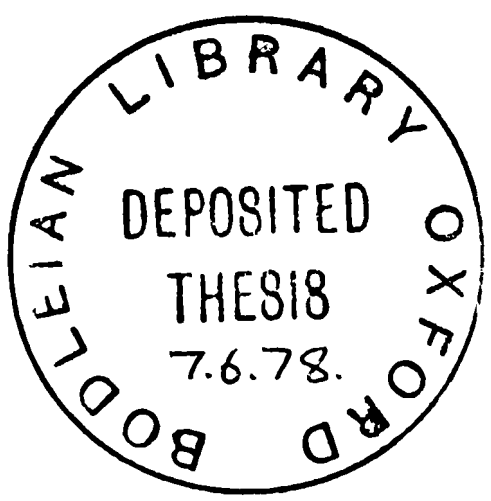
PANEGYRIC OF THE MONARCH AND ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT UNDER ELIZABETH I AND JAMES I

by

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Panegyricum. A lascivious kind of speaking, wherein men do join in praising of one, many lyes with flattery, but this was the abuse of it, the word it self signifies no such infamous kind of speaking.

- Thomas Holyoke, A Large Dictionary in Three Parts (London, 1677), sig. 5h4b.

The qualitie of our monarchie wil admit trew speaking, wil allow trew writing, in both with the brauest, so that it do please, and be worthie praise, so that it preach peace, and preserue the state.

- Richard Mulcaster, The First Part of the Elementarie (London, 1582), p. 257.

ABSTRACT

"Panegyric of the Monarch and its Social Context under Elizabeth I and James I."
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The thesis examines the relationship between poetry and politics under Elizabeth and James, tracing certain changes in modes of artistic representation through historical analysis of particular masques and entertainments. The introductory chaper discusses the close connection between poetry and ceremonial in the Renaissance: in panegyric the poet's private imagination is subordinated to public images, and his art is one of ceremonial "ornamentation". Subsequent chapters discuss the effects of social, political and religious changes on this ceremonial poetic. Chapter II relates the political symbolism of The Faerie Queene to the tradition of pageantry on which it was based, and analyzes the growing tension in the later books between public and private values. Chapter III discusses the new developments of the 1590s, arguing that both in politics and in literature new tensions were being felt. The first part deals with the poets associated with Essex, the second with the poetry of Sir Walter Ralegh. Chapter IV discusses the effects on panegyric of the new, less external concepts of decorum introduced by the writers of the "plain style", with special reference to Fulke Greville and Samuel Daniel. Chapter V deals with Jonson's masques, showing that while in political content they mirror the line taken by the king and his more conservative advisers, in artistic form they display an ambivalence characteristic of Jonson's work. Chapter VI discusses the Jacobean poets who imitated Spenser, showing the continuity of their political concerns from the public poetry of the 1590s and arguing that Spenserian poetry, especially pastoral, became a protest against the corruption of the Jacobean court. A newly discovered draft of a masque for the wedding of Princess Elizabeth in 1613 is included in an Appendix.

PREFACE

The aim of this thesis is to explore certain aspects of the relationship between poetry and politics at the Renaissance through a historical analysis of masques and entertainments. When viewed simply in aesthetic terms, masques and pageants are likely to appear banal - the word "pageant-like" is still often used to describe vapid or emptily ornamental poetry. But scholars like Frances A. Yates and D.J. Gordon have shown that the Renaissance poet was able to use pageantry to convey complex political meanings; techniques which they developed have been used here to uncover new topical allusions in a number of masques. These interpretations cannot claim to be exhaustive; there is still room for detailed analysis of many of the entertainments briefly covered here. The aim of the present study, however, is to mediate between the historical analysis of specific masques and more general questions of literary history and criticism. It is over thirty years since the pioneering studies of Yates and Gordon appeared, but their implications for the criticism of Renaissance literature have not yet been fully explored. It has been thought that the literary critic should be concerned with general meanings rather than the minutiae of court politics. The present study, however, tries to show that there were important continuities in political symbolism, and that these can throw light on the development of literary traditions. It is hoped that by covering a fairly lengthy period it has been possible to bring out connections and continuities which more detailed particular studies do not always clearly reveal.

The study of Renaissance poets' relationship to the monarchy raises questions not only of political content but also of artistic form. As Frank Kermode has pointed out, twentieth-century discussions of the relationship between poetry and politics has been heavily influenced by the Symbolist aesthetic, with its preference for art which is "organically" unified, sign and thing signified being indissolubly united in a sacramental manner.[1] It was easy to project this aesthetic on to Renaissance theory, and to present Puritanism

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1. F. Kermode, Romantic Image (London, 1957).

and the new scientific outlook, with their reductive dualisms, as the inherent enemies of poetry: the highest value was given to those poets, such as Donne, Jonson and the metaphysicals, whose work was felt to be organic in form and who could be seen as the allies of an "Anglo-Catholic" monarchy in the defence of the traditional "organic community" against these new forces. Spenser and Milton were regarded with suspicion as being already tainted by a split between sign and thing signified, a fall from organic unity to dualistic rhetoric.[1]

Recent structuralist criticism, however, has questioned the basis of such theories, emphasizing the artificial element in all communication and therefore being less inclined to disparage the obtrusive artifice of rhetoric or allegory. In Chapter I it is argued that such a view comes closer to Renaissance artistic theory, which in turn was closely related to social thought; the chapter emphasizes the changes which have occurred since the Renaissance in the connotations of words like "rhetoric", "ornament" and "image", and which have often led to a misunderstanding of Renaissance literary theory and practice. If the relationship between a poem and society is seen in terms not so much of organic growth as of a system of socially created signs, a public performance, it becomes necessary to be more cautious in positing immediate connections between poetry, social structure and religion. In an art as highly rhetorical as that of the Renaissance, it is especially important to take into account specifically political mediations. For example, close attention to the political context shows that it is misleading to assume from the apparent natural authenticity of "country-house" poetry that such verse necessarily grew out of a mature "organic" social order (see pp. 195-7, 281-3).

Nevertheless, the present study does try to show ways in which religious, social and artistic changes interacted, but this is always done with reference to specific contexts. In Chapter I the general discussion is related to an analysis of the coronation ceremonial in 1559. Chapter II discusses the

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1. The fullest statement of this view was P. Cruttwell, The Shakespearean Moment (London, 1954). The preference for organic unity in art and society underlies the critical thought of F.R. Leavis; his disciple L.C. Knights makes explicit his debt to Coleridge's distinction between "organic" symbolism and the inferior "artificial" mode of allegory in Further Explorations (London, 1965), pp. 155 ff.

ambiguities inherent in Spenser's allegorical representation of Protestant doctrine by traditional ceremonial symbolism, relating these ambiguities to the broad range of religious positions conveyed by the courtly symbolism of earlier Elizabethan entertainments. It is argued, however, that in the later books there is a growing dissatisfaction with the public world that threatens the status of the courtly poetic itself; Spenser himself is able to contain these centrifugal forces within the panegyric framework, but in Chapter III it is shown that in many other public poets of the 1590s the tensions are still greater, partly because of changes in the patronage system and the church. The analysis of Ralegh's poem to "Cynthia" suggests why in his poetry this tension between the public and the private reaches its most acute and irresolvable form. Chapter IV discusses the new, less external conception of decorum introduced by the writers of the "plain style", with special reference to Fulke Greville and Samuel Daniel, who subjected poetic, social and religious images to critical scrutiny. Chapter V examines the masques of Ben Jonson, exploring the relationship between the sceptical humanism he had in common with Greville and Daniel and his assertive hostility to Puritanism. Chapter VI examines the Jacobean Spenserians, who, while in some ways formally conservative in comparison with Jonson and the metaphysicals, placed increasing emphasis on the poet's autonomy, on the independence of the individual imagination from courtly images; it is argued that this development was partly caused by political disillusionment.

Since the focus of the thesis is primarily political and historical, the term "panegyric" is used in a wide sense. A strictly defined genre of verse panegyric, based upon classical models, became current in the seventeenth century, and I am much indebted to James D. Garrison's excellent study of the form.[1] In the Elizabethan period, however, praise of the monarch was diffused widely throughout poetry, prose and drama, and no such clear definitions can be made. The reason for this was partly aesthetic: it was much easier to accommodate praise of a female ruler to a system of allegorical representation in which virtues were depicted as female. But there were also political factors, and a narrowly generic approach would tend to neglect them. The rhetorical

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1. Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric (Berkeley, 1975).

purpose of the panegyrist is to distract attention from specific historical circumstances to ideal generalities: to aestheticize politics. In order to define this rhetorical purpose fully it is therefore necessary to stand outside the strictly literary limits set by the poet.[1] For the same reason, throughout the thesis panegyric has been set in the context of more critical and satirical political attitudes: to focus on panegyric alone, as Elkin C. Wilson does in England's Eliza, inevitably gives a false impression of the tone of the panegyrics themselves.[2] Certainly it must be emphasized from the beginning that Elizabeth and Jacobean panegyric was based on a broad general commitment to the monarchy; Englishmen compared their state favourably with the tyranny and bloodshed they found in many parts of the Continent. Recent historians have strongly criticized the "Whig" view that politics was firmly polarized on matters of principle by the Jacobean period; as is emphasized in Chapter I, there were strong social and political pressures against the development of ideological as opposed to personal politics. Nevertheless, within this general consensus there were differences of emphasis, often matters of tone and language rather than explicit theories, and more attention has been paid in the thesis to these differences than to the common denominators of political rhetoric.

* * *

In the difficult task of reconciling the claims of literary criticism and of history, I have been fortunate to have the guidance of Mr. John Buxton, my supervisor, who has been unfailingly ready with help and advice, and of Dr. Penry Williams, who directed my forays into historical territory. Dr. Kevin Sharpe read versions of Chapters V and VI and made many valuable criticisms and suggestions. Dame Frances Yates kindly helped with the problems raised by the text reproduced in the Appendix. I have also benefited from advice

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1. On the limitations of genre criticism, see M. McKeon, Poetry and Politics in the Restoration (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), Ch. I.
2. E.C. Wilson, England's Eliza (Cambridge, Mass., 1939). This work is nevertheless indispensable for its comprehensive coverage of the material.

from Professor John Carey, Mr. Emrys Jones, and Mr. Keith Thomas. I would also like to thank Felicity Bloch, Marion Campbell, Nicholas Jose, Catherine La Farge, Julie Lepick, John Pitcher, George Watson and Bob White. Especial thanks must go to Paul Hamilton and Michael Neve for their help and encouragement. A research fellowship from Magdalen College enabled me to complete the thesis under ideal conditions, and I am grateful to the President and Fellows. Finally, I would like to thank Mrs. Maureen Stone, who typed the thesis.

ABBREVIATIONS

B.L.	British Library
Bacon, Life and Letters:	The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon, including all his Occasional Works, ed. J. Spedding (7 vols., London, 1861-71).
C.S.P.D.	Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series
C.S.P. Foreign	Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
E.H.R.	English Historical Review
E.L.H.	Journal of English Literary History
H.L.Q.	Huntingdon Library Quarterly
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports
J.E.G.P.	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
J.W.C.I.	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
M.L.N.	Modern Language Notes
M.P.	Modern Philology
Nichols (in Chapters I-III)	The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, ed J. Nichols (2nd edn., 3 vols., London, 1823).
(in Chapters IV-VI)	The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, ed. J. Nichols (4 vols., London, 1828).
O.E.D.	Oxford English Dictionary
P.B.A.	Proceedings of the British Academy
P.M.L.A.	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
P.Q.	Philological Quarterly
P.S.	Parker Society
R.E.S.	Review of English Studies, 1925-49, and New Series, 1950-
S.E.L.	Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900
S.P.	Studies in Philology
S.T.C.	A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640, ed. A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (London, 1926).
S.T.S.	Scottish Text Society
T.L.S.	The Times Literary Supplement

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CHAPTER I

Two Forms of Royalism: The Coronation Ceremonial of 1559

Signs must resemble the things they signify.
- Hooker, Ecclesiastical Polity, V.vi.2.[1]

God hath power to represent himselfe in what signes hee will.
- William Perkins.[2]

A hard thing is it to keep the mean: or else we extol the signs overmuch, or else too much condemn them.
- John Hooper.[3]

Introduction

On 14 January 1559 Queen Elizabeth made a triumphal entry to London in preparation for the coronation; the following day she was crowned. The first section of this chapter analyzes the coronation ceremony itself, the point of intersection of secular and religious ritual. Parts of the coronation ceremony embodied monarchism at its most mystical: the analogical language of religious ritual, in which form and content were scarcely separable, was used to present the monarch as the natural image of God. It was this kind of "religious" monarchism, freed of excessive dependence on the church, that reached its height under King Charles, and can be termed with some justice "Anglo-Catholic". The second section analyzes the pageants for the royal entry, which embodied a different kind of royalism, no less enthusiastic but more firmly Protestant and ideological; the ceremonial forms of the panegyric are combined with a firm and separable didactic content. In the reigns of Elizabeth and James, however, these traditions were never clearly separated: iconophile and iconoclast joined in the cult of the monarch. The emphasis in the first section is essentially

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1. Ecclesiastical Polity, V.vi.2; Works, ed. J. Keble (7th edition, Oxford, 1888), II, 29.
2. Works (Cambridge, 1605), p. 815.
3. Early Writings (Cambridge, 1843), pp. 196-7.

semantic, showing how various social and religious changes affected the connotations of a large field of words; the final section is structurally parallel, exploring the literary implications of these changes and showing how ideas of artistic representation, of the relationship between "form" and "matter", were affected by changes in the nature of ceremonial representation, of the relationship between role and self.

I. The Coronation: Natural Images and Sacramental Politics

Though seremonye Is nothing In Itt selfe, yett Itt doth Every thinge.
- The Duke of Newcastle to Charles II.[1]

A. The Traditional Ceremony

The coronation ceremony has changed little in form for hundreds of years; but this formal continuity obscures important changes. The form itself can only be fully understood in the context of the whole system of social relations of which it is a highly indirect symbol: the modern coronation, essentially a public spectacle transmitted by the mass media, has only a superficial resemblance to the medieval ceremony, a much more private affair at a time when the monarchy had real political power.[2] In the sixteenth century the status of ceremonial was a matter of serious political importance, and an analysis of the changes in status of the coronation in this period can serve as an introduction to certain aspects of political thought and its social basis. The medieval ceremony had been politically ambiguous. On the one hand it was one of many ceremonies throughout society which emphasized the public responsibilities of an office-bearer, dramatizing constraints on his authority both from the church and from the people. On the other hand, it contained elements of mystical glorification in an analogical, ceremonial language which had a useful political function for those in power, a function which Newcastle was to impress upon Charles II; it provided the concrete support for the mystical rhetoric of the "political philosophy of order" which became ever more elaborate as a justification of royal authority in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[3]

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1. S.A. Strong (ed.), A Catalogue of Letters... at Welbeck (London, 1903), p.189.
2. For an illustration of the pitfalls to which exclusive concentration on narrowly formal aspects can lead, see E. Shils and M. Young, "The Meaning of the Coronation", Sociological Review, I (1953), 63-81, and the critique by N. Birnbaum, ibid., III (1955), 5-23; Shils and Young elaborate on meanings of the ceremony which could not have been perceived by the vast majority of spectators, and speak of Elizabeth's sword as symbol of a "terrible responsibility and power" which she most certainly did not have. On the other hand, such misreadings themselves testify to the power of ceremonial to naturalize social institutions, to divert attention from a concrete situation to timeless generalities.
3. W.H. Greenleaf, Order, Empiricism and Politics (Oxford, 1964), pp. 14 ff; cf. E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (London, 1943).

The basic structure of the ceremony mirrored many lesser civic ceremonies of oath-taking, and followed a pattern found in many societies.[1] First of all the monarch ascended to a raised "theatre" and received the people's acclamation. This part of the ceremony survived from the days when monarchs were elected; the word "election" referred not to the actual process of choosing a ruler, which was generally a foregone conclusion, but to the public ceremony of recognition and designation without which the monarch was not felt to be fully legitimate.[2] Throughout society office-bearers were confirmed in office by similar ceremonies in which all freemen participated. There was a similar vestigial "populist" element in the ceremony of oath-taking: the monarch had to swear to obey the laws chosen by the people. The oath-taking had similar force to the acclamation: an inner commitment was not fully real until it had been publicly dramatized. Oaths still had legal force and were only gradually being superseded by written contracts.

After the oath was taken, the most solemn part of the rite began. The monarch removed the external signs of his former social role and entered a liminal state, which revealed the helplessness of the individual outside the social structure: he became a message without a code, a soul without a body. The monarch had to fast the night before the ceremony, and before the anointment he had to remove his outer garments, bare his skin and prostrate himself before the altar while the presiding clergyman read prayers warning against the veils of tyranny. In many local ceremonies the liminal state was extended much further: normal roles were inverted and Lords of Misrule appointed for a brief Saturnalian reign. The effect of such ceremonies was to make everyday roles appear arbitrary and to reinforce a sense of a communal identity, a social "body" that went beyond both external roles and personalized inner selves.[3]

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1. P.E. Schramm, A History of the English Coronation (Oxford, 1937); cf. C. Phythian-Adams, "Ceremony and the Citizens", in Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700, ed. P. Clark and P. Slack (London, 1970), pp. 57-85.
2. Schramm, pp. 142ff, 171ff.
3. On the medieval symbolism of the "body", see M. Bakhtin, Rabelais and his World (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 18-30, 302-367.

But it would have been dangerous to allow this sense of social roles as arbitrary and external to go too far; and the next part of the coronation ceremony countered the effect of the liminal stage by dramatizing the indissoluble union of the individual with his role. The monarch was anointed with a holy oil that was held to effect an inner transformation; and he was then adorned with the external insignia of his office. The royal role was given great prominence as an entity in its own right: it was personified as an "artificial person" or "body politic", possessing the same kind of immortality as the angels.[1] The death of the monarch left a gap in the social structure which was filled by symbolic representations of the royal "dignity" until the new monarch's natural body was united with the artificial person. This union was now celebrated by an act of homage from the assembled clergy and nobility. From now on honour would be paid not just to the monarch's natural body but to the images of the divine role which were "in" him; ceremonial language would be addressed to his majesty, not to his private person. The least signs and representations of royal authority had to be treated with the same reverence as if the monarch were personally present.

The coronation ceremony embodied the values of a society in which the external role took priority over the inner self, in which public honour and shame eclipsed inner conscience. While Christianity had internalized the concept of the "person", the pressures of an honour-oriented society pulled it in a public direction, and in Elizabethan usage the word often retains its original associations with a ceremonial "mask" or "image".[2] Gardiner equated the king's "person" with his "lively image".[3] Only the nobility and gentry were entitled to public images which would leave a trace in the communal memory; the higher the rank, the more realistic the images on funeral monuments were allowed to be.[4] Lesser men were represented in the community only by the mediation of socially

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1. E. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies (Princeton, 1957), pp. 273 ff.
2. M. Mauss, "Une catégorie de l'esprit humain: la notion de personne, celle de 'moi'", in Sociologie et Anthropologie (3rd edn., Paris, 1966), pp. 333-63.
3. S. Gardiner, Letters, ed. J.A. Muller (Cambridge, 1933), p. 275.
4. J. Weever, Ancient Funerall Monuments (London, 1631), p. 16.

superior patrons, just as they needed a "parson" to mediate with God. The concept of "representation" was still heavily coloured by the "theocratic-descending" political theory: grace and authority were passed down the angelic and social hierarchies by a process of natural reflection, so that each inferior became an image of those above him in the hierarchy, and partook of some of their divinity.[1] The word "patron" was fused with "pattern": a priest was a "patrone and shadowe of heavenly thynges".[2] Thus "representation" always retained a strongly concrete sense: the representative was hallowed by the ghostly presence of that which he represented. The concept of Parliamentary representation in the modern sense, with the member as representative of an atomized group of individuals, was slow in developing; there was distaste for weighing the votes of mean men equally with the well-born.[3] When Hooker used "representation" in its populist rather than theocratic sense, it was with irony, criticizing those who think that the coronation ceremony in any way limits royal power: the king does not need the consent of "such as represent the people's majesty".[4] Insofar as the king "represented" the people it was rather in the same sense that St. George was their "patron" or "pattern", sent from above and acting as a mystical embodiment. The political and artistic senses of "representation", now firmly separated, were still closely interconnected; "representation", like "image", connoted a social "presence" rather than a merely visual resemblance; on the other hand, the head of state was a "representative" not in an impersonal sense but almost like an allegorical personification.

In such a society, communication and exchange are conducted to a large extent through "restricted" rather than "elaborated" codes: the signifier is not clearly distinguished from the thing signified, material "body" from conceptual

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1. W. Ullmann, A History of Political Thought: The Middle Ages (2nd edn., Harmondsworth, 1970), pp. 30-32 and passim.
2. Geneva Bible, 1557 edn., Hebrews viii.5, quoted in O.E.D., "pattern", 1.
3. D. Hirst, The Representative of the People? (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 13-15; cf. H.F. Pitkin, The Concept of Representation (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), pp. 241-52.
4. Ecclesiastical Polity, VIII.ii.8.

"soul".[1] Vulnerable to many natural hazards, and lacking many modern means of social control, the social structure was constantly reinforced by public ceremonies of honour that reiterated the code with each exchange of messages. Private allegiance had to be translated into public ceremonies; honour had to be paid not just with the mind but with the body, so that the meaning of the act and its performance were one and the same. The language of honour blended abstract and concrete: the words "honour", "adore" and "adorn" were often conflated. The metaphor of the "body politic" gained force from this obligatory participation of the body in public ceremonial, whose obverse was the custom of punishing transgressions by stamping a sign on the body. Honour was also paid and earned with gifts, concrete public "representations" of inner respect. The traditional aristocratic ethic emphasized the need to display one's wealth and consume it conspicuously. An aristocratic polity was held to be based upon distributive justice, geometrical proportion, rather than commutative justice, arithmetical proportion: where in a democratic society all transactions were modelled on the exchange of commodities, in which the participants were equals, and value was universally translated into the artificial terms of money, in an aristocratic society exchange had to take into account the rank of the persons involved.[2] Just as the aristocrat's "honour" was not merely a matter of inner purity, so it was not enough for him to hoard up money: he had to display his wealth publicly, making his "price" into his "praise" (the words had not yet been clearly distinguished). Here again, inner moral values are bound up with concrete, external signs: gifts and tokens of honour were "natural signs", partaking of the "mana" of those they "represented". This "natural" value was not simply inherent in the object itself; the public act of exchange was itself part of the value.

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1. M. Douglas, Natural Symbols (2nd ed., London, 1973), passim. The terminology of "restricted" and "elaborated" has been widely criticized, and is in danger of lapsing into the Symbolist antithesis between "organic" and "mechanical"; but it can still be fruitful if its formalism does not become too narrow, and it emphasizes the element of social mediation in the most "natural" system of signs. For a similar distinction between "analog" and "digital" communication, see A. Wilden, System and Structure (London, 1972), pp. 154-95.
2. Renaissance social thought on this question was based on Aristotle, Ethics, Bk. V.

The dominance of role over bearer, of code over message, was symbolically represented in religious ritual as an inner transformation. The central moment of the mass was the transformation of the Word that had been "missus" from God into a concrete embodiment: the sign contained what it signified, the representation became a real presence, the word became a body. Theologians described this as the transformation of an artificial into a natural image: an artificial image bore only an external relationship to its prototype, like that of a statue to a living human being, but a natural image partook of the inner substance of that which it signified, just as a son was the natural image of his father.[1] Man himself was an image of God only in the lesser sense, and the divine image in him had been damaged by the Fall; but by partaking of the sacrament he could renew that image to some extent. Theologians limited the status of natural image to the sacramental bread and wine, but popular superstition gave the same status to images of the saints; the local mediators took precedence in religious practice over an abstract and universal message. But such images had to have received consecration by a public ritual: the natural image combined divine nature with human artifice.

This transformation of an artificial into a natural sign can be seen as "magic". The concept of magic is notoriously difficult because it has been strongly influenced by post-Reformation polemic. Certain kinds of "magic" can be seen as products of "natural" systems of communication, of "restricted codes"; they involve a close connection between code and message, and yet they cannot function as languages unless code and message are also clearly distinguished. In fully "arbitrary" systems like written language the signs are clearly separable from their content; in systems resting upon analogy, the signs tend still to be felt as values, and their dual status causes a tension. The fact that makes communication possible, the natural analogy between signifier and signified, also endangers it. A priest does not merely tell his congregation about angels, he acts like an angel, and yet he is also a mortal. Communication is endangered by the marginal areas, the mediators that threaten to blur the sharp distinctions

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1. N. Sanders, A Treatise of the Images of Christ, and of his Saints (Louvain, 1567), sig. 164b; see also J. Phillips, The Reformation of Images (Berkeley and London, 1973).

necessary for maintaining order; these marginal areas are therefore subject to taboos. "Magicality is a product of social control. To insist that symbols are efficacious is to threaten blasphemy and sacrilege with automatic danger and to promise the reverent automatic blessing... [magic] protects the media of communication."[1] Thus the "magic" of religious ritual was not very different from the "mana" attaching to social images and ceremonies of honour. If to dishonour the image of a monarch was to dishonour his own body, it was but a short step to trying to harm him by damaging a royal portrait or seal.[2] The system of social classification was reinforced by the hierarchical ordering of the natural and cosmic hierarchies; in this closed, densely structured universe the logic of analogy made it easy to believe that one level could be affected by the manipulation of corresponding signs on another level. When great social value attached to objects that were not circulated as commodities remaining "natural" signs of their bearers, it was particularly easy for jewels and other ornaments to be regarded as magical. Even money retained vestiges of its origins in religious ritual: after touching for the King's Evil, the monarch gave the sufferer a coin which was believed to have magical powers; though the coins were theoretically current coin, at least up to the time of James I, they were generally preserved by their owners instead of being circulated.[3] A great deal of the "magic" of ceremonial, then, was not so much the result of a lack of technology as a natural outgrowth of a society in which roles took priority over individual bearers. Some anthropologists have argued that the term "magic" should be abandoned altogether; without going so far, one can at least make

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1. Douglas, pp. 178-9.
2. Several recent scholars have drawn attention to more individualistic theories of magic popularized by Renaissance Neo-Platonists like Bruno; Urmeston, who helped with Henry VIII's revels, urged the use of royal seals as magical talismans: S. Anglo, Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy (Oxford, 1969), p. 167. But such intellectualized projects must be distinguished from the more general "magic" of overdetermined social symbols: on the difference cf. K. Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (London, 1971), pp. 227-9, and Bakhtin, p. 365.
3. M. Bloch, The Royal Touch (London, 1973), pp. 92-3, 182.

distinctions of degree.[1] Luc de Heusch has made a useful distinction between "religious" and "magical" monarchies: in a religious monarchy, the "magic" of authority is mediated by traditional rituals that link the monarchy with a stable natural hierarchy, while a "magical" monarchy claims immediate divinity, which is attached to the person rather than the office and is therefore inherently unstable.[2] Clearly the coronation ceremony established the ruler as a "religious" monarch.

Although the coronation conferred certain kinds of "magic" on the monarch, his dependence on the church for this magic was not altogether satisfactory. The coronation was modelled on the ordination of bishops, and the liturgy emphasized that it involved not just the adoption of an external disguise but an inner transformation: "thou shalt be changed into another man". The monarch was said to become a "mixed person", a "mediator between the clergy and the laity" and enjoying the special status of such mediators. Royalist propaganda presented the ceremony as a sacrament, transforming the ruler into a natural image of God; the king's dual nature was sometimes compared to Christ's, and the relation between artificial and natural persons was compared to that between the Father and the Son: "I am in the Father, and the Father in me".[3] On the other hand, the ceremony implied that this magical status was conferred by the church rather than being inherent in the royal succession. As long as it was felt necessary to go through with the ceremony, however, monarchs made the best of it; they might be reluctant to admit that their divinity depended on the application of holy oil, but royal propagandists turned the ceremony to their advantage by spreading the story that the special oil used at coronations gave them the power of magical healing. It was even claimed that the holy oil washed away the king's sins, and many extravagant superstitions, not sanctioned by the church, gathered around the English and French monarchies.[4] Because "natural signs" cannot communicate about themselves, they are especially liable to

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1. H. Geertz, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic", Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 6 (1975), 71-89; but see also reply by Keith Thomas, pp. 91-109.
2. L. de Heusch, "Pour une dialectique de la sacralité du pouvoir", in Le pouvoir et le sacré (Brussels, 1962), pp. 15-47.
3. Kantorowicz, p. 449.
4. Schramm, pp. 115-40; Bloch, pp. 113-4.

generate misunderstandings and superstitions. Certainly it is possible to exaggerate the power of such superstitions: the literate élite who had full access to the "elaborated code" were perfectly ready to speculate rationalistically about political institutions; and the masses who were thought to be particularly prone to superstition were no doubt often quite capable of resisting such manipulation.[1] Moreover, it could be claimed that even the most mystical ceremonial had a didactic element: the taboos of office not only glorified the office-bearer, they were meant to be a means of social control, a constant concrete reminder of the obligations of office. Hooker emphasized the didactic element in the coronation: "Our kings therefore, when they take possession of the room they are called unto, have it painted out before their eyes, even by the very solemnities and rites of their inauguration, to what affairs by the said law their supreme power and authority reacheth."[2] But this "instruction" was still conveyed largely through the "restricted code", the concrete - and ambiguous - language of ceremonial.

B. The Reformation

Both in its religious and political aspects, the Reformation diminished the status of the traditional coronation ceremony. The reformers mounted a concerted attack on the traditional religious languages, which, they held, had obstructed the divine message by demanding worship of the magical mediators; they wanted to translate religious discourse into an "elaborated code" that would firmly distinguish between sign and thing signified. They were much less confident in man's ability to mirror the divine with natural images, to restore the image of God: for them, there was a huge gulf between human imaginations and Christ's "sinlesse pure impression".[3] "To whom shall ye liken me?"

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1. It has been argued that Ullmann's concentration on symbolism leads him to overestimate the mystical element in medieval political thought: F. Oakley, "Celestial Hierarchies Revisited", Past and Present, 68 (1973), 3-48. Again, one could argue that such errors themselves testify to the power of ceremonial.
2. Hooker, Ecclesiastical Polity, VIII.ii.13.
3. Fulke Greville, Caelica, no.109. The fullest poetic treatment of Calvinist doctrine on images is Sir William Mure's "True Crucifixe for True Catholickes," in Works, ed. W. Tough (Edinburgh and London, 1898), I, 197-298.

declared their God (Isaiah, xl.25). They attacked many secular ceremonies that were held to be of pagan origin, such as the ceremonial exchange of gifts at New Year. They were particularly hostile to rituals of role-reversal: their sense of a sharply individualized, pre-social inner self was affronted by Saturnalian ceremonies that dissolved the boundaries between soul and body, self and role.

To some extent the Reformation was a response to evils that had crept into the church in the late Middle Ages: many of the deceits and impostures which the reformers delighted in exposing really existed, such as the mechanical images that were said to work miracles but were in fact operated by machinery. But the intense reaction against the mechanical character of late medieval religion produced a new outlook which rejected some of the foundations of the traditional order. Medieval religion emphasized the continuity of soul and body, nature and art, visual and verbal signs. Gardiner compared the different varieties of religious signs to different forms of script: all signs were to some extent artificial.[1] On the traditional psychology, all ideas entered the understanding through the medium of the imagination, so that there was not an enormous difference between visual and verbal, natural and artificial signs. Words and images alike "represented" not so much like a mirror as like an ambassador, in a manner that was neither merely concrete and visual nor abstract and impersonal: the ambassador does not precisely physically resemble his master but he is a distinct personal presence.[2] Even the "natural signs" of the sacraments were produced by a public performance: the thing signified did not inhere immediately and organically in the signifier. The Reformers, on the other hand, deplored the mingling of nature and artifice in medieval religion:

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1. Gardiner, Letters. pp. 275-6; on the medieval theory of signs, see J.A. Burrow, A Reading of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (London, 1965), pp. 187-9.
2. The natural sign was in fact frequently compared to a mirror, but in the Middle Ages the mirror was frequently presented as reflecting a transcendental image rather than immediate reality, and there were superstitions holding that the relationship between image and prototype could be reciprocal rather than mere passive reflection. See R. Bradley, "Backgrounds of the Speculum in Medieval Literature", Speculum, 24 (1954), 100-15.

what the Catholics saw as a legitimate use of the imagination in worship, they saw as magic, and where the Catholics presented traditional ceremonies as a harmonious union of all the senses, the Reformers regarded them as essentially visual. Implicit in such arguments was the idea that truly "natural" signs were immediate and pre-social; language was felt to escape the evils of visual media and to offer immediate access to spiritual truths. The status of the sacraments therefore became controversial: were they any more than artificial, "naked signs"? Secular analogies were often used to describe the change effected in the sacraments: it resembled the imposition of the king's head on a coin, transforming the public value rather than the inner substance.[1]

This depreciation of external ceremonies inevitably affected the status of the coronation. Radicals disliked the claim that the coronation transformed the monarch into a natural image: suspicious of magical mediators, they ridiculed the doctrine of the "mixed person" which made the monarch into a "hermaphrodite".[2] At the coronation of Edward VI, Cranmer emphasized that the rite was not essential: the divinity of kings was derived not from the external rite but from God's immediate approval of their power. The unction was no more than an external ornament: "The oil, if added, is but a ceremony: if it be wanting, the king is yet a perfect monarch notwithstanding, and God's anointed, as well as if he were anoiled". The symbolic act is detached from its abstract meaning; the didactic element in the ceremony is derived not from symbolic actions but from a superadded verbal message - Cranmer calls coronations "good admonitions to put kings in mind of their duty to God, but no increasements of their dignity".[3]

The Protestant depreciation of ritual harmonized with the political aspect of the Reformation, the monarchy's declaration of its independence from the Roman church: the traditional ceremony implied that royal divinity came only through the approval of the church, but throughout Europe monarchs were laying emphasis on the hereditary principle and emphasizing that natural succession alone was a sufficient validation of their authority. In Spain the coronation ceremony

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1. Bullinger, Decades, IV (Cambridge, 1852), 270; Hooker, Ecclesiastical Polity, VII.xix.1.
2. The Coronation Order of James I, ed. J.W. Legg (London, 1902), p. xlv.
3. Schramm, p. 139.

was discontinued at the start of the sixteenth century. From the thirteenth century English monarchs dated their regnal years from the day after their accession rather than from the coronation, and finally Edward VI dated his reign from the day of his accession.[1] There were also elements in the traditional ceremony that implied dependence not only on the church but also on the people: the initial "acclamation" and the oath dated from a time when the monarchy was elective rather than hereditary. Henry VIII considered altering the oath, adding to the clause that he would obey the laws chosen by the people the phrase "with his consent". The full details of Elizabeth's coronation order are not known, but there were some significant changes. She did not prostrate herself before the altar; the parchment with the oath was handed to her by a civil officer; and at the end of the ceremony the customary order was reversed and the nobility paid homage before the clergy.[2]

Thus the coronation was no longer a mystical transformation but more like a secular masque or pageant, a "royal ornament".[3] Whereas previously secular ceremonial had required the validation of religious sacraments, now the ceremonial retained in the English church was justified by secular analogies such as that with the coronation itself: "What a Coronation is our taking of Orders, by which God makes us a Royall Priesthood".[4] The monarch as "creator" of social roles became the absolute deity of a secular hierarchy that mirrored the cosmic hierarchy. The reaction against the claims of the Roman church produced ever more exalted statements of the "political philosophy of order", in which the monarchy was celebrated as the sustaining power of the natural order.[5] English monarchs continued to lay claim to the power of divine healing, though it was now presented as being transmitted by heredity rather than

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1. Schramm, pp. 96ff, 165ff.
2. W. Haugaard, "The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth I", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 19 (1968), 161-70.
3. Coke's phrase, quoted by J.N. Figgis, The Divine Right of Kings (2nd edn., London, 1914), p. 10.
4. From a sermon by Donne, who used similar imagery more extensively in his poem "To Mr. Tilman after he had taken orders": Donne, Divine Poems, ed. H. Gardner (Oxford, 1952), pp. 32-3, 101. Cf. Bullinger, Decades, IV (Cambridge, 1852), 270.
5. Greenleaf, pp. 40ff.

conferred by the coronation ceremony. The monarch was both the fountain of honour and the fountain of magic.

Thus the Reformation was accompanied by a massive exaltation of royal power and prestige. But Elizabeth was anxious that liturgical reforms should not be carried too far. Conservatives repeatedly warned that the Reformation was socially subversive: by exalting the inner conscience above traditionally sanctioned media, it was liable to subvert the secular as well as the religious hierarchy. The reformers undermined the traditional hierarchical notion of representation, with its "magic" of honour and reverence; they attacked Catholics for giving "unequal honour to the signs of equal saints", and translated "angel" as "messenger" - a word, Catholics complained, suitable "for posts only and lackeys".[1] The verbal "elaborated" codes preferred by the Reformers allowed the theological message to be detached easily from the media of social control; they skilfully exploited the new medium of printing, which allowed any literate individual to make up his own mind about religious issues. Gardiner warned that "the destruction of images conteineth an enterprise to subvert religion and the state of the worlde with it".[2] Henry VIII passed an act limiting the reading of the Bible, complaining that it was being read "in every alehouse or tavern".[3] The authorities' viewpoint was constantly reiterated: "Nothing is Gospell, not Evangelium, good message, if it be not put into a Messengers mouth, and delivered by him".[4]

It is true that in general Lutheranism, which took a conservative position on ritual, had a greater tendency to encourage political deference than Calvinism. Royal propagandists repeatedly claimed that monarchy was the most natural form of government; in some circumstances Calvinism discouraged such easy analogies between human institutions and the natural order. The more zealous Calvinists tended to view religious and political institutions in more abstract and

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1. J. Calfhill, An Answer to John Martiall's Treatise of the Cross (Cambridge, 1846), p. 35; W. Fulke, A Defence of the... Translations of the Holy Scriptures (Cambridge, 1843), pp. 483-5.
2. Gardiner, Letters, p. 273.
3. A.G. Dickens, The English Reformation (London, 1964), pp. 189-90.
4. Donne, Sermons, VII (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954), 396.

impersonal terms, and sought artificial rather than organic forms of ecclesiastical order.[1] Their vision was international: the Protestant world was bound together by an inner, spiritual unity transcending particular ecclesiastical and politic bodies. E.M.W. Tillyard has drawn attention to the popularity of the dance as a metaphor for the social order in writers like Sir Thomas Elyot and Sir John Davies; but such figures came less easily to a Puritan like John Rainolds, who grumbled that to read some references to Elyot's Book Named the Governor one would think that it was a book in praise of dancing - a complaint not without validity today.[2] In a speech before Elizabeth in 1564, Thomas Cartwright attacked the "insolence and intolerable conceit" of those who would justify earthly monarchy by analogy with God's sovereignty or with the order of nature.[3] Of course, up to a point the Elizabethan celebrations of the natural order were mere rhetoric, ceremonial performances in which the speaker need not fully believe. But it was not so much the content of such panegyrics as the form that counted: to celebrate the monarchy in this way was to defer publicly to established authority, to subdue individual conscience to public performance; to be reluctant to do so, to demand that one's speech should be true and sincere in a less rhetorical fashion, was itself something of a challenge to authority. The directness with which Cartwright or Peter Wentworth addressed the queen was fortified by their religious conviction of inner righteousness. Elizabeth did not want policy to be guided on the basis of such private religious intuitions: to her, monarchy "was an instrument for protecting a standard of certainty in a political universe always threatened by instability. Certainly she did not see it as a tool for the selective and purposeful exercise of power".[4] She wanted to be celebrated as a "religious" monarch, her authority

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1. M. Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), pp. 171-83. Walzer's method of working from abstract models has been widely criticized and is unduly schematic, but his models do have some value for literary analysis: cf. below, p. 150.
2. J. Rainolds, Th'Overthrow of Stage-Playes (Middelburgh, 1599), pp. 135ff. On Davies, see below, p. 130.
3. A.F.S. Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism (London, 1925), pp. 13-14, 419-21. For other criticisms of analogies from nature, cf. below, pp. 144, 150.
4. W. MacCaffrey, The Founding of the Elizabethan Regime (London, 1969), p. 300

firmly rooted in deference to traditional forms. Elizabeth felt that there was validity in Catholic warnings that a change in religious forms would drastically affect the social order.

But most recent historians have argued that such fears were unjustified. It was in the interest of the High Church propagandists to bracket together all their opponents with the most extreme sectarians, and to create a stereotype of a monolithic "Puritanism" hostile to monarchy and intent on bringing in democracy. Such propaganda greatly oversimplified the relation between theology and liturgy, and between religious and secular ceremonial.[1] It proved to be possible to combine Calvinist theology with the retention of many traditional ceremonial forms in a compromise that lacked intellectual elegance but was widely accepted; and the call for a democratic presbyterian church order came only from a minority. Calvinism could equally well be combined with hierarchical social forms. Calvinists made a firm distinction between inner spiritual equality and the external inequalities of the social order; they stressed the need for firm discipline in church and state, and their distaste for traditional secular rituals paralleled a new tendency towards greater social segregation. The whole community took part in the traditional rituals, but in the sixteenth century "the claims of the community ... at this level were yielding first place to class loyalties".[2] If Puritans were suspicious of the body on spiritual grounds, there were also social reasons for maintaining stricter control over the body as a means of distinguishing the élite from the vulgar.[3] With its emphasis on a small élite of the godly, Calvinism exercised a strong appeal to many noblemen, and the clergy lost no opportunity of enlisting aristocratic support. Under the relatively

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1. C.H. George, "Puritanism as History and Historiography", Past and Present, 45 (1968), 77-104. It is nevertheless hard to avoid using the word "Puritanism", but it always needs to be remembered that it referred to very different phenomena at different times. "Calvinism", too, needs to be used with care: B. Hall, "Calvin against the Calvinists", Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London, 20 (1958-64), 284-301, points out that the early Elizabethan reformers were by no means exclusively influenced by Calvin, and that "Calvinism" as it developed often differed markedly in emphasis from Calvin's own thought.
2. Phythian-Adams, p. 80.
3. K. Thomas, "The Place of Laughter in Early Seventeenth-Century England", T.L.S., 21 Jan. 1977, pp. 77-81.

lax regime of Grindal in the 1570s, tolerance was shown to those ministers who disliked some traditional ceremonies and there was no marked deleterious effect on social order; if a nobleman chose to patronize such ministers he disliked ecclesiastical interference. In France, Calvinism served to embolden certain sections of the nobility in their resistance to the monarchy; in the Netherlands the Calvinists supported the monarchy against the mercantile Arminians. It can be argued that the social tendency of Calvinism, far from being intrinsically mercantile and "progressive", was more often backward-looking and feudal. When Charles and Laud began to repudiate Calvinist traditions and introduce a more elaborate liturgy, they claimed to be doing so partly in aid of social discipline and hierarchy, but they succeeded in alienating large numbers of conservative Calvinists, and it was Laud and his allies who were regarded as the upstarts and innovators by the conservative Calvinist nobility and gentry.

Nevertheless, rightly or wrongly, Elizabeth and her successors were apprehensive about the social dangers of excessive liturgical reform. It could be argued that the ease with which Calvinism was naturalized in the hierarchical social order was increased by the retention of external ceremonial forms. The Elizabethan compromise, in which the form of the state religion seemed to contradict its content, lacked intellectual elegance and was unlikely to generate great religious passion; but it meant that the radical potential of the Reformation was kept well under control, and that the extent to which popular religious and political discourse could be translated into an "elaborated code" was limited. Elizabeth's attitude to the coronation typified the compromise. Some Protestants disapproved of the ritual of anointment, but Elizabeth apparently went through with it: without it, the useful divine command "touch not mine anointed" would be a mere empty figure of speech. The ceremony was purged of some aspects of the traditional "magic" of the church but was not translated entirely into an elaborated code. Elizabeth abolished one ceremony of divine healing, but she retained the other. The monarchy retained a semi-mystical aura, something less than magic, but still something a little more than metaphor. "Weigh these things in themselves", said Hooker, "titles, gestures, presents, other the like external signs wherein honour doth consist, and they are matters of no great moment. Howbeit, take them away, let them cease to be required, and they are not

things of small importance, which that surcease were likely to draw after it".[1]

II. The Royal Entry

The coronation ceremony used mystical symbolism that could furnish a valuable basis for the most exalted statements of royal absolutism; but it also retained reminders of the feudal aspect of kingship, of the monarch's contractual obligations to his people. In the Middle Ages, this mutuality between monarch and people was regularly dramatized in the royal entry; the entry before the coronation was a relic of the election of monarchs, similar to the acclamation during the coronation, and the continuation of the ceremony still implied some kind of obligation for the new ruler to display himself to the people before being confirmed in office.[2] The medieval entry combined panegyric of the monarch with the dramatization of the activities of the city. The rise of absolutism on the Continent transformed the royal entry; in Habsburg lands it became more and more one-sidedly a glorification of imperial power. A new model was found in the classical triumph, and the theme of military victory took precedence over the celebration of civic arts. This development gave an opportunity to artists: it was difficult to impose artistic unity on the mingled elements of the medieval entry, but the celebration of the monarch provided an overriding theme for all the pageants. The architecture of absolutism often made its first appearance in the imaginary buildings of these pageants; the twisting streets and motley architectural styles of the medieval city were not a sufficient expression of the unifying power of the monarch.[3]

In England, Henry VIII made an attempt to move in the same direction;

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1. Ecclesiastical Polity, VII.xvii.4. It is noteworthy that James VI too thought it worth insisting on the anointment at his own and his wife's coronations, despite the strong opposition of the Calvinist clergy.
2. E.H. Kantorowicz, Laudes Regiae (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958), pp. 65-80.
3. J. Jacquot, "Panorama des Fêtes et Cérémonies du Règne", in Fêtes et cérémonies au temps de Charles V (Paris, 1960), pp. 113-91.

Anne Boleyn's entry in 1533 introduced classical motifs to English civic pageantry.[1] The 1559 royal entry was a conspicuous exception to the general development of English civic pageantry: it was a classic example of a Protestant "reformation" of a traditional form, fusing medieval traditions with Protestant radicalism instead of following the model of absolutist classicism.[2] The organizers proudly proclaimed that the city "without anye foreyne persone, of it selfe beautifyed it selfe" (60).[3] The royal entry was held on 14 January 1559, the day before the coronation, but the initial order for the pageantry was issued on 7 December. This was a period of great political uncertainty.[4] Services on the traditional Catholic pattern continued to be performed; but the mood of the city was radical, and there were several incidents of iconoclasm. Elizabeth received widely differing counsels about the policy she should follow. At the most conservative extreme, she was warned that it would be dangerous to move too quickly against the Papacy and that it would be better not to summon a Parliament right away, for its mood would undoubtedly be radical. As a middle course she was advised by Waad to make some changes but to do so slowly: "Glasses with small necks, if you pour into them any liquor suddenly or violently, will not be so filled, but refuse to receive that same that you would pour into them". The radical 'Devise", however, urged immediate and complete reform; and such advice was echoed by the exiles returning from the Continent and their mentors. Rudolph Gualter warned her on 16 January that she should not make an "unhappy compound": new wine needed new bottles.[5] Anxious to quell such excessive religious zeal, on 27 December she issued a proclamation forbidding any preaching and discussion that touched on controversial religious topics.

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1. Tudor royal entries are analyzed by Anglo in Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy.
2. There is a valuable study of the pageant and its political background by R. Strong, "Elizabethan Pageantry as Propaganda", University of London Ph.D. thesis, 1962, Ch. I; the pageant is also discussed by Anglo, pp. 344-59, and Bergeron, pp. 12-23. Quotations are from The Quenes Maiesties Passage through the Citie of London, ed. J.M. Osborn (New Haven, 1960).
3. At Mary's entry the foreigners' pageants had been the most impressive (Anglo. p. 319).
4. On the political background see J.E. Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1559-81, pp. 35 ff.
5. Zurich Letters, II, (Cambridge, Parker Soc., 1845), 3-6.

The royal entry was closest in spirit to the advice of the exiles. One of the leading organizers, Richard Hilles, had been in exile himself; another, Richard Grafton, had printed the first English Bible and also the proclamation of Lady Jane Grey as queen. The author of the pamphlet describing the pageantry, and probably of the pageant verses themselves, was Richard Mulcaster, who also greeted the queen's accession with a firmly anti-Papal poem and was to sit in the Parliament that had been summoned for 23 January.[1] The pageantry contained the expected dynastic compliments: the first pageant used the motif of the red and white roses, praising the role of the Tudor dynasty in restoring peace and unity. But Grafton later interpreted this unity in an ideological rather than dynastic sense, as "the coniunction and coupling together of our soueraigne Lady with the Gospell and veritie of Goddes holy woord, for the peaceable gouerneme[n]t of all her good subiectes".[2] The second pageant displayed virtues treading down their opposing vices; amongst them was Pure Religion treading down Superstition and Ignorance. The dramatic climax of the entry came at the fourth pageant, which featured a contrast between a hill topped by a barren tree, representing "Ruinosa Respublica", on one side of the stage and a green hill topped by a flourishing tree, representing "respublica bene instituta", on the other. From a cave between the hills emerged Time with his daughter Truth, and Truth lowered down an English Bible which was presented to Elizabeth. The pure, simple truth of Christianity had been obscured by the masks and images of the Roman church but was now emerging in a progressive revelation that constituted a redemption of history.

The final pageant was particularly significant politically. It depicted Deborah "apparelled in parliament robes" sitting at the head of a pyramid of the three estates, consulting for the good government of Israel (p.54). This pageant clearly looked forward to the Parliament that was to assemble in less than a fortnight, urging the queen to heed its advice, which was to be extremely radical. No later Elizabethan or Jacobean pageant gave such a prominent place to Parliament. The celebration of Deborah had another important political meaning:

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1. R.L. de Molen, 'Richard Mulcaster and Civic Pageantry', S.E.L., 14 (1974), 209; Harleian Miscellany, ed. T. Park, X (London, 1813), 262.
2. R. Grafton, An Abridgement of the Chronicles of England (London, 1570), fol. 128b.

it indicated that God approved of female rulers.[1] A few of the Marian exiles had gone to dangerous extremes in denouncing Mary's rule, challenging the hereditary principle and the legality of rule by women. The previous year Knox had published his First Blast of the Trumpet, arguing that rule by women was contrary to the law of nature. In maintaining this position he was going beyond Calvin, who had been prepared to concede that God might occasionally raise up an occasional woman to fulfil a divine purpose; the example he used was that of Deborah. Knox, however, rejected this exception: Deborah was not in fact a civil but a religious governor. When Elizabeth came to the throne, the antifeminism of Knox, Goodman and Gilby became extremely embarrassing to many Protestants, who found that the extremists had discredited the whole Genevan movement. Calvin wrote to Cecil on 29 January reminding him that he had always admitted exceptions such as Deborah to his condemnation of female rule, and Knox himself grudgingly amended his position, conceding that "the extraordinary dispensation of Godes great mercy maketh that lawfull unto her, which both nature and Godes lawe deny [to all women]". But Elizabeth was not satisfied with a justification of her rule that made her an unnatural exception to a general law, a "magical" rather than "religious" monarch. Another of the exiles, John Aylmer, therefore produced a defence of female government as part of the order of nature; and it was on these grounds that court panegyrists were to justify her rule throughout the reign. The 1559 pageant did not use the more general arguments for female rule, being content to follow the exiles in emphasizing the exceptional case of Deborah. The pageant was close to the rhetoric of Sir Anthony Cooke, one of the first exiles to return, who wrote to Bullinger on 8 December that if the queen were mindful of the great mercy she had received, and daily gave thanks to the Lord, she would not lack the spirit of a Judith or a Deborah, wise counsellors and a strong army.[2] Her prosperity was conditional on her bringing through a complete religious reformation: Cooke was to be a leading advocate of radical reform in the Parliament. In the

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1. The following is based on J.E. Phillips, "The Background of Spenser's Attitude to Female Rulers", H.L.Q., 5 (1945), 5-32, esp. pp. 8-17. On the treatment of this question in The Faerie Queene, see below, pp. 78ff.

2. Zurich Letters, II, 1-2.

same letter Cooke expressed the hope that the queen would soon marry: despite being ready to admit exceptions to the general rule, the radicals would have preferred the queen to subject herself to a husband, provided that he was a good Protestant. Before the final pageant the queen heard an oration which ended with the hope that she would have children (pp. 51-2); on 6 February a group of Members of Parliament were to request that she should marry.[1] The Queen replied that she would live and die a virgin, but few people believed this, and, as will be seen, pageantry and masques would continue to be used to urge her to marry.

Thus in content the pageant was firmly Protestant and didactic, presenting a no less mystical view of the monarch than the Coronation but shrouding her with a divinity that was radical and immediate, more "magical" than "religious".[2] The contrast with the coronation extended to the form of the ceremony. Great emphasis was laid in the descriptive pamphlet on the complementing of visual signs by verbal explanations: allegorical personages wore clothes that made their meaning clear and also had "their names in plaine and perfit writing set vpon their breastes easelie to be read of all" (p. 38). The pamphlets were left for three days for the people to inspect them: "wordes do flye, but wryting doth remayn" (p. 48). The allegorical signs are immediately translated into an elaborated code. This emphasis on the verbal as opposed to the visual contrasts with the conservative idea that the main value of ceremonial was to content the masses with visual spectacle: when urging the staging of anti-Papal plays at an early stage of the Reformation, Moryson had stressed this aspect of pageantry to Henry VIII: "Into the commen people thynges sooner enter by the eies, then by the eares: remembryng more better that they see then that they heere".[3] For the Protestant radicals such language was reminiscent of Popery; the restoration of the old ritual under Mary had sharpened hostility to the use of

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1. Neale, pp. 47-90.
2. Anglo, pp. 357-8, says that it was more didactic than any previous entry; on the didactic technique of "laudando praecipere" in the pageantry see also E.W. Talbert, The Problem of Order (Chapel Hill, 1962), pp. 79-88.
3. Quoted by S. Anglo, "An Early Tudor programme for plays and other demonstrations against the Pope", J.W.C.I., 20 (1957), 176-9. For a similar attitude to the multitude, see Jonson's description of the 1604 pageants, below, p. 189.

the "magical" rhetoric of ceremonial to dazzle the masses. In his poem to the queen Mulcaster reminded her of the clergy's use of Richard II's funeral ceremony to "blinde the people's eyes" to his murder. One of the pageants for the entry of Philip and Mary in 1554 had compared Philip to Orpheus, charming the birds and beasts with his musical eloquence:

> The prince that hath the gift of eloquence
> May bend his subjectes to his most behove.

The figure of the rhetorician as Orpheus was a humanist commonplace; but in the religious fevour of the mid-century humanist devotion to rhetoric was overshadowed by religious populism. Foxe took violent exception to the comparison of the English people to "brute and savage beasts, following after Orpheus's harp, and dancing after king Philip's pipe".[1] Foxe was no democrat, and his indignation was due mainly to the fact that the king in question was a foreigner and Papist, and that the label of "beasts" was being attached to the whole of the English people, not just the lower orders: in fact, his humanist training made him admire the Latinity of the pageant verses. But the incident indicates the kind of social irreverence which the rejection of the traditional religious languages could sometimes arouse.

The climax of the 1559 pageant was the presentation of the Bible to Elizabeth. Here again there was a contrast with 1554. Grafton had planned that entry too, and though the basic programme had to conform to royal wishes he had contrived to slip in a reference unwelcome to the authorities: the figure of Henry VIII was displayed holding a Bible. According to one story, the Bishop of Winchester ordered the Bible to be painted out and replaced by a pair of gloves; according to Foxe, the pageant showed Henry handing the book to Edward VI instead of Mary.[2] Grafton had printed the Great Bible, which was prefaced by Holbein's engraving of Henry VIII handing the Bible down to his clergy. In the 1559 pageant still greater importance was given to the Bible by reversing this scene: it was the monarch who gratefully received the Bible from above. The motif was to be taken up in Mary's entry to Edinburgh in 1561: the

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1. Anglo, pp. 333-4; Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. J. Pratt (London, 1877), VI, 558. On ceremony as rhetoric and magic, cf. below, p. 150.
2. Anglo, pp. 329-30; Foxe, VI, 557-8.

queen was presented with a Bible and a psalter.[1] This form of pageantry, in which visual spectacle is used to recommend the primacy of the Word, and a panegyric form to advise the monarch to adopt policies to which he may be known to be unsympathetic, is eminently characteristic of the tradition of Protestant literature; there may be a certain tension between courtly form and religious content, but there is no objection to the use of courtly forms as such.

In the case of the royal entry this tension was all the less because the form itself was not unreservedly courtly: as has been seen, it implied a strong reciprocity between ruler and subject that was unwelcome to absolutism. This reciprocity was expressed in the presentation of a gift to the sovereign: such rituals of gift-giving imply some kind of reciprocity, though not of a direct contractual kind. The gift was a condensed symbol of the whole ceremony: the present was a representation of the subjects' goodwill in the same way as the other pageants and representations, and the queen's accepting the representations was itself a reciprocation. The pamphlet makes this theme explicit: "As at her first enterance she as it were declared, her selfe prepared to passe through a citie that most entierlie loued her, so she at her last departing, as it were bownd her selfe by promes to continue good ladie and gouernor vnto that citie which by outward declaracion did open their loue, to their so louing and noble prince in such wise, as she her selfe wonderyd therat" (p. 63). Elizabeth signified her approval of the pageant's message by her enthusiastic co-operation, and the pageant ended by listing the spontaneous gestures by which she had improvised on the basic themes. When she first saw the pageant with the Bible she asked to be given it right away but was told that the moment had not yet arrived: she must first be given the city's purse of gold (p. 44). After this she returned to the pageant and received the Bible, kissing it and laying it on her breast. Her receiving the Bible is singled out at the end of the pamphlet as one of the two especial signs of her remembrance of God's goodness (p. 64). Her spontaneous reactions to events testified to a responsiveness to her people's mood that was rather more "popular" than her successors were to think proper. The Venetian ambassador felt that her gaiety and familiarity on the day of her

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1. Bergeron, p. 24.

coronation "exceeded the grounds of gravity and decorum".[1] The pamphlet notes that she not only "shewed her selfe generallye an ymage of a woorthie Ladie and Gouernour" but "priuately" showed many admirable personal qualities (p. 60): this blend of the formal "public person" with appealing glimpses of the private person was one of the greatest secrets of her popularity. The pamphlet describes the city during the pageantry as "a stage wherin was shewed the wonderfull spectacle, of a noble hearted princesse toward her most louing people, & the peoples exceding comfort in beholding so worthy a soueraign, & hearing so princelike a voice" (p. 28). But the "stage" was open and informal; the monarch's "public person" had not yet frozen into a remote and impersonal image. The political harmony expressed by the ceremony is epitomized in the balancing of the two gifts: the gold, whose presentation was in a sense a condensed symbol of a restricted code, the act of giving constituting part of the gift, and the Bible, symbol of an elaborated code. In his pamphlet Mulcaster represents this reciprocity by the ritually balanced syntax.

The reciprocity emphasized in the pageant text reflected a genuine, although not necessarily permanent, coincidence of political interests. The 1559 royal entry was more didactic than any predecessor, and would have appealed to the more radical Protestants; but perhaps it is misleading to place too much emphasis on this Protestant didacticism, for the pageantry was also extremely effective propaganda on the queen's behalf. Although she had no desire for radical reformation herself, the obstinate resistance of the old church hierarchy at the start of her reign led her to move closer and closer to the radicals who were her staunchest supporters. She wanted to show foreign observers that her people were more devoted to her than to Rome, and though she limited public discussion of religious issues she did nothing until 16 May to prevent a series of anti-papal plays staged in the streets of London; indeed, according to the Spanish ambassador these plays were supported by Cecil himself.[2] On 6 January a satirical masque in the tradition of Edwardian Protestant drama was staged at court; on her way to Parliament she said to the procession of monks, "Away

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1558-80, p. 17.
2. C.S.P. Span. 1558-67, p. 62.

with those torches, for we see very well".[1] The queen was prepared to act the part of a religious reformer, but her heart was not necessarily in it. The devisers of the pageantry were firm but not, apparently, extreme Protestants: Hilles wrote to Bullinger the following month admitting that he had made some lapses under Mary's regime, and he apparently favoured the Lutheran Augsburg Confession, which was as far as the queen but not the radicals wanted to go in reformation.[2] In practical politics the lofty ideological vision of the final apocalyptic revelation of the naked Truth had always had to compromise with the exigencies of power; in a classic example of the interaction of ideology with the demands of political patronage, one humanist applied the emblem of "Truth the daughter of Time" first to Edward VI and then to Mary.[3] For those who were most radically committed to Protestant ideals, the settlement eventually reached in Elizabeth's first Parliament did not go far enough towards the revelation of Truth; Neale believes that no later Elizabethan Parliament would have accepted such a compromise. The radicals were intoxicated by their enthusiasm for the new regime; even after a Parliament that was in many ways disappointing for them they continued to celebrate the queen herself, criticizing only her advisers.[4] The "stage" of the London streets on 14 January presented an early example of the queen's political skill; with great zest she co-operated in framing an image of herself that was both immensely popular and artfully misleading.

The harmony between the monarch and militant Protestantism that the pageantry celebrated was more ambiguous and contingent than it appeared; nevertheless, the 1559 royal entry became a symbol of a whole political and literary tradition. This monarchism was firmly loyal but was ideologically coloured, tinged with apocalyptic hopes that the monarch would be the instrument

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1558-80, p. 11; Neale, p. 42.
2. Zurich Letters, II, 14-17.
3. D.J. Gordon, "Veritas Filia Temporis: Hadrianus Junius and Geoffrey Whitney", in The Renaissance Imagination, ed. S. Orgel (Berkeley, etc., 1975), pp. 220-32.
4. Neale, pp. 82-4.

of a final defeat of Rome.[1] The pageant created a political rhetoric that could appeal both to the Calvinist radicals and to the more "politique", and implied that there was no possibility of a difference of interests between the monarchy, the city and the court. Mulcaster continued to use this rhetoric in later civic pageants, and it was taken up by George Peele and, under the next reign, by Thomas Middleton. But Elizabeth and her successors felt that some of this monarchist sentiment, however firmly loyal, was a shade too "popular" and ideological. James's royal entry was more classical than Biblical in its symbolism, and James chose as his laureate the most firmly anti-populist of the collaborators on that occasion, Ben Jonson; thereafter he showed himself to the people far less than Elizabeth. Within a few years Jonson's collaborators on this royal entry were nostalgically recalling the 1559 pageantry and the political traditions it was felt to symbolize.[2] Charles did not make a royal entry at all. The city made elaborate preparations; five triumphal arches were erected; but the king unexpectedly cancelled the entry, causing much resentment.[3] It was apparently the populist element in the royal entry that he disliked: he made parallel alterations in the coronation itself, making it a restrained, private affair. It was later alleged that the reference to the people's role in making the laws had been removed from the coronation oath, though this change had apparently already been made by James.[4] This ceremonial, like the Caroline masque, firmly established Charles as a "religious" monarch, consecrated as a natural image of God by a strong ecclesiastical hierarchy and disdaining Protestant enthusiasm. Under Charles the ceremony of divine healing received greater prominence. When Laud initiated a full-scale religious reaction, the king seemed to be betraying a whole tradition of Protestant monarchism.

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1. On this tradition see W. Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation (London, 1963), and W. Lamont, Godly Rule (London, 1969).
2. The 1559 entry was reprinted in 1603; the first part of Heywood's If You Know not Me, You know nobody (1605) ends with the royal entry and the citizens presenting a Bible to the Queen; Dekker's The Whore of Babylon (1605-7) has a similar scene.
3. Bergeron, pp. 106-9.
4. The Coronation Order of James I, pp. lxxxix ff.

III. Ceremony, Allegory and Politics

> The pompe of Coronation
> Hath not such power her fame to spread,
> As this my admiration.
> - Sir John Davies.[1]

A. Rhetoric and Ceremony

Despite Davies's claim for the superiority of poetry, Elizabethan poetry was heavily influenced by the forms and symbolism of ceremonial. The tensions reflected in the coronation ceremonial of 1559, with the traditional politics of a "magical" restricted code challenged by radical iconoclasm, were also present in Elizabethan literature, but in a complex and indirect way; and just as in 1559, so for much of the reign there was a compromise in which a wide range of political views could be represented by traditional panegyric forms.

In fact, a prevailing poetic theory held that all poetry was a kind of panegyric: artistic forms were entirely subordinated to social forms. From late antiquity, poetry was regularly categorized as a branch of epideictic or demonstrative rhetoric, the oratory of ceremonial praise and blame.[2] This categorization at once justified poetry's epistemological status - it dealt with social truth, not mere fiction - and reflected its place in a system of patronage, in which the poet was expected as a matter of course to write occasional verse in celebration of his patron's deeds. The poet created a public "image", heightened and idealized in the same way as the images of statues and funeral monuments. Epideictic oratory was held to be especially "poetic" because its aim was not to prove a case but simply to amplify and ornament given facts. This emphasis on the practical social function of art similarly blurred the distinction between poetry and history: the function of history was to provide moral examples and to encourage patriotism, and despite the professions of chroniclers to the contrary, history generally contained a large epideictic element,

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1. Poems, ed. R. Krueger and R. Nemser (Oxford, 1975), p. 86.
2. See the full study by O.B. Hardison, Jr., The Enduring Monument (Chapel Hill, 1962), and E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (Princeton, 1953), pp. 155-82.

with a conscious use of fabrication in order to praise a particular region or patron. The stylistic effect of the assimilation of poetry to ceremonial was an increasingly rigid subordination of literary decorum to general social decorum: the classical doctrine of the separation of styles hardened into the prescription that a high "ornamental" style must be used for men of high rank, a low style for the vulgar. Classical rhetoricians prescribed a middle style for panegyric, but an Elizabethan panegyrist urged that the highest style of all should be used for this form.[1] The subordination of art to ceremonial rhetoric reached its height in the Elizabethan period. The loss of church patronage meant that all artistic patronage was concentrated in the hands of the aristocracy and the monarchy; in the visual arts the elaborate ornamentation of religious images was transferred to the ceremonial portrait, while in literature rhetorical ornaments that had previously been used to celebrate the Virgin Mary were adapted to the praise of the Virgin Queen. Courtiers competing for royal favour, and unable to purchase it directly with money, vied with each other in producing extravagant musical and dramatic entertainments for the queen in the "prodigy-houses" that were built essentially for ceremonial purposes; expensive gifts were offered under an allegorical "disguise". The very transience of these spectacles was part of their value: they constituted a conspicuous consumption of artistic ornamentation.

Thus poetry formed an integral part of the political system; poetic composition was seen as a ceremonial act of "investing" or "adorning" an idea with the appropriate degree of ornamentation. The Elizabethan language of artistic representation is essentially public. Rhetorical handbooks concentrated almost entirely on the adornment of the "matter" rather than its "invention"; great prominence was given to the fourth and fifth parts of rhetoric, "action", the art of reinforcing the verbal matter through visually striking gestures, and "memory", the art of fixing the concept in the mind through attractive visual images. According to faculty psychology, all ideas entered the mind through the mediation of visual images; rhetoric could be regarded as an artificial

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1. J. Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth (London, 1823), I. 311. Cf. V. Hull, Renaissance Literary Criticism: a Study of its Social Content (New York, 1945).

reinforcement of this natural process.[1] Visual figures such as "icon" and "descriptio", which involved the painting of lively verbal pictures, were held to belong especially to epideictic rhetoric.[2] The emphasis upon clearly-defined ceremonial ornamentation in "golden" literature parallels the development of Elizabethan portraiture, in which the subject is set not in a naturalistic background but in a ceremonial, allegorical space, surrounded by tokens of honour. The "distance" in this art is not that of "natural" visual perspective but of social reverence and distinction.[3] The isolated allegorical ornaments of this kind of poetry and painting have the quasi-magical quality that Angus Fletcher has well described: the "magic" is of the same, social kind as the "magic" of the coronation.[4] Similarly, unities of time are disregarded, and there is none of the modern sense of historical distance.

The "external", "visual" character of "golden" literature led to its being displaced for many years by the apparently more immediate and "natural" poetry of the metaphysicals and the "Tribe of Ben". But at least some of the negative judgement of "golden" literature derived from shifts in terminology: Elizabethan critical vocabulary often sounds crude because its ceremonial connotations have been forgotten. In ceremony, "external" clothes, gestures and ornaments were capable of bearing precise meanings, forming complex symbolic languages. In a society in which Parliament would fiercely debate which ranks in society were entitled to wear gold braid, minor details of clothing were perfectly adequate vehicles of symbolic meaning. Portraits of Queen Elizabeth conveyed their allegorical meaning through the clothes she wore. When literacy was still limited, great importance was attached to the visual language of heraldry, which again was capable of conveying fine distinctions; and heraldic symbolism linked the social hierarchy with the cosmic order through a tight system of classification that easily acquired magical overtones: ceremonial rhetoric became natural magic. The word "cosmos" originally meant in Greek both "world" and "ornament"; the

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1. According to Thomas Wilson, every trope is "for the most part referred to the senses of the bodie, and especially to the sense of seeing": The Arte of Rhetorique. ed. G.H. Mair (Oxford, 1919), p. 171.
2. H. Peacham, The Garden of Eloquence (London, 1593), pp. 145-6.
3. R. Strong, The Cult of Elizabeth (London, 1977), p. 43.
4. A. Fletcher, Allegory (Ithaca, 1964), pp. 98-129.

"cosmetic" symbolism of the social body mirrored the structure of the macrocosm, and the poem as ornate "golden world" reduplicated this structure.[1] The universe was conceived as a product of divine artifice or "ingegno", so that there was no rigid antithesis between the mechanical and the organic.[2] The social "cosmos" of which Elizabeth was primum mobile and the macrocosm could each be called a "machine".[3] The semantic distinction between ornamental "garnish" and utilitarian "furnish" had not yet been made.

When poetry was so firmly subsumed under general rules of ceremonial decorum, and poets sought advancement within an aristocratic patronage system, the personal status of the poet was necessarily limited: it was considered a disgrace for an aristocrat to publish his poems, exchanging them as commodities, and the professional writer was a distinctly inferior figure. The poet who sought to earn a living by aristocratic patronage became the bearer of his patron's fame, subordinating his own opinions to those of his patron. Manuscripts of poems performed in royal entertainments frequently give the name of the patron rather than the poet. The "truth" of a poem was less a matter of sincerity, of direct expression of the individual sensibility, than of conformity to the decorum of a

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1. On "cosmos" see Fletcher, pp. 108 ff. Cf. La Primaudaye, The French Academie (London, 1618), p. 74: "This word World signifieth as much as Ornament, or a well disposed order of things". Edmund Bolton wrote a pastoral "blazon" of his mistress "Cosma", whose clothing mirrors the macrocosm: "A little world her flowing garment seemes" (Englands Helicon, ed. H.E. Rollins (Harvard, 1925), 9-12). The poem may be a panegyric of Elizabeth whose wardrobe contained a stomacher embroidered with the sun, moon and planets (Nichols, Progresses, III, 507); but the main point is that in the traditional world-view it would be very hard to make a final distinction between a panegyric of Elizabeth and a poem in praise of some more remote mythological or cosmic deity.
2. North's translation of Plutarch speaks of "instruments and Engines (which are called mechanicall, or organicall" (O.E.D. "organical" 2). Early machines were produced with "magical" as much as utilitarian ends, reflecting the view that the universe was a living organism: R.J.W. Evans, Rudolph II and his World (London, 1973), pp. 55-9.
3. See the frontispiece of Case's Sphaera Civitatis (reproduced in Wilson, England's Eliza, facing p. 362), which depicts the queen as primum mobile of the political cosmos:

> Quam bene COELESTI CIVILIS machina formae
> Congruat...

particular occasion; to "express" was to stamp a public image.[1] In analyzing a Renaissance poet's political ideas it is always necessary to find out in whose interest he held them; in the same way, what appears to be a passionately sincere speech by a member of Parliament may prove to have been "personating" views which his patron happened to find it expedient to adopt. This political system worked powerfully against the development of impersonal, ideological politics. The poet or courtier who attacked the corruption of the court and hymned the superiority of virtue to birth was often simply adopting a conventionalized role which he would drop as soon as court favour came his way.

The political world of patronage and clientage mirrored and reinforced a poetic based on personification. Of course, allegory was no longer the only or even the dominant form, but it enjoyed a late flowering in the Elizabethan period and recent criticism has revealed the pervasiveness of semi-naturalized allegorical and typological elements even in apparently "realistic" Elizabethan works. The art of the court polished and refined but did not fundamentally reject the old forms of thought. Just as the coronation ceremony established a union between an abstract social role, itself reified into a concrete symbol or "artificial person", and an individual, so instead of creating an individual "character" the allegorist "set forth" an abstract idea "under" an artificial "person".[2] The post-Romantic prejudice against allegory is related to the increased emphasis in social thought on a pure natural self that is diminished by social representation. Since the Romantic era critics have had particular difficulty with historical allegory, either reducing allegorical works to translations into a rigid code of particular events or denying the relevance of topical allegory altogether. But Renaissance allegory involved the same kind of complex relationship between the general and the particular as ceremonial: Gloriana

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1. O.E.D. "express" 5-7. Christ was commonly described as the "express image" of God (Hebrews i.3).
2. The word "character" long meant an external mark or stamp; Hooker, comparing honours to the stamps on coins, calls them "the characters of that estimation which publickly is had of public estates and callings" (Ecclesiastical Polity, VII.xix.1). The literary "character" which became popular from the 1590s was essentially a generalized stereotype; the word "character" for a fictitious personage seems to have been first used in the eighteenth century.

represented Elizabeth only to the extent that Elizabeth acted like Gloriana.[1] The poet honoured some general quality or mythological deity "in" the monarch just as he might do in his mistress: one poet in fact started a poem in praise of his mistress and adapted it to the praise of the queen.[2] To say that the Elizabethan "idealized" their queen does not imply that they were starry-eyed in their enthusiasm: the "ideal" was a ceremonial "idol" or "image", not to be finally identified with that which it signified. The "truth" of such celebration was provisional, occasional: particularly elaborate titles would be employed on major state occasions in the same way as especially fine clothes would be worn; there was not a "natural" or "organic" relationship between clothes and wearer, title and bearer. The strong performative element in this "idealization" can be seen in a ceremonial speech to Queen Elizabeth in 1593: "We... haveing obtayned at this present, by your gracious permission, accesse to your sacred person, cannot but behold the same as the visible majesty of God, to our unspeakable joy and consolation."[3] The speaker could physically perceive the ugly, old woman behind the elaborate cosmetics, but as a matter of conscious choice he did not ceremonially "see" her. This is precisely the working of allegory as described by A.D. Nuttall: "Part of the excitement of masques and 'disguisings' seems to have consisted in recognizing that your very good friend X was, in several senses, what he was disguised as." The sixteenth century had the ability "to see the ideal not as separated from the here-and-now but as interpenetrating it". But Nuttall emphasizes the provisional element in such recognitions: "the imagery is both playful and seriously pointed at the same time".[4] A favourite Elizabethan textbook both on honour and on literary composition was Aristotle's Rhetoric, which was translated by Sidney and by Hobbes; it offered a detached and naturalistic view of human motivation and the ways of influencing it that left little

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1. For a similar view of the social basis of allegory, see D.J. Gordon, "Roles and Mysteries", in The Renaissance Imagination, p. 18.
2. A. Gorges, Poems, ed. H.E. Sandison (Oxford, 1953), p. 124.
3. Nichols, III, 228.
4. A.D. Nuttall, Two Concepts of Allegory (London, 1967), pp. 97, 81. Cf. Fletcher, Allegory, p. 121: "Allegory belongs ultimately in the area of epideictic rhetoric".

for Machiavelli to add.[1]

But however strong the awareness of the discrepancy between ideal role and fallible individual, the fact remains that ceremonial constantly asserted their identity, and that every kind of social sanction was used to prevent people from separating them too far. The symbolic languages of ceremonial and allegory blurred distinctions about levels of analogy; when a poet went out of his way to emphasize the distinction between sign and thing signified (e.g. pp. 58, 174) the effect of the compliment was diminished. Even when panegyric had a strong didactic element, the poet speaking to the ruler as man to man, it was necessary to counterbalance this with ritualized praise, enacting the gesture of displaying the ruler to the people as the image of God. As Garrison says, panegyric always tries to reconcile power with ceremony: even though poet and audience know perfectly well that the mystical glorification of the ruler is simply a stereotyped trope, the very use of traditional forms is one aspect of the legitimization and naturalization of power.[2] Attention is diverted from the concrete realities of power to a timeless world of ceremonial and rhetorical forms which take precedence over the individual bearers. Even if the inner court circle are aware of the ironies that complicate the ceremonial praise, they also know that time will obliterate these ironies and leave to future generations (and critics) only the smooth surface of the ceremonial image. As in ceremonial, it scarcely mattered whether the subject privately "believed" the mystical claims made for the monarch provided that he was prepared to utter them in public. As long as affairs of state remained "mysteries" of which public discussion was restricted, poetic comment on topical affairs often had to be protected by the "veils" of panegyric and allegory, keeping political discourse in a relatively "restricted" code dependent for interpretation on personal knowledge of the immediate context. Poets frequently used the same kinds of allegorical code that were employed by courtiers in secret diplomatic correspondence. It is easy to overlook the constraints imposed on public poetry by censorship. Four years after the

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1. The comparison between the Rhetoric and Machiavelli's thought is made by John Hoskins, Directions for Speech and Style, ed. H.H. Hudson (Princeton, 1935), p. 41.
2. Garrison, pp. 129ff.

coronation, the question of censorship was discussed in the popular compendium A Mirror for Magistrates. One of the poems was a monologue by the poet Collingbourne, who had been executed for circulating a rhyme attacking Richard III and his allies. Collingbourne laments the days of ancient Rome, when poets had more freedom to comment on public affairs; he warns poets to be prudent, and if they must deal with controversial matters, to "sause them so, that fewe nede be offended". He tells how he tried to evade the (quite justified) charge that his poem had topical application by giving it a more general allegorical interpretation "to hide the sence". Though the poet must be no "flatterer, no bolsterer of vyce", he must also, in the circumstances, be "sound and swete, in all thinges ware and wyse". The previous year a play that commented on the succession, to which one of the contributors to the Mirror had contributed, had aroused the queen's displeasure: though the constraints under Elizabeth's rule were a lot milder than under Richard III, they still existed.[1] Under such circumstances, there were clearly limits to the didacticism of panegyric.

B. Art and Iconoclasm

Thus the traditional poetic forms, like the forms of ceremonial, while permitting a considerable degree of sceptical scrutiny of political life, still helped to keep a great deal of political discourse within a "natural" code of analogical symbolism. It was the repeated claim of conservatives that the Reformation, with its demand for the translation of religious discourse fully into an "elaborated" code, would undermine traditional social forms; it was easy to extend the accusation and complain that the Reformers wanted to destroy the arts. The most elaborate statement of this point of view came from George Puttenham, whose The Arte of English Poesie is a handbook of social and poetic rhetoric that itself constitutes an extended panegyric of the monarch.[2] The terminology he uses for this social "rhetoric" is strikingly similar to the terminology of the

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1. A Mirror for Magistrates, ed. L.B. Campbell (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 347-58. The Collingbourne poem contains a lengthy account of the Pegasus myth, which had been dramatized in the Inner Temple revels of 1562 (see pp. 45-6, 59).
2. References in the text are to the edition by G.D. Willcock and A. Walker (Cambridge, 1936).

defenders of traditional rituals. Puttenham holds firmly to the view that poetry is an ornamental mediator, adorning an idea with flowers of rhetoric and "polishing" it into a pleasing image that will be passed by the imagination to the understanding. Like Gardiner (see p. 12) Puttenham maintains that there is a natural harmony between nature and art, soul and body, a "naturall simpathie, betweene the eare and the eye" (85); even "the spirituall obiectes of the mynde" have an appeal to the senses. Poets must observe the general rules of decorum that also govern social ceremonial; decorum is defined as an "Analogie" or "louely conformitie, or proportion, or conueniencie betweene the sence and the sensible" (262). Hierarchical variations are to be carefully observed; the "ornament" of style must precisely fit the social rank of the person described or addressed. Poetic form also has social implications: the best stanza-forms are those with the most complicated rhyme-schemes, which are beyond the capacity of the vulgar (87). Although at the start of the book he gives a lofty account of the power of imagination, "a representer of the best, most comely and bewtifull images or apparences of thinges to the soule and according to their very truth" (19) in general he subordinates the imagination firmly to social requirements. He demonstrates the value of heraldic emblems in inspiring reverence for the monarchy (107), and illustrates the figure of "Icon", "resemblaunce by imagerie or pourtrait", from one of his panegyrics of Elizabeth (203).

Puttenham's praise of external ceremonial forms is combined with a sceptical awareness of discrepancies between person and role: he repeatedly points out that social life depends upon artifice, that it is impossible to thrive without "the Courtly figure Allegoria, which is when we speake one thing and thinke another" (186). The queen herself plays many different roles, with her public "person as a most cunning counterfaitor liuely representing Venus in countenance, in life Diana, Pallas for gouernement, and Iuno in all honour and regall magnificence" (4-5). But for Puttenham all such artifices are themselves part of a natural order: figures of rhetoric are simply formalizations of things man says naturally, "little lesse naturall then his very sensuall actions" (305). Similarly, the arts and disguises of ceremonial are natural human activities; and those who question ceremonial artifice will undermine poetry as well. To Puttenham the great enemy was Puritanism. He was accused of plotting to assassinate Bishop Grindal, who had strong Puritan sympathies, and of slandering

Spenser's patron Leicester (xxxiii-vi). He set out his objections to Puritanism in a poem addressed to the queen, arguing that good and evil, ceremonial order and deceitful artifice, were so closely linked in the politic body that to attempt to separate them would be disastrous:

> Remove misterye from religion,
> From godly feare all superstition,
> Idolatrye from deepe devotion,
> Vulgare woorshippe from worldes promotion

and the result will be to undermine respect for the monarchy as well. In a companion poem Puttenham defended secular ceremonial, arguing that all civilized life requires "Sleit, semblant, course, order and degree".[1] Poetry and the other arts would inevitably be threatened by the Puritan programme, for they too involved artifice and "a certaine doublenesse" (Arte. 154).

But the relationship between Puritanism and the arts was much more complex than Puttenham suggested.[2] It is true that in the long term the attack on the traditional forms and concepts of religious representation was connected with changes in the nature and status of artistic representation. There was an increasing emphasis on the visual quality of the "image" as precise reflection of external appearance, "natural" in the sense of "immediate". Language likewise came to be viewed as a transparent medium, reflecting inner states with the minimum of distortion: the radical Protestant demand for a "plain style" anticipated the eventual overthrow of the system of rhetoric and genres, with its hierarchical variation of styles.[3] No ceremonial mediation was to mask the naked truth.[4] The search for a literary form that could accommodate the new personal focus ultimately led via the spiritual autobiography to the novel: the

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1. "Partheniades", in Ballads from Manuscripts, ed. W.R. Morfill, II (Hertford, 1873), pp. 84-7.
2. See A.D.S. Fowler, "Protestant Attitudes to Poetry, 1560-1590", Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1957, and L.A. Sasek, The Literary Temper of the English Puritans (Baton Rouge, 1961).
3. For the effect of the Protestant doctrine of the image on Donne's Anniversaries, see below, pp. 261-2.
4. On the distrust of mediation in Romantic artistic and social thought, cf. J. Derrida, De la Grammatologie (Paris, 1967), pp. 416-27: "toute la pensée de Rousseau est en un sens une critique de la représentation, tant au sens linguistique qu'au sens politique" (p. 417).

rhetorical "persona" gave way to a narratorial self that claimed to be transparent, the artificial "person" shadowing an abstract idea gave way to the individual "character". In artistic as in religious thought, there was an increasingly sharp antithesis between natural and artificial signs.[1] These changes affected the relationship of the poet to the public world: there was a split between public and private symbolism, between the individual imagination and the images of ceremonial; public "ornament" became the antithesis of inner "image".

But such changes were extremely gradual, and for the Elizabethan period Puttenham's rigid antithesis between royalist poets and Puritan iconoclasts is completely invalid. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish between different political and literary traditions which had different attitudes to the Reformation. Puttenham's political outlook is sceptical and non-ideological; like the queen herself, whom he addresses in a tone of easy familiarity in the Arte of English Poesie, he views the monarchy not as a dynamic instrument of reformation but as a guardian of order and degree, a bastion against change. There is no hint of apocalyptic excitement in his panegyrics of Elizabeth; she is simply to be praised as the person who happens to be in power at a particular moment. Rather than giving complicated justifications for female rule as the Puritans did, Puttenham accepts it as part of the traditional order of nature, and his panegyrics of Elizabeth consist to a large extent in playful compliments to her femininity.[2] Puttenham does want the monarch to listen to wise counsel, but he does not advise the courtier to go too far in presuming to know better than a social superior: often the courtier will have to be content to be "a creeper, and a curry fauel with his superiours" (293). Puttenham was perfectly prepared to reverse his opinions to please the monarch: in the original version of the Arte

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1. G. Josipovici, The World and the Book (London, 1971), Ch. 5; on natural and artificial signs, cf. p. 12.
2. There is a strong contrast here with Book V of The Faerie Queene (see pp. 78-80, below); the contrast extends to the treatment of the execution of Mary, for which Spenser gave an elaborate moral justification whereas in the tract he wrote on the subject Puttenham argued that even if the deed was immoral it was natural for princes to be governed by expediency: "A Justificacion of Queene Elizabeth", in Accounts and Papers relating to Mary Queen of Scots (London, Camden Soc., 1867), pp. 65-134.

he attacked the seditious Dutch rebels, but by the time the work was printed the queen was aiding them, so Puttenham praised this defence of "a free people from the Spanish seruitude" (246, 314). For Puttenham, one might say, politics has no content; if poetry is didactic it is not through its content but through its form, its re-creation of traditional roles in a pleasing form that will renew reverence for the social order in the same way as public ceremonial. Both poetry and ceremonial use artifice only in order to naturalize it. The only overt political function Puttenham will allow to poetry is negative: it will distract "aspiring mynds" from "seriously searching to deale in matters of state" (308). Puttenham is a highly individual figure, but his political outlook has much in common with the more conservative figures at the Elizabethan and Jacobean courts. To the Puritans such men were the object of great suspicion. They felt that those who were not strongly with the Reformation were against it; and Puttenham was accused of keeping Catholic relics in his room. But in fact he was no Catholic, and his religion was firmly pragmatic; he adhered to some kind of highly personal deism but was strongly aware of the political value of ritual in limiting religious and political self-consciousness amongst the masses. This tradition of sceptical conservatism was strongly monarchist, but if it was "Anglo-Catholic" it was for political as much as devotional reasons. This political tradition produced court art like Lyly's comedies and "cavalier" poetry, art which was consciously aimed only at a select élite and normally circulated mainly in manuscript. Admittedly Puttenham urged courtiers to publish their poems, but ironically enough the work in which he did so was published anonymously, so that it is still not quite certain that it was George Puttenham who wrote the Arte; certainly its author never published any of his verse separately. The poet's art is naturalized and subordinated to the art of ceremonial; the artistic form is not allowed to gain autonomy from the social form. Ben Jonson belongs in some ways to this tradition, though in his case courtly deference is in strong tension with an assertive humanism.

Puttenham represents poetry at its most courtly; but there were other traditions whose relationship to the court was more complex. In the 1559 pageantry a humanist used Biblical rather than classical symbolism to give advice to the monarch, and this was a not unusual combination. Humanism encouraged

poets to see themselves as natural servants of the monarch, putting their eloquence in the service of princes; but it also encouraged a spirit of independence and self-esteem, a readiness to offer direct moral and ideological advice to the ruler. For Puttenham panegyric is almost entirely demonstrative, whereas the humanists also gave it a substantial deliberative element. Pliny and Claudian offered models for panegyric that combined ceremony with didacticism, and such poems were produced by More for the coronation of Henry VIII and by Junius for the wedding of Philip and Mary; Walter Haddon produced a similar poem for Elizabeth's accession, urging her to marry.[1] The religious affiliations of humanism were similarly complex: many humanists sought a religious middle way, rejecting both Calvinist and Counter-Reformation extremes, but in the sixteenth century Habsburg absolutism often seemed the greater peril and humanists were ready to ally with Calvinism as its most vigorous and disciplined enemy. Calvinists for their part supported humanist studies and placed particular emphasis on the political value of rhetoric; in a "country humanist" like Laurence Humphrey humanism and Calvinism were closely connected.[2] Calvinism was no more intrinsically hostile to art than it was intrinsically democratic: poetic forms, like religious forms, could be regarded as "things indifferent", and few reformers would criticize ornamental poetic "bodies" as such provided that they were combined with didactic "souls". Du Bartas was so popular because he offered a Protestant "reformation" of the ornate style of the Pléiade.[3] The humanists were just as eager to impose stricter kinds of decorum, disciplining the literary "body"; the doctrine of separation of styles was applied with great rigidity.[4] Calvinist élitism blended with humanist élitism in the opposition to the public theatre; the attack on the playhouses was motivated by

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1. Garrison, pp. 69ff; H. Junius, Phillipeis (London, 1554); The Poetry of Walter Haddon, ed. C.S. Lees (The Hague, 1967), pp. 169-71.
2. On "court humanism" and "country humanism", see H.F. Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen (London, 1970), pp. 34-45.
3. For further examples of Protestant "reformations" of literary forms, see pp. 120, 131, 178, and Appendix.
4. On the new conception of the body in relation to literary decorum, see Bakhtin, p. 29.

social as much as religious considerations, by distaste for the sale of art as a commodity and the public inversion of normal roles. Nevertheless, despite this social conservatism, the didacticism of the humanist and Puritan traditions did encourage a form of political poetry that was more independent-minded than Puttenham's playful flattery.

To gain an idea of the way the literary tradition appeared to someone of political views antithetical to Puttenham's, we can turn to William Prynne's Histrio-Mastix. This work hardly represents Calvinism at its most broad-minded or attractive, but even Prynne takes a short break from his violent denunciations of the evils of public disguisings to make an exception for poetry and for closet drama, provided that they have a didactic end.[1] Prynne recognized that art could provide a valuable medium of expression under conditions of severe censorship; he pointed out that under Henry VIII and Mary, when the true faith was being persecuted under a tyrannical monarchy, Protestants "did covertly vent and discover sundry truths" in the form of plays and dialogues: this practice was justified as long as the truth "could not else bee Preached but by such Poems as these". Prynne had no objection to poetry as such, but the writers he singled out for praise were those whose work was firmly didactic, and in some cases politically radical: Chaucer (presumably the apocryphal Ploughman's Tale), Langland, Beza, Buchanan, Du Bartas, James VI, Hall, Quarles and Wither.[2] Prynne here draws attention to a tradition of public poetry that, while often highly ornate and by no means intrinsically anti-monarchical, was more self-consciously political than Puttenham would have liked and had sympathy with a number of Puritan demands. Spenser's political and religious position is complex, but The Faerie Queene has points of contact with this tradition, as does the poetry of the successors who imitated his style. Spenser's verse, like the tradition itself, is a complex blend of conservatism and innovation, retaining and elaborating aristocratic forms but simultaneously revaluing them. The Faerie Queene remains within the traditional allegorical, ceremonial poetic, viewing the monarch and leading aristocrats as images of virtue, but the poem also gives

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1. W. Prynne, Histrio-Mastix (London, 1633), pp. 832-4.
2. On the political significance of these writers, see below, pp. 113, 241, 55, 151, 120, 123, 118, 265, 276, 268ff.

increasing prominence to the personal autonomy of the poet's imagination; the poet rejects iconoclasm but remains suspicious of the potential deceptiveness of artifice and magical images. Spenser and his poetic successors wrote for aristocratic patrons but also aimed at a wider audience by having their poems printed; his patrons and their political heirs were prepared to go further than Puttenham would have considered justifiable in stirring up public discussion of political issues and nourishing an ideological view of politics. But Spenser's poetic is in many ways backward-looking; ironically enough, in artistic as in religious forms it was the Laudians who were to be the revolutionaries, and who in turn provoked a reaction that released a genuine radicalism latent in the tradition: Spenser's panegyric of Elizabeth gave way to Milton's panegyric of Cromwell.

CHAPTER II

"The Faerie Queene" and Elizabethan Panegyric

> Of Faerie lond yet if he more inquire,
> By certaine signes here set in sundry place
> He may it find; ne let him then admire,
> But yield his sence to be too blunt and bace,
> That n'ote without an hound fine footing trace.
> And thou, O fairest Princesse vnder sky,
> In this faire mirrhour maist behold thy face,
> And thine owne realmes in lond of Faery,
> And in this antique Image thy great auncestry.
>
> (Faerie Queene, II Proem 4)

I. Elizabethan Pageantry: Towards "The Faerie Queene"

The 1587 edition of Holinshed's Chronicles contained amongst its accounts of political and military events some lengthy descriptions of a series of pageants, beginning with the royal entry and ending with pageantry for the Earl of Leicester in the Netherlands the previous year. These pageants are amongst the "certaine signes" by which the political connotations of The Faerie Queene can be reconstructed. The leading political figure associated with most of the pageants was Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Spenser's most eminent patron. Both Grafton and Mulcaster sought and received patronage from Leicester, and he came to represent the political ideals of a large number of Protestant poets.[1] At the start of the reign he was the leading favourite, and there was a possibility that he might even marry the queen; he staged a series of spectacular pageants in which he courted her. It has been argued that Spenser may originally have had Leicester in mind as the prototype for Arthur, and expected the marriage to take place; but it would seem that after about 1564 there was no real possibility of Leicester's marrying the queen, and it would have been foolish for a poet to take such a risk

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1. On Leicester's patronage of Grafton and Mulcaster see E. Rosenberg, Leicester Patron of Letters (New York, 1955), pp. 66-9, 232-5.

with contemporary politics.[1] But the "courting" of the queen continued on a symbolic level, as Leicester built up a strong power-base and sought to maintain the favour of the unpredictable sovereign; Leicester's personal fate became of concern to the large body of writers and radical Protestants whom he patronized. Thus the "courtship" was, in a sense, allegorical from an early stage, and Spenser's Arthur stands for a wide range of political and religious ideals. But as always under the court system, general principles were personalized, and the views of Leicester's supporters prove, when translated out of the terms of personal allegiance, to be extremely varied; and however symbolic Leicester's courtship might be in reality, for a long time it was difficult for those who did not belong to the inner court circle to be certain that Leicester might not really marry the queen. In the same way, The Faerie Queene oscillates between generalized allegory and historical reality, a "Pageaunt" in which the veils and shadows of the allegory occasionally brighten to a sharp particularity.[2]

Recent research has revealed that Leicester's poetic "romance" with the queen began remarkably early, when Dudley was still a favourite with no consistent ideology or power base; already in 1562 the radical Protestants saw him as the best representative for their views.[3] In January 1562 the Inner Temple presented a masque and a play that outlined the Protestant parliamentarians' view of the political situation. The play was Gorboduc, by Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton, the latter being a firm Calvinist and later an opponent of the public stage; but there was nothing to offend Calvinist principles in this heavily didactic play, whose main import was that Elizabeth should declare a successor, and that this should be done in conjunction with Parliament. Parliament at this time was extremely radical, and would certainly have chosen a Protestant successor; the

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1. W. MacCaffrey, The Founding of the Elizabethan Regime (London, 1969), p.305. J.W. Bennett, The Evolution of "The Faerie Queene" (Chicago, 1942), p.80, argues that it would have been unthinkable even to suggest that Leicester might fulfil the role of an English Arthur, but she also provides evidence that at an early stage Spenser was planning to include genealogical compliment of the house of Dudley in his poem (pp. 80-100).
2. Cf. the complimentary sonnet to Lord Charles Howard: "In this same Pageaunt haue a worthy place".
3. M. Axton, 'Robert Dudley and the Inner Temple Revels", Historical Journal, 13 (1970), 365-78, shows that Legh's Accedens of Armory (London, 1562), a heraldic treatise, contains what appears to be a record of the 1562 revels.

queen regarded any such consultation as an encroachment on her prerogative. The play was first performed at the Inner Temple, but when the queen heard of it she ordered a repeat performance at court. The other dramatic entertainment at the Inner Temple revels was romantic rather than classical, but medieval symbolism was used to convey a message with firmly Protestant implications. Dudley was "shadowed" both as Pallaphilos, a loyal servant of the queen's "public person", and as Desire, ardent suitor of the "private person". As Pallaphilos, the new Perseus, Dudley fought the Catholic "Gorgon nations"; as Desire, the humble suitor of Beauty, the royal private person, he underwent a long preparation, arming himself in various moral virtues, in order to slay a Popish serpent with nine heads. After this victory Desire sacrificed in the Temple of Pallas - which represented the monarch in Parliament - and received permission to marry Beauty. Here in embryo is the basic symbolism of The Faerie Queene: the distinction between public and private persons, the knight with a magic shield undergoing training in the virtues to make himself worthy of marriage with the queen. The form might have connotations of medieval barbarism and Popery, but its content was radical, urging the conservative queen to consult with a militantly Protestant parliament.[1]

The links between Leicester and the radical Protestants gradually became firmer. Our knowledge of early Elizabethan entertainments is scanty, but we know that in March 1565 he presented a masque before the queen in which Juno and Diana debated the relative merits of marriage and virginity; Jupiter decided in favour of marriage, and the queen said to the Spanish ambassador: "This is all against me".[2] At this time Leicester was supporting a French match to counter Cecil's advocacy of a Habsburg match, knowing that his proposal was not really feasible but that its failure might further his own chances of marrying Elizabeth.[3] Our next substantial record is of the spectacular entertainment at Kenilworth in 1575; by now he had probably abandoned any expectations of marrying the queen himself but was continuing to court her politically on a grand scale. He had fortified his castle at Kenilworth to make it the last great private military stronghold in England, and the entertainment was a way of displaying his own power and prestige. Oxford was to

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1. On Protestant and humanist criticism of romance at the mid-century, see Bennett, pp. 68-79.
2. E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford, 1923), I, 159-60.
3. MacCaffrey, pp. 134-5.

accuse him of using the spectacular entertainments and firework displays to camouflage his build-up of a potentially dangerous military power.[1] A more specific purpose for the entertainments was to thank the queen for the special patent she had granted his players the previous year. In 1576 Leicester's men started performing in the first public playhouse. It was presumably these actors who performed the elaborate dramatic entertainments at Kenilworth.[2] A play written by Gascoigne touched upon the delicate question of marriage: as in the 1565 play, there was a debate between Juno and Diana, and Juno urged the merits of marriage. The play was not performed, however, ostensibly because of the weather but perhaps also because the queen found out what was to be said. Leicester may also have overstepped the mark in the previous days' pageantry. Kenilworth was a legendary seat of Arthur and his knights, and the pageant took up this theme: the castle was said to be maintained by servants of giant stature, surviving from Arthur's age, and the queen was greeted by the Lady of the Lake. Arthur's popularity as a national hero was growing in the 1570s, and John Dee saw him as not only a national but also a religious hero, his expulsion of all foreign and pagan enemies being taken as a type of the breach with Rome.[3] Such glorification of a male hero, however, raised delicate problems in praise of a female ruler, and Elizabeth seems to have felt that Leicester was going too far: when the Lady of the Lake offered her the grounds of the castle, Elizabeth, who had given it to him, replied "we had thought indeed the lake had been oours, and doo you call it yourz now?" (Nichols, I, 431). Since this remark was reported by one of Leicester's admirers, it was clearly not meant too seriously, but the decorum of praising both an Arthur-figure and the queen was a problem that was to preoccupy Spenser. His old schoolteacher Mulcaster wrote one of the poems for the occasion (I, 493), and another of the speeches was cast in stanzas ending in an alexandrine, unusual in English poetry before The Faerie Queene (I. 491).

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1. C.S.P.D. 1581-90, p. 39.
2. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, II, 87-8. Descriptions of the festivities are printed in J. Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth (2nd edition, London, 1823), I, 418-523.
3. C.B. Millican, Spenser and the Table Round (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), pp. 42-3.

If the queen felt that at Kenilworth Leicester had glorified himself more than his sovereign, ample amends were made by an entertainment later that summer at Woodstock which handled the problem of complimenting a female ruler less extravagantly but perhaps more tactfully. Woodstock had been the scene of the queen's imprisonment under Mary, so that there were especial reasons why the custom of celebrating the queen's Accession Day with bell-ringing and other public rejoicings should have originated at Oxford. The custom began, according to Thomas Holland, about the twelfth year of her reign - that is, after the Northern Rebellion and the Queen's excommunication, which led to a massive demonstration of loyalty from Protestant subjects.[1] The subsequent history of Oxford has perhaps obscured the strength of Puritanism there in the early Elizabethan period, with Leicester as Vice-Chancellor supporting Puritan appointments and Laurence Humphrey turning Magdalen into a Puritan stronghold. The cult of monarchy originating there was militantly Protestant. Humphrey had delivered an oration to the queen at Woodstock in 1572, emphasizing the queen's delivery from subjection to Popery and praising his patron Leicester; in 1575 he again addressed her, this time singling out for praise Leicester's festivities at Kenilworth and Woodstock.[2] But while the rhetorical function of such panegyric was firmly Protestant, its symbolic forms could be medieval in flavour. Every Accession Day an elaborate tilt was held, in which courtiers adopted spectacular disguises and recounted their deeds in the queen's service in the symbolism of romance. It is not known when and where the first Accession Day tilt was held, but it is possible that they were held at Woodstock from the start of the reign, and from about 1570 Sir Henry Lee, a prominent local landholder, took an especial interest in the proceedings.[3] His entertainment for the queen in 1575 was in the spirit of the Accession Day fictions.[4]

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1. T. Holland, [illegible] (Oxford, 1601), sig. N4a; R.C. Strong, "The Popular Celebration of the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth", J.W.C.I., 21 (1958), 86-103.
2. L. Humphrey, Ad illustrissimam Reginam Elizabetham oratio Woodstochiae habita (London, 1572), sig. Ciiia; Nichols, I, 589-90.
3. Chambers, Lee, p. 37; F.A. Yates, "Elizabethan Chivalry: The Romance of the Accession Day Tilts", reprinted in Astraea (London, 1975): see especially pp. 94-106.
4. The entertainment has been edited by A.W. Pollard (Oxford, 1903 and 1910), and J.W. Cunliffe, "The Queenes Maiesties Entertainment at Woodstock", P.M.L.A., 26 (1911), 92-141.

The queen was entertained with a romance, possibly by Lee himself, which was said to contain an important allegorical meaning; the end of the tale was presented in a play in which the princess Gaudina renounced her love for a mean knight for the sake of the well-being of the state.[1] In this play the delicate question of love and marriage was handled more circumspectly than at Kenilworth. Instead of introducing a commanding male Arthur-figure from the world of romance, Lee devised the entry of the Fairy Queen: she was not the transcendent figure of Spenser's poem but a diminutive woodland deity, a foil for Elizabeth rather than a shadow of her, but the entertainment offered a lesson in compliment with a tactfully feminine flavour.

The Fairy Queen next made her appearance in an entertainment in 1578, when the queen visited Norwich.[2] At this time Leicester and his allies were extremely anxious about the situation in the Netherlands; they wanted the queen to give much more support to William of Orange, but instead she delayed and embarked on a new courtship of Alençon. When the queen entered Norwich, Walsingham was in the Netherlands, frustrated at her dilatoriness; Leicester wrote to him that he felt very close to the Netherlands in Norwich and could hear the voice of the people crying out at having such neighbours.[3] The minister of the Dutch Protestants preached a stirring sermon during the royal visit; the royal entry itself was firmly Protestant in tone. The first arch, like that of 1559, featured the union of the red and white roses. Bernard Garter, who wrote the pamphlet describing the royal entry, soon afterwards published a violently anti-Papal book. His collaborator

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1. Various commentators have looked for political meanings in the entertainment; Chambers, Lee, p 90, feels that Lee would not have risked an open political statement. Negotiations for a French match had been resumed during the summer, but the views of the queen and her courtiers on the issue seem to have fluctuated; a full study of the tortuous political manoeuvres at this time might yield an explanation for the peculiarities of the Kenilworth and Woodstock entertainments.
2. The Norfolk entertainments are printed in Nichols, II, 136-215; references in the text are to Nichols. See also B. Garter, A newyeares gifte, dedicated to the popes holinesse (London, 1579).
3. C.S.P. Foreign 1578-9, p.139. Leicester's letters show him vacillating as to the political consequences of the match; on the background see C. Read, Mr. Secretary Walsingham (Oxford, 1925), I, 415-6, II, 1 ff, and C. Wilson, Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands (London, 1970), pp. 59-70.

Henry Goldingham, had taken part in the Kenilworth festivities; for the Norwich visit he wrote a masque in which the deities presented the queen with gifts. There may be oblique allusions in the masque to the marriage negotiations; in the presence of the French delegation it was impossible to be too outspoken. Cupid gave the queen his bow and arrows, saying that any king or Caesar at which she shot them would be hers; but the queen was told that Hymeneus was absent, though Diana would make sure that he was always at her command. The other entertainments were provided by Thomas Churchyard, who sought favour from many different patrons but had strong associations with Leicester and Walsingham; he had served on the Continent in Walsingham's intelligence service and was to praise Leicester for his entertainments in the Netherlands in 1582.[1] Churchyard's entertainments on this occasion presented the case for royal chastity in symbolism that was to be taken up in the 1581 tilt: Manhood, Favour and Desert competed for the Lady Beauty but were overcome by Good Fortune; Chastity overcame Cupid. The Fairy Queen and her followers seem to have been introduced as a last-minute improvisation, showing that faery symbolism was already considered naturally appropriate to panegyric. Churchyard's old-fashioned "drab" verse was, however, unsuitable for the evocation of such delicate creatures.[2]

By the start of 1579, in any case, the time for light romantic compliment seemed past. Casimir, leader of the Calvinist forces in the Netherlands, visited England and was entertained by Leicester and Sidney; but though the queen gave him a magnificent reception, she was not won over to support him, and his hasty departure was overshadowed by the arrival of Alençon's representative. Oxford and other Catholic courtiers exulted; the French ambassador reported that Catholicism was on the increase at court.[3] It seemed that the political programme of Leicester and his circle was to receive a decisive defeat. Their mood is indicated by their enthusiastic reception of the works of Buchanan, who was taking an anxious interest in events in England; Sidney's friend Daniel Rogers was arranging for the publication in England of the De Jure Regni, which, he said, was

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1. M.H. Goldwyn, "Notes on the Biography of Thomas Churchyard", R.E.S., 17 (1966), 1-15; Chambers, III, 267-8.
2. Nichols, III, 211-13.
3. The best account of the political manoeuvres is J. Bossy's "English Catholics and the French Match, 1577-81", Recusant History, 5 (1969-70), 2-16.

disliked by those who sought only to flatter princes.[1] The same anxieties were expressed more vociferously by the preachers and propagandists of the city. This was a crucial period in the history of the church. In 1576 Edmund Grindal was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and it seemed possible that the widespread demand amongst the gentry for more reform of the church would be met, creating a broadly based church that would satisfy all reformers except the most extreme presbyterians.[2] In 1577, however, the queen suspended him from office because of his toleration of "prophesyings": even an Archbishop was not safe if he supported ecclesiastical reforms. It was shortly after Grindal's suspension that a large-scale propaganda campaign for the reform of social morality began; one immediate provocation was the opening of a public theatre in 1576, but in a sense the content of this literature was secondary: it displayed the strength of Puritan feelings and the effectiveness of their propagandists.[3] This propaganda machine was now turned against the French match. Catholic priests were beginning to enter the country in ever-greater numbers; the marriage would make things much easier for them. Indignation against the match found its most extreme expression in The discouerie of a gaping gulf by Cartwright's brother-in-law John Stubbes; he was punished by having his hand struck off.

It was in this austere climate of opinion that Spenser published The Shepheardes Calender; and his concern with political issues is indicated by his choosing as his printer a man who published no other poetry and specialized in Puritan works, the most recent being the Gaping Gulf itself.[4] The Shepheardes Calender used to be called a Puritan work; a more recent study has claimed that it is in fact liturgically conservative and anti-Puritan.[5] These anomalies can be resolved thanks to the work of Frances Yates and other scholars, who have shown

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1. See J.E. Phillips, "George Buchanan and the Sidney Circle", H.L.Q., 12 (1948-9), 23-55 (42).
2. Thomas Drant, who was to befriend Spenser when he entered the Sidney circle in 1579, celebrated Grindal's appointment with a pastoral defence of the offices of bishop and archbishop (Praesul, London, 1576).
3. P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement (London, 1967), pp. 193-208; cf. W. Ringler, "The First Phase of the Elizabethan Attack on the Stage, 1558-1579", H.L.Q., 5 (1941-2), 391-418.
4. H.J. Byrom, "Edmund Spenser's First Printer, Hugh Singleton", Library, 4th Series, 14 (1933-4), 120-56.
5. P.E. McLane, Spenser's "Shepheardes Calender" (Notre Dame, 1961).

the importance of a heterodox, Neo-Platonic or Hermetic tradition at the Renaissance.[1] In the 1570s and 1580s the militant Counter-Reformation seemed to many intellectuals to be the greatest enemy to this current of thought, and on the Continent a strategic alliance with Calvinism appeared the most effective means of protecting it. England under Elizabeth seemed to offer a favourable climate for intellectual advance, avoiding both Calvinist and Counter-Reformation extremes; Spenser's first published verse appeared in a volume by an exiled Dutch Calvinist who seems to have moved towards a more conciliatory position and who hailed Elizabeth as restorer of "the Golden worlde".[2] Such men did not object to the institution of episcopacy as such, and so were not "Puritan" by McLane's definition; but to them the important division was not so much that between presbyterians and the rest in a national church as that between vigorous supporters of international Protestantism and its Catholic opponents or those who were lukewarm in its defence. Thus on many issues they had points in common with the more radical Protestants; they wanted Elizabeth to take firm action in defence of Continental Protestantism, if necessary allying with the extreme Calvinists; and now that Elizabeth appeared to be initiating an irreversible reaction at home, an alliance with the most vigorous opponents of the reaction became necessary. As part of this strategy, Spenser echoes the rhetoric of the militant propaganda for ecclesiastical reform.[3] In the May eclogue rustic games are criticised. The commentator "E.K." is more austere than the author, condemning "fine fablers and lowd lyers, such as were the Authors of King Arthure the great and such like" and urging the eradication of superstitions about fairies and elves (VII, 44, 64).

In this masculine and moralistic context, the ornamental pastoral blazon of Elizabeth in the April eclogue is essentially an interlude, a decorative pageant that decks her in "royall aray". McLane has suggested that Rosalind, for whose love Colin is pining, also represents Queen Elizabeth, with the rival Menalcas as

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1. For indications of knowledge of this tradition in the Spenser-Harvey correspondence, see J.E. Phillips, "Daniel Rogers: a Neo-Latin link between the Pleiade and Sidney's 'Areopagus'", in Neo-Latin Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, ed. W. Matthews (Los Angeles, 1965), pp. 24-7.
2. On Van Der Noot's Theatre for Worldlings, see J. Van Dorsten, The Radical Arts (2nd edition, Leiden and London, 1973), pp. 75-9.
3. A. Hume, "Spenser, Puritanism, and the 'Maye' Eclogue", S.P., 20 (1969), 155-67.

Alençon: the love of English poetry for the queen has been rejected. This identification is hard to square with Spenser's other uses of Rosalind, but there is more plausibility in the theory that the death of Dido represents the symbolic "death" of the Leicester party's hopes: as in The Faerie Queene, Spenser represents the queen both in her private and public persons. Whether or not one accepts McLane's identifications, the significant feature of the panegyric in The Shepheardes Calender is that under the pressure of political opposition the overt praise of Elizabeth has dwindled to cosmetic compliment, set in a work whose main thrust is hostile to the policies she was pursuing. When Spenser breaks out of the pastoral framework it is to praise not Elizabeth but poetry. The "October" eclogue celebrates poetry as a divine gift rather than a ceremonial art, and Piers urges Cuddie to turn to heroic poetry in praise of Leicester, which he presents as an alternative, and a higher one, to praise of the Queen:

> Whither thou list in fayre Elisa rest,
> Or if thee please in bigger notes to sing,
> Aduance the worthy whome shee loueth best,
> That first the white beare to the stake did bring.
> (ll. 45-8)

Lest there should be any doubt, "E.K." explains that this is a reference to Leicester, and presents praise of Elizabeth as an alternative to "matter of knighthoode and cheualrie". The masculine, the heroic, the radically Protestant, take precedence over the feminine, the pastoral, the romantic.

Spenser's concern with political issues cannot be doubted, but it was not incompatible with a deep interest in the formal resources of poetry, and his poems are dramatic dialogues rather than direct propaganda. Moreover, while they are up to a point publicity for the Protestant cause, they are just as importantly publicity for Spenser himself. In Spenser as in other poets, ideological commitment is closely bound up with the quest for personal advancement; Spenser was urged on in his quest for fame by his furiously ambitious friend Harvey.[1] On the royal progress of 1578 Harvey had presented a volume of panegyrics to the queen. Leicester was highly praised in the volume, and one passage could be taken as hinting that the queen should marry him. Leicester did intercede for Harvey later

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1. On this campaign see Rosenberg, pp. 322-48, and M.C. Bradbrook, "No Room at the Top: Spenser's Pursuit of Fame", in Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, II, ed. J.R. Brown and B. Harris (London, 1960), 91-110.

that year, and Harvey was full of hopes for a successful career; it may have been at this time that he began work on a vast poem in praise of Elizabeth and other councillors. His hopes seemed to be dashed, however, when John Lyly denounced him to the authorities in 1580: one poem in his recently-published correspondence with Spenser was held to be a satire on Lyly's patron Oxford, a Catholic supporter of the French match.[1] Harvey seems to have escaped punishment, but such a tactless servant was clearly an embarrassment to Leicester. Spenser was more cautious, taking a warning from Gosson, who had badly miscalculated in dedicating his attack on the stage to Sidney, whose uncle, Leicester, was a patron of the drama. Spenser had written a poem in praise of Leicester's ancestry, but he did not publish it for fear of political controversy. He was still determined to manipulate the patronage system in his favour: "whiles the yron is hote, it is good striking, and minds of Nobles varie, as their Estates" (IX, 6). He hoped to be sent to France on a diplomatic mission, and had this happened poetry might have played a much smaller part in his life; but instead he was sent to Ireland.[2] By April 1580 he had started work on a version of The Faerie Queene. Gabriel Harvey interpreted it as a move away from classical didacticism to a feminine, romantic world: Hobgoblin had run away with the garland from Apollo (IX, 472). "E.K." would not have approved. The episode indicates the diverse impulses that made up Spenser's poetry, the oscillation between consciously Machiavellian manipulation of public images and a yearning for pastoral or romantic escape.

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1. W.B. Austin, "William Withie's Notebook: Lampoons on John Lyly and Gabriel Harvey", R.E.S., 23 (1943), 297-309. Soon afterwards Oxford changed sides and betrayed his fellow-Catholics; they accused him in turn of trying to dissuade Howard from writing an "Encomium Elizabethae" on the grounds that it would make him look ridiculous in the eyes of the world: A. Feuillerat, John Lyly (Cambridge, 1910), p. 125. It was on Oxford's behalf that Lyly began writing a long series of court comedies (see G.K. Hunter's excellent John Lyly, London, 1962); in view of Oxford's political record it is not surprising that these plays were ritualized celebrations of the queen which made no pretence of giving her advice.
2. For evidence that service in Ireland did not necessarily constitute a banishment, see R. Tuve, "Spenserus", in Essays in English Literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian Age, ed. M. MacLure and F.W. Watt (Toronto, 1964), pp. 3-25. This is by far the best study of Spenser's patronage connections.

In moving away from political controversy Spenser was following a general trend in Leicester's circle. The propaganda campaign they had encouraged had proved alarmingly successful and threatened to get out of control. Despite severe restrictions it had proved impossible to control the pulpit, and a preacher justifying the queen's actions at Paul's Cross met with a hostile reception. In August the Spanish ambassador reported that the people threatened revolution; in November the Prince of Orange's secretary warned Davison of the dangers of further opposition to the queen's will. The effect of this social fear can be seen in the career of Sir Philip Sidney at this time. He had been a firm opponent of the match, quarrelling publicly with Oxford and presenting a treatise against the match to the queen on behalf of Leicester and his allies.[1] His political restlessness had been expressed in the entertainment The Lady of May, in which the queen was asked to choose between the indolently pacific shepherd and the active forester.[2] Sidney never won the queen's confidence, and his career consisted of a few heady periods of diplomatic or military activity separated by long spells of restlessness. Sidney's courtly persona of the "shepherd knight" conveyed the tension between his desire for military action and his need to submit to a queen who preferred to keep him in a subordinate position. In 1579-80 this tension was heightened by alarm at the political emotions that had been aroused. His friend Languet warned him that further resistance to the queen's will would be reckless, and he retired to the country to work on his pastoral romance, the Arcadia. Despite the recourse to a pastoral disguise, Sidney retained his serious political interests: in the Defence of Poetry, written about this time, he agreed with many criticisms of the public theatre and singled out for praise Gorboduc and the tragedies of Buchanan, plays notable for didactic criticisms of tyranny.[3] The action of the Old Arcadia centres

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1. On the French match and the Sidney circle, see R. Howell, Sir Philip Sidney (London, 1968), pp. 61-74.
2. The generally accepted date for the performance of this entertainment is 1578, but it has been pointed out that there is no evidence that it was performed at all, and as with so many Elizabethan entertainments it is hard to determine the precise relationship between topical allusion and general concerns: for a criticism of topical interpretations see P. Picket, "Sidney's Use of Phaedrus in The Lady of May", S.E.L., 16 (1976), 33-50.
3. Sidney, Miscellaneous Prose, ed. K. Duncan-Jones and J. Van Dorsten (Oxford, 1973), pp. 112-6.

on the pastoral retreat of Basilius, whose weak abdication of responsibilities prevents the formation of an alliance against Rome and ultimately plunges the country into chaos. These ills are intensified by the nature of "Monarchiall gouernmentes": Basilius has failed to consult the people often enough, and "Publique matters" have been "privatly governed" (IV, 299).[1] It has been argued that the radicalism of the work's political content extends to its form: the Old Arcadia can be read as a Calvinist subversion of the romance form, exposing artifice and disguise, both social and artistic, as inadequate in the sight of God.[2] But any impulse in this direction is contained not only by Sidney's evident delight in play and artifice but by an acute awareness of the value of pomp and ceremony in quelling a restless populace (e.g. IV, 348).

Sidney concentrated the political ambivalence of the Old Arcadia in the gesture with which he returned to court at the end of 1580: he presented the queen with an ornate gold whip. By this time the political climate had become calmer: the French ambassador, realizing that his attempts to help English Catholics had proved counter-productive, sought a reconciliation with Leicester and Walsingham, pledging that a French marriage would in no way affect the Protestant faith. Leicester succeeded in persuading Oxford to betray his fellow-Catholics, Arundel, Howard and Southwell, and the French ambassador refused to help them.[3] Both Oxford and those he accused protested their loyalty to the queen, and Oxford and Arundel dramatized it in a tilt on 22 January. Oxford appeared as the knight of the Sun Tree, apologizing for his lapse from Protestantism in the language of romance and swearing his determination to destroy the (Catholic) caterpillars that were undermining the tree of commonwealth. The probable author of the speeches, Munday, had himself been converted to Catholicism by Oxford and now made a vigorous recantation.[4] The incident reveals how firmly courtly chivalry was associated with Protestant monarchism. The harmony amongst the courtiers was fragile, however, and Leicester and Walsingham continued to be uneasy about the

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1. References in the text are to Prose Works, ed. A. Feuillerat (revised edition, Cambridge, 1962).
2. F. Marenco, Arcadia Puritana (Bari, 1968): Marenco finds the Old Arcadia "un'opera radicale, antiletteraria" (p. 199).
3. Bossy, pp. 7-9.
4. M.W.S. Swan, "The 'Sweet Speech' and Spenser's (?) Axiochus", E.L.H., 11 (1944), 61-78.

queen's conduct of the marriage negotiations: Walsingham wanted an alliance with France without a marriage, and above all he wanted a decision to be taken quickly.[1] Instead, the long charade of the marriage negotiations continued. According to the Spanish ambassador, the queen paid less attention to the fate of the Netherlands than to jousting and balls; it was through the congenial medium of a court festivity that Leicester's supporters expressed their last, muted protest against the French match.[2] In an entertainment for the French envoys, The Four Foster-Children of Desire, the queen was presented as an exalted Neo-Platonic deity, the goddess of Perfect Beauty, too far above ordinary mortals to yield even to the long and vigorous suit of four knights. The entertainment thus implied that the continuation of marriage negotiations was futile while in no way depreciating the suitor. The negotiations dragged on, but they became increasingly unreal; immediately after the entertainment one observer reported that "the general fear of the marriage is well laid down".[3]

Thus the tournaments of 1581 reflected a state of uneasy compromise between Leicester's supporters and the monarchy; and it was in a similarly motivated gesture that Sidney introduced descriptions of chivalry into the revised Arcadia, including the figure of the Frozen Knight from The Four Foster-Children of Desire (I, 286). In revising the work he is said to have contemplated introducing dynastic compliment by transferring the story to the reign of King Arthur. While the attitude to monarchy is still not particularly mystical - and the tilts themselves are described with a satirical undertone - the social fear is still greater than in the Old Arcadia, and there is emphasis on the need for a strong monarchy as a barrier against social unrest. The punishment of the rebels is described in greater detail, and their grievances are recast to avoid specific allusions to the events of 1579.[4] In his remaining years Sidney's attitude towards

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1. Read, Walsingham, II, 48-9.
2. C.S.P. Spanish 1580-86, pp. 92-3; Nichols, II, 312-29; N. Council, "O Dea Certe: The Allegory of 'The Fortress of Perfect Beauty' ", H.L.Q., 39 (1975-6), 329-42. The entertainment was printed by Waldegrave, the Puritan who later printed the Marprelate tracts. On affinities between this entertainment and the Balet Comique de la Reine, performed in Paris later that year, see F.A. Yates, The Valois Tapestries (2nd edition, London, 1975), pp. 91-3.
3. Council, p. 331.
4. W.G. Zeeveld, "The Uprising of the Commons in Sidney's Arcadia", M.L.N., 48 (1933), 209-17.

foreign policy became rather more ecumenical; but he still favoured policies more activist than Elizabeth's, and there was to the last a tension between his celebration of the queen in the ornamental armour of the tiltyard and his desire for real conflict.[1] For other panegyrists, however, the end of the Anjou match signalled a complete deliverance: now that marriage was out of the question, even those radical Protestants who had once had reservations about rule by women could celebrate this virgin queen with all the greater enthusiasm, and her virginity became a symbol of national independence. The most complete expression of this mood was Thomas Blenerhasset's A Revelation of the True Minerva (1582), which synthesized the symbolism of most of the royal entertainments provided by Leicester and his allies.[2] The poem is a lengthy panegyric of Elizabeth, firmly Calvinist in tone. The gods and goddesses go in search of a new Minerva; a prophecy reveals that she is to be found in the "golden world" of England (C4b), and a lengthy digression portrays the persecution of the true faith throughout Europe and the evil plots of the Pope. When told that the gods salute her, Elizabeth sternly replies that she knows no God but one, and has defaced heathen idols; she eventually agrees to dwell with them, but only after she has been assured that they are only the virtues they "signifie" (B3b-4a). Blenerhasset labours this point to reassure pious readers: the gods and goddesses themselves explain that they are not idolatrous fictions but the immortal memory of mortal heroes, the inventors of various arts and sciences. The printer adds a note to the same effect. At the end of the poem Elizabeth is transformed into the divine Minerva, but the most literal-minded reader can have no religious scruples at this stage. And it is made clear that the queen's divinity is not just a matter of natural dynastic continuity: the printer explains that all political institutions are corrupt, and that only divine grace can repress sin. Elizabeth, the true Minerva, has been endowed with grace because she has rooted out idolatry. The particular interest of this execrable poem is that it contains allusions to all the major Leicesterian entertainments. The Fairy Queen appears,

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1. On his later foreign policy opinions see R. Howell, "The Sidney Circle and the Protestant Cause in English Foreign Policy", Renaissance and Modern Studies, 19 (1975), 31-46.
2. References in the text are to A Revelation of the True Minerva, ed. J.W. Bennett (New York, 1941); see also I.L. Schulze, "Blenerhasset's A Revelation, Spenser's Shepheardes Calender, and the Kenilworth Pageants", E.L.H., 11 (1944), 85-91.

followed by Pallaphilos (sig. E2a), and Elizabeth's crown bears a pegasus - which had been adopted as the emblem of the Inner Temple after its use in the 1562 revels. The Lady of the Lake and the Fairy Queen (sig. I4a) recall the 1575 entertainments; they had previously appeared together in The Shepheardes Calender, and Blenerhasset was the first poet to imitate Spenser's metrical experiments. Elizabeth's final apotheosis is preceded by spectacular tournaments and festivities, recalling in scale if not in specific content the pageantry of 1581. At one point a figure is seen seated beside Elizabeth, perhaps in order to leave open the possibility of marriage; but disapproval of a French match seems to be expressed in a passage where the deities reject the fleur-de-lys as a decoration because it represents trouble and cruel thraldom (sig. D2b). Blenerhasset dedicated the poem to Lady Leighton, nee Cecilia Knollys, the sister of Leicester's wife; her father had Puritan sympathies and had intervened in 1579 on behalf of the Presbyterian John Field. The family had incurred the queen's wrath over their hostility to the French match and two of her brothers had taken part as the children of Despair in The Four Foster-Children of Desire. Blenerhasset would have known Lady Leighton through his service in Guernsey under her husband Sir Thomas, a close ally of Leicester's who had maintained a Presbyterian discipline on the island.[1]

Thus the militancy and distrust of effeminate courtiers that had been so vigorously manifested in 1579 had given way to triumphant celebration of a female ruler whose virginity had become a symbol of independence from subjection to foreign Papists. Several other panegyrists imitated the feminine, pastoral imagery of The Shepheardes Calender at this time; as usual, Oxford University was in the forefront. About 1584 John Dove of Christ Church translated part of The Shepheardes Calender into Latin, emphasizing the religious allegory and adding an anonymous poem in praise of Grindal. Dove praised Laurence Humphrey and apologized for not following his counsel and rendering the different levels of diction of the original.[2] Some time between 1581 and 1584 George Peele wrote The Arraignment of Paris, a court play celebrating Elizabeth as redeemer of the fall of

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1. Collinson, p. 202; Council, "O Dea Certe", p. 339; A.F.S. Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism (London, 1925), pp. 159-61: Cartwright took refuge on Guernsey in 1595 (ibid. pp. 373 ff); Churchyard had also been in Leighton's service on Guernsey (Goldwyn, p. 8).
2. L. Bradner, "The Latin Translations of Spenser's Shepheardes Calender", M.P. 33 (1935-6), 21-26.

Troy and alluding to The Shepheardes Calender in its sub-plot. Peele had studied at Christ Church and returned on occasion to help in the staging of plays; he also wrote pageants for the City of London, fusing militant hostility to Popery with pastoral symbolism.[1] His first surviving pageant dates from 1585, by which time political tension was again rising. The campaign to execute Mary Stuart was at its height, and amongst the first products of the Oxford press sponsored by Leicester was a series of pamphlets celebrating the queen's deliverance from Popish conspiracies and hinting at the need to deal with Mary; Peele may have written one of these pamphlets.[2] Such panegyric nourished political emotions about which the queen was uneasy; when the Babington plot was revealed it was the Puritan Edward Lewkenor who urged the drawing up of a special form of prayer and thanksgiving for the blessings bestowed by the queen.[3]

At the same time the queen was at last reluctantly yielding to the necessity of sending a military expedition to the Netherlands. The Oxford press also issued Thomas Bilson's justification of the action. To the queen and the conservatives the issue was purely political, but radical Protestants saw the war as a religious crusade, freeing fellow-Protestants from subjection to idolatry. The queen appointed Leicester to lead the expedition, but she nearly changed her mind when she realized the radicalism of many of the followers he had chosen. Leicester had apparently played a part in devising the pageantry for Alençon's arrival in the Netherlands in 1582; it had been planned to dedicate to him the volume describing the pageants.[4] Now propagandists were busy both in England and the Netherlands

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1. Peele, Life and Minor Works, ed. D.H. Horne (New Haven, 1952), pp. 214-9.
2. T. Brooke, "A Latin Poem by George Peele (?)", H.L.Q., 3 (1939-40), 47-67. The poem in question is Pareus (Oxford, 1585); Brooke suggests that it was commissioned by William Gager, who published anonymously two other books of Latin poems, In Guil. Parry Proditorem (1585), and In Catilinarias Proditiones (2 edns., 1586). Gager's Horatian odes in praise of Elizabeth are of high quality: see L. Bradner, Musae Anglicanae (New York & London, 1940) p.61. The other Oxford volume from this period is "H.D.", Anglia Querens (1586). Edward Hake, a client of Leicester's, expressed similar sentiments in an oration delivered before the queen in 1586, ending with a prayer for Leicester in the Netherlands (Nichols, II, 461-80).
3. J.E. Neale, Queen Elizabeth and her Parliaments. 1584-1601 (London, 1957), p.49.
4. C.S.P.For. 1581-2, p. 514.

to glorify militant Protestant policies; an elaborate series of pageants for Leicester in the Netherlands glorified his role in the campaign, and he was hailed as the new Arthur.[1] In these heady days Leicester and his friends became impatient with the queen's apparent failure to support them, and against her orders Leicester accepted the Dutch offer of the governorship. Thus the last great series of pageants associated with Leicester marked the furthest distance between royal policy and his own search for political independence. Leicester allied himself with the extreme Calvinists, and Sidney saw the war in fervently religious terms:

> If her Majesty wear the fowntain I woold fear considring what I daily fynd that we shold wax dry, but she is but a means whom God useth and I know not whether I am deceaved but I am faithfully persuaded that if she shold withdraw her self other springes woold ryse to help this action.[2]

But the pageantry was empty: Leicester was an incompetent leader and the campaign lurched from disaster to disaster, including the death of Sir Philip Sidney. Leicester's allies, however, blamed their misfortunes on the queen's lukewarmness: before setting out Leicester had warned that there was no point in beginning the campaign if the queen thought the cause was of no more importance than to make a show. As he had feared, the empty display of his campaign did indeed leave him as a "scarecrow".[3]

But his propagandists were still active, and they managed to transform the fiasco into a triumph. The elegies for Sidney expressed grief as much for the political cause he represented as for the man himself; the Oxford and Cambridge

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1. See the full study of the Dutch propaganda and pageantry by R. Strong and J. Van Dorsten, Leicester's Triumph (Leiden and London, 1964), and on English propaganda sponsored by Leicester, Rosenberg, pp. 268-74.
2. Sidney, Prose Works, III, 166.
3. S.L. Adams, "The Protestant Cause: Religious Alliance with the West European Calvinist Communities as a Political Issue in England, 1585-1630", Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1973, p.48. I owe many references to this thesis, which is of great value for the study of political propaganda.

volumes of elegies were dedicated to Leicester.[1] The 1587 edition of Holinshed's Chronicles, in which the providential view of English history reached its fullest expression, summarized much of the pageantry associated with Leicester - the Norwich entry, the Antwerp entry, the 1581 tournament - and contained a lengthy account of the recent pageants in the Netherlands. The glorification of Leicester was felt to go too far, however, and the account of the Dutch pageants was censored, the victim of the new censorship laws which Whitgift, taking advantage of Leicester's absence to obtain a place on the Council, had introduced the previous year.[2] Churchyard wrote a "sumptuous shew" for performance by Ralegh, Gorges and others in commemoration of Leicester's campaign in the Netherlands, but the text was never published, perhaps for fear of censorship.[3] Leicester's political power was on the wane; he died in 1588, shortly after the defeat of the Armada. The celebrations of that victory were less spectacular than those that Leicester had devised over the years to his own glory. His death marked a decisive change in the balance of power; by the time Spenser published the first part of The Faerie Queene, the Protestant "Faerie Land" symbolized by Leicester's pageantry was already at risk through the loss of its most powerful patron.[4]

II. The Faerie Queene

On one of its many levels, The Faerie Queene constitutes an extended panegyric of Queen Elizabeth and her policies. This panegyric element has until recently been given little attention by critics who have found it an embarrassing excrescence; but when the poem is set in the context of the developing symbolism

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1. G. Whetstone, Sir Phillip Sidney, his honorable life (London, 1587), sig. B3b; on the elegies, see J. Buxton, Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance (2nd edn., London, 1964), pp. 173-7. This was the first occasion that the two universities issued volumes of commemorative verse. The main Oxford volume was edited by William Gager and contained elegies by Humphrey and Dove; Harvey and Giles Fletcher contributed to the Cambridge volume. It is not known when Spenser's elegy was written; Spenser's friend Lodowick Bryskett planned to publish his elegies on a visit to London in 1587, when he apparently circulated parts of The Faerie Queene.
2. Rosenberg, pp. 94-5; Holinshed, Chronicles (London, 1808), IV, 640-57. A poem by Giles Fletcher, father of the Spenserian poets, was amongst the matter excised.
3. Chambers, III, 267-8.
4. Collinson, pp. 386-7.

of Elizabethan panegyric, it can be seen that the political tensions of the age, as dramatized in royal entertainments, played a major part in determining the poem's structure.[1] As has been seen, the central tension was that between the articulate and well-organized advocates of further ecclesiastical reform and a militant policy abroad, who found their chief patron in Leicester and a potent symbol in the heroic figure of Arthur, and the conservatism of a cautious queen reluctant to yield to a husband's authority. The Faerie Queene enacts a process of political sublimation, by which Arthur and the lesser knights subordinate their individual quests for glory to their service of the Faerie Queene. Spenser does all he can to blur the traditional symbolic distinctions between the public masculine world of chivalric militancy and the feminine world of private passivity. By opting for the greatest possible variety in the poem's form, instead of the classical unity demanded by an influential school of critics, Spenser was facilitating this task. Cinthio argued that the modern romance form allowed greater scope for panegyrics of contemporary events than the classical heroic poem.[2] The crucial difference from the point of view of Elizabethan panegyric was that a unified epic would centre on a militant male hero, an Arthur-figure, whereas a more flexible romance form would prevent any one hero from overshadowing the heroine. Spenser portrays Arthur not in his role as chivalric hero but as a young man undergoing instruction in the private virtues; Spenser is able to exploit the fact that the virtues were normally represented as feminine. As well as representing the queen's private person in Belphoebe, the descendent of figures like the Fairy Queen at Woodstock and Sidney's Lady of May, he makes the central representative of public virtue the virgin queen Gloriana, and in fact the distinction between public and private virtues is not

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1. The full importance of the panegyric element was first recognized by Frances Yates in her "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea", reprinted in Astraea, (see esp. pp. 69-74), and has been taken up by Frank Kermode, "Spenser and the Allegorists" and "The Faerie Queene, Books I and V", in Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne (London, 1971), pp. 12-59, and by Alastair Fowler, in Spenser and the Numbers of Time, London, 1964. Fowler, p. 170, argues that each book was to cover a year between the annual Accession Day festivities on 17 November. Quotations are from the Variorum edition, ed. E. Greenlaw, C.G. Osgood, and F.M. Padelford (Baltimore, 1932-49).
2. Of the Composition of Romances, 59, quoted in A.H. Gilbert (ed.), Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden (New York, etc., 1940), pp. 271-2. Cinthio cites as examples Dante, Petrarch and Ariosto; on the panegyric elements in these poets cf. Yates. Astraea, pp. 8-16, 22-3.

consistently maintained. The sun was traditionally the symbol of kingship, with the queen being symbolized by the moon; Spenser retains the lunar symbolism in his presentation of Belphoebe, but emphatically associates the queen's public person with the sun (e.g. II.i.40, VI.x.28); in Book I he gives Una the apocalyptic associations of the Woman Clothed with the Sun in Revelation, and Britomart has a gold, solar shield with a regal lion. Solar symbolism had been a central feature of the 1581 tournaments. Anjou sometimes used the sun as his emblem, and Braggadochio's absurd courtship of Belphoebe is on one level a reflection of the failure of the French match: Braggadochio has a shield representing the sun on a gold background - a heraldic solecism, since it was against the rules to impose a colour on the equivalent metal.[1] Opposition to Elizabeth is again presented in terms of true and false suns in the episode of the Souldan: his chariot is compared to Phaeton's, an ironic twist of Philip II's own personal impresa.[2]

If the poem's form facilitates praise of a female ruler, it also enables Spenser to do justice to the policies of Leicester's supporters. The knights are allied in the Order of Maidenhead, a reflection of the Order of the Garter, whose aim was to tie the aristocracy to the crown by especially firm bonds; but they have their own quests which in different ways put the central panegyric framework to the test. Leicester and his circle had strong links with the aristocratic Protestants in France, whose religious resistance to the crown revived nostalgia for feudal aristocratic independence. La Noue said that the romances of Amadis aroused "un esprit de vertige" in his generation; and in Sidney and Leicester ideological enthusiasm for Protestantism was strongly coloured by aristocratic self-esteem.[3] The Faerie Queene ultimately locates all virtues in the queen, but the immediate credit for their defence goes to the different aristocratic "patrons" and "patterns"of virtue. Just as Leicester protected the Puritans, covering them with the "shield" of his patronage, so Arthegall champions a militant foreign policy and a particularly rigorous attitude to female rulers: in Book V the distinctions that have previously been blurred in the interests of panegyric are made sharper. In The Faerie Queene virtue and meaning are decentralized; a fundamentally medieval

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1. Yates, The Valois Tapestries, Plate 19c, p. 35.
2. R. Graziani, "Philip II's Impresa and Spenser's Souldan", J.W.C.I., 27 (1964), 322-4.
3. M. Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), pp. 68-92.

literary form, reflecting medieval social forms, has not yet been superseded by the centralizing tendencies of absolutism. Under James the dominant form of panegyric would become the court masque, in which individual aristocratic virtuosity was rigorously subordinated to the will of the monarch, and the new device of perspective gave absolute priority to the monarch's point of view. Protestant aristocrats would look back nostalgically to the political world reflected in The Faerie Queene; the interlacings of the plots create an intricate formal dance in which the aristocracy display by their individual deeds their fundamental harmony with the monarchy, and the elaborately caparisoned steeds of medieval romance become the bearers of a Reformed morality.

Book I

The first book of The Faerie Queene is the most deeply infused with the religious values of the 1559 royal entry.[1] The central theme is the redemption of a religious Fall, the restoration of pure, simple Truth after the reign of deceitful magical images. The book is the least courtly in tone: Una is more sober and simply dressed than Venus or Diana (I.vi.16), and lavish ornamentation is reserved for the house of Lucifera. Even the final banquet is "but bare and plaine" (I.xii.14). The central problem of the book is that of distinguishing between true and false images, and without divine aid this task proves to be impossible. The significantly named Archimago deceives Redcross with a false image of Una; Redcross feels that her arts are "Too false and strong for earthly skill or might" (I.xii.32). The narrator agrees that it is hard to see through the masks and vizors of evil (I.vii.1). The sin of idolatry is given specific dramatization in the incident of Sansloy's attempted rape of Una: idolatry was often described as spiritual whoredom, mistaking the sensual exterior for the spiritual meaning, the body for the soul. A milder kind of error is represented by the woodgods' attempts to worship first Una and then her ass: the story of Isis and her ass was a common symbol of idolatry.[2] Una's wanderings indicate that the divine message has been

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1. On the religious symbolism of Book I see F. Kermode, "Spenser and the Allegorists" and "The Faerie Queene, I and V", in Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne (London, 1971), pp. 12-59.
2. J.M. Steadman, "Una and the Clergy: the Ass Symbol in The Faerie Queene", J.W.C.I., 21 (1958), 134-7.

transmitted over the centuries not by the natural language of traditional ceremonial, the anointment confirming the apostolic succession, but through momentary spiritual epiphanies. For reformers like Foxe and Bale, the history of the faith was the history of the conflict between two churches, the false church which was merely external, luring the people with magical images, and the true church which was "not so visibly known".[1] This exaltation of spiritual truth above traditional embodiment meant that Calvinists tended to see all Reformed churches throughout Europe as part of one true church, in which local differences caused by differences of political or social organization were secondary.[2]

Both in domestic and international politics, such exaltation of the spirit aroused concern amongst the conservative: at home it appeared to undermine traditional political loyalties, while in foreign policy it encouraged a militant ideological internationalism. Elizabeth was determined to contain such centrifugal tendencies by emphasizing the national and monarchical character of the church; and in a period of great political insecurity the radical Protestants were willing to share in the exaltation of a state church guarded by a monarch who could alone provide a strong bulwark against Catholic reaction. The career of John Foxe is a striking illustration of the interaction of Calvinist internationalism with Anglican nationalism. He originally intended his Acts and Monuments to commemorate martyrs throughout Europe; and his early work shows no sign of English nationalism. The Acts and Monuments breaks through the conventions of ceremonial representation, disregarding social decorum to show the manifestations of the Spirit in the lives of ordinary men and women. But the first English edition, published in 1563, contained a dedication to Queen Elizabeth, comparing her to Constantine, and fitted its martyrology into a pattern of the fall and redemption of the national church. Foxe "domesticated the Apocalypse": in his view Elizabeth restored the true relationship between church and state that had originally been established by Constantine with the emperor presiding over the church and preventing it from aspiring to illegitimate secular power.[3] This idea provides the basis for the allegory of Book I: Una's parents have been usurped by the Emperor of the West, but Redcross frees their kingdom from the tyranny of the papal dragon;

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1. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. J. Pratt (London, 1877), I, xix.
2. Adams, "The Protestant Cause", ch. I.
3. Yates, Astraea, pp. 42-7; W. Lamont, Godly Rule (London, 1969), p. 33.

England becomes the guardian of the true faith. The book ends with the betrothal of Redcross and Una, which is celebrated with simple rites suggesting the pristine purity of religion shortly after the Fall, but which also recalls the coronation of Elizabeth.[1] By her coronation Elizabeth becomes the embodiment of Protestant Truth: Redcross has often seen her so fair but never so fairly clad. A contemporary annotator explained the occasion: "as Crowned quene".[2] This ceremony reflects the simplicity of the royal entry rather than the heavy mysticism of the traditional coronation: at the betrothal Una is crowned "twixt earnest and twixt game" (I.xii.8). But the essential point is that the wanderings of the spiritual Truth have ended, that it has found a final embodiment in the English church presided over by a godly queen; the idolatry of Lucifera, who "in her selfe-lou'd semblance tooke delight" (I.iv.10) is replaced by the transparent piety of Elizabeth, who

> in her selfe-resemblance well beseene,
> Did seeme such, as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.
> (I.xii.8)

The end of Book I is full of echoes of Revelation: Una is the Woman Clothed with the Sun. But the intersection of general and historical allegories suggests that on one level the end of the book foreshadows events in the distant future, while on another level the religious redemption has already been accomplished by Elizabeth's accession; there is no apocalyptic excitement about the immediate future.

As Frances Yates has shown, the idea of empir- exercised an enormous appeal in the sixteenth century because it reconciled the desire for change with a traditional form, a return to antiquity; it could accommodate Protestant radicalism within a framework of medieval universalism. But even this firmly magisterial ideal could be used to justify a more internationalist policy than Elizabeth desired. Even Foxe became less nationalistic in his later years; the dedication of 1563 was omitted from later editions.[3] The queen was determined to root English Protestant-

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1. J. McAuley, "The Form of Una's Marriage Ceremony in The Faerie Queene", Notes and Queries, 219 (1974), 410-11.
2. G. Hough (ed.), The First Commentary on "The Faerie Queene" (Chichester, 1964), note on I.xii.23; Harvey had praised Elizabeth as "Una" in the Gratulationes Valdinenses. Nichols, II, 112.
3. The view of Foxe as an unqualified nationalist, popularized by William Haller, has been qualified by V.N. Olsen, John Foxe and the Elizabethan Church (London, 1973), pp. 36-47.

ism as firmly as possible in respect for national institutions. More specifically English elements had to be added to the cult of empire; and these were provided by the peculiar history of the English church, which had made its break with Rome before its doctrinal and liturgical Reformation. Tudor church historians traced the faith in England back to the time of Joseph of Arimathea in order to show a continuity that was not dependent on the Roman church. Both Foxe (I, 306) and Spenser (II.x.53) had reservations about the story of Joseph, but they fused the history of Protestant Truth with a patriotic account of the English church. Foxe presented the development of the faith in England up to the time of Wyclif as a steady decline, in which the pure truth became more and more elaborately disguised because of the corrupting influence of Rome; the Saxons still avoided some of the faults of the later church but their faith was not as pure as that of the Britons who converted them.[1] Spenser sets The Faerie Queene at the time when the Britons were still engaged in subduing the pagan Saxons, and fuses religious primitivism with dynastic compliment by locating the origins of the Tudor line at this point in history.

By his use of dynastic myth Spenser tempers ideological fervour; and the evidence suggests that his religious position was essentially "politique", disliking excessive dispute over the external forms of religion. In his tract on Ireland Spenser made his "politique" speaker Ireneus oppose the abolition of idolatry through bloodshed: reform must be gradual. Ireneus accepts that this is to put the body before the spirit: "the outwarde shewe... dothe greatlye drawe the rude people to the reverensinge and frequentinge theareof", even if "our late too nice foles saie that theare is nothinge in the semelye forme and Comelye order of the Churche". Spenser had read his Machiavelli and saw no harm in using religious ritual for political ends.[2] Book I contains many favourable portrayals of traditional ritual. At the House of Holiness Redcross is instructed in the use of sackcloth and ashes, and Penance disciplines him with an iron whip (I.x.26-7); the cross he bears on his shield seems to his enemies a "charme" and keeps him inviolable until he lays it aside. The sacraments are allegorized in highly mystical terms: Redcross

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1. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, I, 306 ff.
2. Spenser, Works, IX, 138-9, 223; Machiavelli is quoted on p. 229. Harvey's printer, John Wolfe, printed several of Machiavelli's works.

receives the balm of the Tree of Life as he lies "as in a dreame of deepe delight" (I.xi.50). Ceremonial is a more important medium of communication than the written word in Faerie Land; Fidelia tells Redcross that the Bible contains "darke things... hard to be vnderstood" (I.x.13), and that it preaches "free will" (I.x.19). Throughout the poem iconoclasm and the destruction of ecclesiastical ornaments are condemned (e.g. I.ii.17, IV.i.21, VI.xii.23-5). The cult of St. George, which Spenser commemorates in Book I, was one of the chief means by which Elizabeth maintained elaborate ritual: its ceremonies were held in her private chapel at Windsor, where, to the annoyance of the more extreme Protestants, she had set up a silver cross. Under Edward VI there had been a plan to reform the statutes of the order, dropping the patron saint and renaming it as "The Order of the Garter and the Defence of Truth as revealed in Scripture". Edward ridiculed the story of George and the Dragon; Spenser sides with Elizabeth's more sympathetic attitude to the legends.[1] Another feature that distinguishes Spenser from extreme Calvinists is his obtrusive syncretism: classical mythology is invoked at moments of great Christian reverence, such as the appearance in Book II of the angel who is compared to Cupid (II.viii.6). Spenser was, after all, a friend of the distinctly heterodox Ralegh, who was hated by the Puritans.

It is easy to misunderstand this "politique" position because it resists all later categories.[2] When Spenser first conceived his poem, later polarizations in the English church had not yet developed, and even in international terms the religious polarization of Europe did not seem final. Frances Yates has shown that intellectuals in both religious camps continued to hope for some kind of reconciliation.[3] The cult of monarchy, with its extravagant but fundamentally secular ceremonial, seemed a possible bridge between opposing liturgical positions: ritual could be demystified while retaining its secular function of preserving social distinctions. Elizabethan entertainments were full of extravagant parodies of Catholic ritual, with hermits playing tribute to the image of their queen in oratories;

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1. R.C. Strong, "Queen Elizabeth and the Order of the Garter", Archaeological Journal, 119 (1962), pp. 247, 263-4.
2. Virgil K. Whitaker, The Religious Basis of Spenser's Thought (Stanford and London, 1950), emphasizes Spenser's liturgical and theological conservatism but does not take into account the political context that qualified it.
3. Yates, Astraea, pp. 80-87.

there were many parallels between the Virgin Queen and the Virgin Mary. In The Lady of May Sidney jokingly presented Leicester as a Catholic.[1] Puritans were urged to accept the traditional vestments as "the queen's livery", while Catholics could be shown that the queen rejected iconoclasm and social disorder. Garter ceremonial was used as a "politique" bridge between the English court and the Gallican court of Henri III. Spenser uses traditional ritual in a similar spirit. At the start of Book II Guyon finds himself unable to strike the image of the cross on Redcross's shield, but Redcross is equally unable to strike the image of Gloriana; from one point of view the incident gives a mystical aura to secular ceremonial, but it also secularizes religious ritual. The ambiguity of the poem's attitude to religious ritual may well be deliberate, aiming to appeal to as wide an audience as possible. The obtrusive syncretism has similar connotations.[2] While the religious views of the Protestant "politiques" offered much that would please the queen, however, their political stance gave their views a radical edge. In times of political crisis they were willing to side with militant Calvinists as the most vigorous opponents of the Counter-Reformation. Hugh Trevor-Roper has characterized such alliances in a metaphor singularly appropriate to The Faerie Queene:

> A philosopher, in a time of crisis, may have to put on a suit of armour... As a suit of armour Calvinism proved serviceable in battle, and though more uncomfortable to wear, proved easier to discard than the archaic, ornamentally encrusted chain-mail which protected but also stifled the philosophers of the rival Church.[3]

In Book V Spenser portrays such alliances in the Netherlands and Ireland with more unequivocal approval than the queen was wont to show.

Thus the poem's "politique" position is not simply a reflection of the queen's religious conservatism; and although Protestant enthusiasm is tempered in the poem by dynastic and national epideicticism, there is still a sense of exhilaration at the liberation of the mind from subjection to false images, and a deep-rooted fear of a

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1. Sidney, Miscellaneous Prose, pp. 31-2.
2. J.E. Phillips, "Spenser's Syncretistic Religious Imagery", E.L.H., 36 (1969), 110-30.
3. H.R. Trevor-Roper, Religion, The Reformation, and Social Change (London, 1968), pp. 235-6.

return to idolatry.[1] As the poem progresses it becomes clear that this concern is central to Spenser's mind. As Isabel MacCaffrey has shown, the poem is deeply self-conscious, and the conflict between Archimago and Una introduces a preoccupation with the abuses of imagination which increases as the poem progresses.[2] Though no iconoclast, Spenser has an increasingly individual conception of the imagination which repudiates any simple subjection of the mind to traditional religious and social images. This element in the poem helps to explain the breadth of its appeal : if it is hardly a "Puritan" poem, it is not exactly High Church. The fortunes of the term "Faerie Land" in the seventeenth century reveal this breadth. For Anglicans like Corbett, fairies were diminutive beings associated with conservative rural areas where the superstitions opposed by the Puritans still flourished.[3] Spenser's Faerie Land, however, is not just a survival from the past: in the proem to Book II he playfully speculates that it may be yet to be discovered, and clearly regards it as a product of the political and imaginative activity of the present as well as the past. Puritans in the seventeenth century would look back nostalgically to the Elizabethan "Faerie Land" as a land in which godly ministers were not yet persecuted and the Protestant cause abroad was supported. Spenser's self-consciousness means that the ritualism of Book I must not be interpreted too literally: as C.S. Lewis observes, Catholicism is inherently allegorical, and the allegorist of religious beliefs can scarcely avoid a ritualistic atmosphere. Puritans like John Rainolds were willing to accept the story of St. George and the dragon as an allegory.[4] For all the talk by critics of the visual quality of Spenser's style, as far as we know he never wrote a pageant, and his basic medium is, after all, artificial and verbal; his poem takes place in the mind, using inner images. While aiming at court favour, he also issued his poem as a printed book, addressing as wide an audience as possible, and the Biblical symbolism of Book I

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1. On the role of magic and witchcraft in Protestant polemic see D.D. Waters, "Errour's Den and Archimago's Hermitage: Symbolic Lust and Symbolic Witchcraft", E.L.H., 33 (1966), 279-98.
2. I. MacCaffrey, Spenser's Allegory (Princeton, 1976), p.254: "the perpetual temptation of the artist is to become a magician".
3. R. Corbett, Poems, ed. J.A.W. Bennett and H.R. Trevor-Roper (Oxford, 1955 pp. 49-52.
4. C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (Oxford, 1936), p. 322; Strong, "Queen Elizabeth and the Order of the Garter", p.264.

made his poem easy of access to readers who might have difficulties with the more abstruse epiphanies. The archaic diction combines courtly dignity with primitivistic simplicity. Elizabeth had good reason to be pleased with a poem whose religious position was as ambiguous as her own; but the poem's self-consciousness undermines any simple kind of sacramental politics. Spenser hymns Elizabeth as "the Idole of her makers great magnificence" (II.ii.41), but only in the context of a searching critique of idols. The first major qualification of the panegyric framework comes in canto x, where Redcross stands on a hilltop to view the heavenly city. When he sees this vision - similar to that with which Van Der Noot's Theatre had ended - he finds the Faerie Queene's capital inadequate and is reluctant to return to her service. The rest of the poem, with all its exalted praise of the monarchy, unfolds in the shadow of that vision.

Books II - IV

Having stated his basic themes in Book I, Spenser runs through the other virtues in a steady expansion of focus from the private to the public. The representation of the queen's "private person" as "a most vertuous and beautifull Lady", Belphoebe, appears for the first time in Book II and disappears after Book V, where Spenser moves decisively to the treatment of public affairs. As has been seen, until the collapse of the French marriage negotiations panegyrists tended to view the combination of the female private person with the monarchical role with some ambivalence, but thereafter a cult of the queen's virginity assumed ever greater proportions. Spenser characteristically raises this cult to its highest degree but at the same time indicates its limitations.

The cult of royal temperance and chastity could have public, ideological implications: Petrarch, whose praise of Laura's chastity was echoed by many panegyrists of Elizabeth, was seen by Protestants as a prophet of the Reformation, and in Chapman's Hymnus in Cynthiam the royal chastity becomes an emblem of militant imperial opposition to the Papacy.[1] The House of Medina episode perhaps portrays the nature of the Elizabethan religious settlement as a middle way between Catholic and Calvinist extremes, and it has been argued that Bishop

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1. Yates, Astraea, pp. 112-20.

Young is "shadowed" in the name Guyon.[1] Temperance in financial matters was certainly one of the queen's public virtues. In Books II-IV, however, the emphasis is primarily on the royal private person; Belphoebe is the representative of the virgin queen as idealized in the cult of courtly love. Innumerable courtiers claimed that they had been smitten by the queen's unsurpassable beauty. Grotesque as this cult may seem today, it had definite political value, in reconciling the queen's male courtiers to the unaccustomed role of submission to a woman; there was never any lack of awareness about the realities underlying the romantic fictions. Lyly makes his Cynthia reply to the romantic effusions of Endimion: "this honorable respect of thine, shalbe christned loue in thee, & my reward for it fauor ".[2] The ritual thus merely carried to an extreme a normal phenomenon of aristocratic social relations: private emotions became sublimated into public performances. The unromantic Bacon had high praise for the courtly love-games:

> if viewed indulgently, they are much like the accounts we find in romances, of the Queen in the blessed islands, and her court and institutions, who allows of amorous admiration but prohibits desire. But if you take them seriously, they challenge admiration of another kind and of a very high order; for certain it is that these dalliances detracted but little from her fame and nothing at all from her majesty, and neither weakened her power nor sensibly hindered her business.[3]

Bacon was writing after experiencing James's infatuations with favourites, which highlighted the laudable restraint the queen had generally managed to exercise in her personal relations: as usual, Spenser's panegyric has a firm basis in reality. Spenser's chief model in creating his image of the queen's private person was Ralegh's "excellent conceipt of Cynthia": the model was fitting not only because of Spenser's friendship with Ralegh but because of the unusually personal character of Ralegh's relationship with the queen (see Chapter III). The heart-shaped ruby with which Timias tries to win back Belphoebe's favour (IV.viii.6) alludes to the

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1. M.Y. Hughes, "England's Eliza and Spenser's Medina", J.E.G.P., 43 (1944), 1-15; A.J. Magill, "Spenser's Guyon and the Mediocrity of the Elizabethan Settlement", S.P., 67 (1970), 167-77. Hughes shows how Spenser reconciles his praise of a temperate female ruler with the stock antifeminist charge that women were creatures of extremes.
2. Lyly, Works, ed. R.W. Bond (Oxford, 1902), III, 76.
3. Bacon, Works, ed. J. Spedding, R.L. Ellis and D.D. Heath, VI (London, 1858), 317.

jewel Ralegh's friend Arthur Throckmorton had used with a similar end in a masque of 1595. As a broad hint to the queen, Spenser gives the story a happy ending.[1]

For all Spenser's exaltation of Belphoebe, the first episode in which she appears is not without a humorous aspect. He celebrates Belphoebe's beauty in an elaborate blazon, outdoing the conventional hyperboles of love poetry (II.iii.23-31); this beauty is presented as the external manifestation of her purity and virtue. Her moral lecture to Braggadochio, however, simply kindles his passions, and he tries to rape her. The incident reveals Braggadochio's baseness of soul, his inability to move from external beauty to the virtue it signifies; but we can sympathize up to a point with his reluctance to make a total separation between the woman's natural beauty and her role as ideal personification. Belphoebe is more than human but, in another sense, less than human. Insofar as she "shadows" Queen Elizabeth's chastity, she "shadows" its inner essence, not its externals; but Spenser draws attention to the artifice he has to use to invest this essence with youthful grace. Such artifice was an essential part of the cult of Queen Elizabeth as she grew older; the charms the poets celebrated became more and more a matter of cosmetic and poetic artifice, and she herself ruefully recognized that the image of the Virgin Queen was in a sense the greatest Elizabethan work of art. Denied any representation to posterity by offspring, the queen had to rely on the "artificial person" immortalized by the poets; she adopted as her personal emblem the phoenix, which was frequently used to symbolize the royal artificial person. When one poet represented himself in a panegyric as the queen's slave, she wrote a poem in reply, observing that on the contrary she was subject to the poets who chose her as a theme and made her into a goddess. Another poet called her "Queene of my thoughts, but subject of my verse".[2] Spenser makes the same kind of point by his distinction between Britain and Faerie Land. This distinction is first elaborated in Book II, where Arthur and Guyon learn the contrasting histories

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1. H.M. English, Jr., "Spenser's Accommodation of Allegory to History in the story of Timias and Belphoebe", J.E.G.P., 59 (1960), 417-29; J.R. Brink, "The Masque of the Nine Muses: Sir John Davies's Unpublished 'Epithalamion' and the 'Belphoebe-Ruby' Episode in The Faerie Queene", R.E.S., 23 (1972), 445-7.
2. J.E. Phillips, "Elizabeth I as a Latin Poet: an Epigram on Paul Melissus", Renaissance News, 16 (1963), 289-98; R. Barnfield, Poems, ed. M. Summers (London, 1936), p. 77.

of their countries. British history is largely a series of disasters, while Faerie history is a monotonous catalogue of successes, culminating in the reign of Gloriana. Faerie Land is presented as the universal Empire of which England under Elizabeth is one manifestation, just as Gloriana is glory in Spenser's "generall intention" but Elizabeth in his "particular". Personages like Gloriana and Belphoebe are more perfect than those who were born in Britain, in actual history, but they are also limited in vision, lacking an awareness of historical process. Guyon can be so temperate partly because he lacks the imagination to be fully affected by temptation.[1] Faerie Land is a world of "artificial persons" that are poetic rather than social "creations", and the poet sometimes treats his purely Faerie personages with a humorous paternal indulgence. Elizabeth may be the queen of Spenser's thoughts, but as Belphoebe she is the subject of his verse. By turning the conventional Phoebe into his own Belphoebe, Spenser highlights the personal element in his panegyric.

Elizabeth's reliance upon artificial means of immortalization constituted at once an opportunity for panegyric and a personal limitation. In the poem as a whole Spenser regularly favours participation in the natural cycle of regeneration. It is true that he places virginity and marriage on an equal plane in Book III by making Belphoebe and Amoret twins, offspring of a virgin birth; but in the transition from medieval to Reformed attitudes it was marriage that gained from such an equation.[2] Spenser's full position on the question of the female role does not emerge until Book V, but it is implicit in the portrayal of Britomart which begins in Book III. On one level Britomart is a compliment to Elizabeth, giving a woman a more active role in the poem and further blurring the distinction between male and female roles. The popularity of the female warrior as a heroine in Renaissance literature was probably enhanced by Elizabeth's renown, and Spenser uses the past deeds of such warriors to compliment Elizabeth (III.iv.1--2). A panegyrist of 1588 praised Elizabeth as Britomartis.[3] Spenser's Britomart, however, is both less perfect than Gloriana or Belphoebe and more human, more deeply involved in history. The quest of Britomart for Arthegall mirrors that of

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1. On the relationship between Britain and Faerie Land, see H. Berger, The Allegorical Temper (New Haven, 1957), pp. 145, 168-73.
2. T.P. Roche, The Kindly Flame (Princeton, 1964), pp. 114-6.
3. H. Lyte, The Light of Britayne (1588, reprint, London 1814), dedication.

Arthur for Gloriana, but there is a crucial distinction. Arthur's quest, as the chronicles indicate, will ultimately be sterile: he will die without issue. Britomart thinks that Arthegall comes from Faerie Land, but in fact he is British; they will have a child to "represent" their union (III.iii.29), and their union will found the line that with Elizabeth finds both its culmination and its end. The love of Arthur for Gloriana finds a more precise mirror in the spectacular but sterile love of Timias for Belphoebe.

Book V

The fifth book of The Faerie Queene has always been the least popular with the critics, who have complained that its verbal texture is thin, its allegorical technique crude, and its political morality repellent; Spenser appears to be allowing his personal pessimism and his concern with contemporary events to destroy his poetic gifts.[1] In the perspective that has been adopted here, however, Book V appears much less of an unexpected deviation, and when the book is viewed as a panegyric of Elizabeth it can be seen to have remarkable allegorical coherence.[2] Spenser's scope has been gradually broadening from the personal to the political: in Book II he introduces the queen's private person, in Book III he introduces the personal romance that founds the Tudor dynasty, in Book IV he moves from individual love to social concord, and now in Book V he deals with public affairs. This means that he has to introduce topical allegory, but there is much less purely topical material than is sometimes assumed, and it is carefully integrated into a general allegorical scheme. As he passes from questions of religion and personal morality, in which to some degree it may be possible to revive prelapsarian standards, to issues that involve practical expediency and hard-headed political manipulation, he inevitably adopts a more pessimistic tone. In the earlier books the praise of Elizabeth had been close to official policy and relatively direct, but it was still qualified in various oblique ways; in Book V Spenser comes closer to

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1. J. Craig, "The Image of Mortality: Myth and History in The Faerie Queene", E.L.H., 39 (1972), 520-44, argues that as the poem progresses Spenser becomes steadily more disillusioned with the secular order, and that this eventually "wrecks the poem".
2. I am much indebted to the excellent study by D.A. Northrop, "Spenser's Defence of Elizabeth", University of Toronto Quarterly, 38 (1968-9), 277-94.

voicing the policies of the old Leicester-Walsingham group, but integrates them with a panegyric framework highly favourable to the queen.[1]

The external evidence certainly supports the view that Spenser was becoming more pessimistic and losing faith in his panegyric scheme. He had been deeply affected by the deaths of Leicester and all his leading political allies, and in the early 1590s he participated in a campaign to defend Leicester's memory.[2] In the Complaints he mourned the Protestant aristocrats who had done so much to patronize poetry and religion: their demise had left political power much more firmly in the hands of Burghley and his son and political heir, both of whom Spenser violently attacked in Mother Hubberds Tale, which was called in by the authorities. A prose defence of Leicester opened The Phoenix Nest (1593), a miscellany which may have been planned by Oxford men and contained several elegies for Sidney; several of these were reprinted with Spenser's own elegy for Sidney in Colin Clouts Come Home Againe (1595). In 1593 Peele lamented that now that patrons like Sidney and Walsingham were dead, poets like Spenser had to suffer "Courts disdaine, the enemie to Arte".[3] Like many poets, Spenser supported Essex as the political heir to Leicester. The publication of the second part of The Faerie Queene coincided with a major propaganda campaign on Essex's behalf (see p. 107), and Spenser seems to have changed the last part of the poem during printing in order to endorse Essex's policies over France.[4] He joined Chapman, Daniel and Day in praising a translation of Nenna's Nennio (entered 27 September 1595) which was dedicated to Essex and took him as the type of nobility. In the summer of 1596 he worked on his tract on Ireland, which was so emphatic about the need for firmer policies supervised by Essex that it was refused a licence. He celebrated Essex's victory at Cadiz in Prothalamion, written for a ceremony at Essex House. It was

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1. For the propaganda supervised by Burghley and closest to the queen's views, see C. Read, "William Cecil and Elizabethan Public Relations", in Elizabethan Government and Society, ed. S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield and C.H. Williams (London, 1961). Burghley himself composed a justification of Elizabeth's policies in 1595 (p. 54).
2. On the effects of the change in the patronage structure, see Tuve, "Spenserus", and Chapter III below.
3. Peele, Life and Minor Works, p. 247. On The Phoenix Nest, see Rosenberg, pp. 318-50. But in fact Spenser was awarded a government pension in February 1591.
4. Bennett, The Evolution of The Faerie Queene, pp. 202-5; R. Heffner, "Essex and Book V of The Faerie Queene", E.L.H., 3 (1936), 67-82.

probably about this time that he wrote a sonnet for Lewkenor's translation of Contarini's The Commonwealth and Government of Venice, which was dedicated to the Countess of Warwick; Lewkenor and his friend Maurice Kyffin were both Essex supporters.[1] Spenser's own sonnet is distinctly ambivalent in its attitude to Venice, but it is interesting to find him praising this work which was to become a favourite with seventeenth-century republicans and was published two years before Essex's revolt.[2]

As will be shown in the next chapter, many poets lost faith in Elizabeth altogether in this troubled period; the balance of power represented in The Faerie Queene was being eroded. In Book V, however, as throughout the poem, Spenser resists polarizations and tries to combine his loyalty to Leicester and his political heirs with loyalty to Elizabeth. In many ways Book V recalls the austere political symbolism of 1579, when hostility to Catholic princes and effete courtiers led to a depreciation of disguise and femininity; where in previous books Spenser had blurred the distinction between male and female spheres for panegyric purposes, here he sharpens the distinctions, following the views of the Puritans rather than the more courtly writers.[3] Through falsely chivalrous obedience to a misconceived oath, Arthegall subjects himself to a female ruler, and this is presented as a usurpation of the natural order, symbolized by his being dressed in woman's clothes.

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1. Harington seems to have written his sonnet on the translation in 1595: Letters and Epigrams, ed. N.E. McLure (Philadelphia, 1930), p.240. The previous year Lewkenor had published The Resolued Gentleman, a translation of an allegorical romance, which was also dedicated to the Countess of Warwick; Lewkenor also praised Leicester in the dedication, and concluded a panegyric of Elizabeth with praise of The Faerie Queene (fols. 43a-45a). For the Spenserian elegies on his relative Edward Lewkenor, see p. 211, cf. p.60; and for Jonson's opinion of his enthusiasm for the republic, p. 207. Maurice Kyffin contributed sonnets expressing disillusion with the court and the conduct of the war both to the Venice book and to The Resolued Gentleman; a former servant of John Dee, Kyffin dedicated a panegyric of Elizabeth to Essex in 1587 and served with him in France. His panegyric urged Welsh poets to praise Elizabeth as Arthur had been praised. Gabriel Harvey praised Kyffin in 1592. See The Blessednes of Brytaine, sig. B2a in Fugitive Tracts, ed. W.C. Hazlitt (1870); Harvey, Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (London and Aylesbury, 1884-5), II, 290.
2. Spenser's friend Bryskett had been in Venice with Sidney, who took an early interest in Contarini (Prose Works, III, 81).
3. J.E. Phillips, "The Background of Spenser's Attitude to Female Rulers", H.L.Q., 5 (1941-2), 5-32, and "The Woman Ruler in Spenser's Faerie Queene", ibid., 211-34.

Radigund's costume resembles Belphoebe's, and like her she has a moon on her shield (V.v.3); the evil of her rule, which imposes female domination throughout society, indicates the general law of which Belphoebe's temperate chastity constitutes a divinely sanctioned exception. The distinction between male sun and female moon, blurred elsewhere in the poem, is firmly asserted in the Temple of Isis episode. Britomart, in a moment of austere hostility to disguisess, condemns Arthegall's "May-game", his "vnmanly maske" (V.vii.37-40).

This firm condemnation of disguise is related to Spenser's panegyric purpose in Book V of justifying the execution of Mary Stuart.[1] It had been Leicester, Walsingham and the Puritans who had called most loudly for her execution; Elizabeth had been extremely reluctant to take such action against a monarch, fearing that it would taint the divinity of monarchy, and in particular of female rule. The violent antifeminism of much Scottish propaganda against Mary was alarming. English opponents of the Scottish queen had to be more diplomatic, and a strict control was kept of allusions to Popish conspiracies so that Mary herself should not be directly implicated. After the execution it was possible to be more open, but Elizabeth still disliked attacks on Mary that might arouse undesirable sentiments: Job Throckmorton, a Presbyterian admirer of Leicester, was imprisoned during the 1587 Parliament for a speech on foreign affairs which attacked princes with a vehemence that was felt to be politically subversive.[2] Passages dealing with Mary, as well as the descriptions of Leicester's Dutch campaign, were cut from the 1587 edition of Holinshed's Chronicles. There is evidence that Spenser may have been a friend of Francis Davison, son of the man who was made the scapegoat for Mary's execution and struggled for rehabilitation for many years.[3] In canto x Spenser affirms the justice of the demands by

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1. Phillips, Images of a Queen, gives a full account of the propaganda problems: the book is the best and most thorough study of the relation between Elizabethan literature and political propaganda.
2. J.E. Neale, Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments, 1584-1601, pp. 169-74; Neale detects Leicester's influence in the Puritan campaign in this Parliament.
3. Davison's masque for the 1595 Gray's Inn revels (Nichols, III, 369-19) seems to allude to unpublished parts of The Faerie Queene: see E.M. Allbright, "The Faerie Queene in Masque at the Gray's Inn Revels", P.M.L.A., 41 (1926), 497-516. The masque dramatizes the superior attractive power of the queen to that of the Adamantine Rock under the Northern Star: perhaps an assurance to the queen that her subjects are not looking too eagerly towards her Scottish successor.

Leicester and the Puritans for firm measures which the queen was known to dislike; the allegorical core of the book represents the approval of Parliament for the execution of a reigning monarch.[1]

Spenser's emphatic endorsement of this scarcely chivalrous policy, however, was less radical than it would have been immediately after the event. Once the deed had been done it was necessary to justify it as effectively as possible; and before long those who had called most vociferously for Mary's execution realized that it was necessary to make peace with her son, who would be the most desirable successor. Already in 1589 Essex sent the poet Henry Constable to negotiate on his behalf with James; he was on much better terms with James than Burghley and his supporters wanted Elizabeth to declare her support for his succession. The queen refused to do so, however, and rather enjoyed playing on her cousin's insecurity. James was angered by the appearance of Book V, which he took to have been officially approved; he was assured that this was not so, but Elizabeth may not have been displeased at his embarrassment. James's own printer, the exiled Waldegrave, feared Elizabeth's wrath more than James's and in 1598 refused to print a work by a court poet justifying James's title to the English throne.[2] James's poets might make him claim Arthur's seat, but Spenser made his Arthur endorse the execution of Mary. Moreover, Spenser qualifies his approval of that execution in complex ways. The application of the full rigour of the law is associated with Arthegall, who is a decidedly unattractive character and had appeared in the previous book in the fitting disguise of the "Saluage Knight". His iron companion Talus is still more unappealing. When Arthegall deviates from the rigid application of the law and puts on a female disguise, it is a woman dressed as a man who rescues him: Britomart's success in the enterprise shows that her disguise, unlike Arthegall's, is a divinely ordained exception to the general rule, and that such departures from normality may be superior to the rigid application of legal norms. The rigour of the law is mitigated by equity, which was particularly associated with royal power. On the Continent a cult of imperial equity had grown up; the emperor was living law, mediating personally between natural law and positive law and tempering the rigidity of the laws of the fallen

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1. For evidence that Mercilla's court represents Parliament, see D.A. Northrop, "Mercilla's Court as Parliament", H.L.Q., 36 (1972-3), 153-5.
2. Phillips, Images of a Queen, pp. 204-5.

world with the golden equity of prelapsarian justice. The general bleakness of the book sets this imperial equity in greater relief. The cult of equity is represented directly in the Temple of Isis episode, where Britomart is identified with Isis, standing above the sinister crocodile of the law as Equity stood above positive law in imperial iconography.[1] In the sixteenth century equity was becoming more firmly identified with the special civil law courts which dispensed specifically regal justice. It is noteworthy that in Book V Spenser concentrates almost entirely on the civil law: only the first episode, that of Sanglier, would definitely have been tried in a court of common law. Mary had been tried by a special civil law court, and when Mary complained that she was still not receiving a trial fitting for her dignity, Elizabeth presented her summoning of Parliament, the highest court in the land, to consider the case, as another instance of equity. Catholics were told that the queen persecuted Catholics only for treason, not because of their religion, and that she was thus merciful; this point is made clear by Zeal (V.ix.40). Spenser thus justifies the queen's actions to Catholic readers, but he also makes allowances for the queen's scruples. The rebelliousness of the crocodile (V.vii.15) is a strange condensed symbol which seems to represent not only Arthegall and the law in general but in particular the strident Puritan campaign against the Popish Jezebel; even as he praises her for overcoming sentimental pity for Mary's crocodile tears, Spenser portrays her revulsion from the ugly anti-Catholic campaign with some sympathy. He glosses over the execution itself, which is portrayed obliquely in Britomart's slaying of Radigund, and we are left at the end of the trial scene with an image of Elizabeth's mercy and compassion.

Having qualified his initial insistence on masculine rigour by a mystical glorification of feminine equity, Spenser now proceeds to qualify the qualification. The mysticism of Empire itself is not quite as extreme as hindsight might suggest. Under James the civil law was identified with extreme absolutism and became widely unpopular; but under Elizabeth there was wide interest amongst common as well as civil lawyers in legal reform. A great attraction of Roman law was its more sophisticated theoretical basis, and many Elizabethans took an interest

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1. R. Graziani, "Elizabeth at Isis Church", P.M.L.A., 79 (1964), 373-89; for a slightly different account see also F. Kermode, "The Faerie Queene Books I and V".

in it for its own sake rather than as a mere buttress of the royal prerogative.[1] Gabriel Harvey studied the civil law and in 1586 tried to become master of Trinity Hall, the centre of Cambridge civil law studies; at Oxford the professor of civil law was Alberico Gentili, who owed his position to Leicester and defended his patron against the attack in Leicester's Commonwealth. The only full Elizabethan treatise on equity was written by Edward Hake, a Leicester protege and veteran of the 1579 propaganda campaign.[2] Giles Fletcher, a firm Essex supporter and father of the Jacobean Spenserians, was a civil lawyer. In the 1590s a reaction against the civil law was beginning to be felt: an overproduction of civilians in the 1580s had made it an unpromising career for the next generation, and those who remained were more and more dependent on the government, becoming accordingly more absolutist in their political views and provoking a reaction from the common lawyers.[3] As in so many areas, however, The Faerie Queene belongs in outlook to an earlier period when such polarizations were not yet fully apparent. Spenser regarded the common law as an alien imposition, a manifestation of William the Conqueror's "Norman yoke".[4] Perhaps the most striking feature of his glorification of equity is that it does not seem decisively to affect important decisions in Book V. Mercilla's pity is taken into account but Parliament's decision is still followed; Britomart rescues Arthegall but she also abolishes female rule, and the vision in the Temple of Isis indicates that she will ultimately remove her male disguise and submit to Arthegall, who is shadowed in the severe crocodile (V.vii.22). After meeting Britomart and Mercilla, Arthegall goes off to pursue a policy about which the queen was uneasy, indicating that the flexibility of "golden" equity must not be allowed to detract from the political necessities of a fallen world in which "iron" law is essential. The basic structure of the book probably owes something to Bodin, whose original contribution to the debate about law and equity was to add a third category subsuming them both:

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1. D.R. Kelley, 'History, English Law and the Renaissance", Past and Present, 65 (1974), 24-51, makes an extreme case for the superiority of continental legal theory; Spenser certainly seems to have been going to French sources for his legal symbolism (Kermode, pp. 50-52).
2. Rosenberg, pp. 286-93, 280-2; E. Hake, Epieikeia, ed. D.E.C. Yale (New Haven, 1953).
3. B.P. Levack, The Civil Lawyers in England, 1603-41 (Oxford, 1973), pp.50-85; C. Brooks and K. Sharpe, "History, English Law, and the Renaissance", Past and Present, 72 (1976), 133-42.
4. Spenser, Works, IX, 46-7, 53-4.

simple commutative justice, or arithmetical proportion, would be fused in an ideal state with the more equitable distributive justice, or geometrical proportion, to produce a new, harmonical proportion. The presiding deity of commutative justic was εὐνομία , of distributive justice ἐπιείκεια , and of the monarchical harmonical justice, εἰρήνη . (Bodin, it may be noted, did not approve of exceptions to the general rule that women were unfit to govern.) Spenser is not merely concerned with topical events when after showing law and equity in their pure forms he sends Arthegall off in the last part of the book to aid "Irena".[1]

The last part of Book V is a glorification of the foreign policy that Leicester's supporters had long advocated; and while Mary's execution was in the past, matters of foreign policy were still highly sensitive, with Essex advocating a more militant approach than the cautious Burghley. In the Irena episode of Book V, as in the prose tract, Spenser defends the most rigorous possible policy in Ireland; Burghley disliked the brutality of men like Spenser's patron Grey and pointedly observed that the Irish had more causes for grievance than the Dutch.[2] Arthegall's delay in freeing Irena while he is thrall to Radigund indicates that victory in Ireland has been delayed by such soft-heartedness. At the same time, the word "Irena" indicates that Spenser's aims are "politique" more than ideological; the speaker Ireneus in his prose tract says: "ffor Religion litle haue I to saie my selfe beinge as I saide not professed thearein, and it selfe beinge but one so as theare is but one waie thearein. ffor that which is trewe onelye is and the rest are not at all" (IX , 221).[3] This enigmatic adaptation of Bodin seems to indicate that Spenser advocates "Puritan" policies only to the extent that the radicals had the determination necessary to execute the firm policy he advocated for secular political reasons. Spenser's defence of the Irish

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1. J. Bodin, De Republica Libri Sex (Paris, 1586), VI.6, pp. 746ff, 777; on the fusion of law and equity into harmonical proportion, cf. W. Lambarde, Archeion, ed. C.H. McIlwain and P.L. Ward (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), pp. 42-4.
2. J. Clapham, Elizabeth of England, ed. E.P. Read and C. Read (Philadelphia, 1951), p.20; a follower of Burghley, Clapham also criticizes Leicester's pageantry in the Low Countries.
3. Cf. Bodin, p.483: "Hîc non desinio quaenam in tanta populorum de religionibus inter se dispreantiu[m] varietate, optima censeri debeat, (quanquam quod verum sit, plus vna esse non potest, & ad religionem adipiscendam quae vera, quaeque praepotentis Dei voce promulgata sit..." Bodin says that he is quoting from a speech he made to Queen Elizabeth while in England, opposing the cruel treatment of Campion; this fact was omitted from the English translation.

campaign is legalistic: he answers charges like Burghley's by presenting English rule of Ireland as rule by right of conquest, so that it was illegitimate for a foreign power like Spain to intervene even if the subjects were being badly treated, and legitimate to use every possible means to crush rebellion. Irena must be aided not for religious reasons but because she has been deprived of her rightful property by the "tort" of Grantorto. Spenser here keeps within the limits of the more conservative school of international law as established by Bodin and Gentili.[1] The apocalyptic hopes of the radical Protestants are qualified: rather than a final struggle against the Papacy, the end of the book indicates a weary struggle to establish a secular peace that is the best that can be expected in a fallen world. The fact remains that the policy Spenser advocated was extremely harsh and was carried out with greatest determination by religious zealots, and the distaste critics have felt for this part of the poem is understandable. Spenser's admiration for the resolute violence of Talus reflects the recurrent frustration of Leicester, Walsingham and Sidney at the queen's vacillation; the cumulative force of such frustrations strengthened Spenser's conviction that only determined measures would save the day. Similar factors at the other religious extreme led Bodin to ally himself with the Catholic League. But though his poem bears the mark of the political pressures of the age, Spenser took care to elaborate the general principles on which his favoured political tactics were based; and Book V is much more carefully integrated with the rest of the poem than has sometimes been supposed.

Spenser comes closest to endorsing Calvinist extremism in his treatment of the Netherlands campaign. He indicates that the Irish campaign is primarily secular in character by giving it to Arthegall; but he assigns the Netherlands campaign to Arthur, indicating that here the religious element is of primary importance. The section on the Netherlands amounts to a vindication of Leicester's campaign, glossing over the disasters and evoking the world of the pageantry that celebrated him as Arthur. Admittedly he also gives a legalistic justification for the campaign; unlike Mercilla, Geryoneo does not rule by right of conquest, so that foreign intervention to prevent religious persecution is permissible. Whereas

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1. Northrop, pp.278-80. On Bodin's influence on Spenser's thought on the Irish question, see H.S.V. Jones, "Spenser's Defence of Lord Grey", University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, V.3 (1919).

Leicester had accepted the sovereignty of the Netherlands, Spenser makes his Arthur refuse it (V.xi.16-17), thus establishing the legality of the proceedings. But on one significant issue he sides with the more ideologically motivated: conventional international law regarded it as improper to intervene in another prince's affairs in order to change the state of religion, but Spenser makes Arthur not only halt the oppression of Geryoneo's subjects but destroy his idol and the monster protecting it.[1] Admittedly the Netherlands campaign was now over, and Arthur could be regarded as a mere generalized symbol of English victory; but Dutch affairs were still controversial when Book V was published, for Essex and the Puritans were urging Elizabeth to join the Dutch and the French in an anti-Habsburg alliance but she was reluctant to sign a treaty that would grant recognition to rebels. One contemporary annotator glossed Arthur on his way to save Belge both as Leicester and as Essex.[2] Topical issues were again raised in the incident of Burbon. The emphasis is again legalistic - Burbon is aided even though he has changed religions, for he is the rightful sovereign, and it is Arthegall who aids him; but it was the radical Protestants who were the keenest advocates of continued support for Henry, so that the anti-Habsburg alliance would have a strong Protestant element. The end of Book V reflects the bitterness of Leicester and Essex at being made "scarecrows" through the lack of firm support for their campaigns.

In Book V Spenser presents a sustained and coherent defence of Elizabeth's policies that at the same time does justice to the political programme advocated by Leicester and Essex; the intellectual challenge this task presented produced a book that is unusually tight and elegant in intellectual structure. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the allegory is often crude and unsatisfactory. The reason is not just that Spenser is allegorizing contemporary events; as has been seen, he is doing a great deal more than that, and it was never an insuperable problem for a Renaissance poet. The more profound problem is that the kind of policy he is advocating pushes allegorical representation to its limits. In this alliance of

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1. Northrop, p. 202.
2. Anon, "M.S. Notes to Spenser's Faerie Queene", Notes and Queries, 202 (1957), 509-15. The "G.W." who praised Spenser's Amoretti in 1595 may be Geoffrey Whitney, who had dedicated an emblem-book to Leicester in 1585 and published a new edition while with his party in the Netherlands. R.B. Gottfried, "The 'G.W.Senior' and 'G.W.I.' of Spenser's Amoretti", M.L.Q., 3 (1942), 543-6.

"politique" cunning with Puritan vigour, of Machiavelli with Christ, personal emotions and personal morality must give way to impersonal calculation, and chivalric courtesy and pity may prove dangerous. In his prose tract on Ireland Spenser was advocating a ruthless policy of starvation and attrition; such policies could not easily be allegorically represented by the personal deeds of knights of chivalry. In political reality, Spenser's Irish policies were ultimately to find their most efficient representative not in Essex's chivalric displays but in the ruthless ideological campaign headed by Cromwell.[1] English relations with the Netherlands were putting a strain on traditional social forms: Elizabeth was so half-hearted in her aid not only for financial reasons but because,

> steeped as she was in traditions of monarchical authority, she could no more comprehend how a constitution without a divinely ordained head could possibly work than she could comprehend how a Netherlands economy innocent of government dirigisme and a Netherlands society without a ruling aristocracy could survive, let alone expand and prosper.

Her social conservatism played its part in her appointment of Leicester to lead the expedition, an appointment which, Buckhurst said, "had been better bestowed upon a meaner man of more skill".[2] The feudal magnate desperately searching to consolidate his personal authority threw in his lot with iconoclastic Calvinists. Spenser's allegory in Book V reflects similar tensions: its crude and threadbare quality stems from the difficulty of finding adequate personifications for phenomena that are beginning to be felt as impersonal, a difficulty that has today confined political allegory largely to the realm of the cartoon. If the queen found it hard to conceive of a state without a personal representative at its head, Spenser found it hard to allegorize the Dutch constitution: the allegory of Belge and her seventeen daughters is rather clumsy. Arthegall's tactics are best represented not by a person but by the mechanical executioner Talus. The chivalric tears that rise to Mercilla's eyes are noble but futile, and the book raises, even as it denies, the suspicion that they are crocodile tears.

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1. Cromwell intervened to restore lands to Spenser's grandson: C. Henley, Spenser in Ireland (Dublin, 1928), pp. 206-7.
2. Wilson, Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands, pp. 131, 165.

Book VI

In Book V Spenser's pessimistic portrayal of the fallen political world threatens to break the framework of chivalry and allegory; in Book VI there is an equally pronounced reaction against courtly allegory in an opposite direction. In Book V public images become tools to be manipulated in the political manoeuvres inevitable in a totally fallen world, and religious images are destroyed by Arthur; in Book VI courtly images are seen as deceptive mirrors that can seldom reflect the divine (VI Proem 5), and Spenser turns to the celebration of autonomous poetic images. At the start of the book Spenser praises Elizabeth's courtesy and presents her as the centre of a courtly dance; but he then makes a qualification: "Of Court it seemes, men Courtesie doe call" because it "most vseth" to abound there. As the book develops it becomes clear that the true source of courtesy is located elsewhere. The patron of courtesy, Calidore, disappears for a great part of the book, and when he does reappear it is to indulge in a pastoral retreat. In a sense Calidore's pastoral disguise parallels the poet's own. In the opening to his poem Spenser had proudly laid aside his "lowly Shepheardes weede"; "W.L." compared his youthful pastoral disguise to Achilles' disguise in woman's clothes and said that Sidney had played Ulysses' part, urging him to lay aside his disguise and enter the public world. In the stern atmosphere of Book V Arthegall, the bearer of Achilles' arms, is condemned for his effeminate disguise; Spenser begins Book VI with a rhapsodic celebration of the delights of his own poetry, and the whole book seems to express a preference for simple pastoral or poetic "disguise" over chivalric armour. Whereas Book V tends to undermine allegory by moving directly from the chivalric public person to the impersonal political virtues it represents, in Book VI the public person is seen as a deceitful mask inadequate to represent the inner self. As Isabel MacCaffrey has pointed out, this dislike of all but the simplest disguises leads Spenser virtually to abandon allegory itself: whereas in Book V he portrayed the need of repressive arts and disguises to discipline a fallen world, in Book VI he searches for the origins of virtue and finds them in a primitivistic "golden world" where the inner being was so transparent that it did not need external representation. Allegory has receded into its origin, romance; the person does not need personification. Only the deceit of the Blatant Beast undermines this pristine harmony and introduces the

need for protective artifices.[1]

Spenser's retreat from public representations is more radical still: the true source of courtesy is not just in this simple romantic world, nor in the pastoral haven within it, but in the private vision that belongs only to the poet himself. In all the other books there had been some allegorical temple presenting the central virtue or its opposite in courtly, allegorical magnificence; and in the Proem Spenser prepares the reader to expect a counterpart to Mercilla's court in which Elizabeth will sit surrounded by graceful courtiers. But if in Book V we may feel that Elizabeth's personal emotions are being appropriated for political ends; in Book VI she becomes secondary in importance to the poet's private emotions, and the central locus is not a palace but the hill on which Colin sees the Graces dance. At the centre is not a representative of Elizabeth but Colin's own love, a mortal advanced to be a fourth Grace; this is an obtrusive contrast with The Shepheardes Calender, where the fourth Grace is Elizabeth. The conflict between public honour and private love had become more and more acute in Spenser's poetry of the 1590s. In Colin Clouts Come Home Againe the poet leaves the court with relief, deciding that he can find love and inspiration only in the country; here Spenser presents the queen and 'Rosalind' as alternative sources of inspiration, and hints that they both have cause to be grateful to him for his ability to "create" an attractive public person. There are close affinities between this poem and Book VI, and Ralegh, to whom Colin Clout was dedicated, seems to have identified Calidore and Colin on Mount Acidale with himself and Spenser.[2] If Book V is Essex's, the more introverted Book VI is Ralegh's. The conflict between public and private concerns is made still more explicit in Amoretti, in which Spenser presents praise of his lady as a "great wrong" to his "most sacred Empresse" (xxxiii), but Queen Elizabeth as Grace is now joined by Spenser's own mother and bride-to-be (lxxiv) and Spenser celebrates his own marriage with an epithalamium as ornamental as any court poem. In Book VI he proudly celebrates the essentially private source of courtesy in the workings of the poetic imagination,

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1. MacCaffrey, Spenser's Allegory, pp. 403-23.
2. Annotations probably by Ralegh himself printed by W. Oakeshott, "Carew Ralegh's Copy of Spenser", Library, 5th Series, 26 (1971), 1-21. The annotations indicate that the Florimell-Marinell episode was also a personal allegory; no satisfactory interpretation has yet been given.

and the "grace" which the poet is able to communicate is balanced against the divine grace of Redcross's vision of the New Jerusalem at a parallel position in Book I. The emblem of Ariadne's crown, which was often used to praise Elizabeth, is transferred to Colin's love.[1] A courtly rhetoric of personification gives way to a poetic of personal imaginative vision; personal love triumphs over public honour. These Graces vanish when the courtier intrudes. The book's self-consciousness continues in the remaining cantos: at the start of Canto xii he quotes from Amoretti xxxiv, and at the end of the book the foe of the Blatant Beast is the poem itself. The arts of the court and the art of the poet appear to be incompatible.

Spenser was not a Romantic, however, and though he puts the relation between panegyric and private inspiration to its highest test in Book VI he had no intention of making an absolute separation between imagination and ceremony, between poetic images and social images.[2] For Spenser poetry is still fundamentally a social art, and its health is directly related to the health of a society that preserves public images of virtue and prevents malicious iconoclasm. Calidore will be able to absorb the natural graces he has found in Pastorella and in the vision on Mount Acidale into the world of the court; if they can never exist in such purity as in the poet's imagination, it is nevertheless essential to communicate them as widely as possible, and the simple pastoral world is dependent upon the artifices of the public world for its preservation. Calidore is rudely reminded of this when the brigands raid his pastoral paradise and carry off Pastorella; in order to restore harmony he has to resume an active role, carrying weapons under his pastoral disguise (VI.xi.36). The beauty of Ariadne's crown is born of an act of violence. Spenser of all people knew how vulnerable rural retreats could be; he could best celebrate the court at a distance, but the function of the court was still important to him. The recurrent motif of the circle, which enables Spenser to move deeper and deeper into the private world, is fluid and ambiguous, allowing for many different kinds of interaction between the circles; if not the centre, the queen is the primum mobile, the ocean from which all rivers

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1. C. Snare, "Spenser's Fourth Grace", J.W.C.I., 34 (1971), 355.
2. For a rejection of oversimplified interpretations of Calidore's "truancy", see H. Tonkin, Spenser's Courteous Pastoral (Oxford, 1972), pp. 300-318.

spring (Proem 7), and in introducing the Mount Acidale scene Spenser uses the fluid syntax to express the mutual interdependence of the different circles:

> Ne ought in all that world of beauties rare
> (Saue onely Glorianaes heauenly hew
> To which what can compare?) can it compare. (VI.x.4)

In each book a centripetal panegyric element is balanced by a centrifugal element as the hero follows his individual bias; the climax of Book VI reveals another centre which at once claims precedence over the image of the queen and gracefully yields it back.

Book VII

There is a growing critical consensus that Spenser had recognized by the time he completed Book VI that he could never fulfil the twelve-book scheme, and that the poem is a coherent whole as we have it. The Mutabilitie Cantos break off with a prayer that forms a fitting conclusion to the whole poem; and because they differ from the other "core" cantos, being narrated directly instead of forming the perception of a character, it has been suggested that the book to which they are said to belong was never written. The truth may never be known, but it can at least be said that from the viewpoint of panegyric a "Legend of Constancie" would have been a predictable and fitting conclusion to the poem. The queen's motto was Semper Eadem, and in the 1590s, in the midst of all the anxiety about the succession, the queen's constancy became especially topical. Sir Henry Lee entertained her in 1592 with a dialogue between Constancy and Inconstancy, ending with a tribute to the queen's matchless constancy. Precisely because in fact there was widespread speculation and anxiety about the coming change of government, it was politically valuable to cultivate a fiction of the queen's immutability: Greville says that although the multitude think that Cynthia changes, the courtly élite know that such an opinion is merely "senses idoll".[1] Cynthia's constancy had always been a central theme of Ralegh's panegyrics, and Chapman's Hymnus in Cynthiam made the political aspect explicit, presenting the fear that would overshadow the world if Cynthia withdrew her light. The central plot of the Mutabilitie Cantos uses similar symbolism: Mutabilitie, having subdued all the earth, tries to dominate the heavens and starts with an assault on Cynthia. When she threatens

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1. Nichols, III, 202-6; Greville, Caelica, no. 55.

to strike Cynthia, the lower world is darkened, as in Chapman's poem; Mutabilitie's claim to rule the heavens is put to the test in a formal debate. It would have been difficult for a reader of the 1590s not to read political connotations in this story; and the "sub-plot" seems also to have topical reference. Like Chapman, Spenser portrays Cynthia both as a lunar goddess and as a huntress on earth, and the comic assault of Faunus on Cynthia mirrors both that of Braggadochio on Belphoebe and the legend of Diana and Actaeon on which both episodes are based. The tale may have a specific reference to the rebellion in Ireland, and it has been suggested that Mutabilitie's revolt refers to Arabella Stuart's claim to the throne.[1] Such specific allusions, however, would have been politically unwise; the important point about the Cantos is the skill with which Spenser has blended a general philosophical allegory with a contemporary situation that is laden with universal implications. The conventional celebrations of the queen's immortality had a hollow ring about them by the 1590s, and scarcely masked the political anxiety they were designed to exorcise; a Legend of Constancy that tried to include panegyric of the queen was in danger either of degenerating into empty flattery or of becoming politically dangerous. By raising his treatment of the theme of constancy to a sustained philosophical level higher than anything previously attained in the poem, Spenser was able to accommodate the fact of Cynthia's ultimate mutability without in any way diminishing the power of the compliment: if Elizabeth must change, so must the entire universe. Such a reconstruction of Spenser's purpose must be conjectural, but it is consistent with his general method: the queen's rule is subjected to the greatest test of all and remains triumphant.

Some critics have argued that Spenser was unable to finish his poem because its optimistic political framework became impossible to reconcile with reality. I have tried to show that from the beginning Spenser put his panegyric framework to severe tests, and that many features in the poem's evolution can be explained thematically rather than as a consequence of changes in Spenser's personal life.

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1. J.L. Stampfer, "The Cantos of Mutabilitie: Spenser's Last Testament of Faith", University of Toronto Quarterly, 21 (1952), 140-56; M.K. Woodworth, "The Mutability Cantos and the Succession", P.M.L.A., 59 (1944), 985-1002. W. Blissett, "Spenser's Mutabilitie", in MacLure and Watt, Essays in English Literature, pp. 26-42, argues that Mutabilitie is a "demonic parody" of Gloriana, and suggests affinities between the mood of the book and the cult of melancholy in the 1590s.

Had Spenser come to his maturity in the 1590s he might have found such unity harder to maintain; but his poem was conceived at an earlier part of the reign, when he belonged to a political group which was both resigned to seeing many of its political ideals frustrated and secure in the knowledge that it had powerful representatives at court. This situation was changing in the 1590s, but we cannot be certain that Spenser abandoned his poem for this reason; for we do not know whether he ever intended to complete the twelve-book plan. There was an accepted panegyric convention that a work might be left unfinished because no praise could do justice to the subject, and many panegyrists of Elizabeth carried this convention to extraordinary extremes. Lyly quotes the story of the artist who presented Alexander with an elaborate empty frame two hundred feet square: no frame could contain the monarch's true representation. Angel Day's panegyrists find that the more they praise the queen the more they have to do, "in so much as the same seemed a thing euermore to bee, but neuer able by anie skill or inuention whatsoeuer fully to be determined". William Warner broke off a panegyric in mid-line, confessing that he could not adequately praise her. Blenerhasset offered his Revelation of the True Minerva as "the first booke", but there is no evidence that a second book was written.[1] Spenser made valiant efforts to publicize Ralegh's poems to Elizabeth; from his praise of Ralegh one gets the impression of a vast body of verse, and the longest surviving fragment indeed styles itself the 11th (or, on another reading, the 21st) book of his love for the queen. No other "book" has been found, however, apart from a handful of short lyrics: the title was probably a strategic hyperbole. It is not impossible that Spenser was engaging in a similar tactic in his letter to Ralegh, where he claims to be imitating Ralegh's panegyrics.

The apparent incompleteness of the poem may, therefore, constitute a rhetorical strategy rather than a reflection of personal disillusion; but as always with Spenser, panegyric hyperbole is perfectly congruent with deeper meanings. The union of Arthur and Gloriana would have been the union of history and myth, reality and imagination, artifice and nature, and Spenser has taken such great pains to establish these distinctions that he would not have allowed them an easy resolution. But few English poems have been more deeply engaged in contemporary

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1. Lyly, Works, II, 204; A. Day, Daphnis and Chloe (London, 1587), sig. M1b; Warner, Albions England (London, 1592), p. 189; Blenerhasset, A Revelation, sig. G2a.

history; its author could after all claim that he had lost his house and livelihood because of the government's inefficiency in carrying out the policies it advocated. Only by understanding the poem's commitment to the issues of its own age can one fully appreciate the assurance with which Spenser remarked to Ralegh that Queen Elizabeth was only his particular intention.

CHAPTER III

The Heirs of Sidney and Spenser: Problems of Public Poetry in the 1590s

I. Gloriana and Elizabeth: Panegyric Myth and Political Reality

> Your Honour knoweth what it is to write a storie specially de praesentibus and how hard it is to please truth and the actours. If the idea and generall scope tend to the honour of hir Maiesties government I hope it wilbee borne withall if I tell truth in occurrent matters.
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> - Giles Fletcher asking Burghley for permission to write a history of the reign, November 1590.[1]

1. Political Tensions, 1589-1599

In the 1590s celebration of the queen in poetry, music and the visual arts reached new heights: the astonishing "Rainbow" portrait (c.1600), the madrigal collection The Triumphs of Oriana (1603) and the poems of Sir John Davies all praised the queen in tones of serene and untroubled confidence. As the immediate danger to her person from Catholic conspiracies receded, the queen renewed her progresses through the countryside, maintaining to the last a defiant energy that amazed and confounded her less active courtiers: "her body endures more travell than they..that attend her", observed Rowland Whyte. In 1599, hearing that a courtier had injudiciously written that the queen made shorter progresses now that she was growing older, Elizabeth angrily resolved to prolong her progress; in 1601 she set off on her progress bidding "the old stay behind, and the young and able to goe with her".[2]

But the more exultant panegyrics of the 1590s cannot be taken as representative of deeper political and literary undercurrents. The Faerie Queene had celebrated the harmony between individual artistocratic virtue and central

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1. The English Works of Giles Fletcher, ed. L.E. Berry (Madison, 1964), p.383.
2. H.M.C. De Lisle and Dudley, II, 481; H.M.C. Hatfield, IX, 246; A. Collins (ed.), Letters and Memorials of State (London, 1746), II, 210.

supreme power; in the 1590s this harmony seemed difficult to maintain. The image of Gloriana framed by Leicester and his circle had always contained a strong element of wishful thinking; in the 1590s some members of a younger generation were impatient with the gap between the panegyric myth and the political reality. As for the role of the modern Arthur, the chief inheritor, the Earl of Essex, was celebrated in a cult that threatened to eclipse that of the queen herself; he was surrounded by men who were restless with the orthodoxies of Tudor political propaganda, and finally he staged a coup d'état. The mystical marriage which Spenser had so confidently prophesied between the forces represented by Leicester and Essex and the Tudor monarchy petered out in a futile attempt at rape.

It is easy to exaggerate the significance of the rebellion itself: its ignominious failure testified to the strength of loyalty to the monarchy. The rebels wanted a redistribution of patronage within the political system rather than a radical change in the system; though impatient with the person of the ageing monarch, they looked forward eagerly to the accession of a new monarch; Essex enlisted the support of James VI. J.E. Neale argued that the 1590s saw the breakdown of the Elizabethan political system, with the careful balance of power Elizabeth had built up collapsing as Essex and Cecil forced courtiers to take definite sides in a rivalry that led to increasing corruption in political life.[1] But Neale may have exaggerated the extent of the change: it may seem that there was more corruption in the later period simply because more evidence has survived. And rivalries between court favourites were nothing new; the Essex-Cecil rivalry may not have polarized the patronage system to the extent some historians suggest, and there were other important political figures whose influence has been overshadowed by dwelling upon this conflict. It is, then, difficult to be certain how far the political discontent of Essex and his supporters was representative of opinion at the time; nevertheless, these men must play an especially important part in the study of panegyric, for they dominated the pageantry and poetry of the 1590s.

An adequate assessment of Essex's career would require a fuller biography than any yet written. He is a figure who seems to present as strange a

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1. J.E. Neale, "The Elizabethan Political Scene", P.B.A., 34 (1948), 97-118.

combination of the archaic and the modern as his fictitious counterparts in The Faerie Queene. In his military campaigns, he seemed to be acting out the part of a feudal knight, subordinating military discipline and efficiency to the romantic quest for personal glory: readers of Sidney would have been familiar with the danger that a restless aristocrat might "rather affect the glorie of a private fighter, then of a wise Generall".[1] His rebellion was undertaken in the name of the public interest, and yet it can be seen as the last fling of bastard feudalism, with discontented aristocrats seeking to maintain their personal power. In many ways Cecil, whom Essex despised for his lower birth, can be regarded as more forward-looking in his political outlook, less nostalgic for feudal grandeur. But for a full view of Essex it is also necessary to take into account his intellectual interests and his role in international politics. He has claims to be regarded as a strategic innovator, and he was in close contact with the Continental Protestants who saw the war as an ideological conflict rather than the traditional dynastic war.[2] While his revolt can be seen as a mere contest between "ins" and "outs" fighting for personal advancement, it is also possible that the "outs" were out of favour because of their political opinions; Essex patronized thinkers whose speculations were felt to be dangerous to the foundations of the traditional political world.[3]

There is a corresponding diversity in the literary forms used by Essex's panegyrists. Spenser's Prothalamion and Bacon's Essays were published within two months of each other, but they seem to belong to different worlds. Spenser presents Essex as the present incumbent of an ideal role which is linked by analogy with the cosmic harmony; when Bacon advises Essex to "represent" a better "image" to the queen even if it is consciously misleading, he seems to be

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1. Prose Works, I, 414. The most important developments of warfare in this period were introduced by Prince Maurice in the Netherlands, where the combined influence of Calvinism and Neo-Stoicism produced more intensive forms of military discipline than anything displayed in the English campaigns; these developments are related to the "Senecan" movement to be examined in Chapter IV.
2. Essex's military career has been defended by L.W. Henry: see especially "Essex in Ireland, 1599", B.I.H.R., 32 (1959-60), 1-23, and "Contemporary Sources for Essex's Lieutenancy in Ireland", Irish Historical Studies, 11 1958-9), 8-17, where he shows that many criticisms of Essex's conduct still repeated by historians are based upon fabrications by his enemies.
3. Adams, "The Protestant Cause", pp. 114 ff.

anticipating the language of modern public relations.[1] Essex's chivalric code resisted such cautious calculation; and to many poets it was his aristocratic bravura that constituted his greatest appeal. When he felt that Essex was becoming a danger to the state, Bacon broke with his patron; he rounded upon him at his trial, rejecting the claims of personal ties. Writers who shared with him something of this more impersonal political outlook will be examined in Chapters IV and V. The present chapter concentrates on poets who were in some ways more intellectually conservative, and who tried to remain faithful to the ceremonial "golden" poetic instead of turning to the new "Senecan" models. These poets form an important link between the public poets of the earlier Elizabethan period and the "Spenserian" poets of the seventeenth century. The leading poet of the Jacobean Spenserians, Michael Drayton, (whose career is examined more fully in Chapter VI) published his first poems in 1591. George Peele, one of the earliest imitators of Spenser continued to produce pageants and poems that mediated between court and city, as Mulcaster had done in 1559 and as Thomas Middleton (whose first published work was dedicated to Essex) was to do in the following reign. Giles Fletcher, whose sons were to write Spenserian poetry under James, succeeded Thomas Norton, the co-author of Gorboduc, as Remembrancer to the City, a post later filled by Middleton. Joshua Sylvester, a fellow-member of the Merchant Adventurers' Company, contributed to the cult of Essex; he was later to orchestrate the cult of Prince Henry.

All these poets were associated with Essex and his circle. Their allegiance to Essex was certainly not unwavering: the more critical poets recognized the instability in his character. Essex was frequently at odds with Ralegh, although in many ways the two men advocated similar policies: a political system giving such primacy to the prince's personal favourites inevitably led to discord between rivals for her favour. Spenser and Chapman both tried to emphasize the cause as well as the men, however, and continued to celebrate both Essex and Ralegh, valuing the ideal roles whatever the failings of their bearers. Essex had the additional attraction of being a generous patron of

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1. Bacon, Life and Letters, II. 41.

poetry and learning. The deaths of Leicester, Sidney and their allies had removed some of the most influential patrons: Essex consciously assumed their mantle.[1] Despite their enemies' allegations, the Cecils too patronized the arts, and Essex was wont to promise a great deal more than he could perform; nevertheless, the record of the Essex circle in this sphere is undeniably impressive.[2]

Self-interest alone accounts to a large extent for the poets' adulation of Essex; but there were also matters of policy in which Essex differed from the Cecils. The differences were most apparent in foreign policy. Essex's marriage to Sidney's widow, Walsingham's daughter, was a characteristic gesture of aristocratic politics, translating an ideological commitment into a personal alliance. Walsingham, Leicester and Sidney represented an internationalist outlook; they kept in close contact with Continental Protestants and were always eager for intervention in their cause. It is true that, unlike Leicester, Essex had a substantial Catholic following; but this can partly be explained in terms of his foreign policy. Many loyal Catholics were as suspicious as the Puritans of the ambitions of Spain, and disliked the Jesuits' campaign towards the end of the reign for a Spanish succession; Essex courted such men and promised them toleration. There was in fact a certain amount of continuity here from the Sidney tradition, for Sidney and his circle had been involved in schemes for religious toleration through alliance with France rather than Spain (see p. 70). In 1589 one of Sidney's friends, Henry Constable, published an appeal for a "politique" peace between

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1. In 1592 Robert Dallington dedicated his translation of Colonna's Hypnerotomachia jointly to Essex and to the memory of Sidney. Dallington was in the circle of Kyffin and Lewkenor (verses to The Resolued Gentleman, 1594; see p. 78 above).
2. The change in the patronage system was lamented by Spenser in the Complaints, by Thomas Watson in his pastoral elegy for Walsingham, Meliboeus (London, 1590), and by Peele in The Honour of the Garter (Life and Minor Works, p.247). Peele made a vain plea for help to Burghley shortly before he died in poverty (ibid., pp. 105-8); Harvey's appeal to Burghley in 1598 was turned down despite his promise to publish verses in his praise (Works, III, xxv-xxviii). Giles Fletcher had been patronized by Walsingham and Randolph (who had encouraged Buchanan to write his History of Scotland); on their deaths he applied to Burghley to write a history of the reign, but Burghley refused him access to the state papers, presumably because he felt Fletcher to be politically unreliable (cf. p. 62); eventually Fletcher turned to Essex.

opposing factions in France, based upon toleration; shortly afterwards Constable himself became a Catholic and went to Henry's court, but he kept in contact with Essex and lived in hope of returning to England, convinced that English Catholics would achieve toleration if they showed their political loyalty.[1] When in 1593 Henry IV himself became a Catholic, Essex urged continued support of the French, and welcomed Henry's envoy, the Catholic exile Antonio Perez, who became a firm friend despite the suspicions of the Puritanical Lady Bacon. In 1595-6 Essex publicly supported the anti-Spanish priest Thomas Wright, who came to England in the hope of achieving religious toleration.[2] The second part of The Faerie Queene, entered in the Stationers' Register in January 1596, endorsed support for Henry from a Protestant viewpoint; Anthony Copley's A Fig for Fortune, entered three days later, used Spenserian symbolism to represent the views of loyal Catholics. Copley's "Doblessa", his equivalent of Duessa, represented not Mary but the Protestant spirit of disunity; but Copley was full of praise for Elizabeth and her "Elizian" nation.[3]

Elizabeth, however, was less enthusiastic about this foreign policy. She had entered on the war with Spain with reluctance: she disliked aiding the mercantile Dutch and the Calvinists in France, both of whom had been prepared to resist a divinely ordained monarch, and she did not want considerations of religious ideology to overrule dynastic loyalties. For many years a guiding principle of her foreign policy had been to balance Spain and France against each

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1. D. Rogers, "The Catholic Moderator", Recusant History, 5 (1960-61), 224-32; J. Bossy, "A Propos of Henry Constable", Recusant History, 6 (1961-2), 228-37.
2. T.A. Stroud, "A Test Case for Toleration: Father Thomas Wright", Biographical Studies, 1 (1951-2), 189-219.
3. A Fig for Fortune (London, 1596); the work was dedicated to Anthony Browne, Viscount Montague, a loyal Catholic who had entertained the queen in 1591 (Nichols, III, 90-96). Copley later attacked Spain in two prose tracts, An Answere to a Letter of a Iesuited Gentleman (London, 1601: see the praise of Essex on p. 69), Another Letter (London, 1602). Spenser contributed commendatory verses to The Historie of Scanderberg (1596), a work written by a Catholic and circulating amongst English Catholics: D. Mathew, The Jacobean Age (London, 1938), pp. 234-5. Lewis Lewkenor addressed a treatise to loyal Catholics which seems to have been occasioned by his conversion from Catholicism: The Letters and Despatches of Richard Verstegan, ed. A.G. Petti (London, 1959), p. 221. Giles Fletcher's Licia (1593) was dedicated to the wife of the Catholic Sir Richard Molineux.

other, fearing that France was likely to become at least as great a threat to English interests.[1] She was also more aware than Essex of the limitations of royal finance. These differences were reflected in questions of military tactics. Essex was constantly being urged by Continental Protestants to aid them in a land campaign in alliance with the French and the Dutch; but such campaigns were inordinately expensive, and the queen preferred a limited, defensive naval war which held out the possibility of financial gain.[2] She was reluctant to allow her favourite to leave court and take part in military campaigns; and when he did so his actions often revealed a tension between military efficiency and aristocratic self-glorification. Although he sympathized with the call for land warfare, he was constantly impelled by his financial difficulties to seek the more immediate honour and profit to be gained from naval expeditions. The erratic trajectory of his career revealed the difficulties of combining the roles of aristocratic warrior, court favourite and champion of Protestantism.

These difficulties frequently placed the panegyrist of Essex in an awkward position. A foretaste of troubles to come was provided by the departure of the Lisbon expedition in 1589. The plan was to follow up the victory over the Armada by a raid into enemy territory; Drake and Norris were despatched to Portugal with the aim of restoring the Portuguese pretender to his throne and gaining a naval base in Iberia. The Puritans were delighted with this blow against Spain but were less happy about the fact that it involved aiding another Catholic prince; they presented a tract to the voyagers before their departure which emphasized that the expedition must be seen as part of a general campaign against Antichrist. Peele wrote a farewell poem which, while primarily military and secular in emphasis, also contained an injunction to carry the struggle as far as Rome. The queen and Burghley were less enthusiastic about the voyage, but Essex was anxious to go, and after repeated vetoes from the queen he slipped away against her orders. The expedition proved unsuccessful; but Peele welcomed

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1. R.B. Wernham, "Elizabethan War Aims and Strategy", in Elizabethan Government and Society, pp. 340-68; however, Wilson argues (Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands, pp. 127-7) that her fear of France was exaggerated.
2. This analysis is based on Adams, pp. 110-14; but historians currently differ widely on questions of Renaissance warfare.

Essex back with an enthusiastic panegyric, a pastoral poem using Spenserian diction. Feeling that he could not pass over his omission of Essex from the farewell poem, but of course unable to put any blame either on the queen or on Essex, he explained, with a rather desperate recourse to mythology, that the hero had been snatched away in a fiery cloud so that his departure could not be seen.[1]

Essex was forgiven for this misdemeanour, but he offended the queen again by his marriage the following year. It was perhaps because of Elizabeth's anger at Essex's marriage that it was the Earl of Cumberland rather than Essex who became the successor to Sir Henry Lee as the queen's champion at the Accession Day tilts.[2] An elaborate ceremony was held for Lee's retirement on 17 November 1590; Elizabeth was adored as a Vestal Virgin in a masque-like ceremony. Essex made his entrance to the tilting dressed in black; according to a poem by Peele describing the ceremony, this was in mourning for Sidney, but it may also have been a reference to his recent disgrace. There may have been yet a further meaning: a French envoy, Henri de Turenne, later Duc de Bouillon, was present, trying to persuade Elizabeth to send aid to Henry IV; Essex took a keen interest in this cause, and spent over £2,000 in entertaining Turenne: it has been suggested that his black disguise may also have been an allusion to the Black Prince.[3] For Essex tilting was a mere shadow of the real battles of which he dreamed.

But the queen was reluctant to let her favourite out of her sight; moreover, many of Essex's friends feared that in his absence Burghley would consolidate the position of his son at Essex's expense. In May 1591 Burghley staged an entertainment for the queen at Theobalds, using his persona of the "hermit",

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1. E.P. Cheyney, A History of England, from the Defeat of the Armada to the Death of Elizabeth, I (London, 1914), 153 ff; Adams, pp. 105-6; Peele, Life and Minor Works, pp. 220-30.
2. Strong, The Cult of Elizabeth, p. 140.
3. Nichols, III. 41-50; Peele, Life and Minor Works, pp. 235-6; H.A. Lloyd, The Rouen Campaign 1590-1592 (Oxford, 1973), pp. 33-4. On Bouillon's importance in the following reign, see below pp. 254, 296.

and soon afterwards it was rumoured that his son would be appointed secretary.[1] But Essex could not be dissuaded from martial courses, and at length the queen gave way and appointed him commander of the English expedition to Normandy.[2] This expedition did his standing with the queen no good; she complained that he had exceeded his instructions, and was particularly incensed at his creation of a large number of knights. Like Leicester, he seemed to be intoxicated by his personal authority, acting out the part of a chivalrous feudal magnate; he challenged the governor of a besieged city to single combat, and appeared to be treating the field of battle like the tiltyard. A French observer reported seeing the English knights "armed and costumed like the antique figures shown on old tapestries, with coats of mail and iron helmets... going into battle to the sound of bagpipes and trumpets".[3] The queen's judgement of Essex's campaign was probably too harsh; his errors sprang partly from the inherent weakness of an as yet new and little-tested military machine.[4] But it was in a state of considerable displeasure that she made her progress in the summer of 1591, anxiously circling the south of England in the hope of gaining news from France. That August Cecil was appointed to the Council.

The following month the queen was entertained at Elvetham by the Earl of Hertford, and the theme was the superior value of naval warfare.[5] Hertford had

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1. For a panegyric speech given on this occasion see Nichols, III, 75. In his edition of Peele's works (London, 1888), II, 303-14, A.H. Bullen prints three speeches, one in verse and two in prose, probably given on this occasion. The attribution of these speeches to Peele is doubtful: T. Larsen, "The Canon of Peele's Works", M.P., 26 (1928-9), 193-5. Nichols also prints (III, 76-8) a prose dialogue by Sir John Davies which refers to Robert Cecil as a secretary; as Chambers suggests (Elizabethan Stage, III, 249), it should probably be assigned to a later date.
2. Many poets went to France: Kyffin, Chapman, Barnes, Campion, and possibly Peele (Life and Minor Works, p. 100). Sylvester's first published work was a translation of Du Bartas's poem celebrating Henry IV's victory at Ivry in 1590.
3. Cheyney, I, 253 ff; A. Esler, The Aspiring Mind of the Elizabethan Younger Generation (Durham, N.C., 1966), p. 93.
4. Lloyd, pp. 191 ff.
5. Nichols, III, 101-21; H.H. Boyle, "Elizabeth's Entertainment at Elvetham: War Policy in Pageantry", S.P., 68 (1971), 146-66.

his own reasons for wishing to please the queen: he had offended the queen by his marriage, and was a source of political suspicion as a distant claimant to the throne. Moreover, his wife was the sister of the Lord Admiral, Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham; Howard's kinsman Lord Thomas Howard had led a naval expedition that summer which had led to the loss of Sir Richard Grenville's Revenge, and there were accusations that he was cowardly and pro-Spanish. The entertainment defended the honour of the sea-warriors: a huge inland lake was dug, representing the fields of naval conflict, and the queen was presented with rich jewels representing the wealth to be gained from naval warfare. The sea-god Nereus, who presented the jewels, quarrelled with the land-god Sylvanus. It has been suggested that this quarrel represented disputes between advocates of land and sea warfare: Sylvanus's cry of "Revenge" could be taken as a pointed allusion to the loss of Grenville's ship.[1] But the mood of the entertainment was light-hearted, suggesting that any disputes between Elizabeth's commanders were of minor importance. As in The Faerie Queene, quarrels amongst the queen's servants ended in harmony; the Fairy Queen herself made an appearance at one stage. But the entertainment certainly set sea-warfare in a more favourable light than land-warfare. Immediately after leaving Elvetham the queen was contemplating the recall of Essex and his men.[2] In terms of artistic patronage, too, the entertainment perhaps indicates an attempt by Lord Charles Howard to display a following independent of Essex: the entertainment seems to have been supervised by Sir George Buc, Howard's candidate for the post of Master of the Revels, the reversion for which was being eagerly sought in the 1590s.[3] One of the leading contributors was Thomas Watson, who had dedicated his book of

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1. Boyle, p. 155, suggests that Sylvanus represents Sir John Norris, then leading the forces in Brittany; like Sylvanus, Norris had aroused ridicule for a love-affair in which he was involved. The following year Norris's father and his family entertained the queen with a series of dramatic dialogues which included a defence of a soldier's love (Nichols, III, 168-72).
2. Cheyney, I, 265-6.
3. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, I, 98-9. In his edition of Lyly, R.W. Bond attributed the Elvetham entertainment and other entertainments of the 1590s to John Lyly on very slender grounds; but as he was competing with Buc for the post of Master of the Revels it is not impossible that he may have tried his hand at some entertainments.

madrigals the previous year to Essex but who had earlier been patronized, like Lyly and Buc, by the Earl of Oxford.

His military expedition having proved unsuccessful, Essex returned to court in January 1592 and resumed his pursuit of "domestical greatness". One notable rival, Sir Walter Ralegh, fell from favour in July (see pp. 133-42); the main remaining rival was Robert Cecil, and Essex did everything in his power to advance his own nominees for office at the expense of Cecil and his allies. He was the dominating presence in Accession Day tilts. In 1592 Accession Day was "more solemnized than ever, and that through my Lord of Essex device"; a lengthy panegyric by Bacon may have been delivered on this occasion.[1] The queen continued to enjoy her favourite's company, but his attempts to advancehis friends met with only limited success. Elizabeth feared that Essex wanted to monopolize power and the very vehemence of his suits made her the more reluctant to grant them. In foreign policy, too, he received setbacks: in July 1593 Henry IV announced that he had become a Catholic, and the queen was greatly upset. The king and Essex were anxious that she should continue to aid France; the Huguenots urged that unless England continued to exercise influence in France their position would be endangered. But now that the king was a Catholic the Huguenot cause became more obviously one of dissent from established authority; though the queen sent an envoy to plead for favourable treatment of the Huguenots, her own religious conservatism would have inclined her to sympathize with Bancroft, the scourge of the Puritans, who condemned the Huguenots as rebels against the order of Nature.[2]

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1. Bacon, Life and Letters, I, 120. Spedding assigned the conjectural date of 1592 to this speech; his dating is confirmed by Bacon's reference to the Aragonese revolt, which had attracted attention in England that year, especially through the arrival that summer of an envoy appealing for English support: G. Ungerer, A Spaniard in Elizabethan England: The Correspondence of Antonio Pérez's Exile (2 vols., London, 1974-6), I, 207 (hereafter referred to as Pérez).
2. J.H.M. Salmon, The French Religious Wars in English Political Thought (Oxford, 1959), pp. 31-2. Bancroft would have been equally suspicious of the interest of some of Essex's circle in Venice (cf. p.73 above): he complained that "the world now a dayes, is set all vpon liberty", and that the "vsuall discourse" of travellers was "what a notable thinge it is to liue in Venice", where "euery gentleman liueth with as great libertie as the Duke himselfe": A Survay of the Pretended Holy Discipline (London, 1593), p. 7.

Henry IV sent the Spanish exile Pérez to plead his cause; this choice was not altogether prudent, for Pérez had betrayed his royal master, Philip II, and was therefore regarded with great suspicion by Elizabeth. But Essex welcomed Pérez and accommodated him at Essex House; he provided much information for the intelligence service Essex was building up with the aid of Francis and Anthony Bacon.

Essex did not regard his association with Protestant or Catholic rebels as compromising his loyalty to Elizabeth. In the Accession Day Tilt for 1593 he dramatized his allegiance in a spectacular entry for which he rehearsed a whole week; and he made much of his discovery in January 1594 of Lopez's plot to assassinate the queen and Pérez.[1] But Elizabeth's suspicions remained. Pérez had not only personally betrayed his master but had supported the nobility of Aragon in their rebellion against Castile, and produced much propaganda on the rebels' behalf. A member of his household later translated Tacitus to support the rebellion; Pérez produced a defence of the revolt, the Relaciones, which was translated by one of Essex's secretaries. Another secretary, Henry Wotton, produced a commentary on the Relaciones which amounted to a "treatise on limited monarchy in disguise", defending the right of subjects to depose and execute a tyrant. Publication of the Relaciones in Spanish for circulation abroad was permitted by the government; but the English translation was not considered suitable for publication, and Wotton's treatise was not printed until 1657.[2] At a time when Essex was associating with a rebellious Catholic, it did not help his reputation to receive the dedication of Parsons' Conference about the Next

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1. T. Birch, Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (London, 1754), I, 131. Chapman's Hymnus in Cynthiam, entered at the end of December, constituted an endorsement of a militant foreign policy (see pp. 117-8).
2. Ungerer, Pérez, I, 208 ff, II, 152 ff, 337 ff. Ungerer notes that Bacon diplomatically toned down his initial strong condemnation of Philip's suppression of the Aragonese revolt, aware that Elizabeth would be as unsympathetic to it as she was to the Dutch revolt with which, as Bacon saw, it had analogies (Life and Letters, I, 137, 163). Pérez's intellectual interests link him with the "Senecans" (see Ch. IV); he published a volume of Senecan epistles to Essex shortly after his fall. Even the anti-Habsburg propagandist Boccalini (see below, p. 146) felt that Pérez's treachery to princes was so severe that his Relaciones should be burned (Pérez, II, 278-9).

Succession, which presented him as a king-maker and questioned the principle of hereditary right. Parsons supported the Spanish succession; there was no question of Essex's leaning in this direction, but he was on increasingly intimate terms with another candidate for the throne, James VI. Although Elizabeth herself favoured his succession, she was extremely angry at any public discussion of the issue; her displeasure with the Puritan Peter Wentworth, who was imprisoned after agitating for reform in the 1593 Parliament, was heightened by his persistent demand that she should name her successor.[1]

Essex tried to avert the suspicions clinging to him by spectacular demonstrations of devotion. He employed scholars from Oxford to perform an entertainment for Accession Day 1594; he may also have had a hand in the Gray's Inn revels that year. His protégé Francis Bacon was probably the author of one set of speeches; the festivities also included a masque by Francis Davison, an Essex supporter and a close friend of Pérez.[2] The masque portrayed the queen as possessing superior attractive power to the "Adamantine Rock" under the North Star; this would probably have been read as a claim that Elizabeth's subjects were not disloyally turning towards her northern rival.[3] Such a statement would have been particularly timely in March 1595, when relations with Scotland were strained; Elizabeth had broken off her correspondence with James after a series of minor disputes. The birth of Prince Henry the previous year had drawn attention to the possibility of a Scottish succession; Andrew Melville had aroused Elizabeth's ire by calling James the king of all Britain in succession, and James had read aloud to his courtiers a satire of the Cecils and Cumberland.[4] Davison had a

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1. Wentworth compared the queen's situation to that of Gorboduc: Sackville and Norton's play had been reprinted in 1590 together with a tract warning against the danger of civil war.
2. The text printed by Nichols (III, 309-19) is extremely corrupt, but there is a modern edition in Gesta Grayorum, ed. D.S. Bland (Liverpool, 1968), pp. 76-89. The masque included a song by Thomas Campion, who probably served under Essex in France and whose Poemata, entered shortly before the revels began, contained panegyrics of Essex and Elizabeth. The leading role was taken by Henry Helmes, who was to join with Spenser in commending Lewkenor's translation of Contarini.
3. The topical allusion is noted by M. Axton, "The Tudor Masque and Elizabethan Court Drama", in English Drama: Forms and Developments, ed. M. Axton and R. Williams (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 46-7; this valuable study came to my attention too late for inclusion in the last chapter.
4. H.G. Stafford, James VI of Scotland and the Throne of England (New York, 1940), pp. 116-8, 132 ff; Phillips, Images of a Queen, pp. 294, 301; H.M.C. Hatfield, IV, 583.

particular interest in Scottish affairs, for his father was still in disfavour for his part in Mary's execution, despite Essex's championing of his cause.[1] Essex's relations with Scotland at this time were particularly complex because he was the heir to the political grouping that had most zealously urged Mary's execution against the queen's hesitations. William Davison wrote to James to assure him that his advancement, which Essex was urging so strongly, would not constitute any slight to the house of Stuart. Many Puritans who had been loud in denunciation of Mary now favoured her son's accession and saw him as a potential champion of the Protestant cause. Essex was in fact on rather better terms with James than the Cecils, but it would have been impolitic to let this be publicly known. Spenser, defending the past foreign policy of the Leicester circle in Book V of The Faerie Queene (which Davison may have seen in manuscript, above, p. 79), was prepared to risk incurring the wrath of James for his discussion of his mother. When in the summer of 1595 Essex received a complimentary letter from one of James's ministers offering to open a correspondence with him, he tactfully showed it to the queen, declaring that he would write nothing but by her direction and recalling her motto of "Semper Eadem".[2] Davison's masque perhaps represented a similar public testification of loyalty.

The international political situation was now becoming critical. Tyrone had rebelled in Ireland and appealed for Spanish help; there were rumours that another Armada was on its way. Henry IV had declared war on Spain in January, but he was faring so badly that it seemed probable that if he did not receive foreign aid he would be forced to make peace and ally himself with Spain. Elizabeth remained reluctant to aid France, but Essex and his supporters mounted a further campaign to publicize the need for an anti-Habsburg alliance (cf. p. 77 above). Political excitement was intensified by the fact that on 6 September 1595 the queen entered into her grand climacteric, her sixty-third year, and such mystical numbers aroused apocalyptic expectations. The queen herself disliked such speculations, and became furious the following April when a bishop touched on mystical numbers in a sermon.[3] Her unease was the greater because Essex

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1. Davison later (about 1601) pleaded for his father in a pastoral complaint at the cruelty of "Astrea": A Poetical Rhapsody, ed. H.E. Rollins (Harvard, 1931-2), I, 25-35, II, 102-6.
2. H.M.C. Mar and Kellie, II, 37.
3. Nugae Antiquae, ed. T. Park (London, 1804), II, 215-8.

was attracting apocalyptic hopes; an Essex supporter, William Covell, prudently tried to calm the political climate by publishing an attack on speculations about numbers and the fall of states.[1] But the queen's disquiet about Essex was intensified when she discovered the existence of Parsons' treatise on the succession. Essex therefore made especial efforts to testify his loyalty as well as publicizing his policies in the Accession Day festivities that year, for which he prepared "such Deuices ... as our Age hath not seen".[2] The tilt was publicized in a poem by George Peele, in which he stressed Essex's suitability both for warfare and for political service and linked the tiltyard festivities with Essex's discovery of the Lopez conspiracy; the pamphlet was dedicated to Leicester's sister, the Countess of Huntingdon. Peele also submitted a project for the civic pageant that year, which perhaps formed part of the same campaign; Sir Robert Sidney's wife made a point of watching it.[3] For the inner court circle Essex and Bacon prepared an entertainment that vindicated his loyalty and repudiated any suggestion that he had been speculating about the succession: Essex was presented as Erophilus, a loyal servant of the queen stolidly resisting the temptations of Philautia and her servants, a hermit, a statesman and a soldier. According to Sidney's secretary, some of the audience detected topical allusions: the hermit was the persona used by Burghley when entertaining the queen at Theobalds, and the secretary could easily be identified with Cecil.[4] Essex had long sought in vain for Bacon to be created secretary, but it now seemed probable that the post would go to Cecil; Bacon had also recently been disappointed in his quest for the post of Solicitor-General. Thus the pageantry that presented itself as a dramatization

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1. W. Covell, Polimanteia (London, 1595); cf. G. Gifford, Sermons vpon the Whole Booke of the Revelation (London, 1596); in the dedication to Essex the Puritan author prophesied that "great things" would be performed by Essex in the climactic struggle against Antichrist. Sidney had called for Gifford to be present at his final illness, of which he wrote an edifying account: Sidney, Miscellaneous Prose, pp. 161-72.
2. Collins, I, 361.
3. Peele, Life and Minor Works, pp. 265-75; Malone Society Collections, III, ed. J. Robertson and D.J. Gordon (London, 1954), xxxv-vi; H.M.C. De Lisle and Dudley, II, 180.
4. Bacon, Life and Letters, I, 374-91. Only fragments of this entertainment survive: on the sources, see Strong, The Cult of Elizabeth, p. 209.

of unselfish devotion to the royal will in fact helped to inflame partisan emotions.

The year 1596 was the high point of Essex's career. In January his supporters assembled at the Rutland home of Sir John Harington of Exton (see p. 169); amongst the entertainments was a masque by Sir Edward Wingfield, whom Gervase Markham, another Essex supporter, had recently praised in his poem on the deeds of Sir Richard Grenville.[1] Questions of naval warfare were uppermost in Essex's mind: Drake and Hawkins had set off for a raid on the West Indies, and Essex wanted to stage an attack on Cadiz. Once again some of Essex's friends warned him that it would be dangerous to his domestic position to leave court on a military expedition. Bouillon, sent over with Pérez in March to urge Elizabeth to join France and the Netherlands in a Triple Alliance, wanted Essex to direct further intervention on land instead of venturing on a naval expedition; but the lure of immediate honour and profit was too great for Essex, though he did plan to follow up the voyage by an assault on Calais, which fell to the Spanish in April. The queen was reluctant to allow her favourite to depart; waiting in Plymouth, Essex grumbled that "I shall never do her service but against her will".[2]

Bouillon's warnings proved justified; the expedition was marred by personal quarrels between the commanders, and long-term military aims gave way to the pursuit of immediate profit. While Essex was away, Cecil was at last created Secretary; and the propaganda advantage Essex had hoped to gain from the expedition was greatly diminished by the queen's opposition. He had planned for triumphs to be held throughout the land to mark the expedition's return, but the queen confined the rejoicings to London. Fearing that the official account of the expedition prepared by Cecil would not give him enough prominence, Essex prepared a version of his own to be circulated throughout Europe, but the account was suppressed; Fulke Greville took the blame for the transgression.[3] Two years later a version of the voyage favourable to Essex was removed from the new edition of Hakluyt's Voyages. Wider circulation was enjoyed by a version prepared for Lord Howard of Effingham and printed in Stowe's Annals; the author

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1. Dedicatory sonnet to The Most Honorable Tragedie of Sir Richard Grinuile, Knight (London, 1595).
2. Adams, pp. 134-9; Birch, I, 466, II, 3-5.
3. Birch, II, 81-2, 88-9, 95-7.

may have been George Buc, the deviser of the Elvetham entertainment.[1] Essex's plan to continue the momentum of the military venture by a strike against Calais was rejected, despite the pleas by Giles Fletcher on behalf of the City. Nevertheless, Essex was extremely popular at the time of his return; but, as Bacon pointed out, this very fact only heightened the queen's suspicions.[2] Essex's propaganda campaigns were in a sense too effective for his own good.

Despite Bacon's advice, Essex continued to court popularity and to seek martial greatness. In 1597 he set out on the ill-starred Island Voyage; in his absence Cecil again consolidated his position, receiving the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and on his return his rival Lord Charles Howard was given precedence over him, receiving the title of Earl of Nottingham. Essex sulked and stayed away from the Accession Day tilt. It was the beginning of a steady political decline. Though he was restored to favour, he had less and less hope of prevailing in important matters of policy; despite his continued advocacy of war, in 1598 negotiations for peace began. In July the queen boxed his ears when he tried to intervene over an appointment in Ireland. When he was appointed to command the English troops in Ireland, he lacked the strong political base at home that would have been essential for a successful campaign.

While those in the know might suspect that Essex's power was declining, to many he still seemed to be the great hope of the nation, and he continued to receive many florid panegyrics in the dedications of martial and political works, many of them by Puritan sympathizers. In 1598 Chapman dedicated to him his translations of those books of Homer which dealt with the fate of Achilles - whose career offered an obvious, though not entirely flattering, parallel to Essex's.[3] Spenser's pro-Essex tract on Ireland, written in 1596, was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1598; before leaving for Ireland Essex arranged Spenser's funeral.[4] In 1598 William Vaughan called on a host of poets to celebrate Essex - Breton, Campion, Daniel, Drayton, Fitzgeoffrey, Gager, Spenser, and several

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1. C.J. Sisson (ed.), Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans (Harvard, 1933), pp. 429-31.
2. Life and Letters, II, 40-45.
3. Seauen Bookes of the Iliads and Achilles Shield (London, 1598).
4. Soon afterwards Hugh Cuffe, who may have been related to Essex's secretary Henry Cuffe, dedicated to Essex a treatise on Ireland in the form of a dialogue between personae whose names were those of Spenser's sons: R. Heffner, "Spenser's 'Views' and Essex", P.M.L.A., 52 (1937), 644-51. The treatise was not printed.

others; the list was not merely conventional, for most of these writers gave signs of particular allegiance to Essex.[1] He could have added the names of Gervase Markham, who in 1597 had published an elegy for Essex's brother;[2] of Sylvester (see p. 120); of Fulke Greville, who in 1598 received the dedication of Pérez's Treatise Paraenetical;[3] and of Giles Fletcher, who was greatly disturbed by the peace treaty signed that year. He was on a trade mission to the Netherlands on behalf of the City, and wrote to Essex complaining that Elizabeth was being ridiculed in pageants for her half-hearted defence of the Protestant cause: Gloriana's image was being tarnished by the Cecils' weak policies.[4] But life was becoming more difficult still for men of Fletcher's mind: censorship became more and more severe, and after 1599 no more books were dedicated to the disgraced Essex (see p. 121). Nevertheless, in 1600 the Privy Council complained that engravings of noblemen were circulating in great numbers and forbade all such pictures save those of the queen. There can be little doubt whose image it was that was eclipsing the Queen's.[5]

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1. Poematum Libellus (London, 1598), sigs. C4a-5b.
2. Devoreux (London, 1597), sigs. C4a-5b. This was a translation of a poem by the French Protestant Genevieve Petau-Maulette, who married John Gordon (see p. 191); but the original has been lost, and the translation bears strong signs of Sidney's influence. Markham's leading patron was the Earl of Rutland, an Essex supporter, and all his poetry of the 1590s was dedicated to members of Essex's circle: F.N.L. Poynter, "A Bibliography of Gervase Markham", Oxford Bibliographical Society Transactions, N.S., 11 (1962), 9-15.
3. A Treatise Paraenetical (London, 1598): G. Ungerer, Anglo-Spanish Relations in Tudor Literature (Bern, 1956), pp. 95-100, argues for Pérez's authorship. The revised S.T.C. rejects the attribution, but it was widely accepted at the time.
4. English Works, p. 398.
5. Acts of the Privy Council, 1599-1600, p.620.

2. Stylistic tensions: panegyric and satire

The political allegory of The Faerie Queene celebrated a political synthesis: great aristocrats could be celebrated as champions of Protestant reformation, and could be relied upon to subordinate their individual quest for glory to the service of the state. Formally, the poem embodied an analogous synthesis: the archaic form of romance offered a sensually appealing, ornamental "body" which could be used as vehicle for a "soul" of Protestant didacticism, and the method of allegorical personification meant that panegyric of the monarch could become an integral part of the poem, with the virtues of individual figures all reflected in the figure of the queen who became a mirror of earthly glory. In the 1590s not only the political synthesis but also the poetic synthesis came under severe strains. A number of Puritan sympathizers took the lead in popularizing a more "plain" style, stripping away courtly ornamentation in a search for more direct didacticism; at the other extreme, a group of wits popularized irreverent literary forms which celebrated the verbal "body" for its own sake without a didactic "soul". These developments interacted in complex ways; but the general effect was to undermine the courtly allegorical poetic which made panegyric of the monarch a natural part of literary composition. Public poets in the humanist tradition of political didacticism were uneasy about such developments and sought to defend a middle position; but their attempts to counter the new fashions with an increasingly rigid didacticism often imposed a severe strain upon public symbols. In the previous chapter it was argued that the second part of The Faerie Queen itself shows a loss of confidence in the allegorical, ceremonial poetic and the chivalric ideal; in many other poems the process goes much further.

An extended debate on the role of the poet was sparked off by the most sensational stylistic innovations of the period, the "Marprelate" tracts. Already before the death of Leicester his political influence was waning, and a small group of Presbyterians lost patience with courtly forms and mounted an independent propaganda campaign, using a secret press to produce their witty, irreverent attacks on the bishops. The alliterative name of the persona linked the tracts with a long tradition of plain-speaking anti-clerical radicalism. The official apologia commissioned by the authorities in response to the wave of

anti-clericalism was Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity; but this work was too elevated and philosophical to have a wide and immediate success.[1] Bancroft decided that the most effective means of defending the establishment, rather than ornate and solemn panegyrics, would be to turn the Martinists' weapons against them, and he commissioned anti-Puritan satires from wits like Nashe and Lyly.

In doing so, he exploited a political ambiguity in the form of the Marprelate tracts. In a broad sense the tracts can be seen as one example of a movement towards a "plain style" in the 1590s; but there was a difference in style between the Marprelate tracts and the writers to be examined in Chapter IV, who engaged in a genuine process of stylistic "iconoclasm", sublimating the verbal "body" in order to communicate the "soul" more immediately. Martin's style was rather different, as Nashe recognized: Martin enjoyed the free play of verbal invention, he mingled different voices and personae in an anarchic verbal saturnalia, a "May-game" evoking the traditional rituals of misrule and the celebration of the body. This was precisely the kind of social form that the Puritans were trying to stamp out, and many Puritans strongly disapproved of the Marprelate campaign: they "like of the matter I have handled", Martin conceded, "but the form they cannot brook ". It was precisely the element of "May-game", however, that appealed to Nashe, who recognized that he could turn his opponent's weapon against him, "call thee a knaue in thine owne language".[2] Nashe developed Martin's manner into a highly idiosyncratic style, a mode of satire quite distinct

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1. For example, Hooker's often-quoted peroration about the order of nature (I,iii.2) did not convince John Dove, the translator of The Shepheardes Calender (see p. 59); in a sermon preached in 1594 he adapted Hooker's rhetoric to claim that Nature had indeed intermitted her course: A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse (London, 1594), quoted by C.A. Patrides, "The 'Universall and Publik Manuscript' Of Commonplaces", Neophilologus, 47 (1963), 216-20. Dove's greater pessimism about the cosmic order was related to his difficulties in obtaining ecclesiastical preferment (D.N.B.).
2. The Marprelate Tracts, ed. W. Pierce (London, 1911), p.304; Nashe, Works, III, 374. See D.J. McGinn, "Nashe's Share in the Marprelate Controversy", P.M.L.A., 59 (1944), 952-84. It is interesting to note that one Puritan adopted a less ambiguous persona, that of Piers the Ploughman: P. Simpson, Proof-Reading in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (2nd edn., Oxford, 1970), pp. 69-70. But the dividing line between a stereotyped mask that can be accommodated into a carefully contained ritual and a posture that is genuinely subversive of authority is extremely narrow, as the authorities were to decide in the case of the satirists: cf. Thomas, "The Place of Laughter in Tudor and Stuart England".

from the tradition of social criticism to which The Shepheardes Calender had belonged. Many wits of the 1590s adopted a similar stance of amused detachment from the political and religious pieties of the public world. The increased numbers of professional writers had placed strains on the system of aristocratic patronage which it was unable to bear, and this led both to an inflation of the complimentary language of dedications and to a reaction against the flattery of patrons.[1] The harsh realities of war led to scepticism about chivalric ideals. With military honour, Platonic love came under attack: erotic and pornographic verse was popular amongst the young wits, Nashe setting an influential example with his A Choice of Valentines. Frequently the poet gave his work an added piquancy by making the seducer have his way with the wife or daughter of a Puritan tradesman. John Carey sees this poetry as the revenge of the less prosperous sons of gentlemen on the wealthy city merchants with their killjoy mentality, an anticipation of the attitudes of the "cavalier" poets.[2] Obtrusive didacticism was out of fashion: the most creative new poetic forms of the 1590s involved pure play. The poet who boasted himself to be the first imitator in verse of The Faerie Queene, Richard Barnfield, quickly sensed which way the wind of fashion was blowing and turned to the production of satires, observing that with so many panegyrics of stale subjects abounding it would be better to write a paradoxical encomium. Nashe classed Sir John Davies's Orchestra as just such a paradox; his own last work was a panegyric not of the monarch but of red herring.[3]

A number of poets in the Spenserian tradition disliked the new literary developments. In political content, both the Marprelate tracts and the pamphlets of the wits were extreme, rejecting the broadly-based religious order that Spenser celebrated in The Faerie Queene. Although Harvey was no Puritan, he felt able to praise Cartwright as well as Whitgift; to Nashe they were as different as black and white. In form, the pamphlets were disturbingly unorthodox, throwing aside the ceremonial masks and disguises that had previously restrained

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1. On the background see E.H. Miller, The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).
2. J. Carey, "The Ovidian Love Elegy in England", Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1960, Ch. 13.
3. Barnfield, Poems, pp. 46, 89; Nashe, Works, III, 151, 176.

public discussion of political issues. It was particularly galling for Harvey to find John Lyly, who had once attacked him on behalf of a crypto-Catholic intriguer (see p. 54), entering the lists as a champion of true Protestantism. Harvey's brother Richard published a pamphlet, dedicated to Essex, which attacked both sides in the controversy; Nashe counter-attacked and ridiculed Gabriel, and a long pamphlet war began. Harvey was a somewhat ludicrous figure, and Nashe suggested that he was embarrassing Spenser by frequently invoking his friendship; nevertheless, Harvey's defence of panegyric corresponded to Spenser's poetic practice, and despite all the personal abuse the quarrel did raise some general issues. Harvey felt that Nashe was prostituting his talent: he "made his personality into a public and salable commodity".[1] His irreverent, individualistic pamphlets were really more appropriate to a democracy than a monarchy. Nashe should instead have been producing epideictic literature, celebrating the great deeds of honourable contemporaries like Essex and Norris in France (as Chapman, Peele, Markham and many other poets did): "Phy vpon fooleries: there be honourable woorkes to doe; and notable workes to reade ... there is a busier pageaunt vpon the stage". Harvey introduced the term "Panegyricall Oration" to English (a neologism for which Nashe mocked him) and urged the production of more panegyrics: "the State Demonstratiue [is] not ouerlaboured at this instant". So insistent was Harvey on the superiority of panegyric to satire that he censured even Spenser for publishing Mother Hubberds Tale. For Harvey the height of contemporary poetry was represented by the divine verse of Du Bartas and James VI.[2] A similar position was to be taken by the Spenserian poets in the seventeenth century with their attack on poets who circulated their verse in manuscript instead of creating public heroic images. Unfortunately, whatever the pious intentions of such poets, their epideictic verse was less vital and entertaining than the more irreverent verse that was coming into fashion, and some of their poems betray an uneasy awareness of the fact.

This unease was not felt by all poets. Men like George Peele and Gervase

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1. D. Perkins, "Issues and Motivations in the Nashe-Harvey Quarrel", P.Q., 39 (1960), 224-33 (233).
2. Harvey, Works, II, 109, 103, 96, 326, 199, I, 164; E. Relle, "Some New Marginalia and Poems of Gabriel Harvey", R.E.S., 23 (1972), 401-16.

Markham continued to turn out confident ornamental verse: in Deuoreux Markham (or the poetess he was translating) compared the world to a tiltyard and the advancing troops to stars flanking the bright suns of their commanders.[1] Panegyric of the queen is easily fitted into such a context: we are told that Devereux committed no idolatry to other mistresses, loving only Elizabeth. Michael Drayton developed the "ornamental" epideictic style to new heights of elaboration, amply fulfilling Harvey's idea of the poet as creator of ornate images of aristocratic virtue and outdoing Spenser in his pastoral "blazon" of Elizabeth (see pp. 245-6 below). But by the latter years of the century Drayton was complaining that his kind of poetry was neglected, and he defensively revised some of his verse in a less ornate direction. John Lyly was finding it hard to adapt to a climate in which his epideictic style was considered out of date: his attempts to imitate Marprelate's style had been unconvincing, and he tried in vain to obtain the post of Master of the Revels. It is not known whether he was the author of Euphuistic speeches before the queen in 1598, but in the same year a Euphuistic speech in Parliament had been censured as "too full of flatterie to curious & tedious", and in 1599 Hoskins reported that Lyly had "outlived" his style.[2]

The unease felt by Drayton and Lyly reached more spectacular proportions in other poets of the 1590s. Most remarkable of all is Ralegh's lament to Cynthia, which will be considered in the next section; Ralegh's unrest was too extreme for his poem to be printed, but even the public panegyrics by his admirer Chapman were not altogether serene in their praise of Elizabeth. Chapman shared Spenser's and Harvey's belief in the value of public epideictic poetry, and Harvey praised his poem on the Guiana expedition for its "vena quaedam Bartasij".[3] The companion poem to the Hymnus in Cynthiam contains a lengthy and digressive simile recounting an incident in Vere's campaign in the Netherlands, and he urges fellow-poets to follow his example (p.44). He dedicated his translations from the Iliad to Essex, and praised him in Hero and Leander (III, 203 ff). In the

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1. Deuoreux, fols. 26b, 28a, 35b.
2. L. Hotson, Queen Elizabeth's Entertainment at Mitcham (New Haven, 1953) (Hunter, Lyly, pp. 356-7, is sceptical about the attribution); Wilbraham, Journal, Camden Miscellany, X (London, 1902),10-12; Hoskins, Directions, p. 71.
3. Relle, "Some New Marginalia", p. 415. References in the text are to The Poems of George Chapman, ed. P.B. Bartlett (New York, 1941).

De Guiana Carmen Epicum he celebrated the overseas ventures sponsored by Ralegh - a subject for poetry which Harvey had recommended - in confident blank verse, praising the queen in exultantly blasphemous hyperbole:

> most admired Soueraigne, let your breath
> Goe foorth vpon the waters, and create
> A golden worlde in this our yron age. (p. 354)

The theme enables Chapman for once to contemplate a complete harmony between the internal and the external:

> Sit till you see a woonder, Vertue rich. (p. 355)

But in his other poems Chapman does not achieve such a harmony between public symbols and private moral values: there is a constant tension between the humanist and the courtier. Chapman was writing essentially for an intellectual rather than a social élite: poetry, he said, must be distinguished by "ornament", but this "ornament" was not a matter of mere rhetoric and external social symbolism but a special height and nobility, varying "in some rare fiction, from popular custome" and transcending the limited intelligence of the multitude (pp. 49-50). Chapman scorned "these vnprofitable rites of Dedication", with the result that in his dedications "generally he seems to be talking to himself".[1] He preferred Homer, whose poetry was written "from a free furie, an absolute and full soule", to Virgil's "courtly, laborious and altogether imitatorie spirit".[2] In the Hymnus in Cynthiam Chapman found difficulty in combining courtly ornament with humanist didacticism. On one level the poem is a panegyric of the chaste Elizabeth, presenting her as a divinely ordained opponent of the Papacy and warning of the dangers that would ensue if her powers were threatened; the political content of the poem is thus not very different from that of Peele's pageants. Like innumerable panegyrists Chapman praises Elizabeth as a beautiful lunar goddess, and uses the stock symbolism of imperial panegyric - the pillars of Hercules, the false papal sun that threatens the imperial moon. But the uncompromising intellectualism distinguishes the poem from most Protestant propaganda, while his figure of Cynthia has none of the courtly charm of the creations of Lyly, Ralegh or Davies. Chapman is so determined to

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1. Dedication to Bussy D'Ambois (1607); M. MacLure, George Chapman (Toronto, 1966), p. 14.
2. Dedication of Achilles Shield (1598) to Essex; A Nicoll (ed.), The Whole Works of Homer, ed. A. Nicoll (New York, 1956), i, 543.

transcend the conventional and hackneyed uses of the moon-symbol that he overloads it with meanings, many of which have to be explained in notes. Cynthia's reign is that of pure Mind dominating the base senses: her body is not composed "of such condensed matter as the earth" (l. 101). Her court, the temple of "Pax Imperii" built by Form, is presented as a unique exception to the general norm, the only place where external ornament is reconciled with virtue. The poem is darkened by anticipation of the departure of Cynthia's pure soul from the gross corruption of the earth; so tenuous is the relation between soul and body that her very existence seems a "rape" of her subjects' hearts (l. 106). Chapman's portrayal of Cynthia is so idealized and transcendental that the mortal queen can scarcely bear the weight of signification that is placed upon her: the harmony between allegorical "soul" and courtly ornamental "body" is precarious, and a permanent union would require a "Magicke miracle" (l. 516). Similarly, in the continuation to Hero and Leander Chapman introduced the figure of Ceremonie, who urges that the naked "substance" of human actions is incomplete without the external "forme" of ceremony; and yet the word "form" in his work often has a derogatory connotation, and the figure of Ceremonie herself is so overlaid with abstruse symbols that the personification is scarcely allowed to become a person in her own right.[1]

Distrust of the ornamental poetic went further with Joseph Hall, whose views were in many ways similar to Harvey's but who felt unable to express them in the conventional epideictic forms; he turned from panegyric to satire. He had a Puritan upbringing and studied at Emmanuel College, a Puritan stronghold; in 1599 he contributed commendatory poems to works by the Puritan Richard Greenham and the firm Calvinist Whitaker, the latter work being dedicated to Essex,[2] Hall's second volume of satires contained an attack on Catholic ceremonies which the printer seems to have found too controversial (pp. 263-4,

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1. On Chapman's theory of ceremony see D.J. Gordon, "The Renaissance Poet As Classicist", in The Renaissance Imagination, pp. 102-33.
2. R. Greenham, Workes (London, 1599); W. Whitaker, Praelectiones (Cambridge, 1599). The editor of Greenham's works praised the whole circle of Puritan aristocrats - Huntingdon, Bedford, Warwick - whom Spenser had mourned in the Complaints; commendatory verse was also provided by Gabriel Powel, who had praised Vaughan's Poematum libellus.

228).[1] But Hall was not extreme in his religious views, and he was no admirer of Marprelate; nevertheless, his suspicion of external forms extended to the ceremonial poetic, and he felt unable to express his views through the old ornamental symbolism. His dislike of external forms extended to poetic ornamentation; in his first book of satires (1597) he announced that he would not

> scoure the rusted swords of Eluish knights,
> Bathed in Pagan blood: or sheath them new
> In misty morall Types. (p. 8)

He satirized the tired conventions of romance and pastoral, and the use of legendary matter like the exploits of Brute and Arthur's round table (pp. 93-4). He seems to have introduced the term "plagiary" to English (p. 259), and pioneered the literary "character".[2] Hall's satires were, however, different in character from those of the Inns of Court wits, and contained little that could have offended Harvey: they were in that tradition of generalized social criticism to which The Shepheardes Calender belonged. In fact, Hall provoked a lengthy quarrel with one of the wits, John Marston, by pasting a critical epigram in a copy of his erotic "Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image", and in many ways the issues in this quarrel recapitulated those of the Harvey-Nashe quarrel. Like Nashe, Marston tried to force his opponent into the stereotype of a bitter Puritan malcontent hostile to all arts and learning, while Hall attacked his opponent for abusing his art instead of using it for didactic purposes. Other poets joined in the quarrel; B.N. De Luna has suggested that this "war of the satirists" was a battle between supporters of Essex and Cecil, with Essex's Puritan-leaning supporters urging didactic as opposed to licentious art.[3] With poetry of such impenetrable obscurity it is difficult to be certain, and in all such quarrels personal factors normally outweighed general principles; but certainly licentious or irreverent verse was being strongly attacked towards the end of the century. Spenser himself was not exactly Puritanical in his attitude to love, but his own poetry always linked virtuous love with a cosmic order: the love relationship could easily be allegorized. The newer, Ovidian poetry

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1. References in the text are to Hall, Poems, ed. A. Davenport (Liverpool, 1949).
2. It may have been Hall's criticisms that made Drayton revise his most "golden" poems (ibid., pp. xlix-l).
3. B.N. De Luna, Jonson's Romish Plot (Oxford, 1962), p. 251.

was more individualistic and materialistic.[1] In 1598 Sylvester set out to "wean our wanton Ile From Ouids heires" with his translation of Du Bartas, which he dedicated to Essex, and called on Spenser, Daniel and Drayton to turn to divine subjects.[2] Spenser had taken a somewhat oblique step in this direction in 1596: one of the daughters of the Puritan Earl of Bedford had taken exception to Spenser's hymns in praise of love and asked for them to be called in; Spenser reprinted them but undertook to "reforme" the poems in a religious direction, though he also reprinted the original versions.[3] Chapman took a similar step, grafting a moral conclusion on to a printing of Marlowe's "Hero and Leander": the defence of ceremony is directed not only against the Puritan upholders of an inner spiritual "nature" but also against the libertine poets who exalted natural bodily appetites.[4] Giles Fletcher's friend John Lane published a satire beginning with an attack on Popery and ending with a defence of chastity.[5] Essex's panegyrist William Vaughan, who had written commentaries on Juvenal and Persius, attacked the public theatre, and defended poetry against its detractors in these terms:

> It is no maruel, that they thus deride Poetry, sith they sticke not in this outworne age to abuse the ministers of GOD, by terming them bookish fellowes and Puritanes, they themselues not knowing what they meane.[6]

Vaughan was a friend of a group of young Oxford poets, two of whom published

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1. For an excellent discussion of the differences between Spenserian and Ovidian poetry, see W. Keach, Elizabethan Erotic Narratives (London, 1977), pp. 219-32.
2. The Second Weeke (London, 1598), sig. A5b; the book was dedicated to Essex and contained sonnets to the Essex supporters Mountjoy and Anthony Bacon. Essex had intervened on Sylvester's behalf the previous year.
3. Four Hymnes (1596), dedication to the Countesses of Cumberland and Warwick. The Countess of Cumberland was a dedicatee of Greenham's Workes; on her relations with Greville and Daniel, see below, p. 166.
4. The volume was dedicated to Sir Thomas Walsingham (Sir Francis's cousin) and his wife.
5. Tom Tel-Troths Message (London, 1600); on Lane see pp. 240, 247.
6. The Golden-Grove (London, 1600), sigs. Llb-2a, Y4a.

Spenserian poems in the 1590s and later became firm Puritans.[1]

In June 1599 such arguments about the role of public poetry were restrained, though not entirely suppressed, by a proclamation banning the further publication of satires. A number of satiric works, including the works of Harvey and Nashe, were publicly burned. The ban on satires was not used against a particular faction: the works of Marston, who was strongly anti-Puritan and was not an Essex supporter, were burned, as were a number of licentious works (including epigrams by Sir John Davies) of which Puritans would disapprove. But it was evidently felt that the very form of satire, with a private individual commenting on public issues and stirring up controversy, was politically dangerous: political discussion must always be veiled with ceremonial reverence.[2] The political climate was especially tense in 1599: "many thinges passe which may not be written" wrote Chamberlain just before Essex's departure to Ireland.[3] The publication of Spenser's tract on Ireland, entered the previous year, had been forbidden; Essex was alarmed lest the dedication to him of Hayward's History of Henry IV (entered in January 1599) should be interpreted as a subversive gesture. Thus although satire was now a dangerous genre, panegyric too could present difficulties to those who supported Essex. William Covell's pupil John Weever celebrated the ban on satire, rejoicing that the satyrs had been banished from the land and the "fairies" could resume their rights and censuring Marston for ridiculing epideictic myths; but it was difficult to write heroic poetry without calling up associations with Essex.[4] Drayton cut and revised his Englands

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1. Commendatory verse to The Golden-Grove was written by Charles Fitzgeoffrey, a close friend of Pym and author of Sir Francis Drake (1596); in 1598 his friend Francis Rous (see p. 289; he became an Independent in the civil war) published a Spenserian romance, Thule. Vaughan was also praised by James Perrott, who had dedicated a work to Essex and was to be conspicuous amongst the critics of James's foreign policy. But Vaughan's circle also included the Catholic Michelbourne brothers and Thomas Campion, whose verse, as Covell complained in Polimanteia, was not notably chaste.
2. L. Lecocq, La satire en Angleterre de 1588 à 1603 (Paris, 1969), pp. 137 ff. Hall's works were spared from the pyre, and it would appear that the ban was not very consistently enforced.
3. Letters, ed. N.E. McLure (Philadelphia, 1939), I, 67-8.
4. J. Weever, Faunus and Melliflora, ed. A. Davenport (Liverpool, 1948), pp. 42-3.

Heroical Epistles in 1600 for fear that topical allusions would be suspected; Sir Francis Hubert was unable to publish his Edward II even though its tenor was firmly against rebellion.[1]

Thus the public poets of the last part of Elizabeth's reign were on the defensive both stylistically and politically. Only the combined effect of these tensions can explain a poem as egregious as Tourneur's The Transformed Metamorphosis (1600).[2] This poem is a protest, couched in apocalyptic terms, against universal disorder, a call for reformation. The first part allegorizes the domination of Rome, represented by the transformation of the Woman Clothed in the Sun into an evil spirit clothed in material gold; there follows a pastoral denunciation of ecclesiastical pomp comparable to The Shepheardes Calender. The state too is corrupt: the appointed guardians of maritime defences are neglecting their duty, allowing Neptune to penetrate Arcadia and corrupt Pan with Indian gold. This section perhaps reflects unease at the more cautious naval policy advocated by the queen and Burghley, and the allegations that Cecil was being bribed to support a Spanish succession. The second part of the poem deals with the victories of the knight Mavortio, with his squires Truth and Strength, in the island of Delta (Ireland?). The last part deals with Mavortio's death and apotheosis; at the end of the poem the unicorn Eliza brings him back to life. The identity of Mavortio has been much debated.[3] In the political climate of 1600 it seems probable that he would have suggested Essex; the "death" would

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1. K. Tillotson, 'Drayton and Richard II, 1597-1600", R.E.S., 15 (1939), 172-9: The Poems of Sir Francis Hubert, ed. B. Mellor (Hong Kong, 1961), pp. 286-9.
2. Tourneur, Complete Works, ed. A. Nicoll (London, 1930), pp. 51-75.
3. Mavortio has been identified with Spenser, Marlowe, Sir Christopher Heydon, and even Henry VIII: the different theories are summarized by H. Fluchère, La tragédie du vengeur (Paris,1958), pp. 10-22. Fluchère, like De Luna, pp. 256-8, is sceptical about the identification with Essex because Tourneur was later patronized by Cecil, but there is no record of any connection with Cecil at this time.

then be symbolic, the resurrection a decisive return to favour.[1] At the end of the poem the sun returns and defies the frosty north; this is perhaps an affirmation of loyalty to Elizabeth with her magical chastity, and a rejection of premature tribute to James (cf. Davison's masque of Proteus); but in fact by 1600 there was little hope that Elizabeth would change her policies, and Essex's partisans were looking more and more to James.

The poem calls for a poetic as well as political "reformation". In his preface Tourneur warns his reader not to expect the usual "cliffes of itching lust"; the poem's title perhaps recalls Marston's erotic Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image, which Hall had attacked. Mavortio is a favourite of the holy muse Urania as well as Mars; Essex's supporters frequently defended him against the charge of being too belligerent by pointing to his literary interests, conspicuous amongst which was his patronage of Du Bartas' translator Sylvester. In poetry as in politics, the poem expresses only limited hopes about immediate reformation and looks forward to the coming reign. Many of Essex's supporters were looking towards James; Giles Fletcher had visited him in 1586 and received many promises; Henry Constable travelled to his court on Essex's behalf; Michael Drayton may have visited him in 1598; Hall wrote a poem for Prince Henry's birth; Gabriel Harvey was loud in his admiration for the king's work; William Vaughan and Francis Rous praised his poetry.[2] At the end of the poem Tourneur calls on Urania, who alone has withstood the corruption of the Muses' springs, to "conuert each riuer to pure Castalie"; James had translated Du Bartas's Uranie, and his poetic coterie was called the "Castalian band". But the censorship made

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1. Falls from royal favour were frequently presented as "deaths"; in Colin Clouts Come Home Againe (l. 599) Spenser says that Elizabeth's words have power "to make the dead againe aliue", and at an entertainment in 1595 Arthur Throckmorton called on the queen to resurrect him (H.M.C. Hatfield, V, 99). Essex undergoes death and resurrection in a poem by an anonymous supporter, printed by W.R. Morfill in Ballads from Manuscripts, II (Hertford, 1873), 217-39. Here again it is not clear whether it is the death or the resurrection that is symbolic. Chamberlain described hopes of a reconciliation between Essex and Cecil in symbolism resembling Tourneur's in a letter of 22 February 1600: Letters, I, 86.
2. Fletcher, English Works, pp. 20-21; H. Constable, Poems, ed. J. Grundy (Liverpool, 1960), p. 141; B. Newdigate, Michael Drayton and his Circle (revised edn., Oxford, 1961), p. 124; Hall, Poems, p. 112; Vaughan, The Golden-groue, sig. Y6a; F. Rous, Thule (London, 1598), sig. A2b.

it impossible for Tourneur to be too open about his political allegiances; he complains in the preface that he has to reflect the confusion of the world in his style, so that he cannot provide a clear "platforme" or "Idea" of the world's ills. Allegory here is a mere protective device, a cumbersome "body" that obstructs the work's puritanical "soul"; even more than in Chapman's Hymnus in Cynthiam, the form seems to contradict the content. The poet's pessimism about the possibility of redeeming the situation under Elizabeth proved well-founded: the following year Essex rebelled and Sir Christopher Heydon, the fierce persecutor of Catholics to whom the poem was dedicated, was suspected of complicity.[1]

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1. Mention should be made here of the theory that another bizarre poem of the late 1590s, Robert Chester's Loves Martyr, also allegorizes the relationship of Elizabeth and Essex. The chief interest of the theory is that a similar reading could then be made of the commendatory verses by Chapman and Jonson, and, most notably, Shakespeare's "The Phoenix and the Turtle". The arguments for and against topical readings are too complicated to be discussed adequately here: they are fully set out by W.H. Matchett, The Phoenix and the Turtle (The Hague, 1965) and W. Oakeshott, "Love's Martyr", H.L.Q., 39 (1975-6), 29-49. From the point of view of the present analysis of public poetry in the 1590s their arguments appear plausible, and a few may be added. (1) The resemblance between Loves Martyr and The Transformed Metamorphosis: in both the hero travels to an island which probably represents Ireland, in both he becomes a kind of sacrificial victim. (2) Oakeshott suggests that Chester was actually proposing that Essex should marry Elizabeth and that she might even have a child by him. Preposterous as this may seem, a maidservant was censured in November 1601 for alleging that it had happened (H.M.C. De Lisle and Dudley, II, 540); and in the context of earlier Elizabethan panegyric the notion of a symbolic "marriage" between a courtier and the queen is perfectly intelligible; in 1599 Andrew Melville praised Essex and Elizabeth as father and mother of the realm (MS. Bodl. 990, p. xiii). (3) As Frank Kermode has pointed out, in his poem Shakespeare plays with the concepts of imperial political theology:

> the phoenix was a common symbol for the royal artificial person, and Elizabeth had adopted it as her personal emblem (Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, London, 1971, pp. 190-199).

(4) Matchett concludes that Shakespeare's poem protests against the inflated Neo-Platonic flattery of the other poets, "defending metaphor... against the danger of being cheapened by extravagance" (p. 200): in the context of the public poetry of the late 1590s it is easy to see the relevance of such a protest. Elizabeth and Essex embody the stock ceremonial symbols of allegorical panegyric so perfectly that the death of the individuals entails the death of the ideal roles, the "artificial persons" as well: the possibilities of public poetry are simply used up. It must be said, however, that there are substantial difficulties in the way of a topical reading; they could perhaps be resolved by following through the tangled patronage network of the late 1590s in more detail.

3. The last years: from melancholy to revolt

The stylistic and political tensions found in the public poetry of the 1590s extended even to the most courtly and ornamental forms, the poems and songs performed before the queen herself in entertainments sponsored by Essex and his supporters. Essex still sometimes used the stock conventions of earlier panegyric: he was a courtly lover who died when she scorned him, a loyal hermit who was more subject to her beauty than her power. But after the Cadiz expedition Bacon had warned him that the insincerity of his praise was too obvious: it was a mere performance, too formal and ornamental.[1] In the later years Essex's addresses to the queen did become more impassioned, but the passion was one of discontent rather than adulation. A new note entered court entertainments, a mood of plangent melancholy, as personal and introspective as was possible within the essentially public forms of the court entertainment.[2] The courtly fashion for melancholy did not necessarily have a political meaning, but Essex and his supporters used it to express their disquiet at his steadily declining political fortunes. Essex returned from Ireland in 1599 after making a truce with the rebel leader without the queen's permission; he went straight to the queen, bursting in on her while she was still dressing. The act was symbolically extremely potent: he had pierced the veil of secrecy and ceremony with which the ageing queen surrounded herself. Essex was at first imprisoned and then kept in close confinement, denied full access to his wife and family. His friends constantly tried to intercede for him, sometimes through the medium of court ceremonial: in 1600 they tried to bring him in to the Accession Day tilt disguised as the Unknown Knight. Other opponents of the Cecils also used the rhetoric of melancholy. Sir Robert Sidney may have been the first Englishman to be painted in a melancholy pose; his secretary referred to Burghley as "Saturn", and certainly the Cecils exercised a melancholy sway over his life. Despite Essex's advocacy, he was persistently refused a post that would enable

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1. W.B. Devereux (ed.), Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex (London, 1853). I, 292, 165, 497; Bacon, Life and Letters, II, 42.
2. On the fashion generally, see G.B. Harrison's essay in his edition of N. Breton, Melancholike Humours (London, 1929), and R. Strong, The English Icon (London, 1969), pp. 352-4.

him to return from his post in the Low Countries, and his sonnets (which were written by 1596) are coloured by his politically induced gloom.[1] His sister, the Countess of Pembroke, patronized Nicholas Breton, whose Melancholike Humours (1600) gave full expression to the cult of melancholy and contained praise of Spenser's Mother Hubberds Tale, urging the reader to penetrate to its secret (i.e. anti-Cecil) meaning. In the same year the Earl of Cumberland, who was not an Essex partisan but who had disliked the manner in which Essex was "tried" earlier that year, made his entry to the Accession Day tilt as the Melancholy Knight (the immediate occasion for his melancholy being his failure to obtain the governorship of the Isle of Wight). In the Senecan epistles to Essex which he published after his fall Pérez cultivated an "obscure and melancholy" style.[2]

The lyrics in which Essex and his supporters courted the queen retained much of the public symbolism of earlier panegyric, but gave it a more concentrated form; the melancholy subjectivity often came not from the words alone but from the musical accompaniment.[3] In the early 1590s the most fashionable musical form was the madrigal, whose ceremonial polyphony was the musical equivalent of the "golden" literary style (it was Sidney who composed the first English madrigal verse) and was suited for public celebration: the best collection of madrigals, The Triumphs of Oriana, was devoted to the praise of Queen Elizabeth.[4] A decisive stylistic change was marked by John Dowland's First Book of Airs (1597): these lute-songs were frequently personal and mournful. Dowland was an Essex supporter; he later set several lyrics by Essex himself, and there

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1. Strong, p. 353 (but the identification of Sidney as the sitter is uncertain, see p. 354); H.M.C De Lisle and Dudley, II, 123; H. Kelliher and K. Duncan-Jones, "A Manuscript of Poems by Sir Robert Sidney: Some Early Impressions", British Library Journal, I (1975), 106-44.
2. Breton, p. 4; Nichols, II, 522-6; Ungerer, Pérez, II, 325.
3. This paragraph is based on L.M. Ruff and D.A. Wilson, "The Madrigal, the Lute Song, and Elizabethan Politics", Past and Present, 44 (1969), 3-51.
4. R. Strong, "Queen Elizabeth as Oriana", Studies in the Renaissance, 6 (1959), 251-60, suggests that the symbolism of The Triumphs of Oriana derives from a tilt of 1593 in which Essex took part; Ruff and Wilson, pp. 21-3, suggest that the publication was delayed because of the need to remove references to Essex after his fall. An alternative possibility is that the volume commemorates an entertainment given by Sir William Cornwallis in 1601 to divert the queen after the rebellion: W. Oakeshott, The Queen and the Poet (London, 1960), pp. 206-8.

may be hidden political meanings in other of his songs: for example, a song in the Second Book of Airs (1600) opens with a quotation from Sir Philip Sidney and ends with an allusion to Wanstead, once Leicester's home and currently the scene of the confinement of Essex's family. Sir Robert Sidney was godfather to Dowland's son. A number of other musicians seem to have been Essex supporters; an important factor in their support was that several of them were Catholics. The master of the queen's chapel, William Byrd, was a Catholic, as was his pupil Morley; Dowland himself had been a Catholic for many years before returning to the English church in 1595, so that there was special point in his setting of a song that had been performed at the 1590 tilt:

> For Quare fremuerunt, use Oremus,
> Vivat Eliza, for an Ave Mary.
>
> (Second Book of Airs, nos. 6-8)

By the end of the reign, however, a number of Catholics were becoming apprehensive about the political influence of Cecil, and looked to Essex as their chief protector; they were therefore particularly melancholy at his political decline. One Essex supporter, William Alabaster, reversed Dowland's direction and became a Catholic after the Cadiz voyage; he had been acclaimed by Spenser for a Latin panegyric of Elizabeth but now he turned to religious verse.[1] Henry Constable also turned to the composition of Catholic sonnets, turning from his Queen Elizabeth to the Virgin Mary: "Why should I any love O queene but thee?"[2] Thomas Wright, who had converted Alabaster, also converted Ben Jonson about 1598.[3] Jonson was quick to disengage himself from damaging involvement with Essex; in Cynthia's Revels he pointedly alluded to the symbolism of the 1595 entertainment where Essex had testified his loyalty, which he had now repudiated by his intrusion into her privacy on his return from Ireland (see p. 185). Other Essex supporters were less cautious, however; they were impatient for a

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1. See the Introduction to The Sonnets of William Alabaster, ed. H. Gardner and G.M. Story (Oxford, 1959); the Bodleian has one manuscript of Alabaster's Elisaeis, MS. Rawl. D. 293; Spenser, Colin Clouts Come Home Againe, ll. 400-415. His conversion caused great concern as a sign of the times: see J. Racster, A booke of the Seuen Planets (London, 1598), sig. A2b.
2. Constable, Poems, p. 190.
3. T.A. Stroud, 'Ben Jonson and Father Thomas Wright", E.L.H., 14 (1947), 274-81.

new order under the queen's successor, and for them the cult of the queen's immutable perfection had become hollow.

This dissatisfaction with panegyric symbolism cut across religious dividing-lines: the religious melancholy of this period signified impatience with the idolization of the monarch and a turning towards some more authentic spiritual experience, and this might mean intensified Calvinism rather than a move to Catholicism. About 1598 Essex's close friend Southampton seems to have been converted from his family's traditional Catholicism; and about the same time Lord Sheffield, who was to be his ally as a critic of royal policy in the following reign, experienced a religious crisis and turned towards Puritanism, although such was the ambiguity of such experiences that some observers at first thought he had become a Catholic.[1] In 1600 Gervase Markham turned from confident epideictic verse to melancholy, Puritanical religious verse that seems to reflect his gloom at the disgrace of Essex and his allies.[2] Another Essex supporter, Sir William Cornwallis, also underwent a crisis in 1600.[3]

Essex's own instability was heightened by the restlessness of the malcontents with whom he surrounded himself, and finally, in February 1601, egged on by Puritan zealots and giving encouragement to restless Catholics, he attempted a coup d'état. The rebellion collapsed ignominiously; it was motivated by a host of individual grievances, by a mood rather than an ideology, and this religious ambiguity meant that its main areas of support cancelled each other out: the London Puritans had no common interests with the disgruntled Catholic gentry in North Wales.[4] Essex died protesting his loyalty to the monarchy; and his grievance had been against what was felt to be an unjust monopolization of patronage

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1. G.P.V. Akrigg, Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton (London, 1968), p. 179; H.M.C. Portland, IX, 65-7; C.S.P.D. 1598-1601, p. 78. While he was in Paris Southampton imbibed republican ideas from Aristotle's Politics.
2. Poynter, pp. 14-15, 48.
3. P.B. Whitt, "New Light upon Sir William Cornwallis, the Essayist", R.E.S., 8 (1932), 160. Sir William Cornwallis the younger is not to be confused with his uncle Sir William, who was jealous of his claim to the estate and a confirmed enemy of Essex (see pp. 152, 188).
4. E.H. Dodd, "North Wales in the Essex Revolt of 1601", E.H.R., 59 (1944), 369. On the financial basis of Essex's support, see Stone, Crisis of the Aristocracy, pp. 482-7.

rather than the institution of monarchy. Nevertheless, Essex had enjoyed passive sympathy from a large number of poets who shared his discontent with the regnum Cecilianum, a discontent which was quickly to revive in the following reign. Giles Fletcher was suspected of complicity in the rebellion, as was his patron Sir Richard Molineux; Tourneur's patron Sir Christopher Heydon was arrested; William Vaughan's father was also a suspect.[1] Though Greville condemned the rebellion itself, he continued to revere Essex and was opposed to his execution. The rebellion was a turning-point in Greville's life; it also seems to have been crucial to Markham, who thereafter published little more poetry and turned to the production of didactic prose works.[2] There was a widespread opinion that Essex had been unjustly executed.[3] Essex's supporters looked forward eagerly to the accession of James, whose intervention Essex had expected in his rebellion, but when it proved that the hated regnum Cecilianum had not been ended the cult of Essex was again to become a focus for political discontent. As in the 1590s, the religious complexion of this discontent was ambiguous: several Catholic malcontents who had been involved in the uprising took part in the Gunpowder Plot, but many Puritan sympathizers continued to revere him (see Chapter VI).

The political climate of the end of the reign makes it difficult to accept without reservation Roy Strong's assertion that in 1600 the "cracks and flaws" in the Elizabethan world picture were "still to come", that "all could yet join in paeans to the Divine One who alone seemed capable of holding together the world they knew". Following E.M.W. Tillyard, Strong offers as evidence the panegyrics of Sir John Davies, which are unfailingly serene in their praise of the monarch as sustaining power of the cosmic order; their mellifluous style shows no sign

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1. Fletcher, English Works, pp. 44-6; H.M.C. Hatfield, XI, 160, 167, 82, 106, 108, 132. It has recently been suggested that Donne's "The Progress of the Soul" is a satire against Cecil, composed after Essex's fall: M. van Wyk Smith, "John Donne's Metempsychosis", R.E.S., 24 (1973), 141-52.
2. Poynter, p. 15.
3. The authorities found it hard to persuade the preachers to blacken Essex's character; a revealing document indicates that if they did comply, they sarcastically amplified their denunciations "beyond all probability": apparently such tactics were "usual in such cases". C.S.P.D. 1598-1601, p. 584.

of the stylistic tensions to be found in so many public poems of the period.[1] But it is dangerous to base generalizations about late Elizabethan panegyric upon Davies, who is in many ways an untypical figure. First of all, as recent critics have pointed out, his most famous poem, Orchestra, is essentially light-hearted, a paradoxical encomium which would have gained added humour from the poet's notorious waddling gait. Davies was also known for his licentious epigrams, some of which were directed against Giles Fletcher's brother.[2] The praise of Elizabeth and her court was added as an afterthought, and some readers might have found it especially paradoxical that the Virgin Queen should have been introduced as a decisive justification for the seduction of Penelope by the man who, according to Homer, was plotting the murder of her son. It is no less paradoxical that Tillyard should have chosen Orchestra to epitomize the Elizabethans' unwavering devotion to order, since the author was expelled from the Middle Temple for breaking a stick over the dedicatee's head. It is interesting to note that in the revels in which he made himself unpopular he had adopted the persona of Erophilus in "sawcy imitation" of Essex's persona in the 1595 tilt (see p. 108); Davies already had a connection with the Cecils, for he had provided an epithalamium for the wedding of Burghley's grand-daughter in 1595. This event had aroused considerable interest on the Continent, as her husband had a claim to the throne: were the Cecils trying to attach themselves to a new dynasty?[3] On his expulsion from the Inns of Court Davies set himself to regain favour by composing poems that would please those in authority; he steered clear of subjects that would be displeasing to the queen. These poems, however, can hardly be said to embody the spirit of the age. One Puritan was

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1. The Cult of Elizabeth, p. 55; cf. E.M.W. Tillyard, Five Poems (London, 1948), pp. 30-48.
2. Poems, pp. 177-9. For a summary of criticism see pp. xlvii - lxvii.
3. B. Rudyerd, Le Prince d'Amour (London, 1660), p. 80; Poems, pp. 202-7; Stafford, pp. 117, 204-5. The young men of the Middle Temple seem to have been lacking in reverence for the queen: in 1602 they showed reluctance to stage an entertainment (Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, I, 170: see further P.J. Finkelpearl, John Marston of the Middle Temple (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 62-9).

moved to write a systematic "Christian Reformation" of his Nosce Teipsum.[1] The Hymns of Astraea, which he presented to the queen on Accession Day 1599, when Essex was in deep disgrace, were ornamental blazons lacking any didactic content. Essex had returned from Ireland in September and was now in confinement; feeling against Cecil was running high, libels were circulating, and preachers were openly praising him. At the end of November the court of Star Chamber issued a declaration vindicating Essex's imprisonment and condemning the circulation of libels; it was threatened that anyone who knew the author of a libel and did not denounce him would incur the same penalties himself.[2] In this political climate, Elizabeth must have greatly appreciated being praised in the following terms:

> Be thou our law, sweet will, and say
> Even what thou wilt ...
> Royall free will, and onely free,
> Each other will is Slave to thee.[3]

Davies was rewarded with Cecil's patronage. Cecil commissioned him to compose speeches for the Accession Day tilt in 1601 and for the last major entertainment of the reign, at Cecil House in December 1602. He was readmitted to the Inner Temple in November 1601. Roy Strong has convincingly argued that Davies was the leading deviser of the queen's image in the period after Essex's fall, and that he may have drawn up the programme for the famous "Rainbow" portrait.[4] But it hardly follows from this that Davies's poems represent the general national mood at the time. It is true that there does seem to have been a kind of relief after Essex's fall, a certain relaxation of political tension. Elizabeth won acclaim with her "Golden Speech" to Parliament in November 1601. But not all Englishmen were as zealous as Davies in praising the queen.

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1. B.L. MS. Royal 18AIXIX; see R.H. Bowers, "An Elizabethan Manuscript 'Continuation' of Sir John Davies' Nosce Teipsum", M.P., 58 (1960-61), 11-19.
2. C.S.P.D. 1598-1601, pp. 347-53; cf. E.P. Kuhl, "The Stationers' Company and Censorship (1599-1601)", Library, 4th Series, 9 (1928-9). 388-94. Drayton's The Owle is full of resentment against Cecil's network of informers (see p. 146).
3. Poems, p. 80. In the 1601 Parliament, however, Davies was critical of royal policy, and as a member of the Society of Antiquaries may himself have experienced political pressures (see p. 145).
4. The Cult of Elizabeth, pp. 46-55.

In 1602 John Howson, a strong opponent of Puritanism, preached a defence of the Accession Day ceremonies on a mystical, sacramental basis; the defence was ostensibly directed against attacks by Catholic exiles, but since those attacks had been made several years previously, it would appear that some of the queen's Protestant subjects were less zealous in their celebration of the Accession Day than they had once been. Howson's sermon in fact aroused wide criticism.[1] In a treatise written in the same year, Sir John Harington, who had turned against Essex but had for some time been close to him, observed how hollow such praise had become. In an epigram he had ridiculed a preacher at Bath for the complacency with which he celebrated her fortieth anniversary, and criticized the poet Thomas Bastard for a flattering panegyric of the queen. He felt it more representative of the mood of the time that in 1598 both universities held disputations on the same topic: that the world was growing old. And yet amidst all the news of conspiracies at home, preparations against invasions from abroad, rebellion in Ireland, and other sources of discontent, the pulpits were devoted to a perpetual magnifying of the realm's peace and safety.[2] Harington addressed his treatise to James VI, who was waiting impatiently in Edinburgh, voicing openly the unspoken corollary to the other frenziedly hyperbolical celebrations of the unchanging Cynthia in her last years: impatience with a woman who seemed likely to endure "as long als the sunne and moone".[3]

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1. J. Howson, A Sermon Preached at St. Maries in Oxford (Oxford, 1602); Chamberlain, Letters, I, 185.
2. Harington, Letters and Epigrams, pp. 297, 219; A Tract on the Succession to the Crown, ed. C.L. Markham (London, Roxburghe Club, 1880), pp. 103-4.
3. Birch, II, 512.

II. Belphebe and Elizabeth: Ralegh's "The Ocean to Scinthia"

Ralegh's extraordinary poem The Ocean to Scinthia is affected by stylistic and political tensions that were present in much public poetry of the 1590s; but the poem is unique in the extreme form which these tensions assume, and in this it reflects the unique character of Ralegh's relationship with the queen, a relationship that was both intense and utterly personal.[1] The other panegyrists of the 1590s are concerned with the policies to be followed by Gloriana and her relationshi with Essex; Ralegh is exclusively concerned in his poem with the queen's "private person", for which he seems to have invented the name of "Belphebe". If the poems considered in the previous section reflected the preoccupations of Book V of The Faerie Queene, Ralegh's poem reflects the more personal concerns of Book VI: he seems to have identified himself with Spenser's Calidore.

Ralegh's earlier poems to Elizabeth had been fairly orthodox rehearsals of the conventions of high Elizabethan panegyric, Platonic ceremonial adoration in the manner of Lyly or Sidney. A classic example is "Praisd be Dianas faire and harmles light". This poem evokes a harmonious universe in which every part is moved by a remote but beneficent sustaining power, and enacts this movement in a ritually obtrusive form: in the first two quatrains there is no indicative verb, only the seven repeated "Praisd be"s; the second two quatrains seem to be moving towards statement but are merely continued reformulations of a cool Platonism:

> In heauen Queene she is among the spheares,
> In ay she Mistres like makes all things pure,
> Eternitie in hir oft chaunge she beares,
> She beautie is, by hir the faire endure...
> In hir is vertues perfect image cast. [2]

The poem is a ceremony in which all tension between individual and society is abolished: the author is absorbed into the poem, the content into the form. The poem's Platonism consists in an assured knowledge of perfect harmony between

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1. The fullest study of the relationship is W. Oakeshott, The Queen and the Poet (London, 1960); I am also indebted to S. Greenblatt's excellent critical study, Sir Walter Ralegh: The Renaissance Man and his Roles (New Haven, 1973).
2. Ralegh, Poems, ed. A.M.C. Latham (London, 1951), p. 11. Quotations from the poems are from this edition.

microcosm and macrocosm, abstract and concrete; the ceremonial image of the real queen's public person is a perfectly adequate mirror of a universal quality. The poem ends with a curse on those who would deny its truth: again, statement gives way to ritual invocation.

This harmonious universe was shattered for Ralegh in 1592, when the queen learned of his marriage and had him imprisoned.[1] Ralegh's public response was couched in the conventional terms:

> "I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph..." etc.

This letter was for showing to the queen, and equally public was his gesture of struggling to break out of his chains when he saw her passing on the river.[2] But in private Ralegh transmuted the inflated language of social hyperbole into a much more introspective form, the most eloquent expression of the melancholy of the 1590s. From the ambiguous testimony of the surviving manuscript, it would appear that on his imprisonment Ralegh conceived the project of regaining favour by assembling and recasting all the poetry he had written to the queen, presenting them as mere fragments of a series of books in her praise. The longest section of the manuscript bears a title which has been variously read as the "11th:" or the "21th:" book of the Ocean to Cynthia; it has been suggested that Ralegh wanted to present his poem as a twelve-book epic, but there is nothing epic about the fragments and Ralegh may equally well have chosen the apparently arbitrary figure

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1. The date is uncertain: Hannah suggested that it was written on Ralegh's disgrace in 1603, and recently Katherine Duncan-Jones has suggested a still later date: "The Date of Ralegh's '21th: and Last Booke of the Ocean to Scinthia'", R.E.S., 21 (1970), 143-58. The "death" of Cynthia referred to in the poem would then be not merely the death of the queen's favour to him, the death of his ideal, but Elizabeth's real death. But on this view it is hard to make sense of the poet's repeatedly voiced frustration at the favours currently being showered on his rivals. The elegiac tone of the poem is concentrated on the poet and there is never any pity or regret for the queen. External evidence for an earlier date has now been provided by the rediscovery of Robert Sidney's poems, which contain many parallels to Ralegh's poem - though it is still possible that Ralegh was reworking lines written much earlier. See Kelliher and Duncan-Jones, "Sir Robert Sidney", pp. 118-9.
2. Oakeshott, pp. 46-7.

of twenty-one as a gesture of sardonic frustration at his wasted efforts.[1] Whatever its precise status in an overall scheme, this book has a certain self-consistency, though of a negative kind: it is a total inversion of the conventions of Elizabethan panegyric. In the poem to Diana the state was an ordered hierarchy mirroring the macrocosm, reflected in turn by the order of the poem; now the order is disrupted, the mirrors are clouded, and Belphebe is no longer a "heaven on yearth transparant".

> Thos streames seeme standinge puddells which, before,
> Wee saw our bewties in, so weare they cleere.
> Bellphebes course is now obserude no more,
> That faire resemblance weareth out of date. (43, 269-71)

Ralegh mirrors this cosmic disorder by the formal dislocation of his verse. He announces at the beginning that he will abandon a "higher kynd", a "more becumming vers," in favour of "simpell wordes" appropriate to his grief. The basic form is a pastoral lament, for which the conventional rules of decorum would allow a simple and rough style; but "simple" is a quite inadequate description for The Ocean to Scinthia, for which there are no parallels in Elizabethan verse. The poem constantly oscillates between different stylistic levels, looking back to a past that is irretrievably lost and quoting from earlier poems only to repudiate them. Rather than confidently rejecting the earlier panegyric mode the poem keeps nostalgically reverting to it, and then constantly enacting the process of its dissolution. So completely is the poem turned in on itself that it is very hard to determine where memory ends and the present begins. After setting the poem in a desolate pastoral landscape, Ralegh looks back to the time of his happiness and rises to a rapturous panegyric (37-56), but then recalls the wrongs she has done him and laments the passing of all happiness. Now the poem folds in on itself as he quotes from an earlier lament:

> Twelue yeares intire I wasted in this warr,
> Twelue yeares of my most happy younger dayes,
> Butt I in them, and they now wasted ar,
> Of all which past the sorrow only stayes.
> So wrate I once, and my mishapp fortolde... (120-4)

Present grief dissolves into past sorrow, and the next section recounts this old sorrow before modulating back to the present:

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1. For a discussion, see Latham, p.122, and Duncan-Jones, p.143. The title alludes to the queen's pet name for Ralegh, "Water".

> Ah those I sought, but vaynly, to remove
> And vaynly shall, by which I perrish liuinge. (171-2)

Though he should have remembered that all earthly things must perish, he could not believe that the object of his love was mortal; here Ralegh launches into another panegyric that recalls past emotion and at the same time recreates it in the present:

> A springe of bewties which tyme ripeth not
> Tyme that butt workes onn frayle mortallety...
> A vestall fier that burnes, but never wasteth... (185-6, 189)

But in the past the queen had imperfections too; and the memory of this prompts Ralegh to "leue her prayse" and

> Discribe her now as shee appeeres to thee,
> Not as shee did apeere in dayes fordunn. (217-8)

He now generalizes about the inconstancy of woman, and distinctions between past and present become completely blurred: on the one hand "My love is not of tyme" (301), on the other, "love was gonn. So would I, my life weare!" (326). There follows a remarkable passage which starts from the total incompatibility between the queen's actual conduct and his ideal of her, and yet the very mention of the ideal leads him back to exalted panegyric:

> This did that natures wonder, Vertues choyse,
> The only parragonn of tymes begettinge
> Devin in wordes, angellicall in voyse;
> That springe of ioyes, that floure of loves own settinge,
>
> Th'Idea remayninge of thos golden ages,
> That bewtye bravinge heavens, and yearth imbalminge,
> Which after worthless worlds but play onn stages. (344 ff.)

But Ralegh proceeds to puncture this effect by adding "Such didsst thow her longe since discribe": he is only quoting from something written in the past. And he undermines the idealism still further by drawing attention to the motives of his writing:

> Butt what hath it avaylde thee so to write?
>
> Shee cares not for thy prayse, who knowes not thers;
> Its now an Idell labor, and a tale
> Tolde out of tyme that dulls the heerers eares;
> A marchandise wherof ther is no sale. (355-9)

He resolves to abandon poetry; and yet he cannot resist returning to a vindication of the quality of his devotion, asserting that the emotion is now so internalized that no external change can shake it: it is the first mover of his soul (413). Then he

becomes impatient; "Butt what of thos, or thes, or what of ought" (462): his love was a bad bargain, it brought him no profit. And yet again he shifts his mood abruptly, this time leaving the previous thought unfinished:

> A guile, whereof the profitts vnto mee -
> Coulde it be thought premeditate for thos? (468-9)

He resolves to renounce his love, and yet he cannot believe that his ideal Cynthia can have changed. In the letter to Cecil the renunciation is cast in a simple Euphuistic framework:

> She is gone, in whom I trusted, and of me hath not one thought of mercy, nor any respect of that that was. Do with me now, therefore, what you list.

In the poem the tension between ideal and actual is raised to the highest pitch:

> Shee is gonn, Shee is lost! Shee is fovnd, shee is ever faire!
> Sorrow drawes weakly, wher love drawes not too.
> Woes cries, sound nothinge, butt only in loves eare.
> Do then by Diinge, what life cannot doo... (493-6)

He returns to the pastoral imagery of the beginning, wending his way home in the evening according to the conventional ending of pastoral poems; and yet the tug of his memories is inescapable:

> My steapps are backwarde, gasinge on my loss. (514)

Thus the movement of the poem is a jerky, spasmodic movement between past and present; Ralegh compares it to the twitchings of a corpse, or the last turns of a water-wheel whose stream has been diverted (73-84). This steady cyclical loss of momentum is enacted by the rhyme-scheme, which constantly breaks away from a rigid structure of quatrains without ever establishing an alternative scheme. Figures of bondage pervade the poem: he is struggling to escape but can never succeed. It is because his "livinge passion" is "so repressed" that he abandons a high style (7), but his grief and wonder break out again and again in a higher style, most spectacularly in the figure of subterranean air breaking out in earthquakes (450 ff). Such figures reflect Ralegh's physical imprisonment at the time of writing, and his gesture of trying to break out of his chains; but in the prefatory sonnet he asserts that the physical confinement is less troublesome than the enslavement of his "thralde mind", which is "Fast fettered in her auntient memory". At times his love itself has seemed an imprisonment (196-7), and he graphically expresses the movements of a man trying to escape from his chains as an analogy for his "loves sanctation" (153 ff);

but it was better to be thus enslaved than to feel her "vntye the gentell chaynes of love" (330). But he can never be completely free:

> Thes thoughts, knitt vp by fayth, shall ever last,
> Thes, tyme assayes, butt never can vntye; (390-1)

The structural disorder of the poem is paralleled in the imagery.[1] The conventional pastoral landscape turns into a desert defined only by negatives: no leaves, no birds, no flocks, no streams. There are recurrent analogies with natural desiccation and decay. The streams of pleasure have dried up or been frozen over. The stream becomes a symbol of his own poetry, particularly appropriate because of the pun on "Water"; the streams that once reflected Belphebe's beauties are now standing puddles, and insofar as his verse is still a stream it is merely a murmuring rivulet that sends the queen to sleep (262-4). Flowers too symbolize poetry as well as fertility (46); both are now withered. These figures interact in a complex self-destructive way, mirroring yet again the break-up of the ordered ceremonial universe. Fire is a destructive element that consumes his joys, eating them away like icicles (134), parching the ground and drying up life-giving rain (237); and yet it is also the ever-burning flame of his love (189) constantly threatened by "suddayn shoures" (303). Water is the source of life and the symbol of his creativity, dried up by the queen's unkindness; yet it is also a threatening element in which, like Hero, he is about to drown, with no lamp in sight to guide his way (485). The "Ocean seas" of Spenser's "shepheard of the Ocean" have become "tempestius waves" (273). But the "ocean" of the poem's title is just as often associated with fire and "Cynthia" is more often the sun. The stock images of Elizabethan panegyric, the stereotyped roles of Endymion and Cynthia, become blurred as the different elements of the cosmos dissolve into each other.

The extraordinary involuted structure of the poem reflects the unusual character of Ralegh's relationship with the queen. A man of great originality and individuality, Ralegh frequently suffered from the hostility of the conservative.[2] In foreign policy he favoured an aggressive pursuit of the war with Spain, and he

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1. On the development of Ralegh's imagery see Greenblatt, pp. 80 ff.
2. On Ralegh's intellectual interests see C. Hill, Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution (London, 1965), pp. 131-224.

was frustrated with the queen's vacillations: "Her majesty did all by halves", he later complained, and The Ocean to Scinthia reflects this restlessness (e.g. ll. 61-80).[1] Ralegh's social thought was sceptical: he was of lower social origins than most of the queen's favourites, and he was often attacked as a Machiavellian, one who saw social roles as arbitrary creations rather than natural images hallowed by tradition. His closest political ally up to the queen's death was Cecil, who likewise came under attack for his low birth and lack of respect for the aristocracy; Essex was a persistent enemy, and several of Essex's supporters composed answers to Ralegh's bitter satire "The Lie", feeling that its scorn of aristocracy worked against their hero.[2] He felt that the queen was too reluctant to honour her military commanders, whose low birth did not prevent their being the basis of English success.[3] Ralegh's scepticism extended to religion, and he was frequently denounced as an atheist.

This independence of mind made Ralegh especially dependent on the queen's favour. Whatever the difficulties of Essex's position, he could command respect for his birth and had the support of a vocal group of Puritans; Ralegh stood for himself alone. It is significant that Ralegh was never able to find a secure seat in Parliament.[4] Spenser represented him as the humble squire Timias, and the queen herself reminded him in a poem of his lowly status. Ralegh had addressed a poem to her in which he complained that his love had been overcome by Fortune but consoled himself with the fact that Fortune was all-powerful and could conquer even kings. Elizabeth replied that fortune would never change her, and the light tone of her answering poem takes him to task for over-dramatizing the situation. To Elizabeth Ralegh was a "silly pugge", a name indicating both her affection and her unassailable superiority.[5] While Ralegh espoused a forward-looking policy of commercial expansion and intellectual adventure, his praise of the queen was cast in the mould of an archaic form of relationship, involving absolute deference and subjection. And yet it seems to have acquired an especial intensity that pushed it

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1. Ralegh, Works (Oxford, 1829), VIII, 246.
2. Poems, pp. 128-38; other anti-Ralegh satires are printed in Morfill, Ballads from Manuscripts, II, 250-9.
3. Works, VII, 789-80.
4. J.E. Neale, The Elizabethan House of Commons (London, 1949), pp. 54-5.
5. L.G. Black, "A Lost Poem of Elizabeth I", T.L.S., 23 May 1968, p. 535; see also pp. 597, 705, 1032.

beyond Platonic declarations of honour and worship.

Ralegh's abrupt loss of favour sharpened his awareness of the insecurity of his position. In The Ocean to Scinthia he attempts to escape from the contradictions in which his relations with the queen involve him, but the attempt proves futile. His rejection of the "golden" style in favour of a direct, colloquial medium of expression marks at the same time a break with the allegorical mode that made the queen a transparent image of divine virtue. His devotion to the queen proves to have been founded entirely upon her power and her personal qualities, not on reverence for her hereditary role, and once her personal favour has been withdrawn there is no stability in the universe; the mystical union of private and public persons breaks down: "A Queen shee was to mee, no more Belphebe" (327). In this disordered universe of broken images, secular power is no longer a mirror of divine order but an arbitrary expression of will: those the queen favours are termed "th'ellect" (333). The severing of public and private extends to the poet: the public "persona" dissolves into an urgently introverted "self". Christopher Hill has pointed to the importance of the poem in "the history of introspection".[1] From this new standpoint the creation of ceremonial images is viewed as a degrading deception, a calculated act of "creation" which transforms the self into "marchandise" (359). The action of the poem is a "tragedye" in which the only "stage" is "my sowle" (144), and it unfolds not in a calculated ceremonial order but in a fluid, spontaneous, organic fashion suggesting Romantic rather than Renaissance modes of composition.

But Ralegh's painful awareness of his dependence on the queen makes it impossible for him to break entirely with the old conventions. He constantly reverts to the Platonizing of his earlier poetry, unwilling to face a complete separation of ideal from actual, compulsively re-allegorizing the ageing woman. He knows that all "Images, and formes" are mortal (174), but he insists on making an exception for this one "Idea remayning of thos golden ages": only when she is gone will human roles lose the lustre of natural divinity and degenerate to arbitrary play-acting (348-50). The recurrent oscillation between complaint and panegyric can never find a satisfactory resolution, and the ending restates the conflicts rather than overcoming them (517-22). The paradox of the

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1. Hill, p.220.

poem is that the most intense and poetically successful panegyric of Elizabeth is also so ambivalent and critical that it could never be shown to her. These contradictions seem to be expressed in the puzzling introductory verses:

> If Synthia be a Queene, a princes, and supreame,
> Keipe thes amonge the rest, or say it was a dreame;
> For thos that like, expound, and those that louth, express,
> Meanings accordinge as their minds, ar moved more or less;
> For writinge what thow art, or shewinge what thou weare;
> Adds to the one dysdayne, to th'other butt dyspaire;
> Thy minde of neather needs, in both seinge it exceeds.

The contorted state of mind these verses express is made harder to unravel by their contorted and compressed syntax, but the poet seems to be addressing himself and to be confronting a complete split between the queen's public and private persons. If Cynthia has become the Queen (cf. l. 327), there is no point in showing the poem to her because she will simply disdain him for his complaints without respecting him for his love: but if he cannot use the poem to gain favour it has no other value, for the rehearsal of his woes has only increased his despair. The very success of Scinthia as a poem has cancelled out its success as what it was originally intended to be, a bid for favour .[1] The self-defeating nature of the project is vividly expressed in the other prefatory poem:

> I alone
> Speake to dead walls, butt thos heare not my mone.

Ralegh was released after two months' imprisonment, but he never regained a secure position in the queen's favour. His political isolation was graphically revealed after the queen's death, when Cecil, whom he had regarded as his ally against Essex, presided over his prosecution. There seems to be no substance in Aubrey's report that he advocated the establishment of a republic after the queen's death;[2] but certainly his allegiance to Elizabeth was as much a commitment to her person as to the office of monarchy, and the History of the World upon which he now embarked laid its emphasis on the evils of bad kings. Ralegh's firm opposition to James's pacific policies gave him prestige amongst the Puritans who had formerly suspected him as a devious Machiavellian; and this "champion liar" (Oakeshott, p.96) became sanctified as a martyr for the cause of sincerity

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1. For different interpretations, see Wilson, England's Eliza, p. 313, and Oakeshott, pp. 174-5.
2. Brief Lives, ed. A. Clark (Oxford, 1898), II, 186.

and Protestant plain dealing. It is hard to accept Ralegh at quite this valuation; a certain deviousness is apparent in all his actions. Even in the case of The Ocean to Scinthia one may feel a lingering doubt about Ralegh's sincerity: may not even the apparent tug between ceremonial rhetoric and personal sincerity be a further strategy of courtly artifice? If Sidney's knights could display their simplicity in the tiltyard by woollen costumes encrusted with jewels, or melancholy by artificial rust on their armour, might not Ralegh have been pushing courtly display to its limit by inventing a supreme disguise, that of sincere self-expression?[1] In fact he seems not to have shown the poem to the queen, which suggests that Ralegh's despair did get out of control and undermine any calculated rhetorical strategy; but the possibility remains that one of the first masterpieces of self-revelation in poetry may have been an almost inadvertent outgrowth of a supreme piece of courtly imposture.

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1. Sidney, Prose Works, I, 286, 454.

CHAPTER IV

Plain Politics

Praise is powers heyre,
Honor the creature of Authoritie.
- Greville, Caelica, no. 78.[1]

Weaknesse speakes in Prose, but powre in Verse.
- Daniel, Musophilus, l. 980.[2]

Introduction

The epideictic poets of the 1590s had considerable difficulty in combining the didactic "soul" of their verse with a ceremonial allegorical "body"; this chapter will deal with poets who had more radical doubts about the creation of public images, both for political and philosophical reasons. They were influenced by the work of Francis Bacon, who in the 1590s was already drawing up his ambitious programme for a redemption of the intellectual fall that had clouded the mirror of the mind. In language recalling his Calvinist upbringing, and retaining an apocalyptic colouring, he described this reformation as a destruction of the idols that had "enchanted" the mind, a transcendence of man's vain tendency to project his own mental images on to impersonal phenomena. He constructed a new "organum" which was to produce knowledge "as if by machinery", concentrating on "matter rather than forms" and placing "all wits and understandings nearly on a level". Such an approach threatened the analogical, hierarchical world-view, and the allegorical poetic that was based on it. Bacon strongly criticized the ornamental, "Ciceronian" style that was the prose equivalent of "golden" poetry.[3]

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1. Greville, Poems and Dramas, ed. G. Bullough (Edinburgh & London, 1939), I, 129.
2. Daniel, Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (London, 1885-96), I, 256.
3. Bacon, Works, ed. J. Spedding, R.L. Ellis and D.D. Heath (London, 1857-9), IV, 40, 58, 63, III, 283-4. This brief account is of course a simplification, but I am concerned here with the points Bacon has in common with Greville, Daniel and Jonson.

Such intellectual adventurousness was characteristic of the 1590s. The ritual repetition of the old analogical and mythical justifications of the monarchy and the social order was growing stale, and speculations were becoming more daring (or at least more open).[1] The organic metaphor of the "body politic" was beginning to seem inadequate; the social order came to be viewed in more impersonal terms, and the metaphor of the "machine" came to be used with less ceremonial and more utilitarian connotations (cf. p.32). According to a writer in the 1620s,

> At the latter end of Queen Elizabeth, it was a phrase to speak, yea for to pray for the Queen and State. This word "State" was learned by our neighbourhood and commerce with the Low Countreys, as if we were, or affected to be governed by States. This the Queen saw and hated.[2]

In a characteristic mechanical figure, Bacon was to urge historians to turn from "the pomp of business" to "the true and inward resorts thereof"; a start had been made in the 1580s with the growth of the new "civil history", turning from epideictic myth to critical research, and in the later 1580s the Society of Antiquaries was founded. In the 1590s both civil and common lawyers took a keen interest in legal reform; Bacon mentioned his plans for reform in a Gray's Inn entertainment of 1594.[3]

But Bacon's ambitious schemes were slow in being realized, partly for political reasons. Essex was a leading patron of the civil historians, and perhaps wrote the preface to the first English translation of Tacitus; their work thus became tainted with political subversiveness. His secretary Henry Cuffe, an admirer of Tacitus, helped to plan his rebellion. John Hayward found himself in trouble for dedicating his Tacitean History of Henry IV to Essex; it was thought dangerous for him to have made one of his personages voice the idea that "a subiect was rather bound to the state than to the person of the Kinge".[4]

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1. Open discussion of Machiavelli seems to have become more common after 1590: N.W. Bawcutt, "Machiavelli and Marlowe", Renaissance Drama, N.S., 3 (1970),29-30.
2. Quoted in G.N. Clark, "The Birth of the Dutch Republic", P.B.A., 32 (1946), 189-217 (195). The use of the word "state" is in fact a kind of watershed between literary generations: according to Clark (pp. 213-7) Spenser does not use the word in precisely its modern sense at all (but he notes the significance of Sidney's interest in Contarini, which Spenser shared); Shakespeare seldom uses it in the modern sense (the significant exception being The Merchant of Venice); as will be seen, Daniel uses it recurrently.
3. Bacon, Works, III, 334; Life and Letters, I, 339-40.
4. M. Dowling, "Sir John Hayward's 'Troubles' over his Life of Henry IV", Library, 4th series, 11 (1930), 212-24 (217). Bacon defended Hayward, arguing that he was guilty not of treason but of theft from Tacitus.

A plan to establish an Academy for antiquarian studies at the end of Elizabeth's reign collapsed, perhaps because members of the Society of Antiquaries were felt to be taking an unhealthy interest in the history of Parliament.[1] James was as sensitive as his predecessor to dangerous innovations; he sponsored a full-scale revival of the political philosophy of analogy, and his critics countered by a legalistic antiquarianism that became increasingly rigid and polemical.[2] Neither Elizabeth nor James had much time for Bacon's ideas, and Cecil was hostile to him, so that he did not obtain the kind of political influence he wanted until after his death. Under James the patronage system became increasingly corrupt; the king allowed it to become a market for the pursuit of personal profit instead of steering it to function as an intelligent instrument of policy. Bacon saw his projects dissipated to provide quick profits for avaricious courtiers.[3] He tried to respond to this situation by exploiting the mechanics of the patronage system, turning flattery into an exact science and applying techniques of coldly impersonal analysis to the court system of personal politics with a precision that barely concealed contempt.[4] But he became a champion of the royal prerogative, firmly believing that progress depended on peace and strong government. The more involved he became in politics, however, the harder it becomes to decide whether the advancement of learning or that of Francis Bacon was uppermost in his mind; there is a great deal of courtly rhetoric as well as real innovation in the projects with which he tried to win the king's favour.

Thus to present Bacon as a champion of the "plain style" and the spirit of modernity is to oversimplify.[5] The complex tension between innovation and courtly rhetoric found a mirror in the Silver Latin writers who were so popular with the new historians and political writers, and the new intellectual movement has been called "Senecanism" or "Tacitism"; it was characterized by a profound political

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1. K. Sharpe, "The Intellectual and Political Activities of Sir Robert Cotton, c. 1590-1630", Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1975, pp. 27-31; I am much indebted to this thesis.
2. Brooks and Sharpe, "History, English Law, and the Renaissance", pp. 141-2.
3. C. Webster, The Great Instauration (London, 1976), pp. 335-46.
4. Bacon, Life and Letters, IV, 39-95.
5. The terms are those of Morris Croll. I am much indebted to his studies of prose style in its political context: see especially Chapters 1 and 3 of Style, Rhetoric and Rhythm, ed. J. Max Patrick et al. (Princeton, 1966).

ambivalence.[1] Muret, one of the founders of the movement, spelt out the parallels between Seneca's time and his own: then as now, representative institutions were dying out and power was being concentrated in the hands of absolute rulers. He piously observed that by the blessing of God there were no Tiberiuses or Neros in his time, but added that it was nevertheless wise to find out how prudent men managed their lives under such reigns. Such men were careful not to sacrifice a possible influence for the good: they would refrain from praising the ruler's vices, but they would also avoid criticizing him too openly, in the hope that the prince might become good by thinking that he was considered good.[2] Thus while the Senecans accepted the inevitability of absolutism, and appreciated its efficiency and its value as a bulwark against religious strife, their praise of those in power was grounded on pragmatism rather than deference to tradition. They exalted inner worth above external social differences, and were fond of criticizing the vices of court life. This gave a sardonic colouring to their exaggeratedly deferential praise of established secular and religious authority: Muret celebrated his conversion to Catholicism with a panegyric of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, while Lipsius, who may have been a sympathizer of the secret "Family of Love", performed an erratic trajectory across Europe, ostentatiously changing religion in deference to external authority with each change of place. A movement grounded upon admiration for a millionaire ascetic was inevitably sensitive to political ironies.

The stylistic influence of these writers was equally complex: they criticized excessive formality and irrelevant ornament, but their style was more than just "plain". Certainly Lipsius rejected the rigid equation of literary decorum with social decorum, placing the emphasis on individual expression and

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1. Some scholars have signalled this ambivalence by distinguishing between "red" and "black" Tacitism: see P. Burke, "Tacitism", in Tacitus, ed. T. A. Dorey (London, 1969), pp. 149-71. Daniel's close friend John Florio translated part of Boccalini's allegory Ragguagli di Parnaso, in which the princes accuse Tacitus of providing people with spectacles that can see through their artifices and mysteries and reveal their inner secrets. Apollo decides that these spectacles must be allowed, but restricted to wise councillors - it would be dangerous to give them to factious spirits. Boccalini, The New-found Politicke (London, 1626), sig. 92a, pp. 29-32.
2. Quoted in Croll, p. 152.

championing the more flexible form of the epistle, which permitted treatment of a wide range of subjects in a low or middle style. But the Senecans were firmly élitist, and advocated not so much "plainness" for the sake of immediate communication as extreme brevity designed to increase the difficulty of the style. Their dislike of ornate flattery was combined with an awareness that "flatterie being couered with plainnesse, is best pleasing to Princes."[1] Under an absolute ruler, observed Muret, of the three traditional branches of oratory - judicial, deliberative and epideictic - only the epideictic remained important; pragmatism therefore demanded awareness of the techniques of persuading a ruler through praise. But the Senecans preferred to do this in a relatively direct fasion; their favourite panegyrist was Pliny the Younger, who presented his panegyric to Trajan as a revival of more severe republican virtues within a courtly form, the sign of a "puram castamque mentem" rather than a "meditatum carmen". The individual moral integrity of the panegyrist became more important than the rehearsal of public legitimizing symbols. It was Pliny who provided the didactic justification of panegyric so often repeated by Renaissance writers: "ut... sub titulo gratiarum agendarum boni principes quae facerent recognescerent, mali quod facere deberent".[2]

To varying degrees Greville, Daniel and Jonson all display the characteristic ambivalence of the Senecans, the tension between radical scepticism and courtly rhetoric. Their scepticism made them as critical of the opponents of the court as of the vices of rulers; it was the heirs of the Spenserian tradition, not the poets of the "plain style", who became the public critics of the Jacobean court. Their political and literary ideas were also influenced by the more thoroughgoing projects of Bacon. They had a Baconian distrust of images which affected their attitudes to ceremonial and to the artistic media in which they worked; the work of Greville and Daniel in particular displays the characteristic shift from ceremonial to mechanical imagery - Daniel compares the state, Greville the human body, to a machine.[3] Greville, who tried to use his influence on Bacon's behalf on several occasions, was the most radical in his distrust of images, but his increasingly rigid Calvinism undercut Baconian optimism about the possibility of

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1. Quoted in Lipsius, Sixe Bookes of Politickes or Civil Doctrine, translated by W. Jones (London, 1594), p. 55.
2. Croll, p. 154; Pliny, Panegyricus, iii. 5, iv. 1.
3. Daniel, Works, III, 140; Greville, Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (Fuller Worthies' Library, 1870), IV, 242.

abolishing mental idolatry.[1] Daniel brought a Baconian scepticism to bear on history, law, the court masque, and poetry itself. Jonson will be considered in a separate chapter, but it is important to note the affinities between his work and that of the other "plain" writers. He greatly admired Bacon, and in certain moods he accepted Bacon's view of dramatic and ceremonial images as a kind of imposture; he differed from the others mainly in his strong though ambiguous enthusiasm for the process of imposture itself, an enthusiasm that links up with a Senecan interest in the mechanics of political intrigue. The difference between Bacon and Jonson is epitomized by their attitudes to machinery: Bacon took an interest in the machinery used in the court masque as an exciting foretaste of new technical developments, valuing it for its own sake rather than as an allegorical "body"; Jonson the conservative humanist oscillated between respect for the machinery as a ceremonial representation of royal power and contempt for it as a mere imposture.[2]

1. Fulke Greville: The Iconoclastic Imagination

The stylistic changes of the 1590s are most dramatically apparent in the work of Fulke Greville. Sidney's closest friend, he began his poetic career by imitating Sidney's sonnets, and on Sidney's death he undertook the task of editing the Arcadia. But this he did unwillingly, for he was always more sober-minded than his friend and felt that Sidney's true legacy was his political example. Like Sidney, he was deeply influenced by the Dutch rebellion; in his Life of Sidney he recounts how impressed his friend was by William of Orange, who was simply dressed, relying on his own worth rather than "exterior signe of degree". In a popular estate there was no idolatry of heredity and external distinctions, no mystique of the innate divinity of the ruler: "no pedigree but worth could possibly make a man Prince and no Prince, in a moment, at his own pleasure".[3] Greville's reputation for political radicalism is indicated by the fact that he was praised in a volume of epigrams occasioned by the death of Henry III in 1589.

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1. G. Bullough, "Bacon and the Advancement of Learning", in Seventeenth Century Studies presented to Sir Herbert Grierson (Oxford, 1938), pp. 1-20, suggests that Greville's Treatie of Humane Learning may be an answer to Bacon's Advancement of Learning.
2. R.L. Colie, "Cornelis Drebbel and Salomon De Caus: Two Jacobean Models for Solomon's House", H.L.Q., 18 (1954-5), 245-60.
3. Life of Sidney, ed. Nowell Smith (Oxford, 1907), pp. 20-21.

The anonymous poets expressed no dismay at the death of a king and viewed the perfidy of the Papists with sardonic detachment; the book seems to have been called in.[1] Greville was a supporter of Essex in the 1590s and may have been the author of some of the lyrics with which Essex courted the queen. He was deeply disturbed by Essex's fall, and as he grew older became steadily more disillusioned; at the same time he embarked on a process of stylistic iconoclasm that laid bare the radicalism which in Sidney's work was veiled by stylistic ornamentation; his literary works are marked by his repeated attempts to harmonize this stylistic iconoclasm with his increasing resignation to absolutism.

The first stage in this process is the Letter to an Honourable Lady (1589?), in which Greville introduces his distinctive dualistic political vocabulary. The work is a Senecan epistle of consolation to a woman with a tyrannical husband, but Greville emphasizes the political connotations: her situation is the "modell" of a subject's estate under a tyrant (Grosart, IV, 279). Greville looks back nostalgically to the Golden Age of "the true equalities of loue", when the "masks" and hierarchies of the body politic did not exist, "the traffick being loue for loue; and the exchange all for all" (IV, 236). The art of government substitutes inequality for equality, subjection for freedom, leading to the idolatry of external roles: external representations can never be adequate to inner worth. The Letter urges Stoic resignation, and it still has something of the magniloquent harmony of "golden" literature. In Greville's subsequent works he becomes increasingly dissatisfied with Stoic self-sufficiency and the tone becomes more urgent. In religion Greville became more and more Calvinist - though he was always an independent thinker - and he was sceptical of the power of any medium to do justice to divine truth: "faith hath her mediation", but "All Mediums else are but the sinnes suggestion".[2] Men "dazell truth, by representing it" (Caelica 66). In religious contexts Greville constantly depreciates the instruments of mediation, for which he develops a special vocabulary: mould, form, womb, trophy, model, idol. At his most pessimistic, the most he will admit is that the visible church may "represent the Truth she doth despise" (Treatie of Humane Learning, 88).

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1. H. Hudson, "An Oxford Epigram-Book of 1589", H.L.Q., 2 (1938-9), 213-7.
2. Treatise of Religion, stanzas 79, 102; Greville, Remains, ed. G.A. Wilkes (Oxford, 1965), pp. 222, 228; quotations from the Treatise of Monarchy are also from this edition; other poems and the plays are quoted from Fullough's edition.

This radical distrust of human artifice places Greville in a problematical position when it comes to celebrating the social order. Though he was prepared to use a myth of a natural prelapsarian political order (Monarchy, 1-16), the overwhelming emphasis in his writings is on the artificiality of the social order, its instrumental function as a means of repressing the "endless Myne" of fallen man's desires (ibid., 43). He strips away the cosmetic vocabulary of Elizabethan panegyric: for Greville the Great Chain of Being is precisely a chain, the "gilt or painted fetters" of inequality (Grosart, IV, 265). He sees the deference paid to noblemen as "idolatry", a kind of "magic" that blinds the people with visual rhetoric (Caelica, 92). For Greville the politic "body" is not harmoniously in union with the soul but requires repression: in the 1593 Parliament he warned that "If the feet knew their strength as we know their oppression, they would not bear as they do". Characteristically, Greville was not arguing that the oppression should be reduced but that the rulers should bear a greater burden too.[1]

Thus Greville confronted in an extreme form a political problem that was much debated in the 1590s, the relation between religious ritual and social order. Conservatives had always warned that the abolition of elaborate religious ritual would undermine respect for the social hierarchy; Elizabeth had taken this warning to heart, and many ceremonies and ornaments were retained as "things indifferent", with the aim of maintaining reverence for hierarchy and tradition in general. But, as Catholics were fond of complaining, the intellectual rationale for such an "adiaphorist" policy was rather weak; they complained that the policy was naked Machiavellianism. Some Puritans too made a similar point: in 1582 Lord Rich's chaplain was arrested for allegedly attacking the Accession Day festivities as idolatry of the queen, and complaining that the queen was "lukewarm" over religion.[2] The reforms of Whitgift and Bancroft were aimed at restoring respect for hierarchy and order in religion and hence preventing any further development of subversive individualism; and the Ecclesiastical Polity at last gave a full and coherent rationale for Protestant ceremonial, rejecting the dualistic

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1. Quoted in R.A. Rebholz, The Life of Fulke Greville (Oxford, 1971), p. 92. Greville's thought conforms closely to the paradigm presented by Walzer in The Revolution of the Saints: the chain of being becomes a chain of command, the state an "order of repression".
2. J. Strype, Annals of the Reformation (Oxford, 1824), III.i. 176-80, III.ii. 228-37.

rhetoric, the suspicion of images and masks, that characterized earlier Protestant polemic. It was thus easy for Hooker to ridicule the idea that Anglican ceremonial was retained for crudely Machiavellian reasons; from his point of view it was simply inane to think that one could "create God in man by art" (V.ii.4). Unfortunately, Hooker's theory was belied by the church's practice. He was unable to publish the last three books of the Ecclesiastical Polity, for which the rest had been a preparation, because it was difficult to square the realities of royal policy with the idealized picture that Hooker presented.[1] A more realistic view was given by Harington, who pointed out that the queen herself had done much to undermine respect for the church hierarchy by her open exploitation of its officers and properties. Despite the efforts of Whitgift and Bancroft, church ornamentation was still in a poor state, and ornamentation in all spheres of life must be defended, for what was the nobility but an ornament? In the late 1590s there was an attempt to revive respect for the monarchy on a sacramental, religious basis, but it was not very successful; as Harington pointed out, the queen performed the ceremony of the royal touch although many of her clergy were strongly opposed to the idea of magic-working miracles. Only a church that was allowed clear autonomy would be able to inspire a real religious reverence that could then be transferred to the social hierarchy.[2]

In the later 1590s similar issues were being debated in the Senecan drama of the Countess of Pembroke's circle. Whatever its literary merits, the academic drama of the Renaissance was a useful vehicle for the exploration of political ideas that might be dangerous to express directly. When questioned by the Inquisition about his Baptistes, which was held to be a justification of the Reformation, Buchanan replied that his hero represented not a Protestant but Sir Thomas More; he did not deny that he had written the play to explore topical issues, and indeed it resembles the De Jure Regni in many ways. In dedicating the play to James VI Buchanan made it very clear that it should be read as a

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1. C. Cross, The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabethan Church (London, 1969), pp. 33-7.
2. Harington, Tract on the Succession, pp. 103 ff, Letters and Epigrams, p. 201, Nugae Antiquae, II, 49-50. It must be remembered that Harington was writing as an aspiring bishop; but Cecil was sufficiently impressed by the tract on the succession to take three pages of notes from it (H.M.C. Hatfield, XIV, 215).

warning to him not to become a tyrant.[1] In public Sidney praised Buchanan's plays; in private he took a keen interest in his political ideas. The first English translation from the De Jure Regni was bound up with Greville's Mustapha.[2] In his Discourses vpon Seneca the Tragedian (1601) Sir William Cornwallis placed the emphasis on politics from the start: states, he begins, cannot survive without inequality, but inequality makes the people jealous and discontented. The remedy is clear: "out of subiectes feare groweth Princes safetie". But, he continues, "how this awe is to be obtayned, restes the Arte"; and a major political concern of the English Senecans was with the "art" of maintaining political order and the questions of political morality involved.[3] Such drama was touching on dangerous ground. Jonson was arrested because of his Machiavellian Sejanus (see p. 187). In dedicating a special copy of his Nero to James when he came to the throne, Greville's friend Matthew Gwinne took the revealing precaution of insisting in his preface that the genre of tragedy was "planè panegyricum". It was necessary, he said, to be acquainted not only with the image of a good prince, as in Xenophon's Cyropaedia, but also with that of a bad prince as drawn by Machiavelli. Gwinne adapted Pliny's justification of the panegyric image: "malus quae fecerit, dum memorat, monet, quid bonus faciat".[4] This apology was somewhat laboured; and it is hard to call Greville's tragedies "panegyric" by any standard.

The dates of most of Greville's works are obscure, but his two surviving plays, Mustapha and Alaham, were probably written in succession in the mid-1590s.[5] They were revised after James's accession, and the political themes were made more explicit; but Greville's novel choice of setting indicates that from the beginning he was interested in the debates of the 1590s about religious and secular ceremonial. It was conventional to give Senecan dramas a classical setting; Greville was the only major dramatist to base his plays on recent events in the Ottoman empire. The success of this ungodly and tyrannical empire had been greatly disturbing to Westerners, who looked anxiously for the causes of its

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1. G. Neilson (ed.), George Buchanan: Glasgow Quatercentenary Studies (Glasgow, 1907), pp. 70-71, 447.
2. Ibid., p. 221. This manuscript is now in the Folger Library.
3. W. Cornwallis, Discourses vpon Seneca the Tragedian (London, 1601), sigs. A1a-b.
4. M. Gwinne, Nero (London, 1603, B.L. shelfmark 636.d.4(1)), sigs. A2a-b.
5. I follow Rebholz's datings (pp. 325-40).

success and were struck by the peculiarities of its social structure. There was no absolute right to private property and offices were non-hereditary: thus no cohesive nobility could be formed to counteract royal authority, and officers were chosen purely on the basis of individual merit and were absolutely dependent on the Sultan. In contrast to the traditionalist societies of the West, with their reverence for hereditary images, the Ottoman empire seemed to be an irresistible outpouring of pure power, without any impeding mediations or disguises.[1] Moreover, the empire seemed to Catholics to mirror all that they disliked in Calvinism: fierce iconoclasm, restless rejection of natural hierarchy, emphasis on activity rather than contemplation, idolatrous exaltation of the ruler.[2] Protestants, including Greville, returned the accusation - in the Life of Sidney the Pope is often compared to the Mufti - but elsewhere Greville portrayed the active Turks as the antithesis of the idle Catholics (Caelica, 104), and one reason for his interest in the Turks is his sardonic recognition of an affinity with his own utilitarian bias. In the second chorus of the revised Mustapha the Muslim priests taunt the Christians with their weakness and hypocrisy: the Muslim unity of church and state has led to dynamic expansion, whereas the Christian world is weakened by the endless squabbling of church and state:

> We make the Church our Sultans instrument:
> They with their Kings will make their Church content. (ll. 155-6)

In the Ottoman empire this pristine unity had relatively recently been disturbed; in the fourth chorus the converts present this change, along with the vices of the Sultans, as the chief cause of the decline of the empire. Church and state are now at loggerheads, as in the West. Hitherto, the priests have cynically used

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1. For a representative analysis of the sources of Turkish power, see R. de Lucinge, The Beginning, Continuance, and Decay of Estates (translated by J. Finett, London, 1606), pp. 1ff. Bacon began a late version of his highly ambivalent essay "Of Nobility" (Works, VI, 405-6) by considering the case of the Turkish empire.
2. See the exchange between W. Rainolds, Calvino-Turcismus (Antwerp, 1597) and M. Sutcliffe, De Turcopapismo (London, 1599). Rainolds describes the replacement of the crucifix in churches by the royal arms, which the English idolatrously worship (346-7), and says that the English are worse than the Turks, who are at least consistent and forbid all images, religious as well as secular (p. 339). For Bacon's answer to this common Catholic charge, see Life and Letters, I, 204. Bancroft thought highly of Calvino-Turcismus: M. Pattison, Isaac Casaubon (2nd edn., Oxford, 1892), p. 477.

ceremonial to manipulate the people and exalt the Sultan: the priests

> preache that God who made all fleshe alike,
> bidde you lay downeyour neckes for kinges to strike.
> (Quarto version, Bullough, II, 241).

The rulers gladly accept the aid of ritual mystification:

> People are superstitious, caught with showes:
> To power why doe they else their freedome giue,
> But that in others pompe these shadowes liue?
> (Alaham, III.iii.89-91)

But in both plays a crisis is reached which makes the ritual lose its force, and the monarch's boasted divinity is shown to be a mere Machiavellian disguise. In Mustapha the priests urge the people to

> teare away this veyle
> Of pride from Power; that our great Lord may see
> Vnmiracled, his owne Humanity. (IV.iv.206-8)

Once the people "know their forces", the "mysteries of Empire are dissolued" (V.iii.7-8). The empire rests on a "Sampsons post" (IV.Chorus 124). In Alaham, the grotesque "maske" of death staged by the usurper leads the people to rebel: the "veyles of Power" are "rent from her face" (V.ii.9-11).

One could read these plays as an endorsement of Hooker's argument that a state founded upon a Machiavellian exploitation of religion will be unstable; Greville's Ottoman empire is the antithesis of Hooker's ideal polity with its harmonious interrelation of secular and religious institutions, its reverence for traditional, ceremonially naturalized roles and images. Greville's oriental tyrants try to keep religious ritual under their personal control, but where social roles are so clearly arbitrary "creations" of the imperial will, reverence for social distinctions is undermined. When stated in the abstract, Greville's political views have much in common with Hooker's.[1] But though Greville presents the Ottoman empire as an example to be shunned, he delights in undermining the reader's complacency by hinting that his own social order may not be so very superior or even different. He retains the radical Protestant suspicion of priestcraft; as long as the church is the naked instrument of imperial power, the state is tyrannous but it also prospers; when the church gains more autonomy, it uses it to foment

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1. H.N. MacLean, "Fulke Greville on Kingship and Sovereignty", H.L.Q., 16 1952-3), 237-71 (258).

rebellion. Greville is sceptical of the ability of the gullible masses to resist the magical allure of religious ritual and superstition; while Hooker is confident that Machiavellianism is false because only a true religion can inspire reverence of the kind that will reinforce the social hierarchy, Greville is not so sure that it is impossible to "create God in man by art". He rejects the arguments of the separatists who claim that a state church is Machiavellian, but he does not reject their rhetoric.

This means that his plays throw a sardonic light on the social hierarchy as well: his impulse to demystify, to reveal the inner essence behind the mask, is so strong that he leaves little room for a distinction between the deceitful disguises of religious ritual and the roles and masks of the social order. In Mustapha the wise councillor Achmat is so excited by the rebellion that he urges the people to "reuiue your old equalities of Nature" (V.iii.92); as in the Letter to an Honourable Lady, social roles are seen as arbitrary impositions and throughout his plays there is a nostalgia for a pre-social "nature" in rigid antithesis to social "art". Of course, Greville is no democrat; his Achmat recoils in horror from the prospect of popular rule; he is presenting this arbitrary social order as an evil to be avoided. When the inflation of honours was at its height under James, many critics were to complain that his arbitrary distribution of honours made a theatre out of a social hierarchy that should be based on natural heredity, and used language similar to that in which Greville makes his characters criticize Solimán (see p.227). But with Greville it is often hard to tell whether the "nature" he opposes to political artifice is a nature of hereditary, hierarchically stratified roles or a Stoic egalitarian state of nature prior to social distinctions and hereditary right; his dualistic rhetoric blurs such distinctions.[1] To some extent, then, the tyrannical social orders he portrays in his plays seem to represent the essence of which other kinds are mere mediations: all representation in a public body is to some extent a distortion of the natural, inner self. Whereas Hooker's monism easily naturalizes social distinctions, Greville's dualism insistently highlights their artificiality. Hooker's church enacts through its ritual

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1. In the Treatise of Monarchy (stanza 35) Greville laments the decline from election to birth, brave industry to blood, nature to art. He repeatedly compares the social role to the stamp on a coin (e.g. Grosart, IV, 292).

a harmonious analogy between social decorum and the structure of the macrocosm; Greville's priests gaze at the "fayre orderlye confused planetts" and wonder "yf you be more then ornaments" (Bullough, II, 241).

Greville's radical presentation of extremes extended to the dramatic medium itself. He agreed with Puritan attacks on the public theatre (Life, p. 224); this is a drama of the mind. The soul is "imprisoned" in the flesh until it can join the ranks of the spirits with their "abstract formes", their "substance bodilesse" (Alaham, Chorus I, l.25): no external representation is a reliable sign of virtue. Thus the dramatic action is ambiguous: on all the evidence given to the reader, Celica in Alaham is totally pure, but the evil spirits say she is motivated by spiritual pride. The soliloquies in the plays move jerkily, proceeding abruptly from generalized maxim to personal emotion: we can be sure of general truths but never of their particular embodiments.[1] But only this inherently ambiguous form can do full justice to Greville's thought: in the drama he can counteract his own reductive dualisms by an infinite regress of ironies. In Mustapha there are two fiercely anti-religious choruses which are meant to display the weaknesses of men without faith: they precisely cancel each other out.

But the dramatic form was dangerously open; Greville had no final control of the ironies, and one of the anti-religious choruses became notorious as a fomenter of atheism.[2] Greville was so alarmed by the parallels between a tragedy he had written on Anthony and Cleopatra and the Essex rebellion that he burned it. The shock of the rebellion marked another turning-point in his steady movement towards political resignation; and he began to seek less ambiguous vehicles for his thought. For some years he continued to work on the plays, which circulated in manuscript amongst a small but enthusiastic group.[3] But he did not publish his plays (the 1609 quarto of Mustapha was unauthorized), and he embarked on no new

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1. P. Ure, "Fulke Greville's Dramatic Characters", R.E.S., 1 (1950), 308-23.
2. J. Rees, Fulke Greville (London, 1971), p. 181.
3. John Davies of Hereford, a friend of Wither and other Spenserians, praised Mustapha "as it is written, not printed": Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (Edinburgh 1878), II.k.53. An early admirer was Sir Thomas Smith, a prominent London merchant who had been imprisoned for suspected involvement in the Essex conspiracy; he patronized George Wither (dedication to Exercises vpon the First Psalme, London, 1620).

ones; he turned material originall, intended for the choruses into didactic poems, feeling that a general "perspective into vice" would be more acceptable to good readers than "any bare murmur of discontented spirits against their present Government". The first and longest treatise took up the subject of Monarchy from the plays; but even this attempt to "walke in between two extremities" met with difficulties. When he came to revise the poem, Greville was disturbed by sentiments that still seemed to him too nakedly critical, fearing to "cast scandall upon the sacred foundations of Monarchy". He tried to save the situation by putting on "richer garments" of style, but decided that this would be inconsistent with the didactic form; then he tried to pass off the ideas as not serious by "that hypocritical figure Ironia"; finally he added parallels from classical history to heighten the gravity, and made the treatise deliberately ambiguous, declaring that the techniques of government he was describing could be used with equal profit by kings and by tyrants (Life, pp. 151-6). Greville could resolve the conflict between his stylistic iconoclasm and his firm monarchism only by strategic ambiguities. This was not only a matter of evading censorship: he had genuine difficulty in reconciling the polarities of his thought. Throughout the treatise he opposes tyranny and urges respect for traditional forms: absolute power must be tempered by mediating institutions like the nobility, the church, and Parliament,

> a medium that in one
> Joynes with content a people to a throne. (stanza 288)

But Greville's vocabulary is coldly neutral: he cannot use "ornament" in a positive sense to defend the aristocracy, as Harington does. Conflicting with his strong desire for the mediation of power is his strong sense of the need for repression, coupled with a deep suspicion of the vanity of human artifice as expressed in religious and social ceremonial. Nobility must not "by reflection dymme the Princes eye" (340); its function is to magnify the lustre of power in order to tame the "wilde beast", the people with their love of equality (350). Because man is so easily dazzled by external images, he may find it impossible to distinguish between a true medium and a false one, and tyrants can exploit them for their own benefit. Titles and honour are mere "shadows", idols for which men will throw their liberties away (335, cf. Caelica 78). Outward religion is but a shadow of true faith, one of the instruments by which "thrones enwall themselves with lawes of terror" (238). Laws may be used by tyrants to veil their crimes: the ambivalence

of Greville's attitude to external "forms" is crystallized in the lines

> by lawes the best, and worst affections
> Of pride-borne tyrants formd and disform'd be. (254)

And in general,

> betwene powrs lust, and the peoples right,
> The Mediums helpe to cleere, or dazell light. (196)

In his sense of the externals of social rank as mere masks, of the social hierarchy as sustained by the chains of the imagination, and in the constant paradoxes and reversals, Greville strikingly resembles Pascal.[1] But the treatise form already makes Greville's thought more rigid; and the Treatise of Monarchy was still too dangerous to be published in 1633. In his later treatises Greville moved still further from perplexing ambiguities, making a firm structural separation between the evils of a phenomenon from an absolute point of view and its practical political utility. This rigidity reflects his growing pessimism under the new reign. He was one of the few major poets not to greet James with a panegyric, and he lost power soon after James's accession. He viewed with great concern the re-emergence of the Howards, representatives of the old Catholic-leaning nobility which Sidney had so mistrusted. The values of the old Essex party were in total eclipse, and Greville decided to use his enforced retirement to write a life of Queen Elizabeth. The project probably began about the same time as Bacon was composing a tribute to the late queen.[2] But Cecil denied Greville access to the state papers, despite his assurance that he would not "tell all truths", and the praise of Elizabeth was worked into another project, a life of Sidney, which began as a posthumous dedication to Greville's works. Thus the prose work for which he is best known was in a sense a by-product of a panegyric of Elizabeth and forms a tribute to the whole reign. Elizabeth is presented in a highly idealized

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1. Cf. Pascal , Pensées, ed. L. Lafuma (Paris, 1962), nos. 26, 44, 828: "La puissance des rois est fondée sur la raison et sur la folie du peuple, et bien plus sur la folie... Qui dispense la reputation, qui donne le respect et la vénération aux personnes, aux ouvrages, aux lois, sinon cette faculté imaginante... ces cordes qui attachent donc le respect à tel et à tel en particulier sont des cordes d'imagination." Greville even has his version of Pascal's wager: "But grant that there were no eternity..." (Caelica 102).
2. Bacon, Works, VI, 291-318.

form; she becomes a "she-David" ruling an "anti-Rome", a guardian of limited monarchy. With characteristic duality, Greville argued that by making great claims for his prerogative the king was in fact undermining his authority by provoking Parliament to encroach upon the sacred foundations of royal power (Life, p. 174).[1]

Greville was, in fact, no more enthusiastic about the growing vociferousness of Parliament than about James's cult of his own image; and, like Bacon, he eagerly grasped the chance to serve the monarchy again when Cecil died. He rejected Seneca's course of retirement from a corrupt court (Monarchy, 109-10), feeling, like Muret, that something could be achieved by "passyve goodnes" even in the worst of times (111) - and not being a man to turn down a chance of profit. He included a few stanzas in praise of kings in his Treatie of Human Learning (c. 1620-22) - though the claim that kings are natural signs, "cleare Mirrors" of God, who can be worshipped "in" them, is hardly consistent with the general iconoclastic drive of his thought (135-6). In 1617 Greville entertained the king at Warwick Castle; his Treatie of Warres may have been written at the time of the Palatinate crisis, in which case it would have been an endorsement of the king's pacific policy.[2] But the last few sonnets of Caelica contain seathing attacks on the decadence of monarchy (102) and worldly fame (105), applying in a secular context the old fable of Isis and the ass. In the Inquisition upon Fame and Honour (1612-14?) Greville ridicules the Aristotelian - and Spenserian - ethic of magnanimity, attacking

> diuiding tytles, captiu'd lawes,
> Of Mans distresse, and ignorance the cause. (78)

But by now Greville had mastered the more troubling problems that had recurred throughout his work: his pessimism was so thoroughgoing that he could make a secure distinction between divine and secular perspectives, and thus justify his continuing to serve a regime of whose defects he was painfully conscious. Nevertheless, he could not entirely silence the old doubts, and his last political gesture was a characteristically "Senecan" act of cautious protest. He had founded

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1. On the political connotations of the Life see Rebholz, pp. 205-15.
2. Nichols, Progresses of James I, III, 431-4. The imagery of the speech of welcome was characteristically Grevillean: in the past the castle had exchanged the gold chains of nobility for the iron chains of imprisonment. On the Treatie of Warres see Rebholz, p. 337.

a history lectureship and after unsuccessful negotiations with other candidates he selected the young Dutch scholar Isaac Dorislaus; he instructed him to lecture on Tacitus, and in his lecture Dorislaus criticized tyrants and praised the Dutch rebellion against the King of Spain. The lecture caused a furore, arousing the fierce opposition of the Laudians.[1] Dorislaus was to support the execution of Charles I and was murdered by indignant royalists. But Greville had been alarmed by the lecture and took no decisive action to continue the lectureship. His political legacy was ambiguous: his closest friend, John Coke, became an extreme champion of the royal prerogative, while his heir died in action on the Parliamentary side.

Greville's tortuous life and writings were one of the channels by which the Protestant radicalism of the Sidney circle was passed on to future generations. He was one of the most original and unorthodox writers of the age but his timidity and scepticism made him constantly draw back from his most radical conclusions, and the result is an extreme and often wilful stylistic obscurity. But the obscurity is difficult to separate from the strengths: it is partly a function of his unusual range, as one whose practical political experience makes him reject the simple dualisms of court vice and country virtue that satisfied the Spenserian poets but who is never complacent in his defence of the established order. Similarly, Greville never uncritically accepted a simple linguistic dualism. It is true that as he grew older his stylistic iconoclasm intensified, and he toyed with the idea of turning his verse treatises into prose, stripping off even their "light, and limited apparell in verse" (Life, p. 152). He occasionally used the Sidneian terminology of "images", but more often his model for language is not ceremony but commutative exchange: poetic images become coins "for all Opinions arts to traffike by" (Caelica 80). Verbal arts are merely instrumental arts,

> Which, in the trafficke of Humanity,
> Afford not matter, but limme out the parts,
> And formes of speaking with authority. (Learning 102)

A peacetime economy is viewed as the nearest approximation to the prelapsarian state:

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1. Rebholz, pp. 293-302; N. Farmer, Jr., "Fulke Greville and Sir John Coke: An Exchange of Letters on a History Lectureship and Certain Latin Verses on Sir Philip Sidney", H.L.Q., 33 (1969-70), 217-36.

> Exchange, the language is she speakes to all;
> Yet least confusion feeles of Babels fall.
> (Treatie of Warres, 2)

But Greville never abandoned poetry, and he was more aware than many theorists of the "plain style" of the difficulties inherent in trying to make language a fully transparent medium.[1] His attitude to language parallels his attitude to other social forms. There can be no final and assured relation between inner and outer: a recurrent image in his writings is the Tower of Babel, emblem of a linguistic Fall parallel to the passing of the Golden Age of social equality. However much man may dream of a prelapsarian order of immediate communication, he is not redeemed from language. An excess of ornament may impede communication, but a plain style may merely reflect limited ability (Caelica 80); a hierarchical society may involve idolatry of external rank but a democratic society with its more immediate forms of communication and exchange "lets fall mens mindes" (Monarchy 612). Idolatrous ceremonial may give a spurious lustre to tyranny, but these "shadowes" in turn form "second reflections" which "represent" the divine truth that earthly power is trying to pervert (Monarchy 38-40). As soon as man has abolished one obstacle to communication, another takes its place: the Manicheans prided themselves on having abolished idols and freed the spirit entirely from matter, but they proceeded to make idols of their mental images; similarly, the Reformation has replaced external ritualized knowledge of Christ by inner verbal forms, but words too can become idols (Caelica 89). The attack on logic and rhetoric in the Treatie of Humane Learning is followed by a lucid exposition of the value of a healthy imagination (114). Greville shared Puritan doubts about ritual, but he was suspicious of the tendency of religious radicals, having disposed of one particular religious form, to freeze its successor and regard it as a rigid, immutable mirror of divine truth; in the same way, implicit in his poetry is the recognition that the "plain style" could aspire to a misleading transparency that concealed the deeper potentialities and ambiguities of language. And yet the urgency of his desire for immediacy is never lost; he uses poetic form in such a way as to sharpen the tension between form and content. He

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1. The best account of his poetic theories is N. Farmer, Jr., "Fulke Greville and the Poetic of the Plain Style", Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 11 (1969), 657-70.

probably discussed the question of poetic form in some detail with Daniel, who was moved to defend rhyme against Campion's charge that it was a Procrustean bed, torturing the matter to the appropriate shape. Daniel's defence of rhyme betrayed a certain unease (see p. 168); he rejected feminine rhymes because they made their artifice too obtrusive. Greville needed rhyme to discipline his endlessly searching and qualifying mind, but he seems also to have relished obtrusive artificiality, and he continued to use emphatic feminine rhymes. The medium is never naturalized: the matter is tormented by the form as the soul by the body.

This sense of literary and social forms as provisional, necessary but imperfect, is most clearly seen in Greville's attitude to Sidney's writings. He reported that Sidney had wanted the Arcadia burned, "from which fate it is onely reserved, untill the world hath purged away all her more gross corruptions" (Life, p. 17). Greville agreed that the work, though magnificent, should be "the last in this kind" (p. 223), and when circumstances compelled him to publish it he left it in its incomplete final form, ending abruptly in mid-sentence, an appropriately truncated memorial. He reproduced this gesture in his life of Sidney: "I will cut off his Actions, as God did his Life, in the midst" (p. 127). In 1615 he planned a more elaborate memorial for his friend; the epitaph he wrote has been lost, but its contents can be inferred from a letter by his secretary. Coke makes the straightforward demand for a "plain style": he complains that some of Greville's similes are not easily "construed to a litteral plaine sense", such poetry being perhaps fit for the stage but not for the church. The verse presumably contained ironic comments on worldly glory, in the manner of the recently completed Inquisition upon Fame and Honour. Coke wants to minimize the tension between religious austerity and social orthodoxy: he complains that Greville's verses seem to deprecate nobility. His criticisms indicate the tensions that give Greville's work its unique force: "the inscription condembeth the tomb: the woords despise the deeds: and take away that honor [which] is sought... they serve... to put down that you build".[1]

Greville concentrated his poetic output in the Caelica sequence; he took great care over its arrangement, revising the plan several times, and the sequence

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1. Farmer, "Fulke Greville and Sir John Coke". p. 222.

as it stands is a symbolic representation of his career and its meaning. The structure pivots on the figures of Sidney and Elizabeth, representatives of a perfection in literary and political forms that can no longer be attained. The sequence has 109 poems, one more than Sidney's Astrophel and Stella. From the beginning Greville's poetry had been more sceptical and disillusioned than Sidney's, but there is an important turning-point after no. 75; numbers 76 and 84 are farewells to love, and the Sonnets in between were subject to much revision; 76-81 may have been written at a later date.[1] 81 is a panegyric of Queen Elizabeth; 82 is a brief epitaph, followed by a blank page: presumably Greville wanted to place an expanded epitaph on Sidney here. 83 is a poem of complaint, probably addressed to Elizabeth before 1583. This is followed by a farewell to love, and the rest is political and then religious didacticism. 81 is three-quarters of the way through the sequence as it now stands; the other explicit panegyric of Elizabeth is at the mid-point, no. 55. 81 is preceded by a brilliantly compressed poem contrasting the ornate literary styles of "cleare spirits" who often use hyperboles and are too obscure for a wide audience with "dull Spirits" who are confined to the transcription of the mundane reality of a declining world - lovers, in a significant phrase rejected in revision, of "sadd reall grounds". The contrast is between Sidney, the poet of the harmonious Elizabethan order, and Greville himself, the representative of that order in an age in which such artifices are no longer appropriate. Elizabeth stands as the representative in political forms of the perfection Sidney embodied in literary forms. This last celebration of Queen Elizabeth is the act by which the "golden" style sadly declares itself redundant.

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1. W.H. Kelliher, "The Warwick Manuscripts of Sir Fulke Greville", British Museum Quarterly, 34 (1969-70), 107-21 (112).

2. Samuel Daniel: The Invisible Ceremony

The conflicts that had such a dramatic effect on Greville's work also marked the poetry of his friend Samuel Daniel.[1] At the start of his career Daniel was setting himself to emulate the great poets of the "golden" style, Sidney and Spenser, and he won the patronage of Sidney's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, becoming tutor to her son. By 1593 he had completed three books of The Civil Wars, a national heroic poem in which Bolingbroke's rebellion is seen, on the orthodox Tudor model, as a political fall from which the Tudors have redeemed the realm. The first four books were published in 1595, and he seems on this occasion or on the publication of an expanded version to have gained patronage from the queen. At a crucial turning-point in the poem, before Bolingbroke returns to England, Daniel launches into a lament for English glory: had it not been for the civil wars, England would still own large areas of France, her dominions would be secure against Spanish attack, and Daniel would have been able to take a more glorious subject, the celebration of Elizabeth's great deeds (II, 122ff.). In 1595, when Essex was urging a grand alliance with France, this indicated enthusiasm for his projects, and Daniel's praise of Essex - though not of Mountjoy - was omitted from the 1601 edition. Daniel added further books in 1601 and 1609; the legend that he was appointed poet laureate in succession to Spenser is without foundation but does indicate Daniel's pre-eminence and his sense of the poet's public function.

But Daniel's poetry was marked from the beginning by uncertainties that did not trouble Spenser or Drayton. Thesepoets used history in the grand epideictic manner, to legitimize and celebrate the glories of the present; Daniel, a close friend of Camden, was imbued with the spirit of the new "critical history", and this tended to undermine both the form and the content of his poem. In successive revisions the original providential scheme was qualified and a more pragmatic approach to power prevailed; Daniel broke off the poem in 1601 at the point where Edward IV has been given power illegitimately, and though Daniel

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1. I am indebted throughout to the study by Joan Rees, Samuel Daniel (Liverpool, 1964). For the sake of convenience I give references to the inaccurate edition by Grosart (references to The Civil Wars are to book and stanza number, otherwise to volume and page number); but I am grateful to John Pitcher for showing me the text and annotations of his forthcoming edition of the complimentary poems.

emphasizes that Edward had no good title to the throne, he says that it would have been best to accept his rule for the sake of peace; it is on this basis that he declares: "This is my side, my Muse must hold with kings". (VII , 109). At the beginning of Book V, Henry V appears to reproach Daniel for his lack of the panegyric spirit: why is he chronicling the dire misfortunes of his country when he could be celebrating great heroic deeds past and present? (V, 3-9). But Daniel had declared at the start of the poem that "I versifie the troth, not Poetize" (I, 6), and he is less interested in framing heroic images than in analyzing historical causation. Like Bacon, he felt that the chains of cause and effect were far too complex to be grasped by the traditional chronicles of ceremonies and battles; history was not made only by a few great men. Daniel thought of the state more easily as a machine than as an organism:

> For this great motion of a State we see
> Doth turne on many wheeles, and some (thogh smal)
> Do yet the greater moue, who in degree
> Stirre those who likewise turne the great'st of all (III, 140)

He views ceremonial critically, taking an interest in the mechanism by which it enforces obedience (VII, 5); and his poetic practice is affected by this suspicion of the power of ceremonial images to deceive. His style is sparse and stripped of all unnecessary ornamentation, differing markedly from the extravagant ornamentation of Lucan with whom he was sometimes compared. Eventually Daniel abandoned the poem altogether and turned to writing a prose history.

According to Harvey, Essex preferred the "pageants" of Warner's Albions England, and it was the slightly more reflective Mountjoy who preferred Daniel's Civil Wars; while Daniel's contacts in the 1590s were mostly with sympathizers of Essex, he did not share the uncritical militancy of men like Peele and Markham.[1] He was better fitted for voicing the critical political disillusion of Bacon and Greville; his brother John composed melancholy lute-songs in the manner of Dowland and perhaps sharing some of the hidden political allusions.[2] Like many of the Senecans, he took a particular interest in the dilemma of oppressed women, which could easily acquire political connotations, as in Greville's

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1. Harvey, Marginalia, ed. G.C. Moore Smith (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1913), p.232.
2. Ruff and Wilson, "The Madrigal, the Lute Song, and Elizabethan Politics", pp. 45-6.

Letter to an Honourable Lady. It has been suggested that the lady of Greville's letter was the lady to whom Daniel's Octavia was dedicated and to whom he addressed a verse epistle: Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, whose daughter Daniel tutored.[1] She was unhappily married, and the contrast between husband and wife epitomized the political tensions of the 1590s: the husband, the queen's champion in the Accession Day tilts, was a man of action, a leader of naval expeditions; his wife displayed the Stoic resignation which Daniel felt to be a more noble course. He has great sympathy for the woman enclosed in the "prison" of her sex; and in the epistle to Southampton he praises virtue that is literally imprisoned. A sense of frustration and confinement runs through his verse of the 1590s, but in Daniel's case the causes were not so much ideological as social: he was acutely aware of the intense competition for "room" in the patronage system. He always managed to find patronage, but he was frequently on the verge of hardship. He does seem to have won favour from the queen, and he was also patronized by Mountjoy and the Countesses of Pembroke and Bedford; but, as a letter to Egerton written about 1601 shows, he felt that his talents were not being fully exercised, and he never felt entirely secure. His doubts were expressed most fully in Musophilus, which, despite its grandly Elizabethan promise to offer "a generall defence of all learning", is much less confident than Sidney's reply to the opponents of poetry. The poem is a dialogue between the poet Musophilus and the sceptical and utilitarian Philocosmus. Musophilus rejects his opponent's arguments, but the fact that he felt compelled to state them at such length is itself significant. By this time Daniel had come under the influence of Fulke Greville, to whom he dedicated Musophilus and whose presence can be felt at many points in the poem. Far from rejoicing in the recent burgeoning of literary talent, Musophilus sees it as a threat at a time when there is such intense competition for places in church and state: the arts and sciences are left with "fewer roomes them to accommodate" (l.458) threatening to dislodge true worth from its "lawfull roome" (764). The result of the competition is stylistic inflation: "he must sing alowd that will be heard" (65). The fashion for superfluous ornamentation can "leaue no roome for words" (237). Philocosmus

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1. Rees, Fulke Greville, pp. 175-6.

rejects the panegyrists' idea that England is a "golden world": it offers "narrow limits" for the poet's labours (434). While he accepts the worth of panegyrics of great men, he regards all other poetry as mere flattery of the imagination (410-13); Musophilus is less enthusiastic about panegyric, and he accepts that his audience may be a few who for him will make up "all the world" (556).

Daniel's Stoicism leads him to make some scathing criticisms of aristocratic vanity; he uses the figure of Isis and the ass to criticize idolatry of titles (629-34) and ridicules the vanity of noblemen's tombs (312ff). But Daniel, characteristically, modified the latter passage in revision; his Stoicism was more serene than Greville's, not being intensified by Greville's urgent Calvinism. A "narrow roome" may be a prison but it may also represent necessary bounds which it is disastrous to break. His architectural metaphors have connotations of hierarchy and geometrical proportion lacking in Greville's blunter symbolism of whips and chains. In Musophilus he lamented the Reformation, which cheapened the estimate of the mysteries of religion and "laid all flat in common" (689ff); elsewhere he even regretted the invention of the printing press, and he did all he could to prevent his own printed works from becoming commodities, by varying copies for specific dedicatees.

In his attitude to poetry, too, Daniel is less extreme than Greville. Up to a point his career, like Greville's, may be seen as a process of stylistic iconoclasm. He prefers abstract to concrete terms, and like Greville he gives the word "image" no more visual overtones than "model". The dominant model for the exchange of ideas is arithmetical rather than geometrical proportion: poetic form is seen as an arbitrary exchange value, and good verse will

> pay
> The eare with substance....
> The stamp will not allowe it but the touch.
> ("To the Reader", ll. 77-82; I,14)

Daniel frequently celebrates the linguistic profit that comes from colonial expansion and from translation: poetry "vents her treasure in all lands", and the mystifying "Hierogliphicques, Ciphers, Caracters" that seem to look up the matter in a traditional form can easily be penetrated (verses to Florio, 69ff, Grosart I, 287). Rhyme is valuable only because all excellencies are "sold vs at the hard price of labour... where we bestow most thereof, we buy the best successe " (IV, 45). Daniel was moved to reply to Campion's attack on rhyme, but there was a certain

hesitancy in his arguments; he said that it was Campion who was imposing a Procrustean regularity on language with his classical metres, and rejected all excessively artificial structures, such as feminine rhyme (IV, 65). Daniel's use of rhyme in the 1590s betrays a similar lack of confidence: he experimented with irregular rhyme schemes to reduce the "certaintie" of regular forms, but the effect was sometimes to make it impossible to have any expectations at all. Jonson was enraged by both protagonists in the controversy but particularly by Daniel, and his "Fit of rhyme against rhyme" is part of his retort: with great virtuosity Jonson demonstrates the possibilities of an unfamiliar and rigid rhyme-scheme even as he denounces it. Not for Jonson any nonsense about pure spirit unmediated by external form.

But where Greville's suspicion of external forms makes him heighten the tension between form and content, emphasizing the artificiality of the medium, Daniel combines a strong awareness of artifice with a desire to naturalize it as effectively as possible. There is a Grevillean ring about his description of enjambement as an escape from the chains of form, "passing ouer the Ryme, as no bound to stay vs in the line where the violence of the matter will breake thorow" (IV, 64); but normally he makes his "matter" accept its imprisonment without resorting to violence. The Defence of Rhyme is a poetic equivalent of the Ecclesiastical Polity: Daniel argues that style and form are "indifferent things" (IV, 57) which should be accepted, despite their limitations, instead of attempting "to ouerthrow the whole state of Ryme in this Kingdome" (IV, 36) - this would be to "put off these fetters to receiue others" (IV, 42). Daniel directly compares the English conventions of poetic form with "the woonderfull Architecture of the State of England" (IV, 53). Daniel's stylistic iconoclasm is designed to counter the inflation caused by those of low rank who imitate the external forms of ceremony by adopting a purer standard of speech; he carefully excludes "low" words and tends to increase the proportion of Latinisms in revision. In The Defence of Rhyme Daniel proscribes a free trade in words: verbal imports must be controlled by a Parliament (IV, 67). Beneath the abstract and "plain" surface of his poetry there is a gentle metaphoric pull towards the original concrete sense: abstract "roome" is not quite a dead metaphor for a concrete, hierarchically ordered room. In form, he steers between the defects of excessive artifice, which devalues aristocratic exclusiveness, and a plainness that lets the verse "fall downe into flat

prose" (IV, 44). Daniel admires Lucan for making his verse "seeme to haue no bounds", and he allows his more prosaically-minded readers to pass over the verse without taking notice of it, "and please themselues with a well-measured Prose" (IV, 64). Poetic form mediates between hierarchical order and direct communication by an invisible ceremony: it is a mask that pretends to be transparent.

Like so many poets, Daniel hoped that the accession of a new monarch would put an end to the insecurities of the 1590s, and the Panegyrike Congratulatorie with which he greeted James, though written at great speed, embodied all of his major preoccupations. The poem was commissioned by the Countess of Bedford, who had been in the circle of Essex's sympathizers but avoided any complicity in his rebellion; it was presented to the king during his visit to Burleigh-Harrington, which belonged to her father Sir John Harington of Exton. Harington had often entertained members of Essex's party at his lavish Christmas revels.[1] Essex's sympathizers hoped that they would now gain especial favour from the king whom Essex had so assiduously courted, and there were rumours that Cecil would be ousted. In June a panegyric of Essex was enjoying a good sale, partly because people were buying it quickly in case it was called in.[2] The volume in which Daniel later published the revised versions of his panegyric reflected these political hopes; he praised Southampton and the Countess of Bedford. Ralegh, Essex's old enemy, met a frosty reception from the king at Burleigh; Daniel judiciously altered a reference to Guiana, too obviously associated with Ralegh, and substituted Peru (stanza 35).

The Countess of Bedford was gaining a dominant position at court, and Daniel seemed set to be the leading court poet. His chief rival was Ben Jonson, who expressed his resentment at Daniel's ascendancy in an epistle to the Countess of Rutland. Jonson had to make do with an entertainment for the queen and her retinue at Althorp; but in his London pageants he sought to establish himself as a superior poet, and he published a "Panegyre" in direct contrast with Daniel's "Panegyrike". The contrast between these poems epitomizes the difference in

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1. At the revels of 1595 Titus Andronicus had been performed: see G. Ungerer, "An Unrecorded Elizabethan Performance of Titus Andronicus", Shakespeare Survey, 14 (1961), 102-9; for the 1602 revels see Chamberlain, 1, 179.
2. H.M.C. Hatfield, XV, 82, 213; H.M.C. Gawdy, 92.

approach to panegyric that persisted for many years, and helps to explain why it was Jonson who won most favour with James. Jonson's chief model is Claudian, not so much in a particular poem as in the general combination of stern moralizing with obtrusive mythological ornamentation.[1] In the central section the goddess Themis, having made a spectacular entrance suspended from the Great Chain of Being, gives stern didactic instruction to King James, warning him not to take pride in pomp. This section is framed by a description of the people who flock to see the king and are told by Themis how lucky they are. Thus Jonson gives his advice under a mythological mask and carefully separates it from the king's relations with the people, whose normal role in Jonson's panegyrics is simply to be grateful. The only part of Pliny's panegyric directly imitated by Jonson is the rather uncharacteristic section describing the people's admiration at the emperor's entry to Rome - though Pliny, unlike Jonson, was using this description to point the fact that the prince's entrancewas much more humble than was the custom (Panegyricus 22-23). Daniel is attracted to Pliny by the relative directness of his approach: advice is given from one man to another, with the minimum of mythological machinery. He therefore sets himself the considerable artistic challenge of maintaining the appropriate dignity without any extravagant rhetorical resources. If the poem was actually read aloud, the king was seldom exposed to such pure didacticism face to face; but the word "deliuered" in the title-page may merely mean "presented". Certainly Daniel was following Pliny's precedent in expanding the original version for wider circulation; and like Pliny he says that a new era of plain speaking is dawning:

> we must be faine
> T'vnlearne that Arte [of flattery], and labour to be plaine.[2]
> (Stanza 27)

He tells James that England's love for its monarch is

> a passion borne most free,
> And most vnsubiect to dominion. (5)[3]

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1. On the classical background of Jonson's and Daniel's panegyrics see J.D. Garrison, Dryden and the Tradition of Panegyric (Berkeley, 1975), pp. 84-95.
2. Daniel's friend, and the Countess of Bedford's kinsman, Sir John Harington, placed a similar emphasis on plain speaking under the new reign: "This age, this minde, a Muse awsteare requires" (Letters and Epigrams, p. 321).
3. Grosart, following an error in the 1623 edition, gives "more free".

The "plainness" does not preclude compliment: much of the moral advice is drawn from the king's own Basilicon Doron, which must have sweetened the pill considerably. Daniel condemns the vices James had condemned, laying especial stress, like James, on flattery and lust.[1] And he presents the state of the kingdom before James came to the throne as so ruinous that only a strong external power could reform it: the king stands above all interest-groups, the same to all men like Jupiter (68), and the people are

> tractable, obsequious,
> Apt to be fashion'd by thy glorious hand
> To any forme of honor... (6)

In the sparse context, the few metaphors have great force: James is like the spring (17), he makes the pulse of England beat (18), the state is a golden meadow waiting to be mowed by the prince (39); God's love

> made thy way, thy passage plaine,
> Leuell'd the world for thee... (12)

In his enthusiasm for James, Daniel depreciates his predecessors: Henry VIII, Edward VI, Philip II and Elizabeth were "a disordinate And lustfull Prince", a "child", a "stranger", and a "woman" (45). Daniel seems to have been the first person to use the term "Great Britain" in a panegyric: James was extremely fond of the name but many Englishmen disliked it. Daniel introduced the word "prototype" to English to compliment James's unprecedented virtue (23). In the 584 lines of the expanded version the word "state" appears in its modern sense no less than eighteen times.

But Daniel lays less emphasis on innovation than many panegyrists of 1603. In the most spectacular celebration of the Union, Hymenaei, Jonson presented it as a transcendence of existing political forms, and Bacon agreed that the union was the creation of a wholly new "form". Parliament disliked such innovations; Daniel characteristically tries both to celebrate innovation and to present it as a full realization of a traditional form. Again and again he seeks terms that will present

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1. Daniel's publisher, Waterson, was one of the syndicate which published Basilicon Doron in England. The original version of the Panegyrike broke off at st. 59 with a stern condemnation of "Imperiall lust": cf. Basilicon Doron, ed. J. Craigie, I (Edinburgh and London, 1944), 123-33. The manuscript is in the British Library, MS. Royal 18 A.LXXII.

the accession as simultaneously new and old, so that it does not "seeme a change" (29). The first stanza presents all the greatest achievements of England, with the word "most" repeated several times, but crowns these with the assertion that this day sees a still greater achievement.[1] The English love freedom but they will readily be ruled by James because he is "much more then a King" (5). The people show more zeal towards James than Elizabeth - and yet how could there be more? (8). It is the greatest glory on earth to be a king, and yet much more to give instruction to princes (21). No band can bind James's crown, and yet his own Basilicon Doron binds it (22). Henry VII made the state of England more sound than ever, but James has brought an addition, at a time when his presence was more than most desired (41, 43-4). The new northern blood is really old blood "return'd... with a greater gaine" (48) (a characteristic shift from hierarchical to economic imagery). Despite the change, we "doe not seeme to moue" (11); Providence creates "vncertaine certainty" (48). Daniel uses the unobtrusive ceremoniousness of his own verse to symbolize the desired reconciliation. The fine simile of the river (32) epitomizes the harmonious union of great power and traditional forms.[2] The theme of change without change is enacted by the rhymes: several times the rhyme-word is simply repeated:

> A greater vnion that is more intire,
> And makes vs more our selues, sets vs at one
> With Nature that ordain'd vs to be one. (3)

In the manuscript and folio versions Daniel carried this technique to its extreme by making three lines rhyme on "forme", "forme" and "reforme" (30). Just as Daniel's stylistic plainness is aimed not so much at undermining ceremonial distinction as at protecting it from inflation, so the reforms he urges on James must simply restore the "frame" of the state founded by Henry VII to "proportion Geometricall" (36). The ills Daniel attacked in Musophilus must be ended so that there will be "room" for talent. Daniel's aesthetic and political ideals are identical: there must be "temp'rate sobernesse" (55), "iust Symetry" (45), and "proportion'd euennesse" (7). Daniel is moving towards a conception of both poetic forms and

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1. John Pitcher points out that "this day" would have been St. George's Day: Daniel celebrates the transformation of England on the day that is most specifically English.
2. Garrison, p. 93, points out that the river simile derives from Claudian, "Panegyricus Dictus Manlio Theodoro Consuli", ll. 232-41.

the state as mechanisms rather than ceremonial enactments of cosmic order, but he accepts traditional forms with good grace. The innovations are completely unobtrusive, down to the most striking of all: Daniel seems to be the first poet to have used the noun "panegyric" for an English poem.[1]

For a time Daniel continued to benefit from the favour the Countess of Bedford enjoyed at court, and he was commissioned to write one of the lavish masques for the Christmas season.[2] In a masque it was obviously more difficult to combine panegyric with stylistic plainness: the queen was enthusiastically trying out her predecessor's wardrobe and wanted an opportunity for spectacular display; Arabella Stuart was disturbed by the frivolity. Negotiations for peace with Spain were under way; there was still opposition from some courtiers, but several former Essex supporters who had Catholic leanings now favoured rapprochement with Spain as the most likely means of gaining toleration. Amongst the supporters of peace was Daniel's patron Mountjoy. The queen was especially friendly to Spain, and she insisted that the Spanish ambassador should be present at Daniel's masque, the climax of the festivities, despite a threat from the French ambassador to kill him. Daniel took as his theme the gifts necessary for good government which the goddesses lay on the altar of the Temple of Peace. But he had extreme difficulty in reconciling the didactic content with the courtly form: he constructed layer upon layer of fictions and then proceeded to strip them away again. Night and Sleep create a vision which is revealed to Sybilla; Iris explains this to her, but Sybilla thinks that her appearance may have been "but a fantasme or imagination" (l. 80, III, 200). In a clumsy device Daniel makes her view the vision of the goddesses through a telescope and explain their meaning as they advance down the hall, "that the eyes of the Spectators might not beguile their eares, as in such cases it euer happens, whiles pompe and splendor of the sight takes vp all the intention without regard [to] what is spoken" (Preface, III, 193-4).

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1. Garrison, pp. 12-13; like Garrison, I have not been able to find any exact precedents.
2. For the background of the masque see the edition by E. Law, The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses (London, 1880), and Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, III, 277-81. The masque has also been edited by Joan Rees in A Book of Masques (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 17-42. For a more favourable evaluation, see W. Creigh, "Samuel Daniel's Masque 'The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses'", Essays and Studies, N.S., 24 (1971), 22-35.

At the end of the masque Sybilla asks that the blessings of which the masque revealed the "Figures" should be present "in substance" (l. 182, III, 203), and Iris sums up by reiterating the principles of representation: the deities, descending in their "inuisible essence", took the "formes" of the court ladies, presenting themselves under their beautiful "persons", "being otherwise no obiects for mortall eyes" (III, 204-5). Iris hopes that the blessings "represented" in the masque will grace the monarchy with their "Reall effects" (ll. 230-31).

In the preface Daniel elaborated further on the gap between form and content: he compared his goddesses to other "Abstracts" like virtues, vice, passions and knowledges which are presented "in humane bodies" to the imagination (III, 192). He felt it necessary to give a written explanation for the sake of those who could not follow the meaning because "the present pompe and splendor entertain'd them otherwise" (III, 195). His other motive was to answer the criticism of Ben Jonson, who had clearly ridiculed the formal uncertainty of the masque and the liberties he felt Daniel was taking with classical mythology. In his reply Daniel displays his customary scepticism about external form: he used the figures of the goddesses for a specific purpose and was not concerned with the "mysticall interpretations" set out by the mythographers. He was not "tied by any lawes of Heraldry" (III, 189). It was not worth lavishing great wit on such an inherently limited form: "in these matters of shewes (though they be that which most entertaine the world) there needs no such exact sufficiency in this kind" (III, 196). Bacon agreed: "These things are but toys, to come amongst such serious observations".[1] But Jonson felt that such rigid dualism threatened the mystique of monarchy: when James wanted to present himself as the natural image of God, a mystical embodiment of divine sovereignty, it was tactless to emphasize the arbitrary character of ceremonial representations. Daniel's masque praised James's peace but there was no direct praise of the king himself. The masque was held at Hampton Court shortly before the conference at which James showed his displeasure with the Puritans. Daniel dressed his Vesta like a nun (III, 190), but his general attitude to disguise and ceremony was so sceptical that he had something in common with the Puritan who a few days later condemned

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1. "Of Masques and Triumphs", Works, VI, 467.

ecclesiastical vestments.[1]

Daniel was now in such favour that the month after the masque the queen created for him the post of licenser to the Queen's Revels. But the following year his play Philotas met with a stormy reception: he was called before the council because of suspected allusions to the Essex case in the play. Daniel denied all topical reference, arguing that the play was wholly general in meaning and that he had begun writing it before Essex's fall: Latewar, who became his patron Mountjoy's chaplain, had long ago written a play on the subject. The question of political intention cannot be given a simple answer.[2] If the play was begun about 1600, it was contemporaneous with Greville's Alaham and Anthony and Cleopatra; there are many similarities between Greville's plays and Philotas, most notably the contrast between the plain'spoken hero and the tyrant idolized by flattering courtiers. Greville did not mean his plays to be simple topical allegories: they were "models" which laid claim to unversal applicability. But the "models" were made to be applied, not to be relegated to an autonomous aesthetic realm, and it was an unwelcome tribute to his skill in penetrating to the essence of events when the events portrayed in Anthony and Cleopatra were "not poetically, but really" fashioned in the fall of Essex (Life of Sidney, p. 151). Greville burned this play for fear that "childish" censors would take it as a topical allegory; he probably revised Alaham for the same reason.[3] If Daniel, as he protested, had no suspicion that anyone in the audience could possibly have detected any reference to Essex, he was remarkably blind to his friend's fears. Attempts had been made by several poets to rehabilitate Essex's memory, but it was clear that the subject was a tender one. The king became unpopular remarkably quickly, and the freedom with which the players satirized him became a public scandal. Moreover, Daniel's patron herself attended these plays: "Consider... what must be the state and condition of a prince, whom the preachers publicly from the pulpit assail, whom

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1. In 1603 Bacon wrote a treatise advocating acceptance of many of the Puritans' demands: Life and Letters, III, 102.
2. The case for allusions to Essex is argued by B. Stirling, "Daniel's Philotas and the Essex Case", M.L.Q., 3 (1942), 583-601, and L. Michel in his edition of the play (New Haven, 1949). G.A. Wilkes, "Daniel's Philotas and the Essex Case: A Reconsideration", M.L.Q., 23 (1962), 233-42, and Rees, pp. 100ff reject topical interpretations.
3. Rebholz, pp. 131-5.

the comedians of the metropolis bring upon the stage, whose wife attends these representations in order to enjoy the laugh against her husband."[1] No company was more willing to take political risks than the company of which Daniel was licenser; they continued to do so after the queen's patronage was withdrawn, so that it is perhaps unfair to hold Daniel responsible for two of his company's lapses which occurred while he was censor of their plays; but no one but Daniel was responsible for the third, and in the disturbed political climate it was at the least unwise to choose such a topic. There was already complaint at the extravagance of the court, and the council urged that the festivities of the previous winter season should not be repeated on such a vast scale: it was to prevent "conceit of ominous presage" that James sponsored Jonson's first masque, The Masque of Blacknesse, but the council feared that the expense of the masque would arouse further criticism (see p. 191). The masque was probably performed three days after Philotas and offered a much more favourable image of royalty.

It is interesting to note that in his "Apology" for the play Daniel slides from a total denial of all political relevance to the argument that the play is not anti-monarchical. In the play itself the councillor Craterus is an unsympathetic character, enthusiastically supervising the torture of Philotas, which is described in gruesome detail; but in the "Apology" Daniel goes out of his way to praise him and follows this by a discussion of Essex's faults - the play is not political, and in any case it is on Cecil's side. Cecil was convinced, and the play was published. The unpleasant affair deeply disturbed Daniel, and in the dedication to Prince Henry he presented himself as "the remnant of another time" and made one of the first of many complaints by poets against James's influence on the new reign: it is not in the power of kings to control the flourishing of poetic talent, and though Elizabeth's reign gave birth to many exceptional poets,

> it may be, the Genius of that time
> Would leaue to her the glory in that kind,
> And that the vtmost powers of English Rime
> Should be within her peacefull raigne confin'd;
> For since that time our Songs could neuer thriue,
> But laine as if forlorne; though in the prime
> Of this new raising season, we did striue
> To bring the best we could vnto the time. (III, 102)

These lines were omitted from the next editions.

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1. The French ambassador, 14 June 1604, quoted by Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, 1, 325.

But Daniel's credit was not permanently impaired, for he was commissioned to write a play for the royal visit to Oxford in August 1605. Daniel took the opportunity to reaffirm the values of the Panegyrike. The Queenes Arcadia is a pastoral, but critics have noted that its austerity makes it unique in pastoral drama, and the rigidity of the primitivism has been taken to imply some polemical purpose.[1] The play depicts the invasion of a simple pastoral world by corrupt town-dwellers who introduce various arts of deceit; eventually they are driven out and harmony is restored. The hypocrite Pistophoenax, who is unmasked at the end, has been taken to represent Puritanism; the satire on lawyers might have been felt to hit especially at the common law - James was delighted by a satire on the common law presented at Cambridge in 1615 - and there was enough criticism of tobacco to please the king. But the portrayal of the effect of corrupt extravagance on a simple world might have suggested the invasion of the academic calm Daniel so often praised by unruly courtiers; furthermore, the emphasis on austerity was extremely pointed in view of the repeated complaints at James's extravagance.[2] In the event James did not attend the play, having fallen asleep during the previous day's offering, which was by Greville's friend Matthew Gwinne.[3] The tone of Daniel's dedication of the play to Queen Anne is resentful. He affirms his determination never to write again about mysteries of state; this is primarily a reference to the Philotas affair, but Daniel may also allude to a more recent grievance. The rivalry between Daniel and Jonson had not slackened; about the time Daniel wrote the dedication Jonson and his collaborators were imprisoned for their satire of James in Eastward Ho! The troubles over this play resulted in the queen's withdrawal of her patronage and Daniel's losing his special post of licenser.[4]

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1. L. Butrick, "The Queenes Arcadia", unpublished Ph.D., Buffalo , 1968, argues that "Arcadia" is the university, disturbed by riotous courtiers.
2. These complaints began very early: in 1604 the king was presented with a long list of criticisms that were to be reiterated throughout the reign: A.D. Mackie, "A 'Loyall Subiectes Advertisement' as to the Unpopularity of James I's Government in England, 1603-4", Scottish Historical Review, 23 (1925-6), 1-17.
3. Chambers, I, 130-1.
4. The chronology of these events is obscure, but Chambers, III, 254-6, places the imprisonment in October or November 1605. The Queenes Arcadia was entered on 26 November 1605.

There may be more specific references still. Greville and Daniel are said to have exchanged a number of letters "upon some improvements or reformation that had been proposed to be made, in the masques, interludes, or other dramatical entertainments at Court".[1] At the time Daniel was in trouble over Philotas, Jonson was reaping the glory for his spectacular Masque of Blacknesse, which had introduced the perspective stage to England. The scenery was such a success that a similar stage was set up for the Oxford productions. The other plays seem to have used it for panegyric purposes: a machine was used to disperse clouds at the appearance of the British Sun. Such devices would not have been in keeping with the austerity of Daniel's play, whose original title was Arcadia Reformed. Daniel's assertion that he will not show

> In lowder stile the hidden mysteries,
> And arts of Thrones... (III, 214)

may be a reference to Jonson's presuming to present "Mysteries of state" with theatrical machinery. He continues that only those who are in power can meddle with such things, and incorrect descriptions of power can mislead the populace, making them think the courtiers devious and "cunning". The idea resembles Greville's contention that lofty declarations of divine right might actually undermine royal authority by provoking counter-claims; and the council the previous year had certainly taken seriously the idea that the masque might be found provoking. Daniel declares that such dramatizations of authority are unnecessary and professes his own humility:

> And therefore durst not we but on the ground,
> From whence our humble Argument hath birth,
> Erect our Scene; and thereon are we found,
> And if we fall, we fall but on the earth... (III, 214)[2]

Here Daniel is maliciously turning Jonson's words against him (see Sejanus, I, 537-40), but here again there may be a specific allusion. There had been a dispute over the placing of the king's seat in Christ Church hall: the perspective stage required that he should have a fairly low seat, so that he, and he alone, could see the stage from the precisely correct angle. The courtiers had objected that the

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1. Rees, Fulke Greville, p. 201; these letters have not been found.
2. Cf. Civil Wars, VIII, 31:
   > What chayre so-euer Monarch sate
   > Vpon, on Earth, the People was the State.

low seat was a lowering of royal dignity and urged that James should be placed higher; in the end they had their way. To a certain extent the courtiers had the more "popular" conception of monarchy: the king should be on view to everybody. The masque as evolved by Jonson and Jones gave unique priority to the king's view of the stage.[1] Daniel opts out of such disputes: his plain scene lays no claim to any kind of elevation. His imagination is a levelling one.

The following year Daniel paid tribute to Elizabethan martial greatness in his elegy on Mountjoy, praising the martial virtues at length and inserting an oblique tribute to Essex (I, 179, ll. 201-4). But his discontent with the Jacobean regime does not seem to have been as intense as Greville's. He was fortunate enough to enjoy fairly secure patronage from the queen, who maintained considerable independence from her husband. In so far as she was politically minded, she favoured Spain, and this does not seem to have been as offensive to Daniel as it would have been to Greville. In 1614, when the Spenserian poets were united in hostility to the court (see pp.265ff) Daniel wrote a play for the wedding festivities of one of Somerset's relatives; the dedicatory poem to the queen attacked French matches - the alternative offered by anti-Spanish courtiers to a Spanish match for Charles - and took up the imagery of Chapman, Jonson and Campion in their defences of the Somerset marriage; Hymen defended the match against Avarice, Envy and Jealousy (III, 330-3). By this time Greville himself had thrown in his lot with the Howards, but when Greville was still out of office Daniel seems to have been on good terms with Cecil. When the secretary died, Greville "frolicked" at the prospect of a return to power, whereas Daniel composed a dignified and unusually favourable epitaph, praising him in characteristic terms as "Greate little Lord".[2] Cecil had refused Greville access to state papers for his projected history of Elizabeth's reign, and Cotton does not seem to have been sympathetic, whereas both men encouraged Daniel to write his prose history of England.[3] According to Fuller, his closest friends were Camden, a supporter of James's policies, and Cowell, who aroused the fury of Parliament by his exaltation

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1. On the dispute at Oxford see S, Orgel and R. Strong, Inigo Jones: Theater of the Stuart Court (London and Berkeley, 1973), I, 6-8, II, 823-6.
2. The Farmer Chetham Manuscript, ed. A.B. Grosart (Chetham Soc., 1873), II, 189. I owe this reference to John Pitcher.
3. For Greville's difficulties see the letter to Coke of March 1610, printed by Rebholz, p. 335.

of the royal prerogative.

There were still, however, personal rather than ideological grounds for unhappiness with James's rule; the king was not always much kinder to his friends than his enemies. The hapless academic Cowell found himself exposed to the wrath not only of Parliament but of the king.[1] Camden was a firm supporter of James's pacific policies but was annoyed by James's attempts to bully historians into writing a favourable account of his mother's life; he dedicated his Annales (1615) not to James but to God, his country, and posterity on the altar of Truth.[2] Ralegh complained that "whosoever, in writing a modern history, shall follow truth too near the heels, it may happily strike out his teeth".[3] Bacon characteristically made his own condescension to the royal will almost offensively obtrusive: he apologized in advance to James for not seeming to write "encomiastically" enough in a projected history of the reign, reassuring him that history "doth not clutter together praises upon the first mention of a name, but rather desperseth and weaveth them throughout the whole narration". He declared himself ready to alter anything "upon your least beck".[4] In the light of such comments it is hard to take entirely at face value Daniel's praise of James because "in his daies there was a true History written", especially when he goes on to labour the point that this is "a liberty proper onely to Common-wealths, and neuer permitted to Kingdomes, but vnder good Princes" (IV, 78).

In 1610 Daniel was commissioned by the queen to write a masque for the installation of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales. This was the only time Daniel interrupted Jonson's long sequence of court masques, and he turned his Tethys Festival into a characteristically oblique criticism of the dominant forms of Jacobean panegyric. In the preface he attacks the tyranny of those who try to display their learning and urge submission to the tyranny of antiquity: let us "emancipate our inuentions, and be as free as they, to vse our owne images" (III,

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1. S.B. Chrimes, "The Constitutional Ideas of Dr. John Cowell", E.H.R., 64 (1949), 461-87.
2. H.R. Trevor-Roper, Queen Elizabeth's First Historian: William Camden and the Beginnings of English 'Civil History' (London, 1971), pp. 9-20.
3. Ralegh, Works, II, lxiii. Jonson told Drummond that Ralegh too had written a life of Queen Elizabeth, but it was not published. Ralegh quoted from Philotas in the History; it was one of the few contemporary literary works he praised.
4. Bacon, Life and Letters, IV, 219.

307). He constantly depreciates the medium, just as in the 1604 masque: these are "images of no result" (III, 306). He attacks the antimasque, with its introduction of professional actors on to this aristocratic stage: in Daniel's aristocratic masque "all was performed by themselues with a due reseruation of their dignity" (III, 323). Daniel was not the only person to object to the Jonsonian masque on such grounds (see pp. 227-8). It is even possible that there were also oblique hits at the king himself. In his attack on authorial vanity in the preface, Daniel constantly refers to people who make apologies, observing that some of the greatest princes of Christendom did not trouble to take up their pen in their own defence, counting it their glory to do while others talked (III, 306). Three years previously James had issued his Apology for the Oath of Allegiance; it provoked Catholic replies, and through the winter and spring of 1608-9 the king set aside other business in order to reissue the Apology with corrections and a lengthy new preface. When the book first appeared the king found many errors and copies had to be recalled; when at last the mistakes had been rectified, copies were sent to the princes of Europe, but the delegates who bore them were often faced with embarrassing refusals to accept the gift. Henry IV, whom Prince Henry greatly admired, was said to have commented that it was not a prince's business to write theological controversy; it was easy to make invidious comparisons between Henry's victories with the sword and James's defeats with the pen - a number of humiliating satires were written in reply. At the time of Daniel's masque the king was exceedingly angry about one such reply and eager for revenge against Catholics; the Venetian ambassador reported that the people "marvel to see him so intent upon this point while he is embarked on other most important affairs, which are straining the devotion of his subjects to his royal person".[1] Another topical issue which Daniel may glance at in the masque text was the king's indiscriminate distribution of honours. James had aroused concern by allowing knighthoods to be bought and sold, the first step in the disastrous "inflation of honours". Knights of the Bath were installed at the time of Henry's creation, and the prince won much praise for excluding those whom he considered unworthy of the position. The account of the creation of the knights was issued along with Daniel's masque, in which he lays equal emphasis on the need for social

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1607-10, pp. 289-90.

exclusiveness.[1] Daniel's prominent allusions to Henry IV were also topical, for Henry was often cited as a prudent, economical king in strong contrast to James and it was hoped that the prince would follow his example. The issue of economy was especially topical because Salisbury's Great Contract was being laid before Parliament, and the holding of the prince's installation in the middle of a Parliamentary session was presented as a great favour.[2]

The professed austerity of the masque tends to undermine its value as panegyric. As in the preface to The Queenes Arcadia, Daniel uses spatial symbolism that may allude to the perspective stage: "a man is worth a man, and none hath gotten so high a station of vnderstanding, but he shall find others that are build on an equall floore with him, and haue as far a prospect as he" (III, 307). In general, Daniel casts doubt upon the value of courtly forms. One of the songs declares that "if ioy had other figure" than dance and music to express devotion the masquers would use it, but as it is they have to be content with this "forme"; the next song presents the masque as a mere shadow, as evanescent as pleasures (III, 320). Daniel stresses his departure from masque tradition at the end: instead of mingling truth and fiction, making the disguised courtiers dance with the audience, he has them "shift these formes" and return to their own "formes", in order "to auoid the confusion which vsually attendeth the desolue of these shewes". This final transformation, "drawne to nature", is superior to any "imaginary sight" (III, 321-3). The aim is hyperbole: the ladies are far more beautiful naturally than any artifice could make them. But in a setting of courtly magnificence this depreciation of artifice threatened to extend from artistic forms to social forms. In the final tribute to James, Daniel was unable to evoke the same kind of mystical awe as Jonson. Like Greville, Daniel pulls down what he builds.

But as usual Daniel was reluctant to push this formal tension very far; his didactic austerity was swallowed up by the extravagance of the form. By

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1607-10, pp. 503, 516; Chamberlain, I, 300; The Order and Solemnitie of the Creation of Prince Henrie (London, 1610).
2. Ibid., p. 440. As an economy measure Henry's entry to the city was made by land rather than water, but even this was turned to the king's disadvantage: it was alleged that this was a device to prevent his son's gaining too much popularity (ibid., p. 507).

depreciating the image and presenting the relation between image and concept as purely arbitrary, Daniel was ceding the central place in the masque to Jones; a great deal of the descriptive pamphlet is taken up with descriptions of costumes and scenery. And in this case, Jones's extravagance completely negated the masque's content, with its overtones of prudent husbanding of money and honours. All the festivities for Henry's installation were extremely expensive - the tilting was particularly theatrical, and the expense of the masque itself became notorious.[1] It was understandable that Parliament should have felt reluctant to exchange some of its rights for a promise of good financial behaviour from the crown. The courtly form had prevailed over its reformer.

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1. H.M.C. Various Collections, II 261-3; C.S.P. Ven. 1607-10, p. 503; C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, p. 86.

CHAPTER V

Jonsonian Panegyric: Ceremony as Theatre

"My praise is plaine", declares Jonson in one of his epigrams (E103); and many critics have taken him at his word. To T.S. Eliot, 'his poetry is of the surface"; Wesley Trimpi takes him to be a classic poet of the "plain style"; as Jonas A. Barish points out, his prose style is "more Senecan than Seneca's".[1] Jonson's critical pronouncements are dauntingly austere; and there runs through his work a strong vein of humanist contempt for the court. And yet Jonson also co-operated with Inigo Jones in devising the most extravagant courtly spectacles yet staged in England; there appears to be a total contradiction between his humanist theory and his courtly practice. But the contradictions can to some extent be reconciled when he is approached by way of the Senecan tradition; for to varying degrees all the Senecans combined humanist or Stoic criticism of the court with an ironic fascination with the realities of court politics. Jonson takes this fascination with the mechanics of power to its extreme, scorning moralistic critics of the court for their simplistic idealism; his awareness of the artifices to which virtue must resort in a fallen world prevents him from making final oppositions between court and country, flattery and plain speaking. But the critical element is always there, and a suppressed hostility towards external

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References in the text are to volume and page of Ben Jonson, ed. C.H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson (Oxford, 1925-52). The following abbreviations are used: E: Epigrams. F: The Forest. U: The Underworld. UV: Ungathered Verse.

I am indebted to Kevin Sharpe for help on this chapter.

1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays (3rd edition, London, 1951), p. 148; W.J. Trimpi, Ben Jonson's Poems: A Study in the Plain Style (Stanford, 1962); J.A. Barish, Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), p. 66.

forms produces a strong aesthetic tension even in his most courtly works.

In Jonson's early work this tension had not yet been resolved in an artistically successful way. Jonson competed with Daniel in writing moral epistles in praise of Stoic virtue, searching for the favour of the Countess of Bedford, the Countess of Rutland and other members of Essex's circle. But in the epistle to the Countess of Rutland (F12) the lofty condemnation of external wealth is undermined by Jonson's obtrusive bitterness at the fact that the Countess of Bedford is giving some of her wealth to Daniel instead of to him. When association with Essex became more dangerous after his presumptuous invasion of her privacy in February 1599, Jonson took care to dissociate himself from Essex's irreverence by glorifying the queen's inviolability in Cynthia's Revels. A similar political caution, and determination to make his way at court, marks his relations with the irreverent wits and satirists of the Inns of Court.

His "comicall satyres" of the late 1590s defend the satirists against unjust censorship, but Jonson makes it clear that the poet's true place is at the centre of power, panegyrist as well as satirist. The weaknesses of the plays derive from the as yet unsuccessful attempt to fuse Senecan moralism with a strong impulse to public dramatization; in Every Man Out of His Humour, Cynthia's Revels and Poetaster the fusion is magically effected by the sudden intervention of the monarch. In Every Man Out of His Humour the split between the embittered, personally motivated malcontent and the virtuous critic of abuses is overcome at the end by Queen Elizabeth, whose very presence transforms Macilente into Asper. Such a device would be normal in a court play, but it was so structurally essential that Jonson tried to reproduce it in public performances, making an actor play Queen Elizabeth, which aroused criticism as a breach of decorum. Cynthia's Revels was written at a time when Jonson was trying to become Master of the Revels, and the play is meant to show that a humanist training is in no sense incompatible with the exercise of this function; but Jonson is still unable to prove his point. Crites and his friend Arete stand aloof from the courtiers, plainly dressed; Arete is ridiculed as a Puritan (IV.v.22). There is much satire of the affectations that turn the court into a "pageant" (III.iv.4) and the dramatic medium itself is undermined by the recurrent exaltation of "Words, aboue action: matter, aboue words" (Prologue, l.20). When Cynthia commissions a masque from Crites, he expresses reluctance but Arete argues that the very artificiality of the masque will make it a means of imposing order on the quarrelsome courtiers: they could never agree "in nature" but will be brought to order by the queen's presence and the fact that they are

> not presented as themselues,
> But masqu'd like others (V.v.27-8)

Poet and prince collaborate in the "creation" of roles whose value they fix and impose on the courtiers; there is no natural harmony between person and role. And it is not entirely clear that the monarch's judgement is more authoritative than the poet's: Cynthia exclaims that Crites has made "Another CYNTHIA, and another Queene" (V.viii.10), and Jonson comes perilously close to suggesting that the poet's creation is as good as the original. Jonson's imagination was

unsympathetic to the romantic symbolism of Elizabeth's court.

The analogy between prince and poet reaches its height in Poetaster (1601). Politically irresponsible poetry is criticized, as is stylistic inflation, whether in the vicious verse of Crispinus or in the mellifluousness of Ovid. But the panegyric of a Horace or a Virgil is another matter; in an extraordinary scene Augustus praises Virgil above himself and asks him to sit in the imperial throne. Virgil protests that this is a breach of decorum, but Augustus declares that the names of Augustus and Virgil are equal in value and that verse is a better mirror of the soul than "the sensuall complement of Kings" (V.ii.20). The royal will can overcome custom in the honour it pays to poets. Here in embryo is Jonson's relationship with King James. But such eminence was in the future: several satirical passages in the play gave offence to the authorities, and his "apology" for the play was censored; embittered, Jonson decided to turn to tragedy. The result was Sejanus, a remarkable play in which Jonson at once gave vent to a Tacitean critique of tyranny and negated it by accepting Machiavelli's admiration for the political cunning with which the emperor outwits the rebel. But such a Machiavellian view of politics, even if not ultimately unfavourable to monarchy, was a dangerous thing to voice publicly, and when the play was performed after James's accession Jonson was summoned before the Council for treason, apparently, ironically enough, by the arch-Machiavellian Northampton.[1]

By the end of Elizabeth's reign, then, Jonson was in sombre mood: Manningham reported that he was living upon the not particularly eminent Sir Robert Townshend and scorning the world (I,30). But several of his friends were establishing contact with the future monarch. Sir Thomas Overbury, who was also living in Townshend's house, went to Scotland about 1601 and there established contact with his old friend Sir William Cornwallis, who introduced him to Sir Robert Carr and other courtiers.[2] Another of Jonson's friends, Hugh Holland, planned to go to Scotland to present the king with his Pancharis. At the time of the king's accession Jonson and Camden were staying in the

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1. D.C. Boughner, "Sejanus and Machiavelli", S.E.L., 1 (1961) 81-100.
2. Overbury, Miscellaneous Works, ed. E.F. Rimbault (London, 1856), p. xxx.

country with Robert Cotton, who quickly found favour with the king for his fidelity to his mother's memory: he had bought the room in which she was executed, and when the king complimented him on his Scottish ancestry he obligingly inserted "Bruce" in his name.[1] Camden was to play a leading part in arranging royal ceremonial. But in 1603 it was Daniel rather than Jonson who was regarded as the pre-eminent poet; it was Daniel who had the honour of reciting a panegyric to the king at Burley. Jonson had to make do with an entertainment for the Queen and Prince Henry, who came south a little later; the host was Sir Robert Spencer, whose aunts had married into eminent social and literary circles.[2] The next year Jonson wrote an entertainment for a visit by the king himself to the home of Sir William Cornwallis the elder, uncle of Overbury's friend.[3] These entertainments retain an Elizabethan pastoral flavour - the name Oriana is transferred from Elizabeth to Anne - but there are already distinctively Jonsonian touches of scepticism and satire. But Jonson regarded these entertainments as altogether less important than the "more labord and Triumphall shewes" of the royal entry, into which he threw his main energy (VII, 131).[4] Here, although lacking a powerful aristocratic patron, he could

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1. Hugh Holland, Pancharis (London, 1603) contains poems by Ben Jonson, Edmund Bolton and William Camden and addresses by Holland to Richard Martin and Sir Robert Cotton; on Cotton, see also Ben Jonson, I, 139, and D.N.B.
2. Spencer's contact with London literary circles may have been through his aunt, Alice, formerly Countess of Derby; Marston frequented Spencer's library about the time of his entertainment for her in 1607: see R.E. Brettle, "The 'Poet Marston' Letter to Sir Gervase Clifton, 1607", R.E.S., 4 (1928), 212-4. There is no later record of Spencer's patronizing Jonson; he had Puritan sympathies, and his one experience of entertaining royalty was enough; in 1608 he fled from his estates to avoid entertaining the king: J. Nichols, The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First, II (London, 1828), 200-201.
3. Cornwallis had been renowned as an entertainer of Queen Elizabeth: Goodman, The Court of King James the First, ed. J.S. Brewer, II (London, 1839), 21. He was a Cecil supporter.
4. On the 1604 entry see Glynne Wickham, "Contributions de Ben Jonson et de Dekker aux Fêtes du Couronnement de Jacques 1er", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, ed. J. Jacquot, I (Paris, 1956), 279-83, and D.M. Bergeron, English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642 (London, 1971), pp. 71-89.

show the power of humanist erudition to glorify the monarchy. Jonson's collaborators were Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton. The strongly Protestant royal entry of 1559 was republished in 1603, and Dekker took up its themes in The Whore of Babylon (1607); the royal entry itself used classical rather than Biblical symbolism, but Dekker and Middleton retained the concern of the 1559 authors for communication with a wide audience. Jonson, whose relations with the City were never easy, scorned his collaborators' populism; he published his contribution separately -- "being assured well of the difference betweene it and Pageantry" (VII, 104) -- and attacked Dekker for his lack of deference to classical authority, boasting that he wrote only for "the sharpe and learned" (VII, 90-91). In one pageant he introduced the figure of Janus, who prophesied the revival of Roman rites in a more Christian form; for Dekker the classical deities were mere rhetorical ornaments, but Jonson tries to evoke an atmosphere of mystery, reverence and exclusiveness. The motto to one of the pageants, "Nec vnquam gratior", was to become a catchphrase of seventeenth-century apologists of absolutism, but Jonson seems to have been the first to quote it in English: liberty is best defended under a strong monarch.[1] Jonson further displayed his knowledge of Claudian, and Pliny, in his "Panegyre", a didactic poem whose title pointedly differentiates it from Daniel's "Panegyrique". The political implications of Jonson's classicism would have pleased James: he was less welcoming to the crowds on his royal entry than Elizabeth had been, perhaps aware of the origins of the ceremony in the old custom of "acclamation", which implied that popular consent rather than heredity was the basis of monarchy.[2] Although Jonson composed one more civic pageant, later in 1604, he had proved the worth of his art for a more courtly setting; the "Panegyre" ended with the proud boast "Solus Rex, & Poeta non quotannis nascitur" (VII, 117).

Jonson was confident that he could improve on his rivals' efforts at court

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1. De Consolatu Stilichonis, iii, 114-5; A. Cameron, Claudian (Oxford, 1970), pp. 434-5. The maxim is also quoted in Sejanus, I, 407-9. Jonson's copy of Claudian (Antwerp, 1585, Bodleian shelfmark 8° C. 90 Art. Seld.) is heavily underlined throughout.
2. J.W. Legg (ed.), The Coronation Order of King James I (London, 1902), p. lxxxi.

entertainments. The festivities of 1603-4 were extravagant and disorderly, and he and his friend Sir John Roe were ejected from the Scots' masque when they made their disapproval noisily apparent. Roe wrote a poem to console Jonson: it was not his role to sing the praises of noble houses,

> The State and mens affaires are the best playes
> Next yours ... (XI, 371)

But Jonson was not satisfied with simple humanist scorn of courtiers, whose affects could be seen in Daniel's Vision of the Twelve Goddesses. Daniel's approach to the masque simply reversed Roe's: both agreed that court ceremonial was inherently limited, and Daniel simply tried to minimize as far as possible the obstacles it presented to the conveying of a didactic message. Such an attitude Jonson found reprehensible for two superficially antithetical reasons: it made the poet abase himself unduly before the ignorant courtiers, and it undermined the force of the social idealization to which he should be contributing. Jonson saw the masque as an aesthetic challenge; and when the queen announced that for the next year's masque she wanted to appear as a blackamoor, Jonson rose to the occasion and from this unpromising material produced an erudite Neo-Platonic allegory. It is not certain how Jonson achieved this eminence. Daniel was out of favour over Philotas; Jonson seems early in the reign to have received the patronage of Esmé Stuart, Earl of Aubigny, whose brother Ludovic was one of the king's chief favourites. But the king himself may have made the choice, having sampled Jonson's panegyric and his London pageants, which, as has been seen, offered a much more impressive image of monarchy than Daniel's. The king had particular reasons for wanting spectacular propaganda in the winter of 1604-5. After the initial enthusiasm at his accession, disaffection had steadily been growing at the king's apparent idleness and self-conceit, and at the extravagance of his court (see p. 177).

A particular cause of discontent had been the king's projects for a complete union between England and Scotland, which had been put to Parliament in April. The Commons did not receive the project as the king desired: they feared that he wanted to tamper with the common law and increase royal power beyond its traditional bounds. They were extremely reluctant to change the king's title to 'King of Great Britain". James was angry with the Commons' recalcitrance, but he promised not to change his title. A few months after the dissolution of

Parliament, however, he did change it, by proclamation, although the council warned him that his move would be interpreted as a provocation.[1] James apparently decided that a spectacular masque would be a good means of popularizing his new title and preventing "any conceit of ominous presage".[2] He had himself written a masque when King of Scotland, and poetry had often been used in his court to convey political messages; Jonson and Jones had ambitious new ideas for court entertainments, and it is not improbable that the king himself suggested that the masque for that winter should not only cater for his wife's extravagance but also publicize his new title.[3] The plot of The Masque of Blacknesse is a search by the masquers for a uniquely fortunate land whose name ends in "-tania", and after a long search they find it in Britain.[4] Jonson's text brought a new erudition to the masque; Jones's innovation of perspective introduced a new dimension to the dramatic art; the king could be satisfied that his person and policies had been glorified in a manner more spectacular than the predecessor, for whose times men were already displaying an unpleasing nostalgia, and fully commensurate with the festivities of absolute monarchs on the Continent.[5]

From the artistic point of view The Masque of Blacknesse was a major achievement; from a political point of view, however, it was perhaps not so successful. Criticisms of the previous year's expensive and riotous festivities had been so severe that at one stage it was apparently planned to cancel the 1605 masque, though it was decided that such an abrupt economy measure would make a

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1. S.T. Bindoff, "The Stuarts and their Style", E.H.R., 60 (1945), 192-216.
2. H.M.C. Hatfield, XVI, 388.
3. R. Dunlap, "King James's Own Masque", P.Q., 41 (1962), 249-56; H.M. Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry ... under King James VI (Cambridge, 1969). In 1604 James wrote a sonnet, preserved in the Cecil papers, which dealt with the theme of concord (Poems, II, 171); it possibly allegorizes his stormy relations with his new subjects.
4. See D.J. Gordon, "The Imagery of Ben Jonson's 'Masque of Blacknesses' and 'Masque of Beautie'", J.W.C.I., 6 (1943), 122-41.
5. John Gordon, who had come to England from France in 1603 and immediately gained favour through his panegyrics and defences of the Union (one of which used symbolism similar to Jonson's in Hymenaei) had written a prose commentary on the most famous of all French court entertainments, the Ballet comique de la reine (1582): John C. Meagher, Method and Meaning in Jonson's Masques (Notre Dame, 1966), pp. 27-8.

bad impression.[1] In the event, the masque, even though much more decorous than some of the previous year's festivities, still aroused criticism (see p. 178), and resentment against the union continued to trouble the king. Nevertheless, James was evidently pleased by the masque, and the following year Jonson was commissioned to provide a still more obvious panegyric of the union, the masque Hymenaei. On one level of allegory the rebellious Humours and Affections who maliciously rebelled against the order of nature in disrupting Juno's rites represented those in Parliament and elsewhere who criticized the Union.[2] The allegory of the body politic was conventional enough, but it had received new emphasis since the king's accession: he repeatedly launched into exalted panegyrics of the royal office, feeling that political irreverence was growing and had to be curtailed. In 1606 Edward Forset published the most elaborate exposition to date of the "political philosophy of order", an exalted statement of absolutist ideas; Jonson's masque provided a corresponding atmosphere of mystery and reverence based upon natural analogies.[3]

Thus the sceptical humanist of the 1590s participated in a revival of mystical political thought, conveyed by an unprecedentedly extravagant form; Jonson was established as the leading court poet. He was on intimate terms with the king himself and with his chief adviser, Sir Robert Cecil; although in private he was uncomplimentary about Cecil's coldness (I, 141-2), he wrote several entertainments for him and was one of the few poets who can be called

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1. H.M.C. Hatfield, XVI, 388-9: the council pointed out that the expenses for the previous year's entertainment had been quite exceptional and that under Elizabeth masques had not been held on such a scale every year.
2. See D.J. Gordon, "Hymenaei: Ben Jonson's Masque of Union", J.W.C.I., 8 (1945), 107-45. To the pamphlets quoted by Gordon may be added Bacon's elaborate defence of the union, which emphasizes that "there is a great affinity and consent between the rules of nature, and the true rules of policy": Life and Letters, III, 90-99. Though Bacon strongly favoured the union, he still felt that James was trying to push it through too fast: J.L. Epstein, "Francis Bacon and the Issue of Union, 1603-08", H.L.Q., 33 (1969-70), 121-32.
3. E. Forset, A Comparatiue Discourse of the Bodies Natural and Politique (London, 1606); Greenleaf, pp. 58 ff.

firmly pro-Cecil.[1] His political outlook seems also to have resembled that of the other leading adviser, Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton; although Jonson quarrelled with the irascible earl and regarded him as an enemy, the quarrel would appear to have been more personal than political, for he remained on very good terms with Northampton's secretary, Sir Robert Cotton.[2] The symbolism of Jonson's panegyrics resembles that of Howard poets like Thomas Campion and James Maxwell.[3]

Cecil and the Howards were widely unpopular at the time and have been frequently denounced by subsequent historians for venality and unpatriotism. Certainly the new regime appeared to present a radical reversal of Elizabethan traditions. Northampton belonged to the old Catholic nobility that Leicester and his circle had opposed; he had corresponded with Mary Stuart, and Elizabeth had consistently excluded him from favour despite a long series of fulsome panegyrics. Northampton's loyalty to Mary was a leading factor in the favour the new king showed him.[4] Northampton was a crypto-Catholic; soon after James's accession negotiations began for peace with Spain, and Cecil and Northampton secretly discussed the possibility of toleration for Catholics with the Spanish ambassador. They and other members of the Howard family accepted large pensions from the

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1. S. McMillin, "Jonson's Early Entertainments", Renaissance Drama, N.S., 1 (1968), 153-66; on Jonson's relations with Cecil see De Luna, Jonson's Romish Plot, pp. 67-9, 196-212.
2. See Sharpe, "Sir Robert Cotton".
3. Campion's masque for the wedding of Lord Hays's daughter to Lord Denny in 1607 was prefaced by a panegyric of the Union in sacramental terms; Campion's chief patron, Sir Thomas Monson, was a firm Howard supporter. Maxwell's "Discourse of Christian Union" (B.L. MS. Royal 18A.LI) outlines schemes for a union of Christendom under James the "Concording-King", using symbolism close to that of Hymenaei; his works are full of mystical sacramental symbolism, and he wrote many panegyrics of Mary Stuart: he praised James as a mystical child of Mary who entered his kingdom at the same time as Christ was conceived (The Laudable Life ... of ... Prince Henry, London, 1612, sig. C4b). His Monument of Remembrance (1613) is dedicated to the House of Howard; one of his works was a treatise on the friendship between Britain and Spain (Carolanna, London, 1619, sigs. F2b-3a).
4. On the king's cautious inauguration of a cult of Mary, see Phillips, Images of a Queen, pp. 223 ff. Maxwell indicates in his "Discourse", fols. 5a-b, the difficulty of expressing admiration of Mary in the current state of opinion. Jonson apparently planned to include praise of Mary in his Heroologia (Works, I, 208-9).

Spanish.[1] Jonson himself was a Catholic at this time, and so, perhaps, was another pro-Howard masque-writer, Thomas Campion.[2] But it is misleading to assume, with anti-Stuart propagandists like Arthur Wilson, that the national interest was being sold to Spain by a cabal of Papists. Peace with Spain was justifiable on political grounds; the Spanish pensions were an agreeable embellishment to courses which Cecil and Northampton would have followed anyway. Earlier historians spoke of a "Howard party", but only Northampton took a serious interest in politics; other members of the dynasty were not particularly close to him personally and were interested mainly in gaining and spending large sums of money. In any case James was not exclusively influenced by Cecil and the Howards; he had his own ideas about foreign policy, and they were not so different from Elizabeth's. He disliked war and political disorder, and he gave priority to political rather than ideological considerations: Europe was to be seen as a union of Christian monarchs with a common interest in repudiating both Catholic and Calvinist extremism rather than a battlefield of two irreconcilable religious camps. In Spenser's time a policy of alliance with the Calvinist states and confrontation with Spain had been justifiable on "politique" as well as ideological grounds; now it was less easy to reconcile reason of state with ideology.[3] For this new political situation Jonson's classicism was a more suitable idiom than the Spenserian symbolism of Protestant chivalry: it was the international artistic language of absolutism, suppressing direct expression of religious enthusiasm and emphasizing hierarchical decorum and loyalty to the state rather than nostalgia for aristocratic independence. As with Northampton, Jonson's Catholicism would seem to have had a strong political motivation: he liked its emphasis on tradition and discipline, but disliked religious fanaticism of all kinds and was used by Cecil to spy on Catholic conspirators at the time of the Gunpowder Plot. In 1612 he made a public return to the English church from

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1. A.J. Loomie, "Sir Robert Cecil and the Spanish Embassy", B.I.H.R., 42 (1969), 30-57.
2. Jonson, Works, I, 19, 40-43; L. Bradner, "References to Chaucer in Campion's Poemata", R.E.S., 12 (1936), 322-3.
3. The fullest reaction against the "Whig" view of James is C.H. Carter, The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs (New York, 1961); see especially pp. 109-19.

which the government extracted political capital. Jonson's intense hostility to Puritanism, which he shared with the king, was based on suspicion of its political connotations, the potential subversive force of an appeal to the inner conscience rather than public traditions.[1]

While Jonson's panegyric was an effective expression of the political outlook of the new regime, he took pains to maintain a certain independence from the court. The Earl of Pembroke was his most consistent patron, and he was also on good terms with Lisle, Sir Philip Sidney's brother; Northampton regarded these men as his chief political enemies, and neither of them took a pension from Spain. He was also a friend of Ralegh, whose imprisonment Cecil engineered at the start of the reign. But where zealots like Wither praised these men as champions of Protestant chivalry, it is for their peaceful pursuits that Jonson praises them, for "virtue" is a generalized and non-ideological sense. Where the Puritans saw the court as split between crypto-Catholic agents of Spain and stalwart Protestant patriots, Jonson presents it as united by social and intellectual ties rather than divided by religion.[2] Even those poems which appear to be extremely critical of the court prove on examination to be less "plain" than they seem. The poems published as The Forest in 1616 seem to reflect disillusionment with the extravagance of the Jacobean court; members of the Sidney family figure prominently in the persons addressed. "To Penshurst" and "To Sir Robert Wroth" are particularly critical of the court; many disciples of Dr. Leavis have taken them as embodying a deep-rooted, mature civilization which was being undermined by the rise of a money economy and the growing

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1. Jonson conformed outwardly to the English church; De Luna, pp. 114, 133-5, goes so far as to argue that Jonson's Catholicism may have been part of a political manoeuvre from the beginning. She regards Catiline as an allegory of the Gunpowder Plot, with Cecil as Cicero. It is possible that Jonson published a treatise on his motives for returning to the Church of England (Works, XI, 586).
2. Pembroke's role as a focus of political opposition came later in the reign; in the early years he was conspicuous as a royal favourite, a role in which he made a notable beginning by kissing the king during the coronation; he appeared frequently in tilts and composed amatory lyrics: C.S.P. Ven. 1603-7, p. 77, Dick Taylor, Jr., "The Masque and the Lance", Tulane Studies in English, 8 (1958), 21-53.

power of the court.[1] Closer attention to the historical context, however, raises doubts about such a reading, particularly with regard to the Wroth poem. At the start of the poem Jonson praises Sir Robert for staying away from the court with its extravagance and its luxurious masques. It is true that Sir Robert did lead a retired life, but his wife took a leading part in the masques, of which Jonson was, of course, the leading author; he wrote an epigram in praise of her masquing costumes (E105), whose expense must have contributed to the fact that her husband died in debt to the tune of £23,000: he must indeed have reflected that life was "a thing but lent" (l. 106). Jonson does not seem in private to have shared Wroth's uneasiness about his wife's activities at court: he told Drummond that she was "unworthily married on a Jealous husband" (I, 142). Despite her extravagance, however, her influence with the king probably helped her husband to gain many privileges, including large grants of land and the surveyorship of the estates of the extravagant prodigy-house of Theobalds, for whose transfer to the king Jonson had composed an entertainment. In return for such favours Wroth encouraged the king to hunt on his estate, and Jonson does not omit to mention the king's visits (11. 21-4). James's passion for hunting was widely unpopular; in Poly-Olbion (1612) Drayton took royal hunting as an emblem of the hated Norman Yoke (see p. 251). Thus the sylvan existence which Jonson praises, far from embodying "values ... incompatible with those of the court", in fact owed a great deal to royal favour; Chamberlain regarded Sir Robert as "a great commaunder or rather by the Kings favor an intruder in Waltham forrest".[2] Insofar as the poem does urge the nobility to follow Wroth's example, it is responding to the royal desire: James was himself increasingly concerned at the numbers of noblemen who spent the winter at court, and in 1614 he issued a proclamation calling on the nobility to return to the country for the sake of hospitality and the relief of the poor.[3] On closer

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1. This tradition of criticism has culminated in a full-length study: W.A.McClung, The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1977).
2. I. Rivers, The Poetry of Conservatism (Cambridge, 1973), p.50; Chamberlain, Letters, I, 520. I am preparing a separate study of the Wroth poem.
3. C.S.P.D. 1611-18, p.258. Royal popularity was at a low ebb at this time after the failure of the Addled Parliament. Sir Walter Chute had been imprisoned for attacking prodigy-houses in Parliament: H.M.C. Portland, IX, 138.

examination, then, it would appear that "To Sir Robert Wroth" is as much an apologia for royal policy as a sternly independent criticism. Jonson sets up a general ideal of austere "plainness" in full and sardonic awareness of the artifices and compromises which are necessary to maintain such an ideal in a fallen world; the poem's rhetorical strategy itself embodies such artifice.[1]

In terms of style as well as moral values, Jonson's poetry is not as "plain" as it looks.[2] This applies even to his use of the least ceremonial of forms, the epigram.[3] In his panegyric epigrams Jonson repeatedly rejects the unthinking idolatry of social externals: "I, a Poet here, no Herald am" (E9). The poet seeks inner worth, which is not "entayl'd on title" (E116); his muse "serues nor fame, nor titles" (E109). Men are too apt to judge deeds according to the rank of the doer (E99). In one epigram he reproaches himself for committing "idolatrie" to a lord who proved unworthy of his praise, consoling himself with the fact that

> Who e're is rais'd,
> For worth he has not, He is tax'd, not prais'd. (E65)[4]

But there is in fact a strong ceremonial element in the epigrams. They were first printed in 1612, when Daniel also issued a volume of epigrams; unfortunately these have not survived, but in view of Daniel's other writings at this time it is perhaps unlikely that the king would have played such a large part in them; certainly Daniel would not have approved of Jonson's jauntily ending a book that began by severely protesting its chastity with the scatological "Famous Voyage" (E133). Jonson's didacticism is likewise not as direct as it may seem. In a poem to Selden in 1614 he confessed that

> (as every Muse hath err'd,
> And mine not least) I have too oft preferr'd
> Men past their termes, and prais'd some names too much,
> But 'twas with purpose to have made them such. (U14)

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1. In "To Penshurst" the praise is more straightforwardly in accordance with the facts: see J.C.A. Rathmell, "Jonson, Lord Lisle, and Penshurst", E.L.R., 1 (1971), 250-60.
2. Ian Donaldson's excellent edition of the Poems (Oxford, 1975) provides much material for a revaluation.
3. E. Partridge, "Jonson's Epigrammes: the Named and the Nameless", Studies in the Literary Imagination, 6 (1973), 153-98.
4. Such epigrams perhaps give a certain plausibility to Aubrey's claim that the patronage he received from the nobility and gentry "was well payd for loue or fere of his raling in verse or prose" (Brief Lives, II, 15).

This didacticism is like that of ceremonial: it involves the sanctions of public honour and shame, and is prepared to accept a considerable discrepancy between person and role. Following Martial, he compares the book to a "Theater" (VIII, 26): those whom he satirizes are given fictitious names, "visards", but those he praises appear under their own titles. He draws attention to the fact that he may have praised the undeserving, and pleads that his "pictures" are at least "no ill pieces, thought they be not like the persons" (VIII, 26). In the last analysis, however, responsibility for such errors rests not with the poet but with the king who conferred the titles. Jonson frequently reminds those he praises that their position derives from the king: if Cecil is virtuous, there is cause for general rejoicing that the allocation of offices is in the hands of such a wise king (E64); we can see "the iudgement of the king so shine in thee" (E63). Despite his warnings about idolatry of titles, Jonson in fact gives great prominence to titles in his book, deriving appropriate etymologies from them in conventional panegyric fashion or praising the ancestry they denote. The fourth epigram is thematically central: after emphasizing the complexity and moral value of his book in the first three epigrams, he turns to James in his twin capacities as prince and poet, declaring that his muse will fly to

> the best
> Of Kings for grace; of Poets for my test. (E4)

Worth must be tested, the "price" must be "appraised", before it is stamped with the seal of public recognition, and there is a natural harmony between political and literary "tests". The poet makes his own evaluations, no less stringent than the king's and no less dependent on an élite rather than the opinion of the multitude; literary evaluation is itself a kind of "title" (E96), and Jonson's disciples are ceremonially "sealed" into membership of the literary hierarchy (U47). A good king will be sensitive to the virtue celebrated by his poets and seek to bring their evaluations into line with the public distribution of honours. Where the other leading poets of the "plain style", Greville and Daniel, tend to move from ceremonial to economic imagery, Jonson relates all evaluation to the ceremonial imposition of the royal seal: true gold must be made current by the king's image. Where Greville and Daniel make a sharp antithesis between nature and art, Jonson is always

concerned to relate the artificial to the natural, the soul to the body, the self to the role; he is much more fond than they are of organic imagery, presenting the social order as a slowly evolving "forest" of literary and civil virtues. Jonson's preferred poetic form, the open couplet, naturalizes its artifice, maintaining a formal pattern while giving an impression of conversational spontaneity. Jonson criticized the king for singing verses instead of reading them (I, 148), and rejected Spenserian archaisms because their artifice was too obtrusive: verbal ornaments must "grow to our style" (VIII, 622). But the fundamental model for representation is social rather than natural: rather than an immediate outpouring of the self, language is a ceremonial representation of the speaker in the same way as an ambassador represents the king (VIII, 628).

Jonson was thus an effective propagandist for the court through his poetry; but it was the "natural" signs of the masque that provided the most appropriate representation of the king's ideas. As has been seen, Hymenaei provided a spectacular defence of the union and justification of glorification of royal power; and the occasion of the masque embodied James's political ideals. It celebrated the marriage of the young Earl of Essex with Frances Howard: thus the heir to a policy of ideological confrontation was to be united with the ancient house of Howard; natural kinship ties were to predominate over ideology. On a smaller scale the masque epitomized James's policies for Europe as well: the disruption caused by the Reformation was to be healed by marriage alliances which would cut across religious boundaries. Hymenaei affirmed the need for unity and rejected all forces that threatened to separate individual from body politic, religion from ritual embodiment, didactic content from ceremonial form. The concepts underlying Jonson's masques are similar to those employed in Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity: there is no sharp antithesis between the visual and verbal elements of a ceremony, between form and content, for the "form" is not only the external sign of the inner volition but its final cause. The priest's vestments may be an external "disguise", but

without them man could not perceive the dazzling truth they represent; similarly, on a secular level, both the ceremonial clothing of one half of the Banqueting House and the poetic fiction of the other are external representations of divine truths but they carry something of the aura of the truth which can only be apprehended through their "masques" (Hymenaei, 11. 240-5, VII, 217). The scenery is the "body" - in the preface to The Masque of Queenes he even calls it a "carcasse" (VII, 169) - and appeals merely to the senses; the invention or "soul" is "the inward part" and appeals to the understanding (VII, 209). But this is not quite - not yet - the reformers' distinction between the verbal and the visual: the "invention" includes the whole action, both spectacle and dialogue, and Jones the artist has as good claims to devise it as Jonson the poet; the "body" includes the poetic text as well as the scenery. What survives afterwards as "soul" is an intellectual construct from the whole experience.[1] Jonson links this formal terminology with the content of the masque: the unruly humours of the body are restrained by Reason, and the ceremony of marriage is presented as a disciplining of the body: "in politick bodies ... Order, Ceremony, State, Reuerence, Deuotion, are parts of the Mind" (ll. 117ff, VII, 213). But there is a dialectic of soul and body: the marriage which the humours disturb is itself a "mysticall bodie", and the rites are the "soul", not an external "dress". The marriage ceremony symbolizes the incorporation of the individual into the

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1. The classic account of this terminology is D.J. Gordon, "Poet and Architect: The Intellectual Setting of the Quarrel between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones", J.W.C.I., 12 (1949), 152-78.

social body, and thus becomes a symbol of all social relations. The individual adopts the mask which comes to express what he really is; the apparent artifice and externality become naturalized. In Hymenaei this stamping of the social mark on the individual is symbolized by pagan sacrifice; the Humours, like a Puritan denouncing religious ritual as barbaric, try to prevent what they see as the cruelty and blood-thirstiness of the rite (l. 149), but it is necessary that the act of embodiment should itself be registered by the body. The masque naturally culminates in tribute to the king, the soul of the body politic, who mediates between the human and divine; the natural body of the king is inseparable from the politic body or "artificial person". Jonson's terminology in Hymenaei resembles that of Bishop Bilson in his coronation sermon. Bilson was strongly anti-Puritan and composed the highly distorted account of the Hampton Court conference that made it appear a routing of seditious Puritans by the unassailable arguments of eloquent Anglicans. In his sermon Bilson said that kings should be revered by the "names, and signes" they had in common with Christ, and emphasized that the ceremony of anointing produced a permanent inner transformation. He urged the expression of loyalty through external signs:

> When S. Peter saith, honour the king, wee must not thence exclude bodily honour, which is sensible to others, and restraine it to the honour of the minde, which neither we can shew, nor can they see, but by externall signes. The commaundements of God binde the whole man: no part is exempted where submission is required. [1]

In The Irish Masque Jonson was to urge the masquers to

> Bow both your heads at once, and hearts:
> Obedience doth not well in parts. (ll. 175-6, VII, 404)

In 1607 the French ambassador noted the number of Catholic ladies participating in masques as a sign of milder feelings towards Catholics and greater antipathy to Puritans (X, 458); it was fitting that James should commission Jones to design fittings for the chapel at Holyrood in his attempt to restore elaborate ritual to the Scottish church.

Despite the remarkable variety of the masques after Hymenaei, Jonson always used the form to dramatize the same basic social values. The

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1. T. Bilson, A Sermon Preached at Westminster (London, 1604), sig. Biva.

celebration of the body in the masque was simultaneously a recognition of transience; the masque belonged to a season of excess, part of a calendar linked to agrarian rhythms which the Puritans were trying to destroy, replacing a cyclical by a linear time-scheme. In defending such festivities James was making a political statement, and one with which Jonson fully concurred. The very disproportion between the intellectual and material resources lavished on the masque and its brief life became a symbol of all such conspicuous consumption: the custom was to destroy the "carkasses" of the masques after the performance. Jonson's highly conspicuous intellectual expenditure, to which he frequently drew attention in his preface, made the Jonsonian masque into a kind of semantic potlatch. Jonson paid particular attention to the seasonal aspects of the masque in the antimasque. One function of this device was to anchor the masque more firmly in reality, using stage effects much more realistic than anything to be found in the public theatre and so preventing the idealized world of the main masque from being too insipid or easily escapist. But the antimasque also expressed the licence to the body permitted in the Christmas season. Christmas himself, a resident of "Popes-head alley", made his appearance in one entertainment; frequently the anti-masque was a riotous and crude entertainment presented by subjects from such barbarous and ignorant places as Wales and Ireland, providing an opportunity to indulge James's taste for rumbustious entertainments without sullying the purity of the court itself. But even the more refined main masque was itself a "banquet" for the senses. In Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion, Jonson, anticipating his later disillusion with the "body", satirizes crude spectacle by making the cook offer to prepare a masque: the cook claims that the banqueting-house is his sphere, not the poet's. At this stage the humour still cuts two ways, and the ingenious interplay of main masque and antimasque helps to give solidity to the main compliment. The antimasque and the main masque had the same enemy, the Puritan, who appeared in the first realistic antimasque, that of Love Restored, in the person of Plutus, masquerading as Cupid. Plutus represented the spirit of frugality and economy, of commutative exchange and money as opposed to the aristocratic principles of distributive justice and love. In a later masque Jonson turned from money to time and again attacked new social movements which undermine the traditional values. In Time Vindicated those who exploit the

traditional seasonal licence by turning it to social disorder are in unholy alliance with the newsmongers who undermine the traditional socially controlled media of communication by selling news as a commodity. Jonson took as his main target the Puritan poet George Wither, whose attacks on pomp and ceremony and defiant assertion of his inner purity conflicted with Jonson's values of ritual and impersonality.

While the masque dramatized the values of a conservative hierarchical society, it also celebrated the increasing power of the monarch, the supreme defender of those values. The perspective stage, introduced to England by Jones, embodied the new supremacy of the monarch: the stage was so constructed that only the monarch in his central position could appreciate the full effect. All the masquers were subordinated to the monarch's viewpoint.[1] Jonson used optical effects to symbolize royal power in an epigram of 1613:

> Except your Gratious Eye as through a Glass
> made prospectiue, behould hym, hee must pas⟨s⟩e
> still that same little poynte hee was; but when
> your Royal Eye which still creat[t]es new men
> shall looke, & on hyme soe, then arte's a lyer
> yf from a little sparke hee rise not fier. (UV16, VIII, 383)

As has been seen, Daniel objected both to the aesthetic and political connotations of perspective; but in this exaltation of the monarch the masque is in a clear line of development from Cynthia's Revels and Poetaster. The monarch and the artist both stand apart from the courtiers, "creating" their worth on the basis of their independent judgements. Artistic and social "creations" met as the line between masquing scenery and courtly audience was crossed by the performers. It was the monarch alone who possessed the power to call such magical spectacles into being; the fiction was even maintained that the first masques were written by the queen herself.

The same absolutist connotations were present in Jonson's use of hieroglyphics. The popularity of hieroglyphics at the Renaissance owed a great deal to their social exclusiveness; in a sense the most explicit theoretical basis for the Jacobean masque is Edmund Bolton's The Elements of Armories, which

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1. On perspective, see Orgel and Strong, Inigo Jones, I, 1-14.

presents heraldic emblems as hieroglyphics like "the Hierogrammes of the AEGYPTIAN sages", natural signs parallel to the hierarchical "ensignes" of the natural world (sig. B2a, pp. 12-13). Bolton praised heraldry as the most complete of all the arts, combining them in a "mystical chaine" (pp. 90, 84).[1] Jonson and Jones created such comprehensive natural signs in the masque; but here the emphasis was particularly on the monarch's unique power to penetrate the enigmas. In Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly James himself is the answer to the sphinx's enigma, a mystical combination of otherwise irreconcilable qualities. James laid great stress on his power to penetrate deep enigmas, which testified to his divine attributes: the pamphlets about the Gunpowder Plot attributed the conspiracy's discovery to the king's sagacity in understanding the warning letter. Northampton compared James to an Egyptian priest in his capacity to decipher mysteries; many panegyrists traced the ancestry of the Scots back to the Egyptians.[2] The emphasis on mystery was a counter to Puritanism and separatism: the meaning of signs, or of scripture, could not be determined by an individual but had to be laid down by the sovereign authority and by traditional rites.

The Jonsonian masque constituted an equally emphatic negation of Puritan foreign policy. The masque replaced the tournament as the dominant form of court entertainment; under James the tournament became more and more emptily theatrical, and the king himself performed badly in the tiltyard. The symbolism of chivalry no longer corresponded to royal aspirations; at one time there was talk of conferring the Order of the Garter on King Philip of Spain. As Arthur Wilson said, in James's reign "Bellona put on Masking-attire".[3] The first challenge to the peace policy came with the emergence of Prince Henry

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1. E. Bolton, The Elements of Armories (London, 1610), was dedicated to Northampton and contained verses by several of Jonson's friends - Camden, John Beaumont and Hugh Holland. Heraldry was regarded as an excessively Popish science by some Puritans: see Henry Peacham, The Gentlemans Exercise (London, 1612), pp. 13, 152-3. The first edition of this work was dedicated to Cotton.
2. Proceedings in Parliament 1610, ed. E.R. Foster, II (New Haven, 1966), 55; J. Adamson, [illegible] (Edinburgh, 1618), p. 137.
3. A. Wilson, The History of Great Britain (London, 1653), p. 31.

as a political force, and competing factions struggled to win the prince over. For the Howards, Cotton wrote a treatise answering all the pamphlets that urged the prince to war; Jonson's masques performed a similar task. The dedication of The Masque of Queenes (1609) to Henry leaves open the possibility that he may have a military future but urges the importance of learning; the main masque celebrates martial heroism but the central revelation is of the House of Fame, in which "heroism is a secondary virtue: the heroes are glorified not by their deeds alone, but by the enduring and transforming power of poetry".[1] For the prince's inaugural Barriers in 1610 Jonson provided speeches that praised the prince but at the same time issued a tactful warning.[2] The theme was the revival of Chivalry, and Jones's setting evoked the Elizabethan chivalric cult, featuring Merlin, Arthur and the Lady of the Lake. But Jonson made Merlin explain that the days of knightly heroism were over:

> These were bold stories of our ARTHVRS age;
> But here are other acts; another stage
> And scene appeares; it is not since as then:
> No gyants, dwarfes, or monsters here, but men.
> His arts must be to gouerne, and giue lawes
> To peace no lesse then armes. (VII, 328)

Merlin recounts the conquests of foreign monarchs, but warns Henry

> not t⟨o⟩ 'incite
> Your neighbour Princes, giue them all their due... (VII, 333)

Merlin urges him to emulate his father, the pattern of all wisdom, and to remember that

> 'tis a wisdome high
> In Princes to vse fortune reuerently.
> He that in deeds of Armes obeyes his blood
> Doth often tempt his destinie beyond good. (VII, 335)

Jonson was not chosen to write Henry's inaugural masque. For the 1610-11 season Henry expressed the desire to appear in a masque on horseback. This idea must have been as offensive aesthetically to Jonson as it was offensive politically to James; the king vetoed the idea. Instead, Jonson was commissioned to write a masque which would please the prince without being politically

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1. Orgel, The Illusion of Power, p.65.
2. On the barriers see R. Strong, "Inigo Jones and the Revival of Chivalry", Apollo, 86 (1967), 102-7.

controversial; the result was Oberon, which recaptures the spirit of Elizabethan romance without any nostalgia for chivalric action, and contains exalted praise of James as a "god, o're kings" (l. 344, VII, 353). Henry's increasing sympathy with Puritan foreign policy could certainly not be blamed on Ben Jonson.

On political grounds it is not surprising that Henry preferred writers other than Jonson for the masques to celebrate the Calvinist triumph of the Palatine match. Jonson was in any case out of the country in 1612-13. His departure may have been provoked by a quarrel with Jones, who seems to be satirized in two of Jonson's epigrams (E115, 129); the Epigrams were entered on 15 May 1612. It may be excessive to conjecture, as Frances Yates does, that Jonson deliberately absented himself from festivities he found uncongenial: he was travelling, after all, as tutor to Ralegh's son, and Ralegh hoped that the wedding would be the occasion for his release.[1] But, if Raymond Urban's ingenious conjecture is accepted, soon after his return to England, in May or June 1613, he was composing a pastoral drama, The May Lord, to celebrate the Howards' delight at the imprisonment of Sir Thomas Overbury.[2] Jonson's sardonic temperament would not have been blind to the irony of adopting a Spenserian form with connotations of rural innocence to celebrate a particularly murky court intrigue involving the defeat of the Earl of Essex. Soon the heroine of Jonson's drama was supervising Overbury's murder, and on 26 December she married the Earl of Somerset. Jonson composed a challenge, a masque and a poem for the occasion. Historians have generally been reluctant to believe that Jonson was closely involved in the Howard intrigues, but he was a close friend of Cotton, who as Somerset's private secretary helped him to falsify potentially incriminating evidence when the fact of the murder was eventually revealed. At the least

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1. F.A. Yates. Shakespeare's Last Plays: A New Approach (London, 1975), p.117.
2. R. Urban, "The Somerset Affair, The Belvoir Witches, and Jonson's Pastoral Comedies", Harvard Library Bulletin, (1975), 295-323. Urban argues that The Sad Shepherd is a later reworking of the play Jonson described to Drummond (I, 143), in which Frances Howard, the Countess of Bedford, the Countess of Suffolk, Lady Mary Wroth and the Earl of Pembroke took part; the play may have been staged at Belvoir, seat of the Earl of Rutland.

Jonson was being blandly and unobtrusively offensive when he reminded Somerset of Overbury's The Wife, a portrait of the ideal spouse written by the man he had disowned and his wife had murdered. But Jonson's other pieces for the marriage were safely general, and he suffered none of Chapman's embarrassment over his support for the match: the poem to Somerset was not printed in the 1616 folio, but he did reprint the challenge at tilt, coolly suppressing the couple's name. His wedding masque, The Irish Masque at Court, said little about the occasion but was provocative in another way. The anti-masque was made up of four Irish footmen, ignorant and stupid but touchingly loyal; delegates from the Irish Parliament were in England at that time, trying to obtain a settlement of the bitter dispute between Protestant and Catholic members that had disrupted the session, and Chamberlain observed that Jonson's masque, though it so pleased the king that he had it repeated, "was not so pleasing to many, which thincke yt no time (as the case stands) to exasperate that nation by making yt ridiculous" (Letters, I, 498).

According to Aubrey, Jonson's next play, Bartholomew Fair (October, 1614), was commissioned by King James as an attack on the Puritans. Certainly Jonson had taken care after Eastward Ho! to make his comedies politically acceptable: in Volpone he satirizes the dewy-eyed idealists who think that there can possibly be anything superior in a republican constitution, while in The Alchemist he ridicules Puritans.[1] As is shown in the next chapter, the year 1614 was one of particularly high tension between writers and the monarchy. Wither was imprisoned and was championed by the Spenserians as a martyr; an attempt by Cotton and others to revive the Society of Antiquaries was abandoned in case it became politically controversial; and a recalcitrant Parliament was dissolved. Amongst those imprisoned was Jonson's close friend John Hoskins, who wrote a poem appealing to the king for release from the Tower on New Year's Day 1615. Another friend of Jonson's in the Tower, Sir Walter Ralegh, had his hopes of

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1. D.C. Boughner, "Lewkenor and 'Volpone'", Notes and Queries, 207 (1962), 124-30, argues that Jonson satirizes Lewkenor's translation of Contarini, to which Spenser contributed a commendatory poem. Lewkenor himself seems to have abandoned any republican sympathies when James appointed him Master of Ceremonies: the French ambassador suspected him of accepting Spanish bribes (C.S.P.Ven. 1603-07, pp. 212-3, 532).

release again dashed in December 1614 when James had his History of the World called in for being too saucy in censuring princes. Jonson had contributed a commendatory poem to the History.[1] Against this context, Jonson's The Golden Age Restored (6 January 1615) can be seen as an appeal for clemency towards writers who have offended the king. The restoration of the Golden Age, the return of justice to earth, also involves the return of the great poets of the past - Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate and Spenser - who are the natural defenders of justice. The tribute to Spenser, unusual from Jonson, reflects a desire to effect reconciliation between poetic as well as political factions. But the appeal to the king is couched in terms of unprecedented adulation: Jove has forgiven mortals for their crimes and rebelliousness and condescended, from his own grace and not through any merit of theirs, to show clemency. The adulation reflects the political situation: it seemed possible that after the fiasco of 1614 the English monarchy, like the French, might dispense with parliaments altogether. The triumph of the Howards seemed secure. The Howards' opponents used the 1615 masque to bring forward George Villiers, who was to be used to lure the king's favour away from the Howards. But Jonson himself does not seem to have faltered in his allegiance to the Howards. Alderman Cockayne's disastrous project to reorganize the wool trade was essentially a Howard enterprise; Cockayne encountered steadily increasing criticism but tried to safeguard his new Merchant Adventurers' Company by claiming that its critics were really enemies of the royal prerogative. Jonson came to his aid by composing an entertainment in June 1616 for a banquet at which Cockayne was knighted.[2] In February 1616 Jonson was awarded an annual pension of 100 marks (I, 86).

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1. L.B. Osborn, The Life, Letters and Writings of John Hoskyns, 1566-1638 (New Haven, 1937), pp. 40, 203-6; Chamberlain, Letters, I, 568.
2. A. Friis, Alderman Cockayne's Project and the Cloth Trade (Copenhagen and London, 1927), p. 303; on Jonson's links with the financial world see also M. Prestwich, Cranfield: Politics and Profits under the Early Stuarts (Oxford, 1965), pp. 97-106. However sharply Jonson satirized the financial corruption of the Stuart court in his plays, he enjoyed associating with the profiteers - a typical ambivalence.

The masques of the years 1616-18 turn away from political topicality to the self-conscious exploration and celebration of the masque form itself. This development was stimulated by Jones's return from Italy, which he had visited with Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel; after his return the last vestiges of Elizabethan medievalism were banished from the masque, giving way to Jones's lucid classicism. Arundel was beginning to emerge as an important political influence, embodying the values of old nobility which the other Howards tried to maintain without being tainted by financial or moral scandal. Jones's other chief patron at this time, the Earl of Pembroke, was likewise of unimpeachable nobility without being touched by the fall of Somerset in 1616 and of Suffolk in 1618. The architectural ideals which Jones had expressed in the scenery of the masque finally achieved realization when the old Banqueting House was burned down in 1619, and Jones was commissioned to rebuild it in a classical style. The building was a striking expression of James's pacific ideals, and he hoped that it would be the scene for the festivities occasioned by the final realization of his long-cherished project of a Spanish match. Jones was commissioned to build a chapel for the Infanta's private worship. It was fitting that in 1621 a commission to decorate the Banqueting House should have been given to Rubens, the chief Habsburg artist and a skilled negotiator who shared James's desire for European peace. The importance James attached to the artistic expression of his policies is revealed by the amount he spent on the Banqueting House at a time of trade depression.[1]

But James's plans were disrupted by his son-in-law's decision to accept the throne of Bohemia, thus precipitating a polarization of Protestant and Catholic powers. James was thrown into an agony of indecision as he tried to find a way of helping his children without endangering the cause of European peace. The Spanish ambassador argued that monarchies must stand together against the poisonous forces of republicanism and democracy; the radical Protestants urged immediate action in a decisive struggle against the Papal Antichrist. James was probably shrewder and more in control than was realized by most of his

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1. On the Banqueting House and its context, see P. Palme, Triumph of Peace (London, 1957).

countrymen, trying to play off one party against another in an attempt to safeguard his aims; whatever his vacillations, he was firm on the principle that he would only intervene in European politics on dynastic and political grounds, never in order to wage an ideological war in defence of Protestantism. The militant Protestants thought this to be a sign of shameful weakness; and more than ever the masque became a symbol of unpopular policies. It is not surprising that the king sought consolation in the buffoonery and adulation of young favourites; his life's work seemed to be in ruins, and he was haunted in his dreams by his old tutor Buchanan; in 1620 he published a meditation comparing the royal crown to a crown of thorns - perhaps as a warning to his son-in-law.[1] In January and February James was entertained at various houses with a "running masque"; Nethersole complained that his master found it hard to gain access to the king with the latest news about Dutch policy on Bohemia because James would allow no interruption in his enjoyment of the masque.[2] The following year the Venetian ambassador complained that the Spanish ambassador was "making use for his own advantage of festivities, masques and all distractions from business, to which [the king] has devoted himself incessantly these last days".[3] These masques combined rumbustious farce with satire of the Puritans. In the August 1620 masque Sir William Feilding, who had made a lucky match with Buckingham's sister and was shortly to become a Viscount, played "a Puritan that marred the play", and the New Year masque of 1621 portrayed a Puritan with long asses' ears who deplored the court's devotion to festivities at a time when the Church of God was in danger.[4]

Jonson never praised the king more enthusiastically than when his policies were under attack, and his masques of this period added to the rather small chorus of adulation. In News from the New World Discovered in the Moon

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1. C.S.P.Ven. 1621-23, p. 444, 1619-21, p.151.
2. S.R. Gardiner (ed.), Letters and Other Documents illustrating the Relations between England and Germany at the commencement of the Thirty Years' War, Second Series (Camden Soc., 1868), pp. 132-4.
3. C.S.P.Ven. 1619-21, p. 534.
4. C.S.P.Ven. 1619-21, p. 390: T. Birch (ed.), The Court and Times of James I (London, 1848), II, 228.

(17 January and 29 February 1620?) Jonson satirizes political romantics who hope to find a "golden world" of perfection. The satire of newsmongers was especially relevant to the political situation: the public marketing of information undermined James's attempts to keep foreign policy a "mystery of state". If the dating of this masque in 1620 rather than 1621 is correct, Jonson was remarkably quick off the mark in his satire, for although there was already great interest in news from Bohemia the first regular newspaper in English was not published until December 1620. James was prompt to suppress it: on 24 December he issued a proclamation curbing discussion of affairs of state, and in January 1621 he asked the States-General of the United Provinces, where the coranto was printed, to forbid the export of news-sheets to England. The first newspaper printed in England appeared in the summer of 1621; Jonson continued to view this phenomenon with hostility, and satirized it again in The Staple of News (1626).[1] In February 1620 the Bohemian envoy Dohna arrived in London to plead the Bohemian case - and perhaps also to sponsor and diffuse propaganda for the cause. James allowed him to raise a loan for Frederick, but only on the understanding that the cause was a dynastic and not a religious one.[2] Shortly afterwards the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, arrived and was given a much warmer welcome. By June Gondomar seems to have been planning with Buckingham an invasion of the Netherlands.[3] Jonson's masque for the king's birthday, Pan's Anniversary (19 June), hymned James as an omnipotent deity:

> PAN is our All, by him we breath, wee live,
> Wee move, we are... (ll. 192-3, VII, 535)

As in News from the New World, there is praise of the music of the king's peace (l. 68). The masque consolidates a pattern which had begun in The Vision of Delight (1617): instead of moving from a rural setting to finish in the court, the masque reaches its climax in a pastoral landscape which is identified with the court. Thus the traditional satiric contrast between court and countryside is

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1. J. Frank, The Beginnings of the English Newspaper 1620-1660 (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), pp. 2-6. Herford and Simpson at first dated the masque 6 January 1621 (II, 310), but later accepted Greg's suggestion of 1620.
2. On the loan, and Bohemian propaganda, see Adams, "The Protestant Cause", pp. 292-9.
3. D.H. Willson, King James VI and I (London, 1956), p. 414.

effectively neutralized by simply identifying the one with the other.[1] The pastoral rites of the Fountain of Light are disturbed by a band from the slow-witted nation of Boeotia. This is a comic gallery of grotesque characters like those to be found in other masques of the period; it is hard to be certain if there are specific political allusions, but the tinker's drum recalls the recruiter's drum from Bohemia which had been beating all spring, and there is a jocular allusion to the "politique provision" of a "match" (l. 120). At the end of the masque the troublesome crew are sent home turned into sheep, all but their leader, a fencer and ex-soldier who claims diplomatic immunity. The name "Boeotia" is not very remote from "Bohemia", whose ambassador was causing James such embarrassment. The masque concludes with a warning to shepherds not to trust their hirelings lest they deceive both their sheep and their master. This masque indicates the change in political symbolism since Elizabeth's reign: the closest parallel is Peele's Descent of Astraea, but in that pageant the danger to the fountain came from the Catholics.

Jonson's next masque, The Gypsies Metamorphosed, was a comic fantasy in the vein of Buckingham's "running masque" andenjoyed a similar popularity, being performed in three different places. Jonson included extravagant praises of James and a prophecy of the Spanish match (ll. 363-404). Gypsies could also be called "Bohemians".[2] James was so pleased with the masque that he offered Jonson a knighthood; the following year he commissioned him to translate Barclay's Argenis.[3] The masque of 1622 was particularly magnificent: it was the first masque performed in the new Banqueting House. Again, Jonson praised James to the heights at a particularly controversial moment: the previous week James had decided to dissolve the troublesome Parliament and torn the Commons' Protestation from the journal. Gondomar regarded this event as the greatest victory for the Catholic faith since Luther's time, and it certainly marked a new

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1. Orgel, The Illusion of Power, pp. 49-50.
2. The usage was current in French, though the O.E.D. does not give an English equivalent so early.
3. Ben Jonson, I, 87. Jonson apparently refused a knighthood; the probable explanation for this uncharacteristic modesty is that he sought, and received, instead the reversion of the office of Master of the Revels.

low point in the king's popularity. The masque was a triumph for the Spanish ambassador; he succeeded in obtaining an invitation not only to the first performance but also to the repeat performance on 5 May. The French Ambassador was invited only to the second performance and indignantly refused this demeaning offer of "cold meat" (X, 639). The Venetian ambassador complained that the fate of Europe was being set aside while the court spent the season "expending enough money to infuse the languishing with fresh life, and losing time, which is even more valuable, to the advantage and jubilation of their enemies".[1] In The Masque of Augurs Jonson dramatized the king's doctrine of "mysteries of state": a reverential atmosphere is created and some aspects of the future are revealed, but the Fates have concealed some things even from the Gods lest they should envy the king (ll. 412-7). For this masque new heights of scenic elaboration were reached; the spectacular changes of scene culminated in a revelation of Jove himself, who gave a sign that the omens were favourable. With characteristic ingenuity, Jonson combined this glorification of royal policy with a personal appeal: the College of Augurs in the masque probably represents the "Academ Roial" which Jonson's friend Edmund Bolton was sponsoring at this time. This was a project for a learned society which would be free of the subversive atmosphere of the Society of Antiquaries: Bolton said that it would "make a diversion of many bitter and curious fancies and turn them to benevolence". Buckingham had raised the project in Parliament; Jonson and Jones were to be members. James had welcomed the scheme and enthusiastically seized on its political function, proposing that the Academy should establish "indexes expurgatory and expunctory".[2]

Throughout 1622 James clung to his hopes of a Spanish match; the Venetian ambassador felt that it was useless to discuss the Palatinate any more, for the king hated the naked truth, so that there was nothing to be done but deceitfully flatter him. It was observed that when the Prince of Wales dismissed some Catholic musicians from his service, James reinstated them under the Spanish

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1. C.S.P.Ven. 1621-23. p. 191.
2. E.M.Portal, "The Academ Roial of King James I", Proceedings of the British Academy, 7 (1915-16), 189-206.

ambassador's pressure: they were excellent choristers for his chapel. Over the Christmas season James ordered the nobility to return to the country, partly because of the misery caused by a harsh winter but also, it was alleged, to stifle political discussion.[1] James kept delaying the masque that winter in the hope that the Dutch envoys would depart before he had to take the embarrassing step of inviting the Spanish ambassador but not the Dutch. In the event the Spaniard declined the invitation, having already witnessed a private performance.[1] For 1623 Jonson again provided a masque that attacked all criticism of royal policy, taking as his main target the poet George Wither, who is presented as the embodiment of irresponsible criticism of the authorities. Wither seeks the applause of the base multitude, whereas true Fame is to be obtained only at court. Jonson also attacks Alexander Gil (ll. 171-7), who had praised Wither as the English Juvenal; this initiated a feud to be taken up by Gil 's son, who was later alleged to have urged Buckingham's assassination. The main masque vindicates the glories of the age against its detractors; there are three changes of scene, culminating in a pastoral landscape and a compliment to James's favourite sport of hunting. But the hunting theme also returns to the attack on Wither, for Wither's pastorals in justification of his satires were called The Shepherd's Hunting: Wither had portrayed himself as fearlessly hunting down vices, even at the court itself. Although he claimed to be attacking general abuses, in fact targets like Northampton were readily identifiable; Jonson urges that hunters must pursue not men but their own vices, emulating the pacific spirit of King James (ll. 525-36). As usual, the masque was on a theme close to the king's own heart; in early 1623 James became so angry at an especially vituperative satire that he composed a poem of his own in reply. The people must not presume to pry into the mysteries of kingship but must either submit to their monarch or else "be puld vp like stinkinge weeds". James criticized the Magna Carta, which had sprung from an unjust rebellion, and warned that he had no need to take advice even from his own council and would summon Parliament only if and when it pleased him. The king ended his poem by warning the people not to provoke him, for if once he bent his angry brow they would be ruined.

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1. C.S.P.Ven. 1621-23, pp. 537, 538, 550.

James is equating his own anger with God's. But Jonson did not keep his wrath as general as the king's: Chamberlain reported that Wither's criticisms of the court were "so tender an argument that yt must not be touched either in iest or earnest".[1] It was all very well to represent the monarch as besieged by cosmic forces of evil, for he only gained in dignity from the confrontation, but to suggest that the king could he harmed by a minor poet was more of a slight than a compliment. Jonson had allowed his personal animosities to outstrip his political judgement.

Perhaps because of this faux pas, Jonson was not called upon to help in the preparations for the Infanta's arrival in England later that year, although Inigo Jones, to Jonson's great annoyance, was commissioned to design triumphal arches. But Jonson's exclusion from the festivities may have been a blessing in disguise, for few events ever presented more difficulties to the panegyrist than Charles' and Buckingham's foolhardy trip to Spain. The Venetian ambassador reported that "expectation of a manifesto or apology, employed by the king upon other occasions, has ceased because every art of the pen would fail where reason is so utterly lacking". Popular feeling was distinctly cool: the bells and bonfires with which the city eventually celebrated the Prince's arrival were distinctly unspontaneous, and even Oxford only produced its panegyric after it "tooke the alarme" from the city. In an attempt to restrain the widespread opposition to the match, preachers were instructed to confine their discussion of it to prayers for the Prince's prosperous journey and safe return; but Chamberlain observed that many of them "are hardly held in, and their tongues ytch to be talking". In one church it was even necessary for the clerk to drown out the sermon with a psalm.[2] The king himself was apprehensive and urged his son in characteristic terms to press Frederick's case "that the worlde maye see ye haue thoght as well upon the busieniss of Christendome as upon the cod-peece point". However, the king reconciled himself to a romantic view of the exploit, as a quest for the Golden Fleece, and remembered that he himself had travelled across the seas for a wife. His poem on the event took up Jonson's Arcadian imagery, but the "Royall Pan" revealed his sensitivity to criticism:

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1. Poems of James VI, II, 182-87, Chamberlain, II, 473.
2. C.S.P.Ven. 1621-23, p. 583; Birch, II, 385; Chamberlain, II, 495, 486.

> Kinde Sheappeardes, that haue lou'd them longe
> bee not soe rashe, in Censuringe wronge
> Correct your ffeares, leaue off to murne
> the Heavens will favour there returne... [1]

Taking their lead from the king, the panegyrists put a brave face on things. Oxford issued a volume of verses on the arrival in Madrid, "that the Spanish may see with what applause we are like to receve her".[2] Emphasis was placed on the lavish Spanish hospitality and the king's romantic passion, so that controversial questions were sidestepped, and the authors did not give their names. Balthasar Gerbier planned a large painting to commemorate the prince's return, with the prince and princess driving a chariot across the waves and Buckingham as Admiral of the Sea guiding the reins. Gerbier's picture would have expressed precisely what many people disliked about the exploit: while James looks on benignly in the background, it is Buckingham who holds the reins.[3] Many hostile satires circulated in London; Richard Corbett wrote Buckingham a poem playfully detailing some of the charges, and his flattery of the favourite provoked an answering satire.[4] But Buckingham's influence was so great that many people thought it worth investing in his favour by sending inflated panegyrics of the kind he appreciated to Spain. Donne wrote in praise of Spanish religion and learning; his friend Sir Henry Goodere, who was in grave financial difficulties, sent Buckingham some panegyrics. Fulke Greville was one of the few people to try to combine a warning against Spain with his flattery, but to make this palatable the austere old man had to assume a bantering role as Buckingham's "grandson".[5]

We have unusually direct evidence about Jonson's feelings at this time from his 'Epistle to one that wrote asking to be sealed of the Tribe of Ben". In this poem, Stoic contempt for the public world is mingled with resentment at

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1. Goodman, II, 299; Poems of James VI, II, 192-3.
2. Vota, siue... Oxoniensium Gratulatio (London, 1623); Chamberlain, II, 495.
3. Goodman, II, 265.
4. R. Corbett, Poems, ed. J.A.W. Bennett and H.R. Trevor-Roper (Oxford, 1955), pp. 76-9; Chamberlain, II, 517.
5. R.C. Bald, John Donne: A Life (Oxford, 1970), pp. 44-7; C.S.P.D. 1619-23, p. 585; 1623-25, p. 195; Greville, Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (Blackburn, 1870), I, lxxv-lxxxvii. See also C.F. Main, "Poems on the 'Spanish Marriage' of Prince Charles", Notes and Queries, 200 (1955), 336-40.

being left out of the celebrations. Jonson loftily declares that inner worth needs no external stamp; the basic action of the poem is Jonson's conferring of the "stamp" of independent literary merit. The poet resolves to "dwell as in my Center", scorning those who exchange gossip about the latest news; but if the Spanish match should be called off he will be ready to fight. The poem is an interesting indication of the possible gap between Jonson's public voice and his private opinions; but it is noteworthy that his criticisms of the court are quickly specialized into criticisms of the Jonesian theatrical apparatus that serves as its symbol. False friends are pictured as

> built with Canvasse, paper, and false lights,
> As are the Glorious Scenes, at the great sights.
> (UV47, VIII, 220)

He claims no right to meddle in the mysteries of state himself; what annoys him is that he was

> not prick'd downe one
> Of the late Mysterie of reception,
> Although my Fame, to his, not under-heares,
> That guides the Motions, and directs the beares.
> (ll. 47-50, VIII, 219)

The animal allusion was all the more appropriate as Philip had sent James an elephant and some camels to amuse him. Jonson is unlikely to have been impressed by the uncontrolled extravagance of the Spanish panegyrists: their accounts of the prince's entertainment were cast in a florid Arcadian prose that Jonson would have found archaic, and one enthusiast managed to turn Charles's name into "Christus Salvator". The lengthiest panegyric of the match, Scipio Mirandula's Cynthia Coronata, was an extraordinary rehearsal of every possible panegyric topos through all its variations; the title-page depicted Christ standing between Charles and Maria. Whatever Jonson thought of this book, we know that he bought it.[1]

In the event Jones's preparations were in vain, for Charles returned without his bride, and the panegyrists were abruptly confronted with the difficult task of turning a manifest humiliation into a triumph of royal sagacity. For the

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1. C.S.P.D. 1623-25, pp. 9, 13; G. Albion, Charles I and the Court of Rome (London, 1935), p. 35; Ben Jonson, I, 268.

London crowd there was no difficulty: overjoyed at the return of Charles and Buckingham who were now eager for war with Spain, they took it for granted that the match would be called off. But for the court poet things were not so simple; the king still had to be won over, and the first poets to treat the events in Spain were understandably circumspect. Oxford and Cambridge issued commemorative volumes which expressed their congratulations in safely general terms, and were careful to distinguish their joy from that of the vulgar. The storm which had endangered Charles's departure from Spain helped the panegyrists to portray his return as an epic victory without having to specify the political implications of the victory too precisely. One poem presented Neptune, king of the "Maria", troubling Charles with stormy seas out of jealousy over "Maria". George Herbert, in an oration commemorating the return, remained faithful to the king's pacific principles.[1]

Buckingham was aware that if he was not to lose all political credibility he had to act fast. His many enemies at court were coalescing, and men like Pembroke who had formerly opposed the Spanish match were inclined to support it now that Buckingham was so firmly against it. Buckingham therefore courted the support of the most militant Protestants, putting pressure on the king to summon a Parliament whose patriotic fervour he felt confident of manipulating in his favour. The king yielded; and Gardiner, followed by many historians, felt that from now on he had virtually abdicated affective power to Buckingham. Recent historians are less sure, and it can be argued that James was playing a subtle political game of his own, using Buckingham to put pressure on the Spanish and anticipating that he would eventually destroy himself politically.[2] What can be said is that Buckingham's views were more prominent than the king's in panegyric at this time: he sponsored a poetic propaganda campaign

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1. Carolus Redux (Oxford, 1623), sigs. D1a-b; Gratulatio ... de Serenissimi Principis Reditu (Cambridge, 1623); Herbert, Works, ed. F.E. Hutchinson (Oxford, 1941), pp. 444-55.
2. For Gardiner's view see History of England, revised edition, V (London, 1883), 160; for a more favourable view of James see R.E. Ruigh, The Parliament of 1624 (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 382-97. I am indebted to an unpublished paper by Kevin Sharpe for this account of Buckingham's role.

aimed at discrediting the alliance with Spain. In November his poet John Maynard wrote a masque for a banquet attended by the Spanish ambassadors, who were offended because it was "free of flattery" of their nation.[1] On New Year's Day 1624 Edmund Bolton presented Buckingham with a project for a heroic poem on the journey to Spain; the poem was to be the first fruit of the Academy of Honour which Jonson had publicized in The Masque of Augurs. James's own Lepanto provided a perfect model. Bolton offered a sample of the opening of a heroic poem under the title of Vindex, or The Blame is Spaines.[2] He left it to other poets to carry on the great work; the best-known poem on the theme is by Waller, but other poets also met the challenge. Buckingham wanted a French match as a substitute for the Spanish match, and the French exile Tourval made Charles's romantic passion for Henrietta Maria the main theme of his poem; but he did not neglect to mention James's admiration for the physical charms of Buckingham.[3]

There is reason to doubt whether Jonson approved of Buckingham; but his masques at this time reflect Buckingham's views more than the king's. Shortly after Maynard's masque in November 1623, Charles and Buckingham were rehearsing for Jonson's New Year masque, Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion. The masque synthesizes the panegyric symbolism of the year and moves it in an anti-Spanish - that is, pro-Buckingham and Charles - direction, while still trying to please the king. Jonson takes care to distinguish the praise he is offering from "the vulgars chime... th'abortiue, and extemporall dinne Of balladry" (ll. 162-4). The central symbolism resembles Gerbier's plan for a marine painting, although Buckingham is given a more subordinate place. Jonson's use of the analogy between Buckingham's offices as Master of the Horse and Lord Admiral (both under the aegis of Neptune) derives from an epigram probably written by Ayton (who sent verses to Buckingham in Spain) but often

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1. Chamberlain, II, 527, 532; C.S.P. Ven. 1623-25, p. 158.
2. Bod. MS. Tanner 73, fols. 418-21.
3. Jean Loiseau de Tourval, Summus Dux, Cum Duce Redux (n.pl., 1623), pp. 1-2. Waller's "Of the Danger His Majesty (being Prince) escaped in the Road at St. Andero" is based on The Ioyfull Returne, of the Most Illustrious Prince, Charles (London, 1623).

attributed to James himself. The main masque presents the arrival of Albion and Haliclyon (Charles and Buckingham) on a floating island; the conceit of the floating isle appeared in Corbett's poem to Buckingham.[1] The travellers have been wafted away at Neptune's command from the deceitful artifices of the sirens: Charles's marine victory is now openly presented as a victory over the Spaniards, not just the elements. This reflects Buckingham's policy, but there is exalted praise of James to sweeten the pill: it is the king whose sagacity saves the voyagers, and whose glories are merely "reflected" in his son's return: and Jonson gives him a striking apotheosis, his trident touching the stars. A spectacular change of scene reveals the glories of the navy, of which James was to boast in Parliament that spring. Jonson successfully handles a problem that had confronted all panegyrists of the events of 1623: Charles and Buckingham had adopted disguises for their journey southwards, and it is not easy to impart heroic dignity to a man in a false beard. The panegyrists, however, had displayed considerable adroitness: one poet compared the disguise to that of Jove when he went wooing, while in another poem (the closest in conception to Waller's) Proteus, angry at the deception, collaborates with Neptune to raise the storm at St. Andero.[2] Jonson places Charles and Buckingham under the protection of "diuine Proteus, Father of disguise" (l. 138) and makes the disguise a necessary protection against the artifices of the Spaniards; Proteus assumes a central part in the triumph and praises the king eloquently.

The masque thus tries to please James and Buckingham at once, preparing the king for a breach with Spain without seeming to cast doubt on his kingcraft. But the task proved impossible: James intervened to cut out some anti-Spanish passages, and even the censored version could not be performed.[3] The diplomatic warfare which throughout the reign had ironically punctuated these celebrations of concord reached a height and neither Spain nor France would give way to allow the masque to be performed. Jonson's next entertainment, in August 1624, likewise succeeded a masque given by Maynard for Buckingham. The content of this masque is not known, but the Spanish ambassador complained that Buckingham

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1. James VI, Poems, II, 176; Corbett, Poems, p. 76.
2. Gratulatio, sigs. G1a-2a.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1623-5, p. 196.

was regularly entertaining the court with ribald anti-Spanish songs.[1] On 19 August Jonson's The Masque of Owles was presented to Charles at Kenilworth. At this time Buckingham's need for anti-Spanish satire was greater than ever, for on 14 August he had discovered that James had rejected the French terms; hostility to the French was rising, and many of those who had supported Buckingham in the first excitement of his return from Spain were murmuring that a Spanish match without Buckingham in a position of power would be preferable to a French match dominated by him.[2] Amongst those who took exception to the extreme anti-Spanish emotions Buckingham was fanning were Pembroke's brother Montgomery and Sir Robert Carey, who was the host at Kenilworth. Jonson included anti-Spanish satire in his masque (VII, 785-6), but it was relatively mild. Once again Jonson is following Buckingham's views but expressing them in a more decorous form, all the more so because of the recent scandal of A Game at Chess, word of which had been brought to the king the previous week.[3]

The king was still cool about the French match, but eventually, in November, the marriage treaty was signed. Preparations for war against the Habsburgs were under way. But the war was not to be quite the one that had been anticipated by the Protestant militants in the heady days immediately after Buckingham's return: it was to be a political rather than ideological campaign, in alliance with a French monarchy that was suppressing a Protestant revolt at home. Despite a promise to the contrary in Parliament earlier that year, on

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1623-5, p. 420; Chamberlain, II, 578; E.M. Wilson and O. Turner, "The Spanish Protest Against A Game at Chesse", M.L.R., 44 (1949), 482.
2. Gardiner, V, 256-8, 261; H.M.C. Mar and Kellie, II, 207, 212.
3. The incident was followed by a ban on 15 August on seditious books and pamphlets: C.S.P.D. 1623-5, p. 327. It is not certain whether it was Buckingham or Pembroke who sponsored the production of A Game at Chess; both had been active in encouraging anti-Spanish propaganda, but, as Margot Heinemann has pointed out, Pembroke had the stronger links with city poets and preachers, and Middleton's satire is directed against all Papists, not just Spanish ones: "Middleton's A Game at Chess: Parliamentary-Puritans and Opposition Drama", E.L.R., 5 (1975), 232-50.

24 December James suspended the penal laws against Catholics.[1] On 9 January Jonson's The Fortunate Isles was staged: the masque was an adaptation of the masque that had been cancelled the previous year. In their symbolism these masques closely resemble Antoine Remy's long narrative Galatée (1625) which described the events leading up to the French match in romance form, perfectly fulfilling Bolton's requirements for a heroic work on the exploits of Charles and Buckingham. Remy describes the visit of Charles and Buckingham to the French court, on their way to Spain, and shows them watching with approval a spectacular ballet de cour. The ballet represented the crushing of a Huguenot rebellion. Remy's romance in turn resembles the canvases recently completed by Rubens for Marie de Medici.[2] Jonson is working in an international artistic language of Catholic absolutism.

Evaluation of the Jonsonian masque has inevitably been affected by political as well as aesthetic factors. As long as the prevailing view of James was that he was a shambling buffoon, it was impossible to take seriously Jonson's claims for the moral value of the form: the discrepancy between the political ideals and the monarch who was presented as personifying them was too grotesque. Historians are now inclined to take a more sympathetic view of James and to recognize that the lurid picture of his court presented by his opponents was a considerable distortion of the truth. There is every reason to think that Jonson believed in James's pacific policies and saw himself as defending political wisdom against ignorant slanderers; he could at least claim that his art had played no part in inflaming the religious passions that led to the horrors of the Thirty Years' War. On the other hand, the nature of his political opinions means that it is somewhat misleading to place too much emphasis on the "didacticism" of his masques: in general his masques simply follow the prevailing royal policy, to a rather greater degree than the pageants

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1. Gardiner, V, 263-4, 277-9, 304-5; Adams, pp. 346 ff.
2. J. Jacquot, "La reine Henriette-Marie et l'influence française dans les spectacles à la cour de Charles 1er", Cahiers d l'association internationale des études françaises, 9 (1957), 128-60; A. Remy, La Galatée et les Adventures du Prince Astiagès (Paris, 1625), pp. 61-83.

sponsored by Leicester and Essex in the previous reign. To some extent this reflects the fact that Jonson was in full agreement with royal policies in a way that Sidney and Spenser were not; to some extent it reflects the increasingly strong pressure of censorship. But in some ways Jonson's political outlook placed an inherent limitation on overt didacticism. The political tradition represented by the pageantry and poetry patronized by Leicester and Essex combined extravagant praise of the monarch with a certain sympathy with Puritanism and with international Protestantism, with sources of value outside the secular order. Jonson, however, was deeply suspicious of any appeal to an independent religious standard which might threaten social stability; for him the monarch was the essential standard of earthly authority, and though the subject had a duty to offer moral advice, it was not for him to speculate too curiously about hidden mysteries of state. When royal policy was displeasing one must simply remain silent.[1] Jonson might have admired the stern precepts of the Neo-Stoics, but he also read with enthusiasm Puttenham's Arte of English Poesie, and he has much in common with Puttenham's conservative outlook (cf. Chapter I). The didacticism of the Jonsonian masque inhered not so much in its content as in its form: like religious ceremonial, it made the nobility enact ideal roles, turning the public persons into personifications partaking of the aura of the ideals they represented. In the Platonism of the court masque, traditional social forms and artistic forms reinforced a traditional world-view. As Stephen Orgel points out, the inherent suspicion of the masque amongst many modern critics "says much for the success of the Puritan revolution", with its attack on hypocritical role-playing.[2] In filling the role of the court poet with such constancy, Jonson was publicly committing himself to the idea that the individual must bow to the demands of the state, remaining faithful to established social forms even if the individual bearers were imperfect. This is the political basis of Jonson's rejection of the Puritan cult of sincerity and self-expression. Where Greville struggles with an apparently insuperable gulf between natural inner self and external artificial role, Jonson affirms the natural harmony between person and persona.

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1. Jonson distrusted Parliaments (VIII, 579).
2. Orgel, The Illusion of Power, p. 88.

To present a simple antithesis between royalist traditionalists and Puritan radicals is, however, extremely misleading. First of all, many Puritans did not object to masques and pageantry as such but to the particular policies which they were used to represent under James and Charles (see Appendix). Moreover, in many ways the Jonsonian masque was an innovatory form, and it was from a conservative point of view that many of its critics judged it. Jonson himself was deeply ambivalent in his attitude to courtly forms; part of the appeal of the masque to him was that it provided an opportunity for experiment and innovation, giving coherent form to the previously inchoate traditions of court entertainment. Jonson's attitude to court life was marked throughout by his desire for rational control, which was compatible with considerable contempt for courtiers and sympathy with the king's attempts to discipline them. In his reaction against the radical Puritan emphasis on the natural inner self, Jonson glorified political artifice to a degree that might seem to threaten traditional values. Already in 1602 Jonson was attacked by Dekker as "Monsieur Machiauell"; one of the maxims from Puttenham which he underlined was that it was the courtier's chief art "cunningly to be able to dissemble".[1] As has been seen, his fascination with Machiavellian "cunning" in Sejanus got him into trouble; it is interesting to note that his publisher at the time he was working on the play, Edward Blount, not long afterwards translated the most cynically Machiavellian of all conduct-books, Ducci's Ars Aulica. In this most extreme form of "black" Tacitism, the Annals become a lesson not in the evils of tyranny but in the efficient exercise of courtly artifice; and Sejanus is singled out as a "great Master in the Courtiers arte". Seneca, by contrast, is criticized for attacking flattery: his end showed what an imprudent course it was to speak the truth to princes. Sejanus is praised for his "cunning" in flattery. In this Hobbesian world, the only end is self-interest, but if this can be gained through serving the prince we must learn the art of "hiding the appetite of our proper interest, vnder the vale of apparent desire to do the Prince seruice". The intricate artifices Ducci describes recall the world of Jonson's plays: if the prince is lustful and conceals the fact, the courtier's best course is not to be openly lustful, which would make the prince suspicious that his secret had been betrayed, nor to be continent, which would make him morally

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1 The Arte of English Poesie, B.L. pressmark G11548, p.250. On Jonson and Machiavelli, see D.C. Boughner, The Devil's Disciple (New York, 1968).

uneasy, but to pretend to be pretending not to be lustful.[1] To the Puritan gentry this advice would have seemed merely shocking; to Jonson it would have seemed while morally dubious, politically extremely interesting. Northampton and his circle took a great interest in Machiavelli, and even though they emphasized the need to Christianize his thought their style of government does seem to reflect a particular fascination with the mechanisms of intrigue. To some contemporaries the Jacobean masques seem to have appeared not as bastions of a traditional world-view but as Machiavellian masks, glossing over political errors with an unprecedented display of finery.[2] Jonson's role in the Overbury affair was certainly an odd one for such an assertive moralist. It may well be that the Howards' opponents painted the affair and its ramifications in exaggeratedly lurid colours in order to make political capital out of it; but not only did Jonson refrain from criticizing any of the participants, he continued to hymn the court as the unique centre of moral health, before which all subjects should be compelled to humble themselves in awed admiration. Here, surely, the gap between ideal and actual had passed beyond the norms accepted in conventional ceremonial.[3]

But Jonson's interest in the sheer artifice of court life could easily revert to Stoic disdain. As Barish has observed, Jonson's claims to impersonality are suspect: he displays "a subjectivity as intense as Donne's masquerading as its opposite, a thin-skinned suspiciousness masking itself as a benign imperturbability, and an acute social insecurity clothing itself in the mantle of achieved status, in a fashion similar to that in which the social-climbing citizens of Jonson's own comedies clothe themselves in the jargon and gestures of a superior class in order to be accepted by it".[4] Contemporaries were right to sense a deep ambivalence in the masque: it helped to undermine the values it celebrated.

On the one hand, the masque was intended to halt what the king regarded as a dangerous tendency towards the demystification of

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1. L. Ducci, Ars Aulica, tr. E. Blount (London, 1607), pp.269, 154-5, 165, 34-5, 114-5. The work was dedicated to Jonson's patron Pembroke and his brother. Blount had published Loves Martyr with Jonson's commendatory Epode (see p. 124). he published the panegyric and pageants of 1604; and in the same year he entered Sejanus in the Stationers' Register. It is not impossible that Ducci's work is a piece of sustained irony: some contemporaries read Machiavelli's The Prince as ironical. But if so, the irony is as dangerously poised on the verge of seriousness as the satire of the court in The Gypsies Metamorphosed.
2. Cf. Daniel's criticism of the public display of "cunning", p. 178 above).
3. In a late work, the Discoveries, Jonson becomes openly critical of Machiavelli (Boughner, The Devils Disciple, pp. 138ff): one wonders whether this reflects disillusionment with the court. But, as Boughner points out, even in this work the debt to Machiavelli remains great.
4. Barish, pp. 88-9.

religious and political institutions: he tried to avert his subjects' gaze from the Netherlands and turn it towards Spain. Their chivalrous loyalty to Elizabeth's person had allowed respect for the office of monarchy to become atrophied. Naunton thought that no powerful prince "stoopt and descended lower in presenting her person to the publique view" than Elizabeth, who affected the love of her people "somewhat beneath the height of her spirit, and natural magnanimity".[1] James made a determined effort to halt this drift towards "popularity". It is easy to overlook the extraordinary fact that, as C.H. Carter points out, "James's contemporary English critics were themselves mostly ignorant of what was usual behaviour at the court of an adult male sovereign".[2] Male favourites were a normal phenomenon at such courts; and James, unlike his predecessor, had to pay for the households of a wife and children. James had, in a sense, to make his subjects re-learn the language of absolutism, and if he seemed to be overdoing it, it has to be remembered that as a correspondent of Essex he had had every reason to know the weaknesses of Elizabeth's regime in her last years. His extravagant bestowal of gifts and titles at the start of his reign was partly a necessary compensation for the queen's excessive parsimony, which had aroused dangerous discontent. The immense popularity of Elizabeth's policy of confrontation with Spain (which she only pursued with reluctance) threatened to give her subjects the misleading impression that she had adopted it because it was popular. He encountered what he considered a quite improper resistance to his right to marry his children where he pleased.

Magnificent ceremonial was one of the means by which all absolute monarchs displayed their power and prestige. But such were the financial difficulties of the English monarchy that James's enormous expense on the symbols of power further undermined its substance. Foreign ambassadors were impressed, as they were meant to be, by the rich jewels worn by the spectators of the masques, but in many cases the jewels were borrowed or hired (X, 457, 466). The monarchy relied heavily on support from Parliament and from the City, which contained powerful elements firmly opposed to James's main policies.

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1. R. Naunton, Fragmenta Regalia, ed. E. Arber (London, 1870), pp. 20, 22.
2. C.H. Carter, The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598-1625 (New York, 1964), p. 289.

The conspicuous expenditure of Renaissance courts could be viewed up to a point as the natural expression of a hierarchical society, a society in which the natural signs of gifts and honours were valued above the arbitrary signs of commutative exchange, but the extravagance of James's court developed into a gross parody of such ideals, discrediting the symbols of the aristocratic economy. For all Jonson's insistence on seasonal rhythms, the scale of the Jacobean entertainments was an innovation; when informed in 1607 that it was not the fashion to hold plays on Christmas Day, James replied angrily that he would make it a fashion. James was wont to justify his extravagance in his first few years by explaining that this period was his "Christmas"; but for James it was Christmas all the year round.[1]

Thus the masque undermined respect for the aristocratic values it celebrated; moreover, it became a potent symbol of the process by which those values were undermined by the monarchy itself. After the fiasco of 1614 made it clear that James could not resolve his financial difficulties through Parliament, he resorted increasingly to the sale of titles to raise revenue, and this became a blatant contradiction of the basis of James's rule, his claim that the aristocracy depended for its survival on a strong monarchy to safeguard the social hierarchy. Up to a certain point the sale of titles served to check aristocratic pretensions and thus consolidate royal authority; but when the controlling force was not the royal will but the mediation of the market, the very principle of an aristocratic society was threatened.[2] By making titles into commodities, James had turned ceremony into theatre: the social mask, the "artificial person", became an arbitrary disguise rather than a natural expression of hereditary virtue. Opponents of the Jacobean regime regularly used theatrical metaphors to express its hollowness: Osborne complained that James rendered "the temple of honour a common theater, into which the basest were suffered to enter for their mony". Greville, who was especially sensitive to the arbitrariness of social institutions, attacked the use of the outward trappings of nobility to inspire reverence for the unworthy:

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1. Ben Jonson, X, 456; Foster, Proceedings in Parliament 1610, I, 5.
2. L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy (Oxford, 1965), pp. 65-128.

> For place a Coronet on whom you will,
> You straight see all good in him, but his Ill.[1]

The masque became both a symbol and an example of social corruption. Theoretically the masquing-hall was no ordinary theatre but a ceremonial temple in which the nobility acted only parts to which they were naturally fitted, and to which only the élite could gain admission. In several of his antimasques Jonson emphasizes how hard it is for ordinary citizens to view the spectacle. But his masques aroused criticism from the beginning because of the unprecedented scale on which social roles were mingled with fictive creations. Carleton complained that the attire of the ladies in his first masque was "too light and Curtizan-like for such great ones... I am sory that strangers should see owr court so strangely disguised" (X, 448-9). It was thought to be especially indecorous for the queen to act a part in a play. Jonson further mingled ceremony and fiction by the introduction of the anti-masque, which Daniel criticized in the preface to Tethys Festival for its social indecorum. But the tainting of social roles with theatricality was redoubled when the courtiers themselves had bought their titles; they indeed needed artificial aids to give lustre to their "public persons". Buckingham, the chief agent in the sale of titles, had "jumped" to favour through his appearance in a masque, and his followers took leading parts in late Jacobean entertainments. To its opponents the masque appeared not a natural ceremonial expression of the social hierarchy but a puppet-show in which the king on the one hand and Jonson and Jones on the other pulled the strings. Wotton complained that James "moulded" Buckingham "Platonically to his owne Idea", a phrase that recalls the techniques of the masque.[2]

But it was precisely this arbitrary quality that attracted Jonson, like his hero Crites, to the masque. Like Crites, he seems to some extent to have identified himself with his monarch, seeing himself as engaged in a parallel

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1. F. Osborne, Historical Memoirs, in Secret History of the Court of King James the First, ed. Sir Walter Scott (Edinburgh, 1811), p. 256; F. Greville, Poems and Dramas, ed. G. Bullough, I (London and Edinburgh, 1939), 139, 129.
2. Reliquiae Wottonianae (3rd edition, London, 1672), p. 210.

process of "creation". Jonson made Selden include in his Titles of Honour an account of the coronation of poets - a ceremony which James had arranged for himself when in Scotland.[1] Both Jonson and James published their collected works in 1616, Jonson being attacked for his presumption in calling plays and masques "Works", James for stooping to the unkingly activity of polemical writing. Jonson claimed that the poet could "faine a Common-wealth... governe it with Counsels, strengthen it with Lawes,..informe it with Religion, and Morals..." (VIII, 595). Daniel attacked the arrogance of the masque-writer in an epistle to the queen:

> And therefore in the view of state t'haue show'd
> A counterfeit of state, had beene to light
> A candle to the Sunne...
> For maiesty, and power, can nothing see
> Without it selfe, that can sight-worthy be.[2]

But Jonson was not so modest, and he relished the opportunity to show the courtiers how much they needed his dramatic skill. His masques display the same kind of ambivalence as his comedies for the public theatre, the same "uneasy synthesis between a formal antitheatricalism, which condemns the arts of show as illusion on the one hand, and a subversive hankering after them on the other".[3] In The Alchemist the artifice of the "projectors" involves a wilful rejection of royal authority, offering sex, money and religious truth without the king's stamp; but the play delights in their ingenuity, which approximates to the dramatic art itself, and in a world divided into fools and knaves the master, Lovewit, favours the inventive knaves. Jonson himself once practised the same kind of impersonation as his alchemists (I, 141). A similar delight in imposture animates the masque. In severe humanist mood he could condemn masques as

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1. Ben Jonson, XI, 383-4; Helena M. Shire, Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland under King James VI (Cambridge, 1969), p. 101. On the concept of "creation" of legal and poetic fictions, see E. Kantorowicz, "The Sovereignty of the Artist: A Note on Legal Maxims and Renaissance theories of art", in Selected Studies, (New York, 1965), pp. 352-65.
2. Daniel, Works, III, 214.
3. J.A. Barish, "Jonson and the Loathed Stage", in A Celebration of Ben Jonson, ed. W. Blissett, J. Patrick, R.W. Van Fossen (Toronto, 1973), p. 52.

"the short brauerie of the night" (F3, VIII, 96); and he told Drummond that "he heth a minde to be a churchman, & so he might have favour to make one Sermon to the King, he careth not what y^{r} after sould befall him, for he would not flatter though he saw Death" (I, 141). But Jonson's masques reveal an admiration for the king's political deviousness and Jonson enthusiastically helps to frame a triumphant image of royal virtue and infallibility from the most unpromising circumstances. In Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists at Court and The Vision of Delight Jonson celebrates the superiority of the king's natural powers to alchemy and artifice; Jonson thus simultaneously compliments himself and Jones, who create the scenic artifice, and the king who by patronizing and financing the spectacle was in a literal sense its "creator". Jonson took great delight in the comic realism of the antimasque, which sometimes threatened to eclipse the final revelation of the ideal courtiers. His masques claimed to be impersonal ceremonial forms, dramatizing the subordination of individual to role, so that it was natural that he should choose as his target in one masque George Wither, the leading poet of individual self-expression; but his attack was so venomous that it was felt to betray personal motives.

But Jonson never entirely forgot his humanist austerity, and he seems to have been disturbed by the ascendancy of Buckingham. He opposed the sale of honours (VIII, 602) and it was rumoured in Cotton's circle that he was the author of a poem calling for Buckingham's assassination. The inflation of honours undermined the Howard commitment to aristocratic exclusiveness, while even when he favoured the Spanish match Buckingham conducted his foreign policy decisions in an erratic and indecorous way. The favourite's ascendancy brought about not only an inflation of honours but an inflation of language: he demanded the most extravagant flattery, and such was his influence that even those who disliked such adulations were forced to go through with it to get things done (see next chapter, section 3). In Discoveries Jonson quoted the Senecan dictum that linked linguistic and social inflation: "The excesse of Feasts, and apparell, are the notes of a sick State; and the wantonnesse of language, of a sick mind" (VIII, 593). In his late Jacobean masques Jonson at once gratified and satirized the shallow tastes of the courtiers for whom Buckingham provided his farcical entertainments. The antimasque of Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue, which was

perfectly integrated with the main action, was unpopular; for the repeated version Jonson sardonically offered the court just what it wanted: conspicuously irrelevant comedy. He made the protagonists reveal the shallowness of their taste: "Is not better this now then Pigmies?" (l. 311, VII, 507). In The Masque of Augurs a group of citizens who feel that Jonson and Jones's inspiration has run out offer to stage an anti-masque themselves: "vor an Antick-maske, de more absurd it be, and vrom de purpose, it be ever all de better" (ll. 265-6, VII, 638). We are told that Jonson and Jones do not have enough inspiration to entertain a baboon of quality, or the Welsh ambassador. The first anti-masque is a dance of bears led by their bear-ward, the second a dance of pilgrims. In the masque of August 1620, the characters played by Buckingham's friends had included a "carrier about of baboons", a Welsh advocate of the bawdy court, and a bearward. In the "running masque" there had been a dance of pilgrims.[1] Jonson indulges the taste for such foolery, and enjoys it himself, but he shows its limitations by making it the pastime of ignorant citizens. The court's taste in comedy is clear enough from Jonson's satire; what Buckingham's protégés did when they were faced with more serious subjects is illustrated by the anonymous Theater of Apollo. This entertainment was written when the French match had been settled but was cancelled owing to James's death; it therefore permits direct comparison with Jonson's The Fortunate Isles. The "golden world" of ideals is never allowed the same kind of autonomy as in the Jonsonian masque; flattery without mythological disguise constantly obtrudes. The author was apparently a follower of Sir John Beaumont, who himself owed his place at court to Buckingham, and the poet praises Beaumont's muse,

> whom greatest Villiers brought unknowne
> Before Apollo's throne, and made her sing
> With heau'enly tunes, the greatnes of his King.[2]

The poet hymns Beaumont who hymns Buckingham who hymns the king: the most blatantly opportunistic of Jonson's masques avoided such naked mutual

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1. C.S.P.Ven. 1619-21, pp. 390 (reading "bearward" for "bearwood", cf. Gypsies Metamorphosed, l. 1025), 533.
2. The entertainment, B.L. MS. Royal 18 A.LXX, was edited by W.W. Greg in 1926, but his arguments for Sir John Beaumont's authorship have not found acceptance.

congratulation. The increase in visual spectacle in Jonson's masques of the 1620s represents not decadence but an attempt to bring the court back to a reverent awareness of its responsibilities.

Jonson confronted the problem of social and linguistic inflation most directly in The Gypsies Metamorphosed. This was the only masque Jonson wrote for Buckingham, whose usual poet was John Maynard. In accepting the commission Jonson ostensibly bowed to the deterioration of standards, for Buckingham's entertainments were generally rowdy and innocent of didactic intent.[1] But, as Dale Randall has shown, Jonson ingeniously turned the form of the late Jacobean entertainment against itself.[2] In his court masques Jonson made a distinction between the hired actors of the anti-masque and the courtiers whose disguises are cast aside to reveal their real identity; here it is Buckingham and his friends who take the comic parts, and the final transformation scene is not clearly motivated, so much so that Jonson added an Epilogue providing an explanation. The implication is that Buckingham and his friends really are the parts they play: a gang of charming and witty but rapacious gypsies. They may pick pockets like gentlemen (l. 1149), but their origins are somewhat dubious; the speech of welcome makes it clear that Buckingham is James's "Creature" (l. 15), and the theme is taken up later when the fortune-teller calls James "the maker here of all" (l. 336). The Earl of Arundel, who had quarrelled in Parliament earlier that year with a peer he considered a new upstart nobleman, is told that his fortune

> shalbe to make true gentrie knowne
> From the fictitious. (ll. 621-2)

Arundel had been imprisoned that year for slighting the origins of Lord Spencer (Jonson's patron in 1603) and was becoming known as a champion of old nobility against debased titles. Although he was still using Buckingham as an ally at this time, he was always suspicious of the favourite's political instability, and indeed Buckingham seems to have been contemplating an abrupt reversal of his

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1. There is a satire of Buckingham's masques in Bodleian MS. Malone 23, fols. 20-21.
2. D.B.J. Randall, Jonson's Gypsies Unmasked: Background and Theme of "The Gypsies Metamorphos'd", (Durham, North Carolina, 1975).

pro-Spanish stance and a Parliamentary campaign for a war. Jonson presents his gang of "Bohemians" in a scornful light, and makes Buckingham condemn himself out of his own mouth. And yet, however gratifying the ironies might have been to the author, the masque can only have confirmed its actors in their self-complacency: the irony was so subtle, and at the same time so blatant, that it left things exactly as they were. A French envoy who was present during the royal visit to Belvoir was disgusted by the king's behaviour: the whole progress, he commented, had been a farce, but this "act" was the most remarkable of all. James had got uncontrollably drunk and then lurched to his feet, launched into a panegyric of Buckingham and brandished some of Jonson's verses as a token of his love. James composed some verses of his own in honour of the occasion. Under the circumstances it would have been impossible for Jonson not to flatter Buckingham or to make any direct criticism of royal policy: the proclamation forbidding discussion of affairs of state had been renewed on 26 July, with the result, according to the Venetian ambassador, that the progress "continued in profound silence". The margin permissible for irony was so narrow that it became invisible. Another poet parodied Jonson's "blessings" of James (ll. 1327-89), turning them into an attack on the court's corruption.[1] In fact, even the ironic reading does not do full justice to Jonson's ambivalence: he retains a certain admiration for the skill and zest with which Buckingham plays his indecorous part. The Gypsies Metamorphosed is Jonson's greatest masque because it concentrates the deepest tensions in his art: it is a drama condemning surfaces whose profundity is precisely on its surface.

It was, then, ironic but not unpredictable that after Buckingham's death, when the abuses he had maintained were abolished, Jonson should have lost patience with the masque. The sale of titles had been halted; the tone of the new court was ostentatiously chaste; Charles had consolidated hieratic ritual in church and state. Jonson was surrounded by young admirers who inherited from him not only his classicism but his firm royalism. But in the deceptive

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1. Ben Jonson, X, 614; Poems of James VI, II, 177; C.S.P.Ven. 1621-23, p. 117; C.F. Main, "Ben Jonson and an Unknown Poet on the King's Senses", M.L.N. 74 (1959), 389-93.

calm of the "king's peace" the artistic climate was too tame for a man who flourished on controversy. In 1631 he angrily broke with Inigo Jones, who was trying to achieve the superior position in the partnership, and in his "Expostulation with Inigo Jones" he enumerated all the criticisms his enemies had made of the masque:

> O Showes! Showes! Mighty Showes!
> The Eloquence of Masques.' What need of prose
> Or Verse, or Sense t'express Immortall you?
> You are y^{e} Spectacles of State! Tis true
> Court Hieroglyphicks! & all Artes affoord
> In y^{e} more perspectiue of an Inch board! ...
> Painting & Carpentry are y^{e} Soule of Masque.
> (ll. 39-50, VIII, 403-4)

Jonson sacrifices the complexity of his earlier terminology to make a simple antithesis between conceptual soul and visual body. In "To Inigo, Marquis Would-Be" (UV 35) Jonson ridicules Jones's social pretensions, pretending that he expects to be made a Marquis like the Spanish king's architect. A similar disparagement of the visual is found in the last plays: in the epilogue to The New Inn the "body" of the play has become the "carcass". In this rigid dualism Jonson reverted to the anti-courtly humanism of his early years; Jones responded by an equally emphatic glorification of the visual "body" of the masque, finding more tractable collaborators who would allow full supremacy to spectacle:

> And though at distance yet high IOVE is pleas'd
> Your laboring eyes shall with his sight be eas'd.
> This from a God. vnto a Goddesse sent,
> A God Relates, that could vse Complement:
> But when such States, negotiate by such meanes
> We speake in Acts, and scorne words trifling Scenes.[1]

The Jacobean masque had always featured a dialectic of the visual and the verbal, but this self-conscious exaltation of the visual above the verbal reflected King Charles's religious policy: the king himself probably played a leading part in the conception of Caroline masques. Knowledge of the ideal can only be obtained through natural signs, through visual images, and the monarch must control

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1. A. Townshend, Poems and Masques, ed. E.K. Chambers (Oxford, 1912), p. 62; on the visual emphasis in the Caroline masque see Orgel and Strong, Inigo Jones, I, 19-75.

access to them. Charles patronized the visual arts more than poetry: painting gave access to a European absolutist tradition, socially exclusive and untainted with Protestant nationalism. The Caroline masque gained its elegant serenity from a substantial cultural polarization.[1] Its polar opposite emerged in 1633 in the person of William Prynne, whose Histriomastix is a ferocious attack on crypto-Catholic courtly play-acting and an assertion of immediate spirituality. Prynne's anger echoed the irascible eruption of Jonson's own repressed puritanism, as the poet finally confronted with dismay the effects of the polarization his work had helped to produce.

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1. P.W. Thomas, "Two Cultures? Court and Country under Charles I", in The Origins of the English Civil War, ed. C. Russell (London, 1973), pp. 168-93, on Jonson see pp. 177-8.

CHAPTER VI

The Spenserians and King James

Where are the Summers when the righteous Maid,
With ev'nest hand the heauenly Scale did weild,
And golden Deed with golden meed repaid:
When Vertue was in price, for Vertue, held,
When Honours daintie but desert did guild,
And Poesie in graces goodly seene,
Rais'd her high thought, with straines that Nectar still'd?
They are ascended with that glorious Queene:
And she, alas, forgot, as she had neuer beene.
- Henry Peacham, Prince Henrie Revived
(London, 1615), sig. A3b.

Introduction

In Chapter III it was argued that the political and artistic synthesis represented by The Faerie Queene, the harmony between courtly "body" and Protestant "soul", was coming under severe strains in the 1590s; the present chapter deals with the successors to the poets examined in Chapter III, showing that similar tensions persisted in the Jacobean period. The poets who supported Essex in the 1590s did not have a coherent ideology but they had a number of political grievances: they resented the ascendancy of the (relatively) low-born Cecil, they wanted a more militant foreign policy, and they had sympathies with Puritanism at home and radical Protestantism abroad, though there were also some anti-Spanish and pro-French Catholics in their number. These men were by no means opposed to monarchy as such, and had high hopes of James's accession; but the new reign proved something of a disappointment, and a number of poets used Spenserian symbolism as a gesture of political criticism, evoking what were now felt to have been the golden days of Elizabeth. Not all imitators of Spenser took an interest in politics; but the term "Spenserian" is normally used to apply particularly to Michael Drayton, William Browne, George Wither, and Giles and Phineas Fletcher, and these poets and their friends were to

varying degrees hostile to James's policies.[1] As was seen in the last chapter, Jonson's masques and poetry formed a suitable vehicle for James's political ideals: his classicism involved a rejection of overt religious enthusiasm and marked a clear break with the past, and his dislike of irresponsible militancy and emphasis on the arts of peace harmonized with James's policies. By contrast, Spenser's symbolism of Protestant chivalry could arouse memories about which James was unenthusiastic: memories of tilting and warfare, of apocalyptic religious hopes, of the popularity of Essex. For the less militant, The Faerie Queene still contained implicit criticisms of the Jacobean regime: Spenser's praise of temperance and chastity contrasted strongly with the extravagance and licence associated with the dominant form of Jacobean panegyric, the masque.

The seventeenth-century Spenserians have been largely neglected by literary critics, and it is true that their verse suffers in many respects in comparison with metaphysical and Jonsonian poetry. The Spenserians tended to lean slackly on Elizabethan models, often imitating the external features of Spenser's verse rather than its deeper complexities and its profound intellectual engagement. When they used allegory it tended to be either perfunctory and superfluous or excessively rigid. Some critics have found the Spenserians' cult of the poet sentimental and inflated in comparison with Jonson's more measured and classical view of the poet's social function. But these characteristics of the Spenserians' verse become easier to understand, if not necessarily to exonerate, when they are seen in relation to the general political developments of the time. In their rather uncritical idealization of the forms of the previous reign they resembled the Parliamentary critics of the king, whose

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1. These five poets are studied by J. Grundy in The Spenserian Poets (London, 1969). See also P-G. Buchloh, Michael Drayton (Neumünster, 1969), R.F. Hardin, Michael Drayton and the Passing of Elizabethan England (Lawrence, Manhattan, Wichita, 1969) and C.S. Hensley, The Later Career of George Wither (The Hague and Paris, 1969). I am particularly indebted to the excellent edition of Drayton by Hebel, Tillotson and Newdigate (references in the text are to the 2nd edition, Oxford, 1962). Much valuable information can be found in W. Wells (ed.), "Spenser Allusions in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", S.P. Special Supplements, vols. 68 (1971) and 69 (1972).

thought likewise tended to be narrowly conservative. The Spenserians inherited an allegorical, ceremonial poetic which took courtly images as a mirror of ideal virtue; when the court proved inadequate to their ideals, they reacted with a rigid dualism of nature and art, pure inner self and corrupt courtly mask, that undermined the basis of their poetic. Thus their verse was not likely to benefit from their political stance, whereas Jonson's ambivalent fascination with political artifice stimulated his art in his role as court panegyrist. Jonson's own attitude to the Spenserians was not entirely favourable, and both artistic and political factors seem to have entered into his judgement of their verse: political pietism and idealization of the immediate past were alien to the sceptical temperament of the keen student of political artifice who could criticize Drayton's friend Drummond for being "too good and simple". Jonson disliked Spenser's archaic diction, and he had little time for another admired Protestant poet, Du Bartas. He wrote commendatory verse for Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas, for the second, though not the first, edition of Browne's Britannia's Pastorals, and for Drayton's Battle of Agincourt (1627); such commendation, however, was not always deeply felt, and in fact Jonson told Drummond that he would not have praised Sylvester had he realized at the time how bad the translation was. His verses to Drayton opened by drawing attention to the fact that people had questioned whether they were friends; and in private he could be less complimentary, telling Drummond that "Drayton feared him, and he esteemed not of him".[1] Jonson despised Drayton's friend Wither, and pilloried him in a masque.

But the distance between Jonson and the Spenserians should not be exaggerated.[2] As has been seen, there is reason to believe that Jonson's private opinions were sometimes at variance with the public rhetoric he adopted as court poet, and he remained on good terms with the Spenserians' favourite patrons. It is in the nature of a patronage system, which subordinates individual poets to stereotyped public roles, to exaggerate the differences between individuals. For the Spenserians' part, under James there were always men at court whom they respected and who, they thought, might make the king see the error of his ways when he strayed from the true path. Their attacks on the court never assumed the proportions of an articulated critique based on general principles: they still tended to see politics in terms of personalities, and their poetry mingles moralistic complaint with resentment at personal grievances. It was only under Charles that a more rigid polarization emerged, under the strain of which it was harder still to maintain the literary synthesis of courtly, ceremonial form with a Protestant "soul". In reaction against the ornate panegyric of the High Church courtiers, Wither completely

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1. Jonson, Works, I, 148, 132, 133, 136.
2. Frances Yates perhaps overstates the difference in Shakespeare's Last Plays, pp. 109-26.

rejected the ceremonial poetic, scorning aristocratic patrons and elevating natural inspiration above all artifice. Only Milton was able fully to overcome this artistic polarization, using the "ornamental" poetic in a highly self-critical way that was truer to Spenser's spirit than either the court panegyrics or Wither's moralistic effusions. But Milton's poetry lies outside the scope of this thesis; the present chapter will deal with the less clear-cut political world that shaped the outlook of his immediate predecessors.

I. Hope and Disillusion, 1603-12

The Spenserian poets had high expectations of James: a number of poets had visited the Scottish court before his accession, and the panegyrics that greeted him in 1603 took up the themes of the poetry of Essex's supporters in the 1590s. Tourneur had urged a general purification of poetry, with divine and heroic verse replacing licentious and irreverent satire. In his panegyric Drayton's friend Thomas Greene expressed similar views, making Calliope lament that in recent years the muses had been neglected, their only friends being James and a few aristocratic ladies like Delia and Idaea (presumably the Countesses of Pembroke and Bedford). Greene complained that the fashion nowadays was for licentious verse which untuned the ear with "harsh discording sounds"; he was sure that James, who was both poet and king, would restore the state of poetry.[1] James indeed held similar poetic views, disliking the "strong lines" of the newer poetry: he wrote a sonnet attacking "harshe varses after the inglishe fasone" and urging that poetry should be "fil'd with smoothly flowing fire".[2] Giles and Phineas Fletcher mourned Elizabeth and greeted James in verses that were careful imitations of Spenser's style and stanzaic patterns.[3] Some panegyrists hoped that the poetic reformation would be accompanied by a revival of the Protestant militancy celebrated by Spenser and embodied until his fall by Essex. Drayton called in The Owle for the release of Essex's allies Southampton and Neville; George Carleton dedicated to Neville his heroic poem on Essex's deeds; John Davies of

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1. T. Greene, A Poets Vision, and a Princes Glorie (London, 1603), sigs. B4a-C2a. Greene had contributed verses to Drayton's Barons Warres (1602).
2. James VI, Poems, II, 114.
3. Giles and Phineas Fletcher, Poetical Works, ed. F.S. Boas (Cambridge, 1908-9), I, 1-3, 92-6. References in the text are to this edition. Another poet drew heavily on Book II of The Faerie Queene, hymning Elizabeth as "Belphaebe": F. Hard, "Two Spenserian Imitations by 'T.W.'", E.L.H., 5 (1938), 113-26.

Hereford praised Essex's associates in his Microcosmos; Giles Fletcher senior's friend John Lane called for renewed war against Spain.[1] Robert Pricket published a series of apocalyptic works viewing James as a worthy successor to Essex, a divinely appointed instrument for the destruction of Babylon. He presented Elizabeth in Spenserian fashion as the woman clothed with the sun, with the wavering and inconstant moon under her feet. But this was a rash miscalculation of James's pacific political views, and Pricket was imprisoned.[2] Determined to maintain European peace and the authority of the monarchy, James could not go too far in rehabilitating the memory of a rebel and advocate of a militant foreign policy. To some partisans of Essex, the new regime seemed a betrayal of Elizabethan traditions; there were fears that Catholicism was becoming more and more powerful at court.

Such fears were exaggerated. James rehabilitated his mother's memory, and some leading courtiers were Catholic; but those with a major influence on policy, such as Northampton, were motivated by political rather than religious considerations. Moreover, James was extremely nervous about the threat of Counter-Reformation fanaticism to the European order, and his own life, and in the first part of the reign he sponsored, and participated in, lengthy theological attacks on the Papacy. In the middle of this period he appointed George Abbot as Archbishop of Canterbury; Abbot was a firm Calvinist, a man in the Grindal tradition who was tolerant of nonconformists. For much of the reign violently anti-Papal rhetoric could thus be regarded as politically orthodox and combined with ardent panegyric.[3] Early in the reign the Gunpowder Plot, which greatly shocked James, provoked a stream of pamphlets and poems, some of which used Spenserian symbolism. In these poems, just as in Elizabeth's time, the rhetoric is that of

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1. Drayton, Works, V, 181; G. Carleton, Heroici Characteres (Oxford, 1603), pp. 18-42; John Davies of Hereford, Works, ed. A.B. Grosart (Edinburgh, 1878), Ic 14-15, 96ff; J. Lane, An Elegie (London, 1603), sig. B2b. See above, p. 120.
2. R. Pricket, A Souldiers Wish (London, 1603); A Souldiers Resolution (London, 1603), sig. A3b; Honors Fame in Triumph Riding (London, 1604); Times Anotomie (London, 1606). Like many panegyrists, Pricket expressed satisfaction that the nation at last had a male ruler who could lead troops into battle (Souldiers Wish, sig. C1b; cf. Davies of Hereford, Works, Ic10).
3. On Jame's religious policies see N. Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution", in Russell (ed.), Origins of the English Civil War, pp. 119-43.

the unity of all English Protestants against the Catholic foe, minimizing internal differences and sympathetic towards the more zealous. This is the stance of William Bedell, a friend of Joseph Hall's who did not share Hall's dislike of Spenserian apparatus (see p.119); Bedell's poem on the Gunpowder Plot, A Protestant Memorial, was a Spenserian pastoral allegory, portraying the Papacy as a Circean, Duessa-like witch skilled in magic arts. Denunciation of Popery was combined with praise of James, who was lauded for his skill in interpreting the warning letter; Bedell paid a pastoral compliment to the Union, which he portrayed as the merging of two folds into one. Bedell warned that the Papists had planned to blame the plot on the Puritans - had it succeeded all Englishmen would have been Puritans.[1] This rhetoric of religious unity corresponds to Bedell's personal stance: he had been on good terms with many Puritans, and though he conformed to the established church and was attacked by the more zealous brethren who refused to conform for betraying them, he was firmly Calvinist, led an austere life and disliked persecution of nonconformists. He apparently debated with the more "precise" the propriety of a clergyman's writing poetry. For Bedell the life of a man like Sir Edward Lewkenor was exemplary: Lewkenor had been an ardent Presbyterian and was imprisoned by Elizabeth after vociferous speeches in the 1587 Parliament, but since then had quietly conformed, though remaining austere in life. Bedell contributed a poem to a volume of elegies for Lewkenor, and may have written the lengthy framing verses, which used Spenserian diction and variants of the Spenserian stanza form.[2] The printer of the Lewkenor volume, a friend of Hall's, also issued in that year a new edition of the pseudo-Chaucerian Ploughman's Tale, a work which had traditionally provided a persona for religious radicalism (a persona used by one of the Marprelate pamphleteers, p.113 above); the

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1. W. Bedell, A Protestant Memorial (London, 1713); there is a seventeenth-century manuscript, Bodleian MS. Rawl. poet. 154, fols 11-26, with some slight variants. The authenticity of this poem has been questioned, but cf. Davenport's notes in Hall, Poems, p. 270. Hall contributed a commendatory poem; he had contributed a poem to the Works of the Puritan divine Greenham (1599) along with Francis Herring, author of an extremely influential poem on the Gunpowder Plot, Pietas Pontifica, which was later translated by the Puritan John Vicars.
2. Threnodia in obitum D. Edouardi Lewkenor (London, 1606), pp. 1-6, 35-6, 39-48; Two Biographies of William Bedell, ed. E.S. Shuckburgh (Cambridge, 1902), p. 233; S.H.A. Hervey, Denham Parish Registers 1539-1850 (Bury St. Edmunds, 1904), pp. 304-25.

annotator reminded the reader of Spenser's attacks on the clergy in The Shepheardes Calender.[1] Thus the origins of Spenser's political symbolism in an old radical tradition were still recalled, but this religious radicalism was combined with firm monarchism; in 1608 Henoch Clapham, a former Separatist who had returned to the church, published a Spenserian dialogue between Hobbinoll and Colin Clout.[2]

At the same time, this radical rhetoric kept alive anticlerical sentiments that might not always be directed only against the Roman hierarchy. In the case of Phineas Fletcher, the praise of the monarch was already a public formality, separate from his real hostility towards the state of the English church and the king himself. Fletcher may have known Bedell: both were Cambridge men, both used the same stanza-form, and one of the contributors to the Lewkenor volume was Fletcher's friend Samuel Collins. In fact, they were rivals in 1607 for the same post: both were interested in Sir Henry Wotton's plan to win the Venetians over to Protestantism.[3] Fletcher wrote a lengthy poem on the Gunpowder Plot in both Latin and English versions; like Bedell, he combined violent denunciation of the Papists with praise of James as presiding deity of an English paradise of peace and plenty.[4] In private, however, his criticisms extended to the English church; in his Piscatorie Eclogues, which he was unable to publish until after James's death, although they were written early in the reign, Fletcher violently denounced the corruption of the clergy, and blamed the evils of the realm on Cecil and on the king himself. Fletcher's political views were hardly disinterested: he simultaneously

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1. The Plough-Mans Tale (London, 1606), sig. A3b.
2. Errour on the Left Hand (London, 1608), pp. 102-3.
3. Fletcher wrote two poems on Venice: Works, II, 292, 297-8. Abroad as at home the ambiguity of James's anti-Papal rhetoric caused difficulties: the king saw the alliance with Venice essentially as a means of retaining European peace, preventing the Papacy from stirring up dissension, whereas Bedell still maintained hopes of an apocalyptic defeat of Antichrist: see Adams, "The Protestant Cause", pp. 160-2. The king and the more militant Protestants might use the same rhetoric, but James was anxious that it should remain only rhetoric. The Venetians, for their part, became impatient with James, and the project collapsed; Bedell returned to England and spent the rest of the reign as a country parson.
4. Locustae or The Apollyonists. Works, I, 97-186. A.E. Langdale's Phineas Fletcher (New York, 1937) needs to be supplemented by L.E. Berry, "Phineas Fletcher's Account of his Father", J.E.G.P., 60 (1961), 258-68.

attacked courtly clerics and tried to use his poetry to gain court advancement. He was also bitter about the fate of his father, who was experiencing financial difficulties and could not obtain help from Cecil. But Fletcher generalized from his own and his father's experience to a picture of national corruption: his father had been an ally of Essex's, and Phineas felt that his misfortunes were representative of a persistent attempt by Burghley and Cecil to keep down men of political and poetic talent. In the introduction to The Purple Island he bewailed the neglect of poetry and claimed that Spenser had died in poverty because of Cecil's malignity. The myth of Spenser's poverty was already gaining currency amongst Cecil's opponents; it was repeated by Joseph Hall and John Lane.[1] Giles Fletcher senior had hoped that the accession of James, who had been more sympathetic to Essex, would mend his fortunes, and apparently James had promised him help when he visited Scotland; instead, the new reign perpetuated the hated regnum Cecilianum.

Fletcher's poetry embodies the more militantly Protestant aspects of the Spenserian tradition; but, as has been seen, Spenser's own religious views were not narrowly partisan, and in the 1590s it was possible to use Spenserian symbolism to plead for some kind of toleration for Catholics. Catholics like Henry Constable wanted to maintain a firm independence from the Habsburg powers, and looked to the example of Henry IV, with his Gallican church and his vigorous hostility to the Habsburgs. But when he returned to England in 1603, full of hopes, Constable was imprisoned; he complained that the king was governed in religious matters only by expediency.[2] In fact James was working for toleration, and his writings were popular in France, where parallels were drawn between his ideas and the Gallican tradition. Many Frenchmen addressed panegyrics to him, and the only epic poem devoted to the praise of his dynasty was the work of a French Calvinist.[3] But James was wary of France's growing power and preferred to seek toleration through negotiations with Spain. It was easy to draw satiric contrasts between Henry's victories with the sword and James's less successful campaigns

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1. Hall, Poems p. 123; Spenser, Works, V, 325.
2. C.S.P. Ven. 1603-7, p.146.
3. G. Ascoli, La Grande-Bretagne devant l'opinion francaise au XVIIe Siecle, (Paris, 1930), I. 24-9; J. de Sanctandre, Le modelle de la Stuartide, B.L. MS Royal 16E XXXIII, Les deux premiers livres de la Stuartide (Paris, 1611).

with the pen.

In the early years of the reign, however, there was a general European calm; a large-scale campaign against James's foreign policy did not emerge until the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. The more immediate grounds for discontent in the early years concerned social decorum rather than religion: both Catholics and Protestants disliked the unruly disorder and extravagance of his court. While Puritans might criticize the court masque for its excessive expense and its political mysticism, religious conservatives like Harington were equally concerned by the indecorum that undermined respect for ceremonial instead of strengthening it. Harington wrote a scathing satire of a masque staged for King Christian of Denmark at Theobalds in 1606, showing how the drunken disorder destroyed the mystique of monarchy.[1] A similar critique is implicit in a poem written for the 1606 festivities by the Catholic poet John Davies of Hereford.[2] Davies has no objection to ritual as such, and provides an interesting "poetic" of ceremonial. He urges courtiers to appear in fine clothes and churchmen to wear their costliest copes,

> And if blinde zeale doe call it Papistry,
> Say (though it stab) it tels an holy lye.

Davies appeals for favourable treatment of loyal Catholics, attacking the misplaced zeal of "Trans-Alpine Faith" that led to the Gunpowder Plot. But he also seems to be issuing a tactful warning about the proper use of ceremonial in his allegory of the body politic: unless the "supplies" demanded by the "body" are granted, the displays of wit will be regarded as "superfluous pompe". The money James lavished on this visit made up almost the whole of a special grant he had just received from Parliament, and there was resentment of his prodigality. Davies also warns that mere expense is not enough; "pompe" must be supplemented by the poets' "wit". In the event the festivities involved much more pomp than wit: James and Christian devoted themselves mainly to drinking, and the Danish courtiers were bored by the amount of time spent hunting. There was tilting, which was viewed more favourably by the king's more belligerent subjects, but while it provided great displays of the pomp praised by Davies it did little to increase James's popularity, for he performed much worse in the tiltyard than Christian.[3]

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1. Nugae Antiquae, I, 348-54. Harington was quickly nostalgic for the reign of Elizabeth, and retired to the country: ibid., pp. 395-6.
2. Davies, Works, Ig 5-9.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1603-7, pp. 364, 399, 391, 398; C.S.P.D. 1603-10, p. 329.

In a poem addressed to James in 1603, Davies had summoned up the spirit of Queen Elizabeth to present him with a choice between two allegorical figures, austere Virtue and aristocratic Vanity, who tempted him with

> al Eye-pleasing ornaments:
> Mummings, Masks, Plaies...

And he had quoted Seneca's maxim: "Superfluity in Banquets & Aparrell are tokens of a diseased Common-weale..."[1] By 1606 it was clear which figure the king preferred. Davies wrote several more panegyrics of the king, but in private he was more critical of the regime. In 1609 he planned to dedicate his Humours Heauen on Earth to the Earl of Northumberland, who had been imprisoned after the Gunpowder Plot, but the dedication was suppressed; Davies inserted it in manuscript in a presentation copy, complaining bitterly at the censorship; the following year he printed a poem of consolation to imprisoned virtue which was clearly addressed to Northumberland.[2] In 1614 he joined the Spenserian pastoralists in their defence of Wither.

The figure who brought together the different varieties of opposition to James and gave them their most influential poetic expression was Michael Drayton.[3] Drayton was often praised as Spenser's successor, and of all the poets surviving from the Elizabethan period it was Drayton who remained most faithful to the ornamental ceremonial style; he did revise his earlier poetry to make it rather more colloquial, but continued to use mythological and ceremonial images far more confidently than Greville or Daniel.[4] Drayton develops the more conservative

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1. Davies, Works, Ic95, 46.
2. G.A. Wilkes, "The 'Humours Heau'n on Earth' of John Davies of Hereford and a Suppressed Poem", Notes and Queries, 204 (1959), 209-10. Drayton contributed a commendatory poem to another of Davies's poems in this year, (Drayton, Works, I, 499). According to Gollancz, the manuscript which contains Greville's Mustapha bound up with the first English translation from Buchanan's De Jure Regni is in Davies's hand (Athenaeum, 19 Jan. 1907, pp. 78-9).
3. I am indebted to Buchloh, Hardin, and to B.H. Newdigate. Michael Drayton and his Circle (Oxford, 1941).
4. Drayton directly imitated Spenser's blazon of Elizabeth in the "April" eclogue in his third eclogue of 1593, applying the phrase "purple and pall", which in The Shepheardes Calender was used to condemn ecclesiastical vestments, in praise of Elizabeth's clothing. In a version reprinted in 1600 he toned down the poem's anti-Papal ending (Works, I, 58. V, 13). Further syntactic revisions only tempered the poem's incantatory ceremonial force.

aspects of Spenser's thought: he tends to equate poetic ornamentation with ancient traditions that are being eroded by Puritanism and economic development, and his verse is full of nostalgia for the military prowess of the feudal aristocracy which was now being oppressed by a presumptuous monarchy. One contemporary annotator described him as a "Papist" (V, 170), and certainly he sympathized with the loyal Catholics who wanted to preserve old traditions and rituals. He had had a more "feudal" upbringing than any other major Elizabethan poet, and in the 1590s he embarked on a series of historical poems which, while full of praise of the monarch, displayed a great inwardness with the resentment of the feudal nobility at the growth of royal power. About 1597 he lost the favour of his chief patron, the Countess of Bedford, and while he made frantic efforts to gain another patron he was reduced to writing plays for one of the less eminent dramatic companies. It is not surprising that his verse at this time shows signs of great discontent, and in 1599 he seems to have gone to Scotland to seek James's patronage.[1]

In 1603 Drayton eagerly anticipated a new political order in The Owle, a bitter satire on the regnum Cecilianum with the emphasis on the decay of feudal social forms (II, 477-514). Upstart favourites hold power, thus devaluing the reverence due to birth: "The abject rich hold ancient Honour meane" (l. 1222). The regime is devoid of all moral validity, dominated entirely by the pursuit of wealth. Ancient social obligations are eroded by the quest for profit, and rack-rent landlords deprive tenants of traditional rights. Drayton's conservatism emerges most clearly in his comments on religion: he protests at the policy of persecuting Catholics, who are zealous and defend important traditions, while tolerating Puritans, who merely spread ignorance (ll. 899-919). This moral bankruptcy also leads to the neglect of poetry, which Drayton praises for its divine powers (672-6). But flattery reigns in the monarch's court (657), and poets are forced to sell their praise for gold; informers at court are always ready to twist valid complaints into personal attacks on the monarch. Both in symbolism and content the poem resembles Spenser's Mother Hubberds Tale, and a contemporary annotator glossed the account of the other birds' attack on the owl as a reference to Spenser's exile.[2] Ultimately the birds' refusal to heed the owl's

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1. Nevdigate, p. 124.
2. Drayton, Poems, ed. J. Buxton (London, 1953), II, 292.

warnings leads to their ruin, and only the princely Eagle can save them. Drayton gives a highly idealized portrait of the new monarch, praising his "safe and absolute protection" (l. 1252).

Drayton set aside his work on The Owle to compose a panegyric of James (I, 469-77), a poem which combined flowery genealogical compliment with vigorous attacks on the corruption of the court: James is urged to banish the fool, the pander and the parasite. Drayton urges his own claims to poetic pre-eminence rather more explicitly than Daniel or Jonson:

> that Muse thy glory sings,
> (What ere detraction snarle) was made for Kings... (ll. 21-27)
> If in thy grace thou deigne to favour us,
> And to the Muses be propitious,
> Caesar himselfe, Roomes glorious wits among,
> Was not so highly, nor divinely sung. (ll. 157-160)

For once Drayton could claim to be in the vanguard of fashion: several panegyrists found him the best model to plagiarize from, and Richard Niccols recognized his position as successor to Spenser:

> Wher's Collin Clout, or Rowland now become
> That wont to leade our Shepeards in a ring?
> (Ah me) the first, pale death hath strooken dombe,
> The latter, none incourageth to sing. [1]

Drayton's enthusiasm for James cooled very quickly. He did not receive the desired patronage; the very zeal with which he greeted the new king proved to have been tactless. His failure to mention the late queen was felt to be a serious indecorum, and he undiplomatically mentioned the victories of Edward I and called attention to the fate of James's mother. His shrill self-assertion did not seem an appropriate quality for a court poet.[2] The newer styles of Daniel and Jonson appealed more to court taste: it was ironically fitting that the most eminent "golden" poet should have found himself reduced, by the time of the royal entry of 1604, to selling an elaborately ornamental panegyric to the Goldsmiths' Company.

The main motives for Drayton's discontent were clearly personal; and in

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1. R. Niccols, Expicedium (London, 1603), sig. B3a. Drayton's verse was also plagiarized by an anonymous ballad writer (The Shirburn Ballads, ed. A. Clark, Oxford, 1907, pp. 216-20) and by John Lane in his Elegie, where he adapts the ending of Drayton's "Bela" blazon (sig. B3a).
2. On To the Maiestie of King James, see Buchloh, pp. 258-75.

so far as he had more general objections to James's regime it was on grounds of social and religious conservatism rather than Protestant fervour. But just as in the 1590s, discontent with the rule of Cecil could unite people of many different shades of opinion, and Drayton's Pastorals of 1606 are strikingly similar to Fletcher's Piscatorie Eclogues. In revising eclogues originally published in 1593, Drayton made them much more political. In the sixth eclogue (formerly no. 4) the lament for Sidney is broadened into an extended complaint at the withering of poetry under a "cold Northerne breath"; Sidney is borne aloft,

> Laughing even Kings and their delights to scorne,
> And all those Sots that them doe Deifie. (II, 549)

In the eighth eclogue (formerly no. 6) a generalized complaint against human infidelity is transformed into a personal attack on the ingratitude of Olcon (James). Drayton also attacks the Countess of Bedford, who patronized the court masques, and "Cerberon" (presumably an anagram of Cranborne, Cecil's current title). These attacks were so violent that they were removed from subsequent editions. In the 'Ode to Himselfe, and his Harpe" Drayton declares that the Muses

> be such coy Things,
> That they care not for Kings,
> And dare let them know it. (II, 347)

In the sixth and eighth eclogues (II, 549, 563) Drayton singles out for praise a small group of virtuous poets - who by Drayton's definition are not in great favour with the king. Amongst them are John and Francis Beaumont; John Beaumont was a Catholic who had lost many of his estates to a Scottish courtier on James's accession, and his brother collaborated with John Fletcher in 1606 in their first joint play, The Woman-Hater, which contained fierce criticisms of the court put in the mouth of a pastoral character. Chambers suggests that it was Drayton who introduced Beaumont and Fletcher to the stage.[1] In his eclogue Drayton also praises Samuel Daniel, who had likewise voiced pastoral criticisms of the court in his The Queen's Arcadia; the evil character Alcon in Daniel's play perhaps suggested the name "Olcon" to Drayton. Drayton also praises Sir William

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1. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, III, 216; on John Beaumont, see the introduction to The Shorter Poems, ed. R. Sell (Åbo, 1974). P.J. Finkelpearl, "Beaumont, Fletcher, and Beaumont and Fletcher: Some Distinctions", E.L.R., 1 (1971), 144-64, gives grounds for a complete revision of the old idea, popularized by Coleridge, that Beaumont and Fletcher are decadent, uncritical absolutists.

Alexander, whom Jonson was to regard as an enemy because he was a friend of Drayton's. Alexander shared with Drayton an interest in the New World: one of Drayton's Odes of 1606 praised the Virginia voyage. The Virginia Company was to become a focus for opposition to the court.[1] There is no direct evidence of contact between Drayton and Phineas Fletcher, whose pastoral criticisms of Cecil's regime are so similar, but certainly they had friends in common.[2] Drayton's The Owle, which had been directed at the abuses he had hoped would be ended by James, quickly became a model for satire of James's court. In 1607 Richard Niccols published The Cuckow, a satire on the unchastity of court and city drawing on The Faerie Queene and The Owle. Before 1610 Niccols wrote another satire, The Beggers Ape, closely modelled on Mother Hubberds Tale; Niccols attacked financial corruption, the sale of titles, and the repressive treatment of critics of the court.[3] It may have been about 1607 that Drayton began work on his own satire, The Moone-Calfe, which attacked poetic and sexual corruption, producing in the hermaphrodite monster a striking image of the effeminate court as seen by its critics (Works, V, 209-10).

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1. Jonson, Works, I, 137; Drayton, Works, II, 363-4; Phineas Fletcher also praised Virginia: Works, I, 136. On Virginia Company politics, see Adams, "The Protestant Cause", pp. 179-82.
2. Relations between the two branches of the Fletchers were not easy. Giles Fletcher senior brought up his brother's children Nathaniel and John Fletcher for a time after his death, but Nathaniel later accused his uncle of cheating him out of his father's estate. In 1607 Phineas tried to replace Nathaniel as chaplain to Wotton in Venice. Giles Fletcher senior may have been an important linking figure: he had a prominent position as Remembrancer to the City until 1605 (the position was later filled by Middleton); he was a member of the Merchant Adventurers' Company, to which Sylvester and Sandys belonged. He was a friend of John Lane, who also knew Milton's father. Drayton presented a copy of his The Battle of Agincourt (1627) to Sir Henry Willoughby, whom Phineas Fletcher had served as chaplain from about 1616 to 1620 (Langdale, pp. 62-5).
3. H.H. Hudson, "John Hepwith's Spenserian Satire Upon Buckingham: with some Jacobean Analogues", Huntingdon Library Bulletin, 6 (1934), 39-71, esp. pp. 62-9. Niccols included Drayton's Legend of Cromwell in his continuation of the Mirror for Magistrates: A Winter Nights Vision (London, 1610), pp. 520-47. The volume ended with a panegyric of Elizabeth and a lament for Essex (pp. 869-72). It was originally dedicated to Prince Henry with praise of Chapman as his laureate, but for some reason the dedication was suppressed and replaced by one to Suffolk: F.B. Williams, Index of Dedications and Commendatory Verses (London, 1962), p. 240.

Thus within three years of the king's accession there was a loose "opposition" of poets connected with Drayton, and at times of political crisis these connections were to be revived. For the next few years the political situation was relatively calm, however; the first wave of protest against the court had spent itself. In the 1590s Drayton had begun work on his vast national poem Poly-Olbion, and he continued work on it in the succeeding decade, but he was so discouraged that he frequently discontinued work (IV, vi). Poetically the poem was somewhat old-fashioned, using every resource of mythological ornament and seeking large-scale effects rather than the swift transitions and concise rationalism of the "metaphysical" and "plain" styles. This respect for tradition pervades the poem: he aggressively defends old legends, attacking those who suspect them all simply because Antiquity sometimes mingled "Slight fictions with the truth", giving "fictive ornament" to things that had been "naked yet and bare" (IV, 118). Those who would refuse all legends because of a few errors are like the precisians who would pluck down a church for the sake of a cross or a saint in the window. But whereas Spenser combined his reverence for tradition with dynastic compliment, in Drayton's poem the monarchy plays a much less central role and is if anything the enemy rather than the guardian of tradition. There is some praise of the king and the Union (e.g. IV, 98-9), but the hero of the poem is the nation, not the monarch. Poly-Olbion is an early example of the use of historical myth by Stuart Parliamentarians to criticize the monarchy. The annotations were by John Selden of the Inner Temple, a centre of critical antiquarianism, and Drayton's arms bore the pegasus badge that had been adopted by the Inner Temple as its emblem, perhaps at the time of Dudley's 1562 revels. Selden's first works had been devoted to proving the unbroken continuity of English law since before the Norman Conquest; Selden himself later broke with this view, but less critical minds found it a useful weapon with which to defend the common law against royal pretensions.[1] Drayton has high praise for the common law (IV, 229) and repeatedly attacks the 'Norman Yoke"; it was Daniel and not Drayton who maintained Spenser's interest in the more highly conceptualized civil law. Drayton

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1. See J.G.A. Pocock, The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law (Cambridge, 1957). C. Hill, "The Norman Yoke", in Puritanism and Revolution (1958), pp. 50-122, and Sharpe and Brooks, "History, English Law and the Renaissance", pp. 136, 142.

took a keen interest in the study of Anglo-Saxon traditions, which was acquiring a polemical flavour: the first systematic work on the subject, by the Catholic controversialist Richard Verstegan, appeared in 1605 with commendatory verses by Anthony Greneway, who the previous year had praised Drayton's The Owle.[1] The interest in the Anglo-Saxons was dangerously close to Tacitus's praise of the free Germanic peoples and was difficult to square with dynastic compliment: it was from the Britons that the Tudors and Stuarts claimed descent, and one panegyrist of 1603 had presented Anglo-Saxon names as badges of slavery.[2] Drayton prefers the "free Customes" of the Saxons to the "forraine Lawes" of the Normans (IV, 381). He praises the Britons as well as the Anglo-Saxons, but the past he idealizes is less explicitly monarchical than Spenser's. Drayton criticizes the Norman kings' dominance of the New Forest: Buchloh suggests that the speech of the New Forest "Into her owne-selfe praise" (IV, 34) symbolizes the illegitimate pretensions of the monarchy to absolute power - James had personal control of huge areas of forest and his interest in hunting led to strict enforcement of the forest laws.[3] Selden's note explains that William the Conqueror sacrificed the people's interest for his own pleasure in hunting (IV, 45-6). Drayton's poem is also full of the contemporary concern that the forests were being destroyed by court profiteers who were selling off the trees for quick profits. Whereas Jonson presents the forests as the natural environment for the leisure of a wise king, Drayton uses the forest as a symbol of independence of the court: it is the home of the idealized Hermit who "is alone a King in his desire..." (IV, 280).

Drayton's most extended treatment of monarchy comes in the seventeenth Song, where the Thames makes a progress to the sea and sings of the kings of England. The list resembles that of Ralegh in the History of the World: it is a catalogue of crimes and usurpations interspersed with great victories (cf. the nostalgia for militant monarchs in Song XI, IV, 219-20). After chronicling the heroic deeds of Elizabeth, the Thames-king suddenly

> staid: and with his kingly Song,
> Whil'st yet on every side the City loudly rong,
> He with the Eddy turn'd, a space to look about:
> The Tide, retiring soon, did strongly thrust him out. (IV, 333)

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1. On Drayton and Verstegan's Restitution of Decayed Intelligence (Antwerp, 1605), see Buchloh, pp. 169ff.
2. Thornborough, The Joyfull and Blessed Newniting, p. 45.
3. Buchloh, pp. 319ff.

If, as Buchloh suggests (pp. 355-6), the Thames represents the new king, his thrusting out becomes a piece of oblique impertinence comparable to Ralegh's sarcastic panegyric of James after his critical scrutiny of other monarchs. This passage is succeeded by a meeting with the Medway; Drayton refers the reader to Spenser's episode of the marriage of Thames and Medway. As in Spenser, the episode seems to signify the union of aristocratic heroism with the mainstream of national policy; there is a catalogue of great noble deeds, ending with Essex, Mountjoy and the noblemen who had recently won glory in the Netherlands (IV, 366-80).[1] Drayton recalls Elizabeth's hostility to Spain (IV, 338). But Drayton's militancy appears to spring not so much from Spenser's militant Protestantism as from nostalgia for aristocratic supremacy, for a time when it was easy to obtain honour by military heroism. James's pacific policy and general distaste for military affairs flew in the face not only of Protestant foreign policy but of the traditional prejudice that a monarch must excel in martial prowess.

Thus the poem which could claim in many ways to be the legitimate successor to The Faerie Queene was less sympathetic towards the monarchy, and both in style and content it displayed the hardening conservatism of those dissatisfied with the Stuart court. But Drayton and the other Spenserians had not lost hope, for whatever the faults of the king, he had an heir who promised to be very different. Drayton dedicated Poly-Olbion to Prince Henry.

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1. Cf. A.M. Buchan, "The Political Allegory of Book IV of The Faerie Queene", E.L.H., 11 (1944), 237-48.

II. The Spenserian Revival, 1612-14

1. Henry, Elizabeth, and Protestant Panegyric

Most of the Spenserians found more favour from Prince Henry than from his father; and the prince came increasingly to play the same role in Jacobean panegyric as Leicester and Essex had done under Elizabeth.[1] Henry observed strict decorum; he made a point of being economical and was often compared to Henry VII and Elizabeth. Many exasperated suitors found that service of the king was "graciouslye acknowledged" but "uncomfortablye requited", and there was more competition for places in Henry's household than in his father's. There was a distinctly Puritan tone to his household; his closest friend, Sir David Murray, was not kept on in Charles's household after Henry's death, allegedly because of his Puritan leanings.[2] Henry favoured a more militant foreign policy; he was renowned for his prowess in the tiltyard; and in the Spenserian tradition he favoured an alliance with France rather than Spain. As early as 1606 the French ambassador reported that his inclinations were wholly towards France; Henry IV carefully flattered him, and the prince regarded him as his second father.[3] He tried to set up his own intelligence service, on the lines of the one the Bacons had organized for Essex. On political as well as financial grounds the Spenserians naturally gravitated towards this household. As early as 1606 Drayton had asked, after describing the military glory of Agincourt:

> O, when shall English men
> With such Acts fill a Pen,
> Or England breed againe,
> Such a King HARRY? (II, 378)

His patron, Sir Walter Aston, was on good terms with the prince, and Drayton contributed a sonnet to a book of poems by Sir David Murray (II, 499). He dedicated Poly-Olbion not to James but to Henry. John Davies of Hereford,

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1. The only full biography is T. Birch, The Life of Henry Prince of Wales (London, 1760); on his literary patronage, see E.C. Wilson, Prince Henry in English Literature (Ithaca, 1940).
2. A. Gorges, Poems, ed. H.F. Sandison (Oxford, 1953), p. xxv; Adams, pp. 224-5; H.M.C. Portland, IX, 14; Birch, Court and Times of James I, I, 257.
3. Birch, p. 75.

Sylvester, and Joseph Hall were amongst the many writers Henry patronized. He favoured John Owen the epigrammatist, whom Jonson despised but who attained the distinction of having his poems placed on the Index. Phineas Fletcher dedicated a version of his anti-Papal poem to Henry, but unfortunately he left it until shortly before the prince's death.

Henry became an important political figure in his own right at a turning-point in royal policy.[1] In the king's first years the old belligerent policy had been abandoned and the old links with French Protestants had weakened; but the assassination of Henry IV in 1610 produced a change in the balance of power, with France moving towards alliance with Spain and James therefore becoming more sympathetic to the European Calvinists. James's motives, as always, were political rather than ideological, but Henry, who eagerly supported the new policy, was prone to see it as the beginning of a great Protestant crusade; his advisers fed him with apocalyptic hopes. The old links with Protestants throughout Europe were resumed, with Essex's old ally Bouillon one of the key figures. Bouillon had been the guardian of Prince Frederick of the Palatinate, and he strongly advocated a match between Frederick and James's daughter as a means of sealing the ties between the Protestant powers. He also wanted Henry to marry a French princess. Henry was delighted when the plans for his sister's wedding were fixed, and played an important part in devising the elaborate festivities for the wedding.[2] According to the Venetian ambassador, Henry himself commissioned the Inns of Court masques.[3] The masque for the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn was written by George Chapman, who had especially close relations with Henry.[4] Chapman was very much a poetic and political individualist, and neither in style nor in political outlook can he be exactly called a "Spenserian"; but he shared in the general Protestant enthusiasm at this time. He had always been a strong supporter

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1. See Adams, Chapters 6 and 7.
2. On the political significance of the festivities, see F.A. Yates, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment (London, 1975), Ch. 1. and Shakespeare's Last Plays (London, 1975), pp. 17-37, 47-61.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, pp. 446-7.
4. Chapman's plays are unique in the Jacobean drama in their interest in contemporary French politics, reflecting the concerns of the "French party" at court; on the plays see N.B. Solve, Stuart Politics in Chapman's "Tragedy of Chabot", Ann Arbor, 1928.

of Ralegh; in the 1590s Ralegh was a suspect figure to the Puritans, but his years of political martyrdom had changed matters, and he was now a Protestant hero; Prince Henry wanted his father to release him, and hoped that this release could coincide with the wedding festivities. Chapman provided a masque that glorified Ralegh's policies of westward expansion: the isolation symbolized by the traditional motif of England as a world of its own is ended by the approach of a floating island whose riches will turn the realm into a really "golden world". At the time the masque was being planned there was a fear that the Spanish might be sending a fleet to Virginia, so that the tenor of the masque was unmistakably anti-Spanish.[1]

While Chapman's masque thus endorsed the militantly anti-Spanish mood at the time of the wedding, it remained within a strong framework of courtly compliment and political mysticism. James is acclaimed with much ceremony as the sun-king, and Chapman remains within the framework of the masque as established by Jonson (who admired Chapman's prowess as a masque-writer): comic anti-masque followed by a main masque with mystical glorification of the ruler as image of God. The symbolism is mythological rather than overtly Biblical, thus restraining Protestant enthusiasm: Chapman's own thought seems to have been some kind of Hermetic synthesis far removed from orthodox Calvinism. The more rigid Protestants were in the mood for more direct displays of religious enthusiasm, and Prince Henry himself was not entirely satisfied with the conventional Jacobean masque. In 1611 he planned to take part in a masque on horseback, thus jerking the form back from its Jonsonian function as glorification of peace to the militancy of the tiltyard.[2] James vetoed the plan, but Henry commissioned a portrait of himself that was the first full-length equestrian portrait of an Englishman. A French Protestant patronized by Princess Elizabeth drafted a masque for the wedding that would have pushed the Jacobean masque form to its limits; as in Chapman's masque the central idea was that the traditional isolation of the "Orbis Britannicus" had been ended, but the emphasis was on overtly ideological issues: all nations would now bow down before England and the Palatinate, the twin homes of the True Faith. Classical mythology was

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1. See D.J. Gordon's study "Chapman's Memorable Masque", in The Renaissance Imagination, pp. 191-202.
2. C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, p.79.

to be blended with overt Christian symbolism; unlike any Jacobean masque that was actually performed, it was to end with a vision not of the King of Great Britain but of the Kingdom of Heaven. The project was far too expensive to be carried out, but it would probably also have been unacceptable politically.[1]

There was a similar movement from classical mythology to didactic Christian symbolism in the civic pageantry of this period. For many years the civic pageants had been derivative exercises in mythological compliment; the normal author, Anthony Mundy, was violently anti-Catholic but his religious opinions left no mark on pageant symbolism. But in 1612 Thomas Dekker was commissioned to devise a pageant of especial splendour to honour Prince Frederick and Prince Henry.[2] Dekker had reaffirmed the Spenserian tradition in The Whore of Babylon (1605-6), a dramatization of the life of Queen Elizabeth and her miraculous deliverances from Catholic conspiracies; the play, which also featured Truth and Time, those stock figures of pageantry, was written for Prince Henry's men. The 1612 pageant was unprecedented in its dramatic unity; there was a recurrent conflict between Virtue and Envy and his allies, and Virtue, like Spenser's Arthur, dazzled her foes with beams from her shield. One pageant was a House of Fame, in which a prominent place was reserved for Prince Henry.

The resurgence of religious symbolism reflects the renewal of links with Protestants on the Continent. In Frederick's train came a great many divines from Germany; it was for the German party's benefit that Dekker's pageant was made so elaborate. In this heady religious atmosphere there was a revival of apocalyptic hopes; several of the epithalamia present Princess Elizabeth as the reincarnation of the late queen and anticipate that Frederick will become Emperor and march on Rome. James, by contrast, wanted to make it clear that his motives in arranging the match were primarily political rather than religious. The difference between James's attitude and the Protestant enthusiasm of some of the panegyrists is revealed by the contrast between an epithalamium by the Italian exile De Franchis and the masque planned by the French Protestants.[3] In many ways both works use

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1. On The Masque of Truth, see Appendix.
2. Dekker, Works, ed. F. Bowers and C. Hoy, III (Cambridge, 1958), 225-49; there is an eyewitness account, differing in some details, in Beschreibung der Reiß (Heidelberg, 1613), pp. 13-14. Dekker's pageant is paraphrased by D.M. Bergeron in English Civic Pageantry, pp. 163-70.
3. M. Joannes Maria de Franchis, of the most auspicatious marriage.... tr. S. Hutton (London, 1613).

similar symbolism: both end with a lofty vision of the universal propagation of the true faith. The marriage restores the golden age; Time brings his daughter Truth from the darkness. In both works there is lengthy denunciation of idolatry. But there is much more emphasis in De Franchis's work on the role of James as moderator of religious zeal. Religion appears to Jupiter (James) and complains that she is being persecuted by Dis (the Papacy); the other gods think that Jove is being too mild in his governing and plan to confront Dis with heavenly force. Jupiter, however, declares that even though his wrath burns to thunderstrike the Papists, the beauteous order of all creatures makes him relent; their hour of doom has not yet come. The persecution of religion is best remedied not by war but by good counsel and exhortation, and the most effective means is alliance by marriage: James's policy of "union". This poem's lofty vision of universal peace is an admirable exposition of James's political aims; but it would have seemed only too revealing to many of his subjects that it was written by a former friar. Chamberlain complained at the friarly conceit in the introductory verses, and De Franchis and his fellow convert experienced much suspicion during their short stay in England; eventually they returned to the Roman church and left the country.[1]

Few other panegyrists adopted such a conciliatory tone; the Oxford volume of epithalamia contained poems so outspoken in their denunciation of Spain that the printer was imprisoned; the Spanish ambassador wanted the book burned.[2] It is not surprising that the Masque of Truth was replaced by a masque that was both less expensive and less extreme: the poet chosen was Thomas Campion, who was patronized by the Howards, and he chose as the theme of his wedding masque the distinction between genuine poetic inspiration and political subversiveness.[3] Orpheus, representative of rational harmony and artistic responsibility, liberates genuine inspiration, in the person of Entheus, from the irrational domain of Mania. Mania refuses to acknowledge a distinction between Entheus and the other "frantics": once open the prison door and all will fly out. But Orpheus replies that Jove is confident of the loyalty of poetic rage to the cause of political order.

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1. P.C. Christie, "Vanini in England", E.H.R., 10 (1895), 738-65, Chamberlain, Letters, I, 138.
2. Epithalamia sive Lusus Palatini (Oxford, 1613); C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, pp. 513-4; F. Madan, Oxford Books, II (Oxford, 1912), 72-3.
3. Campion, The Lords' Masque, ed. I.A. Shapiro, in A Book of Masques (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 95-123.

2. The Death of Henry: Spenserians and Metaphysicals

The Protestant fervour aroused by the wedding was all the greater because by the time it took place Prince Henry was dead. He died shortly after Frederick's arrival, and this loss, shortly after that of Cecil, meant that there was now no strong counterweight at court to Northampton and his allies. There were widespread fears that Northampton was allowing Papists to enter the country and that Catholicism was flourishing at court; Henry was said to have feared for the state of religion. Despite strict censorship and severe punishments, violent criticisms of the court continued to be made; and the wedding that many Protestants had hoped would inaugurate a new political era seemed instead to mark the end of an era.[1] Almost all the Spenserians mourned Henry's death in richly ceremonial elegies. Drayton did not write an elegy, but he later felt it necessary to apologize for this omission, and his patron Sir Walter Aston did write one.[2] Many other poets mourned the prince in Spenserian style, amongst them Giles Fletcher, Williame Browne, William Basse, and Sir William Alexander. The most elaborate recreation of Elizabethan chivalric and poetic forms was by Sir Arthur Gorges in his The Olympian Catastrophe. Beneath its ornamental surface this poem is more critical than most of the elegies, hinting that the martial and intellectual elements in his character were not perfectly harmonized. But another of his elegies expressed the continuity with the Elizabethan tradition more directly: he rewrote for Henry a sonnet he had originally dedicated to the memory of Sir Philip Sidney.[3] The Spenserian elegies are pervaded by a feeling that an era is over, and this was no empty rhetoric. Henry was indeed the last secure figure at the Jacobean court to play the political role of Leicester and Essex in urging a vigorously

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, pp. 453, 459; Chamberlain, I, 392, 394, 396, 453; C.S.P.D. 1611-18, p. 167; C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, p.453.
   Cf. a letter-writer's complaint in February 1613: the bearer will describe the wedding in person and the letter will be short for caution's sake, "seeing we are on this side so much restrained for speaking, as any man is in question almost for thinking". H.M.C. Downshire, IV, 42-3.
2. Drayton, Works, III, 219; Bod. MS. Eng. poet. e.37, fols. 47-8.
   (I owe the attribution to Aston to Dennis Kay, who is working on a full study of the elegies.)
3. Fletchers, Works, I, 266-70; Browne, Poems, ed. G. Goodwin (London, 1894) II, 271-8; Basse, Poems, ed. R.W. Bond (London, 1893), pp. 87-100; Alexander, Poetical Works, ed. L.E. Kastner and H.B. Charlton, II (Edinburgh and London, 1929), 381-405; Gorges, Poems, pp. 135-80, 117, 181-2.

Protestant foreign policy and patronizing Puritans and heroic poets. Sir Walter Ralegh, who had become a symbol of continuity with the Elizabethan age, broke off the History of the World which he had intended to dedicate to Henry with an eloquent meditation on death; without Henry's intercession he remained in prison, so that Chapman's masque which had probably been written in expectation of his release rang rather hollow in performance. Chapman was plunged into financial difficulties; Dekker, author of the civic pageant for Henry and Frederick, was imprisoned for debt; Sylvester lamented that Henry's death was a blow to all men,

> But, more then most, to Mee, that had no Prop
> But HENRY's Hand; and, but in Him, no Hope.

Princess Elizabeth gave him a payment for his elegy, but he could see no future for himself in England and Abbot found him a post with the Merchant Adventurers' Company at Middelburgh, where he died five years later.[1]

The Spenserian ceremonial style represents a compromise between courtly ornamentation and Protestant didacticism; in the political disillusion following Henry's death many poets found this style inadequate and broke through the ceremonial forms, seeking more urgently personal forms of expression and voicing contempt for the corruption of the court.[2] George Wither made his poetic debut with a volume of elegies, dedicated to Lisle, which warned darkly against Popish plots to take over the realm; the mood was so fiercely Calvinist that Wither warned against excessive pomp in the funerals, which might lead to idolatry.[3] John Webster compared Henry to the Black Prince, who knew that battles rather

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1. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, III, 290; Sylvester, Lachrimae Lachrimarum (3rd edition, London, 1613), sig. A3a; H. Ashton, Du Bartas en Angleterre (Paris, 1908), pp. 114-9. Another upholder of Elizabethan traditions, Gervase Markham, had been working for many years on a poetic celebration of the English "Faerie Land", but the last few books, composed in 1614-15, became increasingly bitter and Puritanical in tone, and he brought the poem to an end with an account of the wedding of Frederick and Elizabeth: J.H. Lyon, A Study of "The Newe Metamorphosis" (New York, 1919), pp. 57-60, 255-6.
2. Ruth Wallerstein makes a stylistic analysis in Studies in Seventeenth-Century Poetic (Wisconsin, 1950), pp. 58-95. distinguishing between the ornamental, Aristotelian tradition in which the Spenserians work and the "Augustinian" search for a more immediate expression of experience that is found in Donne and others.
3. Wither, Juvenilia (Spenser Society, 1871), pp. 361, 372, 374; references in the text will be to this edition

than "the gaudy show Of ceremonies" were the best theatres for princes. Christopher Brooke praised him for his ability to see beyond the "fayre shadow" of war to its "substance". Drayton's imitator Niccols described the festivities of Dekker's Lord Mayor's show, presenting the pageantry as a sign of complacency and lack of preparedness for war.[1] One of Henry's chaplains, Daniel Price, published a series of sermons in lugubrious Biblical style on the anniversaries of Henry's death. These displays were viewed with some distaste by the more urbane; Richard Corbett, who was to become a firm friend of Jonson, wrote some poems ridiculing Price's effusions and the other more Puritanical and anti-courtly elegists: what did the grief of a cobbler or a Geneva bridegroom matter, and what right had such people to express their opinions about matters far above their understandings?[2] But in fact the disturbance at the death of Prince Henry cut across rigid social distinctions: Sylvester compiled a volume of elegies that contained not only pietistic effusions by lowly members of the household but the poems of gentlemen like Sir Edward Herbert and Sir Henry Goodere, and the more sophisticated versions of the "plain style" chimed with Protestant religiosity. One of the most important models for the elegy at this time was indicated by Sylvester when he said that he would

> but light my Candle in the Sunn,
> To doe a work shall be so better Donne.[3]

It is generally assumed that when the Spenserians attacked new fashions in poetry they were thinking of Donne and the "metaphysicals". Metaphysical poetry was favoured by the Inns of Court wits who disdained professional poets and did not publish their verse.[4] But at this period political factors complicated literary judgements. Donne was courting the favour of the Countesses of Bedford and Huntingdon, ladies with strong Protestant beliefs, and in the case of the Countess of Bedford found himself to some extent in competition with the Puritan divine

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1. Webster, Works, ed. F.L. Lucas (London, 1927), III, 277; C. Brooke and W. Browne, Two Elegies (London, 1613), sig. B4b; R. Niccols, The Three Sisters Teares (London, 1613), sigs. B3a-b.
2. D. Price, Lamentations for the Death of the Late Illustrious Prince Henry (Oxford, 1613); Prince Henry his Second Anniversary (Oxford, 1614); Corbett, Poems, pp. 8-10.
3. Sylvester, Lachrimae Lachrimarum (3rd edn., London, 1613), sig. A2a.
4. J. Buxton, Elizabethan Taste (London, 1963), pp. 317-20.

John Burgess; his complimentary poems reflect the ladies' theological interests, being full of reference to specifically Protestant ideas.[1] These influences are particularly strong in the Anniversaries which, as Barbara Lewalski has shown, qualify the traditional notions of poetic decorum in a characteristically Protestant way.[2] In the traditional Catholic scheme of representation, the presence of the image of God varied according to position in a vast hierarchy of persons and signs; in the Calvinist scheme, the image was almost totally obliterated by original sin in all men and could be restored only through divine grace. The image of God was present equally in all who had been justified. In Protestant funeral sermons, the individual was often taken as an absolute embodiment of all perfection; Donne extended this technique to the poetic elegy. He was probably influenced by the writings of Joseph Hall, and it may have been through Hall that he made the acquaintance of Sir Robert Drury, who had patronized Hall before he became chaplain to Lord Denny and to Prince Henry. To win Drury's favour Donne wrote an elegy on his daughter, and when this move succeeded he embarked upon the Anniversaries, in which a young girl becomes the embodiment of all earthly virtue. Hall wrote the commendatory verse for The First Anniversary and probably arranged its publication.[3] Shortly after writing The First Anniversary Donne set out for the Continent with Drury, who established contact with Bouillon and visited the Palatinate, though his poor reception there turned him against the Palatine match. Donne came to feel that Drury was not a satisfactory patron, and tried to maintain contact with the Countess of Bedford.

Thus Cruttwell's description of the Anniversaries as "Anglo-Catholic" could hardly be more misleading; the poems align Donne with the Puritan-inclined admirers of Prince Henry.[4] Ben Jonson, affronted by Donne's violation of the traditional hierarchical decorum in this poetry, complained that "if it had been

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1. P. Thomson, "John Donne and the Countess of Bedford", M.L.R., 44 (1949), 329-40.
2. This paragraph is based on B. Lewalski, Donne's "Anniversaries" and the Poetry of Praise (Princeton, 1973).
3. R.C. Bald, John Donne: A Life (Oxford, 1970), p. 243. Thomson, p. 331.
4. The Shakespearean Moment, p. 80.

written of ye Virgin Marie it had been something".[1] The Spenserians generally favoured traditional decorum, but the political pessimism following Henry's death would have made them more sympathetic to a poetic form that conveyed a Calvinist unease at the apparently arbitrary and unstable relation between soul and body, signified and signifier. Allegory in the Anniversaries is pushed to its limits: the poem is not a serene "golden world" mirroring the little world of man and the macrocosm, for the world is out of joint. The affinities of this poetry with Calvinism are most strikingly revealed by the fact that Price not only imitated the Anniversary form but adapted some of Donne's best-known lines in one of his funeral sermons, turning the "Shee" who is dead in Donne's poem to 'Hee", Prince Henry.[2] John Davies of Hereford expressed his admiration (albeit qualified) for Donne's elegies in a poem of 1612; Drayton's friend Sir Henry Goodere imitated Donne in his elegy for Henry.[3] The Spenserians might dislike poets who circulated their verse only in manuscript, but in 1611-13 Donne departed from his normal practice, publishing both the Anniversaries and an elegy on Prince Henry for Sylvester's volume.[4] The Anniversaries were printed by Macham, a friend of Hall's, who had earlier printed the Spenserian elegies on Lewkenor and The Ploughman's Tale. Donne also wrote, though he did not publish, an epithalamium for Frederick and Elizabeth.

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1. Jonson, Works, I, 133. It has been suggested that "shee" in the poem is Queen Elizabeth (M. Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle, Evanston, 1950, pp.79-88); but this reading, like Jonson's, is closer to the traditional hierarchical decorum which it is the purpose of the poem to subvert.
2. Price, Lamentations, p. 25.
3. Davies, Works, II. 1.66, 63-4; Lachrimae Lachrimarum (3rd edn., London, 1613), sigs. F3a-4a; Lewalski, pp. 323ff.
4. Amongst Donne's fellow contributors were Henry Holland, who was to recall the political tradition represented by Henry at the time of the Bohemian crisis (see p. 277) and Henry Burton, who in 1637 supported Prynne in his attack on the church hierarchy; along with Prynne he was punished by having his ears cut off.

3. The Rise of Somerset: Howard Panegyric and Spenserian Pastoral

The death of Prince Henry brought together different poetic and political traditions; but this unity was short-lived. The year 1613 saw an increasing political polarization. The opponents of the Howards wanted to use the favourite Rochester as a counterweight to Howard influence at court, and were not particularly upset by the imprisonment in April of his secretary Sir Thomas Overbury, who was not sufficiently adept at flattery to win the king's favour. But as the year progressed it became increasingly clear that Rochester could not afford to stand up to the Howards, and his love for Frances Howard made him dependent on their aid. Donne decided to try to fill Overbury's place. The Countess of Bedford fell ill in late 1612 and underwent a spiritual crisis, perhaps intensified by the death of Henry, from which she emerged more strongly than ever under Burgess's influence; she never again appeared in a court masque and adopted a "reformed" attire. Though Donne continued to place hopes in her, he had been effectively displaced in her favour by Burgess. Faced with continuing financial difficulties, Donne became more and more desperate for patronage and courted Rochester, who always demanded a humiliatingly high price in flattery for his favours.[1] He quickly repudiated his brief lapse in allowing poems to be published: the public poet gave way to the courtier. Chapman also moved towards the Howards: he was in great financial difficulties and had to dedicate his elegy for Henry to his main creditor; after a series of desperate appeals to various patrons he found favour from Rochester and threw in his lot with him.[2] Chapman and Donne were amongst the poets who celebrated the marriage of Rochester, now created Earl of Somerset, in late 1613. The contrast with the previous winter's festivities could hardly have been greater: then, court panegyric had been celebrating a great political cause, but now the occasion was the king's getting a woman for his favourite. Moreover, the woman in question was the wife of the great Essex's son. In January 1614 negotiations were under way for a Spanish match for Princes Charles. It is not surprising that there was a certain

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1. Thomson, pp. 331-5. Suffolk gives a striking account of the resentment aroused by Rochester's demand for flattery in a letter printed in Nugae Antiquae, I, 395-6.
2. On his relations with Rochester, see Solve, Chapman's Tragedy of Chabot,

defensiveness in the poems and masques celebrating the wedding. Samuel Daniel's play for the wedding of Somerset's kinsman Sir Robert Kerr was prefaced by a dramatization of the opposition to the match, which was presented as consisting of Avarice, Envy and Jealousy (see p.179). As in 1613, the Lords' masque was provided by Thomas Campion, whose patron Sir Thomas Monson was a Howard supporter; Campion himself had acted as a go-between in arranging the removal of Wade and the substitution of the more flexible Elwes as lieutenant of the Tower. Campion's masque attributed supernatural machinations to the opponents of the match instead of the bride, though he refrained from praising her in person.[1] The Inns of Court initially committed themselves to a joint masque, emulating the previous year's festivities, but the plans were abandoned, ostensibly for financial reasons - but, observed Calvert, it was suspected that there were other reasons for their reluctance.[2] In the end only Gray's Inn staged a masque, at the instigation of Francis Bacon, who had finally achieved the coveted post of Attorney-General through Somerset's mediation; he made a point of refusing to allow anyone else to defray the cost, so that the masque was a spectacular repayment of his debt to the house of Howard. Resentment at the cost of the masques was no longer tempered by approval of their content: "You see what toys we devise to bring our poverty to the public stage", grumbled Sir John Throckmorton.[3] The city found the occasion as distasteful as the Inns of Court: when the king commanded the Lord Mayor to stage a wedding masque he at first made excuses, and only after firm persuasion did he commission a masque from Thomas Middleton.[4] There was Protestant indignation at the way William Alabaster, who had changed religion several times, came to the fore at the time of the wedding festivities.[5] Chapman published a defence of his poem on the marriage, which had been held to slander Essex, but he only made himself more unpopular; still in grave financial difficulties, he retired to the country in 1615, complaining the following year that

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1. Campion, Works, pp. 147-56, xlii-xlvi.
2. E.A.J. Honigmann (ed.), The Masque of Flowers, in A Book of Masques, pp. 152-3.
3. H.M.C. Downshire, IV, 260.
4. Chamberlain, I, 499. In the event the king did not attend: H.M.C. Downshire, IV, 286.
5. Chamberlain, I, 568; Alabaster's epithalamium is in B.L. MS. Royal 12A XXXV, fols. 1-11.

"Homer, no Patrone found; nor Chapman freind".[1] Donne continued to court the favour of Somerset and Northampton, but he was uneasy at the price in flattery that he had to pay. In late 1614 he decided to take Holy Orders; Somerset may have put pressure on him to mark his farewell to things secular by publishing a collection of his poems, but Donne was reluctant to do so as it could not fail to offend his other patrons, particularly the Countess of Bedford.

The Spenserians were not involved in these unpleasant manoeuvres, and under the circumstances it is not surprising that there was a strong reaction against court poetry in this period. The naked Truth of Protestantism had been exiled from court and had to take refuge elsewhere. One place of refuge was the City.[3] The Lord Mayor who had been reluctant to stage a masque for the Somerset marriage had marked his inauguration with a strongly Protestant pageant by Thomas Middleton. His The Triumphs of Truth closely resembled The Masque of Truth; it was "the most expensive mayoral pageant of the Renaissance".[4] Despite this extravagance, the content of the masque is firmly didactic: Truth and Error struggle for the allegiance of the new Lord Mayor, Error deriding Truth as a "poor, thin, threadbare thing"; Truth is simply clad in a white garment which "makes her appear thin and naked, figuring thereby her simplicity and nearness of heart to those that embrace her". Middleton emphasizes that what really validated the mayor's status was not the external ceremony of oath-making but the invisible presence of the angel of Truth. The "sub-plot", like Chapman's masque and the Masque of Truth, deals with the propagation of the Faith, emphasizing that foreign trade provides spiritual as well as commercial benefits. This direct Protestant didacticism seemed crude to the panegyrists of the Howards;

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1. Chapman, Poems, pp. 303-35, 389.
2. Bald, pp. 294-7; Donne, The Divine Poems, ed. H. Gardner (Oxford, 1952), pp. lxiii-lxv.
3. Hall's career diverged conspicuously from Donne's at this time; he preached a farewell sermon to the members of Henry's household, and in 1613 delivered a significantly titled Holy Panegyric, in which he declared, "I would the flattery of a prince were treason". It was the Lord Mayor, Swinnerton, who persuaded Hall to publish it (Works, ed. P. Wynter, Oxford, 1863, V, 91-117 (105).
4. Bergeron, p. 179. The pageant is printed in Middleton, Works, ed. A.H. Bullen (London, 1886), VII, 227-62; on the symbolism see S. Williams, "Two Seventeenth-Century Dramatic Allegories of Truth the Daughter of Time", Guildhall Miscellany, II.5 (1963), 207-20.

Chapman sneered in a letter to Somerset in 1614 at "a poore Chronicler of a Lord Maiors naked Truth (that peradventure will last his yeare)".[1] But in fact the 1613 pageant marked a turning-point in London pageants, which especially in the political crisis of the last part of the reign were to become more and more elaborate and return again and again to the symbolism of Protestant truth. Already in 1615 Mundy boasted that the civic pageantry was as magnificent "as if it had been a Royall Maske prepared for the marriage of an immortall deitie".[2]

The other place of refuge for the symbolism of Protestant Truth in 1613-14 was the Inner Temple. The Inns of Court too had been reluctant to celebrate the Somerset marriage with masques; and in 1613 a group of poets who were critical of the court began to hold regular "revels" in the parish of St. Dunstan's, the home of Drayton and Davies of Hereford. The pastoral symbolism they adopted was not mere escapism; it was also a gesture of reaction against a corrupt court. The pastoral symbolism may also have been felt to link them directly with Prince Henry's court. Beaumont's masque for the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn had centred on the revival of the Olympian games; Henry's court was often compared to Olympus, and the festivities at Chester for his installation were described as an imitation of the "Olimpian sportes".[3] It was perhaps about this time that Drayton's friend Robert Dover revived the Cotswold Games, which were often compared to the Olympic Games; by the 1630s the games were to be essentially a protest against Puritanism, but in 1613 pastoral also had connotations of reaction against a corrupt royal court in memory of Henry's somewhat Puritanical court.[4] The Inner Temple did not provide a masque in 1614; the Gray's Inn masque was very much a special commission from Bacon. Already at the time of the 1613 festivities there had been a discernible difference between the organizers of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn masque and the more urbane group in charge of the

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1. Preface to The Odysses (1614).
2. Nichols, Progresses, III, 114. For the view that 1613 marks a decisive turning-point in Middleton's career, after which he abandoned hopes of court patronage and rejected court values, see W. Power, "Thomas Middleton versus King James I", Notes and Queries, 202 (1957), 526-34.
3. Beaumont's masque has been edited by Philip Edwards in A Book of Masques, pp. 125-48; on Olympus, see Nichols, Progresses, II, 295, Gorges, Poems, p. 233, Chapman, Poems, p. 257.
4. J.K. Rühl, Die 'Olympischen Spiele' Robert Dovers (Heidelberg, 1975), p. 101.

Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn masque. This group included Sir Edward Phelips and Richard Martin, who were members of the "Mitre" circle, a group of lawyers, businessmen and aspiring courtiers with good connections with those in authority. Donne belonged to this group, and so, probably, did Jonson.[1] In 1613-14 the group was starting to break up, with Richard Martin joining the Howards; it is significant that the only member of the "Mitre" circle to join the Inner Temple pastoralists, Christopher Brooke, did not find favour from the Howards. Bacon, who was planning the manipulation of the forthcoming Parliament, wrote him off as politically "dead".[2] Brooke had praised Drayton's Legend of Cromwell in 1607, and he printed his elegy on Henry along with William Browne. William Basse, another member of the circle, had dedicated a poem to Henry and published an elegy. John Selden and his friend John Hayward also belonged to the pastoral circle.

The Inner Temple pastoralists saw themselves as reviving Elizabethan standards in poetry and politics.[3] In 1614 the Elizabethan pastoral anthology Englands Helicon was reprinted with additional poems by Browne and Brooke and a new motto:

> The Courts of Kings heare no such straines,
> As daily lull the Rusticke Swaines.

The major work of the pastoralists was Browne's Britannia's Pastorals, the first part of which was published in 1613. In his commendatory poem Drayton complained that the downs which once were sacred to the Muses had been "Digg'd and plough'd up with each unhallowed hand" and urged Browne to "redeem those places... Now utterly neglected in these days" (I, 10). Heyward praised Browne as "a second Colin Clout" (I, 12). In the poem Browne alludes to a large circle of pastoralists (I, 95). The pastoralism links the poem with Beaumont's masque for Princess Elizabeth; it is dedicated to Lord Zouche, an opponent of the Howards and friend of Abbot who had planned to travel with Elizabeth to the Continent. In

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1. I.A. Shapiro. "The 'Mermaid Club'", M.L.R., 45 (1950), 6-17; M. Prestwich, Cranfield (Oxford, 1966), pp. 93-106. Shapiro, p. 12, notes that Drayton was an outsider to this group.
2. Bacon, Life and Letters, IV, 370. Brooke's brother Samuel had been a chaplain to Prince Henry, and wrote a play for the visit of Frederick and Charles to Cambridge in 1613.
3. In 1615 Abraham Holland hailed Drayton as "our still reviving Spencer" (Newdigate, p. 199). References to Browne in text are to Goodwin's edition.

the poem Aletheia is born from the ashes of Fida, who has been killed by the grotesque figure of Riot; she takes refuge first at an abbey and then at a prince's court, but both rudely reject her, preferring vice and adulation: her fate resembles that of Spenser's Una. She then comes to the Vale of Woe, where Endimion (Ralegh) mourns for Cynthia and Essex's fate is pathetically described. Opposition to James has obliterated the memory of the old rivalry between Ralegh and Essex; the poem is in the spirit of Chapman's appeal for Ralegh's release in his masque. There is also a lament for a chaste shepherdess who perhaps represents Arbella Stuart,[1] another prisoner in the Tower. Inevitably Browne also includes a lament for Prince Henry: Aletheia overhears Idya, a former handmaid of the Faerie Queene, singing Browne's own elegy for the prince. Like so many panegyrists of the Palatine match, Browne refers to the traditional motif of England's isolation from the world: this isolation only begins now, with Henry's death and the frustration of the Protestant cause:

> England was ne'er engirt with waves till now;
> Till now it held part with the Continent.
> ... O happy! were I hurl'd
> And cut from life as England from the world. (I, 145)

The true faith has been exiled by Riot. At the end of the first part of the poem, however, there is a reconciliation between a reformed Riot and Aletheia: a reconciliation which had seemed possible at the time of the preparations for the wedding but already seemed unlikely by November, when the poem was entered.

Such was the hostility to the court at this time that William Browne, the admirer of rural traditions, could find common cause with George Wither, whose stern moralism sympathized with Puritan denunciations of old rural customs (Juvenilia, pp. 303-4). In January 1613 Wither published Abuses Stript and Whipt, a denunciation of abuses in church and state which contained sensational attacks on Salisbury and Northampton. The poem went through five editions in two years. Apparently Wither was in trouble about the poem from the beginning, for a much later dedication to Princess Elizabeth suggests that it was her intervention that

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1. Arbella was regarded as a martyr to royal cruelty; in early 1613 she was rumoured to be conspiring with Lord Grey, for whose release Frederick had pleaded, and in November 1613, at the time Britannia's Pastorals was entered, a plot to release her was uncovered: C.S.P.D. 1611-18, pp. 181, 211-12.

saved him from imprisonment.[1] Far from being disturbed by the political pugnacity of this controversial figure, the Inner Temple pastoralists welcomed him to their revels in the summer of 1613. In March 1614 Wither was imprisoned, and the pastoralists undertook a campaign for his release. William Browne published a collection of eclogues, The Shepheards Pipe (entered on 15 May 1614), which contained poems written by Wither in prison and poems by Browne, Brooke and Davies of Hereford consoling him for his imprisonment. Wither republished his two eclogues and some further poems written in prison in The Shepheards Hunting, which was first entered in October.

Allan Pritchard has shown that there was ample warrant in the controversial matter of Abuses Stript and Whipt for Wither's imprisonment; but critics have not explained why it was not until March 1614 that he was arrested. The answer is probably that the spring of 1614 was a time of acute political sensitivity as preparations were made for a new Parliament.[2] The expense of Elizabeth's wedding had intensified the crisis in royal finances, and it was thought necessary to call a Parliament to raise more money, but the courtiers realized that in the volatile political climate it might be extremely difficult to control the House of Commons. For this reason Northampton opposed the summoning of a Parliament at all; but Bacon claimed that it would be possible to manage the Parliament by controlling the elections. In the event the court managed the preparations ineptly and aroused such fierce suspicions that the Parliament ended in political chaos and was dissolved without passing any measures. Wither was imprisoned a fortnight before the opening of Parliament, when the government was trying to decrease political tensions, and the initial order for his release came at the same time as the last of the M.P.s arrested for provocative behaviour during the sitting was released.

But if it was hoped to silence the provocative Wither during the Parliament, the plan went wrong, for Wither was strongly supported by his friends, including one member of the Parliament. Christopher Brooke was an outspoken critic of

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1. Wither, The Psalmes of David (Netherlands, 1632), sig. A2b; A. Pritchard, "Abuses Stript and Whipt and Wither's Imprisonment", R.E.S., 14 (1963), 337-45. Later references in Wither's writings suggest that there may have been an earlier edition of the Abuses in 1611, but Pritchard, p. 337, is doubtful.
2. See T.L. Moir, The Addled Parliament of 1614 (Oxford, 1958), pp. 27-30.

government policies from the beginning of the session, and in his eclogue he voiced the same opinions in pastoral disguise. He made Browne say that

> Thought hath no prison and the minde is free,
> Vnder the greatest King and Tyrannie...

and Browne himself told Brooke that "Thou canst giue more to kings then kings to thee". In Parliament Brooke complained that "by little and little sensim sine sensu our liberties wear taken fromus" and said that if the king could "impose by his absolute Power, then no Man [would be] certain what he hath; for it shall be subject to the King's Pleasure".[1] In his fifth eclogue Browne urged Brooke to publish his The Ghost of Richard III, which was in fact entered the day before The Shepheards Pipe. This sententious denunciation of royal tyranny could be read as a political warning; soon after the Parliament Bacon, accusing another M.P. of circulating a seditious document, censured him for an allusion to Richard II and recalled the way Essex's supporters had the play performed in order to use the historical parallel as a justification for rebellion. In 1614 Sir Robert Cotton composed a History of Henry III which also had a topical message.[2]

The other poets were less directly involved in politics, but they endorsed the stance of Brooke and Wither. Davies of Hereford, the only poet who directly imitated Spenserian pastoral diction, complained that the times were criminal; Browne attacked sartorial extravagance and the neglect of poetry. Drayton's The Shepheards Sirena, which was not published until 1627, was probably written about the same time, for it shares the same symbolism, attacking the swineherds who incite their swine to root up the shepherds' grazing-places.[3] Professor Tillotson's suggestion that Bacon is a particular object of Drayton's wrath as a polluter of poetry is especially plausible because of his part in the masque for Somerset; and Brooke was one of those who led the attack on Bacon at the start of the Parliament. But Drayton goes further by indicating that the real source of

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1. The Shepheards Pipe (London, 1614), sigs. F6a, E3b; Wentworth Papers, ed. J.P. Cooper (Camden Soc., 1973), p. 64; Commons Journals, I, 467.
2. Bacon, Life and Letters, V, 145; Sharpe, "Sir Robert Cotton", p. 289. The rehabilitation of Richard III was something of a Howard project: Sir George Buc, a Howard supporter, was working on a history of Richard III taking an antithetical view to Brooke's. Jonson contributed commendatory verse to Brooke's poem, apparently at the last minute.
3. Drayton, Works, V, 206-9.

the corruption is 'Olcon" himself - Drayton's name for King James.[1]

The fact that while in public the pastoralists were confining their direct attacks only to corrupt courtiers, in private their friend Drayton was blaming all abuses on the king himself, must raise some doubts about the sincerity of Wither's repeated claims that he was an admirer of the king. Nevertheless, in the fourth eclogue of The Shepheards Hunting he claimed that James had approved of Abuses Stript and Whipt; and he addressed a direct appeal to James from prison, saying that the king had graced him with the style of honesty and would not have approved his imprisonment had he known of it.[2] His poetry is full of praise of the monarchy. But the grounds of that praise would not have been altogether pleasing to the king; James is presented as a militant foe of Spain and of crypto-Catholic courtiers:

> Mean-while, great King, a happy Monarch raigne,
> In spight of Rome, the Diuell, Hell, and Spaine. (p. 350)

Wither makes a rigid distinction between the king and the corrupt courtiers; but if the king really does not like parasites or minions (p. 420) it is hard to see why

> each fleering Parasite is bold
> Thy Royall brow vndaunted to behold:
> And euery Temporizer strikes a string,
> That's Musicke for the hearing of a King. (p. 429)

While in theory Wither is as ardent a monarchist as Jonson, he has none of Jonson's conviction that truth must be mediated by social convention: the poet with immediate access to divine truth brushes aside aristocratic formalities and directly confronts his monarch. In striking this posture he goes further than the other pastoralists, but this kind of formal radicalism is found in the other poets too. Joan Grundy has called Browne "a Romantic born out of his time"; but if Browne's verse mirrors the breakup of the ceremonial poetic of the Renaissance it is because he is very much involved in his time: the pressure of hostility to the public conventions of the court leads him to go much further than Spenser in treating

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1. J.W. Hebel once suggested that 'Olcon" in The Shepheards Sirena was not James but Jonson: "Drayton's Sirena", P.M.L.A., 39 (1924), 814-36; this suggestion has not found favour, but it is interesting that Jonson seems to have adopted the name of "Alcon" in a pro-Howard dramatization of the Overbury affairs, The May Lord, in 1613 (see p. 206): Brooke's friend Hugh Holland seems to have known the play and been uneasy about it (Urban, pp. 320-1).
2. "A Satyre", Juvenilia, pp. 113-19.

verse as an immediate self-expression rather than a public allegorical representation.[1] In Britannia's Pastorals the allegorical schematism of Book I of The Faerie Queene is undermined by a more personal interest in rural landscape derived from Book VI: like Spenser himself, the poet turns from allegorizing Protestantism in symbolism with a sacramental aura to losing interest in allegory itself. For Browne, pastoral is not so much a ceremonial disguise as an opportunity for the realistic description of nature. In Wither this process is taken still further: he admits that he may be accused of "erring from the true nature of an Eglogue" (Juvenilia, p. 566), and tells Browne that his chief model is the Psalms (506). Wither was prepared to ally with pastoralists when they were opposed to the court, but he had little sympathy with those who sought retirement for its own sake: in Abuses Stript and Whipt he attacked the champions of old rural customs. For Wither both courtly ornamentation and pastoral mellifluousness may detract from the didactic message; form becomes not a mystical ceremonial, a "golden world", but an individual expression to be marketed as widely as possible: he will

> shew this Great World, that the Little World of my Minde is not so barren, but it can out of it selfe, spare somewhat wherewithall to make trafique for the others best commodities.[2]

Wither was contemptuous of the traditional modes of poetic production: he scorned dedications and dedicated Abuses Stript and Whipt to himself - a "common Mecaenas" would hardly be pleased with his "free speech". The subversive social implications of Wither's political stance were recognized by a contemporary opponent, who argued that Wither's extreme dualism of soul and body would make it impossible to justify any external expression of religious belief and also subverted social decorum: it was absurd to say that virtue was the same in all men, as if there were no difference between an uncut jewel and one that had been ornamented with gold. He complained that Wither's scorn for external ceremonial forms in poetry and society was like a refusal to bow the knee or remove the hat; and the old and new attitudes to panegyric confronted each other directly in the anonymous poet's assertion that

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1. Grundy, The Spenserian Poets, p. 143.
2. Preface to Fidelia (London, 1615).

> To write Encomions is not loud to sing,
> Or publish, what thy priuate muse doth doe,
> I hope there's more then that belongs thereto.[1]

Later in his career Wither was to take his poetic individualism to its extreme by attacking the monopolies of the large printers and having his works produced by a small independent printer; Jonson was scandalized by this attempt to circulate ideas without the consecration of the royal seal and pilloried Wither and the printer in Time Vindicated. The search for immediate divinity turned poetry into a commodity.

III. The Golden World Recedes: 1614-1625

Christopher Hill has observed that a marked change in English intellectual life can be dated from the period 1612-14. The great Elizabethan period of literary achievement was over; intellectual pursuits became more cautious and introspective; the intense emotion displayed at the death of Prince Henry marked a deeper malaise, a sense that an era was over.[2] The political events of 1612-14, culminating in the fiasco of the "Addled Parliament", led to deep disillusion with court life; there was no longer a figure like Essex or Henry to mediate between the Puritans and their sympathizers and the court. The "Protestant party" tried to replace Somerset in the king's favour by George Villiers; the revelations about the Overbury affair, which they exploited to the full, confirmed the most lurid suspicions of the critics of the court, but Villiers turned out to be little more independent of the king and the Howards than Somerset had been and eventually became much more unpopular. Prince Charles was no substitute for Prince Henry; his installation in 1616 was clouded by his brother's memory - Andrewes prayed for Henry by mistake - and the court did not provide a masque because Charles was unwilling either to attend or to be left out: he was felt to be "of a weake and crasie disposition". The Inns of Court provided a barriers instead of a masque, but the entertainment was felt to be poor. The

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1. "T.C.", An Answer to Withers Motto (London, 1625), sigs. D3b, B7a, B5b, B6a.
2. Hill, Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution, pp. 10-13, 219.

civic pageant by Middleton was no more impressive.[1] The removal of Essex's enemy Somerset did not make the heir to that great name any more attracted to the court; his preference was for martial pursuits. He did take part in masques, but they were patronized not by the court but by the Countess of Leicester, one of the last surviving links with the old Leicester tradition; it is perhaps significant that the only masque that survives from this tradition of "country" masques is based on The Faerie Queene, though it is not particularly moralistic.[2] Sir Walter Ralegh's History of the World, which was to become a favourite work with the Puritans, was pervaded by political disillusion and hatred of tyranny; in the year of its publication Ralegh had also contributed an anti-court poem to Gorges's translation of Lucan.[3] By 1619 criticism of the court had become so alarming that one "A.D.B." was commissioned to answer "the perverse petulancie of many Poets, which laid so many odious aspersions vpon Courts, as if no vertue had in them any residence..." He blamed these views especially upon Lucan.[4] Ralegh's execution in 1618 made him appear a victim of the king's cowardly subservience to Spain.

The Spenserians shared in this quiet disillusionment. Browne and Davies sought the patronage of one prominent courtier who upheld the literary and political traditions of the Elizabethan age, the Earl of Pembroke.[5] Browne seems

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1. Chamberlain, II, 31; C.S.P.D. 1611-18, p. 403; D.S. Bland, "The Barriers: Guildhall Library MS 4160", Guildhall Miscellany, I.6 (1956), 7-14; Middleton, Works, VII, 269-90.
2. The text of this masque is printed by R. Brotanek, Die Englischen Maskenspiele (Vienna, 1902), pp. 328-37. G.E. Bentley classes it as anonymous (The Jacobean and Caroline Stage, Oxford, 1941-68, V, 1311), but Arthur Wilson states that he composed masques for the Countess of Leicester (ibid., V, 1268), and the masque seems to fit Wilson's temperament.
3. A. Gorges, Lucans Pharsalia (London, 1614); the work was dedicated to the Countess of Bedford by his son, who states that the translation was made many years earlier; its publication at this time constituted a political gesture. After his elegy on Henry Gorges seems to have written only two poems, an elegy on Henry's friend Sir John Harington and a sonnet in praise of James which seems to be a piece of sustained irony like Ralegh's preface to his History: James is praised for repudiating the possibility of obtaining gold by war with Spain, and reminded that Suffolk, now pro-Spanish, had terrified Spain at the time of the Armada: Poems, pp. 130, 133.
4. A.D.B., The Court of the Most Illustrious and Magnificent James, the First (London, 1619), dedication to Buckingham (who probably commissioned it) and sig. A2a.
5. Dick Taylor, Jr., "The Third Earl of Pembroke as a Patron of Poetry", Tulane Studies in English, 5 (1955), 41-67. Browne later became tutor to a ward of Pembroke's brother.

to have entered his service for a time, and dedicated to him the second part of Britannia's Pastorals in 1616; Jonson, Davies of Hereford, Wither, and William Herbert, a panegyrist of the Herbert family, were amongst those who contributed commendatory verses. The poem contains an attack on favourites and a complaint at the decline of the navy; in the third part, which was never published, Browne ridiculed the Spanish. John Davies of Hereford was also on good terms with Pembroke, and in 1616 he dedicated to Pembroke a poem stimulated by the Overbury affair; Browne contributed commendatory verses. The previous year Davies had written the verse for an engraving that gave Queen Elizabeth an exalted apotheosis; his praise of James at this time, by contrast, was carefully limited: he might not possess other virtues but he was at least bounteous, clement and chaste.[1] Drayton seems to have been patronized by Charles rather than Pembroke, but the second part of his Poly-Olbion, which he finished in 1618, was full of the same concern at the erosion of national honour that was found in Britannia's Pastorals; Drayton attacked poetry circulated at court, and his opinion that patriotism was dying was confirmed by his failure to find a publisher in England for his magnum opus. For the 1619 edition of his poems he inserted an account of the Overbury affair into The Owle, and dropped the sonnet to James in Idea. Wither announced in his preface to Fidelia (1615) that he would write no more works for courtly patrons and attacked clerics who passed over the sins of the times for fear of offending their patrons. He abandoned the attempt to express his political views through poetry and turned to less controversial subjects. After one last attempt to win court favour with a play for James's visit to Cambridge in 1615, Phineas Fletcher abandoned poetry.

The period 1614-18 was one of uncertainty but of relative political calm; this calm was shattered in 1619 with the eruption of the Bohemian crisis. The crisis kindled the kind of ideological enthusiasm that the king had been trying to stamp out, and the anti-Spanish courtiers marshalled a propaganda campaign in favour of military support of Frederick. Abbot had apocalyptic hopes, expecting the imminent defeat of the Whore of Babylon, and planned a public triumph in

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1. Davies, A Select Second Husband for Sir Thomas Overbury's Wife, in Works, II, 1; Drayton's imitator Niccols also wrote a poem on the affair, Sir Thomas Overburies Vision, London, 1616; A.B. Hind, Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, II (Cambridge, 1955), 219; Davies, Wits Bedlam (London, 1617), sig. E5b.

London to celebrate Frederick's accession, but the king vetoed the idea.[1] In 1620 Thomas Scott published Vox Populi, the first of a series of vigorous polemics against the corrupt Papist courtiers who were persuading the king to betray the traditions of the Protestant monarchy. The figures of Elizabeth, Essex and Prince Henry were invoked to lament the evils that had befallen the country that had once been a "Faerie Land". But there was much praise of James: once he had seen through the false advice he had been given he would resume the monarch's rightful role as patron of the armed defenders of the true faith. Chivalry would again become more important than the effeminate masque.[2] Drayton's friend Abraham Holland was to praise one of the English commanders in the Netherlands because

> to see a Maske
> And sit it out, he held a greater taske
> Then to endure a Siege... [3]

John Fletcher wrote to the Countess of Huntingdon that he would not discuss at court

> whether ytt be true
> we shall have warrs with Spaine: (I wold wee might:)
> Nor whoe shall daunce i'th Maske: Nor whoe shall write
> those brave things done: Nor summe up the Expence;
> nor whether ytt be paid for ten yeere hence.[4]

As has repeatedly been seen, Spenser and his successors did not object to masques as such, but they preferred the courtly form to have a didactic and firmly Protestant content. Scott himself anticipated the objection of Puritans who might object to his use of fictitious personages in his pamphlets: "some times Kings are content in plays and masks to be admonished of diverse thinges".[5] By 1620, however, the court masque was identified with subservience to the Spanish, and the Spenserian poets endorsed the militant mood.

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1. Gardiner, Letters and Documents, II, 23. Hall was censured for praying for Elizabeth with excessive zeal: ibid., II, 132-4, C.S.P.D. 1619-23, p. 79.
2. Adams, "The Protestant Cause", Appendix III, gives a full description of Scott's writings; I am much indebted to his account of this period. He suggests that Vox Populi may have been sponsored by the Bohemian envoy; Scott fled to the Netherlands, where Elizabeth and Frederick were living, and produced his other works from there. He may be the Thomas Scott who wrote a satire of the Somerset marriage in the manner of Mother Hubberds Tale, included in Philomythie (London, 1616): C.S.P.D. 1619-23, p. 218.
3. A. Holland, Hollandi Post-huma (Cambridge, 1626), sig. B1a.
4. H.M.C. Hastings, II, 58-9.
5. Scott, Vox Regis (1624), p. 10; quoted in Heinemann, "Middleton's A Game at Chess", p. 246.

One manifestation of this militancy was Henry Holland's collection of engravings, Heroologia Anglica, a pantheon of Protestant virtue which concentrated on such heroes of the radical Protestants as Sidney, Leicester, Essex and Prince Henry. The engraving of Prince Henry was the one that had prefaced Drayton's Poly-Olbion. Henry Holland was the brother of Drayton's friend Abraham, who contributed verses to the Heroologia. Although the work was dedicated to James, and one of his poems was included as an afterthought in a presentation copy, the tone was far removed from the pacific values of the court - values which Jonson would probably have embodied in his own Heroologia (see p. 193). The Heroologia was sponsored by the Dutch engraver Crispin van de Passe, who provided the illustrations for Thomas Scott's pamphlets.[1] The tradition of radical Protestant poetry was being revived; it became the custom to lay satires against the court, often in the name of Queen Elizabeth, under the monument in St. Paul's of Prince Henry's epigrammatist John Owen. Abraham Holland was accused of writing one of these satires, though he indignantly denied the charge.[2] In 1620 the Countess of Dorset erected a monument to Spenser in Westminster Abbey.

The tide of opposition was becoming alarming to the king, who complained that his people were becoming "too republicanising".[3] In December 1620 a proclamation was issued banning licentious speech about matters of state. The immediate occasion of the proclamation was the summoning of a Parliament: as in 1614, it was felt desirable to curb the political excitement. The city was in an aggressively anti-Spanish mood; city apprentices publicly humiliated Gondomar, who had tried to prevent the summoning of the Parliament, and the Lord Mayor commissioned a pageant from Middleton to apologize to the king.[4] The political climate was as sensitive as in 1613-14; and once again George Wither published an outspoken poem and was imprisoned. Withers Motto was an immediate success: according to the author, over 30,000 copies were sold in a few months. Attempts

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1. Heroologia Anglica (London, 1620), B.L. shelfmark G1453, p. 74, sigs. M4a-b; on van de Passe, see Hind, Engraving, II, 39-46.
2. Hollandi Post-huma, sigs. G2a-4b.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1619-21, p. 490.
4. Chamberlain, II, 361; Middleton, Honourable Entertainments, ed. R.C. Bald (Malone Soc., 1953), sigs. D7a-8b.

were made to censor it, but printers vied with each other to pirate copies; finally, in June, Wither was arrested. Wither claimed that his book did not violate the proclamation:

> You are deceiu'd, if the Bohemian state
> You thinke I touch; or the Palatinate:
> Or that, this ought of Eighty-eight containes;
> The Powder-plot, or any thing of Spaines:
> That their Ambassador need question me,
> Or bring me iustly for it on my knee. (Juvenilia, p. 632)

But such a disclaimer enabled Wither to mention the very issues he was meant to keep quiet about.[1] Wither attacked hispaniolized Englishmen and warned against their treacheries; there was enough controversial matter in the work to make Wither's claim that its publication had nothing at all to do with the assembling of Parliament somewhat disingenuous (683). There was probably more substance in his claim that he belonged to no faction and was writing out of personal conviction and a sense of duty to the king; Wither was always very much the individualist. But he had many sympathizers. Alexander Gil, who succeeded Mulcaster at St. Paul's and taught Milton, seems to have had access to Wither's poetry in manuscript and praised him highly as the English Juvenal.[2] And when Wither was defending his poem before the Privy Council he explained that the work had been read and approved in manuscript by Michael Drayton.[3]

It was probably in 1621 that Drayton began work on a series of elegies in which he lamented the corruption of the times. Political irascibility apparently ran in the family, for in 1621 his uncle, an ex-soldier, was punished for reviling the king when drunk.[4] But Drayton's political pessimism was shared by many of his fellow poets, and their poems echo similar complaints. They looked to Drayton as a living link with Elizabethan poetic and political traditions, and the publication of the second part of Poly-Olbion in 1622 brought together several of the pastoralists of 1614 to pay him tribute. William Browne declared that

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1. Drayton uses the same tactic in "To Master William Jeffreys" (Works, III, 238) and "To Master George Sandys" (III, 206), both probably written in 1621-2, though not published until after the king's death.
2. A. Gil, Logonomia Anglica, ed. B. Danielsson and A. Gabrielson (Stockholm, 1972), II, 152, 209. Gil was a friend of Sir Thomas Middleton's (II, 33).
3. Acts of the Privy Council 1619-21, pp. 406-8; C.S.P.D. 1619-23, p. 268.
4. C.S.P.D. 1619-23, p. 187.

> All met not Death,
> When wee intoomb'd our deare Elizabeth.
> Immortall Sydney, honoured Colin Clout,
> Presaging what wee feele, went timely out.
> Then why lives Drayton, when the Times refuse,
> Both Meanes to live, and Matter for a Muse? (IV, 393)

Browne went on to urge poets to

> raise our Muse againe,
> In this her Crisis.

Censorship meant that the political allusions had to be kept oblique, but in an unpublished ode he addressed to Drayton about the same time Browne could be more explicit: he attacked corrupt courtiers, claiming to scorn titles like painted faces, and announced that he was servant only to the muses and scorned costly obsequies:

> if my Muse to Spenser's glory come,
> No king shall own my verses for his tomb.[1]

Wither openly attacked censorship: he expressed his envy of Drayton for enjoying Prince Charles's patronage, saying that if he had followed Drayton's path he would have been pounded on the king's highway.[2] Another tribute to Drayton came from John Reynolds, who had been more prudent than Wither: he composed an anti-Spanish tract with the intention of circulating it before the assembly of Parliament but decided that it would be too risky; when it was eventually published three years later he was indeed arrested.[3] Drayton probably also knew John Vicars, the Puritan poet who translated Owen's epigrams and Herring's poem on the Gunpowder Plot, which was denied a licence in 1634.[4] Thus Drayton was

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1. Browne, Poems, II, 210-13.
2. But after his release Wither wrote a poem thanking Charles for interceding on his behalf: apparently the first attempt failed, but after a second intervention the king agreed to his release, though he was still angry with Wither: see A. Pritchard, "An Unpublished Poem by George Wither", M.P., 61 (1963), 120-1. In dedicating the fourth part of his Emblemes to Philip Herbert in 1635 Wither indicated that it was Pembroke who interceded for him.
3. J.H. Bryant, "John Reynolds of Exeter and his canon", Library, 5th series, 15 (1960), 105-17; "A Footnote", vol. 18 (1963), 299-303.
4. Drayton contributed verses to a volume by Thomas Vicars, who was John Vicars's cousin; Wither and John Vicars contributed commendatory verses to Robert Hayman's Quodlibets (London, 1628), and Hayman grouped together his epigrams to Wither, Drayton and Vicars (p. 61).

associating at this time with men of strong Protestant views, despite evidence of pronounced religious conservatism in Poly-Olbion itself. One explanation may be a change of patrons: his former patron, Sir Walter Aston, had been a supporter of the Spanish match and eventually became a Catholic, but in 1620 he departed as ambassador to Spain, and Drayton's new patron, Sir Edward Sackville, was a strong supporter of war with Spain. Sackville also patronized Reynolds.[1]

But Drayton seems to have been concerned with social as much as religious issues; his verse at this time expresses concern at the inflation of honours. James, on Buckingham's advice, had increasingly resorted to the desperate expedient of raising money by the sale of titles; the progress of 1618 was financed by the sale of four earldoms. This policy succeeded in alienating such pillars of the old aristocracy as the Earl of Arundel, who had no ideological objections to the king's policy over Spain but thought that the inflation of honours was undermining the aristocratic social order which that policy was meant to safeguard. Browne attacked the inflation of honours in his ode to Drayton, and in a verse letter to Browne Drayton complained that the island was polluted by a "rude ribauld crew Of base Plebeians" (III, 210). Wither too attacked favourites and the unworthy grooms who had risen to become courtiers (Juvenilia, p. 685); in 1625 he contributed a commendatory poem to Christopher Brooke's poem on Sir Arthur Chichester, which contained an attack on upstarts with titles.[2]

Drayton thought that the corruption of the times extended to poetry; as in 1614 he complained that the Muses' springs were being defiled by "a sort of swine", and attacked the poetry being circulated at court. In his epistle to William Jeffreys he ostentatiously declared that he was not writing about affairs of state, which had been forbidden by the proclamation, but only about "the Muses common-weale" (III, 238); but for Drayton and the other Spenserians, the health of poetry and the

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1. On Aston's political views see C.S.P. Ven. 1619-21, p. 598, 1621-3, pp. 205-6. Buchloh, p. 57, suggests that the increased religious conservatism of Part II indicates that he was anticipating the coming of toleration for Catholics.
2. Like Drayton and Wither, Brooke complained about the censorship; he wrote a letter to the censor asking him to let the controversial passage stand, or at least to cut out only those lines which referred only to Britain and could not be taken as general moralizing. Brooke, Poems, in Fuller Worthies Miscellany, ed. A.B. Grosart, IV (1872), 213, 223-4.

health of the commonwealth were very closely related. The inflation of honours had been accompanied by an inflation of language. Drayton believed that the poet should frame "golden worlds" representing stable and universal relationships, and the poem he wrote the night before he died crystallized his resistance to the forces of atomism and fragmentation. Drayton presented himself as a mirror that continued to reflect the image of the patroness with whom he had maintained a deferential feudal relationship for almost forty years (I, 507). The ascendancy of Buckingham undermined such relationships and produced a form of complimentary poetry that accorded with the new instability: light, witty, using mythology for arch compliment but with no particular reverence for traditional symbolic images. Jonson was also concerned at the ascendancy of Buckingham (see pp. 230-3); but he was too deeply involved in the court system for his oblique criticisms of its corruption to carry much weight. The early 1620s saw the rise of "cavalier" poetry, in which the lighter aspects of Jonson's classicism were fused with Donne's witty ingenuity. The most intelligent of the Cavaliers, Thomas Carew, was best-known for his erotic poetry, but he also had an easy vein of social compliment; he wrote a panegyric of James for his arrival at Saxham in 1620, on the progress which saw the performance of the "running masque" (see p. 210). The king enjoyed the antics of the young wits, but outside the inner court circle there was resentment at the indecorum of these progresses: during the 1620 progress Buckingham's brother and a friend almost spurred to death one of Southampton's servants. Carew aided in the difficult task of obtaining a match for Christopher Villiers, who was one of the many relatives of Buckingham whom the king was trying to force upon various reluctant families. The king was angered by rumours that his own motive in visiting Saxham was to court the owner's daughter.[1] In such a world there was no sure foundation for a Neo-Platonic aesthetic in which relations of love and honour became mirrors of a transcendental world. The instability extended to the conduct of foreign policy under Buckingham's influence: it was the form as much as the content of his foreign policy that gave offence, the sudden shifts in direction, the refusal to honour traditional commitments. Heroic

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1. Carew, Poems, ed. R. Dunlap (Oxford, 1949), pp. xxxii-xxxv, 30, 225-6; Chamberlain, II, 288, 316. A petition to the 1640 Parliament listed Carew's poems as one of the abuses of the commonwealth: J.E. Ruoff, "Thomas Carew's Early Reputation", Notes and Queries, 202 (1957), 61-2.

poetry was unlikely to flourish under such conditions (cf. p. 219); and divine poetry seemed to fare no better: in 1620 John Vicars lamented that Sylvester should have had to die in exile.[1]

The evils were none the less vexing because many of Drayton's friends were involved with Buckingham and his circle and depended on him for their prosperity. Sir Henry Goodere, who was in great financial difficulties, wrote a series of flattering poems begging his help.[2] Sir John Beaumont, who had spent much of the reign in retirement, was introduced to royal favour by Buckingham, and repaid him with a series of mellifluous complimentary poems, using smooth rhymes and mythological ornamentation to highlight the favourite's physical charms. Beaumont used a similar style in his panegyrics of the king, deftly transforming a fall from a horse into a cosmic disaster. Beaumont's praise of James was sincere: as a Catholic he had high hopes of his schemes for religious reconciliation, and was to write the finest elegy on him. But his main poetic work, a huge Catholic poem called The Crowne of Thorns, was very different in style; it has been suggested that Drayton had in mind Beaumont's lapses from serious religious verse into ephemeral panegyric when he said that he had cared too much "for that which was not worth thy breath".[3] Drayton's friend Henry Reynolds condemned modern poets for "base seruile fawning at the heeles of wordly wealth and greatnesse"; Reynolds upheld a Neo-Platonic poetic in which the poet's task was to create "golden fictions", poetic worlds which had sufficient autonomy to mirror transcendent truths instead of being subservient to the unstable world of the court.[4] The poetry of the court wits seemed to sacrifice overall moral and artistic coherence, of the kind Drayton tried to provide in Poly-Olbion, to immediate local effects and displays of wit for its own sake. The political isolation of England from the Continental Protestant cause seemed to be paralleled by a poetic isolation, with poets

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1. Commendatory poem in Sylvester, Works (London, 1620).
2. C.S.P.D. 1623-25, pp. 147, 427, 556.
3. Beaumont, Poems, pp. 129-33, 138-9, 285-7, 121-2, 30; R. Wallerstein, "Sir John Beaumont's Crowne of Thornes, a Report", J.E.G.P., 53 (1954), 410-34.
4. J. Spingarn, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century (Oxford, 1908-9), I, 155, 149, 142. It is typical of the Spenserians' growing concern with the freedom of the imagination that Reynolds complains that Spenser should have been "a little freer of his fiction, and not so close riuetted to his Morall" (p. 147).

neglecting the traditional models that would aid in the creation of large-scale "golden worlds". Drummond wrote to Drayton in 1619:

> Out of what parte of the World your late Prosaicke versers have their poesies it is hard to find, it may be said of their new fits of Poetizing at court
> et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.[1]

An England that was no longer a "Faerie Land" seemed no climate for the creation of poetic "golden worlds", and many of the Spenserians turned their eyes towards the New World. Prince Henry had planned the formation of an order of chivalry for the exploration of the New World, and Sir William Alexander later established an order for colonizing Nova Scotia. William Vaughan, a pro-Essex poet of the 1590s and now patronized by Pembroke, was urging the colonization of Newfoundland. One of the contributors to The Shepheards Pipe, William Ferrar, may have emigrated to Virginia; his family were closely involved in the Virginia Company.[2] In late 1621 or early 1622 Drayton addressed an epistle to George Sandys, who was about to depart to Virginia as treasurer of the colony. Sandys's brother, Sir Edwin, had, like Wither, been imprisoned during the Parliament that summer; he was an ally of Drayton's patron Sackville.[3] Drayton bitterly recalled the way James had treated him and urged the Muses to emigrate to the New World; he himself would have liked to be the first poet of Virginia (III, 206-8). In Withers Motto Wither had recently warned that the true church might have to take refuge in America from the barbarism of Europe; and towards the end of the reign George Herbert, a close friend of the Ferrar family, wrote that

> Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,
> Ready to passe to the American strand.

These lines were to have difficulty with the censor in 1634.[4]

There is little evidence about the Spenserians' feelings during the last phase of the reign, after the disaster of the journey to Spain had produced a somewhat

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1. Newdigate, p. 183.
2. A.L. Maycock, Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding (London, 1963), p. 11; but there is conflicting evidence about William Ferrar's fate.
3. See H.B. Davis, George Sandys, Merchant-Adventurer (London, 1955). Sandys was related by marriage to the Wenman family; Sir Thomas Wenman praised Browne's Britannia's Pastorals and patronized the pastoralist William Basse.
4. Wither, Juvenilia, pp. 674-5; Herbert, Works, pp. 546-7.

incongruous alliance between Buckingham and Protestant militants.[1] The Lord Mayor's Show under Middleton had been becoming more and more elaborate and was developing a strong Protestant symbolism that made a direct contrast with the court masque; this process culminated with The Triumphs of Integrity, which celebrated the return from Spain in 1623.[2] The following year Middleton wrote A Game at Chess, which used a masque-like conceit to convey fiercely Protestant sentiments and portrayed the king as extremely ineffectual.[3] George Wither might have been expected to play a part in this anti-Spanish campaign, but he was no doubt made cautious by his previous imprisonment; in 1628 Hayman observed that his fate "causeth others wisely to refraine" from writing satire.[4] Moreover, after Jonson's attack on himself and Gil the previous year the king had pacified him by granting him an unusual privilege, the right to have his Hymns and Songs bound up with every metrical psalm-book. The printers took exception to this arrangement and complained to Parliament that Wither's religious poetry was too ritualistic; thus Wither found himself in the position of defending the mysteries of state against printers whom he accused of publishing books injurious to the king.[5] But Wither wrote a commendatory poem for Brooke's elegy on Chichester (see p. 280), which, despite or because of Brooke's letter to the censor, was never published. John Reynolds, who had praised Poly-Olbion in 1622, published his Vox Coeli in 1624, undeterred by its being "suppressed and silenced" in 1621; Reynolds was in France at an early stage of the negotiations for the French match, and the publication of Vox Coeli constituted an endorsement of Buckingham's pro-French policy.[6] Alexander supported the French match and went to Rome to further it;

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1. Poems on Buckingham's return were produced by Drayton's friends Goodere, Alexander and Beaumont and by Rudyerd, a patron of Browne's: C.S.P.D. 1623-25, p. 105; Alexander, Poetical Works, II, 545-6; Beaumont, Poems, pp. 130-3; Memoirs of Sir Benjamin Rudyerd, Knight, ed. J.A. Manning (London, 1844), pp. xliv-xlv.
2. Middleton, Works, VII, 379-96.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1623-25, p. 425.
4. Hayman, Quodlibets, p. 61.
5. N.E. Carlson, "Wither and the Stationers", Studies in Bibliography, 19 (1966), 210-16.
6. C.S.P.D. 1625-26, p. 528; H.M.C. 4th Report, Appendix, 261b. Reynolds was tutor to Basil Feilding, who was to become a Parliamentarian general; Henry Holland apparently served under him (D.N.B.).

William Browne published an epithalamium when it eventually took place.[1] Though not necessarily through love of Buckingham, these men were advocating Buckingham's preferred policy rather than the Spanish match towards which the king still had an inclination.

This preference for policies the king had resisted continued in the elegies marking his death on 27 March. His death was eclipsed by a serious outbreak of the plague, which Wither took to be a judgement on the people.[2] It had been preceded by the deaths of several famous Protestant military heroes; Abraham Holland's elegy for James was less enthusiastic than one for the Earl of Oxford in which he lamented the way James's pacific policies had starved the aristocracy of military honour.[3] The dominant influence of Buckingham is reflected in many elegies; one poet looked forward to the French match:

> Heauen and Buckingham the mean,
> To produce this other scoene...[4]

Richard James noted that few poets were producing elegies - much fewer than had mourned Henry - and tried to explain this by the poets' modesty; but for this

> Some Iohnson, Drayton, or some Herick would
> Before this time haue charactred the Mould
> Of his perfections...[5]

But Drayton, Browne and Wither, as well as Jonson, remained silent on James's death. It is true that Alexander Gil, whose father had been bracketed with Wither in Jonson's satire, did write a complimentary elegy, but we know from later events that in private he had quite different views about the destination of James's soul.[6] The king's extravagant funeral epitomized the indecorum that had been such a strong factor in his unpopularity with the Spenserians. In what might have been a summary of the whole reign, Chamberlain commented that "all was performed with great magnificence, but the order was very confused and disorderly".[7]

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1. T.H. McGrail, Sir William Alexander (Edinburgh and London, 1940), pp. 125-7; Epithalamia Oxoniensia (Oxford, 1625), sig. K3b.
2. Wither, The History of the Pestilence, ed. J.M. French (Cambridge, Mass., 1932).
3. Hollandi Post-huma, sigs. C4a-b.
4. A Coronis, B.L. MS. Lansdowne 805, fol. 67b.
5. R. James, The Muses Dirge (London, 1625), p. 8.
6. A. Gil, ΠΑΙΓΝΙΑ (London, 1632), sigs. B3b-4a; D.L. Clark, John Milton at St. Paul's School (New York, 1948), pp. 85-6.
7. Chamberlain, II, 616.

Epilogue: 1625-1649

By the end of James's reign the poets who considered themselves Spenser's heirs were considerably less reverential to the monarchy than he had been. The political crises of the reign led to an intensification of political excitement and articulate discussion of matters James wished to shroud in mystery. Spenser had veiled his political comments in The Shepheardes Calender in a relatively opaque disguise; Abuses Stript and Whipt attacked the court much more directly. Wither and Browne went a lot further than Spenser in presenting the poet as a figure of rugged independence, standing aloof from a corrupt court. But James managed to avoid a complete political polarization; there were always some courtiers whom men like Wither could regard as sympathetic, and the church under Grindal allowed considerable latitude to those of moderate Puritan sympathies. In his relations with a contentious character like Wither, James seems to have displayed a certain astuteness in disarming criticism. There was a noticeable difference of outlook between Jonson, the leading court poet, and the Spenserians: Jonson's temperate classicism was hostile to any apocalyptic excitement, and his interventions in politics were in support of a disenchanted realism; the Spenserians tended to intervene in moments of great political excitement, supporting Protestant propaganda campaigns and using overtly religious symbolism. But under James there was no permanent polarization between "court" and "country" poets.

The policies of his successor, however, did lead to polarization. At the start of his reign Charles gained popularity by reforming the disorder that had prevailed at court under his father; his interest in the arts could be seen as a healthy change from his father's taste for more boisterous distractions. Had James lived longer he might well have called a halt to the war and renewed the alliance with Spain, but in the first few years of Charles's reign Buckingham was able to carry through the war policy. But the alliance with France proved to involve supporting the French government in suppressing a Huguenot revolt, and Buckingham decided instead to side with the French Protestants, thus involving the country in war with France and Spain at the same time; the more militant Protestants in England supported aid for the Protestant cause but felt that Buckingham was handling the war incompetently. The publications of the Spenserians

and their friends at this time indicate strong support for anti-Catholic warfare. In 1626 William Vaughan published a translation of Boccalini's Ragguagli di Parnaso, a work which was circulated by opponents to the Habsburgs throughout Europe; the volume included a translation of part of the work published by Thomas Scott in 1622.[1] In 1627 Phineas Fletcher at last published his violently anti-Catholic The Apollyonists. In the same year Drayton published The Battle of Agincourt, a rousing call to patriotism; there was a commendatory poem by John Reynolds, who had been released from prison and the following year published an appeal for aid to the Huguenots. Drayton also published some earlier poems that he had been unable to publish under the previous reign for political reasons: "The Shepheards Sirena" with its attack on James as 'Olcon", "The Moone-Calfe", and the "Elegies". The satire The Beggers Ape by his friend Niccols was finally published in the same year. In 1628 the Norfolk Spenserian poet Ralph Knevet published a panegyric of military discipline; he was probably already working on his long sequel to The Faerie Queene, which contained the story of the Netherlands campaign down to the present day and made Gustavus Adolphus the hero of one book.[2] Also in 1628, Robert Hayman published his Quodlibets, which praised Jonson, Wither, Drayton and Vicars; Wither and William Vaughan published commendatory verses.[3] Jonson seems to have been less in favour at court than under the old regime; in 1627 he made a point of publicly praising Drayton for the first time. And as long as Buckingham was in power, Jonson and the Spenserians had a common enemy. When in August 1628 Buckingham was assassinated, there was widespread rejoicing; and both Jonson and his old enemy Gil were accused of writing subversive attacks on Buckingham.

The death of Buckingham did not, however, remove all the ills for which he had been blamed. After dissolving Parliament in 1629, the king embarked on personal rule and intensified the religious reaction. Rigid censorship made it

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1. W. Vaughan, The New-found Politicke (London, 1626); the first part of the translation is by John Florio, the second (kept anonymous) by Scott, the third by Vaughan himself.
2. A.M. Charles (ed.), The Shorter Poems of Ralph Knevet (Ohio, 1966); review by C. Hill, Notes and Queries, 212 (1967), 113-4.
3. The volume was dedicated to the king; it contained an attack on Arminians (pp. 56-7).

difficult to publish Calvinist views.[1] Court panegyrics hymned a new era of hieratic discipline, and masques formed a secular counterpart to Laud's liturgical changes: the king was enshrined as the natural image of God. The Garter ceremonial was transferred from the semi-public spectacle of Elizabethan times to a private and highly mystical initiation rite; Peter Heylyn, an ally of Laud's, published a book roundly asserting the historicity of St. George, whose cult was justified by royalist Calvinists on the grounds that the legends were to be understood allegorically rather than literally. The Faerie Queene was typical of the Elizabethan synthesis in leaving the issue vague; now the authorities were taking an unambiguous position: the symbolic was also literal, artificial allegory became a natural sign. The cult of St. George no longer necessarily implied struggle against the Catholic powers: it was a Catholic artist, Rubens, who provided the definitive portrait of Charles as St. George. Laud justified his liturgical innovations by the analogy with Garter ceremonial.[2] It could be seen as a sign of the times that in 1635 a Catholic justified worship of the Virgin Mary on the analogy of Spenser's praise of Elizabeth.[3] In the 1630s it is possible for the first time to assert that the dominant artistic mode is "Anglo-Catholic".

Many young poets and intellectuals liked the new developments. It is significant that the supporters of Parliament in the Civil War were on average noticeably older than the Royalists.[4] The poets considered in this chapter belonged to an older generation, and did not take kindly to the new developments; for them, there was no incompatibility between firm monarchism and Calvinst opinions or support for a militant foreign policy. None of them seems to have shared the courtiers' image of Caroline England as a "golden world" of peace and plenty. Phineas Fletcher's theological writings, published in 1632, were orthodox in their Calvinism and attacked those who used "Puritan" as a term of abuse;

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1. N. Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism, and Counter-Revolution", pp. 132ff.
2. P. Heylyn, The Historie of... St. George (London, 1631), pp. 41ff, 315-6. Wither, attacked by the Stationers for his use of the "Popish" legend of St. George in his Hymns, had asserted that he meant it only as an allegory (The Schollers Purgatory, in Miscellaneous Works, (Spenser Soc., 1872), I, 76ff. On Laud and the Garter, see R. Strong, Van Dyck: "Charles I on Horseback" (London, 1972), pp. 59-63.
3. "N.N.", Maria Triumphans (1635), p. 83; see G.F. Sensabaugh, "A Spenser Allusion", T.L.S., 29 October 1938, p. 694.
4. Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen, pp. 169-70.

The Purple Island, published in 1633, was prefaced by a panegyric by Daniel Featley, a firm opponent of Laud, and contained an epigram in praise of the Calvinist William Perkins.[1] Fletcher also published some eclogues written by his father as a young man, attacking corrupt clerics; four years later Milton drew on these poems in Lycidas - a striking instance of the continuity of the Spenserian tradition.[2] In 1634 the poem on the Gunpowder Plot translated by Wither's friend John Vicars was refused a licence. In 1635 Ralph Knevet decided that the political climate made it inadvisable to attempt publication of his sequel to The Faerie Queene.

Drayton, too, disliked the times - though it would perhaps be unreasonable to expect anything else of a man of his age. In 1630 an edition of Poly-Olbion was published, perhaps at the instigation of William Browne, under the title of The Faerie Land (V, 304); but for Drayton England was no longer a "golden world". In 1630 he published The Muses Elizium, a last distillation of the "golden" style; the tone is generally light-hearted, but there are serious undertones. In one eclogue a satyr arrives from "Felicia" (Drayton's bitterly ironic adaptation of "Olbion"), bearing the news that the inhabitants are neglecting their ancestors, despoiling the forests and scorning the Muses (III, 321-5). They are subject to their traditional enemy, a "vile nation": this may be an allusion to the link with France under Henrietta Maria (III, 321-5, V, 223). The title, The Muses Elizium unmistakably related Drayton's ideal paradise to the reign of Elizabeth: his friend Reynolds had set his pamphlets in "Elisium", a Protestant paradise in which Elizabeth, Prince Henry and other Protestant heroes lamented the corruption of the times and the passing of the English "Faerie Land". It would appear that to Drayton firm Protestantism was as much a part of hallowed English tradition as the old rural way of life. Another new poem in the 1630 volume, Noahs Floud, is more direct in its pessimism: the poet is presented as a prophet, an outcast in his own country, and God destroys the corrupt world and leaves an elect band of survivors to "make a new world" (III, 354). Noahs Floud is perhaps Drayton's

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1. P. Fletcher, The Way to Blessednes (London, 1632), p. 83; Works, II, 258; Kearney, p. 93.
2. W.B. Austin, "Milton's Lycidas and Two Latin Elegies by Giles Fletcher, the Elder", S.P., 44 (1947), 41-55. Francis Rous, one of the Spenserian poets of the 1590s (see p. 121) was a leading opponent of Arminianism.

response to an appeal by a young Calvinist poet, Samuel Austin, to Drayton and Browne to turn from secular to religious themes in these dark times.[1]

George Wither also assumed the role of prophet denouncing his country's sins. Unable to find a printer, he laboriously set by hand his Britain's Remembrancer, a work strongly influenced by Du Bartas in which the poet's prophetic function virtually usurped any concern with language: for Wither poetry from now on became a gift rather than an art.[2] Wither always regarded himself as standing above factions and pursuing a via media; he firmly believed at this time in monarchy, and saw his role as that of urging his Puritan readership to be loyal to established institutions while at the same time warning the king of abuses. He was critical both of religious sectaries and of those who despised poetry; and he consistently affirmed his belief in free will. He was no uncritical admirer of Parliament. But the more firmly the court and court poets became identified with authoritarian rule and Laudian ceremonial, the harder Wither found it to maintain this kind of artistic and political synthesis.[3] It is significant that in 1631 he went to the Netherlands to visit Princess Elizabeth, who epitomized the old tradition of Protestant monarchy. On his return he published an emblem-book based on engravings by Van de Passe, Thomas Scott's engraver; the work was dedicated to the king and queen, praising them as living emblems of authority, and urged respect for ceremonies of state, 'Hieroglyphickes of Authority" or "vulgar Emblems". Instead of presenting his work immediately to the public, Wither shielded it with dedications to many aristocratic patrons.[4] But such gestures towards political conformity were somewhat hollow in view of Wither's increasingly rigid dualism, his depreciation of visual "body" and exaltation of conceptual "soul".

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1. S. Austin, Austins Urania (London, 1629), sigs. A5a ff. This work contains "experimentall proofes against mans free will" (p. 81); the previous year a royal decree had expressly forbidden all public discussion of predestination and free will. Prideaux, to whom Austin dedicated the work, was regarded by the Laudians as one of their worst enemies - as was Fletcher's friend Featley (Kearney, p. 93).
2. A. Pritchard, "George Wither: The Poet as Prophet", S.P., 59 (1962), 211-30; Hensley, pp. 43-65.
3. Britain's Remembrancer was a revision of Wither's History of the Pestilence (1625); Wither became markedly more pessimistic about the chances of the king's heeding his advice in the interim: see French's edition of the History, pp. xii-xiii.
4. A Collection of Emblemes (London, 1635), sig. A1b, I, 137.

He apologized for the dedications even as he made them. More and more Wither believed that the divine gift of poetry gave insight to truths that did not require mediation through ceremonial images and which could be communicated through the printed work issued as a commodity.

When the Civil War broke out, men like Wither and Browne faced a difficult choice. They regarded themselves as defending true traditions against Laudian innovations; Wither would certainly have approved of a speech by Pembroke's old ally Sir Benjamin Rudyerd in Parliament in 1640, attacking the Laudians for trying to undermine the natural harmony between king and people and complaining that anyone of strong religious beliefs was being denounced as a Puritan. Browne was moved by a report of this speech to write to Rudyerd, saying that his words had been infused with "the spirit which inspired the Reformation, and the genius which dictated the Magna Charta". Rudyerd sided, albeit without much enthusiasm, with Parliament. Wither hesitated for a long time before setting aside his loyalty to the king; finally, however, he threw in his lot with Parliament. He continued to urge for some kind of middle way, and was not one of those who called for the execution of the king.

But once the deed had been done, Wither had no difficulty in adjusting to the new order. Royalists reacted with extreme horror to the execution of their sacramental monarch, the natural image of God, and the decapitation triggered off an extreme cult of the royal martyr. The cult of monarchy embodied in The Faerie Queen had been felt to mediate between the extremes of idolatry and iconoclasm; now the sacramental cult of kingship was opposed by Milton's Eikonoklastes. The new regime felt the need to demystify the potent symbols of kingship, and the Crown Jewels were removed from the Tower. One of the men sent to make an inventory was George Wither. His enemies later circulated a story which cannot be verified but which certainly has symbolic truth as marking the end of the long and tortuous romance between the Spenserians and the monarchy: Henry Marten apparently persuaded Wither to dress up in the regalia himself, and Wither pranced around the room clad in these empty hieroglyphics of authority.[2]

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1. Memoirs of Rudyerd, pp. 156-65; Browne, Poems, I, xxv.
2. P.B. Anderson, "George Wither and the 'Regalia'", P.Q., 14 (1935), 366-8.

APPENDIX

The Masque of Truth

All modern accounts of the festivities for the wedding of Frederick and Elizabeth in 1613 have overlooked the existence of a draft for a spectacular masque which, had it been performed, would have been the most magnificent of them all. On the analogy of other Jacobean masques, I have christened the text The Masque of Truth. Evidence about the text is scanty, but it is possible to construct at least a tentative hypothesis about its origins.

The text is printed in a description of the wedding festivities by one D. Jocquet, published at Heidelberg in 1613.[1] The pamphlet is in three parts. First there is a poem describing the entire course of events, from the departure of the love-smitten Frederick from Heidelberg to the happy couple's return in June of the following year. Then follows a prose account of the events in England immediately surrounding the wedding, from the fireworks on Thursday, 11 February to the masque on Tuesday, 16 February. Finally Jocquet prints the challenges and "devices" for the tournament held on the couple's arrival at Heidelberg in June. The pamphlet was apparently printed immediately after these tournaments.[2]

In his description of the festivities in England, Jocquet draws on two English texts that were available to him: a brief account of the events from 11 to 16 February, and the text of Chapman's masque, which was staged on 15 February.[3] But Jocquet apparently also had access to eyewitness accounts,

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1. D. Jocquet, Les triomphes, entrées, cartels, tournois, cérémonies, et autres magnificences (Heidelberg, 1613).
2. On 1 July Andre Paull sent some of the "cartels" of the tournaments to England, announcing that others were still being printed: H.M.C. Downshire, IV, 158.
3. The Marriage of Prince Fredericke, and the Kings daughter, the Lady ELIZABETH (2nd edition, London, 1613 ; the two editions are S.T.C. 11358 and 11359); Chapman, The Memorable Maske (London, 1613). This edition was rushed out at great speed, and Chapman complained that he had not been consulted. The text is reprinted in Nichols, Progresses of James I, II, 566-86.

or was present himself, for he gives a brief although inaccurate description of Campion's masque, performed on 14 February; the text of this masque was not published before the end of April. Certain errors in the description, such as mistaking Entheus for Mercury and Prometheus for Jupiter (Sigs. E4a-b), might easily have been made by an ill-informed eyewitness.[1] Jocquet also adds (Sig. E4a) a compliment to Lord Hay and Lord Howard de Walden, who are not mentioned in any other description: this suggests some kind of personal obligation. For the most part, however, Jocquet follows the printed descriptions, reproducing the text of Chapman's masque fairly closely; his departure from the evidence comes in his description of the events of Tuesday, 16 February. On that night, we know from other sources, the masquers of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn, eager to emulate the success of Chapman's masque the previous night, made their way by river to the temporary banqueting-house at Whitehall to perform a masque by Beaumont; but at the last minute the king decided to postpone the performance. The reason given out was that there was no room in the hall for all the ladies with their farthingales, but the real reason was probably that the king was tired after two late nights in succession.[2] After much pleading from Bacon, James allowed the masquers to perform later in the week, but the postponement was something of a blow, and it is perhaps not surprising that the author of the English pamphlet makes no mention of it. The first edition had taken the events up to Monday, 15 February; the second edition continued the story to the Tuesday, and the title-page laid great emphasis on the part played by the Inns of Court in entertaining the couple. Perhaps the text had been prepared in advance - a not uncommon practice amongst printers eager to be first with the news.[3] But there is another anomaly in the text: the author seems to suggest that the masque had come as a surprise to the spectators:

> The night proceeding, much expectation was made of a stage play to be acted in the great Hall by the Kings Players, where many hundreds of people stood attending the same; but it hapned contrarie, for greater pleasures were preparing, which in this manner were performed, as

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1. The error was repeated in the description in the Mercure Francois (Troisième tome du Mercure Francois, Paris, 1616, pp. 72-3).
2. Chamberlain, I, 426; Nichols, Progresses, II, 587.
3. The pamphlet was not entered, however, until 18 February.

> vpon the night before a most famous maske came to court, by the Gentlemen and studients of the lawe, from the Roles Office, by land, so some three hundred Gentlemen more, of the same estate and calling, by water, to equall them in statelines, came likewise up the Thames by water, with a maske to White Hall... (Sig. B4a)

In fact arrangements for the river-journey had certainly been made by the Saturday. The compiler does not seem to have been very well informed, and he gives only a perfunctory description of the masquing.

By the time Jocquet came to compile his pamphlet, however, the true facts were available and Beaumont's masque had been printed. Instead of giving a true description, however, he took the phrasing in the English pamphlet as a useful foundation for a fabrication of his own. His own description of the events of the Tuesday begins with the words of the English text but proceeds in a quite different direction:

> LE MARDY d'apres on avoit dressé des eschaffaux, pour faire jouer les Comediens du Roy, de sorte que plusieurs milliers de peuples s'estoyent ia assemblés. Mais il arriva le contraire. Car le ROY les remit à vne aultre fois, & donna ceste nuit entrée à environ trois cents gentilshommes, estudians au Droit & d'autre honnorable Profession, qui arrivèrent par la Thamise, vestus tous differément, comme sont toutes les Nations du Monde...

And here Jocquet inserts his description of The Masque of Truth.

Later in the same year the same printer produced a German-language description of the festivities; this text was much more detailed and also more accurate, for while drawing on some parts of Jocquet's text it omitted The Masque of Truth and gave the true story about the events of the Tuesday night; so did the Dutch-language pamphlet, and all subsequent descriptions in English.[1]

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1. Beschreibung der Reiß (Heidelburg, 1613), p. 66; Warachtlich verhael van de Ceremonien (The Hague, 1613), sig. Aivb. The printer of the Beschreibung produced many semi-official works for the Palatine government: H.-D. Dyroff, "Gotthard Vögelin - Verleger, Drücker, Buchhändler 1597-1631", Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens, IV (Frankfurt, 1963), 1129-1424. Reyher states (Les Masques Anglais, p. 512) that Jocquet's text is translated from the Beschreibung, whereas in fact the compiler of the Beschreibung expressly states at one point that he is translating from the French (p. 52), and a number of small details confirm that he was using Jocquet for some of the time, though checking his account against other versions. It was because they took Jocquet merely to be translating the Beschreibung that Reyher, and after him Chambers (Elizabethan Stage, IV, 73) overlooked The Masque of Truth.

But a shorter and slightly different account of the masque of Aletheia was given in the Mercure François, and a tradition about the masque survived in France.[1] In 1682 Claude-François de Menestrier reproduced a large part of Jocquet's description of The Masque of Truth in a treatise on court entertainments; and it is Menestrier who provides the most likely explanation of the text's origin. Menestrier is discussing the development of the ballet in the course of the seventeenth century, and cites examples of the poor taste of earlier generations; he then observes that such defects were not universal, but that those with good taste were often forced to go abroad. Several Frenchmen went to England to provide spectacles for the marriage of Frederick and Elizabeth. Menestrier gives a brief account of the other festivities, including Campion's masque, and adds a summary of The Masque of Truth.[2] He adds that

> Les Ministres Protestans firent le dessein de ce Ballet, pour favoriser leur Religion, & dirent que le monde quittant ses erreurs se rendroit à la connoissance de la Verité qu'ils prétendoient n'être purement prêchée qu'en Angleterre, & dans le Palais qui s'unissoient par le moyen de cette Alliance. (p. 114)

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1. The Mercure François account is as follows:
Le 16. les Comédiens du Roy s'estoient preparez pour representer vne comedie, mais ils furent remis à une autrefois; pource que sa M. voulut veoir les Ieux moraux de trois ce[n]ts personnes de lettres qui les vindre[n]t representer au Chasteau, estans tous vestus de diuerses sortes d'habits, & de toutes sortes de nations, auec des Statües, des globes, des animaux, & de toutes sortes de Musiques. Leur subject estoit de demonstrer, Quod Religio orbem terrarum Angliae coniunxisset: Contre l'ancien Prouerbe, Diuisus ab orbe Britannus: Et que l'Alitie, Vierge de Verité, residoit en l'Isle de Bretagne de laquelle le Roy estoit Defenseur. En ces ieux vn Atlas fit sortir d'vn globe les trois parties du monde, co[n]duites chacune par trois Muses: auec les Habitans des Royaumes de chacune des ces parties, & leurs Fleuues, qui furent presenter aux Espousez des fruicts de leurs terres. Bref ce n'estoie[n]t que louanges & prieres de Felicité que lon leur desiroit. (p.77).
The motto of the masque is given in Latin, whereas Jocquet translates it into French; the Mercure François also translates the songs of Chapman's masques into a different stanza form: perhaps the two French versions draw independently on a lost English source. Chambers, Elizabethan Stage, III, 233, assumed that the Aletheia and Atlas mentioned in this account were mis-descriptions of figures in Beaumont's masque.
2. C.-F. Menestrier, Des ballets anciens et modernes (Paris, 1682), pp. 110-24. A later French writer, Bonnet, quoted from the Aletheia masque but claimed that it was performed by the House of Lords for Charles II: Histoire générale de la danse (Paris, 1723), pp. 101-5.

He concludes with an interesting terminological point:

> & ainsi se termina ce fameux Ballet, à qui nos Historiens ont donné le nom de moralitez, parce que les nouveaux Reformateurs faisoient des sujets d'instruction de ces divertissemens. (p. 124)

Was Jocquet one of these French Protestants? I have been unable to find further information about the author, but it seems quite plausible. The marriage of Frederick and Elizabeth must be seen as part of a general diplomatic realignment following the revelation of the Franco-Spanish marriages (see above, pp. 254 ff). French Protestants were naturally alarmed at the prospect of the alliance, and so were many Gallicans, disturbed to see the anti-Spanish policies of Henry IV reversed.[1] The festivities for the betrothal, held in Paris in April 1612, were spectacular but could not conceal the undercurrent of political discontent: according to Prince Henry's agent in Paris, the large crowds attended out of curiosity more than enthusiasm.[2] It seemed possible that England would now take from France the role of leading bulwark against the Habsburgs, and French Protestants looked anxiously to James's movements. Shortly after the betrothal festivities Bouillon visited England with a large retinue and secretly urged James's support for an aristocratic and Protestant coup d'état. James was hesitant, but he was anxious about the safety of French Protestants; and Prince Henry was less cautious, taking an active interest in the Huguenot cause and secretly corresponding with their leaders. He was also said to be planning to go with his sister to Germany and marry a German Protestant princess: the Palatine match was but one part of a general European strategy. The Masque of Truth is an allegorical representation of such a grandiose and apocalyptic political outlook, in which religious ideology takes priority over national and dynastic divisions. The motif of the globe was especially appropriate for the Palatine match because Frederick

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1. F.-T. Perrens, Les mariages espagnols sous le règne de Henri IV et la régence de Marie de Medicis (Paris, 1869), pp. 380ff, 423ff.
2. B.L. MS. Harleian 7015, fol. 263a. On the festivities see A. Stegman, "La Fête parisienne à la Place Royale en avril 1612", in Les Fêtes de la Renaissance, III (ed. J. Jacquot and E. Konigson, Paris, 1975), 373-92.

bore an orb on his coat of arms.[1] There is a strong contrast with Jonson's use of the theme of Britain's isolation from the world: in Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly (1611) he celebrated this isolation, as a "world, the world without", and praised James in mystical Neo-Platonic terms as the presiding deity of the island.[2]

But the apocalyptic hopes raised by the marriage were tempered by Henry's death: it seemed that the "orbis Britannicus" was in danger of reverting to its isolation. The Venetian ambassador in France noted that the Huguenots had been subdued since his death, having "chosen him as their chief support and head". Before his death Henry took care to burn his secret correspondence with the Huguenot leaders, so that it remains true of his final grandiose schemes that the "details . and the persons will, for the most part, remain hidden".[3] Perhaps some information about Jocquet's masque also perished in the flames.

In content, The Masque of Truth would have appealed to Huguenots, Puritans and the more militant opponents of the Habsburgs throughout Europe; in form, too, it is international, and again there is nothing implausible in Menestrier's claim that the devisers were French. We know that Henry took a strong interest in court entertainments, trying to move them in a more militant and Protestant direction (see p.255); he had invited a designer from the French court, Salomon de Caus, to join his household, and after his death de Caus accompanied Frederick and Elizabeth to Heidelberg.[4] The series of "entrées" of different parts

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1. Chapman quoted the saying "divisus ab orbe Britannus" in his masque (Nichols, II, 574-5). The same symbolism was used in one of the pageants greeting Frederick and Elizabeth:

   Flvctibvs Oceani Divisa Olim Anglia Terra,
   Ivncta Palatino Creditur Esse Solo. (Beschreibung, p. 118)

   Bathsua Reynolds (probably the daughter of Drayton's friend Henry Reynolds) used the same conceit in a poem addressed to Frederick:

   En pelago toto diuisos orbe Britannos,
   Germanis junxit pax pia, laetus Hymen. (Musa Virginea, London, 1616 sig. B1a)

2. Jonson had earlier used the "divisus ab orbe" theme in the 1604 royal entry (Works, VII, 84) and The Masque of Blacknesse (VII, 177). On the history of the idea, see J.W. Bennett, "Britain among the Fortunate Isles", S.P., 53 (1956), 114-40. Jonson was in France himself in 1612, leaving the field open for other masque-writers.
3. C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, pp. 462-3, 466, 470, 511.
4. Yates, Rosicrucian Enlightenment, pp. 38ff.

of the world, showing off elaborate costumes, was characteristic of French court entertainments: on 1 March 1612 there was a ballet of nine ladies representing the three parts of the world.[1] And a masque-writer looking for inspiration would not have had to look far for the idea of Atlas holding up the world, for the device had been used in the betrothal pageantry in Paris in April 1612; Henry's secret correspondent had sent him a pamphlet describing the festivities.[2]

How near did The Masque of Truth come to actual performance? There is an air of unreality and impracticality about the text which suggests a project that had not reached the stage of dramatic execution: for example, at one time the globe splits into two parts, at another into three. The costumes are not described in detail: Europe is "habillée comme les peintres ont depeint" her; the Asian lands are "vestues toutes comme l'on a accoustumé en leurs regions"; of Africa we are merely told that she is "habillée d'aultre sorte que les precedentes Reynes".[3] The huge cast and extravagant costumes would have required expenditure on a scale unprecedented even in the Jacobean court. Perhaps the text printed by Jocquet represents an initial project submitted at an early stage in the preparations for the wedding, when the masques were "under Invention, not in Resolution".[4] All such projects had to be re-examined after Henry's death, which changed the political situation, plunged the court into mourning and intensified the financial crisis. Jocquet refers to the effect of his death: "vous ne verrez qu'un eschantillon de ce qui se pouvoit faire de magnificence, si la playe n'eust encor saignée tout fraischement" (Sig. E1b). Presumably Jocquet would not have dedicated the book to Elizabeth unless its contents were going to meet with her approval, and this makes it likely that she had taken an interest in The Masque of Truth at some stage. Shortly before Henry's death she was rehearsing for "a sumptuous ballet of sixteen

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1. J. Héroard, Journal, ed. E. Soulié and E. de Barthélemy (Paris, 1868), II, 100. About 1612 there was a Ballet des Anglois: M. McGowan, L'Art du ballet de cour en France (Paris, 1963), p. 272.
2. Stegman, p. 385; B.L. MS. Harleian 7015, fol. 268.
3. In his masque for the Somerset marriage the following year, Campion included the figures of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, but specified the details of their costumes (Works, p. 152).
4. Winwood, Memorials of Affairs of State (London, 1725), III, 404: Winwood to Trumbull, 23 October 1712.

maidens, of whom she will be one"; The Masque of Truth, with its seventeen lady dancers, would seem to belong to the same period, and may even be the masque to which the Venetian ambassador referred.[1]

If Menestrier is right, The Masque of Truth belongs strictly speaking to French rather than English literature; but it seems possible that some of the English poets connected with Henry and Elizabeth may have known of the projected masque. The "inventor" of the masque was certainly familiar with recent developments in English masque-writing. The French ballet de cour at this time tended to be a succession of spectacular "entrées" without much thematic coherence; Menestrier, judging court entertainments on Aristotelian principles, draws attention to the superior unity of the Aletheia masque. It was above all Jonson who had turned court masques into coherent works of art, coining the term "antimasque" to indicate the essential coherence of the initial "entries" and the final revelation. The author of The Masque of Truth translates this term (as "avant-ballet" or "Antibalet") and tries to achieve a similar unity, although he is closer to French practice in having three successive "antimasques" rather than a simple binary structure. Menestrier, who reprinted most of Jocquet's text as it stood, felt it necessary to insert an explanation for French readers of the term "avant-ballet". But while this structural coherence links The Masque of Truth with Jonson's masques, the Protestant religiosity is quite different; in this respect it belongs to the artistic tradition nourished by Henry and Elizabeth rather than the more pacific art preferred by their father. It was shown in Chapter VI that the figure of Protestant Truth made her appearance in the work of the Spenserian poets and in civic pageantry immediately after the wedding. The name "Aletheia" is not common in poetry, and it seems something more than a coincidence that Browne should have used it so soon afterwards. His friend, Christopher Brooke, had helped to organise one of the wedding masques, and Brooke's brother wrote a play for Frederick and Charles; Elizabeth intervened to help Wither, another member of the circle. Middleton did not use the name Aletheia in his Triumphs

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1. C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, p. 444. After Henry's death there was much uncertainty about the date of the wedding and the number of masques to be performed: see the conflicting reports in C.S.P. Ven. 1610-13, p. 474; H.M.C. Downshire, IV, 8; Chamberlain, Letters, I, 404.

of Truth, but he did refer to "Alethe" the daughter of Time in a later entertainment, The World Tossed at Tennis, which also used the central device of the globe. Middleton was especially fond of the globe, having used it first as early as 1604; the most striking parallel with The Masque of Truth came in his 1622 pageant, The Triumphs of Honour and Virtue. There was a Globe of Honour which flew apart into eight sections, and like the Globe in the Aletheia masque this globe had a heavily Calvinistic "morality": it closed up again after the revelation of the virtues, showing that no earthly virtue is self-sufficient (cf. Atlas's inability to bear the weight of the world, sig. H4b below).[1]

Such analogies do not prove influence; but they do at least draw attention to a common tradition of Protestant pageantry. In France the reformers produced political "moralitez".[2] In England, following in the tradition of the 1559 pageant, Middleton devised Protestant pageants that became more and more spectacular for city fathers who were increasingly sympathetic to Puritanism. His A Game at Chess, which was similar in theme and technique to the pageants, is said to have made him the Puritans' favourite dramatist.[3] The Masque of Truth represents an attempt to "reform" the most spectacular and courtly of all dramatic forms, the court masque; at the height of the propaganda campaign for which A Game at Chess was written, Thomas Scott, who was patronized by Princess Elizabeth, justified the use of fictions for didactic ends, observing that "some times Kings are content in plays and masks to be admonished of diverse thinges" (see p. 276). The Masque of Truth indicates the form that the court masque might have taken had Henry and Elizabeth exercised more political influence, and had the leading masque-writer been closer in political outlook to Middleton than to Jonson (who thought him "but a base fellow").[4] The dogmatic pietism and political romanticism of The Masque of Truth would have seemed crude and irresponsible to Jonson, but it would have appealed to many of James's

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1. Middleton, Works, VII, 167, 221-6, 365-6.
2. Menestrier presumably derived the term "Moralitez" from the Mercure François, which describes Campion's masque as a "moralite" (p. 72) and the Aletheia masque as "Ieux moraux" (p. 77).
3. Heinemann, "Middleton's A Game at Chess", pp. 249, 233-4.
4. Works, I, 137. Middleton drew on the figure of Truth in the barriers after Hymenaei for his 1613 pageant.

subjects. Where Jonson firmly confines his didacticism to the ethical sphere, The Masque of Truth engages with overtly religious and topical issues; where the machinery in Jonson's Hymenaei is used to express a confident humanist belief in the power of self-discipline, in The Masque of Truth it expresses the weakness of earthly powers without divine grace. The courtly "masks" are used to represent a final, apocalyptic unmasking of the immediate divine truth; mythological disguise gives way to direct religious statement. Did Greville have such an approach in mind when he corresponded with Daniel about the "reformation" of the masque? Milton's Comus should perhaps be seen as the culmination of a tradition of Protestant masques and pageantry.

But Comus is of course a much more sophisticated fusion of aristocratic spectacle and Protestant didacticism; in The Masque of Truth these elements are pushed to such extremes that they fail to cohere. Stern denunciations of idolatry are succeeded by a particularly spectacular visual display of divine truths, reminiscent of the art of the Counter-Reformation. But such a combination suited Princess Elizabeth's temperament and might not have seemed anomalous to those who looked back nostalgically to Queen Elizabeth's reign, when court pageantry was firmly and unambiguously anti-Catholic. Princess Elizabeth's later career reveals a similar pattern: in the austere environment of the Palatinate she caused some surprise by her love of revelry and chivalry, which she considered perfectly compatible with religious zeal; and during their brief reign in Bohemia Frederick and Elizabeth were equally enthusiastic in staging court festivities and in advocating iconoclasm.[1] During the long years of her exile in The Hague, Elizabeth retained the affection of a large number of English admirers; she became a potent symbol of that Protestant monarchism which her brother Charles seemed to be betraying, and which after the wedding festivities of 1613 was never again directly celebrated in court masques.

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1. C.-P. Clasen, The Palatinate in European History (2nd edition, Oxford, 1966), pp. 42-3.

From: D. Jocquet, Les triomphes, entrées, cartels, tournois, cérémonies et aultres Magnificences, faits en Angleterre, & au Palatinat, pour le Mariage & Reception, de Monseigneur le Prince Frideric V. Comte Palatin du Rhin, Electeur du Sainct Empire, Duc de Bavière &c. Et de Madame Elisabeth, Fille vnique et princesse de la Grande Bretagne, Electrice Palatine du Rhin &c. Son Espouse. (Heidelberg, G.Vögelin, 1613).

[sig. H1a] LE MARDY d'apres on avoit dressé des eschaffaux, pour faire jouer les Comediens du Roy, de sorte que plusieurs milliers de peuples s'estoyent ia assemblés. Mais il arriva le contraire. Car le ROY les remit à vne aultre fois, & donna ceste nuit entrée à environ trois cents gentilshommes, estudians au Droit & d'autre honnorable Profession, qui arriverent pa la Thamise, vestus tous differemment, comme sont toutes les Nations du Monde, & furent introduits en la Sale, ou on avoit joué le ballet precedant; y ayant faict preparer pour leur scene, vne grãde statue ressemblant a vne Vierge, a demy couchée; tenant en sa main gauche, vng Globe terrestre aussy grand quasi qu'une Montagne; & sur la droite elle appuyoit sa teste, environnée de rayons, & regardoit dedans vne grande Bible, posée sut vng pulpitre aupres d'elle. De l'autre costé estoient les Armes d'Angleterre, & celles de l'Electeur Palatin, ou il a vng Monde.

L'ARGVMENT de leur Ballet estoit: Que la [H1b] Religion avoit joint le Monde avec l'Angleterre. Car encor que les Poëtes disent, divisus ab orbe Britannus: toutesfois le mariage, faict au Ciel, & consomé en Terre, de la Fille vnique de ce Sage ROY de la grand Bretagne, avec le Serenissime Prince FRIDERIC V. Electeur Palatin (qui porte en ses Armes, & en son office Electoral, le Monde d'or: qui est maintenant joint aux Armes d'Angleterre) a donné occasion de contredire le Poëte, & de croire, qu'un jour, s'il plaist a Dieu, le Monde (quittant ses erreurs) se viendra rendre à la cognoissance de la Verité, qui est purement preschée en Angleterre & au Palatinat. Ce qui les a meu de faire venir Atlas, pour se descharger du Globe Terrestre entre les mains d'Alithie, c'est à dire la Verité, qui a choisy sa demeure en ceste Isle. Duquel Globe sortent les trois parties du Monde, asçavoir l'Europe, l'Asie, & l'Afrique, estans sommées par les Trompettes de la Verité, qui sont les Muses diuines, & par son Lieutenant Atlas, de venir apprendre d'Alithie, & de son Protecteur, le ROY de ceste Isle heureuse, le droit chemin de Salut, par lequel chacun doit aller consacrer son Ame à la gloire du Grand DIEV.

PREMIEREMENT parurent les Neuf Muses, habiliées en Religieuses ou Vestales, jouans de leurs instrumens: & chanterent toutes ensemble melodieusement ces vers devant le ROY:

Le Monde Te vient faire hommage,
Grand ROY de sa fertilité:
Puis qu'icy loge la Beauté,
Et l'Amour, l'Honneur de nostre aage,
[H2a] Il vient cercher la Verité
Chez Toy, ou son temple est planté.

Puis vient ATLAS, qui se plaignant de lassitude, dit; qu'ayant apprins d'Archimede, que si on luy donnoit vn point ferme, qu'il souleuroit ceste Machine, qui luy avoit tant donné de peine: et qu'estant las de la porter, aussy bien que

Hercules, qui l'avoit soulagé quelque temps; il estoit venu en ceste Isle, laquelle avoit ceste qualité requise, sinon elle mesme, au moins le doigt d'une Vierge incontaminée, qu'on appelloit ALITHIE, qui faisoit sa demeure en Angleterre. Sur lequel il l'avoit posé, & pour recognoissance en venoit remercier son Protecteur, le ROY de ceste Isle; luy promettant, que toutes les Nations de la Terre viendroiēt faire hommage à la VERITE, par laquelle le Monde subsiste; ainsy que les Pucelles avoient n'agueres chanté; lesquelles luy servoyent de guide en ce Royaume, desirans aussy de suivre leur Maistresse ALITHIE; ayant donné conge au fol Amour, pour se choisir ce docte ROY leur Moecenas.

AYANT dit ces paroles, il s'en retourna pres du Globe, ayant pris avec luy les Trois Muses, Vranie, Clio, & Terpsichore, qui chanterent ces paroles:

Sortez EVROPE la premire,
Puis que vostre ame a ia receu
Quelques rayons de la lumiere,
Que le Sainct Esprit a conceu.
Ammenez icy vos Princesses,
Pour en recevoir les adresses.

[H2b] AYANT finy, vne partie du Globe, ou estoit despeinte la Carte de l'EVROPE, s'ouvrit. D'ou l'on vit sortie vne Reyne, habillée comme les peintres ont depeint l'EVROPE, ayant avec elle cinq Princesses, ses Filles: qui se nommoyent, France, Espagne, Allemagne, Italie, & Grece; avec vng Admiral & sa femme (nommez l'Occean & la Mer Mediterranée) avec leurs vassaux; le Loire, le Boete, le Rhin, le Tibre, & Achelous; portant chacun, dans vne Corne d'Abondance, des fruits, qui croissent sur leurs rivages; desquels ilz vontfaire offrande a l'Espouse & l'Espoux: ayant premierement faict reverence à ceste Vierge, qui soustient le Monde. Ces Princesses avoyent chacune trois pages: comme la Françoise, vng Basque, vng bas Breton, & vng Lorrain: l'Espagnol, vng Portugois, vng Arragonois, & vn Catelan; l'Allemagne, vn Hongrois, vng Boheme, & vng Danois: l'Italie, vng Napolitain, vng Venitien, & vng Bargamasch: la Grece, vng Turc, vng Albanois, & vng Bulgarois: chacun habillé a la façon de son pays, & portans en leur main chacun vn flambeau. L'offrande estant faite avec vng air, que l'on chanta, les Porte-flambeaux dancerent l'avant-ballet.

PVIS ATLAS appella les Princes. Qui sortirent richement vestus à la façon de leurs Royaumes, & dancerent le grand ballet avec leurs Princesses. Et s'estans retirez a part. Atlas prist trois aultres Muses, Calliope, Melpomene, & Erato, & les fist chanter au pres du Globe ces vers: [H3a]

Sortez, Reyne, de qui les yeux
Ont veu plus cler que les Estoilles;
Mais maintenant plus tenebreux,
Que ne sont les nuits eternelles.
Venez cercher vostre Clarté
Dans le puy de la VERITÉ.

Incontinent l'on vit sortir la Reyne ASIE, sans faire la reverence à Alithie, non plus que les Princesses ses filles, qui la suivoyent, nommées Syrie, Palestine, Mesopotamie, Caldée & Assyrie: vestues toutes comme l'on a accoustumé en leurs regions. Seulement les deux derniers differoyent. Car l'une estoit habillée

richement d'ung costé, & de l'autre pauvrement, et se nommoit Arabie: l'autre estoit à demy Mede, à demy Perse. Leur Admiral marchoit apres: quel on appelloit le Golfe de Bengale, avec ses deux femmes, la Mer Rouge & la Mer Caspie, suyvies de leurs vassaux; le Tigre, l'Inde, le Gange, l'Euphrate, le Iourdain, le Iadoc, & le Tanais; qui apporterent aussy des offrandes des fruits de leurs contrées. Les pages de ces Princesses suivirent; chacune en ayant trois, habillez à la Moscovite, à la Tartare, à l'Hotomane, à l'Indienne, à la Iuifue, à la Samaritaine, à l'Hircinie, à la Natolie, à l'Idumee, à l'Egitiaque, à la Scythie, à la Parthe, à l'Hircanie, à la Bythinie, à la Phrigienne, Dorique, Ionique & Corinthe, a la Licaonie , Pamphile & Cilicie. Car chacun avoit son habit particulier, & portoit vne torche, avec laquelle ils dancerent leur advant-ballet, (apres que les fleuves eurent fait l'offrande) lequel fuit suivy du grand bal-[H3b] let des Princes avec les Princesses, selon la Musique & la façon de dancer de leurs pays. Ce qui donna du plaisir extreme aux spectateurs.

ET S'ESTANS retirez, ATLAS prit les trois dernieres Muses, & s'en alla querir l'autre Royne, la faisant appeller avec cest air:

Sortez, AFFRIQVE monstrueuse
En erreurs plus qu'en animaux,
Et cerchez en ceste Isle heureuse
Le repos à tous vos travaux.
C'est icy que la VERITE
Veut que son temple soit planté.

Soudain l'on vit sortir l'AFFRIQVE, habillée d'aultre sorte que les precedentes Reynes, & suivie de 4. Princesses ses filles, asçavoir Barbarie, Numidie, Libye, Ethiopie, qui toutes oublierent à faire la reverence à ALITHIE: reservé la dernicre, femme du Prestre Ian: avec leur Admiral, l'Occean Atlantique & Etiopique freres encor à marier; menans leur vassaux, qui sont le Nil, le Zambere, le Niger, & l'Agaise, qui sont aussy chargez le leur Abondance, à l'imitation de ceux quiles devancent: suivis des pages, qui marchent avec des flambeaux, & habillez à la Bresilienne, à la Madagascar, à la Guinée, à la Tunes, à la Fez, à la facon d'Algier, des Amazonnes, à la Sicilienne, à la Sardinienne, à la Moravie & à la Mozambique. Lesquels dancerent aussy leur Antibalet. Qui furent suyvis de leurs Maistres, apres l'advertissement d'ATLAS.

ET AYANT dancé le grand Balet, les MVSES [H4a] chanterent cest air, trois à trois, à la persuasion d'ALITHIE, se tournans vers les trois Reynes:

DISANT:

Quittez vos anciennes querelles,
Vous Princes & Princesses belles,
Pour mieux plaire à la Verité.
Accordez vous tous trois ensemble,
Reynes, soubz qui le Monde tremble,
Et laissez l'opiniastreté.

II.

Imitez ce ROY debonnaire,
Qui a tiré en Angleterre
Le pure service divin,

Brusiez dans le feu de son zele
Ceste religion nouvelle
De Mahomet & de Iupin.

III.

Vous Empires & Republiques,
Amenez tous vos heretiques
Aux pieds de ceste VERITE.
Affin qu'ayant sa cognoissance
Ilz soynt touchez de Repentance,
Et recherchent la Pureté.

CHOIR

Vous Affrique, Europe, & Asie,
Delaissez vostre Idolatrie,
[H4b] Pour recognoistre l'Eternel.
Il nous concede ceste grace,
Qu'il a choysy en ceste place
Son sacré temple & son Autel.

Ce qu'estant achevé, toutes ces Roynes, Princesses, Mers, Fleuves, & Nations estranges, se tournans devers ALITHIE, l'adorerent comme en dançant. Soudain ATLAS les remercie, d'avoir quitté le monde, qui le chargoit si fort à cause de leurs pechez, qui est vng insupportable fardeau. Et lors soudain le MONDE s'ouvrant en deux, & disparoissant, l'on vit comme vn PARADIS: au devant du quel estoit vng Ange avec vne Espée flambãte & vne teste de mort à ses pieds: mais la Verité assise au milieu de plusieurs Estoilles, Anges & Cherubins. Qui avec l'armonie de Violes, de Luths, & de Voix, inviterent ces Roynes & leur suite, d'entrer en leur PARADIS, avec ces paroles:

Que ceux, à qui la Repentance
Et la Foy ont touché le coeur,
Et luy ont donné cognoissance,
Que IESVS CHRIST est leur Sauveur:
Qu'ilz ne redoutent point la mort,
Pour entrer en cest heureux port.

Ce qu'ayant entendu ces Nations, apres avoir derechef adoré la Verité; Atlas & les Neuf Muses les conduirent en ce Paradis, au son de la haute Musique: d'ou desplaça ceste Espée de feu & ceste mort. Puis le Paradis se fermant, chacun se retira.

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