde not mediocres, or imos) is so thinne and rare among us; Every beggerly Corporation affordesthe State a Major, or two Bailiffs, yearly; but, solus Rex, aut Poeta, non quotannis nascitur.
>
> (Disc. 2409-34)

This lengthy statement with its burden of classical authorities seems to combine two distinct and antipathetic concepts, the Horatian notion of 'ingenium' and the Platonic furor, in its description of the poet's ability. It must be examined in detail.

It, first of all, describes an ability peculiar to the poet, a certain predilection to literature composed, it seems, of intelligence and the innate ability to express and communicate it in language. This is clearly opposed to working according to rules, which is a characteristic of all the other arts.[2]

It was the poet's ability which exempted him from rules and would in effect lead him, "by nature, and instinct," to the principles which were necessary for his art and which were the origins of the rules themselves: "I am not of that opinion to conclude a Poets liberty within the narrowe limits of lawes, which either the Grammarians, or Philosophers prescribe. For, before they found out those Lawes, there were many excellent Poets, that fulfill'd them." (Disc. 2555-9). The poet's natural ability, moreover, leads to the discovery of something new and rare, for it goes beyond what is commonly accepted to what is immortal and hitherto unknown. The utterances of Poetry which are "somewhat above a mortall mouth" are evidently in the service of "mans proper good; and the onely immortall thing, was given to our mortality to use": Truth (Disc. 531-2). The poet's ability, therefore, enables him to see through the commonplace to lofty and hidden Truths.

Into this statement, however, Jonson had introduced a description of poetic inspiration which suggests Plato's theory of

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2. Sidney, on the other hand, had differentiated poetry from the other arts, because unlike them, it did not depend on nature, Apology, pp. 99-100.

divine madness discussed in the Phaedrus and the Ion, a theory which interpreted inspiration as a divine possession in which the poet was no more than an involuntary vehicle.[3] It is noteworthy that Jonson's quotations from the classical writers generally go farther in suggesting such a possession than his own commentary. Nowhere does he himself suggest an actual possession in which the poet is out of his own control or unaware of his utterance. Yet he does intimate that the poet undergoes a certain elation, or elevation in which he has a special ability to perceive the Truth. And his language and quotations do suggest, if not specifically the Platonic, the Neo-platonic concept of the poet as one who had a special ability to perceive the higher realities.[4] The numerous classical quotations, however, suggest an uncertainty about inspiration and its relation to the poet's ability, an uncertainty which he hopes to bolster by authoritative support. Perhaps he sensed the antagonism between his belief in the poet's natural gift and the Platonic theory that the poet was actually possessed and used by higher forces.

Echoes of Plato's theory of inspiration are found throughout the Renaissance discussion of literature. Sidney, for example, made use of it, and his discussion is again useful in elucidating Jonson's thought. He recognised the necessity of natural genius,

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3. Bernard Weinberg, A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance (Chicago, 1961), I, 250-347, discusses the influence of Plato's theory on Italian critics; for the iconology of inspiration, see Robert J. Clements, Picta Poesis: Literary and Humanistic Theory in Renaissance Emblem Books, Terni e Testi, no. 6 (Roma, 1960), pp. 47-59.
4. That the poet had special abilities which enabled him to perceive the Platonic forms was suggested by Plotinus and became part of neo-platonic poetic precept; cf. Enneads, trans. Stephen MacKenna, 2nd ed. (London, 1956), pp. 422-3 and Sidney, 'Apology', pp. 99,101 and notes.

in the poet, but also stated that "Poesy must not be drawn by the ears; it must be gently led, or rather it must lead; which was partly the cause that made the ancient-learned affirm it was a divine gift, and no human skill." (p. 132). Sidney went on to explain that the poet must nonetheless train himself for his task, for his inspiration "hath three wings to bear itself up into the air of due commendation: that is, Art, Imitation, and Exercise". (p. 133) Clearly inspiration itself was not sufficient to make a poet, for art, imitation, and exercise were necessary for him to develop his abilities and to acquire the techniques of expression. Nor was inspiration enough to provide even the matter of poetry, for Sidney somewhat inconsistently criticized the kind of writing which was not based on knowledge derived from actual experience (p. 133). Like Jonson's, Sidney's description combined suggestions of possession with an emphasis on the poet's natural and acquired abilities.

Sidney, however, did not believe in divine possession for he wrote, with reference to the Ion, that Plato "attributeth unto Poesy more than myself do, namely, to be a very inspiring of a divine force, far above man's wit" (p. 130). Though he frequently described poetry as 'divine', calling it a "divine gift", a "divine breath" (p. 101), and a "divine fury" (p. 142), he clearly did not mean to imply possession. The 'divine' aspect was associated rather with the poet's presentation of truth and the rational plan of nature, and his ability to create "another nature" like the creative processes of nature herself. There is no suggestion of possession in Sidney's description of the heightened activity of making when the poet was "lifted up with the vigour of his own invention" (p. 100). The suggestion of a force, a breath or a fury seems to be an attempt to

describe the intangible aspects of poetic making, the emotional intensity and the poet's ability to perceive and express a higher reality. Considering the defensive nature of the "Apology", the allusions to inspiration might also have been employed because it was a traditional association which had the authority of Plato and which added lustre to the poet's task.[5]

A similar ambiguity existed in Jonson's use of the theory of inspiration. Despite the suggestive language of his statement on "ingenium", he did not believe in possession. He undoubtedly believed that the poet had a special and specific ability, but even more than Sidney, he stressed the importance of training and study to develop it; most of all, he emphasised the deliberate elements in the poet's craft, the qualities of reflection and judgement. These are impossible to square with the notion that the poet was actually possessed by and became the vehicle for a higher being. To understand his exact meaning, it is necessary to reduce his allusions to a more strict and precise denotation.

The theory of inspiration most frequently finds expression in invocations and in brief and passing references in Jonson's poetry.

> O, then inspire
> Thy Priest in this strange rapture; heat my braine
> With Delphick fire:
> That I may sing my thoughts in some unvulgar straine.
>
> (Und. XXV, ll. 10-14)

These lines from an early ode to the earl of Desmond contain several interesting notions. The association of inspiration with the mysterious and unusual recalls the description of the poet's ability to rise above what was already known.[6] In Hymenai (l. 19) Jonson

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5. The Italian critic Ludovico Castelvetro claimed that the notion of a divine fury was false and had been furthered by poets, see Weinberg, I, 286.
6. cf. The Arte of English Poesie, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge, 1936), pp. 89.

described poetry as one of the "remov'd mysteries" of life; there is throughout the discussion of poetry an air of mystery, but, despite the rather elusive terminology, Jonson is clearly referring to an extraordinary ability in the poet to perceive and express the Truth. The suggestion of prophecy or clairvoyance in the reference to the Delphic oracle reinforces the notion of exceptional percipience.[7] It also leads to the identification of poet and priest; Jonson, in addition to the above invocation, followed Horace in considering himself a priest of the Muses (For. XIII, ll. 100-2), and, in more Christian terms, spoke of eternity "Of which we Priests, and Poets say/ Such truths" (Und. LXX, ll. 82-3).[8] Indeed, Jonson often emphasised the divine aspects of poetry: the "sacred pen", the poet "rapt with rage divine", and "teacher of things divine, no lesse than humane". Jonson, as Sidney had before him (p. 99), seems to be confusing three of the four kinds of madness described by Plato in the Phaedrus: the prophetic, the mystic, and the poetic; with regard to the fourth kind, that of the lover, Jonson wrote a Platonic Epode (For. XI), but also in rather unplatonic fashion reminded his mistress that "Poets, though divine, are men" (Und. II, 1). "Divine" in these cases refers to the poet's role as arbiter between man and the divine plan of nature; and inspiration, to his extraordinary ability to perceive beyond the appearances of sense to the ultimate moral Truths.

The other aspect of the theory of inspiration was the suggestion of a heightened activity. Jonson refers to this when he states his intention to immortalise his subjects,

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7. Arte., p. 7, and Sidney, Apology, p. 98.
8. See McEuen, p. 87.

> not with tickling rimes,
> Or common places, filch'd, that take these times,
> But high, and noble matter, such as flies
> From braines entranc'd, and fill'd with extasies.
>
> (For. XII, ll. 87-90)

This poem presented to the Countess of Rutland in 1600 reflects Jonson's earlier convictions and enthusiasm about his art. The association of poetry with what is high and noble, and the dissociation from what is commonplace or vulgar is here made dependent on some kind of trance or ecstasy. This is the "Poetical Rapture", the "strange rapture", the "poetical fury", or the "right Furor Poeticus" ironically ascribed to Asper in Everyman out of his Humour.[9] This seems to be composed of two salient features: an emotional or psychological intensity and a heightened awareness. The second undoubtedly pertains to the poet's particular ability to perceive the Truth; the first, expressed by images of being carried away or by the suggestion of ecstasy or madness, is related to Sidney's description of the ability of poetry to lead or lift up the poet. Light is thrown on both of these aspects by Juan Luis Vives' discussion in the De tradendis Disciplinis of the poetic temperament, which is similar in language and implication to Jonson's remarks:

> I consider that man to have a poetical temperament who possesses great passion, which sometimes raises him above the usual and ordinary state of his nature, and in this elation he conceives lofty and almost heavenly inspirations. Then the sharpness of his mind contemplates and concentrates itself on not only great and animated ideas, but also arranges them and thus causes within his body a harmony, derived from the exaltation of his mind.[10]

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9. From Jonson's discussion of "ingenium" (Disc. 2409-34); Und. XXV S. of N. 'Induction', 1; and EMO, "After the second Sounding," l. 147.
10. Vives: On Education, trans. Foster Watson (Cambridge, 1913), p. 138.

Vives saw poetic inspiration in terms of the humours and his description of the mind and a consequent elation in the body explains and relates the various intellectual and emotional aspects of poetic making described by Jonson. Clearly, he too envisaged inspiration in terms of an emotional intensity which led to increased percipience. There is no need, therefore, to have recourse to possession, or any outside influence to explain the extraordinary abilities of the poet. Inspiration could be conceived and it seems that Jonson conceived it purely in terms of a natural function of the poetic nature.[11]

Another theme to which Jonson frequently returns imputes a kind of inspiration to drink: Jonson, following Anacreon and Horace celebrated the "conjuring wine" (For. X); and, coming closer to home, the "wit of Ale, and Genius of the Malt" (Und. XXXVIII).[12] Usually, he refers to the inspiration of drink in an ironic spirit and at his own expense, as when he reminds his friends at the Exchequer that wine was necessary "to enable/ The Muse, or the Poet". (Und. LVI). There was perhaps a real connection between the flow of wine which could raise the spirits and quicken the wit and poetic fluency:

> Swell me a bowle with lustie wine,
> Till I may see the plump Lyaeus swim
> Above the brim:
> I drinke, as I would wright,
> In flowing measure, fill'd with flame, and spright.
>
> (Poet. III. i)

Jonson, with classical authority, seems to have elevated a personal predilection into a poetic function.

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11. The Italian critic, Lorenzo Giacomini, in an oration Del Furor Poetico, delivered in 1587 and published in Orationi e Discorsi (Fiorenza, 1597) gave an interpretation of inspiration which was based on the humours; see Weinberg, I, 322-4.
12. See also Ep. LXXXIV, CI, Und. XXXVII, XLVIII, LV, and Kathryn Anderson McEuen, Classical Influence upon the Tribe of Ben (Cedar Rapids, 1939), pp. 211 and 87.

There are, nevertheless, intimations of Plato's theory in Jonson's discussion of it. The notion of divine madness, authorized by so many ancient writers, was too attractive to be passed by, even by those such as Sidney and Jonson whose understanding of poetry was not consistent with it. Jonson tacked it on to a theory of poetry which was basically Aristotelian. Such unlikely associations, however, were frequent in the Renaissance, and Paul Oscar Kristeller notes that "Plato's doctrine of divine madness as expressed in the Ion and Phaedrus appealed to many poets and literary critics who would either add this Platonic doctrine to an otherwise Aristotelian system of poetics, or use it as the cornerstone of an anti-Aristotelian theory."[13] Jonson was among those who appropriated it, with due reservations and limitations, to a system of poetics which laid heavy emphasis on the training and judgment required for poetry.

Imitation and exercise were needed to acquire the skills of poetry. They were a part of the poet's training in the use and resources of language. Jonson's famous description of imitation, "to be able to convert the substances or Riches of another Poet, to his own use" (Disc. 2466-9) makes it clear that it was primarily undertaken because it was useful to the aspiring poet. Its usefulness was related to Jonson's warnings that the poet must not 'presume' on his own natural ability, for that was never enough; "For hee that was onely taught by himselfe, had a foole to his Master" (Disc. 21-2).[14] Imitation and study of the best and choicest authors enable him to develop his ability, to acquire a greater range of techniques, to deepen and broaden his mastery of style. He therefore emphasised the

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13. The Classics and Renaissance Thought, Martin Classical Lectures, Vol. 15 (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), p. 64.
14. See also Disc. 745-59, 2505-11.

importance of careful selection of models, "To make choise of one excellent man above the rest, and so to follow him, till he grow very Hee" (Disc. 2469-70), while at the same time stressing the importance of assimilation from as many such excellent sources as possible: "One, though hee be excellent, and chiefe, is not to bee imitated alone. For never no Imitator, ever grew up to his Author; likeness is alwayes on this side Truth" (Disc. 884-6). Exercise enabled the poet to dispose of these acquired skills according to his own needs. This was the poet's practical training; it gave him manifold and flexible resources of expression which enabled him, after his apprenticeship, to stand on his own.

The additional requirement, study, is different then from the poet's ability and inspiration, and distinct from the pen-and-paper methods of imitation and exercise. In the light of these distinctions, Jonson's description of study gains in precise meaning: "an exactnesse of Studie, and multiplicity of reading, which maketh a full man, not alone enabling him to know the History, or Argument of a Poeme, and to report it: but so to master the matter, and Stile, as to shew, he knewes, how to handle, place, or dispose of either, with elegancie, when need shall bee". The emphasis on assimilation and usefulness is the same as that for imitation; indeed, in its prescriptions about style it approaches the requirement for imitation, but here it seems specifically to describe the analytical process which precedes and accompanies the attempt to assimilate and reproduce a model. There is an emphasis on excellence for the poet "must read many; but, ever the best, and choisest" (Disc. 2507-8), and on the assimilation of matter as well as style. There is also an indication of the importance of developing the poet's mind and extending his understanding by

absorbing the thought of other men: "For the mind, and memory are more sharpely exercis'd in comprehending an other mans things, than her owne" (Disc. 1743-5). What also suggests broader implications is the need for an exact and complete study which contributes to a full human development. This indicates that the requirement for study is related to the Renaissance discussion of the value of knowledge and that into his idea of the poet Jonson has incorporated the humanistic ideals of learning and the good life.

Many of Jonson's ideas about the kind of study required for the poet were closely derived from the classical ideal of the orator, as expounded in two treatises, Cicero's De Oratore and Quintilian's De Institutione Oratoria.[15] Jonson borrowed from both of these writers in his Discoveries, but he seems to have had a special regard for Quintilian; Drummond recorded that Jonson "recommended to my reading Quintilian (who [he said] would tell me the faults of my Verses as if he had Lived with me)" and especially, "that Quintilianes 6.7.8 bookes, were not only to be read but altogither digested" (Convers. 12-4, 139-40).

The ideals of oratory defined by Cicero and Quintilian had a profound and widespread influence on ideas about poetry, for though poetry and oratory were considered only to be sister-arts, they were often identified. Jonson describes the relationship between poetry and oratory in lines derived from Cicero: "The Poet is the neerest Borderer upon the Orator, and expresseth all his vertues, though he

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15. De Oratore, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, The Loeb Classical Library (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1942) and Institutes of Oratory, trans. Rev. John Selby Watson, Bohn's Classical Library, (London, 1856); all quotations are from these editions.

be tyed more to numbers; is his equall in ornament, and above him in his strengths." (Disc. 2528-31)[16] The distinction between them is based on the poet's usage of the measures of rhythm. This formal difference, however, is outweighed by many similarities. Though Sidney declared that he deserved "to be pounded for straying from Poetry to Oratory", he pointed out that a discussion of oratory would cast light on poetry: "both have such an affinity in this wordish consideration, that I think that this discussion will make my meaning receive the fuller understanding" (p. 139).[17] Jonson did not identify the two arts, for at Disc. 2290-1 he clearly distinguished between them: "we have spoken sufficiently of Oratory; let us now make a diversion to Poetry"; but he often, as in his recommendation to Drummond, transferred requirements from one to the other; for orator, he simply substituted poet. In the discussion of poetry at Disc. 1020-45, the lines 1038-45 are lifted, with the requisite adaptation, from Quintilian's remarks about oratory in the preface to the first book of the 'Institutes'. The classical discussion of oratory and ideal of the orator, therefore, provides a key for understanding many of Jonson's statements about poetry and the poet.[18]

Jonson made some interesting changes in adapting Cicero's description of the relationship between poetry and oratory. In the first part of the quotation he remained close to Cicero's assertion that the "poet is a very near kinsman of the orator, rather more heavily fettered as regards rhythm," and then noted that the poet had

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16. See De Orat. I, xvi, 70. Jonson's adaptation of Cicero will be discussed below.
17. The "wordish description" refers to what Sidney called diction, see Apology, p. 231.
18. He also drew from Quintilian, Institt. XII, x, 6-9, for the relationship of painting and poetry, Disc. 1529-37.

"ampler freedom in his choice of words", that poet and orator were similar in the use of many sorts of argument, and that "in one respect at all events something like identity exists, since he sets no boundaries or limits to his claims, such as would prevent him from ranging whither he will with the same freedom and licence as the other."[19] Jonson, however, changes Cicero's simple comparison of the two arts into an evaluation, by claiming that poetry expresses all the virtues of oratory, is its equal in the use of ornament, and above it in its strengths. For Cicero's discussion of their freedom of language and subject matter, he substitutes, with a poet's bias, a statement of his conviction that poetry was finally superior. This opinion was common in the Renaissance, and the basis of Sidney's defence of poetry.

A great part of Jonson's dicussion of poetry is derived in this manner from Cicero and Quintilian. His borrowings from both Cicero and Quintilian in the Discoveries are nearly always taken directly from their originals, rather than from secondary sources. He obviously knew them well.

Yet despite this familiarity with the originals and the evident attempt to return to the classical sources of the Renaissance poetic tradition, Jonson often read them in the light of that tradition of interpretation and criticism.

Both Cicero and Quintilian had emphasised the wide training and the unceasing application that was to give the orator his skill in speaking and eloquence. Jonson echoes this by stressing the need for imitation and exercise to develop the poet's abilities; thus the poet achieved the mastery of style and, one might say, poetic eloquence.

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19. De Orat., I, xvi, 70.

Both Cicero and Quintilian included wisdom and learning as well as eloquence in their requirements for the orator. Cicero noted that "a knowledge of very many matters must be grasped, without which oratory is but an empty and ridiculous swirl of verbiage", and expanded on the kinds and extent of the knowledge which were necessary:

> And indeed in my opinion, no man can be an orator complete in all points of merit, who has not attained a knowledge of all important subjects and arts. For it is from knowledge that oratory must derive its beauty and fullness, and unless there is such knowledge, well-grasped and comprehended by the speaker, there must be something empty and almost childish in the utterance.[20]

Style could only be justified by the value of what was being expressed. The orator was not one who spoke vacantly for the sake of speaking but one who employed his skill to give apt and cogent expression to a true understanding of his subject. Quintilian, who points out that the orator must be able to speak on all subjects refers to Cicero's opinion, but concludes that for his purposes "it is sufficient that an orator be acquainted with the subject on which he has to speak."[21] Underlying both of these opinions is the conviction that oratory must at best be grounded on sound knowledge and understanding of the matter.

"... if Tully would have his Orator skill'd in all the knowledge appertaining to God and man," asks Samuel Daniel, "what should they have, who would be a degree above Orators?"[22] Jonson's answer to this question about the learning due to a poet involved the adoption and development of the classical ideal. His requirements come very close to those of his Roman predecessors:

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20. De Orat., I, v, 17; vi, 20.
21. Instit., II, xxi, 14.
22. "A Defense of Ryme" in Poems and A Defense of Ryme, ed. Arthur Colby Sprague (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), p. 152.

> The reason why a Poet is said, that hee ought to have all knowledges, is that hee should not be ignorant of the most, especially of those hee will handle. And indeed, when the attaining of them is possible, it were a sluggish, and base thing to despaire .... If a man should prosecute as much, as could be said of every thing; his worke would find no end.
>
> (Disc. 1873-80)

This incorporates the breadth of Cicero and the practical basis of Quintilian. Though Jonson implicitly admits the impossibility of acquiring all knowledge he urges his poet to seek as much as possible, and to master the subject on which he is to write. Jonson made the same dual requirement when, in translating Horace's prescription 'Scribendi rectè, sapere, est & principium & fons" in his Art of Poetry (l. 309), he expanded the thought so as to make explicit the kinds of knowledge required by the poet:

> The very root of writing well, and spring
> Is to be wise; thy matter first to know.
>
> (ll. 440-1)

Horace, after this demand for "sapere", had sent his poet to the Socratic philosophers to acquire a proper understanding of human affairs:

> Which the Socratick writings best can show:
> And, where the matter is provided still,
> There words will follow, not against their will.
> Hee, that hath studied well the debt, and knowes
> What to his Countrey, what his friends he owes,
> What height of love, a Parent will fit best,
> What brethren, what a stranger, and his guest,
> Can tell a States-mans dutie, what the arts
> And office of a Judge are, what the parts
> Of a brave Chiefe sent to the warres: He can,
> Indeed, give fitting dues to every man.
>
> (ll. 442-52)

Horace's examples provide both for a general understanding of various duties and obligations, and a particular understanding of certain arts and offices. His poet must also have both learning and knowledge.

In the Renaissance view of literary history, poetry had an ancient association with learning, and was regarded as the first teacher of all the arts and sciences. Sir Philip Sidney described it as the most ancient of all learning (p. 120) and the mother of all sciences, "the first lightgiving to ignorance, and first nurse, whose milk by little and little enabled men to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges" (p. 96).[23] Indeed, he wonders how anyone who could profess learning could ungratefully inveigh against poetry (p. 96). Similarly, Sir Thomas Elyot believed that poetry was the first philosophy.[24] And, according to George Puttenham, poets were the first priests, prophets, legislators and politicians, the first philosophers, astronomers, historiographers, orators, and musicians in the world.[25] With the gradual division and proliferation of the arts and sciences, however, the position of poetry changed, and it became more associated with its sister arts of rhetoric, grammar, logic, history, and ethics than with the theoretical sciences, physics, mathematics, or metaphysics. Because of their old connection, however, Puttenham could include as proper to poetry "the revealing of sciences naturall & other profitable Arts",[26] and Sidney could with some inconsistency commend poems that dealt with "matters philosophical" (p. 102) and believe that "it pleased the heavenly Deity, by Hesiod and Homer, under the veil of fables, to give us all knowledge, Logic, Rhetoric, Philosophy natural and moral, and quid non." (pp. 141-2).[27] This association of learning and poetry was also an important factor in determining the attitude to the learning that was required of the poet.

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23. See also pp. 113, 120, 141-2; for the concept of poetry as mother of sciences see Gilbert, p. 407-8.
24. The Booke named the Governour, ed. S. E. Lehmberg, Everyman's Library no. 227, (London and New York, 1962), pp. 46-7.
25. Arte, pp. 6-9.
26. Ibid., p. 24.
27. See also Apology, p. 109.

There were specific kinds of learning which were thought especially appropriate to him. Cicero had required a knowledge of all important arts as well as subjects, and Jonson's view of the arts which were necessary to the poet gives a Renaissance interpretation to the classical requirement. Jonson gave this description of the arts which the poet must master in the course of his education:

> I would lead you to the knowledge of our Poet, by a perfect Information, what he is, or should bee by nature, by exercise, by imitation, by Studie: and so bring him downe through the disciplines of Grammar, Logicke, Rhetoricke, and the Ethicks adding somewhat, out of all, peculiar to himselfe, and worthy of your Admittance, or reception.
>
> (Disc. 2403-8).

These disciplines, grammar, rhetoric, logic and moral philosophy were, together with history and poetry the traditional subjects of the studia Humanitatis, which remained the basis of humanism through the sixteenth century and later.[28] Their relationship to literature is significant for poetry had at different times been considered as a branch of each of them. As a part of grammar, poetry was thought to be concerned only with measure, metre, and rhythm; Jonson refers to and explicitly denies this theory when he asserts that measure is not alone sufficient to make a poet: "hee is call'd a Poet, not hee which writeth in measure only" (Disc. 2351-2). He did, however, recognize the value of the study of grammar for the poet, and composed an English Grammar. As a part of logic, the poem was considered to be a kind of syllogism known as the example which sought to persuade the reader to accept rather than prove its premises; hence Jonson's frequent references to the argument of a poem.[29] As a part of rhetoric, poetry was also concerned with the techniques of securing belief, particularly with regard

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28. Kristeller, Classics and Ren. Thought, pp. 9-11.
29. See his description of study (Disc. 2484-8), the "soundnesse of Argument" (Disc. 2121) and "truth of argument" of the preface to Sejanus.

to praise and blame of the subject; Jonson frequently uses the topics of rhetoric in his poetry of praise.[30] As a part of ethics, it taught men to live well.

It was one of the tasks of the revival of learning to define the proper relationship between these arts and to apportion to each its proper matter. Cornelius Agrippa, for example, decided that grammar made an intelligible speaker; logic, a well-ordered subject; rhetoric, a well-disposed hearer.[31] Jonson would have endorsed such a disposition of these three arts. Their importance for him is illustrated by the part they play in the qualities of style he required: "choiseness of Phrase, round and cleane composition of sentence, sweet falling of the clause, varying an illustration by tropes and figures, weight of Matter, worth of Subject, Soundnesse of Argument, life of Invention, and depth of Judgement" (Disc. 2118-25).[32] Without a knowledge of grammar, rhetoric and logic, such a deft, flexible expression and well-disposed exposition was not possible.

The fourth art mentioned by Jonson, Ethics, was regarded by the ancients as the special province of the orator. For since oratory, according to Cicero, was concerned with all human affairs, "all the virtues and duties, all the natural principles governing the morals and minds and life of mankind", the orator was expected to understand the principles of human action; in Cicero's words, "this division of philosophy, concerned with human life and manners, must

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30. See O. B. Hardison, Jr., The Enduring Monument (Chapel Hill, 1962), pp. 112, 142-9, et passim.
31. William Harrison Woodward, Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance (Cambridge, 1906), pp. 101-2.
32. See also Disc. 786-800, and 1038-45.

all of it be mastered by the orator".[33] Jonson likewise required his poet to have an "exact knowledge of all vertues, and their Contraries" (Disc. 1039-40). This gave the poet an understanding of the human life.

The close association of poetry and moral philosophy in the Renaissance was a consequence of their devotion to the discovery of moral truth and led to their frequently being identified, as in these lines from Andrea Alciatus:

> you should understand that both studies embrace each other mutually, as if an alliance had been entred upon, and you must consider them the same, and not different. For when you say Philosopher you mean Poet, and when you say Poet you mean philosopher.[34]

Jonson shows that he accepted this identification of the ends of poetry and moral philosophy when claiming that "the wisest and best learned" have thought poetry

> the absolute Mistresse of manners, and neerest of kin to Vertue. And, whereas they entitle Philosophy to bee a rigid, and austere Poesie: they have (on the contrary) stiled Poesy, a dulcet, and gentle Philosophy, which leades on, and guides us by the hand to Action, with a ravishing delight, and incredible sweetnes.
>
> (Disc. 2394-2400)

The difference between poetry and philosophy was in their means of expression. Sidney thought that the philosopher's means of expression was so abstract and general that his teaching is difficult to understand and even more difficult to put into practice. The poet's expression was more enticing: "for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth." (p. 107). It was undoubtedly

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33. Cicero, De Orat., III. xx. 76; I, xv. 69; see also III, xiv, 54 and xix, 72.
34. Emblemata (Antwerp, 1577), p. 63: trans. by Clements, p. 98.

also because of this advantage that Jonson asserted that poetry was superior to oratory.

Grammar, logic, rhetoric and ethics were the intellectual disciplines which gave the poet an understanding of language, argument, persuasion, and human actions, and enabled him to employ them in his poetry. They may be said to be faculties or instruments which broadened the resources at his command and aided the poet in the task of expressing aptly and accurately the true "consequence" of things.

The poet had yet to address himself to all or at least the most important subjects, and to acquire a good understanding of them. His study must not be light and passing. In a paragraph of the Discoveries (ll. 228-35) Jonson notes the difference between a genuine and a superficial pursuit of truth and knowledge; the theme is described in the margin as Differentia inter Doctos et Sciolos:

> Wits made out their severall expeditions then, for the discovery of Truth, to find out great and profitable Knowledges; had their severall instruments for the disquisition of Arts. Now, there are certaine Scioli, or smatterers, that are busie in the skirts, and out-sides of Learning, and have scarse any thing of solide literature to commend them. They may have some edging, or trimming of a Scholler, a Welt, or so: but it is no more.

Poets must be "docti": men of learning and skill. There was good authority for this, for many classical writers had shown their mastery of the work of earlier poets and demonstrated their knowledge of mythology and their skill in metre.[35] By laying emphasis on learning into his work Jonson was to some extent following the classical example. More important, however, was the Renaissance conviction that

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35. McEuen, p. 252.

the ends of learning and poetry were the same and that the poet was a learned man with an exceptional understanding of life who used his knowledge and skill to promote learning and virtue. Jonson himself did not everyrealize the dichotomy that was inherent in his theory of poetry.

The kind of understanding which was to be derived from such learning pertained to the best manner of life; all of the poet's studies were undertaken with this clear purpose and definite end. The frequent encyclopaedic character of some Renaissance learning did not mean that knowledge was pursued for its own sake, or that voluminous erudition was itself sufficient. This is the moral of these naive verses by the emblemmatist, Geffrey Whitney; under the motto, Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit:

> The volumes great, who so doth still peruse,
> And dailie turnes, and gazeth on the same,
> If that the fruicte thereof, he do not use,
> He reapes but toile, and never gaineth fame:
> First reade, then marke, then practice that is good,
> For without use, we drinke but LETHE flood.
>
> Of practise longe, experience doth proceede;
> And wisedome then, doth evermore ensue:
> Then printe in minde, what wee in printe do reade,
> Els loose wee time, and bookes in vaine do vewe:
> We maie not haste, our talent to bestowe,
> Nor hide it up, whereby no good shall growe.[36]

This attitude illustrates the moral and utilitarian basis of Renaissance erudition. Studies must make life better. Vives, that most attractive humanist, expressed this succinctly when he wrote of the proper use of learning: "This ... is the fruit of all studies; this is the goal. Having acquired our knowledge, we must turn it to usefulness, and employ it for the common good".[37]

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36. A Choice of Emblemes (Leyden, 1586), p. 171.
37. On Education, p. 283.

The ancients were also aware of the power and influence of oratory and, since it embraced all aspects of human life, they saw it as a potent force in the operation and development of both individuals and their society.[38] Jonson, for his part, stressed the importance of poetry in forming both the character of the individual and the quality of society: "The Study of it (if wee will trust Aristotle) offers to mankinde a certaine rule, and Patterne of living well, and happily; disposing us to all Civill Offices of Society" (Disc. 2386-8). He points out that the poet must have "Civil prudence" as well as eloquence (Disc. 2522).

An important corollary of this emphasis on social responsibility was particularly developed by Quintilian, who held that since the poet sought to discover and teach the good life, he had therefore to be a good man himself. Quintilian was aware of the destructive power of oratory in the hands of an evil man, and could not permit oratory to be used against Truth and goodness. He even goes so far as to say not only that "he who would answer my idea of an orator, must be a good man, but that no man, unless he be good, can ever be an orator."[39] Cicero also maintains that eloquence must be "combined with integrity and supreme wisdom, and if we bestow fluency of speech on persons devoid of those virtues, we shall not have made orators of them but shall have put weapons into the hands of madmen."[40] Jonson himself echoes these sentiments when he asserts in the dedication to Volpone (ll. 20-3): "For, if men will impartially, and not a-squint, looke toward the offices, and function of a Poet, they

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38. De Orat., III, xx, 76.
39. Instit., XII, "Introduction", 3.
40. De Orate,,III, xiv, 55.

will easily conclude to themselves, the impossibility of any mans being the good Poet, without first being a good man." This is another aspect of the "full man" which Jonson requires his poet to be. The poet like Cicero's orator was a man of eloquence, learning, and goodness.

The result of the vast effort to acquire learning and understanding and to exemplify it in the conduct of his own life was wisdom. The concept of wisdom included both an understanding of Truth and a consequent life of virtue, for any man who perceived the rational order of life could not fail to observe it himself. So intimately was learning associated with virtue that George Chapman could maintain:

> Learning, the Art is of good life: they then
> That leade not good lives, are not learned men.[41]

This simplistic couplet brings together many Renaissance assumptions: that the justification of study was the discovery of the best way to live, that a true understanding of the best way to live could not but lead to a good life, and that a life that was not good indicated a failure to understand the best way to live and therefore a false learning.[42] It is a circular argument but given a belief in its fundamental principles entirely consistent within itself. Jonson made a similar stand when he wrote that "without truth all the Actions of mankind are craft, malice, or what you will, rather than Wisdome" (Disc. 534-6).

The poet devoted himself to learning to acquire an understanding of life but he was also expected to undertake study which had more immediate ends. Jonson, like Horace and Quintilian, felt that the

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41. Poems, ed. Phyllis Brooks Bartlett, Modern Language Association of America. General series. no. 12 (New York and London, 1941), p. 248.
42. Robert Hoopes, Right Reason in the English Renaissance (Cambridge, Mass., 1962) discusses the origin, history and implications of this idea.

poet must write out of a true knowledge of his matter. This conviction led Jonson to do considerable research in learned volumes for his work and to employ his scholarship in the making of poetry. The histories show that Jonson consulted the classical historians and remained extraordinarily faithful to his sources; the footnotes to Sejanus are even a scholarly invitation to verification.[43] The masques reveal his consultation of the compendiums of mythography.[44] The Alchemist incorporates a thorough study of the literature of alchemy; the terminology and arcane allusions and references are authentic and true to life.[45] Jonson with a careful eye for detail even studied the methods of hunting and dressing deer for The Sad Shepherd.[46] This scholarship had to do with what was called the "invention" of the matter of poetry: it provided the poet with a true and comprehensive grasp of his matter and enabled him to interpret it in the light of his values.[47] The poet, therefore, was obliged to employ factual knowledge in the making of fiction and to reveal the moral order in terms of a genuine knowledge and understanding of his subject. This indicates how the 'feigning' of poetry pertained not so much to making out of the imagination the

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43. See Bryant, "Truth of Argument", op. cit.,
44. See Ernest W. Talbert, 'New Light on Ben Jonson's Workmanship' SP, XL (1943), 154-85; "The Classical Mythology and the Structure of Cynthia's Revels'," PQ, XXII (1943), 193-210, and "Current Scholarly Works and the 'Erudition' of Jonson's 'Masque of Augurs'," SP, XLIV (1947), 605-24; and D. J. Gordon, "The Imagery of Ben Jonson's 'The Masque of Blackness' and 'The Masque of Beautie'," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, VI (1943), 122-41. "Hymenai: Ben Jonson's Masque of Union," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, VIII (1948), 107-45, and "Ben Jonson's 'Haddington Masque': the Story and the Fable". MLR, XLII (1947), 180-7.
45. See H & S, X, 46-7.
46. See J. W. Fortescue, "Hunting" in Shakespeare's England (Oxford, 1916), II, 335-40.
47. For 'invention' see Disc. 2161-2191.

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matter of his poetry, but rather in interpreting and ordering that matter so as to reveal its essential moral value. It was a consequence of Jonson's belief that the poet must understand and give an accurate representation of real life that he demanded such knowledge in the poet. Scholarship, therefore, was an aid to poetic making.

Thoroughness and accuracy are the characteristics of Jonson's use of scholarship. He drew from many sources; he tried to be faithful to them. Even when his health was bad after an attack of palsy, he strove to maintain these standards and so had occasion to write to his friend Sir Robert Cotton to borrow a book:

> Sir, as serious, as a man but fayntly returning to his despayr'd health, can; I salute you. And by these few lines request you, that you would by this bearer, lend me some booke, that would determinately sati⟨s⟩fy mee, of the true site, & distance betwixt Bauli or Portus Baiaru, and Villa Augusta into which (if I erre not) runnes Lacus lucrinus. They are neare by my historical ayme to Cumæ Chalcidensium Misenu, Avernus, in Campania.[48]

His editors point out that Jonson doubtlessly made this scholarly inquiry for a literary purpose. This was his practice throughout his life; to obtain an exact and comprehensive grasp of his matter, even to the verification of a detail. Much scholarship is in fact communicated in his work, and it is often presented in a scholarly fashion. Jonson stands out as being more strict and rigorous than most of his contemporaries in the way he applied his knowledge to his poetry.

It was never, however, Jonson's intention to convey factual knowledge as an end in itself. His knowledge, whether of classical poetry or current scholarship, was employed in the service of his art. His learning was in fact exploited so that his poetry could be the

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48. H & S, I, 215.

best and the most faithful representation of life. His study of books and men provided the matter to be ordered and interpreted by the fiction of poetry in order to reveal the essential truths which lay behind the sensible world.

The poet's responsibility to acquire learning and to press it into the service of poetry put him in a central position; poetry was the child of all knowledge. Because he gathered his wisdom, his learning, and his knowledge from a wide range of sources and because his poetry was capable of any subject pertaining to man, the poet was able to become many men:

> I could never thinke the study of Wisdome confin'd only to the Philosopher: or of Piety to the Divine: or of State to the Politicke. But that he which can faine a Common-wealth (which is the Poet) can governe it with Counsels, strengthen it with Lawes, correct it with Judgements, informe it with Religion and Morals; is all these.
>
> (Disc. 1032-8)

This passage brings together many of the themes which we have been discussing: the concern with human life and society, the obligation to study and understand various kinds of human activity, the duty to employ this knowledge to "instruct to good life, informe manners" (Disc. 1029-30). Having applied himself to the study of philosophy, theology, and politics, the poet could feign on the basis of his knowledge a world which revealed the fundamental moral truths, and was consequently better than real life.

Jonson devoted himself to learning and the acquisition of knowledge. His own motto "Tamquam explorator" suggests his constant search for an understanding of life.[49] He spoke of this search in terms of maritime exploration, and used an exciting imagery of discovery to describe Chapman's translation of Hesiod's Works and Days;

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49. The motto which Jonson inscribed in some of his books, from Seneca; see H & S, I, 180, 183, and 286.

> What treasure hast thou brought us, and what store
> Still, still, dost thou arrive with, at our shore,
> To make thy honour, and our wealth, the more.
>
> (Ung. V. XXIII)

This bold image, which evokes some of the feeling of Renaissance intellectual and terrestrial exploration and discovery, shows how study opened up new areas of knowledge. Jonson, consequently, could name Discoveries the passages drawn from his reading and noted in his commonplace book; his study of the Classics, and Renaissance literature and scholarship, were a part of his effort to come to grips with life and the meaning and significance of human experience. The fruit of these discoveries was Truth.

The relationship between the poet's study and his inspiration in the discovery of Truth needs some elucidation, for to some extent study and inspiration seem to be contrary and overlap. Inspiration, as we have seen, pertained to the poet's ability to perceive beyond the ordinary range of perception to lofty and noble truths. It was, in other words, a kind of insight peculiar to the poet. Study, on the other hand, was an empirical search for the Truth, difficult to square with the notion that Truth was perceived by a natural ability rife with Platonic associations. Yet, Jonson seems to suggest that the perception of Truth depended on both inspiration and study. The poet's natural ability seems to have enabled him in some special or extraordinary way to perceive and present the Truths which were incorporated into the material of his study; the breadth of his study, therefore, considerably extended the possibilities of his discovery of Truth. If we envisage the poet's ability as insight, we can see how it could depend on and be enhanced by a wide and varied study. Inspiration also described the process by which the poet realised in his work the moral order that was

implicit in nature, by which he interpreted his matter so as to reveal the ultimate Truths. Whether in relation to the perception or the expression of Truth, the natural ability of the poet depended on and indeed worked on the material derived from his study.

While, moreover, both study and inspiration enabled the poet to perceive the Truth, Jonson laid the greater emphasis on study. This was undoubtedly a consequence of his belief that a poet must not presume on his natural ability but must seek to develop it by studying and assimilating the work of other men. To some extent this emphasis on wide and thorough study was a rather strict interpretation and application of the humanistic ideals of learning to the Aristotelian concept of poetry. Poetry in Jonson's view was essentially fiction, but a fiction dependent and based on and even made from learning and experience. In his eagerness to stress the training and the continuous study which were necessary for the poet, Jonson seems to have neglected, though he never denied, the necessary ground of ability, and the special advantages of inspiration.

Yet, however much we attempt to reconcile them, there will be some conflict between the notions of inspiration and study because they are essentially antipathetic, and are always edging towards mutual exclusion. Clearly the adjustment between them was a fine and subtle one, maintained only with some degree of tension. It seems probable, nonetheless, that Jonson did not ever realize the dichotomy that was inherent in his theory of poetry.

Study, natural ability and the other requirements for the poet each pertained to different aspects of the process of making. Jonson described two basic operations in writing: the invention and the ordering of the material. His prescriptions for good writing derived from Quintilian are based on this division: "In style to consider,



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what ought to be written; and after what manner; Hee must first thinke, and excogitate his matter; then choose his words, and examine the weight of either. Then take care in placing, and ranking both matter, and words, that the composition be comely" (Disc. 1699-1704). This had reduced the three operations which were traditionally given to rhetorical composition - invention, disposition, and elocution[50] - to two, but even there the selection, the disposition, and the literary expression of the matter are clearly distinguishable. Jonson seems to have conceived the selection of the matter and of the manner and language of its expression as a single operation. For him, writers must, after the selection of matter and the form of expression "judge of what wee invent; and order what wee approve" (Disc. 1708-9).[51]

Invention was the selection of the matter of poetry. Since Jonson required both that the poet remain faithful to the character of real life and that he base his work on a true understanding of the matter, this process of invention incorporated material both from the observation of life and the study of books:

> Who tracks this Authors, or Translators Pen,
> Shall finde, that either hath read Bookes, and Men:
> To say but one, were single.
>
> (Ung. V. xxiv)

Study gave the poet an understanding of life and of his material and was necessary if the poet was to give an accurate representation of the ultimate realities and the subject with which he was dealing.[52]

Study also contributed to the poet's ability to select the manner and language of his poetry, but it was imitation and exercise which gave him a mastery of expression. They were concerned

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50. Weinberg, pp. 55, 81, et passim.
51. See also Disc. 2161-91.
52. cf. Weinberg, p. 128.

with elocution, with developing and extending the range of the poet's ability to give apt and effective expression to his material.

It was principally by the disposition that the poet interpreted his material so as to reveal the moral vision which lay behind it. Both study and inspiration seem to have to do with the perception and the presentation of this moral order. Study gave the poet a comprehension of life, and inspiration permitted him to grasp and to realise the moral values which were implicit in his material, which were the special responsibility of the poet to discover and teach, and which gave his work its merit and usefulness.

The final requirement for the poet, Art, was, like study, of special importance. It was the principle which governed all the others. It enabled the poet to employ his ability, skill, and learning to the greatest advantage in the selection, disposition and expression of his matter. It was undoubtedly acquired by the development of a natural ability of the poet by means of his training, but, once acquired, it was the principle which deployed and used the others. Art was made up of knowledge and judgment, and, in the final analysis, ensured the value of a work:

> For to Nature, Exercise, Imitation, and Studie, Art must bee added, to make all these perfect. And, though these chalenge to themselves much, in the making up of our Maker, it is Art only can lead him to perfection, and leave him there in possession, as planted by her hand. It is the assertion of Tully, If to an excellent nature, there happen an accession, or conformation of Learning, and Discipline, there will then remaine somewhat noble, and singular.
>
> (Disc. 2491-9).

Jonson's poet, like Cicero's orator, was to be a man of learning, goodness, and skill in speaking, who employed these resources to elucidate and to improve the life of man.

IV

The Past and the Present

> Sir, nothing againe
> Antiquitie I pray you. I must
> not heare ill of Antiquitie.
>
> News from the New
> World Discovered
> in the Moon (1620)

"Jonson, the first great English theorist and practitioner of neoclassicism, the first really direct, learned, deliberate, and single-hearted heir of antiquity, gave poetry a new charter through his dynamic assimilation of the main tradition of the past": these words by Prof. Douglas Bush are a succinct and admirable expression of Ben Jonson's achievement.[1] Jonson turned to antiquity for his inspiration, and studied and drew copiously from the example of the classics, but he did so in a way which enriched and transformed the poetry of his own age. His work was an attempt to bestow the fullness of the past on the present.

Jonson devoted himself to the past: as critic, scholar, and poet he turned to Antiquity. His own literary models were classical poets; "you track him", noted Dryden, "every where in their Snow".[2] He borrowed ideas, images, phrases, lines, whole sections of poems from them. To would-be poets, he recommends the study of the poetry of Homer and Virgil (Disc. 1808-9) and, as we have seen above, the

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1. English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660, 2nd ed., Oxford History of English Literature (Oxford, 1962), p. 107.
2. Of Dramatick Poesie, p. 14.

criticism of Aristotle, Horace and Quintilian. Even when he suggests the study of contemporaries, "As Livy before Sallust, Sidney before Donne" (Disc. 1798), he sees them in terms of a classical precedent. And though the poetic education was not to be solely classical, it remains that the fundamental purpose of study and imitation was "to arrive at the dignitie" of the Ancients. (Disc. 2435-6) It was to the past that Jonson turned for his theory of poetry, his standards, his models, the aims and qualities of his own poetry.

Yet, whatever his debt to the past, his work owes much to the present. The themes, language and characters of his poetry are almost entirely drawn from the life of Jacobean London and seventeenth-century England.[3] His satirical poems are so rich in the colour and character of the times that they were often read as portraits of living individuals; indeed, his poetry can be seen as a kind of pageant drawn from contemporary life.

All that he took, moreover, from Classical and Renaissance sources is entirely transformed into the contemporary idiom. If the research of scholars had not brought to light his numerous debts to the ancients, there was little that would have given them away. They are usually entirely assimilated and anglicised.[4] That Jonson studied both classical and Renaissance literature with an eye for its contemporary relevance is evident from the full title of the Discoveries: "TIMBER: or, Discoveries; made upon men and matter: as they have flow'd out of his daily Readings; or had their refluxe to his peculiar Notion of

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3. L. C. Knights in Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson, Perigrine Books no. Y15 (1937; rp., 1962), pp. 151-91 shows how Jonson's drama was closely related to current social and economic issues.
4. This is now generally accepted, see Bush, pp. 107-14 and H. A. Mason, Humanism and Poetry in the Early Tudor Period (London, 1959), pp. 255-89.

the Times." He undoubtedly sought to take from his reading of classical or contemporary sources whatever might be of value for the present age. His reading was therefore to some extent utilitarian, at least partly undertaken in order to glean what might be useful for his work and his times.

Jonson's debt to and use of the past has been studied and understood, but his attitude to the past and its relationship to his literary theory and the aims and achievements of his own poetry has not been sufficiently explored. Professor Bush suggests that Jonson's attitude to the past was deliberate and purposeful, and it would be useful to follow up this suggestion in order to see just what Jonson was trying to take from the past and how he attempted to relate it to his own society. Clearly, his poetry brought together the past and the present, but the way in which he envisaged the past itself and its value for the present underlay this conjunction and still needs explication.

Jonson was a Renaissance man of letters. He drew considerably from Renaissance sources, and the evidence of his reading in the Discoveries and the list of books which he is known to have possessed show that he was interested in and familiar with Renaissance as well as classical material.[5] His judgements of "Stranger Poets" such as du Bartas, Petrarch, Guarini and Ronsard are thrown in with those of classical and English poets in his comments to Drummond (Convers. 57-75). Drummond curiously remarks that "all this was to no purpose, for he neither doeth understand French nor Italianne" (ll. 73-4); yet, he had noted a few lines earlier that Jonson had

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5. See H & S, i, 250-71 and xi, 593-603 for a catalogue of books known to have belonged to Jonson.

changed his mind about Sylvester's translation of du Bartas which he had commended "err he understood to conferr". (ll. 29-31); later Jonson is known to have read Machiavelli.[6] Evidently, he had or acquired some knowledge of these modern Romance languages; it is amusing to conjecture that his knowledge of them was insufficient in the eyes of the Italianate Drummond. Jonson was also familiar with the neo-Latin scholarship of Erasmus, the Scaligers, Justus Lipsius, Possevino, Vives, Heinsius, and others. Some of his comments on poetry, though ultimately classical in origin, are derived from Joannes Buchler of Gladbach, who had in turn quoted from the work of Jacobus Pontanus.[7] The classical texts with which he was familiar and which he used were Renaissance editions; his Martial was edited by Peter Scriverius and his Horace had a commentary by Bernardino Partenio.[8] Much of the knowledge of classical mythology of the masques has been shown to be actually derived from Renaissance dictionaries and compendiums of mythography.[9] A good deal of his work is evidently derived from the Renaissance interpretation of and commentary on the classical sources.

Jonson's point of view furthermore was essentially that of the Renaissance. The rebirth of secular learning was sustained by the belief that the Classics represented man's highest achievement in literature. This produced a curious backward-looking attitude in the men of the period, for their principal efforts were devoted to retrieving an accomplishment that had been lost and confounded in the course of time. For them, to go back was to progress. This was Jonson's attitude. For him, the Classics represented the best

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6. See Disc. 1127-96 which is taken from Machiavelli and H & S, xi, 284.
7. Disc. 2375-81; see H & S, xi, 282.
8. H & S, i, 265-7; see also, 253-4, and xi, 598-600.
9. See Talbert and Gordon, op. cit.

available source of wisdom and literary craftsmanship and therefore the most desirable material for study and imitation. They provided the standard of literary excellence, both from the point of view of moral content and accomplished expression, and they thus furnished infinite resources of matter and style which could develop and be useful to the student of poetry.

Yet, if Jonson was in large measure a Renaissance humanist, he was also a neoclassicist. The distinction is important. He was more strictly and directly the heir of antiquity than his English predecessors; Sidney, for example, drew his ideas more from Italian than classical sources, so that his work closely follows the Renaissance interpretation and development of the Classical tradition.[10] Spenser's Faerie Queene was in the tradition of the Roman de la Rose and the romantic epics of Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso. Both Sidney and Spenser were borrowing and sharing the intellectual life of the Renaissance, the mainstream of Christian humanism which had watered Italy and France. Jonson went back to the source. Though he too derived much from the Renaissance tradition and shared many Renaissance attitudes and a typical point of view, he returned to the springs of humanism for his inspiration. The Classics have the priority throughout his work. His definition of poetry is more scholarly and more strictly Aristotelian than Sidney's because it was more closely derived from primary sources. A good indication of the way in which Jonson returned to the original is how, when drawing from Vives in his Discoveries (ll. 1881-915), he

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10. William A. Ringler, in Poems (Oxford, (c) 1962), pp. xxviii-xxxvi points out that the major influences on Sidney's poetry were the Latin poets Ovid, Virgil, and Horace, the Italians Petrarch and Sannazaro, and the Spanish poet Montemayor and his continuators; Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 404-6, points out Sidney's debt in the Apology to the Italian critics J. C. Scaliger, Minturno and others.

supplements Vives' account by returning himself to Vives' original authority, Quintilian (ll. 1915-8); and though he draws heavily from both, he takes mostly from Quintilian. His poetry owes little to the sonnets and romances which had supplied Sidney and Spenser with much of their material; in fact, his comments on the epic and sonnet, show that while he showed respect for the classical epic, he rejected the sonnet which was an Italian innovation.[11] He is indebted rather to Martial, Horace, Juvenal and other classical poets. He took from them directly and strove to reproduce the qualities of their work; his work therefore was more distinctly classical in its aims and achievements.[12]

What also distinguishes Jonson from his predecessors is the assurance with which he used and borrowed from the Classics. He took; he assimilated; he transformed what he had taken so that it accorded with his own purposes, language and society; he reproduced in his own writing the assurance and control which had characterised the classical writers. He evidently had considered and reflected on the value and use of the classical heritage.

His attitude to the ancients was one of piety. Derived from the classical pietas, this was related to the concept of authority, and both in its religious or secular sense meant dutifulness and respect to parents and superiors. Aeneas who rescued his father from the flames of Troy was considered the type of piety. It is the secular sense of piety that Jonson usually employs.[13] He often expressed his

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11. Cf. Convers.1-4 and Disc. 2678 ff with Convers. 60-3; Jonson, however, did attempt a few sonnets, see H & S, ii, 392-4.
12. H. A. Mason, op. cit., and G. A. E. Parfitt, "The Poetry of Ben Jonson," ES, XVIII (1968), 18-31; "Ethical Thought in Ben Jonson's Poetry," SEL, IX (1969), 123-34.
13. Jonson uses piety in the religious sense at Und. LXII, l. 3; Und. LXXXIII, l. 42; and Disc. 1033.

gratitude to his teachers in keeping with his own dictum, "those, that can teach him any thing, hee must ever account his masters, and reverence" (Disc. 2508-9). He praises Camden by avowing his respect: after admitting that many of his others former students could render better tribute than he, he concludes: "But for their powers, accept my pietie" (Ep. XIIII). The epitaph on Sir Vincent Corbet is another expression of "pietie":

> Much from him I professe I wonne,
> And more, and more, I should have done,
> But that I understood him scant.
>
> (Und. XII, ll. 29-31)

Jonson usually used the word to express the gratitude and respect which was due to those whose efforts and achievement had contributed to man's grasp and understanding of the Truth, and provided a basis upon which he and others could build. The oft-quoted dictum, "It is true they open'd the gates, and made the way, that went before us; but as Guides, not Commanders" (Disc. 137-9), is an expression of piety as well as a declaration of independence. It suggests both the respect due to the Ancients and the obligation to further and continue their work.

The first reason that Jonson turned to the past was to acquire Truth and wisdom. He regarded the classics as a repository of the insights and understanding which had been gathered by the Ancients from their observations and reflections on life. This moral content, because of its basis in reason and Truth, was of enduring value. It was not to the past itself that Jonson gave his allegiance, but to the Truth that was contained in the past. He constantly emphasised that the search for truth must be disinterested, free from any prior loyalty to an individual or school:

> I will have no man addict himselfe to mee; but if I have any thing right, defend it as Truth's, not mine (save as it conduceth to a common good.) It profits not me to have

> any man fence, or fight for me, to flourish to take a side. Stand for Truth, and 'tis enough.
>
> (Disc. 154-9)

This firm conviction was applied with equal rigour to the Ancients: "Nothing is more ridiculous, than to make an Author a Dictator, as the schooles have done Aristotle. The dammage is infinite, knowledge receives by it" (Disc. 2095-8). These lines, derived from Bacon, express a laudable independence, and recall Jonson's praise of Aristotle because he "understood the Causes of things: and what other men did by chance or custome, he doth by reason" (Disc. 2569-71). Undoubtedly, it was this basis in reason and the Truth that justified his study and use of Aristotle and the other ancient writers; their authority lay in the value of their content. Jonson, following Vives, consequently recommends a critical attitude:

> I know Nothing can conduce more to letters, then to examine the writings of the Ancients, and not to rest in their sole Authority, or take all upon trust from them; provided the plagues of Judging, and Pronouncing against them be away; such as are envy, bitternesse, precipitation, impudence, and scurrile scoffing.
>
> (Disc. 129-34)

The basis of the evaluation of the past must be the search for truth and the best means of expressing it, and Jonson therefore condemns any challenge to the findings of antiquity that is reckless or ill-considered, or given for petty and unworthy reasons. Following Bacon, he admits the necessity of a modicum of scepticism with regard to many things: "a temporary beliefe, and a suspension of his owne Judgement, not an absolute resignation of himselfe, or a perpetual captivity" (Disc. 2098-100). He went to the Classics, therefore, with the belief that they had much to teach him, with a willingness to learn what he could from them, and with an awareness that he must still test, criticise, and be somewhat sceptical of their findings.

These borrowings from Bacon and Vives are significant and of great value for determining Jonson's attitude to nature.[14] This is of primary importance, for ideas of nature were at the basis of any evaluation of the accomplishments of the past and the possibilities of the present; if in some way nature was suffering a decline in its resources or potential, then mankind could never hope to recapture the achievement of Antiquity. This was the contention of an Anglican clergyman, Godfrey Goodman whose The Fall of Man, or the Corruption of Nature, (London, 1616) put forth the thesis that, because of original sin, the whole of nature was in gradual and irreversible decay. The acme of poetry, oratory, philosophy and history, for Goodman, occurred in ancient Rome, and could never be equalled, much less surpassed.[15] Goodman was answered by George Hakewill's An Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World (Oxford, 1627, 1630, 1635) which argued for the uniformity of nature and explained the decline of classical civilization by pointing out that mutability did not mean decay, and by positing a theory of cyclical progress in which what was lost in one way was made up in another;[16] while some arts decline, others flourish. Hakewill argued that Sidney's Arcadia was "nothing inferior to the Ancients," and, after noting that Virgil had raised poetry "to the utmost perfection", continues, "if I should match Vergill him-selfe with Ariosto or Torquato Tasso in Italian, Bartas in French, or Spenser in English, I thinke I should not much wrong him."[17] Hakewill maintains that if modern man was in any way inferior to the Ancients, he alone was to blame.[18]

14. For this discussion I have drawn from Richard Foster Jones, Ancients and Moderns, 2nd ed. (St. Louis, 1961) and Victor Harris, All Coherence Gone (Chicago, 1949).
15. Fall of Man, pp. 359-62; see Harris, pp. 8-46.
16. An Apologie or Declaration, 3rd ed. (1635), pp. 48-9, 54, 529 et passim; see Harris, pp. 47-85.
17. Ibid., pp. 287-93.
18. Ibid., sig. b3^{r}.

Though Hakewill's defence of nature was the first outright reply to Goodman's thesis, the way for him had been prepared by the defenders of science, such as Francis Bacon in The Advancement of Learning and, to go back even further, by humanists such as Juan Luis Vives.

Vives had maintained, a century before Hakewill, the uniformity of nature, the possibility of equalling the past achivement, and the human responsibility and culpability for any inferiority to Antiquity; Hakewill had, in fact, borrowed from Vives some of the most famous passages of his work.[19] Jonson, as well as Hakewill, borrowed from Vives an oft-quoted assertion of the uniformity of Nature:

> I cannot thinke Nature is so spent, and decay'd, that she can bring forth nothing worth her former yeares. She is alwayes the same, like her selfe: And when she collects her strength, is abler still. Men are decay'd, and studies: Shee is not.
>
> (Disc. 124-8)

The importance of this passage is that it clearly demonstrates that there is in the mainstream of humanism and in Jonson himself no natural impediment to equalling and passing beyond the past achievement. And since any blame for inferiority is placed squarely on humanity, it was possible for men to return to true learning.

Bacon had also provided Hakewill with some of his material, though he had himself rejected a theory of cyclical progress.[20] The passages which Jonson borrowed from Bacon's Advancement of Learning for the Discoveries were not only taken from one of the first and most important affirmations in England of the possibility of progress, but

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19. Cf. Of Education, op. cit., pp. cv-cvi, 8 with Apologie 'preface', sig. b2^{v} and p. 258; see Hans Baron, "The 'Querelle' of the Ancients and Moderns as a Problem for Renaissance Scholarship," JHI, XX (1959), 3-22.
20. Baron, pp. 4-8.

had themselves to do with the necessity of maintaining a critical and sceptical attitude to the authority of Antiquity in order that learning might advance.[21] Jonson's interest in Bacon's thought is further indicated by his copy of the Novum Organum.[22] Clearly Jonson, in true humanist fashion, was willing, in the search for Truth, to consider and accept some of the scientific thought of the age. Clearly here again, he was on the side of progress.

Jonson, like Vives, stressed the importance of advancing learning. While he freely and generously expressed his piety, and repeatedly avowed his debt and gratitude to the Ancients, he insists that men must not be afraid to carry on after them: "Let Aristotle, and others have their dues; but if wee can make farther Discoveries of truth and fitnesse then they, why are we envied?" (Disc. 2101-3). He is convinced that the Ancients themselves would endorse the search and the discoveries of their successors: "For I thanke those, that have taught me, and will ever: but yet dare not thinke the scope of their labour, and enquiry, was to envy their posterity, what they also could adde, and find out" (Disc. 146-9). These passages, taken respectively from Bacon and Vives, show that Jonson envisaged his task as including the addition of new discoveries - the particular gift of the poet - to the body of learning.

Yet, even here, Jonson distinguishes a correct from a misguided study. If the criticism of the Ancients must be based on sound reasons and judgement, the additions to knowledge must be undertaken in

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21. Disc. 2090-124 is largely taken almost verbatim from The Twoo Bookes of Francis Bacon: Of the proficiencie and advancement of Learning, divine and humane (London, 1605), fol. 17[r] - 23[v] passim; see H & S, xi, 273-4.
22. H & S, i, 267.

the proper spirit and directed to the proper end: "Let us beware, while wee strive to adde, wee doe not diminish, or deface; wee may improve, but not augment" (Disc. 2103-5). Jonson is concerned that in the attempt to improve understanding, there is a danger of losing or corrupting what has already been discovered, or being misled into the search for novelty as an end in itself. The distinction between "improve" and "augment" suggests that Truth itself which was absolute could receive no increment, but that on the basis of the past we could improve our grasp and understanding of it. Jonson evidently conceived the development of learning in organic terms, as growing out of the ground of existing knowledge.

Jonson emphasised the importance of writing out of experience, and spoke in several places of his own role in the development of learning. Experience was the foundation of the poet's work: "For to all the observations of the Ancients, wee have our owne experience: which, if wee will use and apply, wee have better means to pronounce" (Disc. 134-7). Likewise, Jonson referred to his own contributions to the body of knowledge in the "Comick Lawes" which he first taught the age (Unq. V. XXXVIII) and his "strange" poems "which, as yet,/Had not their forme touch'd by an English wit" (For. XII, 81-2). Yet, his drama and poetry are much indebted to the Classics. Jonson is aware of the dangers of coining new words, but concludes: "Yet wee must adventure, for things, at first hard and rough, are by use made tender and gentle. It is an honest errour that is committed, following great Chiefes" (Disc. 1923-5). Classical precedent is used to support the pursuit of new ways of doing things.

Having accepted the uniformity of nature and the possibility of advancement and, at the same time, having noted the superiority of the Ancients in certain respects, Jonson was in a peculiar position.

On the one hand, he held that nature was constant but that men and studies had declined. On the other, he was attempting to benefit from the discoveries of Antiquity in order to raise the level of specific aspects of English poetry. He sought a return to what he believed the highest learning. Throughout his discussion of Antiquity, there is the conviction that the discoveries of the Ancients should be used and assimilated by modern man. Central to his discussion, furthermore, is the conviction that past discoveries which could withstand a disinterested examination should be related to the modern experience. Jonson went to the Classics, therefore, with the intention of taking what was of value for his own age. He evidently envisaged his role as one of restoration, as playing a part in the reintegration of the classical achievement into literature and, since nature was still the same, of elevating men and studies to their former level; the implication is that, once this had been achieved, learning could advance beyond the classical achievement.[23]

From the Ancients Jonson took two things: a philosophic point of view which he regarded as wisdom and an idea of the genres and canon of qualities which were desirable in literature. His choice was selective and limited, and as much an indication of his own task and judgement as an evaluation of the best in Antiquity. Yet, within these limits, he chose with discernment and conviction.

The wisdom which Jonson learned from the Ancients was a way of looking at man. He acquired from them the conviction that man by his own efforts could live in accordance with ideal standards, that he could achive virtue without any supernatural aid. His attitude to

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23. See Appendix A.

grace was consistent with his attitude to religion. He prays for grace in "To Heaven" (For. XV) and avers the sincerity of his prayer:

> O, be thou witnesse, that the reynes dost know,
> And hearts of all, if I be sad for show,
> And judge me after: if I dare pretend
> To ought but grace, or ayme at other end.

The first of the three prayers at the beginning of the Underwoods is a plea that God, who is envisaged as the Trinity, will take compassion on him, and ensure his salvation.[24] He evidently accepted the possibility and the efficacity of supernatural aid, but the emphasis of his work indicates that, although grace may have been an aid, it was not the sine qua non for the acquisition of virtue.[25] The moral truths he derived from Antiquity were the Stoic ideals of constancy, integrity, and self-sufficiency, which he took from the Romans, particularly Seneca, partly through the intermediary of Justus Lipsius.[26] These are what he advocates as sufficient for a good life; he writes from an essentially practical point of view. The way in which Jonson envisaged life in ideal terms and was constantly applying his ideals to life was also classical in origin.[27]

A clear example of Jonson's attempt to relate past truth and present circumstance can be found in his epistle to Sir Edward Sackville (Und. XIII). Here the two elements are imperfectly joined, and passages of vivid realism are found beside translations of abstract and moral reflections from Seneca and Plutarch. This description of vagrant and opportunate soldiers is undoubtedly taken from the observation of Jacobean London:

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24. The first of these poems, written before 1612, was probably written during Jonson's Catholic period.
25. See Hoopes, pp. 123-45 et seq.
26. See Hilberry, Ben Jonson's Ethics, op. cit.
27. See Mason and Parfitt, op. cit, and Hugh Maclean, 'Ben Jonson's Poems', in Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age (Toronto, 1964), pp. 44-67.

these men ever want: their very trade
Is borrowing; that but stopt, they doe invade
All as their prize, turne Pyrats here at Land,
Ha' their Bermudas, and their streights i'th'Strand:
Man out their Boates to th'Temple, and not shift
Now, but command; make tribute, what was gift;
And it is paid 'hem with a trembling zeale,
And superstition I dare scarce reveale,
If it were cleare, but being so in cloud
Carryed and wrapt, I only am alow'd
My wonder, why the taking a Clownes purse,
Or robbing the poore Market-folkes should nurse
Such a religious horrour in the brests
Of our Towne Gallantry.

(ll. 79-92)

The abuses which it lists are genuine criticism of the habits of many contemporary soldiers.[28] Yet, the poem is modelled on Seneca's moral epistles, and juxtaposed with such passages are reflections taken out of Plutarch:

Men have beene great, but never good by chance,
Or on the sudden. It were strange that he
Who was this Morning such a one, should be
Sydney e're night! or that did goe to bed
Coriat, should rise the most sufficient head
Of Christendome! And neither of these know,
Were the Rack offer'd them, how they came so;
'Tis by degrees that men arrive at glad
Profit in ought; each day some little adde
In time 'twill be a heape; This is not true
Alone in money, but in manners too.[29]

Passages of keen observation of contemporary manners alternate with moral reflections from the Classics: this illustrates the way in which moral Truth from Antiquity is related to the contemporary experience. A more perfect integration, such as that of the famous song to Celia (For. VI) which manages to make a mosaic of passages from Catullus seem perfectly English, makes the classical and contemporary elements less easily distinguishable.

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28. See also Ep. CVII.
29. See H & S, xi, 56.

It was, however, not only Truth and Wisdom that Jonson sought from Antiquity. The excellence of the Ancients consisted not only in their ethical discoveries but also in the literary expression which they gave to them. The Classics were the highest literary achievement from the point of view of skill and craftsmanship, and the fullest realization of the art of poetry. They were consequently models of expression. Jonson clearly felt that the genres and the qualities of style which had been developed by the ancients to convey their view of life should be studied in order to adapt and transform them into the medium of English. In composing his epigrams and odes, for example, he disdained all contemporary precedent and modelled his work directly on the classics; his comments on style are in the same way taken directly from Quintilian.[30] The numerous imitations of and borrowings from the Classics were also an attempt to elevate English poetry to the level of the Classics: to restore the true understanding of genre and style, and to purify English of barbarisms and misconstructions.

The Renaissance attempted both to restore and to purify. The knowledge of Greek was restored for Western civilization; monkish Latin was purified from its mediaeval corruptions. The attempt to restore and purify also applied to literature. It was clearly the work of generations to assimilate and equal the classical achievement; and each successive one had to refine and improve on the work of its predecessor. As an analogy, one might imagine the several stages of distillation which produce a pure product. This is the principle of Jonsonian imitation, to rise by degrees until you can equal your model:

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30. For the epigram, see below; for the ode, see H & S, ii, 394-406; for style, see Disc. 1697-735, et passim.

> If his wit will not arrive soddainly at the dignitie of the Ancients, let him not fall out with it, quarrell, or be over-hastily Angry: offer, to turne away from Study, in a humor; but come to it againe upon better cogitation; try another time, with labour. If then it succeed not, cast not away the Quills, yet; nor scratch the wainescott, beate not the poore Deske; but bring it to the forge, and file againe; tourne it a newe.
>
> (Disc. 2435-43.)

Jonson's own attempts at literary restoration and purification are evident with regard to the epigram.[31] He quite openly expressed this intention.[32] In his poem, "To my Meere English Censurer" (Ep. XVIII) he points out that he is attempting to write epigrams according to the classical standards.

> To thee, my way in Epigrammes seemes new
> When both it is the old way, and the true.

The poets he has chosen to represent the conventional standard of epigram were Sir John Davies whose Epigrams were printed sometime before 1598 and John Weever, whose Epigrammes in the oldest cut, and newest fashion, were printed in 1598. Both of these poets claim or show the influence of Martial, Jonson's own model, but their work is so inferior to the Roman's both in style and content that it hardly bears comparison to it. Jonson saw this, and attempted to raise the English epigram to the level of the classical original.

Earlier writers had regarded the epigram as a form of entertainment. Puttenham wrote:

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31. See T. K. Whipple, "Martial and the English Epigram from Sir Thomas Wyatt to Ben Jonson," University of California Publications in Modern Philology, X (1920-5), 279-414, and McEuen, pp, 14-27; H & S, ii, 342-57; and Wesley Trimpi, Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study in the Plain Style (Stanford, 1962), pp. 167-90.
32. He did the same in the dedication to Volpone: "I have labour'd, for their instruction and amendment, to reduce not only the ancient formes, but manners of the scene ..."

> the poet devised a prety fashioned poeme short and sweete (as we are wont to say) and called it Epigramma in which every mery conceited man might without any long studie or tedious ambrage, make his frend sport, and anger his foe, and give a prettie nip, or shew a sharpe conceite in few verses.[33]

This light-hearted attitude is also apparent in the works of Davies and Weever. In his first epigram "Ad Musem" Davies instructs his "merry" muse:

> Fall in betweene their hands that praise and love thee
> And be to them a laughter and a jest:
> But as for them which scorning shall reproove thee,
> Disdaine their wittes, and thinke thine owne the best.[34]

He treats the epigram simply as a form of amusement and shows little evidence of Jonson's moral earnestness. Similarly Weever in his dedication writes to his patron, "if you favour the effect of my labour, it will serve you for a jeast, to refresh your wearied mind".[35] Their epigrams are conceived in the same spirit. Though they have some incidental satire, they lack Jonson's gravity and consistent moral stance.

Similarly, Jonson objected to the association of the genre - and his own name - with licence and scurrility; he describes these in an epigram "To my Booke" (Ep. II):

> It will be look'd for, booke, when some but see
> Thy title Epigrammes, and nam'd of mee,
> Thou should'st be bold, licentious, full of gall,
> Wormewood, and sulphure, sharpe, and tooth'd withall;
> Become a petulant thing, hurle inke, and wit,
> As mad-men stones: not caring whom they hit.

This is what his readers might expect not only because of Jonson's reputation for biting dramatic satire, but also because the genre had become associated with obscenity and frivolity:

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33. Arte, p. 54. Puttenham also recognized the satiric element in the epigram, for as well as a "pretty nip" or a "sharpe conceite" it could be a "bitter taunt", p. 53.
34. The Poems of Sir John Davies, ed. Clare Howard (New York, 1941), p.33.
35. John Weever, Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion, 1599, ed. R. B. McKerrow, (London, 1911) p. 4.

PLAY-WRIGHT me reades, and still my verses damnes,
He sayes, I want the tongue of Epigrammes;
I have no salt: no bawdrie he doth meane
For wittie, in his language, is obscene.

(Ep. XLIX)

Jonson saw the epigram as an effective instrument for social reform, in keeping with his belief that it was the poet's duty to instruct to the good life. As such, it was serious literature with a moral purpose.

A light-hearted or ribald attitude to the epigram, even though it might claim with some justification an origin in Martial, was unacceptable to Jonson. He regarded the genre with a seriousness that was extraordinary for his age.[36] Likewise, Puttenham's suggestion that epigrams could be written without long or tedious preparation was opposed to Jonson's view that a long, exact, and complete study was necessary to make a full man and a good poet. He sets all such frivolous attitudes against his own ideal of the poet when in the dedication to his Epigrammes he chastises those who "hold their deare Mountebanke, or Jester, in farre better condition, then all studie, or studiers of humanitie."

Jonson, moreover, places this discussion of epigrams in the wide context of European culture. The title of the poem "To my Meere English Censurer" underlines both the ignorance of the critics, and the insularity of their views. Jonson suggests a wider context which includes the classical epigram and the neo-Latin epigrams which had long been popular on the continent and had been inaugurated in Britain by St. Thomas More.[37]

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36. See H & S, ii, 343.
37. See Hoyt Hopewell Hudson, The Epigram in the English Renaissance (Princeton N.J., 1947), pp. 29 ff.

What distinguishes Jonson from his predecessors, both Roman and English, is his consistent moral purpose. Though he had derived his poetic and ethical values from antiquity, Jonson - and, in fact the Renaissance generally - interpreted them more seriously and rigorously than many of the ancient writers. This was partly the result of a confluence of various traditions, for whereas Jonson had derived his notion of the epigram from Martial, he had taken his idea of the poet and the moral value of poetry from Cicero and Quintilian. He was, as a consequence, considerably more serious and sincere in his epigrams than Martial, who was indulgent to some and given to flatter other subjects.[38] Jonson also read Martial with the earnestness of the Renaissance poet; indeed, it is evident that the moral principles which Jonson considered the basis of poetry underlay his reading and rendering of Martial. In the same way, Jonson's work is more grave and solid than the work of his English predecessors, who were less strictly and whole-heartedly committed to the values of Renaissance humanism.

Jonson's attempts to treat the epigram as serious literature comprised not only a regard for moral import, but also for the art of epigrams. It is here that he is most indebted to Martial. The work of the English predecessors was prolix, awkward, crudely-composed, and fell far short of the brevity, wit, and polish of their Roman model. Jonson's work owes nothing to the English epigrams. He returned to the Classics, but so successfully imported the quality of Martial into English that he has been justly called the English Martial.[39]

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38. See Ep. XXXVI and Whipple, pp. 387-93.
39. See H & S, ii, 342-56 and Whipple, pp. 384-6 et passim.

When Jonson writes that he has restored the old and true way of writing epigrams he equates the true with the best way of writing them. Yet, it appears also to have some higher meaning; this is suggested by a comment to Drummond, 'that when Sir John Harrington desyred him to tell the Truth of his Epigrames, he answered him that he loved not the Truth, for they were Narrations and not Epigrames' (Convers 37-40); John Owen's epigrams were also described as "bare narrations" (l. 225).[40] Jonson evidently envisaged a proper way of composing epigrams, based on that which had been established by the Classical writers, which had most fully realised the potential of the genre, and consequently had raised it to its highest level. There is, moreover, in the reference to the Truth that was proper to epigrams a suggestion that the epigram should have a moral content; indeed, that there was some consonance between Truth, or at least some kinds of Truth, and the nature and form of the genre.[41] Jonson's criticisms were directed both at the form and the content of the English epigram; "true" implies the most apt and accomplished expression of the moral order of the world.

Jonson uplifted the moral and technical level of the epigram, purified it of the crudities to which it had been given over, and restored it to its place as serious literature. He achieved what he had set out to do: he became the founder of the English epigram.[42]

Though Jonson's innovations were not original, but derived from the precedent of Antiquity, they were largely new to the English

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40. Harington's Epigrammes were published anonymously in 1613; Owen's Epigrammata, in four volumes between 1606-12.
41. H & S, ii, 351-3 interpret these criticisms of the bare narrations of Harington and Owen as referring only to technique, but Jonson's explicit reference to "the Truth" seems to require a moral interpretation; the adjective "bare" seems also to support this view.
42. Whipple, p. 406.

language. One of Jonson's greatest achievements was in thus transforming and making accessible the classical heritage to English letters. This was a deliberate effort, undertaken with a clear grasp of the due relationship between the literature of the past and present. Jonson refers to this in the preface to his masque Hymenai, where in justifying his composition of such "transitorie devices" he elucidates the relationship of past and present. He first makes a clear distinction between things of the sense which are "momentarie, and meerely taking" with those of understanding which are "impressing, and lasting". To illustrate this, he contrasts the duration of man's spiritual and corporal elements, "so short-liv'd are the bodies of all things, in comparison of their soules". Because of this, he maintains, princes and great men not only study for outward magnificence, but also

> curious after the most high and heartie inventions, to furnish the inward parts: (and those grounded upon antiquitie, and solide learnings) which though their voyce be taught to sound to present occasions, their sense, or doth, or should alwayes lay hold on more remov'd mysteries.

This passage suggests important distinctions and some crucial relationships. There is, first of all, a distinction between sense and voice. The "sense" conveys "the remov'd mysteries", the universal Truths which are grasped by means of the poet's study with the aid of inspiration. The voice however "sounds" to a particular occasion, the marriage of Lady Frances Howard and the Earl of Somerset. The distinction is similar to that made by Sidney between the universal principle and the particular instance. There is, moreover, a distinction between permanence and impermanence. The voice like the body is "momentarie and meerely taking"; the sense like the soul is "impressing and lasting". This refers to the eternal truth and its temporal vehicale. Finally, there is the distinction between the past and

the present. The "most high and heartie inventions" which Jonson recommends are those which are "grounded upon antiquitie, and solide learnings". Yet although based on the wisdom and the techniques of expression which had been developed in the past, they must be made relevant to the present, "sound to the present occasions". Jonson is describing the deliberate attempt to transform the discoveries of the past into the modern idiom.

Jonson elsewhere refers to the need to make the ancient discoveries relevant to modern times. He praises Selden's search for and contributions to knowledge: "In sharpnesse of all Search, wisdome of Choise,/Newness of Sense, Antiquitie of voyce." (Und. XIV ll. 59-60). Jonson is clearly referring to the need to give new and cogent expression to the ancient tradition of learning.

This plexus of relationships, between the universal and particular, the eternal and temporal, the past and present pertain then, to Truth and its expression. It has further complications, for the study to acquire universal and eternal truths must be based both on ancient and modern discoveries, and the use of particular contemporary examples was based on classical precedent. All of these elements had to be brought together harmoniously in the poem.

This does not mean that the ancient wisdom should be simplified or vulgarized to suit modern tastes, or to pander to the ignorance of contemporaries. In a good-natured scene in Bartholomew Fayre (V, iii, 20 ff), Marlowe's story of Hero and Leander is considered "too learned, and poeticall" for its audience, and so it has been reduced "to a more familiar straine", and made "a little easie, and moderne for the times". Such vulgarization was anathema to Jonson, even though here he realizes its comic possibilities. Elsewhere he comments on the vulgar preference: "But a man cannot imagine that

thing so foolish, or rude, but will find, and enjoy an Admirer; at least, a Reader, or Spectator. The Puppets are seene now in despight of the Players" (Disc. 608-11). His own adaptation of classical culture did not include reduction; his intention was to assimilate and transform, not to diminish, classical culture.

Jonson's attempt to relate the past achievement to his own age is evident throughout his poetry. Though he is constantly invoking the past, it is never for its own sake, but always in relation to the present. The references to the past are in fact functional and serve as a device for measuring the present and seeing it in the context of human development. The relationship of past and present is consequently not only a theme to which Jonson frequently returns but also the basis for comparisons and contrasts, for an evaluation of modern life. The past is deliberately invoked because it tells us something about the present. The juxtaposition of past and present throughout Jonson's work serves to compare and contrast the two ages; it can serve not only to compare and contrast but to reveal, and not only to reveal but to evaluate. It enables the men of Jonson's time to see themselves in relation to another age, and in Jonson's opinion, a finer one: the past is a yardstick for the present. There is consequently no attempt to reproduce the past as a whole; only what is relevant to the present, either because it illuminates or exposes it, is chosen. The past becomes an ideal standard in his poetry because of this careful selection; thus Jonson compares Lord Chief Justice Coke to Solon, the great Athenian law-giver (Und. XIV) and Susan, Countess of Montgomery to the biblical Susanna (Ep. CIII).

Jonson's celebrated ode on Shakespeare uses both the immediate and the ancient past to measure Shakespeare's achievement. Jonson first makes an oblique reference to William Basse's Elegy on

Shakespeare[43] in which Shakespeare was laid beside Spenser, Chaucer, and Beaumont:

> I will not lodge thee by
> Chaucer or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lye
> A little further, to make thee a roome:
> Thou art a Moniment, without a tombe
> And art alive still, while thy Booke doth live,
>
> (ll. 19-23)

After this allusion to the development of English poetry and two of its greatest poets, Jonson explains Shakespeare's relationship to his immediate predecessors in English drama. He begins by explaining that he will not place him with the others:

> That I not mixe thee so, my braine excuses;
> I meane with great, but disproportion'd Muses:
> For, if I thought my judgement were of yeeres,
> I should commit thee surely with thy peeres,
> And tell, how farre thou didst our Lily out-shine,
> Or sporting Kid, or Marlowes mighty line.
> And though thou hadst small Latine, and lesse Greeke,
> From thence to honour thee, I would not seeke
> For names; but call forth thund'ring Æschilus,
> Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
> Paccuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead
> To life againe, to heare thy Buskin tread,
> And shake a Stage ....
>
> (Und. V. xxvi, ll. 25-37)

The general meaning of this passage is clear, but its particulars seem obscure and inconsequent; I would paraphrase it thus: I excuse my not placing you with Lily, Kyd, and Marlowe whose greatness is still less than yours, for if I am to give a lasting judgement, I must place you not with them, but (even though you knew little of classical literature[44]) with Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Paccuvius, Accius, and Seneca.[45] The implication of course is that the modern age cannot bring forward any adequate measure for Shakespeare, and that such could only be found in Antiquity. Jonson then claims that Shakespeare even stands

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43. H & S, xi, 145.
44. Perhaps only in comparison to Jonson's own knowledge.
45. For Paccuvius and Accius see H & S, xi, 145.

alone above "all that insolent Greece, or haughtie Rome sent forth", and has replaced the ancient accomplishment:[46]

> The merry Greeke, tart Aristophanes,
> Neat Terrence, witty Plautus, now not please;
> But antiquated, and deserted lye
> As they were not of Natures family.
>
> (ll. 51-4)

Among the ancients, Jonson selects both Greeks and Romans, both tragedians, and comedians. It is noteworthy and typical of Jonson's classical bias that nothing is said of Shakespeare's sonnets.[47] With regard to the moderns we should remember the choice of Chaucer, Spenser and Beaumont to represent the history of English literature was not Jonson's own, but William Basse's, though Jonson would probably not have challenged at least two of the nominations. The third was Jonson's friend, the Beaumont in question being Francis Beaumont, the dramatist, who wrote commendatory verses to the Fox, 1607, the Silent Woman, 1609, and Catiline, 1611. He died on March 6th, 1615-16, just shortly before Shakespeare's death on April 23rd, 1616. In any case, the reason for his inclusion in Basse's poem rather than that of Sidney, whose contemporary reputation was considerably greater, seems to have been because of his interment near Chaucer and Spenser on the south side of Westminster Abbey.[48] Jonson's inclusion in the poem of Lyly, Kyd and Marlowe is more significant, because, as Herford and Simpson point out, they "are precisely the dramatic predecessors of Shakespeare who influenced his literary development."[49]

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46. He says the same thing of Bacon at Disc. 916-18.
47. See H & S, ii, 392-3.
48. Sir John Beaumont who was also buried in the same area died in 1627. Jonson knew both brothers, and addressed poems to them: John at Und XXXII, and Francis at Ep. LV (see also Convers. 154).
49. H & S, xi, 145.

This poem exemplifies how, even though willing to consider the relative merits of his English predecessors and contemporaries, Jonson turns to the ancients for a final estimation. For his ultimate criterion, he turns to the past ages of learning. That Shakespeare should have surpassed even these is indeed high praise.

The past becomes a different kind of standard in some of the courtly poems. Here, it is important to distinguish between praise and compliment: praise is defined by the O.E.D. as the "commendation of the worth or excellence of a person or thing"; while compliment, "a ceremonial act or expression as a tribute of courtesy", or in the words of Dr. Johnson, "an act of civility usually understood to mean less than it declares." As a court poet, Jonson was expected to turn out his share of complimentary verse; its courtly deference made it quite different from his poetry of praise. Jonson praised Shakespeare, but he complimented some of the court ladies. In the complimentary poems classical mythology is usually put in the service of beauty or grace or some feminine attribute; his praise celebrates virtue or accomplishment. Typical of the complimentary verse is Jonson's description of Charis:

> But could'st thou, love,
> Call to mind the formes, that strove
> For the Apple, and those three
> Make in one, the same were shee.
> For this Beauty yet doth hide
> Something more then thou hast spi'd.
> Outward Grace weake love beguiles:
> She is Venus, when she smiles,
> But shee's Juno, when she walkes,
> And Minerva, when she talkes.
>
> (Und. II. 5 ll. 45-54)

The allusion of course is to the famous contest between the goddesses Juno, Minerva, and Venus for the golden apple awarded by Paris. Venus, of course, was a symbol of beauty; Minerva, of wit; Juno, of feminine

dignity.[50] The compliment is gracious and courteous, as indeed it was expected to be.

These complimentary poems are related to the masques. A masque was an occasion; a complimentary poem, a poetic exercise. Both have the same courtly elegance and artificiality, and use their classical machinery to create a symbolic world. They are not as forthright and explicit as the poems of praise, but they do have a moral content, conveyed by means of mythological symbols. In an elaborate compliment to Lady Wroth (Ep. CV), Jonson uses mythography to define an ideal of womanhood:

> MADAME, had all antiquitie beene lost
> All historie seal'd up, and fables crost;
> That we had left us, nor by time, nor place,
> Least mention of a Nymph, a Muse, a Grace,
> But even their names were to be made a-new,
> Who could not but create them all, from you?[51]

He then catalogues the mythological figures and their attributes:

> He, that but saw you weare the wheaten hat,
> Would call you more than CERES, if not that:
> And, drest in shepheards lyre, who would not say:
> You were the bright OENONE, FLORA, or May?
> If dancing, all would cry th'Idalian Queene,
> Were leading forth the Graces on the greene:
> And, armed to the chase, so bare her bow
> DIANA alone, so hit, and hunted so.
> There's none so dull, that for your stile would aske,
> That saw you put in PALLAS plumed caske:
> Or, keeping your due state, that would not cry,
> There JUNO sate, and yet no Peacock by.

The poem's distinctly visual quality links it with the masques and with the poetic tradition of Spenser; the attention to suggestive visual detail, the wheaten hat, the shepherd's lyre, the dancing on the green, the bow, the plumed caske, the absent peacock indicate how Jonson was drawing from Renaissance iconography to define

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50. See H & S, XI, 51.
51. The same device is used at Ep. CXII and CXXV.

his values in symbolic terms.[52] Ceres was the first to sow seed, and to gather and grind it to make bread; hence her wheaten hat, symbol of fertility.[53] In addition, she invented law, and first civilized man:

> creust-on qu'elles eust donné les loix devant tous les autres. Car apres que l'usage du blé fut trouvé, les hommes laisserent avec la gland la mode de vivre premiere, qui estoit rude & brutale, & s'estant assemblez ensemble, firent les villes, & commencerent à vivre civilement, & avec quelque ordre.[54]

Oenone was a nymph of Mount Ida, who had the gift of prophecy; the beautiful Flora was the goddess of flowers whose power made the fields blossom;[55] Maia was one of the Pleiades, who having pleaded for divine protection after having been pursued for five years by Orion, was placed, along with her pursuer, in the stars: "comme plusieurs autres, qui pour avoir aimé, our bien esté aimés, meriterent la demeure du Ciel".[56] The Idalian Queene, Venus, "Dame tresbelle [sic], agreable, puissante a merveilles" was seen not only as the goddess of love but as the mother of creation, "qui seme, remplit & comble de ces plâtureuses beneficences les creatures mortelles."[57] She was the symbol of fruitfulness and generation and ensured the succession of creatures. Her constant companions, the Graces, were a symbol of human harmony; indeed this is suggested by their dancing:

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52. The compendiums of mythographical figures used by Jonson, Charles Francis Wheeler's Classical Mythology in the Plays, Masques, and Poems of Ben Jonson (Princeton, 1938) and Allan H. Gilbert's, The Symbolic Persons in the Masques of Ben Jonson (Durham, (c) 1948) offer a ready means of reference and cross-reference; see also the articles by Talbert and Gordon for a symbolic interpretation of some of the masques.
53. Vincent Cartari, Les Images des Dieux Anciens (Lion, 1610), pp. 291-2; Cartari writes that her image "est couronnée des espis, & mesnes à l'entour queleques plantes de pauot, qui signifie fertilité" (p.294).
54. Ibid., p. 292.
55. Ibid., p. 676; see The Entertainment at Highgate, l. 68.
56. Noel Lecomte, Mythologie (Lyon, 1607) p. 300.
57. Lecomte, p. 351.

> Car comme Venus & Amour sont cause de la succession de la lignee, & par ce moyen, de la conservation du genre humain, les Graces aussi tiennent les hommes unis ensemble: car les plaisirs que tour à tour les hommes se font les uns aux autres, sont cause que l'un est agréable a l'autre, du moyen dequoy ils sont joincts ensemble du beau lien d'amitié, sans laquelle, certainement les hommes ne seroyent a comparer aux autres animaux, & seroyent moindres qu'iceux, les citez deviendroyent cavernes, voire s'aneantiroirent du tout. Et pour cette cause, pourroit-on dire quasi, de n'estre, qu'estans sur la terre vivre sans les Graces.[58]

Diana, another beauty, was less sociable: she was a huntress and fled from male conversation in order to protect her virginity;[59] yet, she was thought to help with childbirth.[60] Pallas, or Minerva, the goddess of prudence and inventress of all the arts, was also goddes of wisdom.[61] Her plumed cask was a symbol of her prudence: "Davantage on à [sic] couvert à ceste-cy la teste d'un heaume, pour nous signifier que l'homme prudent ne monstre pas toujours tout ce qu'il scait, & ne declare pas à un chascun son conseil & sa deliberation."[62] Juno was the goddess of riches,[63] and, being also the goddess of joy, puberty and marriage, she presided at deliveries.[64] She is usually depicted as seated in a high throne; her peacock which is significantly described as absent, was the symbol of the arrogance which frequently accompanies riches.[65]

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58. Cartari, p. 674.
59. Lecomte, pp. 244-5.
60. Ibid., p. 251.
61. Cartari, pp. 456-65.
62. Ibid., p. 460.
63. Ibid., p. 229.
64. Lecomte, p. 128.
65. Cartari, 229-30; see also Ripa, Iconologia (Padova, 1611), p. 30; and Hymenai, ll. 214-5: "JUNO, sitting in a Throne, supported by two beautifull Peacockes."

Jonson concludes the poem by describing Lady Wroth as an index of the potential of nature and as the restoration of the ideals of antiquity:

> So are you Natures Index, and restore,
> I'your selfe, all treasure lost of th'age before.

She is described, moreover, not only as an epitome of womankind but as a principle of order. Several different kinds of order are intimated: natural order in the allusions to Ceres, Diana, Flora, Venus, and Juno, all of whom were associated with the life cycle, with fertility, generation, birth and fruition; the ethical order by the symbols of chastity, prudence, and wisdom; the social order, by Ceres who invented laws, Pallas who invented the arts, and the beneficent harmony of Venus and the Graces. Ceres and Pallas were also associated with the forces and development of civilisation. It also appears that Jonson is describing an aristocratic ideal, not only by the graciousness of the poem, but by implying, in the image of Juno without the peacock, the privilege of wealth without the flaw of arrogance. Though a poem of compliment, it is also the depiction of idealized womanhood which is conceived as the principle of natural, ethical, and social order - the control - which is the mark of civilization.

This poem depends totally on the evocation of the past for its effect but the past is evoked, not so much to measure the present, as to enhance a compliment, and to define an ideal. In its device of using a woman to represent an ideal of order and harmony it bears a curious resemblance to Donne's Anniversaries; it is, however, more positive and concerned with ethical and social values than Donne's study of loss and decay. For even though it is in some measure a courtly exercise, it has implications which are serious and characteristic of Jonson's work, implications which arise from the conscious use of mythology and the past.

The use of the past as a standard is the basis of the frequent references to the myth of the golden age; in fact, the myth represents the most absolute standard drawn from the past. Hesiod seems to have been the first classical writer to describe the decline of man in terms of four ages with metallic ascriptions: a golden age, a silver, a bronze age of heroes, an iron age of sorrow: the present. Adapted by Vergil, it was given its locus classicus in Ovid's Metamorphosis. It became a commonplace in the Renaissance: in using it, Jonson was following one of the poetic conventions of his day; few of his contemporaries did not. Accounts and interpretations differ in many respects, but all agree that the golden age was one of perfection and harmony on the personal, social, and international plane.[66]

Though it depicted a remote and bygone era, the myth of the golden age often reflected the character of the poet and his age, for his use of it was always to some extent an expression of his own personality and values and in some measure a reaction against the problems and failures of contemporary life. Prof. Levin points out that, roughly speaking, "the golden age is all that the contemporary age is not. Consequently, any specification of the factors making for its initial beatitude comprises a revealing index of subsequent values and of the changing interests of other ages".[67] Because it was an ideal state and open to interpretation, Jonson could identify it with his own ideals and make it represent the qualities which he felt were lacking in contemporary life. It provided him with an apt image of perfection which could be related and set in contrast to the men and life of his own age.

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66. Harry Levin, The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance (London, 1970), pp. 3-25.
67. Levin, p. 11.

The variations played on the engaging theme of an ancient age of peace and fulfilment were numerous. It was envisaged and thus depicted by Virgil in his fourth eclogue and Spenser in the Garden of Adonis (FQ. III. vi. 29ff.) as a time of eternal spring, of an unceasing natural abundance.[68] It was thought to be characterized by the absence of boundaries and private property and the abolition of all strife for acquisition and possession; More's Utopia belongs to this tradition.[69] As described by Tasso in the Aminta it was a place of "free love" where the code was "s'ei piace, ei lice", which Jonson translates as "Nought that delights is sinne" (CR. V. iv. 630), and where the convention of feminine "honesty" could be disregarded. It had, on the other hand, been identified with the Garden of Eden, and associated with Christian beatitude.[70] It has even been given a setting, for Sannazaro's Arcadia had conflated the myth of the golden age with the pastoral genre.[71] Jonson, however, made little use of its numerous connotations and interpreted the golden age in terms of his own interests and values; for him it is largely an age of moral perfection, of vertue, justice, and social harmony.

The golden age, over which Saturn is thought to have presided, becomes such an ideal in a poem to Jonson's friend, Sir Benjamin Rudyerd (Ep. CXXII):

> If I could wish, for truth, and not for show,
> The aged SATURNE'S age, and rites to know;
> If I would strive to bring backe times, and trie
> The world's pure gold, and wise simplicitie;
> If I would vertue set, as shee was yong,
> And heare her speake with one, and her first tongue;
> If holiest friend-ship, naked to the touch,
> I would restore, and keepe it ever such;
> I need no other arts, but studie thee:
> Who prov'st, all these were, and againe may bee.

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68. See Levin, pp. 14,17,20-1, et passim.
69. See Levin, pp. 89-93.
70. See Levin, pp. 28-31 et passim.
71. Ibid., pp. 42-5; Jonson's pastoral poems, following the classical practice, do not suggest the myth, see Und. III and XXXVI.

Envisaged as an age of wise simplicity and of virtue and friendship, it is the measure of the value of a man's character and relationships with other men. The image is one of order and harmony on the personal and social plane. It is interesting that in the last line Jonson underlines the pertinence of the ideal for the present, by making explicit the theme which had been implied in the praise throughout the poem: that given the proper direction and effort such order and harmony were still possible to attain. Jonson does not employ the myth of the golden age for its own sake, or to evoke nostalgia for a lost age of innocence; its value for him was that it allowed him to suggest an absolute criterion, and to bring that criterion to bear on the subjects of his praise.

It is conceived in purely human terms; indeed, it becomes an image of the possibility of virtue. In a poem to Sir William Uvedale (Ep. CXXV), Jonson describes it as the full realization of man's nature and of his potential moral control: "UV.'DALE thou piece of the first times, a man/Made for what Nature could, or Vertue can." It is therefore a measure of human development and fulfilment.

Such a moral interpretation of the golden age was not peculiar to Jonson, but also characterized Spenser, a poet who was also concerned with human potential:

> But antique age, yet in the infancie
> Of time, did live then like an innocent,
> In simple truth and blamelesse chastitie,
> Ne then of guile had made experiment;
> But voide of vile and treacherous intent,
> Held vertue for its selfe in soveraine awe:
> Then loyall love had royall regiment,
> And each unto his lust did make a lawe,
> From all forbidden things his liking to withdraw.[72]
>
> (FQ. IV. viii, 30)

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72. The Faerie Queen, intro. J. W. Hales, Everyman's Library no. 444 (London and New York, 1910), II, 94.

For Jonson and Spenser, the golden age was one of perfect moral control. Professor Levin points out with regard to the above passage from Spenser that there is "a certain degree of tension here between liking and being forbidden, which is resolved by the exercise of self-control."[73] There is no such ambivalence in Jonson, whose depiction of virtue is devoid of the sensuousness and the denial of sensuousness which characterized Spenser. His presentation of virtue is clear, direct, and unambiguous.

Yet, there is a curious contradiction in Jonson's use of the golden age as an image of moral perfection. Jonsonian virtue depends on an evil world: it is essentially a positive reaction to negative circumstances. If harmony prevailed within and without man, there would be no need for the singular ability to withstand the vagaries of fortune. It seems necessary therefore to distinguish between the virtue which was inherent to the men of the ancient age, and that which could be acquired and exercised by the men of Jonson's age. Jonsonian virtue is an attempt to realise man's potential and recapture his former perfection in different, and difficult, circumstances.

Ideal relationships between men are determined by the virtue of justice; as virtue orders a man's inner self so that he is impervious to an inconstant fortune, justice establishes the due and equitable harmony with his fellow men. Justice was also a feature of the golden age. Saturn was usually associated with the virgin, Astraea, known to the Greeks as Dike, who was the goddess of justice.[74] She was the last goddess to abandon the earth; after men had become so wicked that she, symbol of justice, could no longer endure earthly life, she became Virgo, a star. Virgil's messianic Fourth Eclogue (ll. 4-45)

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73. Levin, p. 54.
74. Wheeler, pp. 106-7 and Levin, p. 15.

describes her return with Saturn to their place among men: "Iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna" (l. 6). Like Virgil, Jonson likes to imagine the age of justice returned; redeunt Saturna regna is a frequent theme, repeated in several masques: The King's Entertainment (esp. ll. 523-32), Prince Henries Barriers, (ll. 341-2), and most notably in The Golden Age Restor'd. In this last, Jove summons two allegorical figures, the Golden Age and Astraea, to return to earth like Saturn and Justice in Virgil's Eclogue. It is also exemplified in a poem to Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor.[75] (Ep. LXXIV). Praising his administration of justice, Jonson writes:

> The Virgin, long-since fled from earth, I see
> T'o'our times return'd, hath made her heaven in thee.

The image suggests Astraea's flight from earth to become a star culminating in making her haven/heaven in Egerton. The image, applied to a man who was concerned with dispensing justice and preserving the social order is apt, but it is apt not only because it is a suitable compliment, but also because it suggests Egerton's real importance in maintaining harmony among men.

Justice, of course, depended upon virtue, and Jonson, before making Egerton a symbol of justice, had described the ethical qualities which gave his judgements authority: integrity, fair-mindedness, wisdom, skill in the law, fidelity to his word and conscience. These are the prerequisites and basis of justice.

Another aspect of the Golden Age which Jonson singles out for attention was its appreciation of literature. It was after all the age of poets. Jonson, in 'The Famous Voyage,' describes the achievement of the former age as its bringing forth of poets. (Ep. CXXXIII, 19-20). Hence, when the golden age is restored, there will be a return to a

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75. Jonson praises his justice at Und. XXXI and XXXII.

suitable respect for the great poets of the past; its restoration in the Golden Age Restor'd leads to a literary revival. After Astraea has returned to earth, she summons the native English poets to take up their rightful places; perhaps Jonson is suggesting that justice includes the recognition of literary merit:

> You farre-fam'd spirits of this happie Ile,
> That, for your sacred songs have gain'd the stile
> Of PHOEBUS sons: whose notes the[y] aire aspire
> Of the'old Aegyptian, or the Thracian lyre,
> That Chaucer, Gower, Lidgate, Spenser hight,
> Put on your better flames, and larger light,
> To waite upon the age that shall your names new nourish
> Since vertue prest shall grow, and buried arts shall flourish.
>
> (ll. 113-20)

Jonson, incidentally, has nationalised the myth; it is Britain's ancient poets, not their classical prototypes, who are invoked.[76] After putting poetry under the protection of justice, he characteristically places her arm in arm with virtue: a conjunction which fixes the relationship of letters to the moral and social aspects of life.

Jonson, however, is usually more aware of the harsh realities and, in the light of the former age, constantly deplores the position of the arts in contemporary society. Poetry, he felt, especially suffered because of ignorance and neglect; "The time was, when men would learne, and study good things; not envie those that had them. Then men were had in price for learning: now, letters onely make men vile. He is upbraydingly call'd a Poet, as if it were a most contemptible Nick-name." (Disc. 278-82) Jonson's editors point out that Jonson has inserted the reference to poets being special victims of the general ignorance into a long passage taken from Scaliger, and remind us of its similarity to Ep. X, To My Lord Ignorant:

> Thou call'st me Poet, as a terme of shame;
> But I have my revenge made, in thy name.[77]

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76. Cf. Disc. 1796-1808.
77. H & S, xi, 220-1.

Poets suffered in consequence: "Poetry, in this latter age, hath proved but a mean Mistresse, to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her, and given their names up to her family". (Disc. 622-4). Jonson frequently makes a contrast between the esteem formerly given to poetry and its present estimation. Again, an attribute of the golden age provides Jonson with a means of expressing an ideal, in this case the due place of letters and men in society, and to contrast this ideal with the current situation.

There is in these references to the former recognition of the value of poetry a failure to distinguish clearly between the ideal attributes of the myth and the real position of poetry in the classical age. Jonson seems, indeed, deliberately to apply the ideal qualities of the myth to classical Greece and Rome. After having described, for example, how poets were of more esteem when Astraea still inhabited the earth he then shows how the classical poets gave immortality to their subjects: many more beautiful than Helen are forgotten; those who were valiant before the days of Achilles, or brave before Ajax, Idomen, and the other Greeks are forgotten because they "lack'd the sacred pen, could give/Like life unto 'hem" (For. XII, ll. 41-64). The line of thought associates the mythical golden age with the classical past. Though Jonson nowhere explicitly identifies them (and probably in his mind they were distinct), his hearkening after an ideal past tends to run them together. When he writes "It was not so of old" (Ung. V. XXXVIII, 13), he clearly is thinking of classical times, rather than mythical, because he describes the laborious apprenticeship necessary for poets, but he still intimates the golden age. This contributed to the idealization of the classical past.[78]

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78. Yet Jonson was aware of the difficulties of poets even in that age; witness Poetaster.

The myth of the golden age also provided Jonson with a particularly apt way of distinguishing and contrasting the values of the ideal and contemporary ages. Writing to the Countess of Rutland, he complains that values have changed and that the pursuit of gold has replaced the more noble ones of antiquity. After describing the power that the metal held over his contemporaries, he continues:

> whil'st gold beares all this sway,
> I, that have none (to send you) send you verse.
> A present, which (if elder wits reherse
> The truth of times) was once of more esteeme,
> Than this, our guilt, nor golden age can deem.
>
> (FOR. XII, 18-22)

This same contrast is again used in a poem to the Earl of Salisbury, where he offers the same gift, "what the golden age did hold/ A treasure, art: contemn'd in th' age of gold" (Ep. LXIIII). The pun on gold pinpoints in a word the contrast between an age characterized by moral excellence and a due appreciation of literature and an age which gives its attention to superficial and materialistic values. It serves to fix the difference between humanistic and commercial values, between the effort to acquire wealth and that to envisage and live life according to ideal standards.

The contrast between a golden age and an age of gold, and the consequent pun on guilt, were classical in origin. They were derived from Ovid:

> Aurea sunt vere nunc saecula: plurimus auro
> Venit honos; auro conciliatur amor.
>
> (Ars Amatoria, ii, 277-8)[79]

Jonson, however, applies it to his own age in a way which elucidates the character of contemporary life by contrasting his own humanistic values with the growing commercialism of his society. His was the age

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79. The Art of Love, trans. B. P. Moore (London and Glasgow, 1935), p. 76.

in which the practice of financial investment and speculation became common among the aristocracy, and the rising middle classes were establishing themselves by means of their commercial power as a potent force in society; one only has to think of the characters of Jonson's plays, those like Fitz-dottrell of The Divell is an Asse who aspired to quick wealth and the duchy of Drown'd-land by means of clever projects, to acquire a vivid impression of the commercial activity and excitement of the time.[80] Jonson uses the pun on gold to define and evaluate the nascent capitalism of his age, and, by implication, to contrast the grace, order and stability of traditional life with the feverish grasp for riches of the new era.

It is curious that the same "precious and ambiguous substance should be regarded as both a touchstone for goodness and the root of all evil."[81] This ambivalence is found throughout Jonson's work. On the one hand gold is the measure of the highest moral achivement; indeed, in classical times already "the Latin aureus comes to be the equivalent of optimus."[82] Jonson uses it to describe moral excellence:

> Men that are safe, and sure, in all they doe,
> Care not what trials they are put unto;
> They meet the fire, the Test, as Martyrs would;
> And though Opinion stampe them not, are gold.
>
> (Und. XLVII, ll. 1-4)

Gold here represents the Jonsonian concept of 'vertue'. The same indentification is made in the Ode to James, Earle of Desmond (Und. XXV), the unfortunate young Irishmen who spent most of his short life in confinement, where Jonson avers that true worth will outlive its trials:

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80. See L. C. Knights, Drama and Society for the relationship of individual plays to the economic life of the time.
81. Levin, p. 12.
82. Ibid., p. 11.

"Gold, that is perfect, will out-live the fire" (l. 45). Gold was thought to be incorruptible, the perfect metal, the only naturally pure substance: as Donne writes to Lady Bedford:

> And as no fire, nor rust can spend or waste
> One dramme of gold, but what was first shall last,
> Though it bee forc'd in water, earth, salt, aire,
> Expans'd in infinite, none will impaire.[83]

This fortunate property makes its application to moral excellence apt and justified, for nothing could taint or overthrow the virtuous man: "no ill can happen to a good man" (Disc. 9-10). On the other hand, Jonson criticizes those contemporaries who were "Enamor'd of their golden gyves" (For IIII, l. 24), and complains of the power of gold "for which, all vertue now is sold,/ And almost every vice." (For XII, 1-2). Gold, he contends, has banished justice from the world: man's greed for wealth has "put to flight ASTREA" (l. 24). For some, it justifies the jockeying for a position at court and opens all doors and eases all passage:

> Gold is a suitor, never tooke repulse,
> It carries Palme with it (where e're it goes)
> Respect, and observation; it uncovers
> The knottie heads of the most surly Groomes,
> Enforcing yron doores to yield it way,
> Were they as strong ram'd up as Aetna gates,
> It bends the hams of Gossip Vigilance,
> And makes her supple feete, as swift as winde.
> It thawes the frostiest, and most stiffe disdaine:
> Muffles the clearnesse of Election,
> Straines fancie unto foule Apostacie,
> And strikes the quickest-sighted Judgement blinde.
> Then why should we dispaire? Dispaire, Away:
> Where Gold's the Motive, women have no Nay.
>
> (Ung. V. III, ll. 5-8)

Again and again, Jonson deplores an ethic based on a gold standard. He celebrates an age when gold "ingots were better plac'd in earth" (For. XII, 24-5), and reaffirms the primary importance of learning; "the seaven-fold

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83. The Satires, epigrams and verse letters, ed. W. Milgate (Oxford, 1967), p. 95.

flower of Arte (more rich than gold)" (Ung. V. I).[84]

A longer and more comprehensive picture of the harmony which arises out of the concert of individual lives of virtue, is given in "To Penshurst" and "To Sir Robert Wroth," poems which depict the life of a rural society. The analogy between the life of these estates and the myth is made in the poem to Wroth after a catalogue of the bucolic pleasures to be found at Durants: the reposeful scenery, the seasonal hunting, the bountiful harvest, the mirth and cheer in the hall" as if in SATURNES raigne it were" (l. 50). The analogy is clinched in the couplet:

> Such, and no other was that age, of old
> Which boasts t'have had the head of gold.[85]

This is also implied, though no reference is made, in the poem to Penshurst; there, in fact, the hyperbolical description of nature suggests the easy natural abundance which was one of the usual attributes of the age of perfection. Post-lapsarian man was still thought to be the lord of nature and of all creatures but this did not eliminate the need to struggle for subsistence. Here, the element of struggle is largely omitted:

> Each banke doth yeeld thee coneyes; and the topps
> Fertile of wood, ASHORE, and SIDNEY'Scopps's,
> To crowne thy open table, doth provide
> The purpled pheasant, with the speckled side:
> The painted partrich lyes in every field,
> And, for thy messe, is willing to be kill'd.
> And if the high-swolne Medway faile thy dish,
> Thou hast thy ponds, which pay thee tribute fish,
> Fat, aged carps, that runne into thy net.

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84. The seven arts were Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy; see H & S, xi, 125.
85. This seems to be a conflation of two myths, that of the four ages described by Hesiod and Ovid, with Nebucadnezzar's dream of "a monstrous statue with its head of gold, its breast of silver, belly of brass, legs of iron, and feet of clay," which portended the declining succession of kingdoms for a long line of prophets extending from Daniel. (Daniel II, 51-5); see Levin, pp. 13-4.

> And pikes, now weary their owne kinde to eat,
> As loth, the second draught, or cast to stay,
> Officiously, at first, themselves betray.
> Bright eeles, that emulate them, and leape on land,
> Before the fisher, or into his hand.

While there are suggestions of the natural struggle, as when the Medway fails to provide them with fish, the picture of man's relationship with nature nonetheless is idealized, and the hyperbole is used to suggest the total harmony that prevails at Penshurst: nature orders herself to man's needs.

In spite of the idealization and the intimations of the age of gold, the poem is an accurate picture of the life of the times. The descriptions of the rural pleasures, of the relations between lord and tenants, and of the life of the master and members of the household which is common, with slightly different emphasis, to both of the poems represent a selection of realistic details from the life of a contemporary rural estate. The selection and the hyperbole and simplification which are evident in certain parts of the poems contribute to make an idealized picture which has at the same time a solid ground in reality.[86]

The ancient custom of housekeeping was disappearing in Jonson's time, and several royal proclamations were issued in the attempt to prevent the growing absenteeism as landlords began to prefer the attractions of London to their traditional duties on their estates.[87] Jonson's reference to it shows how his poem pertains not only to contemporary manners, but also to topical issues and social problems. Related to 'housekeeping' was the tradition of hospitality; and the liberal board of Penshurst is set in contrast to the niggardly tables to be found

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86. Cf. Parfitt, 'Jonson's Poetry', p. 29.
87. See Knight, pp. 97-102 and G. Walton, "The Tone of Ben Jonson's Poetry," in Metaphysical to Augustan: Studies in Tone and Sensibility in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1955), pp. 23-44, reprinted in Seventeenth Century English Poetry: Modern essays in criticism, ed. William R. Keast (New York, 1962), pp. 183-214; see esp. pp. 206-8.

elsewhere. Another tradition was the close association of the landlord with his tenants. The poem then is to some extent a plea for the conservation of a traditional mode of aristocratic life and relationship between the classes. In "To Penshurst", Jonson also glances at the practice of enclosures which had been also criticized by More:

> And though thy walls be of the countrey stone,
> They'are rear'd with no man's ruine, no mans grone,
> There's none, that dwell about them, wish them downe.
> (ll. 45-7)

The great families of the period were consolidating their positions by constructing grand houses, such as the earl of Salisbury's Hatfield House, and Suffolk's Audley End, which often necessitated the enclosure of vast tracts of common land which deprived many of their livelihood.[88] Jonson describes Penshurst and Durants as the representative of an older order, a sign of permanence and security, an image of universal values for his own age.

Jonson's allusions to the golden age usually include such a contrast with the prevalent standards, and this is vividly drawn in the poem to Wroth. The character of Sir Robert and the life of his estate are set in contrast to the pride, avarice and vain and frenetic activity of society:

> Let others watch in guiltie armes, and stand
> The furie of a rash command,
> Goe enter breaches, meet the cannons rage,
> That they may sleepe with scarres in age.
> And shew their feathers shot, and cullors torne,
> And brag, that they were therefore borne.
> Let this man sweat, and wrangle at the barre,
> For every price, in every jarre,
> And change possessions, oftner with his breath,
> Then either money, warre, or death:
> Let him, then hardest sires, more disinherit,
> And each where boast it as his merit,
> To blow up orphanes, widdowes, and their states;
> And thinke his power doth equall Fates.

88. See David Matthew, The Jacobean Age (London, 1938), pp. 44-6, 60-1, 166-7; for enclosures, see Knights, pp. 87-95.

Let that goe heape a masse of wretched wealth,
  Purchas'd by rapine, worse than stealth,
And brooding o're it sit, with broadest eyes,
  Not going good, scarse when he dyes.
Let thousands more goe flatter vice, and winne,
  By being organes to great sinne,
Get place, and honor, and be glad to keepe
  The secrets, that shall breake their sleepe:
And, so they ride in purple, eate in plate,
  Though poyson, thinke it a great fate.

(ll. 67-90)

Though no such explicit contrast is made in the poem to Penshurst, it is adumbrated throughout the poem.[89]

Both of these poems adapt to the English countryside and the Jacobean scene, a genre which had been developed by classical writers to celebrate the bucolic pleasures of their own time and place. Jonson also employs the myth of the golden age in a way which enhances the values and the image of the good life. Jonson did more, however, than simply anglicise the genre and the myth, for he used it to convey Renaissance social values.

These poems are in the tradition of works such as More's Utopia, Sidney's Arcadia, and Spenser's Faerie Queene, which present an image of social ideals. They are, of course, much more restricted in scope than any of these, and exclude entirely the narrative element, but they are like the others the images of a society. A comparison with More's Utopia shows its heritage. Both More and Jonson are concerned with the social ideals of Renaissance humanism, and attempt to define their ideal by describing a discrete locality which is set in contrast to the world that surrounds it. Within that limited area virtue and harmony prevail. More's account, however, is of a far-off fictional land, to which he gives reality by Hythloday's first person

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89. See ll. 1-5, 45-8, 61-75, 90-3, 161-2.

narration. Jonson sets his ideal in rural England; his presentation is both more realistic and immediate than More's. While More is primarily concerned to depict his ideal, Jonson is concerned to exemplify it in contemporary life. The catalogue of current abuses in the poem to Wroth recalls More's criticism of the social, legal and economic injustices of his own day, but Jonson is more pointedly topical and distinctly visualized. The values held by More and Jonson are in many respects the same, but while More's fictional picture of an ideal society was meant to be applied to Tudor England, Jonson described the ideal in terms of Stuart society. He has gone one step further than More by making an image of real life intimate the ideal.

The essential difference between More and Jonson is in the way each used his humanistic culture. Both had absorbed Renaissance values though Jonson was closer to its sources in the Classics. Both had to some extent a European outlook. Yet each made use of their heritage in a way consistent with the particular endeavours of his own age. More's work, written in Latin and actually composed in Flanders was addressed to a European audience; the movement of the Renaissance had not yet become divided along religious and nationalistic lines. By Jonson's time, humanistic culture had already been to some extent anglicized by the work of such men as Elyot, Sidney, and Spenser who had written in English for a national audience. Yet, like More, both Sidney and Spenser had presented fictional accounts which were meant to be applied to contemporary life. By presenting the same values in terms of contemporary life, Jonson advances a further step in the assimilation in England of Renaissance culture.

This was the aim and the achievement of his work. His study of the past was undertaken to acquire wisdom and the most apt and flexible means of expressing it. It was an effort to conserve the best

of what had gone before. But it was conservative only because it looked to the past for its models at a time when Antiquity actually did represent the highest literary achievement, and not because of any reverence for the past for its own sake, or any interest to check the forces of change or development. Jonson transformed what he took from the past to suit his own needs and purposes; he was entirely without servility or any sense of inferiority; "He invades Authors like a monarch," wrote Dryden, "and what would be theft in other Poets, is onely victory in him".[90] What he took from the past, whether a code of values, a theory of genre, an apt phrase or expression, he transformed completely so that it could serve the needs of the present.

To do this, Jonson also used the past as a standard with which he could measure the present, but it was not an absolute standard. Having recognized the classical age as the highest development of certain aspects of life, and having accepted the desirability that these be restored, the men of the Renaissance had to measure themselves against the past until they felt they had assimilated and equalled its achievement. It is quite natural therefore that they should go to the previous age to evaluate the present. And it is equally natural that Jonson should have scrutinized the present in the light of the past.

It is significant that Jonson's work reveals several attitudes to the past. With regard to the epigram, he clearly saw the superiority of the classical achievement, and, consequently, deprecated the inferior imitations which he found in English, and sought himself to elevate the native genre to the height of the classical original. At

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90. Of Dramatick Poesie, pp. 49-50.

the same time, however, he recognised with admirable judgement that both Shakespeare and Bacon had in their way surpassed the Ancients, and that England had already produced many who were comparable to the classical fathers (Disc. 899-923). Similarly, he envisaged some of his contemporaries as embodying many of the ideals of the past, those ideals which had been expressed by the figures of mythography and the myth of the golden age. Never does he suggest that classical ethical or literary values, or indeed any aspect of the past achievement, could not be reproduced, equalled, or surpassed by the men of his own age.

His work was, in sum, to convert the classical heritage into a form which could be of value to his own age, by relating classical discoveries to contemporary life, by exploiting on the basis of the classical example the potential of the English language for masterful expression, by employing genres which had been refined by the ancients to a high level of elegance and urbanity, by employing all of these resources to depict English situations and to convey Renaissance values. His whole effort, as the successor of Sidney and of all those since More who had attempted to bring classical and Renaissance culture home to England, was to make the classical discoveries accessible and meaningful to the men of seventeenth century England.

V

"Books and Friends"

Jonson was able to relate the values drawn from the Ancients to his own society by his deliberate use of his friends, his patrons, and the leading figures of his age. What he derived from the Renaissance is at points reinforced by what he himself fetched from the Ancients; but this is itself typical of the Renaissance. What he took from study is constantly modified by his observations of his own society. The part played by his own character and personality in what he undertook and achieved was, of course, important, but it was not the self that Jonson sought to express in his poetry. The values to which he gave expression were for him as for many men of the Renaissance central, fundamental, essential to poetry. The business of poetry was to convey these as effectively as possible to the men of the age.

Since Jonson's poems are largely topical, they have a close association with the time of their composition. The question of dating is important. Jonson's poetry also represents work done over more than thirty years in changing circumstances, so that it is equally important to chart his course throughout this time in order to see how he adapted his principles to the contingencies of life. The publication of his Workes in 1616 marked the end of a specific period in Jonson's life, and will serve as a useful if somewhat artificial limit to the first period of his poetry. After sending

this work to the press in 1612, Jonson rested, or, at least, applied himself to interests other than poetry. He travelled. In 1612-13 he was in France, as tutor to Sir Walter Raleigh's son; in 1618-19, he undertook his pedestrian journey to Scotland; in 1619, he went to Oxford to receive an honorary degree. For a time he abandoned drama: after The Devil is an Ass (1616), he produced no new play until The Staple of News (1626). During this period, however, he wrote some of his greatest masques, producing between 1614 and 1618 one and sometimes two of them yearly. The publication of his work then coincides with an interruption of the succession of plays and poetry which he had been producing since just before the turn of the century.

Conveniently, the years leading up to the publication of the Workes were also the period of Jonson's greatest dramatic success, the acme of which was from Volpone in 1606 to The Alchemist in 1610; Bartholomew Fayre, the last of Jonson's undisputed best plays, was presented in 1614, following the failure of Catiline in 1611.

One fact about the poetry of this early period is immediately striking: the predominance of the epigram. Jonson did work in other genres, but The Forest, which includes lyrics, odes, and epistles, contains fewer poems, and is considerably shorter than the Epigrammes. In addition to these, Jonson had composed several odes, which he did not publish in 1616: that to the Earl of Desmond (Und. XXV) written before 1600, the "Allegorical Ode" (Und.V.VI) prefixed to Hugh Holland's Pancharis in 1603; others, which were included in Underwoods, such as the "Ode to Himself" (Und. XXIII), "High spirited friend" (Und. XXVI), and the Celia ode (Und. XXVII) might also have been completed before that date.[1] Jonson also wrote several sonnets, even

1. The "Ode to Himself" (Und. XXIII) has affinities with the "Apologeticall Dialogue", which was spoken on the stage when Poetaster was presented in 1601, see H & S, IV, 193. The Celia ode (Und. XXVII) may be connected with the Celia poems in The Forest (V, VI, VII). See H & S, II, 399, and XI, 47.

though he "cursed petrarch for redacting Verses to Sonnets, which he said were like that Tirrants bed, wher some who were too short were racked, others too long cut short". (Convers. 60-3). Some of his sonnets were definitely written before 1612: the poems on Breton's Melancholike humours of the Minde in Generall (Unq. V. II), and two epigrams in sonnet form, the fifty sixth of the Epigrammes and the poem of Lord Burleigh (Und. XXX), written 1608-12. Despite such experiments, however, the bulk of Jonson's non-dramatic output for this period consists of epigrams. In his dedication to Pembroke is Jonson's well-known description of them as the 'ripest' of his studies. At this stage he evidently regarded the epigrams with especial seriousness.

This prominence of the epigram suggests that after some initial experimentation in different genres, Jonson settled on that form because he felt that it was most consistent with what he had to say. In the following discussion, I shall attempt to show how the form of epigram which Jonson developed enabled him to give expression to his ideals, and how it was admirably suited to the task of relating his values to the contemporary world.

Jonson's poetry is addressed both to those who shared his values and those who ignored them. Yet, though he directed his teaching to all men, it was directed in a particular way to those who shared his interests and ideals. This is apparent in the large number of friends and associates who figure in his epigrams. His pictures of them are in striking contrast to the portraits of folly and ignorance for which he is well-known. While Jonson often worked with the spirit of a noble mission in the face of a perverse society, he also wrote in a spirit of fraternity to his friends and colleagues. They were fellows in the common search for and propagation of truth.

The poems which Jonson wrote to his friends are concerned with defining the value and the moral basis of character, friendship and letters. They generally take an ethical point of view, for even those poems in which the emphasis is literary are concerned with Truth and the good life. Whether they set out to teach or to praise, whether they are hortatory or descriptive, they expound an understanding of man and his actions which is characteristic of the Renaissance. The most clear expositions of these values are the hortatory poems written to young friends or the younger members of the families with which Jonson was associated, such as the Roe brothers and the new generation of Sidneys (For. XIV); much later he wrote in the same vein to the young children of Lady Venetia Digby (Und. LXXIV. 8).

One of three brothers who were Jonson's friends, Sir Thomas Roe (1581-1644) had achieved popularity in the court and became a favourite of Prince Henry and Princess Elizabeth.[2] His relative youth and his position in society led Jonson to write him poems which were admonitory in spirit and which were an application of his values to Roe's particular situation. Jonson's two epigrams to Roe expound several related themes which are central to Jonson's understanding of man and society.

The first of the poems defines an ideal of character, the basis of all human action, and consequently of Jonson's ideal of man:

> Thou has begun well, Roe, which stand well too,
> And I know nothing more thou hast to doo.
> He that is round within himselfe, and streight,
> Need seeke no other strength, no other height;
> Fortune upon him breakes her selfe, if ill,
> And what would hurt his vertue makes it still.
> That thou at once, then, nobly maist defend
> With thine own course the judgement of thy friend,
> Be alwayes to thy gather'd selfe the same:

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2. For Jonson's relations with the Roes see H & S, I, 223-31.

> And studie conscience, more then thou would'st fame.
> Though both be good, the latter yet is worst,
> And ever is ill got without the first.
>
> (Ep. XCVIII).

The various aspects of the Stoic ideal are clearly set out in precise images of integrity, self-sufficiency, constancy and independence. The images, "round within himselfe" and "gather'd selfe" suggest the wholeness and the moral control of the man whose reason dominates his passions.[3] This is what Jonson means by "vertue". It is a purely ethical concept, and excludes qualities which we would associate with personality rather than with character, such as graciousness, liveliness, etc. This is a strictly ethical picture of the ideal man.

One image suggests a further connection; the word "studie" here applied to conscience points to learning, and indeed in the poem immediately following, Jonson goes on to consider this other apsect of his ideals:

> That thou hast kept thy love, encreast thy will,
> Better'd thy trust to letters; that thy skill;
> Hast taught thy selfe worthy thy pen to tread,
> And that to write things worthy to be read:
> How much of great example wert thou, ROE,
> If time to facts, as unto men would owe?
> But much it now availes, what's done, of whom:
> The selfe-same deeds, as diversely they come,
> From place, or fortune, are made high, or low,
> And even the praisers judgement suffers so.
> Well, though thy name lesse then our great ones bee,
> Thy fact is more: let truth encourage thee.
>
> (Ep. XCIX)

The first poem had examined the relationship of a man to himself, and described virtues which were private and personal. The second poem moves on to more social virtues, and follows as a consequence of the first. The transition between the two is formed by the reference to letters; by increasing his knowledge and skill in them, Roe has acquired

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3. See Hilberry, Ben Jonson's Ethics.

the ability to communicate his own discoveries to others. His character,-or rather his pursuit of an ideal of character, is, however, the first requirement because it is the basis of all human action. After considering Roe's character and his acquisition of literary skill, Jonson reflects on the society which, unfortunately, does not share his humanistic ideals, and renders tribute on the basis of the name and place of the doer rather than on the value of the deed itself; there, men are not measured by the strict and sufficient Stoic ideals but by the superficial standards of fortune. Jonson is suggesting the conflict between his humanistic ideals and the current values of his society, between the few who appreciated learning and the many who ignored it.

In these two poems, Jonson has defined his ideals of character and literature, and related them to contemporary society. He has said much in little, for in two short poems he has established, from the point of view of his own brand of humanism, the value of the individual and his relationship with society. Brevity was one of the primary attributes of the epigram and the first quality which Jonson himself preferred in the epistolary style and, indeed, poetic style generally (Disc. 2192-2236).[4] Bringing together solidity of content and brevity of expression, Jonson wrote to Selden,

> I know to whom I write. Here, I am sure,
> Though I am short, I cannot be obscure:
> Lesse shall I for the Art or dressing care,
> Truth, and the Graces best, when naked are.
>
> (For. XIV, ll. 1-4)

Jonson therefore in some measure identified brevity with a fitting presentation of Truth. The epigram permitted Jonson to be trenchant:

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4. Trimpi, pp. 55-9, 63-6, 166-90; Hudson, pp. 6-7, 18-9; Whipple, pp. 281-5.

to go straightaway to the core of his meaning. In the poems to Roe Jonson wastes no time in preliminaries, but goes directly to the elucidation of the moral content of the subject; thus, from Roe's life and actions he draws universal principles appertaining to the individual, to literature, and to society. This grasp of the essential is conveyed briefly, clearly, and concisely: perspicuity was the second quality of style which Jonson required (ll. 2237-77). As for the third quality, vigor, which Jonson described as "Life, and Quicknesse," there is in the assurance, the moral conviction, and the economy of language a strength and vigor that is both intellectual and linguistic (ll. 2378-82). It is clear that Jonson was thinking of his audience and of the fourth requirement "descretio" or decorum, when seeking to convey his meaning in such clear and cogent fashion (ll. 2283-9).

The epigram also permitted Jonson to offer striking images of his ideals; their trenchancy is, however, not so much a tour de force as the most apt and consumate presentation of Jonson's poetic and ethical values. It permitted a particularly effective presentation, for Sidney had emphasised the persuasive power of the image as opposed to the exposition of moral values (p. 107). By depicting Roe, Jonson was able to praise him for genuine achisvement and, at the same time, expound for the benefit of others moral values which were essential for the good life. There is also a strong vein of exhortation and encouragement directed both at the subject and the audience. Many elements are brought together in the poem, but the depiction of the subject and the ideal is perfectly integrated in the image which is in turn perfectly contained by the epigram.

It was undoubtedly the potential of the epigram for trenchancy and effectiveness and for bringing together in a single image elements of the real and the ideal, elements of praise and

instruction, that gave rise to Jonson's high regard for his work in this genre. He found it especially amenable to the expression of his ideal of man in accordance with the stylistic qualities he required.

A yet more consumate realization of Jonson's ideals than Sir Thomas Roe was achieved by Sir Edward Herbert (1583-1648). He was Jonson's friend, and in 1604 had commended his Art of Poetry (Converse. 85-8); in 1608 he had addressed a satire to Jonson.[5] Herbert also gave Jonson a copy of Martin de Roa's Singularum Locarum ac Rerum (Cordova, 1600) which Jonson inscribed "Ex dono Ed. Herberti Equites Amiciss. Doctiss".[6] He was learned and accomplished; he had been taught Greek, Latin and logic at Oxford, had taught himself French, Italian and Spanish, and become proficient in music, riding and fencing. He made a successful foreign tour in 1608-9. In the campaigns of 1610 in the Netherlands, he had demonstrated his courage. By 1610, so high was Herbert in the public esteem that copies of his portrait were in great demand; clearly, he had come to represent like Sidney many of the values of his age.[7]

The poem to Herbert (Ep CVI) reflects the breadth of his accomplishments and his place in the popular estimation:

> If men get name, for some one vertue: Then,
> What man art thou, that art so many men,
> All-vertuous HERBERT! on whose every part
> Truth might spend all her voyce, Fame all her art.
> Whether thy learning they would take, or wit,
> Or valour, or thy judgement seasoning it,
> Thy standing upright to thy selfe, thy ends
> Like straight, thy pietie to God, and friends:
> Their latter praise would still the greatest bee,
> And yet, they, all together, lesse than thee.

Jonson depicts Herbert as a man who embodies all of his ideals: integrity, constancy, learning, intelligence, judgement, valour, and devotion to

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5. Occasional Verses (1665; facsimile rpt. Menston, 1969), pp. 14-6, 19-20.
6. H & S, I, 270.
7. After the composition of this epigram, Herbert achieved yet further distinction; in 1619, he became ambassador to France and in 1624 published his chief philosophical work De Veritate.

his friends and to God. Indeed, it is particularly his friends who broadcast Herbert's vertues because they are in the best position to know them. Yet, all they could say about him is less than he is in person. The poem to Herbert is, in keeping with its subject, a consumate image of Jonson's ideals, and brings together many themes which are discussed separately elsewhere but which are parts of a single ideal of man. Their realization altogether in one man enables Jonson to present a comprehensive and unified image of his values.

The relationship of these values to contemporary society is made more explicit in a poem to Sir Thomas Overbury (1581-1613). He was, according to a near-contemporary historian, "a man of parts and abilities"[8] and had received a B.A. at Oxford (1598) where he had acquired great proficiency in logic and philosophy, before going on to the Middle Temple. He had travelled abroad. Both Fuller and Wood agree, in almost identical words, that Overbury had "attained to be a most accomplished gentleman, which the happiness of his Pen, both in Poetry and Prose doth declare." Fuller also suggests, without giving credit to the work of Joseph Hall, that Overbury was "the first writer of Characters of our Nation, so far as I have observed". His friendship with Robert Carr, whom he had first met in Scotland in 1601, led to entry into the court circle; Carr "perceiving him to be a person of good parts and abilities, and withal sober and studious" made him his confidante, procured for him a knighthood in 1608, and enabled him to enjoy a position of power and influence.[9]

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8. Arthur Wilson, The History of Great Britain (London, 1653) p. 66.
9. Thomas Fuller, The History of the Worthies of England (London, 1662) p. 360 and Anthony à Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis (London, 1691), i, 330-1; the words are Fuller's.

Overbury's achievements and prominence in the court led Jonson to celebrate him as the representative of values not often found there:

> So PHŒBUS makes me worthy of his bayes,
> As but to speake thee, OVERBURY, is praise:
> So, where thou liv'st, thou mak'st life understook!
> Where, what makes others great, doth keepe thee good!
> I thinke, the Fate of court thy comming crav'd,
> That the wit there, and manners might be sav'd:
> For since, what ignorance, what pride is fled!
> And letters, and humanitie in the stead!
> Repent thee not of thy faire precedent,
> Could make such men, and such a place repent:
> Nor may' any feare, to loose of their degree,
> Who' in such ambition can but follow thee.
>
> (Ep. CXIII)

Overbury has given witness to the values of learning and the good life in a court usually dominated by pride and ignorance, and consequently has been able to give it a truer understanding of life; the phrase "thou mak'st life understood" suggests the rational basis of Jonson's ideals. In praising Overbury, Jonson is celebrating the accomplishment of a man who shared and deomonstrated his own values and who was able to further them in a usually hostile environment. Overbury is a colleague in the search for and propagation of Truth.[10]

This sense of community is found throughout Jonson's work in the form of an address or appeal to a particular part of his audience. His early plays are addressed to the intellectual part of his audience, the young men from the Inns of Court to whom he dedicated Every Man out of his Humour, and from the universities, to whom he dedicated Volpone. He often distinguished between the learned and the ignorant, or the gentleman and the common sort in the audience, and before his plays he placed with great seriousness addresses to the "Pretender" and the

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10. For Jonson's later relationship with Overbury see below.

"Understander", the "reader in ordinarie" and the "Reader extraordinary".[11] It was this intellectual part of the audience that was meant to understand the historical accuracy of Sejanus and Catiline, and the point and erudition of Poetaster. At the failure of Sejanus, fellow men of letters like George Chapman, Hugh Holland, Sir Thomas Roe, John Marston, William Strachey, Edmond Bolton and others rallied to Jonson's support and prefixed their commendatory verses to the quarto edition of the play which appeared in 1605, two years after its unsuccessful performance.[12] With Catiline, however, even this part of the audience had failed to give its wonted support.

Jonson's poems were undoubtedly also addressed to this minority. They contain the same contrast between the learned and the ignorant, the same appeal to the knowledgeable critics and contempt for the unlearned ones. The literary and ethical values which Jonson maintained were those of an educated society, and most of the people he praises in his poetry had undergone a conventional education in one of the universities, or the Inns of Court; most often, they had progressed from one to the other, from a grounding in the liberal arts to the study of the law, which provided an education which was both liberal and practical. Among these were Christopher Brooke and John Donne (the former was at Cambridge and the latter at Oxford, but they shared a chamber at Lincoln's Inn), William Browne (Oxford and Clifford's Inn), Francis and John Beaumont (Oxford and the Inner Temple), as well as others. These were typical of the educated and sophisticated part of Jonson's audience.

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11. See the addresses before The Alchemist and Catiline, and the dedication to The Newe Inne; see also H & S, I, 22-4.
12. H & S, I, 36-7.

They were also his friends and society. A study of the literature of the period reveals the close association of men of literary and scholarly tastes. Among the great names of the period who were Jonson's personal friends were Shakespeare, Donne, Bacon, Selden, Cotton, Beaumont, and Chapman, not to mention his patrons and numerous disciples who will be discussed below. Among these, there were amateurs as well as "professional" poets, but all were united by a serious interest in literature or scholarship. Their sense of community is illustrated by Jonson's remark to Drummond, that Markham "was not of the number of the Faithfull. i. [i.e.] Poets and but a base fellow." (Convers. 166-7)

This coterie of literati gathered together in numerous societies. They assembled in Sir Robert Cotton's famous library, where Jonson may have first met Bacon.[13] Jonson was a member of a group which, according to Coryat, met on the first Friday of every month at the Mermaid Tavern in Bread St., and which also included Sir Robert Cotton, John Donne, Richard Martyn, Christopher Brooke, Inigo Jones, Hugh Holland, and, it has always been assumed without sufficient evidence, Shakespeare.[14] Later, there were 'lyric feasts' at the Sun, the Dog, the Triple Tun, and above all at the old Devil Tavern, where Jonson and his coterie gathered at the upper chamber known as the 'Apollo'.[15] More serious and less successful assemblies were also contemplated: Ben Jonson was included among the list of members in Edmond Bolton's proposed 'Academ Roial,' or 'College of

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13. H & S, I, 35.
14. Jonson is not named among those who were expected at the Mitre for a "Convivium Philosophicum", on Sept. 2, probably in the year 1611; they included many of those who later met at the Mermaid; see I. A. Shapiro, "The Mermaid Club," MLR, XLV (1950), 61-7; see also H & S, I. 49-51.
15. H & S, I. 85.

Honour,' the establishment of which was discussed from 1617 until the end of James' reign. After 1628, when Jonson's stroke confined him first to his chamber, and then to his bed, his room in Westminster became a centre of learning and letters.[16] It is quite understandable that men of similar tastes and interests should assemble wherever feasible. Jonson perhaps was responsible for transferring the Renaissance preference for discussion in a pleasant garden, as in The Courtier, and Utopia, to the Tavern; that he did finally bring it to his own bedside is a tribute to his position among these men of learning.

These friendships based on common humanistic values played an important part in maintaining and furthering the order of society.[17] The association of good men who were devoted to moral and literary ideals and willing to go through hardship in order to defend and promote them was one of the basic units and strengths of a society; we have only to recall the importance of friendship in Sidney's Arcadia, and in Spenser's Faery Queene. It is important to remember that true friendship could only exist between good men, and that it had an important place in the natural order and in the humanistic view of the good life: "he seemeth to take the sun from the world," wrote Elyot, "that taketh friendship from a man's life."[18] Yet, friendship was more than personal, for it was an important social virtue, on which depended the well-being of the whole community. These literary associations formed a leadership which attempted to spread its ideals of learning and virtue throughout the whole of society.

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16. H & S, I, 103.
17. See F. Caspari, Humanism and the Social Order in Tudor England, (Chicago, 1954), pp. 96-7, 165, 180-1; and Hugh Maclean, 'Ben Jonson's Poems,' op. cit., pp. 45-51.
18. Governour, p. 133.

Jonson often relates literature and friendship. He praises Sir Henry Goodyere for his 'well-made choise of friends, and bookes' (Ep. LXXVI); among the former was Donne. He praises the Countess of Rutland for making her books her friends (Und. 1). In giving the Countess of Bedford a copy of Donne's satires, he writes: 'Rare poems ask rare friends' (Ep. XCIIII).[19] These connections are not accidental, and are entirely consistent with Jonson's basic literary and ethical ideals. Both books and friends required the same careful selection and just appreciation. There was an obligation to learn to benefit from friendship; it is because he has something to teach them, or they have something to teach others that Jonson's friends find their way into his poetry.

A poem to Francis Beaumont (1584? - 1616) exemplifies the mutual esteem which could exist between men of letters:

> How I doe love thee BEAUMONT, and the Muse,
> That unto me dost such religion use!
> How I doe feare my selfe, that am not worth
> The least indulgent thought thy pen drops forth!
> At once thou mak'st me happie, and unmak'st;
> And giving largely to me, more thou tak'st.
> What fate is mine, that so it selfe bereaves?
> What art is thine, that so thy friend deceives?
> When even there, where most thou praysest mee,
> For writing better, I must envie thee.
>
> Ep. LV

Herford and Simpson suggest that this poem was written in answer to Beaumont's famous epistle to Jonson from the country, 'M. Francis Beaumont's Letter to Ben Jonson written before he and Master Fletcher came to London', in which Beaumont had recalled the conviviality of the Mermaid, and concluded with a tribute to Jonson's friendship:

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19. Jonson makes a similar connection between friends and books at Ung. V. XXI.

'twill once againe
Bring mee to thee, who wilt make smooth & plaine
The way of knowledge for mee, and then I
who' have noe good in mee, but simplicitye,
Know that it will my greatest comfort bee
T'acknowledge all the rest to Come from thee.[20]

This poem, a recognition of Jonson's help in the pursuit of Truth and learning, is not the only testimony of Beaumont's regard and friendship, for he also prefixed commendatory verses to the Quartos of Volpone (1607) and Catiline (1611), and the folio edition of Epicoene (1616).

Jonson's poem to Beaumont is a poem about Beaumont's respect for him. It exemplifies within itself the exchange of affection and commendation which took place between the poets. Though Jonson remarked to Drummond that Beaumont, who had died in 1616 "loved too much himself & his own verses" (Convers. 154), his criticism of his friend does not detract from this evidence of their mutual esteem. Jonson seems to have retained a resolute detachment in evaluating his friends and was as quick with censure as he was generous with applause. Nor is it to be assumed that such cordiality prevailed in all of Jonson's relationships with fellow poets. Several of his bitter and long-lived feuds with other artists are well-known: his altercation with the play-wrights Marston and Dekker consumed much of his energy from 1599 to 1601;[21] his quarrel with Inigo Jones which may have commenced as early as 1612 was still vehement in 1631.[22] Nor was Jonson always sympathetic to other writers and their work. His dicti pronounced in rather pontifical fashion to the impressionable Drummond are often unkind and unsparing: "that Sharpham Day, Dicker were all Rogues and that Minshew was one", that "Abram Francis in his English Hexameters was a Foole",

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20. H & S, XI, 374-7; see also pp. 10-1.
21. H & S, I, 24-31.
22. H & S, I, 61-2, 96-8.

and that Markham, Day and Middleton, were base fellows. (Convers. 51-4, 166-8). He also related that "Daniel was at Jealousies with him", that "Drayton feared him, and he [Jonson] esteemed not of him," and that he "beate Marston and tooke his pistoll from him" (Convers. 152-3, 160). These animosities were based on both personal and literary differences, and took little account of common ideals or the fellowship of men of letters. Clearly, these values could not always sustain a joint effort and mutual cordiality between poets.

Yet, though these literary feuds frequently found their way into Jonson's drama and his conversations with Drummond, they are less evident in his Epigrammes and The Forest. Swipes at Daniel, at Drayton and possibly at Inigo Jones, John Marston, and Henry Parrot have been identified, but here, his friends receive the greater attention.[23]

Jonson's close association with John Donne (1572-1631) is evident both from his poetry and his extant remarks to Drummond; three epigrams are concerned with Donne, though one of them is not actually addressed to him. He is the first contemporary poet to be mentioned in the Epigrammes. The points of contact between Jonson and Donne were numerous. They shared much of their society: Christopher Brooke, Richard Martin, Sir Robert Cotton, Hugh Holland, Sir Henry Goodyere, Sir Francis Bacon, and Sir Edward Herbert were among their mutual friends; and Lady Bedford and Lord Egerton, their patrons. Both of them, as well as most of their friends, frequented the Mermaid. An extant letter from Jonson to Donne shows how the latter intervened on

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23. Both Daniel and Drayton have been suggested as the "better verser" of For XII, ll. 65-70 (H & S, XI, 45); and Jones as the inspiration of Ep. CXV and CXXIX addressed to "Mime" and "The Town's Honest Man" (H & S, XI, 26, 28); Marston has been suggested as the 'Play-wright' of Ep. LXVIII (H & S, XI, 12), and Henry Parrot, the "Court Parrat" of Ep. LXXI see H & S, XI, 13.

Jonson's behalf when he had offended a lady, probably the Countess of Bedford; a letter from Donne to Goodyere shows Donne once more intervening on behalf of his friend.[24]

Other known contacts between Jonson and Donne testify to their close association. To Drummond, Jonson probably spoke more of Donne than of any other, and his knowledgeable remarks suggest their intimacy. He revealed to his eager listener that Donne's maternal grandfather was Heywood the Epigrammatist (Convers. ll. 194-5), and that in his last preface to Horace's Art of Poetry he had meant Criticus to be Donne (ll 82-5); he explained to Drummond the 'conceit' and general purpose of Donne's 'Metempsychosis' of which "he never wrotte but one sheet" and that Donne "now since he was made Doctor repenteth highlie & seeketh to destroy all his poems" (ll. 130-7). Jonson also recalled a frank exchange of criticism in which he had told Donne that if the 'Anniversary' had described the Virgin Mary, 'it had been something' to which Donne replied that he had described the "Idea of a Woman and not as she was"; Jonson's final opinion was that it was "profane and full of Blasphemies" (ll. 43-8). He also related that Donne had told him that he had written his Epitaph on Prince Henry "to match Sir Ed. Herbert in obscurenesse" (ll. 125-7). Clearly, Jonson and Donne often "talked shop" together. This literary exchange is also demonstrated by Donne's commendatory poem, addressed to "Amicissimo & meritissimo BEN: JONSON", on Volpone, published in the 1605 quarto edition.

Jonson's relationship with John Donne exemplifies the dual aspect of Jonson's attitude to books and friends: it was both

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24. H & S, I, 203.

selective and critical. Their friendship was personal, but Jonson reveals both respect and detachment in his evaluation of Donne's work. The evidence of his respect is familiar. Drummond records that "he esteemeth John Done the first poet in the World in some things", that he had by heart Donne's 'The Bracelet' and 'The Calm', and "affirmeth Done to have written all his best pieces err he was 25 years old" (Convers. 117-22).[25] Another well-known tribute to Donne singles out the early work for special praise:

> DONNE, the delight of PHOEBUS, and each Muse,
> Who, to thy one, all other braines refuse;
> Whose every worke, of thy most early wit,
> Came forth example, and remaines so, yet:
> Longer a knowing, then most wits doe live.
> And which no'affection praise enough can give!
> To it, thy language, letters, arts, best life,
> Which might with halfe mankind maintayne a strife.
> All which I meant to praise, and, yet, I would;
> But leave, because I cannot as I should!
>
> (Ep. XXIII)

This poem is not only a testimony of Jonson's respect and affection for Donne, but also an appraisal of some of the peculiar qualities of Donne's poetry: the intellectual vigour and the extraordinary erudition. In the fourth line, he suggests Donne's profound and radical influence on the poetry of his age, which developed in the line of metaphysical poetry. He also commends Donne's mode of life. Jonson, in fact, attests to Donne's singularity in both ethical and literary qualities, and his praise is solid and deeply felt.

Jonson's strictures on Donne are also well-known. In addition to his comments about the obscurity of the 'Epitaph on Prince Henry' and the blasphemy of the 'Anniversaries', he told Drummond that Donne "for not keeping of accent deserved hanging" (Convers. 196). It

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25. R. C. Bald in John Donne, A Life (Oxford, 1970) mentions on p. 76 that 'The Calme' was written after that age. Donne was born between 24 January and 19 June, 1572, and he wrote this poem during his voyages with Essex, July to October 1597 (pp. 86-92); see also W. Milgate's edition of Donne's Satires, Epigrams, and Verse Letters, pp. 203-10.

need hardly be pointed out that Donne's metrical roughness, frequent hyperbole and often dense and recondite imagery sinned against Jonson's own critical canon, the classical qualities of brevity, clarity and perspicuity. Jonson did not possess the ability to see, and much less to sympathise with, both sides of a question, or principles contrary to his own. His strictures on Spenser and Shakespeare, already quoted above, reveal the limits of his literary sympathies.

These comments, moreover, must be understood in context, for Jonson's strictures go hand in hand with his tributes to Donne. The comments to Drummond show their exchange of ideas and criticism. Honesty and frankness could be no hindrance to a friendship based on knowledge and respect; nor could criticism based on sound learning offend. Indeed Jonson and Donne seem to have made a practice of consulting one another. They exchanged manuscripts. Though Donne's poems were not published until 1633, Jonson sent a copy of the Satires to Lady Bedford before 1612, and referred to the 'Metempsychosis', 'The Bracelet', and 'The Calme' in 1618-9. In this spirit, Jonson himself submitted to Donne's judgement and to the free exchange of criticism:

> Who shall doubt DONNE, where I a Poet bee,
> When I dare send my Epigrammes to thee?
> That so alone canst judge, so 'alone dost make:
> And, in thy censures, evenly, dost take
> As free simplicitie, to dis-avow,
> As thou hast best authoritie, t o ' allow.
> Reade all I send: and if I find but one
> Mark'd by thy hand, and with the better stone,
> My title's seal'd. Those that for claps doe write,
> Let pui'nees, porters, players praise delight,
> And, till they burst, their backs, like asses load:
> A man should seeke great glorie, and not broad.
>
> (Ep. XCVI)

Seizing once again on Donne's singularity, he testifies that he is willing to allow himself to be measured by a man who has the learning and the experience to judge properly. Though the poem resolves into an arrogant sentence, it is a tribute to a living contemporary and friend.

Jonson's study and assimilation of Donne's poetry is another testimony of his esteem. Donne had a surprising influence on Jonson and, indeed, this influence has been so great in some cases that the attribution of a group of poems in the Underwoods has been much disputed. One of them 'The Expostulation' has been, without doubt, attributed to both Jonson and Donne.[26] The remaining three, written in the style of Donne, are generally thought to be by Jonson. Donne's influence, moreover, probably suggested this turning from the epigram to the elegy, which Donne had developed in the 1590's.[27] Nor was this influence limited to a single group of poems, for echoes of Donne's manner are also found in Jonson's later work. These lines from the 'Elegie on Lady Pawlet' (d. 1631) show the hyperbole and the religious timbre which we associate with Donne:

> when they urg'd the Cure
> Of her disease, how did her soule assure
> Her suffrings, as the body had beene away!
> And to the Torturers (her Doctors) say,
> Stick on your Cupping-glasses, feare not, put
> Your hottest Causticks to, burne, lance, or cut:
> 'Tis but a body which you can torment,
> And I, into the world, all Soule, was sent!
>
> (Und. LXXXIII, ll. 49-56)

The tone here is similar to that in the 'Anniversaries', and the theme, the relationship between body and soul, is characteristic of Donne; even the hyperbolical medical conceit suggests his work. It is, however, Jonson. The elegy on Lady Digby (d. 1633) shows Jonson making use of scholastic speculation in the manner of Donne.

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26. See Percy Simpson's discussion of their authorship, H & S, XI, 66-70 where he differs from his colleague C. H. Herford, II, 383-4; in his edition of Donne's Poems (Oxford, 1912) Sir Herbert Grierson (II, cxxxvi-cxxxvii) attributes 'The Expostulation' to Donne, but Dame Helen Gardner, in her edition of The Elegies and Songs and Sonnets (Oxford, 1965) gives it to Donne (pp. xxxv-viii).
27. Compion had preceded Donne in the composition of English elegies, but Donne was the prevailing influence on subsequent writers; see Gardner, Elegies and Songs and Sonnets, p. xxxiii.

> For, as there are three Natures, Schoolmen call
> One corporall, only; th'other spiritual,
> Like single; so, there is a third, commixt,
> Of Body and Spirit together, plac'd betwixt
> Those other two ...
>
> (Und. LXXXIV, 9, ll. 51-5)

This kind of arcane and abstract imagery is not typical of Jonson. Though the simple distinction between scholastic or classical learning is not adequate to define the different qualities of Jonson and Donne, for both of them read widely and variously, it does describe the areas of knowledge which each principally exploited for his poetry. Jonson's earlier poetry does occasionally glance at patristic or scholastic speculations, as in this image from 'The Sinner's Sacrifice', written not long after the completion in 1612 of the poetry for publication in the 1616 Workes:[28]

> Father, and Sonne, and Holy Ghost, you three
> All coeternall in your Majestie,
> Distinct in persons, yet in Unitie
> One God to see.
>
> (Und. I, i. ll. 37-40)

Yet, in the two elegies mentioned above, Jonson takes such matter to great lengths. He expatiates fervently on the beatific vision and the nature of the Trinity in a rather abstract and arid manner. This is a kind of imagery to which Jonson turned late. In this change, we can detect not only the awareness of new attitudes and resources, but also the hand of Donne.

The judicious esteem, the exchange of ideas, the candid criticism, the evident influence: all of these were aspects of, and subordinate to, ideals which were universal and absolute. Jonson's friendship with a man like Donne fitted into the scheme of things. Both poets shared literary and moral values, and, if Donne more inclined

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28. H & S, XI, 47.

to its Christian, and Jonson to its classical aspect, they both still belonged to the central tradition of letters. In different ways, each tried to express, in terms of his intellectual interests, an attitude to life, and implicit in their different paths was a common belief in the value of letters.

Jonson's deliberate attempt to relate his ideals to contemporary life led him to make use of his relationship with Donne. His person and relationship with Jonson form the factual background of the poems. But while it is the facts of Donne's life and achievement which give substance to the poems, it is Jonson's ideals which determine their form and give them unity. The poems attempt to relate these values with the facts of experience. The values are central and the focus of the realistic elements in the poem, but the reality of Donne's achievements gives these values tangibility and relevance. The themes of character, friendship, and literature are brought together in a poem to a man who was good, a friend, and an admirable poet and critic. The close fusion of ideal and real elements is evidence of the attempt to convey universal values by means of particular and contemporary images.

Jonson's relationships with the great scholars of his age also illustrated his values and found their way into his poetry; his devotion to "letters" included scholarship as well as poetry. Jonson's poem to his teacher, the great antiquarian, William Camden (1551-1623) was not only an expression of personal gratitude but also a definition of the qualities required for true scholarship. Characteristically, Jonson has mixed personal and ideal elements in a poem to a friend. It begins as an expression of "piety":

> CAMDEN, most reverend head, to whom I owe
> All that I am in arts, all that I know,
> (How nothing's that?) to whom my countrey owes

The great renowne, and name wherewith shee goes.
Then thee the age sees not that thing more grave,
More high, more holy, that shee more would crave.

There is no exaggeration in this description of Camden's eminence. He was the acknowledged leader of antiquarian studies in England in his time, and at the same time a man of the Renaissance who addressed his work to a European audience. His communications with continental scholars, the composition of the Britannia in Latin, and its evident aim to establish the topography and historical development of Britain for the world of international scholarship made Camden a scholar of European standing. His Britannia (1586) was printed in Frankfurt in 1590 and reached five editions before its English translation by Philemon Holland in 1610. His Remaines of a Greater Worke concerning Britaine (1603) went through seven editions in the course of the seventeenth century.[29]

Jonson, however, turns from his description of Camden's eminence to define his scholarly character:

What name, what skill, what faith hast thou in things!
What sight in searching the most antique springs!
What weight, and what authoritie in thy speech!
Man scarse can make that doubt, but thou canst teach.

Jonson singles out the qualities of great scholarship, the authority, the patient skills, the considered and reliable judgement, the insight that can penetrate through the obscurities of time and error, the erudition that gives his judgements weight and authority. The basis of Camden's reputation and his value as a scholar is the solidity of his character and the personal attributes of learning and discernment that he brought to his work.

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29. See Stuart Piggott, "William Camden and the Britannia", Proceedings of the British Academy, XXXVII (1951), 199-217 and the introduction to the facsimile of the 1695 edition of the Britannia (Newton Abbott, 1971); see also May McKisack, Mediaeval History in the Tudor Age (Oxford, 1971), pp. 150-4.

Jonson's poem concludes by bringing together his personal feelings and the worth and eminence of his subject:

> Pardon free truth, and let thy modestie,
> Which conquers all, be once over-come by thee.
> Many of thine this better could, then I,
> But for their powers, accept my pietie.

This is a tribute of a man who had shared his discoveries of Truth with Jonson and posterity.

The scholarly values which Jonson defined in his tribute to Camden are considerably expanded in a poem to Sir Henry Savile (1549-1622). Unlike Camden, Savile was not a personal friend, but he also shared and exemplified Jonson's ideals, Savile was one of the most learned men of the age. Warden of Merton (1585) and Provost of Eton (1596), he had acquired standing in the world of scholarship by his translation of Tacitus (1591) which included an original section "The Ende of Nero and Beginning of Galla"; it had six editions during the next fifty years. Jonson praises this work in the first part of the poem. Savile was also the most outstanding academic antiquarian of the period and edited seven important historical texts.[30] As in the poem to Camden, however, it is not his particular achievements which interest Jonson but rather the way Savile's character and work elucidate and exemplify humanistic values. He therefore turns from the Tacitus to describe the qualities of Savile's scholarship:

> For who can master those great parts like thee,
> That liv'st from hope, from feare, from faction free;
> That hast thy brest so cleere of present crimes,
> Thou need'st not shrinke at voyce of after-times;
> Whose knowledge claimeth at the helme to stand;
> But, wisely, thrusts not forth a forward hand,
> No more than SALLUST in the Romane state!
> As, then, his cause, his glorie emulate.
> Although to write be lesser then to doo,
> It is the next deed, and a great one too.
>
> (Ep. XCV, ll. 17-26)

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30. McKisack, pp. 63-4.

Savile's detachment from interest or involvement in contemporary issues and his prudent use of his learning make him fit for the discovery of Truth. Because he devoted himself to the search for what is absolute and universal, and not to the narrow loyalties of self or party, what he discovers will withstand the test of time. Savile is both learned and disinterested; these are the prerequisites of true scholarship.

In the last part of the poem Jonson turns from the describing of Savile to that of the ideal scholar:

> We need a man that knowes the severall graces
> Of historie, and how to apt their places;
> Where brevitie, where splendor, and where height,
> Where sweetnesse is requir'd, and where weight;
> We need a man, can speake of the intents,
> The councells, actions, orders, and events
> Of state, and censure them: we need his pen
> Can write the things, the causes, and the men.
> But most we need his faith (and all have you)
> That dares nor write things false, nor hide things true.
>
> (ll. 27-36)

Discernment, understanding, judgement, integrity of purpose and an apt style of expression: these are the qualities necessary for the scholar to discover and to communicate the Truth about the past.

The structure of this poem is significant. The first part praises Savile's Tacitus for its fidelity and merit. The next part describes the disinterested and informed judgement which he brought to his work; Jonson has moved from the work to the man. The last part describes the qualities necessary for the discovery and communication of Truth. The poem becomes progressively more abstract, moving from the praise of a particular work to a description of the ideal scholar; the application of this ideal is clinched in the final line, where Savile is revealed as its embodiment. The poem applies the ideal to a particular individual and to the needs of contemporary society.

Jonson's praise of great antiquarians like Camden and Savile is related to the revival of interest in the national past which had

taken place during the Tudor period.[31] There were many reasons for this fascination with British antiquity, not the least of which was the dispersal of books, manuscripts, and all kinds of ancient records which was a result of the dissolution of the monasteries. Many fervent Protestants desired to establish by means of these records the legitimacy of the English church. Some antiquarians were motivated by an interest in the history of their families, cities, or counties; some, simply by a fascination with ancient monuments. Common, however, to all of the English antiquarians was a profound love of their country. Jonson himself reflected this pride in the national past when he spoke to Drummond of his "intention to perfect one Epic Poeme intitled Herologia of the Worthies of his Country, rowsed by Fame, and was to dedicate it to his Country" (Convers. 1-4).[32] This same interest probably accounts for his request to Howell for a copy of "Doctor Davies his Welsh Grammar" and for the references to the middle English poets Chaucer, Gower and Lydgate in The English Grammar.[33] Jonson's own contribution to the history of his country was his history of Henry V for which he had received help from the noted antiquarians Carew, Cotton and Selden; unfortunately this was destroyed in the fire commemorated in "An Execration upon Vulcan". (Und. XLIII, ll. 97-100). Jonson was evidently interested not only in classical antiquity but in the ancient history and literature of his country.

When in the poem to Savile, Jonson spoke of the requirements for attaining a true understanding of antiquity, he was describing the

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31. See McKisack and Piggott, and John Butt, "The Facilities for Antiquarian Study in the Seventeenth Century" in Essays and Studies by members of the English Association, XXIV (1938), 93-100.
32. George Burke Johnston in Ben Jonson: Poet (New York, 1945), pp. 96-125, shows how Jonson made use of mediaeval and chivalric literature.
33. See H & S, XI, 417 and VIII, 456-8.

contemporary need to understand both the national and the classical past. The work of clarifying the past was a consequence of the realization that distortion and error had perverted the transmission of Truth through time and that it was necessary to rescue Truth from the obscurities, alterations, and corruptions which had accrued to it; hence, the disinterested scholarship advocated by Jonson was not only free from present interests, but also free to question the findings of antiquity. Its sole allegiance was to Truth:

> We must not goe about like men anguish'd, and perplex'd, for vitious affectation of praise: but calmely study the separation of opinions, find the errours have intervened, awake Antiquity, call former times into question; but make no parties with the present, nor follow any fierce undertakers, mingle no matter of doubtful credit, with the simplicity of truth, but gently stirre the mould about the root of the Question, and avoid all digladiations, facility of credit, or superstitious simplicity; seeke the conconancy and concatenation of Truth; stoope only to point of necessity, and what leads to convenience.
>
> (Disc. 2104-16)

This is the credo of scholarship.

Jonson, therefore, praises the great jurist John Selden (1584-1654) for his important work in correcting the understanding of antiquity by recognizing and expurgating errors and impostures and by giving an accurate picture of historical development:

> Which Grace shall I make love to first? your skill,
> Or faith in things? or is't your wealth and will
> T⟨o⟩'instruct and teach? or your unweary'd paine
> Of Gathering? Bountie' in pouring out againe?
> What fables have you vext! what truth redeem'd!
> Antiquities search'd! Opinions dis-esteem'd!
> Impostures branded! And Authorities urg'd!
> What blots and errours, have you watch'd and purg'd
> Records, and Authors of! how rectified
> Times, manners, customes! Innovations spide!
> Sought out the Fountaines, Sources, Greekes, paths, wayes,
> And noted the beginnings and decayes!
>
> (Und. XIV, ll 35-46)

This passage reveals the concern to return to origins and primary sources, rather than depend solely on the standard histories, which enabled the antiquarians of the period to begin to clear away the legendary and fabulous from the history of their country. It was at this point largely a work of establishing the facts of history.

Common to the poems to Camden, Savile, and Selden is a sincere appreciation of the value of scholarship, and of the role of individuals in its discovery and transmission.[34] Jonson grasped the importance of establishing by means of the tools of scholarship the best and most accurate representation of antiquity: accuracy was needed, whether in the form of a topographical description, a scholarly edition, or a work of historical or antiquarian research. Jonson perceived the importance of establishing the facts. He therefore praises all three of these eminent scholars for their "faith" in things.[35] By this, Jonson seems to have meant the assurance that they would fulfill their obligation to uncover and present the Truth without bias or distortion.[36] It was a quality of character which ensured fidelity to the Truth. The importance of faith was no doubt partly due to a scholarly respect for the facts, but it had also to do with the importance of understanding and elucidating life, and of making life understood. There is throughout Jonson's work a respect for the actuality of life, which, as we have seen, led to his basing most of his drama and poetry on the solid materials of actual life. It also led him to endorse the efforts of men who sought to restore a true understanding of a place, a document, or a subject. It was this respect for reality which lay at the basis of his respect for these scholars.

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34. See Trimpi, pp. 142-9.
35. Ep. XIIII, l. 7; XCV, ll. 36-7; Und XIV, l. 36.
36. OED. III. 10: "The quality of fulfilling one's trust; faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty"; Mids.N. III.ii.127: "Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true" (1590).

Jonson's relationship with John Selden exemplifies the fruitful association of scholars. Theirs was a relationship based not only on similar interests, but on mutual esteem; their remarks about one another breathe familiarity and respect. To Drummond, Jonson described Selden as "the Law book of the Judges of England, the bravest man in all Languages" (Convers. 604-5). Selden, who refers to Jonson's "most choice and able store" of books in a letter to him describes how in order to elucidate a passage from the Orestes of Euripides he consulted "the well-furnished Librarie of my beloved friend that singular poet M. Ben: Jonson, whose speciall Worth in Literature, accurat Judgement, and Performance, known only to the Few which are truly able to know him, hath had from me, ever since I began to learn, an increasing admiration".[37] Selden clearly refers to the community of literary cognoscenti. Discussing the custom of giving laurel to poets he ends with a tribute to Jonson:

> And thus have I, by no unseasonable digression, performed a promise to you my beloved BEN. JONSON. Your curious learning and judgement may correct where I have erred, and adde where my notes and memory have left me short. You are
> — omnia Carmina doctus
> et calles Myth n plasmata & Historiam.
> And so you both fully what concernes it, and your singular excellencie in the Art most eminently deserves it.[38]

Out of his copious learning, Selden supplied an answer to Jonson's query about the Mosaic law proscribing the wearing of apparel of the opposite sex.[39] Their friendship was both scholarly and social. Selden as well as Camden were among those present when Jonson 'banqueted all his friends' after his release from imprisonment for Eastward Ho

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37. See H & S, I, 250 and XI. 383-4; the latter is from the preface to his Titles of Honor, (London, 1614), sig. d.
38. Titles of Honor, 2nd ed. (London, 1631), p. 412.
39. H & S, I, 250; XI, 384.

(Convers. 277-8); later Jonson intervened on Selden's behalf when then the latter was summoned to Theobalds by James, who had been offended by his History of Tythes.[40] Selden was party to Jonson's intention to satirize "the vain Disputes of Divines" as well as his enemy Inigo Jones in his portrait of Inigo Lanthorne in Bartholomew Fayre.[41] The two scholars exchanged verses of commendation: Jonson prefixed a poem to Selden's Titles of Honour, 1614; and Selden, to the folio edition of Jonson's workds. Jonson's library contained several of Selden's workds, his Titles of Honour, 1614, his De diis Syriis Syntagmata 1629, and Jani Anglorum Facies Altera, 1610; the last of these is inscribed "Sū Ben: Jonsonii Liber ex dono Authoris mihi chariss".[42] Only Selden's copy of The New Inn, possibly presented by Jonson, survives but it is certain that he knew more of Jonson's work.[43] The history of their friendship suggests frequent exchanges and mutual support.

Jonson's epistle to Selden also throws light on his attitude to criticism and friendship. Before praising Selden's Titles of Honour Jonson is careful to distinguish between the duties of criticism and the obligations of friendship, and explores the implications of his dual responsibility as critic and friend:

> Your Booke, my Selden, I have read, and much
> Was trusted, that you thought my judgement such
> To aske it: though in most of workes it be
> A pennance, where a man may not be free,
> Rather than Office, when it doth or may
> Chance that the Friends affection proves Allay
> Unto the Censure. Yours all need doth flie
> Of this so viticus Humanitie.
> Then which there is not unto Studie'a more
> Pernitious enemie; we see, before
> A many'of bookes, even good judgements wound
> Themselves through favouring what is there not found.
>
> (Und. XIV, ll. 5-16)

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40. H & S, XI, 384-5.
41. See John Selden, Table Talk (London, 1689), p. 52.
42. H & S, I, 270; XI, 602-3.
43. H & S, VI, 386.

Friendship did not abrogate a detached and just criticism. Though it was within friendships based on common ideals that the most fruitful exchanges could take place, a friend was subject to pressures either to be over-tolerant or over-critical:

> It is an Acte of Tyranye, not Love,
> in Course of ffrindshipp, wholie to reprove:
> And fflatterye, with ffrindes humors: still to move.
>
> (Und. V. XLIX)

The critic's detachment and solid foundation in learning was to be a remedy against both of these excesses.

Jonson goes on to commend the breadth of learning and experience which is at the basis of Selden's work, and employs the image of the compass to describe how he has extended the range of his knowledge while remaining constant and true to himself:

> you that have beene
> Ever at home: yet, have all Countries seene:
> And like a Compasse keeping one foot still
> Upon your Center, doe your Circle fill
> Of generall knowledge; watch'd men, manners too,
> Heard what times past have said, seene what ours doe.
>
> (Und. XIV, ll.29-34)

The image of the compass was a traditional emblem in which the fixed leg symbolized work and the outer one constancy. It was the device used by the Plantin press with the appropriate motto, labore et constantia. It is also significant because Jonson's own emblem was a compass: the compass itself being an image of perfection; and being broken, a sign of man's inability ever to achieve it.[44]

Characteristically, Jonson represented Selden as a student both of the past and the present. An understanding of both was necessary to the scholar: the past was the basis of an understanding of the present and the present was the justification for the study of the past.

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44. See The Masque of Beautie, ll. 220-2 and Jonson's note, and Edward B. Partridge, The Broken Compass. A Study of the Major Comedies of Ben Jonson, (London, 1958), p. 239.

After praising Selden's study of the past and his apt and decorous mode of expression, and making the usual admission that his powers are not up to his subject's deserts, Jonson mentioned Selden's dedication of the Titles of Honor to his chamberfellow, Edward Heywood. Since Heywood was himself a scholar, he could duly appreciate Selden's achievement. Friendships based on such common pursuits were regarded as being of particular felicity by the courtesy writers, and Elyot maintains that if "similitude of study or learning" is joined with the requisite qualities for friendship, "the mutual interview and conversation is much more pleasant".[45] Such an association between Selden and Heywood is indicated. Jonson concludes by praising their friendship, with its basis in knowledge and humanity.

It is significant that the theme of friendship introduces and concludes this poem which defines the value of antiquarian scholarship. In the first part, Jonson had discussed the relationship between criticism and friendship; in the latter, the value of a friendship which shared an interest in learning and scholarship. Both of these suggest the importance of friendship in the world of letters and in the natural order. The pursuit of Truth was a joint effort which involved encouragement, consultation, and criticism within the community of scholars.

This explains how Jonson came to commend many obscure writers who seem unworthy of his attention. Swinburne, however, took exception to this apparent failure of Jonson's critical ability. "Just judgement of others", he writes of Jonson, "just judgement of himself, was all but impossible to this great writer, this consummate

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45. Governour, p. 134.

and indefatigible scholar, this generous and enthusiastic friend."[46] He points out the disparities in the people Jonson praises, and calls Jonson the "promiscuous panegyrist of Shakespeare, of Fletcher, of Chapman, of Drayton, of Browne, of Brome, and of May; and moreover of one Stephens, of one Rutter, of one Wright, of one Warre, and of one Filmer".[47] Modern scholarship has rescued many of these names from their obscurity, if not from their deserts, for many still remain among the most minor writers of the period. Swinburne's charge is really that Jonson did not seem able to discriminate between these and the greatest of his contemporaries.

These poems, however, are evidence of the close association of like-minded men. Many of them are addressed to friends and connected with specific periods of Jonson's life. Thomas Palmer, Hugh Holland, and Thomas Wright, for example, were all Roman Catholics, and received verses from Jonson while he himself was of their religion. The sub-titles to many of the poems suggest the personal element, such as "To my Truly-belov'd Friend, Mr Browne: on his Pastoralls" or "To my chosen Friend, The learned Translator of Lucan, Thomas May, Esquire". Some of the later verse was addressed to his sons "To my deare Sonne, and right-learned Friend, Master JOSEPH RUTTER". Few of these poems use the impersonal formula "To the worthy author".

There is, moreover, a discrimination in the kind of praise which Jonson gives to his various friends and associates. The poems written to Shakespeare, Selden, Savile, and Browne, for example, are more comprehensive and personal than those to the lesser names. Poems to the latter are often no more than a précis of the subject-matter of

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46. Algernon Charles Swinburne, A Study of Ben Jonson (London, 1889), p. 114.
47. Ben Jonson, p. 15.

their books, or a general celebration of the ideal of knowledge. The poem prefixed to Thomas Wright's The Passions of the minde in generall (1604) is typical, and illustrates the tendency to write a precis of the theme of the book to be praised:

> In Picture, they which truly understand,
> Require (besides the likenesse of the thing)
> Light, Posture, Height'ning, Shadow, Culloring,
> All which parts commend the cunning hand;
> And all your Booke (when it is throughly scan'd)
> Will well confesse; presenting, limiting,
> Each subt'lest Passion, with her source, and spring,
> So bold, as shewes your Art you can commend.
> But now, your Worke is done, if they that view
> The severall figures, languish in suspence,
> To judge which Passion's false, and which is true,
> Betweene the doubtfull sway of Reason', and sense;
> 'Tis not your fault, if they shall sense preferre,
> Being told there, Reason cannot, Sense may erre.
>
> (Ung. V. VII)

Wright was a Jesuit, and possibly the priest who visited Jonson in prison and converted him to Roman Catholicism.[48] In writing this tribute, Jonson gave evidence of an association based on common religious as well as ethical beliefs; another of Jonson's Catholic friends, Hugh Holland, also prefixed a poem to the same work. The theme, moreover, is one which would itself have appealed to Jonson, for he himself often makes this traditional contrast between reason and sense in his own work; his pervasive theme of learning versus ignorance is also related to it. Finally, Jonson actually makes no extravagant claims for this book. He does two things in his poem; he epitomizes its theme, the conflict between reason and sense, and he describes the author's comprehensiveness and command of his matter. The commendation is modest.

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48. This was suggested by Miss Guiney, in her Recusant Poets, (London and New York, 1938), see H & S, XI, 128-9. The DNB entry under Thomas Wright maintains that The Passions of the Minde does not belong to the Jesuit but to another Thomas Wright (fl. 1604), a protege of Henry Wriothelesley, third Earl of Southampton, but Jonson's editors identify its author as the priest.

This is unlike the tributes given to Donne, Camden, Savile, and Selden, which are more detailed and specific, which make far greater claims for their subject, and which are redolent with personal feeling and respect. The greater writers and scholars evoked a more fulsome and heartfelt tribute.

It was, moreover, Jonson's duty as a man of letters to promote learning, not only by his own work but by encouraging the works of others; it was probably in this spirit that Jonson lent his pen to commendation. There was considerable interchange of verse among the literati of the age and the connections between Jonson and three close friends illustrate its exclusiveness. Jonson commended the work of Christopher Brooke, John Donne, and William Browne; Donne commended Jonson's works (1616), and Browne praised Jonson along with other contemporary writers in the second book of his Britannia's Pastorals (1616). Donne dedicated 'The Storm' and probably also 'The Calm' to Brooke, and addressed to him one of his early verse letters, 'To Mr C.B.'[49] William Browne prefixed verses to Brooke's The Ghost of Richard the Third (1614), eulogized him in the second book of his Britannia's Pastorals, and inscribed to him the fifth eclogue of his Shepherd's Pipe (1614). Brooke in return prefixed a poem to Britannia's Pastorals (1613), appended an eclogue to the Shepherd's Pipe, and published jointly with Browne Two Elegies Consecrated to the Never dying Memorie of ... Henry Prince of Wales (1613). Each actively promoted the other's work.[50] Jonson's poem to Wright was undertaken with the same spirit. By 1604, Jonson had some stature in the literary world for he had presented his early humour comedies, and had been called upon to provide

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49. Milgate, pp. 203 and 214.
50. See Bald, pp. 74-5.

entertainment for the arrival of the new king in London in March and of the new Queen and Prince at Althrope in June, 1603. His commendation already carried some weight. Later, in his unique position as literary lion, he continued his promotion of letters by commending the work of younger men.

A good illustration of Jonson's desire to promote letters is his poem on Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas:

> If to admire were to commend, my praise
> Might then both thee, thy worke and merit raise:
> But, as it is (the Child of Ignorance,
> And utter stranger to all ayre of France)
> How can I speake of thy great paines, but erre?
> Since they can only judge, that can conferre.
>
> (Ep. CXXXII)

Jonson is honest enough to explain his difficulty, that he does not know French and therefore cannot compare the translation to its original, but he clearly felt that the work deserved his support. He solves his immediate problem by bringing in a deus ex machina:

> Behold! the reverend shade of BARTAS stands
> Before my thought, and (in thy right) commands
> That to the world I publish, for him, this;
> BARTAS doth wish thy English now were his.
> So well in that are his inventions wrought,
> As his will now be the translation thought,
> Thine the originall; and France shall boast,
> No more, those mayden glories shee hath lost.

Jonson is evidently content to see English letters enriched by this translation of a foreign work. It is evident, nevertheless, that in this poem he is endorsing, not so much a particular work, but the art of translation, an important activity in the Renaissance and one of the chief ways in which classical and humanistic culture was made relevant to the times. It must be added that after having acquired French, Jonson decided that Sylvester's translation was not worthy of the praise he had given it, for he confessed to Drummond that

"Silvesters translation of du Bartas was not well done, and that he wrote his Verses befor it err he understood to conferr" (Convers. 29-31).

The desire to promote the diffusion of Renaissance culture is behind Jonson's praise of numerous other translations: Sir Henry Savile's Tacitus, Clement Edmonds' Caesars Commentaries, Chapman's Hesiod, James Mabbe's The Rogue, Thomas May's Lucan, Edward Filmer's French Court-Aires. These works include translations from French and Spanish as well as from the classical languages, and show Jonson's interests to have been European rather than exclusively Classical. These translations also reflect the growing desire to make the classics and the literature of the Renaissance more accessible by rendering them into the vernacular. The same spirit was responsible for the translation into English of Camden's Britannia after five Latin editions. These translations were an important sign of, and a significant step in, the assimilation of Renaissance culture.

Jonson's comment in his poem to Selden that a request to commend a book was in most cases "a pennance, where a man may not be free" (For. XIV, l. 8) indicates that he often found it difficult to criticize justly the works submitted to him. Presumably he could not be as frank and outspoken about such work as he would have liked. Yet, he evidently felt that he must do his part to promote the literary and scholarly values of the Renaissance. If he regretted the limitations imposed on him by such undertakings, he did what he could within them. He commended and praised carefully and tactfully, even to the point of admitting his own deficiencies.

The system of patronage introduced another relationship with a literary basis. For the aristocrat, patronage was thought to be a consequence of nobility, though noblesse oblige was not always a sufficient motivation for generosity to men of letters; many nobles

such as the Earl of Northampton cared little for poets. Only a part of the nobility were ever active in supporting letters. Relations, moreover, between patron and writer need not be close nor sympathetic. Yet because of the Renaissance ideal of the courtier, letters and the patronage of letters came to be considered an important requirement for the nobility: Jonson wrote that the most "Royall Princes, and greatest persons" are "not only studious of riches, and magnificence in the outward celebration or shew; (which rightly becomes them) but curious after the most high, and heartie inventions to furnish the inward parts". (Hymenai, ll. 11-3). This extended to the support of worthy writers, and Jonson's age was one of great patrons. The relationship between poet and patron was not simply financial, for it implied an acceptance of the value of letters and at least some appreciation of poets' work.

A poem to Esmé, Lord Aubigny elucidates the nature of this relationship. He was one of Jonson's first and most lasting patrons, and received from Jonson not only this poem, but also the folio edition of Sejanus; Jonson wrote a lengthy epistle to Lady Aubigny (For. XIII). Aubigny was one of the lords who secured Jonson's release from prison for Eastward Ho (1605).[51] Jonson later stayed in his house for five years, probably 1614-18 (Convers. 254-5),[52] and he told Drummond he had done his translation of Horace's Art of Poetry there (ll. 86-8). Jonson also celebrated the marriage of Aubigny's daughter to Jerome, the son of a later patron, the earl of Portland. Jonson's poem to Aubigny is a direct expression of gratitude:

> Is there a hope, that Man would thankefull bee,
> If I should faile, in gratitude, to thee,
> To whom I am so bound, lov'd AUBIGNY?
> No, I doe, therefore, call Posteritie
> Into the debt; and reckon on her head,

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51. H & S, I, 198.
52. H & S, XI, 576-7.

How full of want, how swallow'd up, how dead
I, and this Muse had beene, if thou hadst not
Lent timely succours, and new life begot:
So, all reward, or name, that growes to mee
By her attempt, shall still be owing thee.
And, than this same, I know no abler way
To thanke thy benefits: which is, to pay.

(Ep. CXXVII)

Jonson's usual claim that he has given his subject immortal fame by praising him in his poetry is undoubtedly implied here, but his tribute to Aubigny is yet more generous, for he has attributed to him some of the credit for any appreciation or reputation which his work might acquire. His debt to Aubigny will be paid by means of his own accomplishment.

Jonson, however, does not usually express gratitude in such a forthright manner. More frequently, he repays his debt by praising his patrons for their admirable qualities, or by celebrating important occasions in their lives. Such a return in which the gratitude is implied was expected of a poet who accepted patronage.

The poems which Jonson offered his patrons reflect his basic concerns. It is interesting to compare his attitude to patronage with Shakespeare's, who in his twenty sixth sonnet wrote of his duty to his patron:

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written ambassage
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In my soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it:
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving
Points on me graciously with fair aspect
And puts apparel on my tattered loving
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee,
Till then not show my head where thou mayst prove me.[53]

The duty which here is involved with a gentle love and dependence is, in Jonson's poetry, strictly limited to conveying ethical and social ideals,

53. Shakespeare's Sonnets, ed. A. L. Rowse (London, 1964), p. 54.

and, whatever the personal emotion that may lie beneath it, is therefore more objective. Jonson, in acknowledging his duty to his patron would be more likely to praise him in terms of his ideals, than to analyse a personal relationship with him. His poetry of duty, however, contains a deep and persuasive feeling which arises out of the fervour of Jonson's convictions and his admiration for those who shared and realized them.

One of Jonson's earliest patrons was Lucy, Countess of Bedford.(1581-1627).- She was a cousin of Sir Philip and Mary Sidney, and shared their literary interests. One of the great patronesses of her age, she received verses from Donne, Davies of Hertford, Daniel, Drayton, and Chapman as well as Jonson. She seems to have written verses herself, for Donne had asked her for a copy of them, but none survives.[54] Brilliant at Court, she performed in Jonson's Masques of Blackness and Beauty, Hymenai, and the Masque of Queenes. Jonson presented her with an inscribed copy of Cynthia's Revels in 1606; a letter addressed to a lady from prison in 1605 is probably to her.[55]

Jonson's verses to Lady Bedford range from the light-hearted to one of his loftiest tributes. The eighty-fourth epigram, which Drummond notes (Convers. l. 93) was one of "the most common place of his repetition", describes Jonson's transports at Lady Bedford's promise of a gift:

> O Madame, if your grant did thus transferre mee,
> Make it your gift. See whither that will beare mee.
>
> (Ep. LXXXIIII)

This poem celebrates her generosity in contrast to a lord who had denied the same suit, and as a direct expression of gratitude is close to the poem to Aubigny.

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54. See Gardner's Elegies and the songs and sonnets, pp. 250-1.
55. H & S, VIII, 662; XI, 301; I, 197-8.

Another epigram (Ep. XCIIII) accompanied a gift, a copy of Donne's satires, from Jonson to Lady Bedford. Jonson makes use of the occasion to discuss the didactic aspect of satire. By her willingness to treat seriously a genre devoted particularly to social criticism, Lady Bedford is demonstrating true humanistic values. She accepts the necessity of criticism and is willing to face it with a rare and noble courage. Jonson's poem defines the basis of his own satire as well as giving a neat encapsulation of his literary and ethical principles.

Jonson's third epigram to Lady Bedford is one of his outstanding poems: deft, gracious, deeply-felt, certainly his best poem to a woman. It combines a grace with moral fibre, and employs the courtly love convention of the poetic mistress to define an ideal of womanhood which is informed with the spirit of Renaissance humanism:

> This morning, timely rapt with holy fire,
> I thought to forme unto my zealous Muse,
> What kinde of creature I could most desire,
> To honor, serve, and love; as Poets use.
> I meant to make her faire, and free, and wise,
> Of greatest bloud, and yet more good then great;
> I meant the day-starre should not brighter rise,
> Nor lend like influence from his lucent seat.
> I meant shee should be curteous, facile, sweet,
> Hating that solemne vice of greatnesse, pride;
> I meant each softest vertue, there should meet,
> Fit in that softer bosome to reside.
> Onely a learned, and a manly soule
> I purpos'd her; that should, with even powers,
> The rock, the spindle, and the sheeres controule
> of destinie, and spin her owne free houres.
> Such when I meant to faine, and wish'd to see,
> My Muse bad, Bedford write, and that was shee.

The qualities which Jonson ascribes to Lady Bedford are a characteristic selection of masculine and feminine virtues. There is no specific mention of her literary interests or connections, but these are understood in the poem, for they were after all what linked her to Jonson and earned her this tribute. The courteous and ethical ideals

which are described are perhaps more typical of Spenser and Sidney than Jonson. They suggest the background of the courtesy books, and especially of The Courtier, where the gracious duchess presides over the discussion of Renaissance ideals. Their discussion of the ideal courtier is interrupted in the third book by a digression to consider the qualities of the ideal woman. She was to have vertues of the mind in common with the courtier, and "a sight in letters", though her character and demeanor were to be coloured by feminine sweetness and discretion. Jonson glances at the Renaissance discussion of the status and intelligence of women by attributing to Lady Bedford both feminine and "masculine" virtues; indeed, his description is close to that of Lord Julian de Medici in The Courtier:

> albeit stayednesse, nobleness of courage, temperance strength of the minde, wisedom, and the other vertues, a man would thinke belonged not to entertaine, yet will I have her endowed with them all, not so much to entertaine ... as to be vertuous: and these vertues to make her such a one, that she may deserve to bee esteemed, and all her doings framed by them.[56]

Lady Bedford is presented as the consumate image of such an ideal.

The force of an epigram lies in its concluding lines.[57] They usually give a witty or ingenious turn to the thought, or an emphatic summary of, or a distillation from, what has gone before. The last line of Jonson's poem to Lady Bedford gives a sudden coalescence to the thought, a vivid incorporation of the abstractions. Its point is not the result of ingenuity or wit but of the striking turn from a catalogue of ideal qualities to the reality of the present; suddenly the ideals of the Renaissance are shown to be embodied in a person. Jonson had also used this method in the poem to Savile, who

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56. Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, Everyman's Library no. 807 (London and New York, 1956), p. 195.
57. See Hudson, Epigram in the Eng. Ren., pp. 1-22, esp. pp. 6-9.

in the concluding lines is revealed as the man required to satisfy some of the needs of the present. In both these poems, the conclusion not only gives the poem its point, but also shows Jonson's concern to convey his values by means of images from real life.

This poem illustrates very well the fusion of idealistic and concrete elements in Jonson's work, for nowhere are they more evidently and more successfully brought together than here. The device of the poet describing the ideal and then suddenly applying it to the person of a contemporary permits us to see these elements separately and to see how Jonson looked at life through the eyes of his ideals. I am not suggesting that his method was only to seek subjects who could stand as the personification of his values, for obviously he had to praise people who could not fit into a pre-ordained pattern. Here he has undoubtedly set out to praise Lady Bedford, and the poem represents a careful adjustment of what he conceived as the ideal woman and what he observed in the countess. This probably explains the emphasis on courtesy. The poem reveals nonetheless how Jonson tended to regard life in terms of what should be. While his extraordinary grasp of the surface of life is evident in the realism of his work, the absolute criteria by which he measured life are evident in this poem, where the definition of the ideal is distinct from, and prior to, the description of the person. This habit of mind enabled Jonson to see Lady Bedford as the realisation of his values.

In spite of its moral basis, there is an air of urbanity in this poem. It recalls the courtliness of Jonson's compliment to Lady Wroth, and shows once more that Jonson was able to appreciate the feminine graces. It also demonstrates that his ideals were not exclusively ethical; here he is trying to give a picture of the whole

woman and must therefore make mention of courtesy, mildness, sweetness, and each "softest vertue". Yet, the Renaissance ethical and literary values receive the greater emphasis and were obviously of greater importance to Jonson.

The poem reveals a deliberate and controlled use of language and imagery. Alliteration and assonance are used to emphasize the point:

> I meant to make her faire, and free, and wise,
> Of greatest bloud, and yet more good than great.

The alliteration of the 'm' and 'f's and particularly the 'g's in the second line are functional; the antithesis between "of greatest bloud" and "yet more good than great" defines Jonson's attitude to society and the values which lay behind his poetry. His description of Lady Bedford's feminine attributes is set in parallel two- line units which begin with 'I meant', but a sudden emphasis is given to a "learned, and manly soule" by a break in the parallelism which coincides with the turn of the thought. Throughout, the flow of the verse is sure and easy; and the rhyme is again functional, relating, for example, "fire" with "desire" and "zealous Muse" with "Poets use". There are no striking images which could be culled out for singular appreciation; all is subordinate to the whole effect. Though there is depth of feeling, there is little poetic resonance, that breadth of associations which we associate with metaphysical poetry. All is deft and spare. Analysis would reveal that the same qualities existed in most of the epigrams, but it would be pointless, and outside of the scope of this study, to continue to demonstrate it. Here it has been considered in order to show how Jonson's language and form are subordinate to the whole effect and import of a poem and how matter and form, both subject and moral content, are perfectly adjusted in the poetic image.[58]

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58. Knights, Drama and Society, pp. 158-6 examines the language of some of Jonson's dramas.

Jonson's poems of praise to Lady Bedford are considerably more restrained than Donne's, and show us some of the differences between the two poets. Donne, in his poem 'To the Countesse of Bedford At New-yeares Tide' writes of her:

> When all (as truth commands assent) confesse
> All truth of you, yet they will doubt how I,
> One corne of one low anthills dust, and lesse,
> Should name, know, or expresse a thing so high,
> And not an inch, measure infinity.[59]

Donne here analyses his relationship with Lady Bedford, and her influence on him; his self-deprecation would have been impossible to Jonson who never addresses a patron in this manner. Elsewhere, as in the poem which begins "Reason is our Soules left hand ..." Donne attempts to show how Lady Bedford had ennobled him; in doing this, he often makes use of the language and imagery of alchemy. The praise is hyperbolical:

> for you are here
> The first good Angell, since the worlds frame stood,
> That ever did in womans shape appeare.[60]

Donne's poem to Lady Bedford is personal, intense, and extravagant; Donne himself is an important presence in the poem. Jonson's poems to women patrons are either courtly compliments or praise in terms of his ethical and literary values. They are detached, and largely impersonal, and though they often have warmth or deep feeling these are expressed in the tone, not by Jonson's presence in the poem; his ethical vision and his craftsmanship set the poem apart from its maker. One might say that both Donne and Jonson agree that Lady Bedford is 'Gods masterpiece,'[61] but they envisage her in completely different terms. Jonson's vision is characteristic of his poetic creed and practice.

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59. Milgate, p. 99.
60. Ibid., p. 91.
61. Ibid., p. 91.

After the publication of The Epigrammes in 1616, Lady Bedford also disappears from her position of prominence in Jonson's verse. After her illness in the winter of 1612, she withdrew somewhat from the society of men of letters; her closest relationship to Donne is during the years 1608-12, after which they drew somewhat apart. No poems to her outside of the 1616 folio are known. Though she had participated in several masques before 1609, she later emerges only to organise Jonson's Lovers Made Men for Lord Hay in 1617.

The largest group of early patrons were the Sidneys, and Jonson was fortunate to enjoy the patronage of most of the members of this illustrious family, who together were the greatest and most accomplished group of literary patrons in the age. Their unique position in the world of letters was largely due to their manifest and genuine espousal of Renaissance literary values. Many were poets themselves as well as patrons of literature.

The Sidneys had also gained much from the aura which they had inherited from their outstanding kinsman Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586). They continued to maintain the humanistic values which he had held and had come to represent for his own and succeeding generations. Jonson speaks of Sidney as the height of accomplishment in letters and life, of "noblest" Sidney:

> like whom, before,
> Or then, or since, about our Muses springs,
> Came not that soule exhausted so their store.
>
> (Ep. LXXIX)

He speaks of Sidney's birth "where all the Muses met" (For. II, l. 14). Sir Philip Sidney, however, had been more than a poet, and Jonson is thinking of his many achievements when he writes:

> Men have beene great, but never good by chance,
> Or on the sudden. It were strange that he
> Who was this Morning such a one, should be
> Sidney e're night. (Und. XIII, ll. 124-7)

Sidney's personal charm, his statesmanship, his martial courage, his accomplished prose and poetry had made him the embodiment of the ideals of his age. Castiglione's learned courtier and Elyot's Governour seem to have been embodied, and given a specifically Elizabethan turn, in Sir Philip Sidney. He was a man for his times: an Englishman, a Protestant, a soldier, a statesman, a man of letters. Because he had caught the imagination of his generation, his death was universally mourned and his funeral was one of the outstanding events of the reign of Elizabeth. To subsequent generations, his name became a catch-word for excellence. Despite Jonson's asides to Drummond, that "the King said Sir P. Sidney was no poet", that Sidney "did not keep a Decorum in making everyone speak as well as himself", and that "S. P. Sidney was no pleasant man in countenance, his face being spoiled with Pimples & of high blood & Long" (Convers. 371, 17-9, 230-1), Jonson clearly conformed with the general admiration and in his poetry presented him in that light.

Mary Herbert, Countess of Pembroke (1561-1621), who was Sidney's sister, shared his literary interests and spent much time with him in literary pursuits. At her desire and suggestion, Sidney wrote his Arcadia; and she completed the literary business which his death had left unfinished. She edited and published the Arcadia, and completed and revised the metrical version of the psalms begun by her brother who had finished only the first forty three.[62] This was, she felt, her major contribution to literature, but, though it seems to have had wide circulation in manuscript, it was not printed until the eighteenth century. Donne wrote a poem in praise of their work: "Upon the Translation of the

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62. Poems, ed. Ringler, pp. 150-1.

Psalmes by Sir Philip Sidney, and the countess of Pembroke his sister."

Lady Bedford also did translations from the French of Robert Garnier's Antonie (1592, 1595) and her brother's friend, Plessis de Mornay's Discours de la Vie et de la Mort (1592, 1600) and from the Italian, Petrarch's The Triumph of Death which remained in manuscript. Her real greatness, however, lies in the extensive and generous patronage of letters which earned her tributes from many writers of the age including Samuel Daniel and Edmund Spenser.[63]

It is curious that Jonson, who had connections with most of the members of her family, makes only one reference to her, that "Sir P. Sidney had translated some of the Psalmes, which went abroad under the name of the Countesse of Pembrock" (Convers. 204-5). Two poems to her formerly attributed to Jonson are now thought to be spurious.[64] Perhaps, being of the previous generation, she did not favour the 'strong lines' which Jonson and Donne, both in revolt against Elizabethan conventions, had brought into poetry. Her patronage of Jonson's rival, Daniel, might also have contributed to their difference.[65]

Her son William (1580-1630) inherited her literary tastes and reputation. Anthony à Wood writes that he was "the very picture and Viva effigies of Nobility, a Person truly generous, a singular lover

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63. Nicolas Breton, Samuel Daniel, Abraham Fraunce, Gabriel Harvey, Thomas Nashe and numerous more minor poets offered her tributes; Thomas Morley dedicated to her a collection of songs; see Frances Berkeley Young's Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke (London, 1912), pp. 120-204.
64. Sidney Lee in the DNB account of Lady Pembroke suggests that she was the unnamed countess of Und. L, who is now thought to be Lady Rutland; the epitaph "Underneath this sable hearse" is now given to William Browne. see Mary Sidney, pp. 198-200, and H & S, VIII, 433-4.
65. See Convers, 23-4, 152, 211-2.

of learning and the professors thereof'[66]; and Aubrey, that he was "the greatest Maecenas to learned Men of any Peer of his time: or since."[67] Jonson seems to have wanted to dedicate his best work to Pembroke, for he offered him the Epigrammes (1616), drawing attention to the fact that they were the "ripest" of his studies, and Catiline, of which he wrote, "It is the first (of this race) that ever I dedicated to any person, and had I not thought it the best, it should have beene taught a lesse ambition".[68] Jonson's declaration to Pembroke, "You have ever been free and Noble to mee,"[69] is borne out by his famous revelation to Drummond, which deserves the tribute of repetition, that "every first day of the new year he had 20lb sent him from the Earl of Pembrok to buy bookes" (Convers. ll. 312-3). It was he and his wife who gave the occasion for Jonson's epigram, "Song. That women are but mens shadows" (For. VII); Drummond records, "Pembrok and his Lady discoursing the Earl said the Woemen were mens shadowes, and she maintained them, both appealing to Johnson, he affirmed it true, for which my Lady gave a pennance to prove it in Verse, hence his Epigrame". (Convers. ll. 364-7). Jonson enjoyed a familiarity with those much above him in station who shared his Renaissance values. Pembroke's patronage was as wide as it was generous and he was also a friend of John Donne,[70] Daniel, his old tutor, and George Herbert, his kinsman, and he had connections with Massinger, Chapman, and Inigo Jones; Shakespeare's first folio was inscribed to him and his brother. Like his mother, he wrote poetry himself; it was edited and published by the younger Donne as 'Poems written by the Right Honourable William, Earl of Pembroke, Lord Steward of Her Majesties

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66. Athenae Oxoniensis, i, 795.
67. Brief Lives, p. 145.
68. H & S, V, 431.
69. H & S, I, 199.
70. See Bald, pp. 350-1.

Household, many of which are answered by way of repartee by Sir Benjamin Ruddier, knight, with several Poems written by them occasionally and apart." To Rudyerd, Pembroke's friend, Jonson addressed Ep. CXXI and CXXII. In 1630, the earl was "suddenly snatcht away by Death (to the grief of all learned, and good men)"[71].

Jonson's epigram to Pembroke (Ep. CII) describes him as "an Epigramme on all mankind".[72] It is a significant epithet, for it suggests a particular consonance between Jonson's ideal of man and the form in which he usually chose to express it. 'Epigramme' is used here to mean 'epitome' or 'quintessence'; Jonson described his poem on Lord Burleigh (Und. XXX) as an "epitome". Jonson made the epigram express the essence of its subject, the human qualities which were the basis of literature and the good life. The inference is that the genre was especially suited to the expression of Jonson's ideal of man, that the epigram permitted the poet to present the image of the ideal briefly, clearly, and concisely. The poem to Lady Bedford (Ep. LXXVI) shows how an image could be drawn in an epitomical and quintessential fashion, for it conveys an image of the person and the ideal with an admirable wholeness and perfect unity of matter and form. It shows how Jonson was able to adapt the epigram to the expression of his humanistic values.

Jonson's epigram to Pembroke, however, does not mention his literary interests or patronage. It envisages him purely in terms of his character and his place in the court and commonwealth, and pertains to an ideal of public service rather than literature; as such, it will be considered in a subsequent chapter. For the moment, it is sufficient to remark that Jonson's relationship woth Pembroke had a humanistic, and specifically literary, basis.

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71. Brief Lives, p. 145.
72. See Trimpi, pp. 167, 153-9; see also Ep. CIIII.

Jonson addresses many other members of the Sidney-Herbert connection; in fact, nearly every member of the family is mentioned. Many of them also had literary propensities. Sidney's dauther, Elizabeth, Countess of Rutland (d. 1612) was also a poet, and Jonson's friend and patron. To her he addressed three poems, Ep. LXXIX, For, XII, and Und. I; the last two were in part suppressed because of references to her unfortunate marriage.[73] She was a character in Jonson's lost May Lord, and she performed in Hymenai. A rather personal, and perhaps private, glimpse into their relationship is given by another revelation made to Drummond: "Sir Th: Overburie was in love with her and caused Ben to read his wyffe to her, which he with an excellent grace did & praised the Author"; Jonson's reading was so successful that Lady Rutland kept some of the lines "in remembrance" and the next morning Overbury accused him of having illicit intentions (Convers. 213-9). Another anecdote to Drummond tells of a falling out with her husband: "Ben one day being at table with my Lady Rutland, her husband coming in, accused her that she keept table to poets, of which she wrott a letter to him which he answered My Lord intercepted the letter, but never chalenged him." (ll. 357-60). Jonson's relationship with the countess was intimate and though it would be risky to speculate further about its nature, it clearly had a literary basis. Her husband, who also received a tribute from Jonson, did not fully share her literary sympathies, and calls to mind that body of the aristocracy which in contrast to the Sidneys spurned the new ideals of learning.

Jonson's epigram to her is the praise of a professional poet to a gifted amateur; after paying tribute to her father he goes on to discuss her own work:

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73. See H & S, VIII, 10 and XI, 88.

Hence was it, that the destinies decreed
(Save that most masculine issue of his braine)
No male unto him: who could so exceed
Nature, they thought, in all, that he would faine.
At which, shee happily displeas'd, made you:
On whom, if he were living now, to looke,
He should those rare, and absolute numbers view,
As he would burne, or better farre his booke.

It is clear that Jonson's intention is to compliment, both in mentioning her father's eminence and her own pre-eminence. The claim that she surpassed her father in poetry seems an extravagant one, and smacks of flattery, but it seems to reflect Jonson's actual opinion of her verse. He told Drummond that she was "nothing inferior to her Father ... in Poesie' (Convers. 213-4); the evident sincerity of this remark made six years after her death and in a private conversation gives support to the praise in the poem. The suggestion, however, that her work would cause Sidney to burn his own indicates Jonson's concern to compliment his subject, but hyperbole does not contradict the truth, for Jonson did not praise work he secretly deplored. It can perhaps be explained by Jonson's eagerness to establish Lady Rutland as an example of true nobility and the due respect for letters. By praising a great noble-woman who was a poet herself and a member of a family distinguished by its own literary accomplishments and by its patronage, Jonson is furthering the values which he thought important.

Lady Mary Worth (Fl.1621) was the niece of Sir Philip Sidney, the daughter of his brother Robert, first earl of Leicester (1563-1626), the 'great lord' of thepoem 'To Penshurst'. To her, Jonson dedicated the Alchemist, where he claims she is "most deserving her name, and Bloud", and praises her judgement "which is a Sidney's"; he also addressed her in three poems, Ep. CII and CV, and Und. XXVIII, and praised her hospitality in the poem to her husband (For. III). Jonson, punning, commented to Drummond that she was "unworthily maried

on a Jealous husband" (Convers. 355-6); she, like Lady Rutland, took part in The May Lord (Convers. 393-8), and she also acted in the Masque of Blackness, Twelfth Night, 1605. She also was both patroness and poet, and her work, Urania, called The Countess of Montgomeries, Urania as a compliment to Susan, wife of her cousin, Philip, Earl of Montgomery, was licensed 13 July, 1621. Jonson praises her ability as a love poet (Und. XXVIII) in a spirit similar to that in which he commended the work of her cousin Lady Rutland; he also praises her family name:

> How well, faire crowne of your faire sexe, might hee,
> That but the twi-light of your sprite did see,
> And noted for what flesh such soules were fram'd,
> Know you to be a SYDNEY, though un-nam'd?
> And, being nam'd, how little doth that name
> Need any Muses praise to give it fame?
> Which is, it selfe, the imprese of the great,
> And glorie of them all, but to repeate!
> Forgive me then, if mine but say you are
> A SYDNEY: but in that extend as farre
> As lowdest praisers, who perhaps would find
> For every part a character assign'd.
> My praise is plaine, and where so ere profest,
> Becomes none more than you, who need it least.
>
> (Ep. CIII)

The name is used to represent the values with which she and the other members of the family were associated.

In a different vein, Jonson complimented her as a reincarnation of the excellence of the golden age in the poem (Ep. CV) which we have considered in another chapter. It was, we recall, a courtly, if somewhat hyperbolic poem of compliment, rather mythographical in the manner of the masques. Though the poem makes no explicit reference to letters, it is a "literary" poem: it has an air of conscious artifice. It makes extensive use of mythographical symbols to lend grace, and moral content, to a compliment. Though it evokes an ideal, it is not deeply felt and gives the impression of being a literary exercise.

The ideal of womanhood it depicts is less precise and more courtly than that in the poem to Lady Bedford, and indicates Jonson's intention to render gracefully his duty to his patroness.

In addition to Lady Wroth, Jonson addressed poetry to other children of Sir Robert Sidney. Another daughter, Philipea, or Philip, is addressed in a short poem in which the Sidney name is again singled out for praise:

> I Must beleeve some miracles still bee,
> When SYDNYES name I heare, or face I see.
>
> (Ep. CXIIII)

To Sir Robert's son, Sir William Sidney (1590-1612), Jonson wrote an ode on the occasion of his birthday. Again it is his respect for that great family which comes through the praise of one of its members:

> 'Twill be exacted if your name, whose sonne,
> Whose nephew, whose grand-child you are;
> And men
> Will, then,
> Say you have follow'd farre,
> When well begunne:
> Which must be now,
> They teach you how.
>
> (For. XIIII, ll. 41-8)

That Jonson praises both of these lesser members of the family shows that he adopted his role of poet with regard to the whole family, and not only to its great patrons like Pembroke and Lady Wroth.

Susan, Countess of Montgomery, to whom Lady Wroth dedicated her Urania was another lady of the Sidney-Herbert connection whom Jonson praises. She had taken part in The Masques of Blackness and Beauty, Hymenai and The Masque of Queenes. Jonson's poem to her is also a courtly compliment, and gives the theme of the age of gold a biblical turn. Lady Montgomery was of a religious temperament; Gifford comments

that she was "a Lady of strict piety and virtue"[74]:

> Were they that nam'd you, prophets? Did they see,
> Even in the dew of grace, what you would bee?
> Or did our times require it, to behold
> A new SUSANNA, equall to that old?
> Or, because some scarce thinke that story true,
> To make those faithfull, did the Fates send you?
> And to your Scene lent no lesse dignitie
> Of birth, of match, of forme, of chastitie?
> Or, more than borne for the comparison
> Of former age, or glorie of our one,
> Were you advanced, past those times, to be
> The light, and marke unto posteritie?
> Judge they, that can: Here I have rais'd to show
> A picture, which the world for yours must know,
> And like it too; if they looke equally:
> If not, 'tis fit for you, some should envy.
>
> (Ep. CIIII)

Jonson relates the biblical example to the character of Lady Rutland and to the needs of the time. Though another poem of compliment, it is less allusive and more specific than the mythographical poem to Lady Wroth, and defines the Christian aspect of the ideal of womanhood.

Lady Montgomery's husband was Philip Herbert, who was the second son of the second Earl of Pembroke and brother of Jonson's patron the third earl. He was James' first English favourite; his attractive figure and skill in hunting enchanted his king. In May, 1603, he was made a gentleman of the privy chamber; in July, Knight of the Bath; he was a gentleman of the bed-chamber from 1605 until the end of the reign. In 1605, he also became Baron Herbert of Shurland and Earl of Montgomery. In 1608, he was made Knight of the Garter, and from that time onwards given lavish grants. No real accomplishment accounts for this rise: "He pretended to no other qualifications," wrote

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74. Works, viii, 216. Another work, a religious treatise by Robert Newton, The Countesse of Montgomeries Eusebia, Expressing briefly the Soules Praying Robes (London, 1620) was dedicated to Lady Mary Pembroke and the branches of her family. Gifford mistakenly attributes it to Lady Montgomery.

Clarendon, "than to understand horses and dogs very well, which his master loved him the better for, (being at his first coming into England very jealous of those who had the reputation of great parts,) and to be believed honest and generous, which made him many friends and left him no enemy".[75] Though Montgomery was actually bad-tempered and foul-mouthed, he maintained the king's favour; Wood describes him as "a person esteemed a very frequent swearer, and one so intolerably cholerick, quarrelsome, and offensive while he was Lord Chamberlain to K. Ch. I. that he did not refrain to break many wiser heads than his own".[76]

The only evidence that Montgomery had any personal connection with Jonson is a letter of appeal to him from Jonson when imprisoned for Eastward Ho. This does not mean that Herbert did not have some interest in literature, for, like his mother and brother, he was a patron of Massinger; in conjunction with his brother, he also received several dedications. As a courtier, he took part in many of Jonson's masques: Hymenai, The Haddington masque, The Vision of Delight, For the Honour of Wales, and Love's Triumph; and he tilted in Prince Henry's Barriers, 1610, and in the Chalenge at Tilt, 1614. But apart from his role in these courtly entertainments he finds no place in Jonson's work. He is not mentioned in the poems to his wife, nor to the other members of the family. No verse is given to him. That Jonson did not praise this man, though a Sidney and a prominent favourite, shows that he was not willing to praise every member of that illustrious family.

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75. Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, The History of the Rebellion, ed. W. Dunn Macray (Oxford, 1888) I, 74; see also, VI, 539-41.
76. Athenae Oxoniensis, i, 795.

The poems to Penshurst and to Sir Robert Wroth, which have already been considered in relation to Jonson's social ideals, further exemplify the way in which Jonson drew from his own experience the material of his poetry. The estates of two of his most prominent patrons become the basis for the depiction of an idealised society; in this picture the ideal and real elements are deftly integrated, and the celebration of an English country estate becomes the occasion for defining a harmonious, if rather conservative, social order. Poetry is not given a prominent role in this idealised picture. In neither poem does Jonson give much attention to the serious aspects of his own craft. Poetry contributes to the joyful spirit in the hall of the Wroth estate.

> APOLLO'S harpe, and HERMES lyre resound
> Nor are the Muses strangers found.
>
> (For. III, ll. 51-2)

In the poem to Penshurst, Jonson makes a passing reference to Sir Philip Sidney's birth, "where all the Muses met." These are his only explicit references to his art.

The role of poetry in such a society is revealed, however, by the poems themselves. It was, precisely, the personal and social values which lay behind both literature and these idealised societies that gave poetry its importance. These, the ultimate concern of poetry, were also what united Jonson to the Sidneys, and what he celebrated in its individual members and in the lives of their estates.

The Sidneys are very prominent during the first period of Jonson's life. Altogether, six (out of one hundred thirty-three) of the epigrams and four (out of fifteen) of the poems in the Forest are addressed to them. In addition, the Alchemist (q. 1612), Catiline and the Epigrammes (1616) were dedicated to members of the family. Outside of this evident presence in the 1616 folio, there is little extant

poetry addressed to them: there is a suppressed poem to the Countess of Rutland (Und. L) written before 1612, the year of her death, and one poem to the Lady Wroth (Und. XXVIII), which cannot be definitely dated; presumably it dates from after the publication of the Epigrammes. When Jonson spoke to Drummond about the Sidneys, it was largely reminiscence. By 1616, several of them had died: the Countess of Rutland and Sir William Sidney in 1612; Sir Robert Wroth in 1614. Though Pembroke and Lady Wroth continued their patronage of letters and probably of Jonson, they disappear from the forefront of his poetry, and their disappearance coincides with the end of the first period of Jonson's life. This was fitting, for the Sidneys had their roots in the age of Elizabeth, and though they continued their prominence into the new reign, they represented the ideals which had been developed throughout the sixteenth century and had been exemplified by Sir Philip Sidney.

Jonson was fortunate in his patrons. They included some of the most brilliant aristocrats of his age, and he seems to have enjoyed a close relationship with most of them, as his residence with Aubigny and his reminiscences about the Sidneys indicate. This was not necessarily the case, for Jonson's friend George Chapman spent a good part of his life searching for a patron. His Twelve Bookes of the Iliads (1610) contained sixteen sonnets (from which some were subtracted and others added in the 1611 edition) and addressed to nearly everyone of any importance or potential in his society in an attempt to interest one of them in his work; there is little evidence that he knew any of them personally. The poem to James' favourite, the Earl of Somerset, is the only one in the group which may be said to have profited him at all, for the notorious Somerset was to become his final Homeric patron.[77] Jonson's friendship with some of the greatest

77. Poems, ed. Bartlett, pp. 396-405 and notes.

nobles of the age is evidence of his position in the tradition of Renaissance humanism and the world of letters. The Sidneys particularly exemplified the literary values of the age, and in their relationship with Jonson, they were to a large extent endorsing the work of Sir Philip Sidney's greatest living successor.

Central to Jonson's friendships with poets, scholars, and patrons was a common tradition and acceptance of certain humanistic values. The way in which Jonson envisaged his relationship to his friends and to their common ideals was largely inherited and typical of his age. Perhaps, he held his convictions more seriously and drew upon them more purposefully than most of his fellow poets; his greater seriousness is evident in the consistent moral fibre of his work. Perhaps, he adhered to his principles more strictly. Perhaps, because of his extensive classical and Renaissance culture, he was also able to base his beliefs on a more solid foundation and to see them in a wider context. These make him the outstanding representative of a common heritage, a position which was recognized by people such as Selden and the Sidneys, who were among the greatest exponents of Renaissance culture of his day.

The predominance of the epigram in the early poetry is an indication of the kind of statement Jonson sought to achieve. He was evidently attempting to convey the image of his ideals in the most incisive and economical fashion. In the epigram, he found a form which enabled him to draw an image which was both concrete and ideal and which had a particular unity, coherence, and conciseness. Though he made use of more discursive genres, such as the epistle and the ode, to convey the same values, they did not permit the same taut and pithy expression. The epigrams have a chiselled perfection, suited both to presenting the image of a person and an ideal.

There is, moreover, an evident concern to achieve formal perfection in these epigrams. They combine a solid foundation in reality and Truth with absolute control of language and images; they are both substantial and spare.[78] What is more, they demonstrate an admirable marriage of matter and form, a harmony which is the result of the depth of Jonson's convictions and the mastery of his craftsmanship. It is not too much to suggest that this formal perfection is itself a reflection of the "reason of things", the rational order of the universe.

Finally, Jonson was also concerned that his poetry be relevant. He frequently spoke of "the needs of the times" and related his values to society at large. By affirming the value of letters, Jonson was asserting their importance in the diffusion of Renaissance humanism. But letters were a means, not an end, a means of acquiring and expressing the Truth; their end was "to instruct men in the best reason of living". They were directed to the betterment both of individuals and society as a whole; hence Jonson's images of persons and of larger societies such as Durants and Penshurst. In the poems considered in this chapter, Jonson was defining the place of letters in the scheme of things, but this was not really his most important endeavour. He was primarily concerned with the ethical and social values which were in the final analysis the ultimate justification of poetry. He constantly related his ideals of character and literature to the needs of society as a whole, and consequently sought to embody in his work images of those who had made important contributions to their age in the sphere of public action.

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78. See Knights, pp. 151-67.

VI

An Ideal of Public Service

Jonson's poetry of praise to the notable public figures of his age is a tribute to good men. The ideals of character which he promoted found their realization in action, and, though he appreciated and praised the contributions of poets and scholars, it was for men of action that he reserved his highest commendation; his priorities are made clear even in the poem to Savile:

> Although to write be lesser then to doo,
> It is the next deed, and a great one too.
> (Ep. XCV, ll. 25-6)

Jonson's poetry of praise is a tribute to those who by their life and actions have realized and demonstrated the ideals of man which had been developed in the Renaissance and which Jonson had incorporated with some adjustment into his view of life. At the same time, the poetry defined the nature of the good man, and his role in society. For Jonson, character and action were intimately related, and a man's ability to make a contribution to his society was a consequence of his character; Jonson repeatedly emphasises this relationship: "Good men are the Stars, the Planets of the Ages wherein they live, and illustrate the times. God did never let them be wanting to the world ... " (Disc. 1100-2). And again, "they are ever good men, that must make good the times: if the men be naught, the times will be such" (Disc. 247-8).[1] An admirable character was the basis of praiseworthy actions.

1. Jonson also refers to the good man at Disc. 1-12, 1323-1467, et passim.

Jonson's praise of contemporaries, those who by their character and actions had fashioned the life and quality of his own times, is the recognition not only of their personal merit, but also of place in the quality and achievement of their age.

Jonson's praise is on one level idealistic. He looked at his fellow men in the light of his ideal of man, and praised or criticized them in as much as they realised or fell short of it. His attitude was humanistic, and derived from ethical and social ideals current in the Renaissance. Generally he conveyed his ideals by means of portraits of individuals, but when these individual portraits are taken together, they reveal the vision of a moral order which is at the basis of all his work; though the poems represent no more than single instances, together they reveal a serious and constant outlook on life and a coherent and consistent system of values. This ideal of man was a concept, a creed, a code, a criterion, an intellectual and rational vision of the attributes and the actions which were proper to man.

Yet, despite this idealistic basis, Jonson's praise was never removed from everyday life. If its inspiration was intellectual, its raison d'etre - and its sustenance - was reality. It dealt with contemporary examples of goodness, and was directed to the improvement of the times. It was both realistic and topical.

Jonson made considerable use of contemporary history and envisaged his subjects in the light of their times. They are presented against the backgrounds of their actions, their lives, their contributions to their age. Though the poems can be read, and to some extent appreciated without this topical reference, they can be better understood in relation to it. This is not only because Jonson was writing

for his own age, but also because he was using it deliberately and purposefully in his poetry.

There is another justification of our attempt to see with a Jacobean eye. Jonson's view of the people he praised was that of a contemporary, and was to some extent shared by the men of his age. His choice of people to praise was based on the facts of their achievement, what had been recorded to their credit in the annals of history, or what testified to their worth in their contemporary position in society. Their accomplishments, their standing, their reputations, their relations with Jonson - all the matter of history - elucidate his praise, for they are its basis.

These considerations, moreover, elucidate not only the background of Jonson's praise, but also a fundamental question of poetic theory: the due relationship between fact and fiction. About this simple relationship turns a host of complexities, and Jonson shows himself constantly aware of them. In the poem to Sir Thomas Roe (Ep. XCIX) Jonson clearly indicated that reality, the actual facts which lay behind his praise, was of primary importance:

> How much of great example wert thou, ROE,
> If time to facts, as unto men, would owe?

The poem concludes with an exhortation:

> Well, though thy name lesse then our great ones bee,
> Thy fact is more, let truth encourage thee.

The implication is that factual truth was not only the basis of a valid assessment of the person but also of a poet's praise. Whether a poem is praise or flattery depends on whether it has its basis in fact or fiction. Jonson proclaimed to Drummond that he "never esteemed a man for the name of a Lord" and "that he would not flatter though he saw Death" (Convers. 337, 331). He implies that his praise was just and deliberate.

This noble resolution was made in the knowledge that some tenets of Renaissance poetics justified a disregard for the facts. The didactic theory of poetry placed moral above factual truth, and reasoned to its logical conclusion led Sidney to praise Xenophon for his indifference to the facts in an historical account. (pp. 103, 108, 110). Because Jonson espoused a didactic theory, while at the same time endeavouring to maintain a regard for the facts, he was obliged to reconcile elements which are not always compatible. Because he set out to praise, he had to reconcile this intention with the necessity of teaching; his resolution depended on his attitude to factual truth and its efficacy in teaching, and whether he considered praise to be, not a recognition of actual merit, but a subtle form of teaching. Thus, the Aristotelian and Sidneian doctrine of moral probability, and the lengthy Renaissance debate about the relative value of history, philosophy, and poetry in inculcating the good life lies behind the issues, and Jonson's decision to make use of his own times represents a modification of, and a contribution, to this tradition. But in doing this, Jonson had to resolve numerous complexities.

This chapter will be devoted to eliciting from Jonson's poetry of praise some idea of the qualities he admired in his contemporaries. It will be concerned with Jonson's use of contemporary history: the men and actions he chose to praise, the manner in which he chose to praise them, and the relationship of these factors to contemporary opinion and historical facts. In short, this chapter is concerned with clarifying Jonson's ideal of man, and its application to his age.

An incident, a single fact, can be the occasion of a poem and pertinent reflections; Jonson used an act of heroism by Sir Henry Carey as the occasion for reflections on the martial ideal (Ep. LXVI).

Jonson associated this ideal with the national past, and in "A speech according to Horace" (Und. XLIV), with mediaeval heroes such as Guy of Warwick, Bevis of Southampton, and King Arthur, and the ancient nobility, the Beauchamps, Nevilles, Cliffords, and Audleys. Though a feature of darker times, it was still relevant to the new age of learning, and Jonson adhered to it; in fact, he laments its passing, and is happy to find examples of it in his own day. In his poem to Carey, he celebrates it in relation to a specific act: the charge made by Carey and three others at a band of Italian cavalry, who had routed a much superior force of English and Dutch soldiers. Carey's valiant act, which led to his being taken by the enemy, led Jonson to reflect on the true nature of valour and 'vertue'. He exhorted Carey to be proud of his capture - "thy great loss" - and to love honors,

> which of best example bee,
> When they cost dearest, and are done most free,
> Though every fortitude deserves applause,
> It may be much, or little in the cause.
> Hee's valiant'st, that dares fight, and not for pay;
> That vertuous is, when the reward's away.

Here, Jonson contrasts Carey's behaviour with the common practice of mercenaries. The last line which is derived from Juvenal[2] defines the value of Carey's act; that true 'vertue' lies in good deeds done for their own sake.

In a similar vein, Jonson celebrates the martial ideal in a poem to Sir John Radcliffe (Ep. XLIII). A friend of Jonson's, he had given him a manuscript of Juvenal's Satires and Horace's Ars Poetica, and a copy of Hermes Trismegistus' Opuscula cum fragmentis ... Item Asclepii Discipuli adiecta (London, 1611).[3] Undoubtedly their friendship was to some extent intellectual and literary. But Jonson

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2. McEwen, Classical Influence, p. 54.
3. See H & S, I, 262-3, 265.

chose to praise Sir John and his brothers for their accomplishments on the field of battle. In their military service the men of his family had achieved and lost much. Jonson commends Sir John for valour, spirit, and goodness, qualities which make a man as well as a soldier, and at the same time elegizes the misfortunes of his family: the two brothers who died fighting rebels in Ireland, the two others who, had they not been taken away by the "Belgick fever", might have fallen with equal greatness. These deaths in the service of their country are regarded as a credit to the family and worthy of praise, and together with the current life of the surviving brother, they represent the martial ideal.

Jonson, however, in describing the qualities of Sir John Radcliffe suggests broader implication, a wider context. In addition to the valour and spirit which he shared with his brothers, Sir John had his own goodness to increase his merit. The martial ideal is given its place within the ideal of the good man.

Jonson makes the same conjunction in a poem written to Sir Horace Vere (Ep. XCI), who was one of the greatest soldiers of the age. Since 1590, he had served the British interest in the Netherlands, at first in conjunction with his brother Sir Francis, who was general of the English troops in the Netherlands, and then in his place. In 1604 he had foiled Spinole's attempts to prevent the capture of Sluys, and the following year, was largely responsible for saving the Dutch army from destruction at the battle of Mulheim. This might have occasioned Jonson's poem. In 1610, he served at the siege of Juliers. Jonson, however, puts aside Vere's military achievements in order to celebrate his more personal attributes:

Which of they names I take, not onely beares
A romane sound, but romane vertue weares,
Illustrious Vere or Horace; fit to be
Sung by a Horace, or a Muse as free;
Which they art to thy selfe: whose fame was wonne
In th'eye' of Europe, where they deedes were done,
When on thy trumpet shee did sound a blast,
Whose relish to eternitie shall last.
I leave thy acts, which should proscouute
Throughout, might flatt'rie seeme; and
to be mute
To any one, were envie: which would live
Against my grave, and time could not forgive
I speake thy ether graces, not lesse showne
Not lesse in practice; but less mark'd, lesse knowne
Humanitie, and pietie, which are
As noble in great chiefs as they are rare.
And best become the valiant man to weare,
Who more should seeke mens reverence, then leave.

Jonson saw Vere primarily in terms of the humanistic values derived from antiquity, but he also suggested specifically Christian overtones in paying tribute to his piety. Fuller comments that "Sir HORACE had more meekness, and as much valour as his Brother, so pious, that he first made his peace with God, before he went out to war with man."[4] He was of an excellent temper, and much loved by his soldiers. Jonson in true humanistic fashion sees through his great actions to find the essence of the man in his character.

These poems to Carey, Radcliffe and Vere were topical. They refer to living individuals and contemporary events: the rebellion in Ireland and the wars in the Netherlands. Jonson, however, uses them as the basis for reflections on the martial ideal, thereby uniting the general principle with particular instances which are relevant to the times.

In contrast to the poems which celebrate the martial ideal, there are those which satirize a fraudulent soldiery which by empty boasting and bravado sought to acquire both honour and sustenance.

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4. Worthies, "Essex", 331.

The various Captains - Capt. Surly, Capt. Hazard, Capt. Hungry - who people Jonson's epigrams are objects of scorn, and are not to be regarded as true soldiers. Jonson, proud that he himself had once been a soldier, claimed to love their "great profession", but he could not tolerate those who were "misse-call'd Captaynes" and who wronged and shamed it (Ep. CVIII).

Despite an allegiance to the martial ideal, Jonson does not give it priority. It was to the new ideals of learning and public service that he gave his greater attention. In his poems to men of letters and to the members of the Sidney family, he had defined ethical and literary values. In the same way, he defined an ideal of public service in his poems to the public officials of his day. That these are given greater prominence than the soldiers is in keeping with the humanistic values of the age.

To find images for his ideal of public service, Jonson had to scan the field of public action and scruitinize the leaders of his day. His praise was occasional, but its scope and terms varied according to whether it was inspired by a laudable act, a noble achievement, a virtuous stand, or a life of exemplary service. Whatever the particular accomplishment, it usually gives rise to reflection on universal principles. A good example of the celebration of a single act is a poem to Lord Mounteagle (Ep. LX) the Catholic peer who gave timely warning of the Gunpowder Plot, which was thought to have been contrived by idealistic and fanatical Catholics to restore their religion. The poem is an expression of patriotism, of gratitude to the "saver" of the country, and similar in spirit to the martial poems. It celebrates a well-known incident. It does not, however, attempt to relate its history, or explore the biography of Mounteagle for his individual part in it, or his particular virtues. It celebrates the man only in connexion

with this act, and even about this it assumes a knowledge of the facts. The exposition of facts was the responsibility of the historian, or biographer; the poet wrote encomium, "a distinct division of literature, a laudatory composition on some assigned theme and following conventional rules. It is a presentation, with more or less extravagant praise, of the good qualities of a person or thing."[5] From the Greeks to the Jacobeans it is an expression of values. Here what interests Jonson is the value of Mounteagle's act and the poem consequently leads to reflections on loyalty to one's country. Some such union of a particular act and universal principle will be present in all of Jonson's poems praising public service, the encomia which celebrate the truly noble figures and actions of his day.

In several other poems, for example (Ep. V) "On the Union" and (Ep. LI) "To King James, Upon the happy false rumour of his death, the two and twentieth day of March, 1607" Jonson celebrates specific historical incidents. Other poems are associated with formal occasions, such as (Und. XXX) "An Epigram on William Lord Burl: Lo: High Treasurer of England. Presented upon a plate of Gold to his son Rob, E. of Salisbury, when he was also Treasurer." Other poems celebrate births, birthdays and promotions, and lament deaths; all are more or less tied to the incidents which occasion them, and nearly all move to more general considerations. This is one way in which Jonson used contemporary history in his poetry.

Often, however, the occasion of a poem is impossible to determine, which suggests that the particular occasion was not important, or that it was not a specific incident which gave rise to it but perhaps the general appreciation of a man's character of life. This seems to be

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5. Theodore Burgess, "Epideictic Literature," The University of Chicago Studies in Classical Philology, III (1902), p. 113.

the case with a poem (Und. XLVI) to Sir Edward Coke (1552-1634). Though it has a biographical structure, for it describes the various stages of Coke's career, it remains general; the praise of his character and actions in office is without explicit reference to specific events. A knowledge of the factual background is again taken for granted, but an examination of it will show how Jonson's praise is related to Coke's actual life and contemporary history.

We know from the title that the poem was written between Coke's appointment as Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1613, and his fall in 1616.[6] During these years Coke was much in the public eye. His prominence was due to his support of the authority of the inherited body of legal precedent known as the common law, against the king's prerogative. In the defence of the common law he had actively opposed the interference of the royal or prerogative courts (the Star Chamber, Chancery, and High Commission) with the pre-eminent jurisdiction of the common law ones (the Common Pleas and King's Bench).

A good example of Coke's methods was his opposition to the ecclesiastical High Commission which had begun to try cases which were under common law jurisdiction. Coke opposed this by issuing prohibitions which arrested cases until the question of jurisdiction could be decided. When matters came to a head Coke, whose opinion was contrary to that of the Chancellor, Lord Ellesmere, the Solicitor General Bacon, Archbishop Bancroft and the king himself, was called to plead his position before James who had decided to act as arbiter.[7] At the second

6. This discussion of Sir Edward Coke is largely based on Catherine Drinker Bowen's The Lion and the Throne (London, 1957), with cross-references to two histories of the period: Samuel R. Gardiner's History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1603-42 (London, 1883) and David Harris Willson's King James VI and I (London, 1956).
7. Gardiner, II, 35-42; Bowen, pp. 254-7; Willson, James VI and I pp. 258-9.

meeting (November 1608) Coke boldly informed James that even the king was protected by the common law. James retorted angrily that the king protected the law, and not the law the king,[8] and even Coke is said to have fallen down on all fours to beg pardon of his raging sovereign; but he persisted in opposition, quite alone, unsupported by the other four chief justices of the common law courts.[9] He found his support in Parliament.[10] The difficulties escalated as Coke's principles led him to deny that the King could settle points of law, and that royal proclamations had the force of law.[11] In 1613, on the suggestion of Bacon, Coke was promoted to the Office of Chief Justice of the King's Bench, a more honourable but less lucrative position, and though Coke protested his attachment to the Common Pleas, he finally accepted the new office with reluctance. Ten days later he became privy councillor.[12] These promotions were in fact a cunning reprimand but they failed either to shake him into submission or distract him with the prospect of advancement. He continued to attack the prerogative courts resisting the growing jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery, which repeatedly interfered in the common law courts and stopped judgement, and the king's right to grant commendams (a benefice in which the holder could receive the revenues while a deputy performed the duties). In the case of commendams James ordered a stay to the trial but, since it was against their oath, the twelve judges refused. Later, all except the indomintable Coke submitted.[13]

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8. Bowen, pp. 260-4; Before the lower house Coke had said that "The common law hath admeasured the King's prerogative. It is not I, Edward Coke, that speaks it but the records that speak it"; see Bowen, pp. 251 ff.
9. See Bowen, p. 266.
10. Bowen, pp. 257 and 266-7; Willson, James VI and I, p. 258.
11. Gardiner, II, 104-5; Bowen, 274-7.
12. Gardiner, II, 207-9; Bowen, 291-4.
13. Gardiner, III, 1-19; Bowen, pp. 309-13, 321-2; Willson, James VI and I, pp. 380-2.

These various conflicts finally came to a head on June 30, 1616. Coke was suspended from the Council and the public exercise of his judicial duties. After several attempts by Bacon and others to bring him into submission, on November 15 he was removed from the Bench.[14] His fall was a profound shock to his contemporaries.

In the climate which preceded this fall, Jonson presumably wrote the poem to Coke. His description of Sir Edward as "Lord Chiefe Justice of England" is perhaps significant in view of James' displeasure over Coke's use of this traditional title, though we have no way of knowing whether Jonson was aware of James' cavil.[15] He could hardly, however, have been unaware of the judicial dispute because of its sensational nature, his own connection with the court (for which he had been writing masques since 1605), and with Salisbury, Ellesmere, and Sir Francis Bacon, three of the protagonists. In these circumstances, his praise for Coke's virtue is certainly significant. If we read the first lines in their historical context, they gain much:

> He that should search all Glories of the Gowne,
> And steps of all rais'd servants of the Crowne,
> He could not find, then thee, of all that store
> Whom Fortune aided lesse, or Vertue more.

That singular and often solitary courage and integrity with which Coke fronted a most formidable opposition showed the qualities which brought about his rise to power. Without the gifts of fortune, greatness of blood, title, or even the royal favour which James readily bestowed on lesser men, Coke rose solely because of his own exceptional ability. He was never obsequious or eager for advancement, and if he received it was quick to point out that it was without his solicitation: Fuller

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14. Gardiner, III, 23-7; Bowen, pp. 331-6; Willson, James VI and I, p. 383.
15. He had done this in the last volume of his Reports (1615); see Gardiner III, 23-4; Bowen, p. 327.

writes that he much applauded his success "in his free coming by all his Offices ... neither begging, nor bribing for preferment."[16]

James' favour was prodigal, and often undeserved. Surely Jonson had in mind the numerous "thirty pound knights" and the superb and insufferable favourites who crowded the court. The favourite Carr rose over the same period to become a knight (1607), viscount (1611), and earl (1613), because of James' attraction to him. Yet, nothing more than a "comely personage, mixt with a handsom and Courtly garb" had recommended him to his king.[17]

Coke on the other hand had worked, and excelled in every undertaking; Jonson describes the stages of his advancement:

> Such, Coke, were thy beginnings, when thy good
> In others evill best was understood:
> When, being the Strangers helpe, the poore mans aide,
> Thy just defences made th'oppressor afraid.

That one person's good is understood by other's evil is a common theme in Jonson's work for he often praises by contrast. The particular qualities praised: helping stranger, aiding the poor, and defending against oppressors, might refer to specific incidents; there is ample evidence of Coke's concern that the humble and defenceless as well as the great and powerful receive justice. There was a famous case in which he successfully defended an obscure country vicar against a charge of libel from a peer, Lord Cromwell.[18] When asked for his opinion in Peacham's case, he had decided in favour of Peacham, an Anglican rector sympathetic to the Puritans, who had been arrested for insulting a bishop, and then tried for treason when an undelivered

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16. Worthies, "Norfolk", 251; see also Bowen, p. 68.
17. Arthur Wilson, History, p. 54; he is not to be confused with D. H. Willson, author of James VI and I.
18. Bowen, p. 60-1.

sermon opposing James' new taxes and attacking the king was discovered among his papers; Peacham however was found guilty, but died before sentence could be carried out.[19] Particular instances, however, are hardly necessary: Coke's respect for the law led him to deal justice even in the face of title or power. He made no party with privilege, nor sought favour by deference.

Jonson goes on to describe Coke's early legal career:

> Such was thy Processe, when Integritie,
> And skill in thee, now, grew Authoritie;
> That Clients strove, in Question of the Lawes,
> More for thy Patronage, then for their Cause.

Coke's rise in the legal profession was rapid. Such was his proficiency that after six years at the Inner Temple, "exceeding early in that strict age"[20] comments Fuller, he was called to the bar (1598). The next year he was chosen Reader at Lyon's Inn, a position usually reserved for barristers of 10 or 12 years standing. There, "his learned Lectures so spred forth his fame, that crouds of Clients sued to him for his counsel."[21] His integrity, which finally led to his downfall, was unassailable; his skill, such that he was known as "the oracle of the law". That clients sued more for his patronage than their own cause is not meant to be literally true, but it has a basis in truth. Hyperbole is after all a literary device intended to heighten the praise; what interests us is the truth which underlies it. Jonson's description is really not far from Fuller's account of Coke's real eminence.

Jonson goes on to the next stage in his career:

> And that thy strong and manly Eloquence
> Stood up thy Nations fame, her Crownes defence.

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19. Bowen, pp. 302-6.
20. Worthies, "Norfolk", 250.
21. Ibid.

Coke had made his greatest reputation as the Crown's defence. As Attorney General, he had been Crown Prosecutor at most of the outstanding trials of the period: those of Essex and Southampton (1601), Sir Walter Raleigh (1603), and the Gunpowder plotters (1604); "In all of these" writes G. P. Macdonell in the DNB, "he exhibited a spirit of rancour, descending even to brutality, for which no one has attempted a defence, his biographers one and all agreeing that his conduct towards Raleigh was simply infamous". Coke was an able though often vituperative and violent speaker, Sir Robert Cecil has left testimony of both of these aspects: Coke's ability to express complicated matters clearly and simply, prompted Cecil at the close of the trial of Father Garnet (1606) "to tell the court that 'he had never heard such a mass of matter better contracted nor made more intelligible to the jury.'"[22] at the trial of Raleigh, however, Cecil rebuked Coke for his overriding rhetoric: "Be not so impatient, good Mr Attorney. Give him leave to speak".[23]

This violent language led Sir John Roe to write to Jonson:

> And when I true friendship end,
> With guilty conscience let me be worse stonge,
> Then with Pophams sentence theeves, or Cookes tongue
> Traitors are.[24]

Lord Mountjoy had said that he would "flee England rather than come under the file of Coke's tongue."[25] Jonson's phrase "strong and manly eloquence" to describe such language is understatement, but again suggests a real quality. Coke's 'eloquence' moreover, had been employed in prosecuting traitors, and trials for treason were, in Cecil's phrase to Garnet, "to make the cause appear as it deserveth".[26]

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22. Bowen, p. 240.
23. Ibid., p. 181.
24. Poems, ed. Grierson, I, 414. This poem was formerly attributed to Donne.
25. Bowen, p. 164.
26. Ibid., p. 231.

"And now such is thy stand," continues Jonson, asserting that as a judge Coke still remains the nation's fame and crown's defence. This is a curious judgement. Jonson does not note the change between Coke's rise as a lawyer and his life as a judge noted by the people of his own time and every historian: "the most offensive of Attorney Generals" wrote Francis Bacon's biographer, "[transformed] into the most admired and venerated of Judges."[27] The energy with which he had defended the crown was turned to an unyielding defence of the common law. In view of Coke's already longstanding (since 1606) opposition to the prerogative, Jonson's statement that he was still the crown's defence (written after 1613) could be a significant political statement; yet for the moment it is sufficient to understand this in a strictly limited sense: that by dealing justice and explaining laws Coke is defending crown and country.

The poem continues:

> while thou dost deale
> Desired Justice to the publique Weale,
> Like Solons selfe.

Solon was a great Athenian reformer and law-giver. Chosen as governor and "reformer of the rigor of the lawes, and the temperer of the state and common weale",[28] he rejected pressures to become a tyrant: "notwithstanding he had refused the kingdome yet he waxed nothing the more remisse nor soft therefore in governing, neither would he bow for feare of the great, nor yet would frame his lawes to their liking, that had chosen him their reformer."[29] In his reform of the law he

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27. James Spedding et al, ed., "The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon," Works, (London, 1857-74), xi, 379-80.
28. Plutarch, The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romaines, trans. Sir Thomas North, (London, 1603), p. 88.
29. Plutarch, p. 89.

instituted a new code which was moderate, notably just, and less harsh than the preceding one (which had for example prescribed death for 'idleness').[30]

The analogy between Solon and Coke is apt and just. Both men had a reputation for integrity and incorruptability and both sought to implement justice through the law. Neither would submit to the pressures of the great. Sir James Whitelocke, a fellow judge in the court of King's Bench said of him: "Never was a man so just, so upright, free from corruption, solicitations of great men or friends as he was ... [Coke was] the most just, honest, and uncorrupt judge that ever sate on bench".[31] Both Solon and Coke though in different ways codified a system of laws; before 1616 Coke had already published the eleven volumes of his Reports (St. Omer, 1600-15), of which Bacon, Coke's rival and enemy wrote:

> (to give every man his due) had it not been for Sir Edward Coke's Reports (which though they may have errors, and some peremptory and extrajudicial resolutions more than are warranted, yet they contain infinite good decisions and rulings over of cases) the law by this time had been almost like a ship without ballast.[32]

His later and greater Institutes, the first part of which was published in 1628, and the second, and third and fourth parts posthumously by order of Parliament 1642-4, rendered an important service to ensuing generations in making accessible in clear and direct language the older legal learning: "he was a Storehouse and magazine of the common-law, for the present times; and laid such a Foundation for the future, that Posterity may for ever build on".[33] Hence Jonson's lines that Coke

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30. Plutarch, p..90.
31. Liber Famelius, ed. John Bruce Camden Society (London, 1858), p. x.
32. See Spedding, VI, 65; see also pp. 76-97.
33. Wilson, HISTORY, p. 97.

explat'st the knottie Lawes
With endlesse labours, whilst thy learning drawes
No lesse of praise, then readers in all kinds
Of worthiest knowledge, that can take mens minds.

Jonson's concluding lines begin "Such is thy All", and he has indeed given us a surprisingly complete picture of this extraordinary person, as man, lawyer, judge, scholar and law writer; except for his career in the commons, which was for the most part later than the poem, Jonson describes all the outstanding achievements of his life.[34] Repeating the sentiments of the opening, Jonson returns to the theme of Fortune and Vertue:

that (as I sung before)
None Fortune aided lesse, or Vertue more.
Or if Chance must, to each man that doth rise,
Needs lend an aide, to thine she had her eyes.

These last lines set Coke up as an example of the rise of a worthy man.

Since there is no evidence that Jonson knew Coke personally, it appears that the judge's heroic stand fired the poet's imagination and earned this tribute. It is cynical to suggest that Jonson admired Coke because of an affinity of character or "no doubt in part because he, like Jonson, was arrogant in the extreme, and 'the most obstinate, opinionated and difficult of men'".[35] "In part", perhaps, but this poem must be read in the context of Coke's contemporary reputation for justice and uncorruptibility and his unbending, if rigid, adherence to his principles against powerful forces and in the face of disfavour, dismissal, and disgrace. This strength of character was something Jonson could sincerely admire.[36] Coke possessed integrity and constancy,

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34. He had been speaker of House of Commons, 1592-3. He later sat for Cornwall, 1621, Norfolk, 1625-6, and Buckinghamshire, 1628.
35. Willson, James VI and I, p. 257; quoted by B. N. De Luna, Jonson's Romish Plot (Oxford, 1967), p. 234.
36. What Jonson would have thought of some of Coke's other opinions is not difficult to imagine. "Five sorts of people" says Fuller, "he used to fore-design to misery and poverty; Chemists, Monopolizers, Concealers, Promoters and Rhyming Poets" (Worthies, "Norfolk", 251).

the elements which make up Jonson's Stoic ideal of character; he also had the combination of public service and scholarship which make up Jonson's ideal of man, and for which Jonson praised Bacon, "I have ever observ'd it, to have beene the office of a wise Patriot, among the greatest affairs of State, to take care of the Common-wealth of Learning" (Disc. 924-6). Coke's 'vertue' cannot be doubted and Jonson's sincerity in praising it cannot be impugned.

One should also recall Jonson's own awareness of the legal abuses of his day. This is evident in his plays, in the satire of lawyers in Poetaster which offended the Inns of Court, in Epicoene with its lawyers civil and canonical, in Volpone, where not until the last does the Law grasp the situation, and is found also in his poetry (Ep. XXXVII):

On Chev'rill the Lawyer

> No cause, no client fat, will Chev'rill leese,
> But as they come, on both sides he takes fees,
> And pleaseth both. For while he meets his greace
> For this; that winnes, for whom he holds his peace.

This is the other side of contemporary legal practice.

The poem to Coke therefore is basically supported by the facts; we can concur with Gifford that the poem "has truth for its basis, and characterizes both the author and his works with discrimination and judgement".[37] Jonson has singled out the most salient aspects of Coke's career and his most important contributions to his age.

Because, however, Jonson has written a poem, rather than a history or biography he has made use of literary devices, those like hyperbole and understatement which affect content, and those like repetition and parallelism which determine form; they were meant to

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37. Works, VIII, 431.

heighten the tone. Behind these devices there are facts; the biographical structure of the poem facilitates the demonstration of its relationship to factual truth. In its noblest form - in Jonson's view its true form - the poetry of praise eschewed the cultivation of style for its own sake, and the selection of matter for the purpose of adulation, or moral instruction. The true poet selects an inherently noble man, and by stressing his moral qualities creates "a pattern of virtue made particularly attractive through the use of a ceremonial style".[38] This leads to admiration, and consequent emulation in the reader or hearer. It must be stressed that stylistic ornamentation was integral to the poetry of praise and was meant to contribute 'magnificence' and heighten the tone rather than distort the truth. By selection, omission, hyperbole, understatement, repetition, parallelism, rhetorical questions, by all the devices of rhetoric the poet sought to adapt his style to the presentation of his subject and values.

Jonson's ideal of public service was the basis of his praise for Sir Henry Neville (1564? - 1615). Like Coke, Neville was neither a great lord nor a favourite, and like him he managed by his integrity and plain dealing to offend the king; a similarity which is perhaps significant. Also like Coke, Neville is not known to have had any personal relations with Jonson, and since he was neither friend nor patron, it seems likely that Jonson praised him simply because he admired him.

Jonson praised Neville (Ep. CIX) for 'vertue' which confers true fame and title "and that's in thee; /Where all is faire, beside thy pedigree", and integrity, which does not seek to conceal private gain under pretext of public service.

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38. Hardison, The Enduring Monument, p. 52; see also Burgess, pp. 118ff.

Thou rather striv'st the matter to possesse,
And elements of honor, then the dresse;
To make thy lent life, good against the Fates:
And first to know thine owne state, then the States.
To be the same in roote, thou art in height;
And that thy soule should give thy flesh her weight.

The theme, a contrast between substance and appearance is frequent in Jonson, and the ideal is the same Stoic ideal of character as in the poems to Roe and Coke.

Jonson, however, discusses these common features in the specific context of an ideal of nobility. Though he refers to Neville's pedigree only to pass over it, the mention of it is significant. Neville was of the old aristocracy of England, a descendant of the second lord Abergavenny and a nephew of the seventh. His ancestors had been peers of England since 1295, and had held before the end of the middle ages a dukedom, a marquisate, five earldoms and five baronies. The Nevilles had made and unmade kings during the Wars of the Roses.[39]

Such an ancient and illustrious lineage was of some account in an age characterized by the lavish creation of peerages and by the consolidation of new families like the Cecils who replaced the old aristocracy decimated during the Wars of the Roses. Jonson recognized the advantages of a truly great ancestry; his poems to the younger Sidneys (For. XIV, 39-46), and later Digbys (Und. LXXXIV, viii) teach them how to use the merit and example of their ancestors as a spur for their own achievement. Such emulation was of particular importance at a time when Jonson felt that the ancient aristocracy was failing to fulfill its traditional role. In "A Speech According to Horace" he mimics those who felt that true nobility could be inherited:

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39. See Burke's Peerage under Abergavenny, Baron.

> Let poore Nobilitie be vertuous: Wee,
> Descended in a rope of Titles, be
> From Guy, or Bevis, Arthur, or from whom
> The Herald will. Our blood is now become
> Past any need of vertue. Let them care,
> That in the Cradle of their Gentrie are;
> To serve the State by Councels, and by Armes;
> We neither love the Troubles, nor the harmes.
>
> (Und. XLIV, ll. 79-86)

Jonson complains that the ancient names "bold/Beauchamps, and Nevills, Cliffords, Audleys old" (l. 81) must, because of the delinquency of their heirs be replaced by new ones.

This is not simply a romantic evocation of the mediaeval past; it is a statement about the place of the nobility in the leadership of the country. There was considerable discussion about the origin of nobility, whether it was a quality inherited from ancestors or acquired by the efforts of the individual himself. Books such as Nenna's Nennio, or A Treatise of Nobility: Wherein is discoursed what true Nobilitie is, with such qualities as are required in a perfect Gentleman, translated by W. Smith (London, 1595), considered whether nobility consisted in blood and riches, or learning and virtue. Though it was generally agreed that the nobility of learning and virtue was superior to that of blood and riches, and that "nobility, being inherent and natural can have like the dismond, the luster but only from itself", the usual solution was to prefer an ancient name coupled with personal achievement.[40]

True nobility, moreover, showed itself in action: this was another basic tenet of Renaissance belief. It revealed itself in actions which were "beneficial and useful" to the country, and the reward of nobility, of virtue combined with glorious actions, was honour.[41]

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40. See Henry Peacham, The Complete Gentleman, ed. Virgil B. Heltzel, Folger Documents of Tudor and Stuart Civilization (Ithaca, N.Y., 1962), pp. 13, 28.
41. See Peacham, p. 12.

This is what Jonson ascribes to Sir Henry Neville. Like the ancient members of his family, Neville shows his true nobility by taking up his place in the leadership of the country. In suggesting that this is done not as of old in the field of battle but in the House of Parliament, Jonson demonstrates the new spirit of the Renaissance: the ideal of the warrior had been largely replaced by that of the statesman.

Neville served in Parliament nearly all his life, continuously from 1585 to 1614. His character had recommended him for important service as ambassador to France where in 1599 he helped to negotiate the treaty of Boulogne; he was knighted in the same year. Accidentally implicated in the Essex plot because of his friendship with Southampton, he was imprisoned in the Tower, brought before the council and fined £5,000. On James' accession in 1603, he was released by royal warrant. Though not one of its leaders, Neville sympathized with the popular party in Parliament, and during its 1610 session took the opportunity of explaining to James his party's demands and advising him to concede them. This plain-dealing, and his opposition to the Howards were later responsible for his failure to secure the Secretaryship for which he was the most popular contender after the death of Salisbury in 1612.[42]

It has been suggested, by W. A. J. Archbald in the DNB, that Jonson alludes to Neville's imprisonment in his epigram; Herford and Simpson, however, do not mention this. It seems more probable that Jonson is referring to later incidents, the exchanges with James or the bid for the Secretarship. At these times, Neville was in the public eye but out of royal favour because of his views, and outspokenness;

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42. Gardiner, II, 147-8.

as in the case of Coke, what had earned James' enmity might have occasioned Jonson's praise.

Though in his poetry to men of letters, Jonson had made extensive use of his friends and the theme of friendship, in his poetry to men of state it is hardly mentioned. It is not the personal relationships of statesmen which interest Jonson, but rather their relation to the sovereign and the common-wealth; their place in the state is the most salient feature of his praise. This is true even to the extent that the poems suggest contemporary issues, as we have seen in the case of both Coke and Neville. These poems indicate how Jonson reacted to the current of the times, and how he drew upon its passing events to make his poetry. They also show that his praise could be completely detached from any personal relationship.

With regard to his patrons, in whom he had a personal interest, Jonson adopts the same detached and discriminating attitude. The values he expresses are entirely consistent; they are those of the poems to Roe, Donne, Selden, Coke, or Neville. His practice, however, varies somewhat, for while he praised the Sidney ladies for their interest in letters, he praised those men who were his patrons, including the Earl of Pembroke with his Sidney blood and interests, for their public service. Undoubtedly, it was a more suitable, a more masculine ideal. His interest in these patrons admits an influence which was not evident in his poems to Coke and Neville: a dependence on favour. Jonson's praise therefore must by its careful selection, its tact, and its use of literary devices reconcile his interests with his values.

This is exemplified in the epigram to William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke (1580-1630). Jonson praises him for integrity,

constancy, and independence in a mercenary, inconstant, and hypocritical court. After naming Herbert "an Epigramme, on all mankind," and then describing the evils of the court, Jonson turns to his subject:

> But thou, whose nobless keeps one stature still,
> And one true posture, though beseig'd with ill
> Of what ambition, faction, pride can raise;
> Whose life, ev'n they, that envie it, must praise;
> That art so reverenc'd, as thy comming in,
> But in the view, doth interrupt their sinne;
> Thou must draw more; and they, that hope to see
> The common-wealth still safe, must studie thee.
>
> (Ep. CII)

Here the Stoic ideal is set in contrast to courtly values.

Jonson's praise of Herbert's qualities is supported by contemporary evidence. Pembroke was independent, and he strove neither for favour nor position. At the court of Elizabeth he was in attendance but sought the queen's favour in a "cold and weake manner"[43]; but from the first, nonetheless, he was "exceeding beloved of all men". At the court of James, he was never "loved or favoured" but rather "regarded and esteemed" by his king. Clarendon's eulogy on Pembroke affirms that "being the most universally loved and esteemed of any man of that age, and having a great office in the Court, made the Court itself better esteemed and more reverenced in the country". The independance from Court values mentioned by Jonson is also described succinctly by Clarendon: "He lived many yeers about the Court before in it, and never by it". The same writer describes Pembroke's constancy and integrity, how he stood upon his own feet, without any other support than of his proper virtue and merit, and how he "was exeedingly beloved in the Court, because he never desired to get that for himself which others laboured for, but was still ready to promote the praetences of worthy men. And he was equally celebrated

43. Arthur Collins, Letters and Memorials of State (London, 1766), II, 122.

in the country for having received no obligations from the Court which might corrupt or sway his affections and judgment".[44] Anthony à Wood also points out the earl's ingenuous and outspoken opposition to the Spanish match: "he would sometimes rouze to the trepidation of that King [James I], yet kept his favour still; for his Majesty knew plain dealing (as a jewell in Men so) was in a Privy Counsellour an ornamental duty; and the same true-heartedness commended him to K. Ch. I".[45] This is the plain-dealing which characterized both Coke and Neville. Jonson, during Pembroke's life, and Clarendon and Wood after his death, concur in their praise.

Jonson's poem, however, neglects to mention not only Pembroke's generous patronage of letters, but other less meritorious aspects of his character and life, which Clarendon, anxious to give a complete picture of the man, is careful to mention: "Yet his memory must not be so flattered, that his virtues and good inclinations may be believed without some allay of vice, and without being clowded with great infirmityes, which he had in to exorbitant a proportion". Clarendon's fair-mindedness leads him to reveal that Pembroke "indulged to himself the pleasures of all kinds, almost in all excesses" and was "immoderately given up to women". Though the beneficiary of a large fortune, he exhausted it by his extravagance but later replenished it by his marriage.[46] (1604) His extravagant life led to his premature decline.

These faults are not mentioned by Jonson because, unlike Clarendon, he is neither writing biography nor history, nor attempting

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44. The History of the Rebellion, ed. Macray, i, 71-4.
45. Athenae Oxoniensis, i, 795.
46. Clarendon is uncertain about the cause of Pembroke's concupiscence: "Whether out of his natural constitution, or for want of his domestic content and delight, (in which he was most unhappy, for he paid much too dear for his wife's fortune, by takinge her person into the bargain)".

a complete picture of his subject. He is describing an ethical ideal, by illustrating it in a man's life; and he selects what he presents in accordance with this.

There is considerable variation in the presentation of Jonson's ideal of man and the scope and depth of treatment of his subjects. The poem to Coke was the epitome of a man's character and life. The lines to Neville were comparative abstract and general, but nonetheless pertained to contemporary issues. The praise of Pembroke was selective and apt. Jonson's concern for the individual subjects of his poems leads him to select, to qualify and to adapt his terms of praise. A poem to another patron, the Earl of Suffolk, (Ep. LXVII) illustrates how Jonson's care to join the ideal with the real led him to praise qualities which, though admirable, were not usual in his work.

Jonson's relationship with Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk (1561-1626) was bound with the ties of gratitude. Though in 1604 Suffolk had "ushered" Jonson and his friend Sir Thomas Rowe from a masque at court (Convers. 155-6), in 1605 he brought about Jonson and Chapman's release from their imprisonment for Eastward Ho.[47] Gratitude for this seems to have prompted Jonson's epigram (Ep. LXVII), as well as the masques Hymenai which Jonson wrote for the first marriage of Suffolk's daughter Frances to the Earl of Essex, (1606) and A Chalenge at Tilt and The Irish Masque (1613-4) for her second infamous marriage to the Earl of Somerset.

In his epigram Jonson praises Suffolk for his gifts of fortune and his popularity. Since men, he avers, no longer do praise-

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47. H & S, I, 38-40.

worthy things, they consider all praise flattery; but Jonson claims that this poem has the cogency of truth. Howard's blood, place, and virtue had made all good men hope for his advancement, and some even seek it on his behalf before he could seek it himself. The success of this promotion - Howard's advancement by the king - showed that the people's choice was God's as well.

Jonson's praise can be supported by external evidence. The Howard blood was indeed noble but the family had recently suffered great misfortunes: Thomas Howard's father, the fourth Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England, had been attainted for high treason because of his communications with Mary Queen of Scots (1572); his grandfather was Surrey, poet and statesman, executed by Henry VIII; two of Henry's wives, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, both of whom were executed for their adulteries, were also of the same family. Thomas Howard had had a distinguished naval career and had fought beside Raleigh and Essex; in 1588, he was knighted at sea for valour against the Spanish Armada, and held several naval commissions, which led to his being made Knight of the Garter (1596) and Admiral of the Fleet (1599); his ability and courage had won the favour of the Queen. With the accession of James came the restoration of the Howards, for he desired to compensate them for their sufferings in the cause of his unhappy mother. Thomas Howard was one of the few "new" appointments made by James upon his accession, replacing Elizabeth's Lord Hunsdon as Lord Chamberlain, the principal officer of the court. In the same year he became Earl of Suffolk and a privy councillor.

Suffolk was "dignified, moderate, and easy-going"[48]; Wilson writes that he was a "plain-hearted man"; the author of "The Honorable

48. Willson, James VI and I, p. 178; see Gardiner, I, 107-8.

Voyage into Cadiz, 1596" published in Hakluyt's collection attests his popularity: "[his] exceeding great magnanimity, courage, & wisdome, joyned with such an honourable kind of sweet courtesie, bountie, and liberalitie, as is not able by me & my weakenes to be expressed, hath wonne him all the faithfull loving hearts of as many as ever have had any maner of dealing with him."[49] His later career throws light on his character. In 1604, he had refused a Spanish pension which his own wife and Salisbury had accepted and when he came untouched through the subsequent investigations, his evident integrity and loyalty were largely responsible for his appointment as Lord Treasurer (1614). It was a mistake: he proved inept because though well-meaning he was too lax and easy-going for such a difficult task, and too preoccupied - at the expense of the treasury -- with the aggrandizement of his own fortunes. He was removed.[50] Charged in 1618 with embezzlement, he was fined £30,000, commanded to restore what he had embezzled and sent to the Tower. His wife, a forceful and rapacious woman was blamed for his misconduct, and Suffolk was exonerated because of his popularity, and censured only for his laxity and uxoriousness.[51] By 1620 he was again in favour, and his fine reduced to £1000. His easy and winning ways had won his reprieve.

Jonson's gratitude to Suffolk did not lead him to flatter. He is praised for actual qualities, but these are blood and place which Jonson usually spurns, and popularity which he generally scorns. Such gifts are usually brought in, as in the poem to Neville, as a contrast to the inherent virtues of the subject. That they are here

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49. Richard Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, IV (Glasgow, 1904), 247.
50. Gardiner, iii, 187-95; Willson, James VI and I, p. 349.
51. See Wilson, History, pp. 97-9; see also G. P. V. Akrigg, Jacobean Pageant (London, 1962), p. 71, and David Mathew's The Jacobean Age, op. cit., pp. 159-77.

praised in relation to Suffolk is Jonson's concession to gratitude.

The discernment and care which is evident in Jonson's praise indicates his concern to illuminate his subject as well as his ideals. He imposed a tactful and apt selection which was determined by his own ideals and by an appraisal of the facts. He omits a good deal; he rarely says too much. Despite his allegiance to absolute moral values - the "removed mysteries" of poetry - he envisages his ideals in terms of contemporary reality, and reveals something of the particular humanity of his subject. Jonson demonstrates his perception into character. Both the general principle and the particular example are analysed and defined in the praise.

Yet in several places Jonson confesses to having praised unworthy men. Given his care and discernment, this seems unlikely, or at least unusual. and gives rise to questions about the circumstances of such mistakes, and the identities of the persons involved. It is important to ascertain how these confessions and their circumstances change or qualify the principles described above.

Jonson's most famous revelation in this regard is the poem addressed to the Muse. Its theme is the bitterness of error:

> Away, and leave me, thou thing most abhord
> That hast betray'd me to a worthlesse lord;
> Made me commit most fierce idolatrie
> To a great image through thy luxurie.
> Be thy next masters more unluckie Muse,
> And, as thou'hast mine, his houres, and youth abuse.
> Get him the times long grudge, the courts ill will;
> And, reconcil'd, keepe him suspected still.
> Make him loose all his friends, and, which is worse,
> Almost all wayes, to any better course.
> With me thou hav'st an happier Muse than thee,
> And which thou brought'st me, welcome povertie.
> Shee shall instruct my afterthoughts to write
> Things manly, and not smelling parasite.
> But I repent me: Stay. Who e're is rais'd,
> For worth he has not, He is tax'd, not prais'd.
>
> (Ep. LXV)

Its vehement feeling, and tone of indignation are evidence that this poem was written as the result of an actual misjudgement. Jonson's explanation for his mistake shows not only a concern with principle, that he had misused his praise, but an awareness of the circumstances of his error. He blames his muse for betraying him through 'luxurie', which is an admission of personal responsibility. He regrets the wasted time and energy. He reveals the consequences of his error: the lingering censure and suspicion, the ill will of the court, the loss of his friends, the difficulty of recourse, and the ultimate privation. It is to these circumstances rather than to the principles involved that he gives the greater attention.

In the end, Jonson's bitterness leads him to censure those who deceived him, rather than to accept remorsefully his error: his concluding lines point out that praise for virtue not actually possessed constitutes a rebuke. This is the nearest thing to a statement of principle, but it is a rather defensive explanation; it was evidently conjured up after the fact. What is more important is Jonson's awareness of the cause and consequences of his mistaken praise, and his determination to write "things manly, and not smelling parasite." His pledge not to repeat his error is proof that despite his concluding lines he felt that praise should be given only where deserved.

In lines to Selden, Jonson makes a similar confession, but he concentrates solely on the fact of error without attending to its circumstances:

> Though I confesse (as every Muse hath err'd,
> And mine not least) I have too oft preferr'd
> Man past their termes, and prais'd some names too much,
> But 'twas with purpose to have made them such.
> Since, being deceiv'd, I turne a sharper eye
> Upon my selfe and aske to whom? and why?
> And what I write? and vexe it many dayes
> Before men get a verse: much lesse a Praise;
> So that my Reader is assur'd, I now
> Meane what I speake: and still will keepe that Vow.
>
> (Und. XIV, ll. 19-28)

In claiming that the didactic motive could justify praise which was excessive, or unmerited, Jonson seems to be allying himself with those who held that praise need not be based on the fact, but on the requirements of moral instruction. Yet, he vows that in future he will avoid straying from the facts. The vows to examine first himself, in order to avoid any further concessions to "luxurie", and then the subject, to ensure that his praise is based on a true knowledge of the person. Clearly whatever his earlier policy, he will now have a due regard for the fact. He vows to doubt and question and admits that he previously accepted his subjects too readily, too uncritically; this admission explains to some extent how Jonson came to make his mistakes.

This explanation, like the former, is somewhat disingenuous. The evidence suggests that for the most part Jonson praised carefully. Perhaps in his earlier poetry of praise his convictions, or his enthusiasm, led him to indulge in 'wishful thinking', for Jonson's habit of praising his contemporaries in terms of his ideals could easily, despite his care, lead him to attribute virtue where none or little existed. This is particularly true with regard to the great nobles who were the leaders of his society. His eagerness to illustrate his own ideal of man in the lives of the notables of the age made his praise susceptible to error, because he was inclined to ascribe their eminence and achievements to his own values, rather than to their particular methods, or aims. His vision could easily distort reality for a time.

In addition to this danger, there is the possibility that personal motives, such as the need to win or confirm a patron, or to express gratitude could also for a time obscure his grasp of reality.

Jonson himself admitted this kind of failing. His attitude to it is clear: neither the desire to seek favour nor to acknowledge gratitude justified the attribution of virtue. Favour or gratitude could be sought or expressed in acceptable ways, either by a frank expression of the poet's need, such as Jonson was to do later in life, by the direct expression of gratitude, such as that to Lord Aubriguy to Lady Bedford, or by praising his patrons for their real qualities. Jonson's apologies, and his determination to examine himself as well as his object make it clear that he strove to overcome self-interest. This can be discounted in all but those few lapses which Jonson himself deplored.

In his dedicatory letter to Pembroke, Jonson gives another explanation for his errors. Its tenor and implications are quite different from those considered above. They were personal confessions; somewhat self-defensive, they sought to vindicate the error. This letter to Pembroke has a different, a rather prudential ring. After mentioning "the good and great names" which are immortalized in his book, he continues "Amongst whom, if I have praysed, unfortunately, any one, that doth not deserve; or, if all answere not, in all numbers, the pictures I have made of them: I hope it will be forgiven me, that they are no ill pieces, though they be not like the persons." Jonson was aware that he was presenting to the public poems written over a number of years and in various circumstances, and that times and circumstances had changed. Some of their subjects were, or had become controversial: and some were the subjects of personal or partisan antipathy. Reputations had changed. He had himself made some mistakes. By making a prior admission of error and by claiming that the poems could stand on their own Jonson seems to want to forestall accusations

and recriminations irrelevant to the poetry itself. But this admission is couched in language that leaves much to the judgement and prejudice of the reader. Note the careful phraseology, the cautious "ifs", the failure to suggest or mention any names. Note his concern to fix attention on the poems themselves, and the assurance and the artistic pride with which he asserts that his poems have merit, though their subjects might not. All points to an attempt to free his poetry from the circumstances described in his poem to his muse: the censure, ill-will, loss, helplessness, and privation that is the result of assessing the poems, not on their own merit, but on that of the person they describe. Such misreading subjected the poems to the vagaries of royal favour and public opinion. Jonson's letter to Pembroke attempted to free his poems from a disadvantage which had been brought on him by his own concern to relate his values to his own time.

Jonson never explicitly named those men who had deceived him, discreetly preferring as in his satirical portraits to let them remain anonymous, but there is one man, a peer of high office and great power, who received fulsome eulogies from Jonson which are difficult to square with his subsequent criticism: Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury (1563?-1612). Dr B. N. DeLuna in fact specifically identifies Salisbury with the "unworthy lord" of Jonson's poem to his Muse (Ep. LXV).[52] Though this identification is open to question, there is ground for some doubts and puzzlement about Jonson's attitude to Salisbury. On the one hand, Jonson praised him in his most high-flown vein; on the other, he censured him severely in private conversation with Drummond. Jonson's relationship with the earl and the specific terms of his praise and censure must be examined before we can draw any conclusions about the reasons for this disparity.

52. Jonson's Romish Plot, pp. 70-2, 155-6.

Jonson's connection with Salisbury was not simply literary. In 1597, Salisbury was one of those who sat in judgement on The Isle of Dogs, the first play to cause Jonson imprisonment, but in 1605, he was among those whom Jonson supplicated when in prison for Eastward Ho.[53] Later, perhaps out of gratitude to the Earl as well as loyalty to his country, Jonson, though a Roman Catholic at the time, carried out investigations for him into the Gunpowder Plot.[54] Salisbury commissioned two masques from Jonson, both of which were performed at Theobalds, his country house: "The Entertainment of the Two Kings at Theobalds" (July 24, 1606) for a visit from James and Christian of Denmark, and "The Entertainment of King and Queen at Theobalds" (May 22, 1607), to mark the transfer of Theobalds to James. Jonson addressed three epigrams to the Earl, two of which have specific occasions: his creation as Earl of Salisbury (May 14, 1605), and his accession to the Treasurership (May 6, 1608). The third poem, probably written at some time between the other two, is possibly closer in date to the later poem, which immediately follows it in the Epigrammes. At some yet later date, Jonson presented to Salisbury a poem about his father, the great Lord Burleigh (d. 1598). Salisbury died in 1612. These poems and masques suggest that Jonson's relationship with the Earl was at its height from 1603 to, at least, 1608, and probably later. With the exception of the political commission, it shows most of the usual aspects of patronage; Jonson evidently adopted a formal role toward his patron, celebrating with masques the royal visits to his house; and with epigrams, the steps of his advancement.

Jonson's three poems to Salisbury explore the same theme, the poet's duty to praise worthy public service, and all are rhetorical

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53. H & S, I, 15-6, 38-40; Jonson's letter to Salisbury is reproduced at I, 194-6.
54. H & S, I, 202-3.

and formal in tone. The first of these (Ep. XLIII) claims that Salisbury's life speaks for itself, and having no need of poetry to give it renown will on the contrary confer fame on the poet's work:

> When, in my booke men reade but CECIL'S name,
> And what I write thereof find farre, and free
> From servile flatterie (common Poets shame)
> As thou stand'st cleere of the necessitie.

Jonson's distinction between praise and flattery is significant because it implies that the facts will bear out his claims, but at the same time it raises the question whether this implication is sincere or artificial. The arrogant denunciation of flattery, and its imputation to the common sort of poets, however, does indicate that Jonson meant what he said. The specific actions which earned both Cecil's advancement and his country's love are not described. But the import of the poem is that these actions testify to Cecil's worth and praiseworthiness; indeed, Jonson claims that they are more eloquent than his own poetry.

The second poem defines more explicitly Jonson's estimation of Cecil. It is concerned with Cecil's character:

> Who can consider thy right courses run,
> With what thy vertue on the times hath won,
> And not thy fortune; who can cleerely see
> The judgement of the king so shine in thee;
> And that thou seek'st reward of thy each act,
> Not from the publike voyce, but private fact;
> Who can behold all envie so declin'd
> By constant suffring of thy equall mind. (Ep. LXIII)

Jonson concludes that no poet, even should Salisbury himself forbid, could silently recognize such merit. The precise delineation of character - the vertue, integrity, and constancy which Jonson sees in Salisbury - is in keeping with his Stoic ideal; as usual, it is set against the drift of fortune. The terms of this poem are specific, and give a closer appreciation of the man, and a more precise definition of the way that character was related to public service than the former one. It also declares the poet's duty to celebrate the noble service

of a good man to his country. Its import is that the facts oblige Jonson to speak out; but this of course could be either a clever rhetorical device to secure belief or cunning flattery, if the actual facts do not support the claim.

The third poem gives a catalogue of unworthy reasons for praising - ingratiation, or gratitude, fashion or flattery, or the exercise of wit for its own sake - but Jonson repudiates all of these. He describes his own reasons:

> ... I am glad to see that time survive,
> Where merit is not sepulcher'd alive.
> Where good mens vertues them to honors bring,
> And not to dangers. When so wise a king
> Contends t'have worth enjoy, for his regard,
> As her owne conscience still, the same reward.
> These (noblest CECIL labour'd in my thought,
> Wherein what wonder see thy name hath wrought?
> That whil!st I meant but time to gratulate,
> I'have sung the greater fortunes of our state.
>
> (Ep. LXIIII)

A similar sentiment about the benefits which accure from the advancement of worthy men was expressed in Jonson's Discoveries:

> When a vertuous man is rais'd, it brings gladnesse to his friends: griefe to his enemies, and glory to his Posterity. Nay, his honours are a part of the honour of the times: when by this means he is growne to active men an example; to the sloathfull, a spurre; to the envious, a Punishment.
>
> (Disc. 1292-7)

The device which forms the basis of the poem, a contrast between unworthy and worthy motives for praising, is another rhetorical device which to some extent secures belief for the terms of the praise. The reasons for praising Cecil are themselves cogent: that merit deserves praise, that Cecil's services promote the well-being of the country, that the advancement of a worthy man deserves commendation. Of the three poems to Salisbury, this one has the greatest breadth, for it explicitly relates Cecil's character and services to the commonwealth and the common good. He is a man whose service 'makes' the times.

Jonson, in sum, praises Cecil for the qualities of character which enable him to give effective and beneficial service in the common interest. This is somewhat different from the usual picture of the individual against a hostile society; here we have a man whose character and actions influence and even determine the course of events. The background of Jonson's praise - the record of history - must be examined to see whether Cecil merited such eulogy.

These poems have a notably rhetorical character. The rhetorical questions and hyperbole of the first one; the parallel questions of the second; the parallel and balanced catalogues of the third: all reveal a conscious use of rhetorical devices. Meant to heighten the tone and to secure belief, they were proper to the poetry of praise.[55] Yet, they can suggest adulation, or a lack of sincerity for which the poet attempts to compensate by an excess of praise. Moreover, if the rhetoric does not imply a paucity of substance, the frequent protests that the praise was merited could suggest that Jonson felt the weakness of his assertions. There is a latent defensiveness in these poems which makes the reader wary of credit. This discussion must elucidate whether Jonson used rhetoric to cloud or to illuminate the truth.

Robert Cecil (1563?-1612) had the advantage of birth; he was the son of the great Burleigh "the grave, the wise, the great, the good" (Und. XXX), who for 40 years was Elizabeth's chief minister. He had the further advantage of inheritance: not of title, for he was a younger son, but of a formidable ability; he became to James what his father had been to Elizabeth. Physically, he was less fortunate and suffered from deformity and various disabilities. His rise was

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55. Hardison, pp. 29-35.

rapid. In 1588, he served in negotiations with Spain; the next year, in Parliament. He was knighted and sworn of the Privy Council in 1591. After having done the work of Secretary of State for several years, he was appointed to that office in 1596; his appointment was delayed because Elizabeth, not wanting to offend Essex who was promoting one of his protegés for the office, left it officially vacant until Essex was absent. In 1598, Cecil served in an embassy to France to prevent an alliance with Spain. In that year, his father's death left him completely on his own; in the next, he was awarded his father's post of the Mastership of the Court of Wards. In 1601, he entered into secret correspondence with James VI of Scotland to prepare for his accession; he did this, and Cecil made it clear to James, not out of disloyalty to Elizabeth but in the interests of his country; he was thereby largely responsible for the smooth transferal of the crown.[56] The new king retained him as secretary, and advanced him from Baron Cecil of Essingden (1603) to Viscount Cranborne (1604), to Earl of Salisbury and Knight of the Garter (1605). James left the government of the country largely in Cecil's hands, while he indulged his own interests; his hunting and his favourites. In 1608, Cecil added to his burdens the hopeless treasury; his success in augmenting the royal income was dissipated by his failure to curb the royal expenditure. Though James would not govern he wilfully interfered, and subverted Cecil's attempts to secure a financial agreement with Parliament in The Great Contract.[57]

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56. Algernon Cecil, A Life of Robert Cecil, First Earl of Salisbury, (London, 1915), pp. 170-91; see also Gardiner, I, 82, 90-3, and Willson, James VI and I, pp. 153-8.
57. See Life, pp. 303-11, Gardiner, II, 63-87, 105-10, and Willson, James VI and I, pp. 261-7.

Contemporary accounts testify both to Cecil's personal merit and his unequalled service. James himself told Cecil that no living king could more confidently rely upon the advice of a councillor and trusty servant than he could on him. Others give similar recognition. Perhaps the most eloquent is the will (dated 7 August, 1607) of Salisbury's colleague and predecessor as Lord Treasurer, the Earl of Dorset. His character in Office was blameless, and his testimony, only to be known after his own death, is unimpeachable; he celcares his intention to provide a faithful remembrance of Salisbury with whom he had shared many years of friendship. He writes, not only to describe his own personal affection, "but also and most chiefly" Salisbury's "public merit":

> Wherein when I behold the heavy weight of so many grave and great affairs which the special duty of his place as principal secretary doth daily and necessarily cast upon him, and do note withal what infinite cares, crosses, labours and travails both of body and mind he doth thereby continually sustain and undergo; and lastly, do see with how great dexterity, sincerity, and judgment he doth accomplish and perform the painful service of that place, these divine virtues of his, so incessantly exercised and employed for the good of the public have made me long since so greatly to love, honour, and esteem him ... that I do daily and heartily pray unto Almighty God to continue all strength and ability both of body and mind in him that he sink not under the weight of so heavy a burden ...[58]

This is the account of a man who knew both Cecil and the affairs of state; perhaps in the face of death he was kind, but he could not be dishonest; his appreciation of Salisbury must be given credit.

Later historians have echoed this tribute. The work of S. R. Gardiner who attempted to redeem Cecil from some of the charges, and lore, brought against him, has been carried further by more recent historians, such as D. H. Willson. Gardiner paid tribute to Cecil's

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58. The will is at Somerset House; the section pertaining to Cecil is quoted in Life, pp. 374-5.

unflagging industry, his calm good sense, his unfailing courtesy, his constant temper and thorough honesty of intention; Willson, for his cuation, prudence, sagacity, courtesy, patience, self-control, and his sight of larger ends amid endless routine.[59] His self-control was marvellous: when the long and difficult negotiations for "The Great Contract" ended in failure, Cecil commented that he could see no other cause "but that God did not bless it".[60] He was indifferent to public opinion and, in the face of unpopularity and hostility, he devoted his attention to his duties.

Salisbury's position in the government was central; from 1603 until his death, he was the King's most important minister.[61]

> Cecil ... was of course pre-eminent as Principal Secretary, Master of the Wards, and later Lord Treasurer, he remained until his death the pivot about which the entire machinery of government revolved. More than a president, he was alpha and omega in Council. He solely managed all foreign affairs, especially Ireland; he directed Parliament; he managed all the revenues and great affairs of King, Queen, and Duke of York.[62]

Both Gardiner and Willson attribute the failures of the reign not to Salisbury but to James himself.[63] It was only near the end of his life that the pressure of his responsibilities, the debility of illness, and the King's ingratitude combined to disturb Cecil's equanimity.

Before going on to consider Jonson's critical remarks about Salisbury, it would be valuable to examine and to compare what another poet had to say about him. George Chapman shared much with Jonson, for he too belonged to the humanist tradition and promoted ethical and

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59. Gardiner, i, 90-3, II, 141-5; Willson, James VI and I, p. 277.
60. Life, p. 307.
61. Godfrey Davies, The Early Stuarts, 1603-60 (Oxford, 1959), p. 2.
62. Willson, James VI and I, p. 176-7.
63. Gardiner, II, 144; Willson, James VI and I, p. 277.

literary values.[64] His ethics also had a Stoic bent. It has been already noted above that he exercised less discrimination than Jonson in choosing the subjects of his praise, for, in the attempt to attract a patron, he cast his net wide. He too praised Salisbury:

TO THE MOST WORTHIE
Earle, Lord Treasurer, and Treasure of our
Countrey, the Earle of SALISBURY &c

Vouchsafe, Great Treasurer, to turne your eye,
And see the opening of a Grecian Mine;
Which, Wisedome long since made her Treasury;
And now her title doth to you resigne.
Wherein as th'Ocean walks not, with such waves,
The Round of this Realme, as your Wisedomes seas;
Nor, with his great eye sees; his Marble, saves
Our State, like your Ulyssian policies:
So, none like HOMER hath the World enspher'd;
Earth, Seas, & heaven, fixt in his verse, and moving;
Whom all times wisest Men, have held unper'de
And therfore would conclude with your approving.
Then grace his spirit, that all wise men hath grac't,
And made things ever flitting, ever last.

An anagram

Robert Cecyl, Earle of Salisburye.
Curb foes; thy care, is all our erly Be.[65]

Chapman, first of all, owed a debt of gratitude to Salisbury, who had played some part in freeing him and Jonson from prison for Eastward Ho; Chapman, however, reserved greater praise for Suffolk whose part in their release was more significant.[66] It must also be noted that Chapman's immediate concern, to secure a patron, is evidently the basis of the poem; he clearly tries to point out to Salisbury the worth of his book. Chapman praises Cecil for wisdom and for his policies, but nowhere does he specify the traits of character which

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64. See Janet Spens, "Chapman's Ethical Thought," Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association, XI (1925), 145-69.
65. Poems, ed. Bartlett, pl 397.
66. Ibid., p. 482.

were thought to be the foundation of wisdom and effective action. Unlike Jonson, Chapman did not grasp the qualities in Cecil which enabled him to serve so well, nor did he indicate the true value or significance of his actions. The language, moreover, is conceited and ponderous, and does not seize, like Jonson's, the essential and express it clearly and vigorously. Both the thought and its expression are less incisive and more clouded, less sagacious and more commonplace than Jonson's. This serves to illustrate the acumen Jonson showed in his praise of Cecil, and his poetry of praise generally.

It is probable that Salisbury would have regarded these poems as of less value and seriousness than Jonson did; yet, it does not seem improbable that Salisbury would appreciate the incisiveness of Jonson's vision: "His lordship," suggested John Palmer, "would have read these tributes with a finer smile than he accorded to the celebrations of other men. This was an honest admiration of real gifts, warily employed."[67]

These accounts tally to a remarkable degree with Jonson's picture of Salisbury. They describe Cecil's integrity, his constant devotion to duty, his independence from faction and popular opinion. They single out his unremitting service. They acknowledge his beneficial influence, his effectiveness in the government, and his efforts to improve the financial situation. Not only do they confirm Jonson's praise, but they actually indicate the sagacity with which Jonson discerned the salient elements of Cecil's character and the importance of his service in contemporary history.

How then do we explain Jonson's censure of Cecil and the popular view of him as a cold and scheming politician. On May 24, 1612,

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67. Ben Jonson (London, 1934), p. 91.

Salisbury died, and his death released much pent-up hostility and many accusations: "I never knew", wrote John Chamberlain, "so great a man, so soone and so generally censured, for men's tongues walk very liberally and freely, but how truly I cannot judge." Six weeks later, he wrote again,

> The memorie of the late Lord Treasurer grows dayly worse and worse and more libells come as yt were continually, whether yt be that practises and juglings come more and more to light, or that men love to follow the sway of the multitude: but yt is certain that those who may best maintain yt, have not forborn to say that he jugled with religion, with the King, Quene, theyre children, with nobilitie, Parlement, with friends, foes, and generally with all.[68]

There were reasons for this hostility: the Earl's lonely self-sufficiency and unequalled power made him feared and hated; as a new man he was resented by the older nobility, and especially by his political enemies the Howards; his prosecution of Essex and Raleigh had alienated their friends; his enclosure of Hatfield Wood, his own neighbours; his desperate measures to supply the treasury, both Parliament and country; his restraining influence on the King and his own incorruptibility made him offensive to those who hoped to gain from royal favour.[69] During his life, Cecil was satirized in Middleton's The Phoenix (pr. 1607) and in Day's Ile of Gulls.[70] After his death, a scurrilous epitaph circulated in the court which began:

> Here lies thrown, for the Worms to eat,
> Little Bossive Robin, that was so great.

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68. Letters, ed. Norman Egbert McClure, Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 12 (Philadelphia, 1939), I, 364-5.
69. See Sir A[nthony] W[elden], The Court and Character of K. James. Whereunto is now added the Court of King Charles (London, 1651), pp. 9-11, 29-37, 46-9; see also Akrigg, pp. 109-11, Willson, King James VI and I, pp. 268-70, Life, pp. 364ff.
70. De Luna, Jonson's Romish Plot, p. 146.

James, whose ingratitude to Cecil at the end of his life was shameless,[71] was content to be free of his restraining influence; court and country, of his power and vigilance.

Furthermore, among the revelations made after Salisbury's death, was the astonishing evidence that Cecil had been receiving a Spanish pension: Sir John Digby in a letter to the king (September 9, 1613) "set down particulars of prejudice and stain to a person, the opinion of whose worth and integrity may perhaps be of greater weight than any advertisements".[72] He suggested that Cecil had been "cozening" the Spaniards, a suggestion which is supported by Cecil's consistently anti-Spanish policy.[73] His incorruptibility was defended by a colleague Sir Walter Cope who as Chamberlain of the Exchequer had worked closely with him: "The heart of man was never more free from baseness, or bribes: he hated the bribe and the taker."[74] Modern historians have suggested that Salisbury's pension was a means used by Cecil to gain information about the Catholics, and reminded us that the Lord Privy Seal (Northampton), the Countess of Suffolk, Queen Anne, and King James himself had accepted pensions from foreign powers; pensions were a form of compliment and though, when given to ministers, may have offered temptations to treason, were not treasonous themselves.[75] Whatever his reasons for accepting the pension, Cecil did not betray his country.

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71. James had treated Maitland, his earlier Scottish Chancellor with similar ingratitude, see Willson, James VI and I, p. 118.
72. Gardiner, I, 214-7 and II, 216-7; Digby's letters are printed in Gardiner's earlier History of England from the accession of James I to the Disgrace of Chief-Justice Coke, 1603-16 (London, 1863), II, 356-68; see esp. p. 356.
73. See Life, p. 360-1; Gardiner, I, 215-6.
74. John Gutch, Collectanea Curiosa (Oxford, 1781), I, 120.
75. Akrigg, p. 65.

One last fact helps to account for Cecil's unpopularity. Sir Francis Bacon, the brilliant cousin who had to live in Cecil's shadow, was thought to have depicted Cecil in the essays on 'Cunning' and 'Deformity' in the second edition of the Essays (1612); on December 17, 1612, John Chamberlain wrote to Sir Dudley Carleton, "Sir Francis Bacon hath set out new Essays, where, in a chapter on Deformity, the world takes notice that he paints out his little cousin to the life."[76] The portraits are characteristically incisive.

Nearly seven years after Salisbury's death (1612) Jonson made his pedestrian voyage to Scotland, where in the winter of 1618-9 he had his conversation with Drummond. He twice referred to Salisbury, both times unfavourably. He first mentioned a specific incident: "being of the end of my Lord Salisburie's table with Inigo Jones & demanded by my Lord, why he was not glad My Lord said he you promised I should dine with you, bot I doe not, for he had none of his meate, he esteamed only ht his meat which was of his owne dish" (Convers. 317-21). This is often compared with these lines from "To Penshurst":

> Where comes no guest, but is allow'd to eate,
> Without his feare, and of the lords owne meate:
> Where the same beere, and bread, and selfe-same wine,
> That is his Lordships, also shall be mine.
> And I not faine to sit (as some, this day,
> At Great mens tables) and yet dine away.
>
> (For. II, ll. 61-6)

There is an unmistakable personal note in the last lines which seems to justify the comparison, but it is not surprising that there is also a classical precedent for this complaint and that Jonson was drawing from a similar passage in Martial.[77] The classical precedent is aptly applied to his own experience.

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76. Chamberlain, I, 397 ; Life, pp. 351-7, Akrigg, pp. 106-7.
77. See McEwen, pp. 22, 265.

Jonson's second comment about Salisbury is less specific, but probably equally personal: that Cecil "never cared for any man longer than he can make use of him" (Convers. 353-4). This bitter reflection seems to have been prompted by a particular incident, related, perhaps, to Jonson's work for Cecil in connection with the Gunpowder Plot. Bacon, whose own rise was accomplished only after the death of his powerful cousin, described a similar indifference to others, "in the time of the Cecil's, the father and son, able men were by design and of purpose suppressed". Chamberlain mentions that Cecil had 'jugled' with the King, Queen, and everyone, and Weldon wrote that Cecil was "a great lover and rewarder of virtue and able parts in others; so they did not appeare too high in place or look too narrowly into his actions."[78] Cecil's self-sufficiency made him aloof and his single-minded devotion to duty may have made him somewhat calculating in his dealing with men.[79]

Herford and Simpson suggest that these remarks in the Discoveries represent Jonson's "private opinion" of his patron.[80] It is an unfortunate suggestion. Though it asserts no more than a difference between what Jonson could write in a poem available for public examination and what he could say in private conversation, it implies a disparity between what Jonson wrote and what he thought, and makes his praise of Salisbury suspect. Perhaps from the beginning, Jonson had had reservations about the Earl; perhaps, in view of Jonson's high opinion of him, there was an inevitable disenchantment. It is possible that there was a personal rupture. It is, however, also likely that the hostility which followed Cecil's death would have

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78. Court and Character, p. 13.
79. See Mathew, Jacobean Age, pp. 168-72.
80. H & S, XI, 9.

disposed Jonson to look on him, or Drummond to interpret him, in an unfavourable light. Jonson's censure of Cecil to Drummond moreover in no way contradicted the praise of him, and pertained neither to character nor public service, but to Cecil's relationship with Jonson.

Another piece of evidence used to show Jonson's disenchantment with Cecil is based on the sequence of the epigrams: two poems to Cecil are followed by the one in which Jonson rebukes his muse for having led him to praise a "worthlesse lord" (Ep. LXV). Dr. De Luna's contention that this refers to Cecil is based on the supposition of a rupture between Jonson and Cecil after 1610. She also argues that the work (mentioned in the poem) in which Jonson did "most fierce idolatry" was Catiline where Ciciro was to be identified with Cecil. This argument is, however, inconclusive. There is an evident attempt to relate consecutive poems in certain parts of the Epigrammes; the initial poems, for example, are arranged in an order which is modeled on Martial's. Individual poems are connected: "To the learned Critick" (Ep. XVII) is followed by "To my meere English Censurer" (Ep. XVIII); the epigram on the fraudulent Captayne (Ep. CVII) followed by one "To true soldiers". But such sequence is fitful, and many poems have no relationship to that which follows them: an epigram "To Censorious Courtling" (Ep. LII) immediately follows one to King James; poems of great tenderness such as the epitaphs on his children are juxtaposed with satirical swipes. In fact, the order of the poems can be used to show that Jonson had a special regard for Cecil, for he is the first patron to be praised and Jonson was careful of precedence; his master Camden is the first person to be praised after due tribute to his king; John Donne, "the first poet in the World in some things" (Convers. 117) and Sir John Roe, who died in Jonson's arms (Convers. 185), are the first friends.[81] From these contradictory indications no conclusion can be drawn.

81. Jonson's relationship with Margaret Ratcliffe, the sister of his friend Sir John Radcliffe (Ep. XCIII) is not clear; see H & S, XI, 7-8, 18.

Yet, it is likely that Cecil would have been regarded by a large number of readers as one of those who did not deserve praise, or who did not correspond with the picture Jonson gave of them. His services had not impressed the public imagination as much as the Machiavelian aspects of his character. Undoubtedly, the hostility which was current in 1612, when Jonson sent his work to the press, would have prompted many to question and challenge the favourable picture of Salisbury which Jonson had given. Such a contingency had been allowed for in the dedicatory letter.

Another reputation which had suffered eclipse, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury. Advancement had changed Overbury; Wood comments that "in learning and judgment [he] excelled any of his years, (which, as 'twas generally thought, made him while living in the Court to be proud, to overvalue himself, undervalue others, and affected, as 'twere, with a kind of insolence)".[82] His close association with Carr, which, from poverty and obscurity, had given him influence and power, finally led to his downfall and death by poisoning. Though he had aided Carr in his courtship of Frances Howard, Countess of Essex, he deprecated and opposed their marriage. His subsequent refusal of a diplomatic appointment, which was contrived to get him out of the way, led to disfavour at court, and imprisonment; in the Tower, at the instigation of Lady Essex he suffered his slow death (15 Sept. 1613).

Shortly after, Jonson wrote for the Somerset-Essex marriage (26 Dec. 1613) The Irish Masque and A Chalenge at Tilt; he also composed a poem to Carr. The murder came to light in the summer of 1615, and, during the trial which followed, the victim was

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82. Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, i. 331.

not spared, for Bacon declared before the court that Overbury had lacked religion and moral virtue and was driven by ambition and vainglory. "Overbury", he claimed "was naught and corrupt".[83] The early promise had expired in ignominy; the trials, in death for the menial instruments of the murder and pardon for their movers.

Jonson, moreover, had personal reasons for disclaiming Overbury. He told Drummond that "Overbury was first his friend, then turn'd his mortall enemie" (Convers. 170), and related the misunderstanding which had come between them about their relationship with the Countess of Rutland. Perhaps this had led to their estrangement.

The Overbury scandal was prominent in 1615-6, and led Jonson to make revisions in the text of his Workes. Though this had apparently been sent to the publishers in 1612, because of its slow progress Jonson was still able to expurgate all reference to the occasion of the masques written for the Somerset marriage, and even to Frances Howard's earlier marriage, for which he had written Hymenai.[84] The epigram to Somerset - whether or not it was meant to be included in the collection is not known - was entirely suppressed. Yet, the poem to Overbury remained; perhaps Jonson felt that its content or craftsmanship justified its inclusion; perhaps it had already been printed.

It is important to note the similarities and differences between Cecil and Overbury, two men who would almost certainly have been regarded with disfavour by Jonson's audience in 1616. Both were known to Jonson: one was an important patron; the other, his friend. Both received tributes during the time of their acquaintance. We know for certain that Overbury later fell out with Jonson;[85] we have

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83. David Mathew, James I (London, 1967), p. 200.
84. H & S, IX, 12-4.
85. The rupture occurred before 1612, the date of Lady Rutland's death.

no such evidence about his relationship with Salisbury. Jonson's criticisms of Salisbury are similar to those he made of many friends, of Donne, Beaumont, Edward Herbert etc, and do not necessarily indicate hostility or estrangement. They certainly did not imply repudiation. While Jonson evidently would have retracted his praise of Overbury because of a personal rupture and a due reassessment of the man, he would probably, because of the current hostility, have also had Salisbury in mind when writing his disclaimer to Pembroke in 1612.-

This indicates the kinds of mistakes which Jonson made. Both his statements about his errors and these probable examples suggest that Jonson had failed in judgement not in sincerity. The verses to Cecil and Overbury were sincere and derived from a close observation of their actual lives. They represent Jonson's opinion of their subjects at the time of composition. Jonson had praised them with care and discernment, but had failed to take account of the aspects of their characters which eventually necessitated a reversal or an adjustment of his first appraisal. This was a consequence of the selective ethical terms of his praise and of his tendency to interpret character and action solely from the point of view of his ideals. The seriousness with which Jonson himself viewed these errors reveals the sensitivity of his scruples more than the gravity of his errors.

There is, moreover, no example of gross flattery or adulation in Jonson's work. None of James' favourites is offered the tribute of a published poem. The early Scottish favourites, the Lords Haddington and Hay who both commissioned masques from Jonson, The Haddington Masque (1608) and Lovers Made Men (1617),

receive no poetry. The poem to Somerset (d. 1645), addressed formally "To the most Noble, and above his Titles Robert, Earle of Somerset", makes one reference to "virtuous Somerset", and is primarily concerned with wishing him well on his marriage. He is not praised in the usual fashion, but it was nonetheless suppressed. The masque for Somerset's marriage to Frances Howard, written out of gratitude to the bride's father, was later expurgated. Buckingham (1592-1628) who succeeded Somerset in the King's affections, and in his powerful position, also receives little attention. In "A Grace by Ben: Jonson extempore before the King" (Ung. V. XLVII), he is described as "Buckingham the fortunate", a significant epithet. Though he took part in many of Jonson's masques, and commissioned The Gypsies Metamorphosed, (Aug. 3, 5 and September 1621), he does not receive the honour of a poem. Jonson's silence with regard to both Somerset and Buckingham is clearly a quiet protest against their elevation to power and title. They are probably in his mind when he praises men like Coke, and Salisbury, whose rise and place was the result of their ability. These favourites were examples neither of character nor of genuine public service; and so Jonson passes them by.

Jonson's poems of praise are however complemented by his portraits of those who feign a knowledge of state affairs, those who go about with "lookes grave enough, /To seeme a statesmen" (Ep. XI). His major assault on such frauds, who glean their portentous knowledge from almanacs and news-sheets, occurs in the poem "The New Crie" (Ep. XCII). He depicts them as being entirely concerned with the appearance of statesmanship, and without having the personal attributes or even the genuine desire to do any real service to the state. They are excited

by secrets, by forbidden books, by messages written in cypher. Like those who attempt to appear to be poets, soldiers, and courtiers, they are the objects of scorn.

All the evidence, Jonson's selection of persons and qualities to praise, his apologies for error, his probable mistakes, his omission of the patently unworthy, indicate the care and discernment which he exercised in his poetry of praise. All point to his regard for the facts. Indeed, his apologies particularly show how scrupulously and how passionately he sought to celebrate only true worth. If he believed that a poem, because of its craftsmanship or moral content, could stand on its own, and used this principle to justify the inclusion in his Epigrammes of unworthy subjects, he clearly did not use it to justify the praise of the unworthy. Though he claims to have made some mistakes, there is little evidence of carelessness or laxity in the extant poetry.

His poetry of praise successfully brings together a great complexity of elements. It reconciles praise with instruction, the universal truth with the particular instance, the moral with the factual truth, a code of ethics derived from the study of the past with the colour and the achievements of the present. All of this is forged into unity.

The ideal which emerges from Jonson's pages covers a wide range of human attributes and activities: character, friendship, literature, scholarship, and public service in the army or the govern- of the country. It pertains to the individual, to his relationship with his friends, to his service to the commonwealth. It appreciates feminine gracefulness as well, if not as much, as masculine virtue. The men Jonson depicts stand on their own; they act in accordance with their principles in the face of royal or popular censure; they are good as well as great: they made the times.

VII

Later Developments

Only a few extant poems can definitely be attributed to the years immediately following the publication of Jonson's Workes in 1616. Two epigrams were presented to Lord Ellesmere in January, 1617; an epigram was addressed to Sir Anthony Benn before his death in 1618 (Und. XXXI - XXXIII). The epitaph on Vincent Corbet (Und. XII) dates from 1619; the poem to Bacon on his sixtieth birthday (Und. LI), from 1621. The long epistle to Sir Edward Sackville (Und. XIII) written before he became Earl of Dorset in 1624 also belongs to these years. The Shakespeare ode (Ung. V. XXVI) was published in 1623. While between 1612-16 Jonson had continued to promote letters by commending the work of Thomas Farnaby, John Stephens, Sir Walter Raleigh, Christopher Brooke, William Browne, and the anonymous author of The Husband, between 1616-20 he commended a single work, Chapman's translation of The Georgicks of Hesiod. (1618)

Sometime after sending his work to the press in 1612, he composed the three religious poems, the series of lyrics to Charis and the nine amorous songs and poems which are found in the first part of the Underwood. Much of the work done in the latter part of the decade seems to have been destroyed in the fire of 1623; there was the Aristotelian commentary on Horace which Jonson had expanded after Bartholomew Fayre (1614),[1] the Grammar which was later rewritten, and the

1. Convers. 82-8, 416-7; H & S, I 156.

journey into Scotland song,
With all th'adventures; Three bookes not afraid
To speake the fate of the Sicilian Maid
To our owne Ladyes; and in storie there
Of our fift Henry, eight of his nine yeare;
Wherein was oyle, beside the succour spent,
Which noble Carew, Cotton, Selden lent:
And Twice-twelve-yeares stor'd up humanitie,
With humble Gleanings in Divinitie ...

(Und. XLIII, ll. 94-102)

While the history of Henry V probably dates between 1612-23, the notes from Jonson's study of "hunanitie" and "Divinitie" were the harvest of his lifetime.[2]

What we know about Jonson's interests at this time suggests a change of direction from the earlier period. There is more attention to the lyric at the beginning of The Underwood and among the pieces which were the "most common place of his repetition": "The Musical Strife, In a Pastoral Dialogue" (Und. III), "Parabostos Pariare",[3] and "his verses of Drinking, drinke to me bot with thyne Eyes, swell me a Bowle etc. his verses of a Kisse" (Convers. 89-101).[4] These also indicate an interest in the pastoral reflected in the lost May Lord (Convers. 393-8), in The Sad Shepherd, and in Jonson's "intention to writt a fisher or Pastorall play & sett the stage of it in the Lowmond Lake" (ll. 402-3). The poem on the journey into Scotland would probably have contained both lyrical and pastoral elements. There is also an interest in epic suggested by the intended 'Heroologia' (Convers. 1-4). Jonson's critical work, his interest in grammar and history, and his translation of the Argenis further suggest the greater breadth and variety of his interests.

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2. Carew died in 1620, and Cotton in a note of 23 April 1621 mentions "vita Henrici quinti per Titum livium and a great boundell of originall things of Hen. 5th. unbound" lent to Benjamin Jonson (H & S, XI, 78).
3. It has been lost; see H & S, I, 156.
4. These are For. IX, Poetaster (1601) III, i. 8-12, and Und. II. 7.

During these years, Jonson was at the acme of his success. His dramatic reputation, the publication of his Workes (1616), and the brilliant series of masques produced between 1614-8 assured his position in the court and society. This eminence seems to have led him to relax somewhat the strict morality and didacticism of his earlier work. There is evidence of this in the development of his drama. The humour plays such as Every Man in his Humour, Every Man out of his Humour, and Cynthia's Revell's were based on a rigid pattern of retribution, and by the end the culprits were usually purged of their defects. This rather schematic plan is especially evident in the catastrophes of Every Man out of his Humour and the end of Cynthia's Revell's where the courtiers are despatched to the fountain of knowledge. Even in Volpone (1605) the villains Volpone and Mosca must suffer their harsh sentences; there Jonson clearly declares his intention to "imitate justice and instruct to life", a formula which suggests the prior and abstract scheme which he imposed on his work. He writes to demonstrate what Sidney called "moral probability". The prologue to Epicoene (1609), however, marks a departure from this schematicism and a greater willingness to please. He declares in the prologue that his wishes "are not to please the cookes tastes, but the guests", and the result is a more affable and amusing comedy. The Alchemist goes yet further, for at the end the culprits escape unpunished, though without their loot, and Face resumes his position in the master's household. Bartholomew Fayre (1614) is the culmination of this development, for the Fair with its seedy and greasy tricksters remains unchanged at the end of the play.[5] This suggests the movement from a point of view in which life was

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5. See H & S, I, 70, however, for Jonson's reservations about this play.

made to conform to an ideal moral order to a greater acceptance of its complexities and imperfections. This change in Jonson's attitude to life permitted him to tolerate and find amusement in corrupt intractable reality (such as the Fair), and consequently to develop and expand his comic vision.[6]

This development is also reflected in Jonson's poetry, and may explain the changes in his use of the epigram, and the movement toward the employment of other genres. Jonson had fashioned the epigram of praise to express an image of man which was a careful balance of many elements; the satirical epigrams were the negative expression of this image, but, though based on the same values, were less complex because they were anonymous and at the same time presented with greater realistic detail. The epigrams of praise fused the depiction of an individual with the expression of an ideal of humanity. Yet, in spite of Jonson's insight and his care to adapt the praise to the subject, the poems reveal their idealistic basis, the abstract criteria by which Jonson measured life. Their abstract quality was further accentuated by the brevity, conciseness, control and detachment of the epigrams. They were the perfect vehicle for expressing the rational order of things and the values which animated Jonson. They did not, however, give much leeway for the personal, emotional, or discursive, nor permit a loose and complex expression. These, however, are the characteristics of Jonson's later verse: it is marked by a relaxation of the strict idealism and economy of matter and form which characterized the earlier epigrams.

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6. Herford and Simpson in the introductions to the separate plays, Gabriele Berhard Jackson in Vision and Judgment in Ben Jonson's Drama, op. cit., and John J. Enck, Jonson and the comic truth (Madison, 1957) trace various aspects of his development.

The poems to Ellesmere illustrate some of these changes. In the Discoveries, Jonson described him as "a great and grave Orator" (l. 913); Fuller writes that "surely all Christendome afforded not a Person which carried more Gravity in his Countenance and Behaviour, then Sir Thomas Egerton, in so much that many have gone to the Chancery on purpose only to see his Venerable Garb ... Yet was his Outward Case nothing in comparison of his Inward Abilities, Quick Wit, Solid Judgement, Ready Utterance."[7] Earlier, Jonson had praised his ability as a judge, and drew him as the 'pictura' of a just man:

> Whil'st thy weigh'd judgements, EGERTON, I heare,
> And know thee, then, a judge, not of one yeare;
> Whil'st I behold thee live with purest hands;
> That no affection in thy voyce commands;
> That still th'art present to the better cause;
> And no lesse wise, then skilfull in the lawes;
> Whil'st thou art certaine to thy words, once gone,
> As is thy conscience, which is alwayes one:
> The Virgin, long-since fled from earth, I see,
> t⟨o⟩' our times return'd, hath made her heaven in thee.
>
> (Ep. LXXIIII)

Nearly all of the component parts of the ideal are described; integrity, constancy, judgement, learning, wisdom; only the heroic quality of 'vertue' is not named, but then, Ellesmere, who was a royalist and well thought of by nearly everyone, did not need that particular ability. The picture is well-rounded; the definition typically Jonsonian. Its occasion is not stated, nor suggested, and it seems to have been written without a specific or formal occasion to celebrate the merit of a good man.

Two poems, written in 1617, are quite different. Their titles suggest a particular occasion: "An Epigram. To Thomas Lo: Elsmere, the last Terme he sate Chancellor"; a marginal note explains that the poem was written for a poor man. Only one of the poems need be quoted to show their similar character:

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7. Worthies, 'Ches-Shire', 176.

So, justest Lord, may all your Judgements be
  Lawes, and no change e're come to one decree:
So, may the King proclaime your Conscience is
  Law, to his Law; and thinke your enemies his:
So, from all sicknesse, may you rise to health,
  The Care, and wish still of the publike wealth:
So may the gentler Muses, and good fame
  Still flie about the Odour of your Name;
As with the safetie, and honour of the Lawes,
  You favour Truth, and me, in this mans Cause.

(Und. XXXI)

This is a poem of entreaty: the various clauses are predicated to, and dependent upon the final request. There is no attempt to define the image of an ideal; even the invocations, that his decrees be unchanging, that his conscience determine the law, that in accordance with the care and wish of the people he may regain his health, that his reputation continue to be propagated, are primarily concerned with glorifying an individual; except for the reference to the conscience and judgement, this poem is only implicitly about character. It is a formal and ceremonious appeal in which the final request appears rather weak and anti-climatic after the grandiose cadences which precede it.

If Jonson's later epigrams are not more occasional, more particular, and more limited in content, they tend to become more general and discursive. The epigram to Benn (Und. XXXIII), written before his death in 1618, revealed its occasion in the title, "An Epigram to the Chancellour that pleaded, and carried the Cause"; yet it discussed a characteristic theme, the relationship of character and public action, at greater length than ever before.[8] Though much like the poem to Coke, it lacks the rhetorical structure and economy

8. Ep. XCII, "The New Crie" and Ep. CI, "Inviting a Friend to Supper" have respectively 40 and 42 lines. The epigram of praise to Savile (Ep. XCV) has 36 lines. Most of the earlier epigrams are between 10-20 lines; the epigram on "the Court Pucell" (Und. XICX) the longest epigram, was written before 1609 (H & S, XI, 48 and 87-8).

of the earlier poem. It is more expansive, more particular, and more vivid, and closely resembles the verse epistles. Indeed, Jonson tended to make greater use of more lengthy and discursive genres such as the epistle and elegy in the later work. While he had given expression to his most intimate and profound grief, the loss of his first daughter and son, in the brief and somewhat impersonal statement of the epigram, he mourned deaths of less personal significance, such as those of Lady Winchester and Venetia Digby, in long and expansive elegies. More than anything else, this indicates how he loosened and expanded his form of expression.

Jonson's later verses also become more personal and show greater self-awareness. The first of the 1617 poems to Ellesmere concluded with a personal appeal: "You favour Truth, and me, in this mans Cause". This typifies the later emergence of the self. Many of the earlier epigrams such as the tributes to Francis Beaumont (Ep. LV) and to Donne's critical ability (Ep. XCVI), were personal but they kept the subjective element in check and subordinate to the ethical and literary values. Such personal touches are, moreover, relatively infrequent in the early poetry, which is usually presented as objective description. If the first person is employed as in two of the poems to Salisbury (Ep. XLIII and LXIIII) it is often more rhetorical than subjective. There is an evident detachment and an effort to reflect life and human values rather than the personality of the poet.

The later poems, however, become more self-expressive. Ben Jonson often became the protagonist of his poetry: he, not a poetic type, is unmistakably the lover in the poems to Charis. The elegies, though not so unquestionably Jonsonian, concentrate in the

manner of Donne on the personality of the poet-lover. Further evidence of the emergence of the subjective element are the famous references to "My hundred of gray haires", "My mountaine belly, and my rockie face" (Und. IX), and "prodigious wast" (Und. LII). Such humorous self-deprecation is a departure from the seriousness, not to say the earnestness, which underlay the Epigrammes and The Forest. Neither of the long poems to Penshurst or Sir Robert Wroth contains an overt personal reference. The personal is further explored in such poems as "An Execration upon Vulcan" (Und. XLIII) which gave half-humorous expression to a great personal loss, and "An Epistle answering to one that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of BEN" (Und. XLVII), longer and more expansive than the earlier similar epigram "Inviting a friend to supper" (Ep. CI). In the later verse Jonson gave rein to the subjective element which to some extent had always underlaid his poetry.

There is also a good deal of self-definition in these later poems. Jonson often took advantage of the occasion of a poem to define his position on some related theme. One of the earliest instances of this is the discussion of his mistaken praise and the difficulties of evaluating the work of friends in the poem to Selden (Und. XIV) which dates from 1614. It also found expression in the poem to Sackville written before 1624 where Jonson for the first time analysed in verse his attitude to patronage:

> You cannot doubt, but I, who freely know
> This Good from you, as freely will it owe;
> And though my fortune humble me, to take
> The smallest courtesies with thankes, I make
> Yet choyce from whom I take them; and would shame
> To have such doe me good, I durst not name:
> They are the Noblest benefits, and sinke
> Deepest in Man, of which when he doth thinke,
> The memorie delights him more, from whom
> Then what he hath receiv'd. Gifts stinke from some,
> They are so long a comming, and so hard;
> Where any Deed is forc't, the Grace is mard.
>
> (Und. XIII, ll. 13-24)

An obligation to explain and defend himself has replaced the confidence of the poems of gratitude to Aubigny and Lady Bedford. Similarly, Jonson felt obliged to justify his friendship in this poem to Arthur Squib, a teller of the Exchequer:

> What I am not, and what I faine would be,
> Whilst I informe my selfe, I would teach thee,
> My gentle Arthur; that it might be said
> One lesson we have both learn'd, and well read;
> I neither am, nor art thou one of those
> That hearkens to a Jacks-pulse, when it goes,
> Nor ever trusted to that friendship yet,
> Was issue of the Taverne, or the Spit:
> Much lesse a name would we bring up, or nurse,
> That could but claime a kindred from the purse.
>
> (Und. XLV)

Jonson went on to define the true basis and value of friendship, and made explicit the convictions that had been taken for granted in the earlier epigrams to his friends. The movement away from the assurance of the earlier verse to a more analytical and self-conscious approach recalls the probing mind of Donne.

The "Odes to Himself" provide further instances of the growing self-awareness in his verse. The earliest of these seems to be Und. XXIII which has some affinities with the "Apologeticall Dialogue" appended to Poetaster (1601). In the 'Dialogue', however, the poet vowed to turn from comedy to tragedy, while in the Ode, he repudiated satire for the lyrical genres. The "Apologeticall Dialogue", moreover, was written in dramatic form, while the poem was an intense personal analysis. The poem on the failure of The New Inne (1629),[9] which was highly subjective and made the same rejection as the former poem, also exhibited an extreme self-defensiveness never found in the earlier verse. It is the culmination of Jonson's attempts to explain and defend his self and work. Another undated poem (Ung. V. XLVIII),

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9. H & S, VI, 492-4.

close in content and spirit to both of the preceding poems, was not published in either the 1616 or 1640 edition of his work. These poems, so very similar in theme and content, were probably, despite their affinities with the earlier Apologeticall Dialogue, composed about the same time, and reflect the mood of Jonson's later years when even his comedies were not achieving their wonted success.

The poem to Bacon written in 1621 shows other changes. It is closely tied to its occasion, the Chancellors sixtieth birthday, and is a poem of celebration rather than praise:

> Haile, happie Genius of this ancient pile!
> How comes it all things about the⟨e⟩ smile?
> The fire, the wine, the men! and in the midst,
> Thou stand'st as if some Mysterie thou did'st!
> Pardon, I read it in thy face, the day
> For those returnes, and many, all these pray:
> And so doe I. This is the sixtieth yeare
> Since Bacon, and thy Lord was borne, and here;
> Sonne to the grave wise Keeper of the Seale,
> Fame, and foundation of the English Weale.
> What then his Father was, that since is hee,
> Now with a Title more to the Degree;
> Englands high Chancellor: the destin'd heire
> In his soft Cradle to his Fathers Chaire,
> Whose even Thred the Fates spinne round, and full,
> Out of their Choysest, and their whitest wooll.
> 'Tis a brave cause of joy, let it be knowne,
> For 't were a narrow gladnesse, kept thine owne.
> Give me a deep-crown'd-Bowle, that I may sing
> In raysing him the wisdome of my King.
>
> (Und. LI)

The sense of occasion is dominant; the tone of celebration leads Jonson to mention Bacon's title and background. The imagery, derived from classical mythology, suggests Jonson's complimentary verse to ladies; the evocation of the "genius" suggests the masque at Theobalds in which the genius of the house gave over possession to James. There is no suggestion of the 'pictura', of ethical or literary ideals. The poem is a tribute not to character but to reputation.

There was, of course, much in Bacon which accorded admirably with Jonson's ideals and which he could have praised. Bacon exemplified the union of letters and public action; Jonson, as we have noted above, described him as "he, who hath fill'd up all numbers; and perform'd that in our tongue, which may be compar'd, or preferr'd, either to insolent Greece, or haughty Rome ... hee may be nam'd, and stand as the marke, and [acme] of our language". He demonstrated Jonsonian "vertue" in the face of affliction; Jonson himself recorded, referring to Bacon's disgrace in 1621, not long after Jonson's poem: "In his adversity I ever prayed, that God would give him strength: for Greatnesse hee could not want. Neither could I condole in a word, or syllable for him; as knowing no Accident could doe harme to vertue; but rather helpe to make it manifest." (Disc. 943-7). These lines were adapted from Fr. Fulgenzio Micanza's tribute to Bacon after his fall in a letter to the first Earl of Devonshire.[10] Jonson, however, made slight but significant changes in it, so it is worth giving the source: "I pray God to give him strength in his adversity for greatnesse he cannot want. I esteem him so much that if I had the confidence to write unto him yet, I could not condole a worde, as knowing no accident can do harme to true greatnesse, but rather helpe make it manifest." Jonson has changed the Venetian's "true greatnesse" to "vertue", a characteristic change, which is completely in keeping with Jonson's idealistic habit of mind, and, significantly, written after 1625.[11] Despite Bacon's evident worthiness, there is no extant poem in which Jonson praises his "letters" or "vertue". His tributes to Bacon, together with his failure in the poem to treat Bacon as a specifically ethical or literary 'pictura',

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10. See H & S, XI, 244.
11. The past tense indicates that this was written after Bacon's death in that year.

suggest that while Jonson's values remained constant, his aims and means of expression had changed with the years.

It is instructive to compare this poem to an earlier one which had a similar formal occasion, "An Epigram on William Lord Burl: Lo: High Treasurer of England: Presented upon a plate of Gold to his son Rob. E. of Salisbury, when he was also Treasurer." Written between 1608-12, it praised Lord Burleigh in the usual terms:

> If thou wouldst know the vertues of Man-kind,
> Read here in one, what thou in all canst find,
> And goe no farther: let this Circle be
> Thy Universe, though his Epitome.
> Cecill, the grave, the wise, the great, the good,
> What is there more that can ennoble blood?
> The Orphans Pillar, the true Subjects shield,
> The poores full Store-house, and just servants field.
> The only faithfull Watchman for the Realme,
> That in all tempests, never quit the helme,
> But stood unshaken in his Deeds, and Name,
> And labour'd in the worke; not with the fame:
> That still was good for goodnesse sake, nor thought
> Upon reward, till the reward him sought.
> Whose Offices, and honours did surprize,
> Rather than meet him: And, before his eyes
> Clos'd to their peace, he saw his branches shoot,
> And in the noblest Families tooke root
> Of all the Land; Who now at such a Rate,
> Of divine blessing, would not serve a State?
>
> (Und. XXX)

After the initial lines introducing Cecil as, to borrow a phrase from another poem, "an epigramme on all mankind", Jonson gives an epitome of his character and an account of his service to the state in terms of justice, constancy and integrity. The last lines, perhaps, introduce another element, for they are clearly an attempt to compliment the recipient of the poem as well as its subject; Burleigh had been one of the new men who rose to prominence during the Tudor age, and consolidated his position by the advantageous marriages of his children and grand-children into the families of the older aristocracy. Yet, despite this digression, the poem is a clear

exposition of Jonson's ideal of man. Its formal occasion did not make Ben depart from his usual practice. The poem to Bacon, however, makes use of mythological imagery to enhance the personal compliment and the sense of a formal occasion. Though it suggests Jonson's respect for Bacon, it does not attempt to present him in terms of the ideals which underlay even the later prose tribute. It is a poem of compliment rather than praise.

Between the accession of Charles I and the end of his life, Jonson as poet laureate wrote a number of epigrams to commemorate royal occasions. Their titles suggest their formal and ceremonious nature: To K. CHARLES, and Q. MARY. For the losse of their first-borne, An Epigram Consolatorie (Und. LXIII), An Epigram. To our great and good K. CHARLES On his Anniversary Day (Und. LXIV), An Epigram on the Princes birth (Und. LXV), etc. This was an age in which the brilliant court, which has been described as the last Renaissance court in Europe, became isolated from the movement of popular opinion.[12] The court poetry of the period conjured up an artificial world and contributed to the disjunction. Jonson, was too sagacious a critic not to detect, and too forthright not to make at least oblique references to it:

> What can the Poet wish his King may doe,
> But that he cure the Peoples Evill too?
>
> (Und. LXII)

In a rather adulatory poem to Charles, Jonson again alluded to the current discontent:

> How happy were the Subject, if he knew,
> Most pious King, but his owne good in you!
> How many times, Live long, CHARLES, would he say,
> If he but weigh'd the blessings of this day?
> And as it turnes our joyfull yeare about,
> For safetie of such Majestie, cry out?
> Indeed, when had Britaine greater cause
> Then now, to love the Soveraigne, and the Lawes?

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12. C. V. Wedgwood, Poetry and Politics under the Stuarts (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 45-47.

When you that raigne, are her Example growne,
  And what are bounds to her, you make your owne?
When your assiduous practise doth secure
  That Faith, which she professeth to be pure?
When all your life's a president of dayes,
  And murmure cannot quarrell at your wayes?
How is she barren growne of love! or broke!
  That nothing can her gratitude provoke!
O Times! O Manners! Surfet bred of ease,
  The truly Epidemicall disease!
'Tis not alone the Merchant, but the Clowne,
  Is Banke-rupt turn'd! the Cassock, Cloake, and Gowne,
Are lost upon accompt! And none will know
  How much to heaven for thee, great CHARLES, they owe!

(Und. LXIV)

This is a sensitive portrayal of the pious and fastidious, and the finally aloof Charles, as well as a reflection of the general dissatisfaction.[13] It is typical in tone of the later verses to the royal family; their primary purpose is to celebrate a royal personage or occasion, and consequently they are extravagant in their tone and adulation, and show little of the earlier restraint. It was to this employment that he devoted the epigram in the last part of his life.

Not all of Jonson's poetry, however, served such formal occasions. Jonson continued to associate with men of letters and to commend the work of his friends. He wrote on behalf of the translations of James Mabbe, Thomas May, and Edward Filmer, and the historical poems of Michael Drayton and the late Sir John Beaumont. Besides commending the work of his peers and contemporaries, he encouraged that of the next generation and commended his former servant Richard Brome's comedy The Northern Lasse (1632) and his "deare Sonne and right-learned Friend" Joseph Rutter's The Shepheards Holy-day (1635). He devoted verses to anonymous friends such as "An Epistle to a friend" (Und. XXXVII), which is an analysis of the obligations of friendship, "Epigram. To a Friend, and Sonne" (Und. LXIX), and his paternal "An

13. See Mathew, The Age of Charles the First (London, 1951), pp. 30-5.

Epistle answering to one that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of BEN." (Und. XLVII). While these poems continue the themes of the earlier verses to friends, they become less the exposition of an ideal than an analysis of values and relationships.

Another development from earlier practice is the humorous epigram or epistle to a friend. Poems to Arthur Squib (Und. LIV) and John Burges (Und. LV and LVII), as well as the related "An Epigram. To the House-hold" (Und. LXVIII) attempt to give humorous expression to personal need. They are like the poem on Lady Bedford's buck, one of Jonson's favourites, but without the confident and witty stance. Like the earlier verse they make use of Jonson's friends, but not in the light of the earlier ideals.

How to interpret Jonson's "The Vision of Ben Jonson, on the Muses of his Friend, M. Drayton", prefixed to The Battle of Agincourt (1627) has long been a problem for scholars. Many consequently have ignored it. Some, however, have thought that by his extravagance Jonson had done Drayton an injustice, or even that he meant the poem as a satire rather than a compliment.[14] Others have contended that the poems contained no unusual exaggeration; George Burke Johnston commented: "Jonson's praise may be a bit enthusiastic, but it is no more exaggerated than that in innumerable other commendatory verses."[15] It is necessary to seek an explanation which is consistent with Jonson's relationship with Drayton and with his own poetic development.

Herford and Simpson suggest that the poem was written "to compensate for the failure to inscribe any earlier tribute to

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14. H & S, XI, 147-9.
15. Poems of Ben Jonson, ed. George Burke Johnston (London, 1954), pp. 342-3.

Drayton".[16] The relationship between Jonson and Drayton had been the subject of some unkind remarks by Jonson to Drummond in 1618-9. He claimed that he was feared by Drayton, that he "esteemed not of him." (Convers. 135), and that he had been neglected by Sr. W. Alexander because Alexander was a friend of Drayton's (ll. 161-2). Relations had improved by 1627, however, when this tribute was written, probably in reply to an earlier tribute from Drayton to Jonson.[17] Jonson's poem surveyed all of Drayton's work in a manner which threw critical judgement to the winds.

The "Vision" invites comparison to the Shakespeare elegy, published four years earlier. Both poems compared contemporaries to the giants of antiquity: Shakespeare is represented as better than Aeschylus, Europides, Sophocles, Paccuvius, Accius, Seneca, Aristophanes, Terence, Plautus, in fact "all that insolent Greece, or haughtie Rome/ sent forth"; and Drayton, as the combination of Theocritus, Virgil, Ovid, Orpheus, Lucan, Homer and Tyrtaeus. It is the same kind of tribute, but while we have no trouble believing the one to Shakespeare, we have difficulty accepting that to Drayton. One seems apt and just; the other, extravagant. Both poems are long, high-flown, and effusive, a far departure from the brevity, control, and pithiness of the epigrams to earlier poets. Though some relatively early poems were euqally long, such as the epistle to Selden (1614), they discussed important themes such as the duties of friendship and scholarship, but both of these poems devote their length primarily to celebrating the work of an individual. When Jonson discussed friendship in the poem to Drayton, it was not principles but the history of his relation-

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16. H & S, XI, 148.
17. H & S, XI, 147-8.

ship with Drayton that concerned him. These celebrations of poets, however, do implicitly affirm the value of letters, even if they do not discuss its implications.

The differences between the tributes to Shakespeare and Drayton are, however, more telling than the similarities. Jonson praised Shakespeare for his superiority to his contemporaries and the ancients, for his gifts of nature and art, and for the quality and immortality of his work. Time has vindicated this assessment. Jonson praised each of Drayton's works as an ultimate triumph: the Idea. The Shepherds Garland (1593) was found to be "pure, and perfect Poësy (ll. 23-4) and the Poly-Olbyon (first published in part in 1612 but completed in 1618) was "ravishing" (ll. 53-4). This judgment is thought to be so extreme as to require an explanation. Yet, the poem to Drayton is typical of the poems of the last years: concrete and particular in conception, extravagant in tone, exclamatory, effusive, overdone; indeed, it carries these qualities to far greater length than the poem to Shakespeare. The key to the poem to Drayton is in Jonson's use of a vision, a device which he had earlier employed in an epigram which commended Sylvester's translation of du Bartas which Jonson had not been able to examine properly but which he wanted to endorse. The vision, a deus ex machina, permitted Jonson to bypass the usual care, scrutiny, and judgment which he brought to his tributes. A vision likewise permitted Jonson to eulogize Drayton. Here, perhaps, for the personal reasons suggested by Herford and Simpson, he allowed his desire to celebrate an individual to overcome his assessment of the facts; perhaps, he had even lost some of the discernment and discrimination which had marked the earlier period.

In the later years, Jonson's patrons also changed and the new patrons suggest further developments of Jonson's values and poetic

practice. Some of the earlier ones continued their support until well after the publication of the Epigrammes. Jonson's praise of Pembroke to Drummond and the following lines from the Gypsies Metamorphosed (1621):

> You knowe how to use your sword and your pen,
> And you love not alone the Arte, but the Men.
> The Graces and Muses everie where followe
> You, as you were theire second Apollo.
>
> (ll. 688-91)

indicate the continuity of his relationship with Pembroke who died in 1630. Lady Mary Wroth, however, who was still alive in 1640, is not heard of again.[18] Lord Aubigny with whom Jonson probably stayed 1613-8 died in 1624. But, despite the survival of some earlier patrons Jonson found new and different patrons for his latter years.

An epitaph (Ung. V. XXII) on the death in 1619 of the father of William, Earl of Newcastle, is the first sign of a new era of patronage which was to last until Jonson's death. With respect to the family of Cavendish, Jonson adopted a formal role similar to that to the Sidneys, and he wrote verses for the major occasions in the family life. In addition to the epitaph on Newcastle's father, Jonson wrote to commemorate the death of his aunt, "that most honoured Ladie Jane, eldest Daughter, to Cuthbert Lord Ogle: and Countesse of Shrewsbury" in 1625 (Ung. V. XXVIII) and his mother, Katherine, in her own right Baroness Ogle, in 1629 (Ung. V. XXXI). He celebrated, with the Entertainment at Blackfriars (1620), the birth of Charles Cavendish, son of the other line of the family, the Earls of Devonshire.[19] For King Charles' visits to his home, Newcastle commissioned from Jonson the entertainments at Welbeck, 1633, and

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18. See the DNB account of Lady Wroth.
19. H & S, VIII, 767.

Bolsover, 1634. To the earl himself, Jonson wrote two epigrams. There is one connection which might link this family with the Sidneys of earlier days: Jane, the Countess of Shrewsbury mentioned above was the mother of Mary Talbot, the wealthy wife of William, the Earl of Pembroke.

Jonson makes no attempt to present the Earl of Newcastle in terms of the ideals of literature or public service. He was not in those years a statesman, occupying only minor posts on the counties, as lord lieutenant of Derbyshire (1628-1638), and of Nottinghamshire (1626-42).[20] His prominence, as governor of the prince of Wales (1638-41) and royalist general during the civil wars, came later.

He was, however, a man of many interests. He was a great patron; "no Person since the Time of Augustus better understood Dramatick Poetry, nor more generously encourag'd Poets; so that we may truly call him our English Mecœnas", wrote Gerard Langbaine in 1691.[21] This is perhaps a somewhat exaggerated estimate of his eminence, but not entirely inaccurate, for he was a patron or friend of Richard Brome, Jonson's former servant, John Ford, the dramatist, James Shirley, and Davenant, and, after the Restoration, Dryden, Shadwell, and Flecknoe. He was a man of letters and wrote poems and plays himself; "His Natural Wit," his second wife declared, "appears by his delight in poetry; for I may justly call him the best Lyrick and Dramatick Poet of this Age."[22] He wrote love poems to his first wife, whom he married in 1618,[23] and seventy more to his second, the

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20. Douglas Grant, Margaret the First: A Biography of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, 1623-73 (London, 1957), pp. 60-1
21. An Account of the Dramatick Poets (Oxford, 1691), p. 386.
22. Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, The Life of the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince William Cavendishe, Duke, Marquess, and Earl of Newcastle (London, 1667), p. 146.
23. These poems and others are among the Portland Papers at Nottingham University Library.

celebrated Margaret, whom he married in 1645;[24] he also contributed verses to her The Philosophical and Physical Opinions, 1655, and Nature's Picture, 1656. He commended Flecknoe in verses printed before A Relation of Ten Years Travel. He also wrote an elegy for Ben Jonson, entitled "To Ben Jonson's Ghost."[25]

He produced, furthermore, several dramatic works, sometimes in collaboration with the leading dramatists of the day. The Country Captaine, largely the work of James Shirley, and The Varietie, which shows pervasive Jonsonian influence and, much inferior to the former, is solely Newcastle's work, were printed together in 1649 with the description that they were "Written by a person of Honor".[26] The Humourous Lovers and The Triumphant Widow, the second written in collaboration with Shadwell, who shared Newcastle's great admiration for Jonson, were printed separately in 1677 under the duke's name.[27] Sir Martin Mar-all (1667) said to have been only corrected by Dryden, is now thought to be almost entirely his work.[28] Though these plays were produced long after Jonson's death, they do give us insight into Newcastle's character and Jonson's relationship with him.

In several ways, Newcastle was a successor to the Sidneys. He was a great nobleman whose interest in literature led him to composition and to the friendship and patronage of men of letters. He was called, like Pembroke, the Maecenas of his age. It is true that Newcastle "managed to assimilate the old Elizabethan attitude

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24. The Phanseys of William Cavendish, ed. Douglas Grant (London, 1956).
25. H & S, XI, 489.
26. Grant, Margaret the First, p. 160, and Henry Ten Eyck Perry, The First Duchess of Newcastle and her Husband as Figures in Literary History, Harvard Studies in English Vol. IV (Boston and New York, 1918), pp. 102-27.
27. Grant, Margaret the First, pp. 223-4, and Perry, pp. 145-50 and 156-65.
28. Grant, Margaret the First, p. 226 and Perry, pp. 151-2.

towards literature and to carry it, comparatively untouched, down to the other times and manners of the Restoration."[29] In fact, Newcastle combined the humanistic respect for letters which was characteristic of the Renaissance with a fascination with the new science and the values of the new age of learning.

Newcastle was an amateur of science. He frequented many outstanding men of science of his age, was a friend of Hobbes, and knew Descartes, Gassendi, and Mersenne. His interest carried over into the practical and he experimented with telescopes and chemistry.[30] Not deeply learned, he relied much on his own natural wit and judgment; his wife described how his answer to the question whether man could possibly fly like the birds so pleased Hobbes that he included it in the Leviathan.[31] He was to some extent a dilletante in science as he was in literature, but he was still able to reconcile the claims of the old and new learning.

One might sum up Newcastle's quality by describing him as a gentleman of the new age: a virtuoso.[32] This was the conclusion of his contemporaries. His wife wrote that 'His Behaviour is such that it might be a Pattern for all Gentlemen; for it is Courtly, Civil, easie and free, without Formality or Constraint; and yet hath something in it of grandure, that causes an awful respect towards him."[33] Clarendon, who judged him severely, conceded nonetheless that he was "a very fine gentleman, active and full of courage and most accomplished in those qualities of horsemanship, dancing, and fencing, which

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29. Perry, p. 86.
30. Grant, Margaret the First, pp. 91-4.
31. Life, p. 143.
32. Walter E. Houghton, Jr., "The English Virtuoso in the Seventeenth Century," JHI, III (1942), 51-73 and 190-219.
33. Life, p. 150.

accompany a good breeding."[34] It is such qualities that Jonson chooses to praise; Und. LIII praises the duke's horsemanship, and Und. LIX, his fencing, and these were the activities in which Newcastle excelled. His books on horsemanship were a major contribution. In 1658, he published at Antwerp his costly but exquisite La Methode Nouvelle et Invention extraordinaire de dresser les Chevaux which was translated into English in 1743. After the Restoration, in 1667, he published A New Method and Extraordinary Invention to Dress Horses a development of some of the ideas in the earlier work.[35] His manuscript on fencing, The Truth of the Sorde, also survives.[36] These were the products of exceptional skill and deep knowledge. In his publications as in all his interests the duke showed a grand and aristocratic extravagance; his productions of Jonson's entertainments are said by his wife to have cost nearly twenty thousand pounds.[37]

In his earlier work, Jonson had celebrated gentlemanly pursuits. The descriptions of hunting in the poems on Penshurst and to Sir Robert Wroth, and hawking in that to Sir Henry Goodyere (Ep. LXXXV) show that Jonson did not spurn these aristocratic sports. The manner in which he treats them, however, does show a change of emphasis. Hunting at Penshurst or Durants was part of a broader ideal of social and natural harmony; it was envisaged within a scheme of ethical order, in terms of Jonson's deeply felt moral and literary concerns. Hawking at Polesworth was seen in a similar light:

> GOODYERE, I'am glad, and gratefull to report,
> My selfe a witnesse of thy few dayes sport:
> Where I both learn'd, why wise-men hawking follow,
> And why that bird was sacred to APOLLO.

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34. History, ed. Macray, III, 380-1.
35. Grant, Margaret the First, p. 227.
36. H & S, XI, 91.
37. Life, pp. 139-41.

She doth instruct men by her gallant flight,
  That they to knowledge so should toure upright,
And never stoupe, but to strike ignorance:
  Which if they misse, they yet should re-advance
To former height, and there in circle tarrie,
  Till they be sure to make the foole their quarrie.
Now, in whose pleasures I have this discerned,
  What would his serious actions me have learned?

(Ep. LXXXV)

The cavalier sport is made the occasion for moralizing on the unending conflict between knowledge and ignorance. This curious poem, with its simple almost mediaeval allegory, is nonetheless entirely Jonsonian. It hints at the classical past, an ideal of wisdom, and the continuing pursuit of knowledge, and shows Jonson envisaging life in terms of his ideals. This poem was written before 1612.[38]

The poem on Newcastle's horsemanship written 1620-28[39] begins with the same direct address:

When first, my Lord, I saw you backe your horse,
  Provoke his mettall, and command his force
To all the uses of the field, and race,
  Me thought I read the ancient Art of Thrace,
And saw a Centaure, past those tales of Greece;
  So seem'd your horse and you, both of a piece!
You shew'd like Perseus upon Pegasus;
  Or Castor mounted on his Cyllarus:
Or what we heare our home-borne Legend tell,
  Of bold Sir Bevis, and his Arundell:
Nay, so your Seate his beauties did endorse,
  As I began to wish my selfe a horse,
And surely had I but your stable seene
  Before, I thinke my wish absolv'd had beene.
For never saw I yet the Muses dwell,
  Nor any of their household, half so well.
So well! as when I saw the floore, and Roome,
  I look'd for Hercules to be the Groome:
And cri'd, Away with the Cæsarian bread,
  At these Immortal Mangers Virgil fed.

(Und. LIII)

This poem, unlike the former one, is primarily concerned with celebrating a personal accomplishment, a particular and quite

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38. The date Jonson sent his poems to the press.
39. See H & S, XI, 89.

specialized skill. There is no attempt to go beyond this literal level; no moralization accompanies the description of the duke's ability. The poem is heavily suggestive of the ancient and mediaeval past, but Antiquity is not introduced to suggest an ancient wisdom, but to embroider the compliment. The ancient accomplishment remains a standard, but it is not ethical, and is evoked mainly to add an allusive richness to the poem. The mediaeval element is also allusive and entirely different from the moral allegory of the Goodyere poem. It represents that developing interest in Britain's national heritage which culminates in Jonson's deliberate attempt to naturalize the pastoral tradition by conflating it with the legend of Robin Hood in The Sad Shepherd.

This poem, furthermore, contains some singularly infelicitous imagery; take, for example, the Centaur and stable images, and the pious absurdity, "Nay, so your Seate his beauties did endorse, /As I began to wish my selfe a horse." Such extravagance suggests a loss of perspective and control, the result of the attempt to render a compliment rather than define an objective ethical ideal. The values expounded in the Epigrammes gave a unity to each poem, and indeed to the whole collection, for they were clearly and consistently held and set forth. They gave the poems their assurance, force and solidity. The moral emphasis and the numerous adjectives describing ethical qualities, great, good, noble, true, just, reappeared again and again to evoke this ideal, and carefully defined and restricted the allusions to the past.[40] Here, the poem suggests no ethical basis; there are no adjectives to suggest ethical qualities; the allusions, though unified by the theme, do not suggest an ethical ideal.

40. See G. R. Hibbard, "Goodness and Greatness: An Essay on the Tragedies of Ben Jonson and George Chapman," Renaissance and Modern Studies, XI (1967).

If any ideal is suggested it is a martial one, but one more gentlemanly and ceremonious than that of the poems to Ratcliffe, Vere, and other true soldiers. It recalls, in fact, the feminine ideal of Jonson's mythographical compliments to the Sidney ladies, and seems to be its masculine counterpart. These poems of compliment have the same formality, the same courtly extravagance, the same use of antiquity to enrich the compliment. The particularity, the clearer factual basis, and the more manly and vigorous tone of the later poems are largely the result of Jonson's scrupulous regard to suit the compliment to its subject.

Jonson continued to show acumen and judgment in his praise and deftly singled out Newcastle's genuine accomplishments. Yet, his poems to Newcastle do suggest a changing attitude to life. Jonson made no attempt to present Newcastle in terms of an ideal of the whole man or his due role in society. Nor did he suggest the needs of the time. Newcastle was a virtuoso and a man of varied accomplishments, but Jonson only concentrated on two of these. This suggests that in an age of changing values Jonson found it impossible to praise Newcastle in terms of either the old or the new ideal of man and consequently chose to praise him for particular and concrete achievements.

Another patron, Sir Kenelm Digby showed many of the same interests as Newcastle. He combined a love for literature and scholarship with a passionate and eclectic interest in the new science. Sir Kenelm had early won fame for his learning, and in his early twenties had given two lectures on the secret modes of writing of the ancients before the Accademia dei Filomati in Siena.[41] In addition

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41. R. T. Petersson, Sir Kenelm Diby: The Ornament of England (London, 1956), p. 54.

to such arcane interests, he loved literature, and in his early years, he himself wrote original poems,[42] criticism of Spenser, Fuller and of George Hakewill's Apology,[43] and translations of Vergil's Eclogues into French, and Tasso's Aminta as well as some lines of Petronius and parts of Guarini's Il Pastor Fido, into English. He also had extensive literary connections: Cowley, Selden, May, and James Howell sought his help or opinion, and, as well as Jonson, Aubrey, Evelyn, Clarendon, Denham, Felltham, Waller, Davenant, Fanshawe, Wotton, Crashaw, Habington, Henry Shirley, Joseph Rutter, and Aurelian Townsend were his friends. At least nineteen books in five different languages were dedicated to him.[44] Later, his love of natural philosophy took precedence over his love of literature, but in the years of his acquaintanceship with Jonson he was known both as a man of letters and of science.

Digby and Jonson had a number of things in common. Both had acquired their copious erudition outside the normal course of contemporary education; though Digby had attended Oxford, as a Catholic he could not take a degree; his learning, moreover, went far beyond the usual scope of an Oxford education. Both had changed their religion, and had eventually returned to the faith of their birth; Digby's conversion to Anglicanism took place during the period of his acquaintance with Jonson.[45] Both had courtly connections, and they were both proposed for membership in the projected Royal Academy.[46]

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42. Petersson, pp. 38-41; these were published among Poems from Sir Kenelm Digby's Papers, ed. Harry A. Bright, Roxburghe Club (London, 1877).
43. Petersson, p. 91.
44. Ibid., pp. 91.
45. Ibid., pp. 34-8, 89-95.
46. Ibid., pp. 93-5.

Their friendship seems to habe been inevitable. Digby is known to have given Jonson a copy of Sandys translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses (Oxford, 1632) and Savonarola's Triumphus Crucis (Leyden, 1633); the first of these bears the inscription "Sum Ben Jonsonii ex dono illustrissimi equitis (immo Herois) et summi amici D. Kenelmi Digbaei".[47] Though Jonson was of the preceding generation, their common love of literature and learning was still sufficient basis for friendship. Digby, according to his most recent biographer, "idolized" Jonson, and called him "the honour of his age."[48] Jonson in turn showed his esteem for Digby by entrusting to him the first complete edition of his work. Humphrey Moseley, tells us in the 'Address to the Reader' in The Last Remains of Sir John Suckling (London, 1659) that Digby, having judged it "a Piece of too much worth to be laid aside", had himself decided to publish the fragment of The Sad Shepherd. Digby also stated his intention to edit the remainder of Jonson's work, because of his desire to share with others "those excellent pieces (alas, that many of them are but pieces!) which he left behind and that I keep religiously by me to that end."[49] He was a faithful friend.

Sir Kenelm Digby deserved Jonson's esteem and friendship, and in many ways exemplified the new ideals of his age. Jonson speaks of him in an epigram which is addressed to his wife: "An Epigram to my Muse, the Lady Digby, on her Husband, Sir Kenelm Digby":

> Tho', Happy Muse, thou know my Digby well;
> Yet read him in these lines: He doth excell
> In honour, courtesie, and all the parts
> Court can call hers, or Man could call his Arts.
> (Und. LXXVIII)

47. H & S, XI, 599 and I, 268.
48. Petersson, pp. 89-90.
49. Ibid., p. 333, and H & S, IX, 95-6; II, 213; VIII, 17-8.

Jonson in the sub-title to "Eupheme" (Und. LXXXIV) described him as a "gentleman absolute in all numbers." This, despite criticism for specific shortcomings or failures, was the general opinion of Digby. His tutor at Oxford, Thomas Allen, is said to have dubbed him "the Mirandula of his age",[50] and Henry Peachem, the courtesy writer, described him as a "noble and absolutely complete gentleman".[51] Clarendon described the courtesy mentioned by Jonson, "a wonderful graceful Behaviour, a flowing Courtesy and Civility, and such a Volubility of Language as surprized and delighted";[52] his charm led him to be sought after by Marie de Medici, and to be a favourite of both Charles I and Cromwell, though all the while a papist. Wood called him "a compleat Chevalier" and "the magazine of all Arts";[53] Aubrey, "a Gentleman absolute in all Numbers" and "the most accomplished Cavalier of his time";[54] Laud, "a very learned and noble gentleman".[55] In this first part of the poem, Jonson is suggesting the new man, "the virtuoso", of which Digby was an example. The ideals of character, letters, and public action are brought together with more gentlemanly values in a man who excells in all courtly and human arts. Digby represents an ideal that has gained breadth and is in line with the changing values of the age.

The next part of the poem introduces yet other elements:

> Hee's prudent, valiant, just, and temperate;
> In him all vertue is beheld in State:
> And he is built like some imperiall roome
> For that to dwell in, and be still at home.

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50. Brief Lives, p. 97.
51. The Complete Gentleman, p. 120. This tribute is from the second (1634) edition.
52. Clarendon, Life (Oxford, 1759), p. 18.
53. Athenae Oxoniensis, ii, 238-9.
54. Brief Lives, p. 97.
55. Works (Oxford, 1853), V, p. 105.

This is once more the Stoic ideal of character which Jonson promulgated in the earlier poems. What perhaps is new is the expansive imagery; "In him all vertue is beheld in state"; he is an "imperiall roome". Even this Stoic ideal seems to be altered somewhat, perhaps in keeping with Digby's own character: prudence and temperance are not qualities which Jonson often mentions in his earlier poetry; constancy, moreover, an important and frequent theme of the earlier verse is not mentioned, and indeed was not one of the characteristics of the restless and omniverous Digby.

The mention of Digby's 'vertue' was justified and the subject of tributes from other men; Clarendon gave an account of Digby which not only accorded with Jonson's but which also expressed pungently the qualities in Digby which would have attracted Jonson's friendship and admiration:

> He had all the Advantages that Nature, and Art, and an excellent Education could give him, which, with a great confidence and Presentness of mind, buoyed him up against all those Prejudices, and Disadvantages ... which would have suppressed and sunk any other Man, but never clouded or eclipsed him, from appearing in the best Places, and the best company, and with the best Estimation and Satisfaction.[56]

Among Digby's disadvantages, Clarendon mentioned the attainder of his father, the beauty and the chequered reputation of his wife, his changing and rechanging religion, and some personal vices and and licences. In overcoming these Digby stands as another example of Jonsonian 'vertue'.

The next part of the poem turns to yet different qualities and accomplishments:

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56. Life, p. 18.

His brest is a brave Palace, a broad Street,
  Where all heroique ample thought doe meet:
Where Nature such a large survey hath ta'en,
  As other soules, to his, dwell in a Lane:
Witness his action done at Scandaro⟨o⟩ne;
  Upon my Birth-day the eleventh of June;
When the Apostle Barnabee the bright
  Unto our yeare doth give the longest light.
In signe the Subject, and the Song will live,
  Which I have vow'd posteritie to give.

The poem, then, progresses from a general description of Digby's large and heroic nature to the illustration of it, by pointing out Digby's part in the naval battle at Scandaroon in the district of Aleppo. This occurred during Digby's stint as a royal privateer in 1628-9. At Scandaroon, Digby, in a bid to capture four French ships loaded with gold, had outmanoevred and defeated a superior force of Venetian galleons and galleasses. Unfortunately, by the time he took the French ships, the gold had been carried ashore, but the victory still was his. Though it provoked a difficult international situation and led to imprisonment and exorbitant fines for the English merchants at Aleppo, it was received with rejoicing in Britain. Sir Kenelm became a national hero. King Charles himself welcomed him home, and despite the official reprimands necessitated by the international repercussions, rewarded him after a suitable time had elapsed with numerous preferments.[57] Charles even tried, and failed, to make him a fellow of St. John's, Cambridge. Jonson's recognition was this poem, for he evidently joined in the popular approval; in his inscription in the Ovid which was mentioned above, Jonson calls him a hero as well as an illustrious knight; this tribute in one of his own books testifies to his real admiration of Digby.

The next part of the poem introduces a new note:

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57. Petersson, pp. 82-4.

> Goe, Muse, in, and salute him. Say he be
> Busie, or frowne at first; when he sees thee,
> He will cleare up his forehead, thinke thou bring'st
> Good Omen to him, in the note thou sing'st,
> For he doth love my Verses, and will looke
> Upon them, (next to Spenser's noble booke,)
> And praise them too.

The first part of this section shows familiarity, and sounds like reminiscence. This sudden personal note is transformed into a discussion of the appreciation and reputation of Jonson's work which is continued in the remainder of the poem:

> O! what a fame 't will be?
> What reputation to my lines, and me,
> When hee shall read them at the Treasurers bord,
> The knowing Weston, and that learned Lord
> Allowes them? Then, what copies shall be had,
> What transcripts begg'd? how cry'd up, and how glad
> Wilt thou be, Muse, when this shall them befall?
> Being sent to one, they will be read of all.

Such a shift of emphasis, unknown in the earlier verse, is surely connected with Jonson's circumstances at that time. This was the last period of his life. Since 1628, he had been first confined to his room, and then to his bed. It was a time of acute and embarrassing want, which necessitated proud petitions to the earl of Newcastle.[58] Though Jonson was one of the literary legends of the London scene, he suffered from neglect, for the patronage of the king was fitful and that of his friends apparently insufficient. It is understandable that he should have turned with gratitude to those who recognized his contribution to the age, and dreamed of a renaissance of appreciation. This is, however, the sentiment of someone who recognizes his own decline.

It is perhaps fitting that a passage similar to this in tone but quite different in implication, occurs in his earlier verse. In the verse epistle sent, in 1600, to the Countess of Rutland, he wrote of the Countess of Bedford:

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58. See H & S, I, 210-4.

I have already us'd some happy houres,
  To her remembrance; which when time shall bring
To curious light, the notes, I then shall sing,
  Will prove old ORPHEUS act no tale to be:
For I shall move stocks, stones, no lesse than he.
  Then all, that have but done my Muse least grace,
Shall thronging come, and boast the happy place
  They hold in my strange poems ...

(For. XII, ll. 74-81)

In the earlier confident and hopeful passage, Jonson dreamt of conferring recognition and fame on those who had aided him; in the later passage, he hoped that the appreciation of his patrons would assure a general approbation. A faltering confidence seems to underlie the later poem.

The sudden shift of emphasis from Digby to Jonson is also significant. Such a digression was permissible in a verse letter, but the epigrams almost always stick rigorously to the point. Here, the control and structure have been loosened to allow a greater discursiveness and the intrusion of personal elements. Surely, this also is the sign of a declining and afflicted greatness.

This poem, however, still shows Jonson's care to describe real qualities in his subjects, and to present an accurate picture of their merits. The first part retains that abstract quality characteristic of the early verse, and can be supported by the facts. The vision, however, is larger. In describing Sir Kenelm, Jonson shows a much broader and more comprehensive ideal, a product no doubt of his desire to describe the man as well as the changing values. The imagery is more expansive than that of the earlier verse and almost metaphysical in its quality and scope: "His brest is a brave Palace, a broad Street,/ where all heroique ample thought do meet." It was the engaging and enthusiastic Digby who inspired Jonson to such an ample imagery.

The ambitious and fitful elegy on the death of Venetia Digby (Und. LXXXIV) is also important in considering Jonson's changing attitudes. It is one of Jonson's most ambitious poems; its scope and variety are equalled only by the ten lyrical pieces to Charis. It represents a radical change from Jonson's earlier mode of lamenting death, from the brevity and control of the epitaph. Even the later epitaphs, however, had showed a tendency to greater length and discursiveness. The Corbet poem (1619), though much longer than the others, was still called an epitaph. The poems on the daughters of lord Ogle are also longer and yet more diffuse; one of these is also called an epitaph, that to Katherine, Lady Ogle (d. 1629), Newcastle's mother (Ung. V. XXXI), though it is quite unlike any earlier epitaph and consists of three separate parts. The poem on the death of Lady Jane Pawlet, the Marchioness of Winchester (Und. LXXXIII), is called an elegy, and is much broader in scope than anything that came before. It heralds many of the elements of the poem to Venetia Digby: the suggestion of noble descent, the praise of her feminine qualities, the strong religious sentiment, the allusions to her family, the promise of heavenly bliss, and consequent consolation.[59] These elements, the conventional topics of elegy, are presented in a yet more diffuse state in the fragments of the Venetia elegy which remain. It is more baroque, and metaphysical than anything that Jonson had done before. That Jonson should have gradually abandoned the exquisite epitaphs of the earlier years for these more elaborate genres is in keeping with his general development from the objective and abstract description which he had accomplished in epigram to other forms which enabled him to range more freely.

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59. See Hardison, pp. 113-22, 142-5, and 149-50.

The years led Jonson also to modify his ideal of public service and the means by which he gave it expression. Most of the poems praising public service are contained in the 1616 folio, and only a few were written later. The earliest of these, entitled simply "An epigram", was occasioned by the removal of John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, from the Keepership in Oct. 1625.[60] Williams had first been a chaplain and protégé of Jonson's patron, Lord Ellesmere, and then became chaplain and favourite of King James.[61] Learned and intelligent, he spent many hours in tactful theological discussion with his king. He understood James, and did not ever find it necessary to contradict him; hence his appointment as Lord Keeper in 1621 after the removal of Bacon. The appointment of this favourite caused considerable surprise, for he had not been one of those popularly considered for the job. He was young, (thirty nine) and a cleric, the first since Queen Mary's Archbishop Heath, and he was also without the usual legal training. Modelling himself on his predecessor and patron, Ellesmere, he seems to have conducted himself in a suitable manner, for though he had been originally appointed for three years, a suggestion he had made to shield himself from the early criticism,[62] he was retained in his office beyond this limit. Upon the accession of Charles, however, Williams did find himself in opposition to his king, and, though he had earlier secured the favourite's favour by bringing about his marriage with Lady Katherine Manners, to Buckingham as well; Buckingham's displeasure alone, according to Clarendon, would have been enough to ensure his removal.[63] Because of the original

60. H & S, XI, 92.
61. For an account of him see David Mathew, James I, pp. 274-6, and The Age of Charles I, pp. 111-5; and Akrigg, Jacobean Pageant, pp. 316-9, and his biography by B. Dew. Roberts, Mitre and Musket (London, 1938).
62. Roberts, pp. 44-50.
63. History, ed. Macray, I, 96.

three year clause in his appointment, Charles was able to remove him in a manner which was convenient and without recourse.[64]

Accounts of Williams differ about his character and actions. Clarendon's judgement of the bishop was harsh: "though a man of great wit and good scholastic learning, [he] was generally thought so very unequal to the place that his remove was the only recompense and satisfaction that could be made for his promotion."[65] Clarendon also intimated that Williams had by the wise managing of his defence escaped the censure and the reproach due to him.[66] Welden agreed with this estimate: "In Bacons place comes Williams, a man on purpose brought in at first to serve turnes, but in this place to doe that which none of the Layity could be found bad enough to undertake." He compared him to Bacon: "This Williams, though he wanted much of his Predecessors abilities for the Law, yet did he equall him for learning and pride, and beyond him in the way of bribery."[67]

Other accounts, however, see the bishop in a more favourable light. Godfrey Goodman, a bishop who wrote in defence of bishops,[68] also testified to Williams' learning but gave a different estimate of his actions. He was clearly responding to Weldon's unfavourable picture. He speaks of Williams as a "man of as great wit and understanding as ever I knew any man .... He had a very quick apprehension, and for the discharge of the lord keeper's office he was never taxed with any insufficiency".[69] He points out that later, when Williams'

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64. Roberts, pp. 94-106.
65. History, ed. Macray, I, 57.
66. Ibid, p. 8.
67. The Court and Character, pp. 129-30.
68. The Court of King James the First, ed. John S. Brewer (London, 1839). Replying to Weldon's disparagement of the clergy, he writes, "In my life I did never know more honest, more virtuous, more pious, or wiser men then I have known bishops and churchmen" (I, 286).
69. Ibid., I, 285.

conduct in office was officially examined, even his fervent prosecutors could find little wrong with it.[70] Fuller in the Church History, while admitting Williams' deficiencies and shortcomings, concludes: "Considering all disadvantages, he managed the Office to admiration ... Sure it is that unpartial men of the best & clearest judgments highly commended him, and J. Yelverton himself having him in a case of concernment, ingenuously profest, This is a most admirable man."[71] Arthur Wilson attempted to explain the hostility to the bishop:

> For though he were composed of many grains of good Learning, yet the Height of his Spirit (I will not say Pride) made him odious even to those that raised him; happily because they could not attain to those Ends by him, that they required of him; For great and good Officers ought to be just to their own principles, and not deviate from them for any worldly Respects .... But being of a comly and stately Presence, and that animated with a great Mind, made him appear very proud to the Vulgar Eye, but that very temper rais'd him to aim at great things, which he effected ...

Wilson mentioned Williams' restoration of the Abbey Church at Westminster, and erection of a library at St. John's Cambridge and a chapel at Lincoln College Oxford; to these should be added the library at Westminster.[72] This last account showed much that was admirable, and explained much that was offensive in the bishop. Williams was a grand Renaissance figure, a man who would have appealed to Jonson.[73] He was a generous patron: "that which heightened him most in the Opinion of those that knew him best, was the bountiful Mind to Men in Want, being a great Patron to support, where there was Merit that wanted supply."[74] Goodman also commended his care of young scholars

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70. Brewer, I, 286. For an account of this see Thomas Fuller, Church History (London, 1655), XI, 155-9.
71. Church History, X, 89.
72. History, p. 197; Goodman, I, 287.
73. See Mathew, Age of Charles I, pp. 113-5.
74. Wilson, History, p. 197.

even while Lord Keeper.[75] As Dean of Westminster, Williams gave a grant to Jonson in his sickness (1629).

Modern historians and his most recent biographer agree that Williams justified his appointment. Gardiner praised the bishop's cautious prudence and fund of strong common sense, and claimed that his continuation in office might have prevented the ensuing disaster: "With Lord Keeper Williams," he wrote, "worldly wisdom departed from the counsils of Charles."[76] G. P. V. Akrigg agreed that Williams had filled his position with distinction and credited him with industry and shrewdness, but pointed out that he was an opportunist and pluralist, being simultaneously Lord Keeper, Bishop of Lincoln, and Dean of Westminster.[77] Archbishop Mathew also gave a favourable account of Williams and suggested that it was the prelate's "swift talent" that had aroused Charles' disquiet.[78] His biographer, Roberts, remarked, "Still Williams' appointment remains a freak of favour, which he had to justify, and did justify, by his own ability and industry. If not a great Chancellor, he filled the office competently and with dignity."[79] This seems an accurate assessment.

Jonson, for his part, made, apart from this poem, one other reference to Bishop Williams. In the Gypsies Metamorphosed (1621) where the fortunes of all the leading court and state officials are revealed, he praised the bishop for his integrity and loyalty (ll. 562-84).

The first part of Jonson's poem to Williams described the evils of the court in a manner typical of Jonson's earlier satires of court life. It then moved on to discuss Bishop Williams place in such a setting and celebrated his escape from it:

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75. Goodman, I, 287.
76. History, VI, 31.
77. Jacobean Pageant, pp. 316-8.
78. Age of Charles I, p. 111.
79. Mitre and Musket, p. 50.

You are got off thence, with cleare mind, and hands
To lift to heaven: who is't not understands
Your happinesse, and doth not speake you blest,
To see you set apart, thus, from the rest,
T⟨o⟩'obtaine of God, what all the Land should aske?
A Nations sinne got pardoned! (Und. LXI)

This is a reversal of the sentiments of earlier tributes to men of public action, for Jonson implies that effort, apart from prayer, had become useless, so corrupt was the court and nation. This rather negative poem was also unusually religious, perhaps out of deference to Williams' ecclesiastical position. It ends on a severe and fervent note:

He, that in such a flood, as we are in
Of riot, and consumption, knowes the way
To teach the people, how to fast, and pray,
And doe their penance, to avert Gods rod,
He is the Man, and Favorite of God.

The epithet "Favorite of God" suggested the reasons for Williams' advancement and dismissal. The criticism of the court is a familiar theme, but is here coupled with a religious theme which is unusual in Jonson's poems of state. Formerly, in the poem to Suffolk (Ep. LXVII), God was invoked to confirm a royal appointment, rather than to succour a desperate society. Jonson had praised Pembroke and Overbury for being virtuous in a corrupt environment; he praised Williams for having escaped virtuous from it. The earlier tributes had expressed a confidence in the ability of the individual to affect his surroundings, but here, having lost that confidence Jonson turned to supernatural remedies, a conversion which implies that human effort is insufficient. Such a sentiment and such a poem are completely alien to the spirit of the Epigrammes.

Yet, Williams did represent typically Jonsonian values. His independence and refusal to bend to the designs of Buckingham and the king had brought about his dismissal. Like Coke and Neville, his

integrity and outspokenness had led to his disgrace. Jonson remarked that because horses did not flatter, princes learnt the art of horsemanship truly: "Which is an Argument, that the good Counsellors to Princes are the best instruments of a good Age" (Disc. 1245-6). This is the conviction which lay behind both the earlier praise and the despondency of the poem to Williams.

Jonson's poems to Lord Weston show further development. Weston was Charles' secretary and favourite minister. He was generally unpopular and considered unworthy of the office. Fuller cautiously refrained from judging him, claiming that Weston had lived too near his own time, but Clarendon with more courage delivered a severe judgment.[80]

He gave a lengthy account of the Treasurer's character and life. Weston was of distinguished family, and his education "had been very good amongst books and men". In his early attendance at court, in which he spent the best part of his considerable inheritance, he showed a proper and decorous awe and distance, just as in his early career he had shown great promise. When sent on an embassy to Flanders and Germany, he "behaved himself with great prudence, and with the concurrent testimony of a wise man from all those with whom he treated", and on his return was made a privy councillor and Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which office he once more showed himself able. Clarendon, however, pointed out that Weston demonstrated great agility in keeping his place in troubled and shifting times: "by this dexterity he kept his credit with those who could do him good, and lost it not with others who desired the destruction of those upon whom he most depended." This is the key to Clarendon's interpretation of Weston's

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80. Worthies, 'Essex', 329; History, ed. Macray, I, 59-67.

character. He speaks again of the Treasurer's "talent in removing prejudice and reconciling himself to wavering and doubtful affections." After Buckingham's death, however, Weston "threw off his old affection to please some very much, and to displease none." He became imperious, neglected his duties to interfere in the work of others, freely offended and censured men, then lived in terror of them, and lamented and complained about his state of affairs, for "all the honours the King conferred upon him ... could not make him think himself great enough." He "quickly lost the character of a bold, stout and magnanimous man, which he had been long reputed to be in worse times; and, in his most prosperous season, fell under the repraoch of being a man of big looks and of a mean and abject spirit"; he died in 1634 "unlamented by any, bitterly mentioned by most, who never pretended to love him, and severely censured and complained of by those who expected most from him, and deserved best of him".[81]

Weston was evidently an important patron of Jonson's last years; toward his family, Jonson adopted the usual formal position. In 1632 he wrote to celebrate the return of Weston's son, Jerome, from an embassy, and his marriage to Lady Frances Stuart, the daughter of his late patron Esmé, Seigneur d'Aubigny and later duke of Lennox; this advantageous marriage to a distant cousin of the king had, according to Clarendon, been arranged by Charles.[82] To Weston himself, Jonson addresses three poems, including an epistle and an epigram.

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81. Hillaire Belloc in Charles the First (London, 1933), pp. 142-3 suggested that Clarendon maligned Weston because of the Catholicism of which he had been long suspected and which had been confirmed at his death.
82. History, ed. Macray, I. 67.

The earliest of these is the epistle, written in 1631. A noble and dignified plea for help, it is justly famous. It is perhaps significant that this is also the earliest known reference to Weston; the only earlier poem might be Und. LXXVII, written before 1632; perhaps the earliest reference to him is to the "knowing Weston" in the poem to Digby which is dated between 1628-33. Weston, to his credit, seems to have responded favourably, for this epistle is followed by poems of praise; there is also an extant poem which claims that it returned Jonson "forty pound in gold".[83]

The next poem was occasioned by Weston's elevation to an earldom; "On the Right Honourable, and Vertuous Lord Weston, L. High Treasurer of England, upon the day, hee was made earle of Portland, 17. Febr. 1632. To the envious." The title represents a further change from earlier practice; it is more fulsome and ceremonious, and, because of its specific occasion, more particular; it has not the deliberately general quality of the earlier titles. The initial address to the envious, haughty and somewhat defensive, sets its tone:

> Looke up, thou seed of envie, and still bring
> Thy faint, and narrow eyes, to reade the King
> In his great Actions: view whom his large hand
> Hath rais'd to be the Port unto his Land!
> WESTON! That waking man! that Eye of State!
> Who seldome sleepes! whom bad men only hate!
> Why doe I irritate, or stirre up thee,
> Thou sluggish spawne, that const, but wilt not see?
> Feed on thy selfe for spight, and shew thy Kind:
> To vertue, and true worth, be ever blind.
> Dreame thou could'st hurt it; but before thou wake
> T o'effedt it, feele, thou'ast made thine owne heart ake.
> (Und. LXXIII)

This is not as much praise as defence; the feeling is directed against the public and is almost entirely negative. When Jonson had referred to Salisbury's unpopularity, it was to highlight the significance

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83. H & S, XI,406.

of his character and place in the government; here, it is Weston's position in the King's favour that is emphasized in the course of criticizing the "sluggish spawne". The poem has an exclamatory and rancorous vehemence and completely lacks the idealistic vision and the deft control which had elevated the earlier epigrams. It appears in comparison too declamatory. It did not attempt in any serious way to present Weston in terms of the Stoic ideal of character and referred only to his virtue and true worth in a vague and general manner. No delineation of character and no description of particular ethical qualities is presented: little of the 'pictura' remains. It is only an outcry against public ignorance; the matter of satire has almost completely overtaken that of praise.

The last poem has another fulsome title, "To the Right Honourable, the Lord Treasurer of England. An Epigram". It is a curious poem:

> If to my mind, great Lord, I had a state,
> I would present you now with curious plate
> Of Noremberg, or Turkie; hang your roomes
> Not with the Arras, but the Persian Loomes.
> I would, if price, or prayer could them get,
> Send in, what or Romano, Tintaret,
> Titian, or Raphael, Michael Angelo,
> Have left in fame to equall, or out-goe
> The old Greek-hands in picture, or in stone.
> This I would doe, could I thinke Weston one
> Catch'd with these Arts, wherein the Judge is wise
> As farre as sense, and onely by the eyes.

Jonson seems to be setting up a contrast between the static quality of art and the active life of the Lord Chancellor. It is also a rather roundabout tribute to Weston's discernment:

> But you I know, my Lord; and know you can
> Discerne between a Statue, and a Man;
> Can doe the things that Statues doe deserve,
> And act the businesse, which they paint, or carve.

These references to the visual arts are unusual in Jonson's poetry of praise, and suggest an imaginative fertility not found in the earlier

poems. This is also found in the poem to Jerome Weston (Und. LXXIV), where the natural images are rich and fluid, and have the lyrical felicity characteristic of the masques. Here, the references to the visual arts are unexpected, and put to unusual use, and, though they are used to contrast art to the active public life, they do pertain to character.

The rest of the poem describes the active element in Weston's intelligence and life:

> What you have studied are the arts of life;
> To compose men, and manners; stint the strife
> Of murmuring Subjects; make the Nations know
> What worlds of blessing to good Kings they owe:
> And mightiest Monarchs feele what large increase
> Of sweets, and safeties, they possesse by Peace.

This is a description of Weston's abilities and as far as it goes it is reasonably accurate. Even Clarendon recognized Weston's ability, for he pointed out his early promise, and the "breeding and wisdom" which should have prevented his foolish behaviour. He also claimed that "no man better understood what method was necessary towards that good husbandry "of the treasury, then in a desparate state". His most severe criticisms are consequently of policy. Not surprised that Buckingham, who had been bred in the court and knew nothing of parliamentary conventions and public opinion, should have advised Charles to resolve difficulties by dissolving, or preventing Parliaments, he was incredulous that Weston could give similar advice:

> that ... lord Weston, who had been very much and very popularly conversant in those conventions, who exactly knew the frame and constitution of the kingdom, the temper of the people, the extent of the courts of law, and the jurisdiction of Parliaments, ... should believe that the union, peace, and plenty of the kingdom could be preserved without parliaments, and that the passion and distemper gotten and received in parliaments could be removed and reformed by the more passionate breaking and dissolving them; or that that course would not inevitably prove the most pernicious to himself; is as much my wonder as any thing that hath since happend.[84]

84. History, ed. Macray, I, 7-8.

This passage defines the principle of Weston's policy: evasion.

Gardiner basically concurred with this estimate. His description of Weston's character and policy seems to have been influenced by Clarendon's account: "Weston, the Lord Treasurer, was neither a high-minded nor a far-sighted pollitician ... He was outrageously rude to those whom he could afford to despise, and obsequiously subservient to those upon whom he was obliged to depend".[85] He points out that Weston was a careful and economic administrator, but that he took care to fill his own pockets as well as the Treasury. His policy was complete abstention from foreign complications; Gardiner comments that as "a financier and politician, Portland's recipe for every ill was to leave matters alone".[86] Attempts by powerful interests failed to shake his position in the royal favour.[87]

Jonson's claim then that Weston used his knowledge of the arts of life to bring unity and harmony to the kingdom and to make the subjects appreciate their sovereign was a basically accurate description of Weston's abilities and his pacific and royalist policies. It lacks, nonetheless, the acumen and shrewd judgment of similar tributes in the Epigrammes. The significant reference to "murmuring subjects" itself suggests the short-sightedness of Weston's policies and of the gravity of the popular dissatisfaction and discontent.[88]

To illustrate this change, it is useful to compare the Earl of Portland with a predecessor in the Treasury who also received poetry from Jonson, the Earl of Salisbury. Both Portland and

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85. History, VI, 361-2.
86. Ibid., VII, 377.
87. Ibid., 355-6.
88. In 1630, Jonson had received a pension from Charles; this poem was written in 1632.

Salisbury were extremely unpopular in their time. Both were industrious. Each of them was the leading minister of his age. There are, however, significant differences. Cecil played an active role in government and sought solutions to problems, such as the Great Contract. His personal qualities, which were partly responsible for his unpopularity, were such as increased his efficiency, and strengthened his position: he was aloof, self-sufficient, and of extraordinary self-control. He always retained a quiet courtesy in his dealings with others. The personal defects, however, which made Weston unpopular, were such as reduced his efficiency: he was rude, anxious, obsequious, and fearful of his position. He remained in office by Charles' favour, and it was rumoured that, had Buckingham lived, he would have been removed.[89] He was a favourite; Cecil was not. Salisbury had restrained James, and advocated sensible policies; Portland influenced Charles to avoid facing evident and serious problems. Of the two treasurers there is no doubt that Cecil was the greater man, both in his person and the exercise of his office.

Jonson, moreover, had envisaged Cecil's character and service in terms of an ideal and praised him for universal qualities. Though this ideal still underlay the poem to Weston, it was applied to a particular use, to defending him and his policies. The description of policy in fact replaced that of character. The move toward a more concrete and detailed poetry led Jonson to envisage Weston in the light of his politics, rather than an abstract scheme of values. Unfortunately the ultimate disaster to which the policies he advocated were to lead can never be far from our minds when considering his role in Charles' government. Yet, it was not really in terms of policy that

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89. Clarendon's History, ed. Mackay, I, 61.

Weston is found wanting, for he lacked that strength of character which Jonson had consistently praised throughout his life, in Cecil, Coke, Neville, Bacon, Digby, Williams, and others. Even apart from the failures of his policy, his character and life fail to meet the measure of the earlier men.

The conclusion to the poem to Weston is surprising:

> These I looke up at, with a reverent eye,
> And strike Religion in the standers-by;
> Which, though I cannot as an Architect
> In glorious Piles, or Pyramids erect
> Unto your hohour: I can tune in song
> Aloud; and (happ'ly) it may last as long.

These last lines show a striking and profound change in Jonson. The implacable scorner of spectacle, and enemy of Inigo Jones, the poet who boasted that his verse would immortalize those who had given him help and that his lines would out live "those glorious notes,/Inscrib'd in touch or marble", here concluded that perhaps his song would last as long as the glorious piles and pyramids erected to honour great men. It is a pathetic conclusion. While Jonson's values remained basically constant, and his acumen and judgment persisted in some respects at least, his confidence seems to have faltered at the end. It is significant that at this time Inigo Jones occupied a position in the court of Charles similar to that of Jonson in the court of James. In the closing lines of The New Inne (1631) Jonson had written, "the maker is sick and sad"; the circumstances of his last years appear not only to have undermind his assurance, but even to have shaken his confidence in the value of his poetry.

VIII

Conclusion

Jonson's phrase about poetry "expressing the life of man" seized upon the quintessential element in his own art; poetry was for him an attempt to elucidate human experience: it was an interpretation more than a criticism of life. Jonson's study of ancient and contemporary sources, his keen observation of his own age, his exquisite care to give apt and accurate expression to his vision were all directed to this end: to make life understood.

If I say, then, that his work was a reflection of life, I do not mean this in a light or superficial sense. Jonson attempted to express the whole of life: the life of the mind as well as that of the streets. A confidence in reason, in the power of men to perceive and to relate fundamental principles about life, underlies all of his work. A vigorous intellect can be detected in the art of his poetry, in the incisiveness and economy of his expression; it is evident in the ethical principles he put forth; it can be sensed in the swift movement of his thought.

Yet, though the poetry is informed by intellectual principles, these are completely submerged in the image. Imagination is not something we would readily concede to Jonson; indeed, he himself restricted the free range of the imagination which had been envisaged by Sidney and which characterized the work of Shakespeare. But his

was an imagination which worked on the materials of actual life, a fertile and powerful imagination which formed, or one might even say, construed the elements of his experience in accordance with his intellectual convictions. It was an imagination disciplined by the intellect and tied to the solid materials of actual life, but nonetheless vivid and forceful; Drummond records that Jonson was "oppressed with fantasie, which hath ever mastered his reason, a generall disease in many poets" (Convers. 692-3) and gave two instances of its ascendancy: that Jonson had suffered a vision of his eldest son who had, unknown to him, just died (ll. 261-72), and that "he hath consumed a whole night in lying looking to his great toe, about which he hath seen tartars & turks Romans and Carthaginians feight in his imagination" (ll. 322-4). It was this force of imagination which enabled him to grasp and to integrate the real and the ideal material upon which he worked, to make the images of his poetry.

Jonson accepted Sidney's idealism, but modified it in accordance with the changing intellectual currents of the age. Both he and Donne, in fact, moved toward a more empirical poetry; Donne explored the personal while Jonson explored the social aspects of real life. They both reflect the growing interest in 'things', the facts of experience, which was the impetus of the scientific movement. Jonson, however, because he was attempting to imitate an external reality, gave a more objective expression.

Jonson's poetry is a reflection of contemporary experience but the vivid impression it gives of the life of the age is again not a light or superficial one. Not only does he present contemporary manners but also the current of contemporary thought. He brought humanism to fruition in England and handed it on to Milton.

The patriotism which he demonstrated in his use of the vernacular, in his effort to transform classical culture to serve the needs of the present, and in the celebration of the great Englishmen of his age was part of the feeling and energy of his times. The influence which he reflects is that of Donne and Bacon as well as Martial and Seneca. His poetry hints at contemporary issues: the heroic stand of Coke, the dismissal of Williams, the tension between the Caroline court and popular feeling; it was not, however, issues which primarily interested him, but men and values.

Jonson demonstrated great breadth and sagacity in the way he reflected his age. His poetry moves from the personal to the social, from intimate associations to the field of public action. It is, moreover, an index of the values, the intellectual currents, and the achievement of the age. It is not accidental that Jonson knew and praised Pembroke and Newcastle, the greatest and the most accomplished patrons of their respective periods; his discernment is everywhere visible. Jonson's highest praise was reserved for the three greatest writers of the period: Shakespeare, Bacon, and Donne. In civil matters, his judgments, except for some of those of the last years, have been confirmed by subsequent historians: Salisbury, Ellesmere, Coke, Vere, Neville, Williams, all made important contributions in the public sphere; his judgments, however, were not dependent on party or faction, for some were rivals and opponents, but on their worth as individuals. Some contemporaries, such as Sir Edward Herbert and Sir Kenelm Digby were recognized as being, like Sir Philip Sidney, striking embodiments of contemporary ideals: it is as such that Jonson saw them. His verses reflect a changing society as the Elizabethan ascendancy, represented by the Sidneys and

Salisbury, gave way to the Caroline, represented by Weston, Newcastle, and Digby. He reflects the development of the ideals of the courtier and the governor into that of the virtuoso. Jonson was acutely aware of and constantly scrutinizing the life and movement of the times.

In many respects, he was at the centre of the civilization of the age, and had affinities with humanism, the scientific movement and neo-classicism, with Aristotle, with Horace, Martial, and Juvenal, with Erasmus and Vives, with Sidney, with Donne and Bacon, with Milton, with Dryden and so on. R. F. Jones has pointed out how Jonson was responsible for maintaining the prestige of Aristotle and the ancients in criticism, while they were overthrown in science; L. J. Potts, how Jonson's influence determined the course of poetry:

> the influence of Donne petered out; that Spenser was kept alive by Milton, but only just kept alive. It was Jonson's conception of poetry, and the impetus he gave to it by his own work, that provided our writers between Donne and Wordsworth with an intelligible aim, with enough discipline and just enough elbow-room to keep English letters alive.[1]

It was because of what Prof. Bush called Jonson's "dynamic assimilation of main tradition of the past", and indeed, of the intellectual life of his age that his voice was carried through the eighteenth century.[2]

Jonson himself was a great man, a great poet, a great intellectual, an index of much that was best in the age: a rare combination. There were unsavoury elements in Jonson: a savage egotism,

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1. Ancients and Moderns, p. 271; "Ben Jonson and the Seventeenth Century," ES, II (1949), 6-24.
2. English lit. in the Earlier 17th Cent., pp. 107-8; see also Mason, Humanism and Poetry, pp. 255-89; Maurice Hussey, Jonson and the Cavaliers (London, 1964); A. C. Partridge, The Tribe of Ben: Pre-Augustan Classical Verse in English (London, 1966); and Walton, "Tone of B.J.'s Poetry", op. cit., pp. 193-214.

a sore and truculent assertiveness, a fierce and uncompromising arrogance, a failure to distinguish between principle and personal opinion. He was touchy, and given to drink and to quick and penetrating censure of others. But, if we may repeat his words about Shakespeare, there "was evermore in him to be praysed, then to be pardoned" (Disc. 667-8). The men of his age, though they had neglected him in his last years, made his the most important funeral of a literary figure since that of Sir Philip Sidney. It was just and fitting that, admixed with curiosity, there was respect and gratitude, for it is true for a people, as for the student, that "those, that can teach him any thing, hee must ever account his masters, and reverence" (Disc. 2508-9).

Appendix A

Jonson did borrow for his Discoveries a passage from Scaliger which, in the vein of Goodman, spoke of the decay of nature and the old age of the world. After considering the abuses and injustices of the age, he concludes:

> it is the disease of the Age: and no wonder if the world, growing old, begin to be infirme: Old age it selfe is a disease. It is long since the sick world began to doate, and talke idly: Would she had but doated still; but her dotage is now broke forth into a madnesse, and become a meere phrency.
>
> (Disc. 300-5)[1]

This passage, which decidedly contradicts the affirmation of nature taken from Vives, was part of a longer quotation from Scaliger; the passage from Vives stood completely on its own. The defence of nature in the Vives passage was, moreover, certain and unambiguous; Jonson seems to have taken the old age metaphor along with an exposition of a favourite theme: the failure of contemporary society to appreciate learning. In view of his other statements, Jonson could not have supported this view. What seems more likely is that he adhered, like Hakewill, to a theory of cyclical progress. In an original passage of the Discoveries (ll. 899-947), he catalogues the great writers of the last century who had worthily represented their country, and singles out Bacon as the highest mark and acme of the English language,

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1. See H & S, XI, 220-1.

but Bacon has been given this preeminence because literature after him was falling into a decline: "Now things daily fall: wits grow downe-ward, and Eloquence growes backward." Jonson's patriotism is inextricably mingled with his pessimism at the current situation; his willingness to admit and celebrate the achievement of his English predecessors shows that he fully endorsed the possibility of equalling the Ancients and his consciousness of the current neglect of learning and poetry intimates only a temporary decline in the progress of learning. The inference, if we take this statement with those considered above, is that learning had suffered a momentary set-back, but would be ultimately restored. This is a conviction which underlay Jonson's regard for Truth and Art; he says of the true but neglected writer:

> An other Age, or juster men, will acknowledge the vertues of his studies: his wisdome, in dividing: his subtilty, in arguing: with what strength hee doth inspire his Readers; with what sweetnesse hee strokes them: in inveighing, what sharpenesse; in Jest, what urbanity hee uses. (Disc. 786-91).[2]

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