

NAMES AND NAMING IN BEN JONSON'S *EPIGRAMMES*:  
PERFORMING THE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

NAMES AND NAMING IN BEN JONSON'S *EPIGRAMMES*:  
PERFORMING THE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

By

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## ABSTRACT

This study will discuss and seek to clarify the significance of Ben Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes*, as published in his 1616 folio edition of the *Workes*. My central argument here is that Jonson's use of names in this text is an integral part of an effort to preform a social performance. Jonson, in accordance with the Christian humanist view that poetry should morally edify its reader, attempts to modify the thought and behavior of an anticipated reader by disseminating an ideologically influenced interpretation of ordinary social phenomena -- a social performance -- in his poetry.

Jonson's repeated use of names in the "Epigrammes" will be read as reflecting a commitment to both confirm and conform to a Christian mythos which incorporates and services a dichotomous view of reality. At its most basic level, my paper will show that Jonson dichotomizes his collection of *Epigrammes* by giving names as a reward to some subjects and attributing mock-names as punishments to others. From this observation I will argue that for Jonson the name acts as a cornerstone of an interpretation of a social performance that has religious, political, cultural and personal implications.

The merit of this study is that it places Jonson's use of names in an expansive context. Criticism to date on the subject has treated names only as a means to show that the collection possesses a unity of form and function. In this study Jonson's use of names is not looked upon as an isolated event whose significance is strictly limited to the text of the *Epigrammes*. Historical, sociological and psychological aspects of naming are discussed and related to naming in Jonson's *Epigrammes*. By incorporating materials from a number of disciplines the study allows the religious and political significances of the action of naming to be fully appreciated. Such an approach to the subject of naming in the *Epigrammes* has never been attempted. In the end, the true value of this study is that affirms that naming is a vital form of expression in Jonson's poetic art.

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## INTRODUCTION

In *The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry*, Sara J. van den Berg notes that in Ben Jonson's book of *Epigrammes* published in the 1616 folio edition of his *Workes*, "repetition is not merely a trait but its central complex action."<sup>1</sup> The unity and cohesion in Jonson's *Epigrammes* is fundamentally a product of the organizing power of the repetition of syntax, image, theme and argument. Of the repeated "actions" that organize the collection of one hundred and thirty-three epigrams perhaps the most obvious (besides the numbering scheme) is his deployment of names.

Each one of Jonson's *Epigrammes*, with a few notable exceptions, contains a name in its title. In all cases the name is either part of an address beginning with the word "to," or of an expository title beginning with the word "on." Occasionally the same name appears more than once in the collection. However, the names in the titles of the epigrams are usually unique.

The most important feature of Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes* is that they are noticeably of two types. On the one hand, approximately one half of the epigrams use proper personal names (Title, Christian name, surname) in their title. On the other hand, approximately half of the



## DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIONS IN JONSON'S *EPIGRAMMES*

### PRAISING

IV. TO KING JAMES  
 V. ON THE UNION  
 XIV. TO WILLIAM CAMDEN  
 XLV. TO THE LEARNED CRITIC  
 XXXII. TO JOHN DONNE  
 XXXV. TO KING JAMES  
 XXXVI. TO THE GHOST OF MARTIAL  
 XLIII. TO ROBERT EARLE OF SALISBURY  
 LL. TO KING JAMES  
 LV. TO FRANCIS BEAUMONT  
 LX. TO WILLIAM LORD MOUNTAEGLE  
 LXIII. TO ROBERT EARLE OF SALISBURY  
 LXIV. TO THE SAME [above]  
 LXV. TO SIR HENRIE CARY  
 LXVIII. TO THOMAS EARLE OF SUFFOLKE  
 LXXIV. TO THOMAS LORD CHANCELOR  
 LXXX. ON LUCY COUNTESSE OF BEDFORD  
 LXXXIX. TO ELIZABETH COUNTESSE OF RUTLAND  
 LXXXIXA. TO LUCY COUNTESSE OF BEDFORD  
 LXXXV. TO SIR HENRY GOODYERE  
 LXXXVI. TO THE SAME [above]  
 LXXXIX. TO EDWARD ALLEN  
 XCI. TO SIR HORACE VERE  
 XCIII. TO SIR JOHN RADCLIFFE  
 XCV. TO LUCY, COUNTESSE OF BEDFORD, WITH MR. DONNES SATYRES  
 XCV. TO SIR HENRIE SAVILE  
 XCV. TO JOHN DONNE  
 XCV. TO SIR THOMAS ROE  
 XCIX. TO THE SAME [above]  
 CII. TO WILLIAM EARLE OF PEMBROKE  
 CII. TO LADY MARY WROTH  
 CIV. TO SUSAN COUNTESSE OF MONTGOMERY  
 CV. TO MARY LADY WROTH  
 CV. TO SIR EDWARD HERBERT  
 CIV. TO TRUE SOULDIERES  
 CX. TO SIR HENRY NEVIL  
 CX. TO CLEMONT EDMONDS, ON HIS CAESARS Commentaries observed, and translated  
 CXI. TO THE SAME; ON THE SAME [above]  
 CXIII. TO SIR THOMAS OVERBURY  
 CXIV. TO MRS. PHILIP SYDNEY  
 CXV. TO SIR WILLIAM JEPHSON  
 CXIX. TO RAPH SHELTON  
 CXXI. TO BENJAMIN RUDYERD  
 CXXII. TO THE SAME [above]  
 CXXIII. TO THE SAME [above]  
 CXXV. TO SIR WILLIAM UNVEDALE  
 CXXV. TO HIS LADY, THEN MRS. CARY  
 CXXVII. TO ESME, LORD D'AUBIGNY  
 CXXVIII. TO WILLIAM ROE  
 CXXX. TO ALPHONSO FERRABOSCO, on his Booke  
 CXXXI. TO THE SAME  
 CXXXII. TO MR. JOSUAH SYLVESTER

### ELEGIES

XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER  
 XXV. ON SIR JOHN ROE  
 XXXII. ON SIR JOHN ROE  
 XXXIII. TO THE SAME [above]  
 XL. ON MARGARET RATCLIFFE  
 XLV. ON MY FIRST SONNE  
 LXX. TO WILLIAM ROE  
 CXX. EPITAPH ON S.P. A CHILD OF G. EL. CHAPPEL  
 CXXIV. EPITAPH ON ELIZABETH L.J.

### OTHER GESTURES

I. TO THE READER  
 II. TO MY BOOKE  
 III. TO MY BOOKE-SELLER  
 IX. TO ALL, TO WHOM I WRITE  
 XXXIV. OF DEATH  
 LXXX. OF LIFE AND DEATH  
 CL. INVITING A FRIEND TO SUPPER  
 CXXXII. ON THE FAMOUS VOYAGE

### DISPRAISING

VI. TO ALCHEMISTS  
 VII. ON THE NEW HOT-HOUSE  
 VIII. ON A ROBBERY  
 X. TO MY LORD IGNORANT  
 XI. ON SOME-THING, THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE  
 XII. ON LIEUTENANT SHIFF  
 XIII. TO DOCTOR EMPIRICK  
 XV. ON COURT-WORME  
 XVI. TO BRAYNE-HARDE  
 XVII. TO MY MEERE ENGLISH CENSURER  
 XIX. ON SIR COD THE PERFUMED  
 XX. TO THE SAME SIR COD  
 XXI. ON REFORMED GAMSTER  
 XXIV. TO THE PARLIAMENT  
 XXV. ON SIR VOLUPTUOUS BEAST  
 XXVI. ON THE SAME BEAST  
 XXVIII. ON DON SURLY  
 XXX. TO SIR ANNUAL TILTIER  
 XXX. TO PERSON GUILTY  
 XXXI. ON BRANCK THE USURER  
 XXXVIII. ON CHEV'TRILL THE LAWYER  
 XXXVIII. TO PERSON GUILTY  
 XXXIX. ON OLD COLT  
 XL. ON GYPSEE  
 XLII. ON GILES AND JONE  
 XLIII. ON CHIFFE, BRANCKS THE USURER'S KINSMAN  
 XLV. TO SIR LUCKLESS WOO-ALL  
 XLVIII. TO THE SAME [above]  
 XLVIII. ON MUNGREL ESQUIRE  
 XLIX. TO PLAY-WRIGHT  
 L. TO SIR COD  
 LII. TO CENSORIOUS COURTLING  
 LII. TO OLD-END GATHERER  
 LIV. ON CHEV'TRIL  
 LV. ON POET-APE  
 LV. ON BAIDES, AND USURERS  
 LVII. TO GROOME IDIOT  
 LIX. ON SPIES  
 LXI. TO FOOL, OR KNAVE  
 LXII. TO FINE LADY WOULD-BEE  
 LXV. TO MY MUSE  
 LXVIII. ON PLAY-WRIGHT  
 LXIX. TO PERTINAX COB  
 LXX. ON COURT-PARRAT  
 LXXII. TO COURT-LING  
 LXXII. TO FINE GRAND  
 LXXV. ON LIPPE, THE TEACHER  
 LXXVII. ON ONE THAT DESIRED ME NOT TO NAME HIM  
 LXXVIII. TO HORNET  
 LXXX. TO PROULE THE PLAIGERARY  
 LXXXII. ON CASHIERED CAPT. SURLY  
 LXXXII. TO A FRIEND  
 LXXXVIII. ON CAPTAIN HAZARD THE CHEATER  
 LXXXVIII. ON ENGLISH MOUNSIEUR  
 XC. ON MILL, MY LADIES WOMAN  
 XCII. THE NEW CREE  
 XCIII. ON THE NEW MOTION  
 C. ON PLAY-WRIGHT  
 CIV. TO CAPTAYNE HUNGRY  
 CXII. TO A WEAK GAMSTER IN POETRY  
 CXV. ON THE TOWNES HONEST MAN  
 CXVII. ON GROVNE  
 CXVIII. ON GLUT  
 CXXIX. TO NAME

Epigrammes are marked by descriptive and noticeably fictitious names. These fictitious names, moreover, are satirical. I will refer to the onomastic symbols in these names as "mock-names" to indicate the functional duality which is inherent in them. In figure one, on the next page, the two types of name in the collection are organized into two columns, one on the far right and the other on the far left of the page. Jonson's *Epigrammes* are, thus, dichotomized on the basis of names. The onomastic symbol, to the extent that it functions to dichotomize the collection, is invested with a differentiating power. Jonson uses the name not only to denote individuals but to group them into two separate camps.

In this thesis I will propose that Jonson uses the name as a means by which to organize and interpret the performance of his society. Moreover, I will propose that his deployment of names is a means by which he attempts to fashion a social performance for an anticipated reader. Jonson's *Epigrammes*, in this respect, should be read as being a vehicle by which Jonson inculcates his values, into his readers and, hence, into society. Jonson's vision of his role as a pedagogue, I believe, supports my reading. In his *Discoveries* Jonson writes,

I take this labour in teaching others, that they should not always to be taught, and I would bring

my precepts into practice for rules are ever of  
less force and value than experiments.(567)

To this end each epigram presents an example of how to behave in certain social moments. The model is simple, exemplary behavior is to be loved and praised and sinful behavior is to be aggressively reproached. Jonson's poetic discourse is to be committed his reader's memory and his value system inscribed in his reader's heart.

Some may find that in my reading of the *Epigrammes* I make Jonson out to be a dogmatist of sorts. If by this they mean that in my interpretation of the use of names in the *Epigrammes* I read Jonson as a man possessing great self-confidence and a deep concern for the ethical, spiritual and political well-being of the community, then I agree. However, the term dogmatist simplifies and overstates the self-assuredness that I interpret Jonson as possessing. Moreover, it should be noted, my discussion of Jonson is always aimed at providing explanations for the way he uses names as he does in the *Epigrammes*. Had I been focussing on a different aspect of these poems my view of Jonson may have been somewhat different.

In the first epigram in the collection Jonson addresses his reader:

PRay thee, take care, that tak'st my booke in hand,  
To reade it well: that is, to understand.(4)

The reader, here, is challenged to find out the meaning of Jonson's epigrams and to study their ethics and arguments. Moreover, the reader is also asked to be sympathetic to and accept the interpretation that Jonson offers. Thus, the reader's mind is to be engaged with the matter of the *Epigrammes* and criticism is to be withheld until the meaning of the text is absorbed. In this respect, Jonson's epigram to the reader is similar to other opening recommendations to readers in texts of this period. Usually these recommendations warn readers to understand the text before criticizing its matter. William Camden's note to the reader at the end of his *Preface* to his *Britannia* is a small masterpiece of such warnings: "Books take their doom from each Peruser's will, / Just as they think, they pass for good or ill." Just as Jonson anticipates a reader, he also anticipates the effects that reading his poetry will produce. Jonson aims to totally indoctrinate his reader. In his exposition on the function of the poet, in *Discoveries*, Jonson writes that a poet should show "wisdom in dividing," "reign in men's affections" and make men's minds "like the things he writes."<sup>2</sup> Jonson, I will argue, in keeping with this doctrine of the ends of poetry, uses names as part of a pedagogical endeavor to shape society and its performance.

Jonson's pedagogical use of names works to disseminate a politicized version of the Christian mythos. Thus, his poetic response to ordinary social phenomena appears in the guise of a providential interpretation. The deployment of names in the *Epigrammes* is directed by the values of Jonson's political-theology so that finally his use of names in the *Epigrammes* becomes part of the creation of a social performance in the mind's eye of his reader. The context in which Jonson uses the proper name and the mock-name is repeated, locking in the reward/punishment binary in the mind of the reader. In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* Stephen Greenblatt remarks that repetition was a fundamental technique of self-fashioning and social control in Elizabethan England. He writes that

To grasp the full import of this notion of repetition as self-fashioning, we must understand its relation to the culturally dominant notion of repetition as warning or memorial, an instrument of civility. In this view recurrent patterns exist in the history of individuals or nations in order to inculcate crucial moral values, passing them from generation to generation. Men are notoriously slow learners and, in their inherent sinfulness, resistant to virtue, but gradually, through repetition, the paradigms may sink in and responsible, God-fearing, obedient subjects may be formed.<sup>3</sup>

Greenblatt goes on to note that the repetition of catechisms and other social actions was used to enforce norms of behavior. Jonson's *Epigrammes*, with respect to the repetition of proper names and mock-names as symbols of

reward and punishment, participate in, and attempt to shape, a process of indoctrination similar to the one that Greenblatt describes. Indeed, in *Discoveries* Jonson recognizes the mental control that can be applied through repetition and advises practicing writers to apply it in their own work. He writes,

Repeat often what we have formerly written; which beside that it helps the consequence, and makes the juncture better, it quickens the heat of imagination, that often cools in the time of setting down, and gives new strength, as if it grew lustier by the going back...But the safest is to return to our judgement, and handle over again those things, the easiness of which might make them justly suspected.(566-567)

I have termed this process of indoctrination through repeated performance the "preforming of a social performance." Accordingly, the onomastic symbol is not confined to the role of either mimetic or iconic representation in the *Epigrammes*. Rather, Jonson's use of the name is aimed at creating a moral effect outside of the text of the *Epigrammes*.

The name in Jonson's *Epigrammes*, in addition to its differentiating power which we have already noted, possesses an element of magical potency. That is, the name has the power to *do* things. In the *Epigrammes* epistle of dedication, addressed to the Earl of Pembroke, Jonson makes the treatment of names his single most important task due to

the fact that he perceives names as possessing the ability to be transplanted in futurity:

I must expect at your Lo:[rdship's] hand, the protection of truth, and libertie, while you are constant to your own goodnesse. In thankes whereof, I returne you the honor of leading forth so many good and great names (as my verses mention of their better part) to their remembrance with posteritie.<sup>4</sup>

The name in this passage appears as a type of vessel in which the "goodness" of the person of the person who owns it is contained. Moreover, the name appears as a vehicle by which the virtues of an individual can be passed on through time. In Chapter Two I will show that the name has been construed historically as possessing magical powers by which people and things may be manipulated. In chapters three and four I will delineate the propagandistic elements of Jonson's providential interpretation of the social performance. In the next chapter I will outline and discuss the strengths and shortcomings of current studies of Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes*.

## I

Critical interest in names and naming in Jonson's *Epigrammes* has been remarkably slight considering the central importance of names in the text. At the time of this writing there has been no critical examination of the *Epigrammes* which devotes itself completely to this subject.

David Wykes's paper "Ben Jonson's 'Chast Booke'-- the 'Epigrammes'," published in 1969, is the first recognized attempt to discuss names and naming in terms of their being central to the form and function of the text. Wykes begins his short paper (it is ten pages long) by observing that

one might reasonably claim that the epigram is for Jonson a sort of 'name poem.' Names provide him with the themes on which to elaborate, and they contribute to the structure of the epigram as Jonson practiced it. The *Epigrammes* is a book of names, a directory of good and evil.<sup>1</sup>

Wykes's statement holds much promise, but the possibilities implied by this statement are not realized in his small paper. Wykes does, however, make several interesting observations concerning the use of names in the *Epigrammes*. He provides valuable speculations on the subject and offers a useful discussion of the continuity to be found in the historical use of name devices in literature. However,



Wykes never synthesizes these components into a comprehensive argument.

Wykes's failure to capitalize on the topic of naming as it pertains to the *Epigrammes* can be explained by the fact that he is chiefly interested in showing that the collection possesses a unity of form and function. Nonetheless, Wykes's thoughts on the subject of names and naming are valuable and demand to be reviewed.

Wykes's first points concerning Jonson's nominative epigrams are rudimentary. He notes that the use of names in the titles of the epigrams serves to link Jonson's epigrams with those of Martial, the first century Latin epigrammist and poet. This particular use of names is a means by which Jonson emulates one of his literary heroes, according to Wykes. More important is Wykes's discussion of how the name, "real" or "invented," functions in relation to the structure of the individual epigram. Wykes reads the epigrams in the collection as possessing two main kinds of geometric structures. He argues that the epigrams which use the invented names are structured like a triangle which points downward. The epigrams which use the names of real people, on the other hand, are structured like a triangle pointing upward.<sup>2</sup> For Wykes, the non-particularity and particularity of the invented and real names facilitate these two epigrammatic structures.

With regard to the satiric epigrams Wykes argues that the invented names in their title function

to undermine the security which the reader would have if their names were specific. By not being restricted to a particular person, the epigrams can claim wider importance. The suggestion is always present that the characteristics described are widespread in society, and that the typical epigram of censure is structured to reinforce this view.<sup>3</sup>

In pressing this idea further he points out that the "name-title...supplies the context" for the satirical epigram. He writes that "in this type of Jonsonian epigram, the generic nature of the name-title is instrumental in relating individual characteristics to society as a whole."<sup>4</sup> The encomiastic epigrams, which use the name of a specific person in their title, operate in the opposite fashion.

In the encomiastic epigrams the name in the title serves to signify that the person to whom the epigram refers is a "unique" individual.<sup>5</sup> The nature of this uniqueness and its relation to the actual name is not made entirely clear. Wykes, however, does make some worthwhile comments regarding the type of praise that appends to the persons named in the encomiastic epigrams. I will systematize these comments by categorizing them under four headings: *moral, social and political, psychological/anthropological* and *historical*. The division that I will be using here is not native to this paper. Wykes does not formally differentiate

between these aspects of naming. By organizing his discussion of names under these four headings I hope to advance his main thoughts concerning Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes* in a way that is accessible and easily digested. Moreover, by imposing these divisions I want to underline the idea that the scope and significance of the use of names in the *Epigrammes* is multifaceted.

Wykes makes two important comments concerning the moral importance of those who are named in the encomiastic epigrams. First, he notes that in these epigrams "the poem's hero is...one of the few vessels preserving the essence of Jonson's age of gold in a world from which all excellence has vanished."<sup>6</sup> Second, he notes that the "tendency for the subject of the eulogy to be the epitome of virtue suggests the techniques of emblem literature."<sup>7</sup> Wykes, however, fails to draw out this comparison between emblem literature and Jonson's *Epigrammes*. Mark Anderson, in his paper "Defining Society: The Function of Character Names in Ben Jonson's Early Comedies," does give some attention to this comparison. We will look at this paper shortly.

In terms of the sociological function of names and naming in the *Epigrammes*, Wykes tentatively suggests that the use of names may be linked to a certain ideological predisposition. He points out that

Jonson takes real care in these poems to guard himself against the charge of admiring appearance rather than the reality of merit...what he claims to admire is individual merit, which may have nothing to do with title, but which seems indissolubly linked to name, perhaps for interesting psychological reasons. The treatment of appearance and reality often turn on the name title disparity.<sup>8</sup>

Further, he notes that "it may be significant that many of the persons to whom such epigrams are addressed had only lately been ennobled, and thus Jonson could intimate that these titles were the reward of merit."<sup>9</sup> Wykes's discussion of the psychological aspects of the name and naming in the *Epigrammes* is also restricted to a few brief comments.

In terms of the psychological importance of the name Wykes writes that in reading Jonson's *Epigrammes*, "one does get the feeling that the quiddity of a thing resided somehow in its name"<sup>10</sup> He also points to the work of Ernst Cassirer and James Frazer to suggest that there are psychological theories concerning names and naming which might be related to the use of names in the *Epigrammes*. Wykes notes that in "primitive thought"<sup>11</sup> the name of a person can be used to exert control over that person and implies that Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes* may be interpreted as functioning in this manner.

On the historical dimensions of naming, Wykes notes that "classical literature sanctioned the use of name

devices, of course; the middle ages etymologized enthusiastically, and as Ernst R. Curtis says, 'the thing was later taken over by Humanism, the Renaissance and Baroque.'<sup>12</sup> Wykes's paper, although it lacks specificity and thoroughness, suggests both the importance and the complexity of the subject of names and naming in relation to Jonson's *Epigrammes*. Edward B. Partridge's "Jonson's *Epigrammes*: the Named and the Nameless" responds to the deficiencies of Wykes's paper and expands many of his points. However, Partridge, like Wykes, is mainly interested in locating a unity of form and function in the collection.

Partridge's paper, published in 1973, adds to Wykes's offerings but, according to its thesis, focuses mainly on the use of names in the encomiastic epigrams. Partridge, borrowing a passage from William Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, views Jonson's *Epigrammes* as creating a great society of "The noble Living and the noble Dead"<sup>13</sup> in which the great men of his society are made "exemplars for all time and not merely for the present."<sup>14</sup> The name, according to Partridge, is of prime importance to Jonson in this venture. He writes that the name is "a clear identification in a world where names mean reputation, and reputation means place and influence."<sup>15</sup> His discussion of the use of names

in the collection, like Wykes's, can be divided up into the four categories already created.

For Partridge, Jonson's use of names has a moral function in that they are used to reward and punish the subjects of his epigrams. He notes that bequeathing a name to a subject would "enshrine him forever in the House of Fame where exemplars of heroic virtue live."<sup>16</sup> Further, he asserts that the use of name allows Jonson to "vindicate his subjects to eternity."<sup>17</sup> Moreover, referring to Jonson's poem *An Epistle to Master John Selden* (Underwood XIV.) prefixed to John Selden's *Titles of Honour*, he notes that Jonson's praise of names was aimed to "induce them [his subjects] to live up to the image he drew of them."<sup>18</sup> Consequently, Partridge proposes that Jonson's use of names in his epigrams have a didactic function.

Partridge identifies the didactic function of the *Epigrammes* as over-riding all differences among Jonson's subjects. In this respect he notes that

Jonson uses the great, as he uses lesser men, as mirrors or models of ideal culture. The great may appear, as Marvell later said, 'polished to the utmost perfection,' but all will only be a 'Mirrour for others,' not themselves to look in. An actual person becomes exemplary without becoming merely abstract or idealized.<sup>19</sup>

his position concerning the didactic function of the Jonsonian epigram is clarified by the observation that there is a connection between names and deeds in the *Epigrammes*.

He notes that "Name and deed can give birth to good deeds in others."<sup>20</sup> In addition, he notes that "In time, by a kind of virgin birth, good deeds can create a good name where none existed before, though Jonson usually likes to think that the word of the poet makes sure the good is to be known and therefore known to be great."<sup>21</sup> The political consideration that is manifest here is brought out by Partridge more clearly later in this paper. Before we look at this, however, the moral aspects of the use of names in the poems of dispraise must be considered.

Partridge reads the names that Jonson uses in the titles of his poems of dispraise to be "typifying and demeaning."<sup>22</sup> Thus, where the names of the persons discussed in the epigrams of praise are used to create a positive moral effect on both the person named and on his audience of readers, the use of names in the epigrams of dispraise is seen to have a negative effect. This understanding of the use of names is exemplified in Partridge's discussion of the three uses of names in the *Epigrammes*. He argues that Jonson uses names to

(1). deny a man individuality that necessarily goes along with his having a particular name by seeing him only as a metonymic type.

(2). deny the victim even the typifying name and to leave him not merely classless, but unidentifiable. This strategy, he notes, can have a deadly power.

(3). create a talismanic or magical effect.<sup>23</sup>

Partridge's paper mainly concerns itself with the moral applications of naming. His thesis, remember, is that Jonson is involved in creating an ideal society, a heroic society in the *Epigrammes*.

Don E. Wayne, in "Poetry and Power in Ben Jonson's *Epigrammes*: The Naming of 'Facts' or the Figuring of Social Relations", disagrees with Partridge to the extent that he believes

that Jonson essentially tried to record what he observed. But what he observed was not a 'great society' of the virtuous and the noble; rather it was a society in which virtue, nobility, and all such values were being reduced to a reliable and universal measure.<sup>24</sup>

Wayne, however, seems to have taken Partridge's views to an extreme. He builds his objection to Partridge around a small portion of Partridge's argument in which he suggests that Jonson admired and attempted to emulate humanist scholars (historians and translators) who professed the final cause of their studies to be the revealing of factual truth.



Partridge does take account of idealistic tendencies in Jonson's *Epigrammes*. Thus, his thought on the social-political aspects of names and naming in the collection is that "Naming, then, is one of his [Jonson's] ways of giving poetic life to the world of his *Epigrammes* and of blazoning for all time that new aristocracy he is proposing [a moral and intellectual intelligentsia.]"<sup>25</sup> Wayne's point adds to this statement by noting that this intellectual intelligentsia is distinguished by certain quantitative criteria.

Like Wykes, Partridge uses the anthropological thought of Ernst Cassirer to supplement his position. Whereas Wykes uses Cassirer's writing on the name in primitive thought, Partridge uses a quotation that underlines the power of the name in mythical thought. Cassirer's position is worth repeating here since it concerns itself with the power that may be invested in the name. In this way it relates directly to my thesis, that Jonson preforms a social performance through the deployment of names in the *Epigrammes*. Cassirer writes,

in 'mythical thinking' 'word and name do not designate and signify, they are and act...And it is most of all the proper name that is bound by mysterious ties to the individuality of an essence. Even today we often feel the particular awe of the proper name -- this feeling is not outwardly appended to a man, but is in some way a part of him.'<sup>26</sup>

The "essentialism" which Cassirer finds in mythical thought also exists in Jonson's understanding of names according to Mark Anderson's paper "Defining Society: The Function of Character Names in Ben Jonson's Early Comedies."


Anderson's paper, published in 1981, has been entirely neglected in the discourse that is beginning to develop concerning the use of names and naming in Ben Jonson's *Epigrammes*. This paper, as its title indicates, is primarily concerned with the use of names in Jonson's early comedies. However, Anderson's points can be translated to a discussion of the use of names in the *Epigrammes*. Anderson remarks that the character names in Jonson's plays have three functional facets: names are related to the action of the play, they provide a "multi-leveled perspective" on the story the plays dramatize and they are used as a means of "revelation and exposition."<sup>27</sup> He points out that names in Renaissance drama could either be pleasurable or didactic, in accordance with the Horatian principle that poetry is meant to "teach and delight." The didactic use of names, according to Anderson, treats names as being "polysemous" in meaning so that an "allegorical approach" may be taken in reading them. This way of using names is in keeping with both a hermeneutics informed by Platonic dualism and the Renaissance idea of hieroglyphics, according to Anderson.

In Anderson's view, Jonson's Platonic concept of names allows the meaning of the name to be effectively doubled. He notes that "Jonson constructs his dramatic artifice so that concrete personages embody abstract verities not only in their action, but immediately in their names."<sup>28</sup> Hence, concerning Jonson's use of names in *Every Man Out of His Humour*, he writes that "character names provide a revelation of the truths that are accessible to reason...Jonson's emphasis on names extends even into the conceptual basis for the action."<sup>29</sup> Anderson also provides a comparison between Jonson's use of names in his *Epigrammes* and the emblem literature of the period.

In comparing the epigrams with emblem literature Anderson argues that Jonson "uses the form of the emblem for the conceptual basis of his invented characters."<sup>30</sup> This leads him to note that

Jonson manipulates his characters as moral symbols who repeatedly present their truths in changing contexts. Name and moral content, motto and subscript, remain constant, but one action-picture succeeds another in presenting didactic tableaux.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, he writes that in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels* "the resolution..is predicated on the recognition of the character's names as revelations of their moral natures."<sup>32</sup> In my study of Jonson's use of names and naming in the *Epigrammes* I intend to synthesize the finding of these three



papers to argue that Jonson fashions, or preforms, a social performance for a prospective reader. Names and naming, I will argue, are at the heart of this project. Thus, Jonson's use of names is not just symptomatic of an ideology to which he conforms. Rather, names are a means by which an ideology, in the form a social performance, is to be constructed and maintained by Jonson. Thus, by deploying names in a manner which affirms a certain vision of the social performance, Jonson fashions himself as an ideologue.

We must now sum up the main ideas concerning Jonson's use of names and naming in the *Epigrammes* as they appear in these articles. There are six main points to be made. First, Jonson uses names in conjunction with a moral purpose which is primarily pedagogical in its intent. Second, the use of names in this pedagogical endeavor favours a learned, politically powerful and materially privileged element in society by arguing that they are also spiritually privileged. Third, Jonson's notions of names holds to a form of essentialism which presupposes a dualistic philosophical schema. Fourth, this type of essentialism is rooted in man's primeval past. The emergence of writing and the emergence of a dualistic conception of the word, subsequently, are interwoven. Fifth, the use of names is construed phylogenically with the addition of anthropological critiques of language which

recognize that in "primitive thought" the name is synonymous with power and can be used as a form of controlling interpersonal relations. Thus, a sixth point can be added which would construe this matter ontogenetically in order to formulate the view that name and identity are mingled in a highly seductive and conductive way.

My analysis of Jonson's use of names and naming will necessarily touch upon all of these considerations. I will do so, however, not with the intention of privileging any one aspect of Jonson's use of names. All these aspects of naming should be considered as being simultaneously operative in an immediate and highly unsystematized way. Thus, I want to simultaneously acknowledge with John Donne that "Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone" and with the French historian Fernand Braudel that "Everything is connected."

## II

Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes* suggests that his understanding of names was shaped by both Platonic philosophy and the Scriptures. There are marked similarities between the Platonic and Christian conceptions of names so that combining the two paradigms would have posed little difficulty for the Renaissance mind. The paradigm of naming that is found in Scripture, like the Platonic conception of naming, is founded on the idea that the name of a person or thing corresponds to the essence which distinguishes that person or thing from all others -- a unique signified. The Catholic Encyclopedia's discussion of the Christian concept of naming notes that

Among ancient peoples generally, a name was considered the identification of the essence, nature, or function of an individual, rather than merely a distinguishing appellation...this relation between a name and the function or significance of the bearer is illustrated by the use of the word "name" itself to signify the presence or power of God whose nature or inner being was knowable.<sup>1</sup>

In *Language -- The Unknown: an Initiation into Linguistics* Julia Kristeva notes that

The interest of Hebrew thinking in names is also manifested by the search for the motivation of names: it is found in a supposed *etymology*. For instance 'She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.' (Genesis 2:23)<sup>2</sup>

The idea of there being a relation between the name of a person or thing and its essence is also central to Platonic thinking about language.

Julia Kristeva notes that, according to the Platonic paradigm of language presented in the *Cratylus*,

To speak was to carefully differentiate things by *expressing* them, by giving them names. *Naming* became the differential *act* that *elicited* speech, because it located this speech (along with its subject) in front of things. (author's emphasis)<sup>3</sup>

In addition, Kristeva notes that the name for Plato "revealed the essence of things, for it resembled them. The name/thing relation is one of *semblance* or even of imitation.<sup>4</sup> The conventional use of a name, according to Plato, is left to the "legislator." Kristeva notes that the legislator establishes the name by knowing the form or the ideal matrix of the thing. Thus, in Plato's dialogue Socrates says to Hermogenes, his interlocutor, "It is not then the province of every man Hermogenes, to establish a name, but of a certain artificer of names, and this as it seems, is the custom-introducer, who is the most rare of artificers among men."<sup>5</sup> In the Scriptures, of course, Adam fulfils the role of the legislator under the supervision of God:

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living

creature, that was the name thereof. (Genesis 2:19)6

It is by applying names to things that man comes to participate in God's creation and enters into a dialogue with God himself.

The idea that there exists a bond linking a person's name to his character, by whatever mechanism, is psychologically and sociologically of the utmost importance. From a psychoanalytic perspective this connection is read as being the result of a confusion of word with the thing itself so that word and thing become inseparably connected in the psyche. Thus, Lacan writes,

Through the word -- already a presence made of absence -- absence itself comes to giving itself a name in that moment of origin whose perpetual recreation Freud's genius detected in the play of the child. And from this pair (of sounds) modulated presence and absence -- a coupling of the tracing in the sound of the single and the broken line of the mantic *kwa* of China would also serve to constitute -- there is born a particular language's universe of sense in which the universe of things will come into line.

Through that which takes on body only by being the trace of a nothingness and whose support from that moment on cannot be impaired, the concept, saving the duration of what passes by, engenders the thing.

For it is still not enough to say that the concept is the thing itself, as any child can demonstrate against the scholar. It is the world of words which creates the world of things -- the things originally confused in the hic and nunc of the all-in-the-process-of-becoming -- by giving its concrete being to their essence, and its ubiquity to what has been from everlasting.7



This theoretical discussion is contracted upon clinical observations made by Lacan which point to the ability of the word to act as a locus for erotic energy. He notes,

The Word is in fact a gift of Language, and language is not immaterial. It is a subtle body, but body it is. Words are trapped in all the corporal images which captivate the subject...the Word may become an Imaginary, or even Real object in the subject and, as such, swallow up in more than one respect the function of Language.<sup>8</sup>

The confusion of word and thing that Lacan points to in *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* empowers language and, especially, the name to be used as a way of controlling things outside the self.

In *Naming and Addressing: A Sociolinguistic Study*, Max K. Adler argues that nominalization is a means by which man has historically felt it possible to control things outside himself and to be controlled by them. Adler writes,

What, then, is the purpose of naming? 'A name does several things. First it identifies, denotes and signifies something, comes to be descriptive of it, and thus takes it out of the realm of the unknown or amorphous. A nameless thing is something vague, incomplete, uncanny' (Hertzler, 1965, p 270 f.). But names do much more than that: they endow their bearers with certain characteristics, they can exert their magic on others, they can become dangerous when known by an enemy, -- and all that not only in primitive societies but also in the sophisticated societies in which we live.

To endow names with mystical and magical powers is a belief that goes back many thousands of years. 'Early man regarded words as mystical forces, much as later people like the Jews and Arabs regarded numbers as pregnant with hidden meanings. A word is the image of the thing it

represents; it is also so closely identified with the thing itself that not to have a name is not to exist...to know the name of a person is to have power over him. Even today in some European countries care is taken to avoid mentioning the name of a person in close connexion with a word of ill omen. In the experience of all of us, thought that crystalizes in words becomes an incantation, and the words exercise a profound influence on the general and particular behavior of the person who utters them. They have become something which transcends in power the source from which they sprang.' (Guillaume, 1938, p.20). You cannot divide the name from the person. 'The power of words has been recognized by every student of primitive and modern cultures. In all early cultures the name is thought to be a definite part of the person or thing to which it is attached... among primitive peoples the name is considered the most essential part of the person. The real name is not to be exposed to strangers who may use it in a magical manner.' (Young, 1931, p. 112).

Proper names are not words attached to the skin of a person. 'A proper name accumulates the internal forces, it is a latent reservoir of energies, which can, so to speak, easily explode, and their discharge is not without dangers. That is the reason why the revelation of the proper name gives the operator all power over the being whom he names by his real name' (Garnot, 1948, p.469).<sup>9</sup>

Harold R. Isaacs, in *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* goes further than Adler in discussing what names do in societies. Isaacs argues that the name constitutes a basic symbol of group identity. In *Idols of the Tribe*, Isaacs takes the position that group identity is "part of a cluster of cells making up the ego identity, sharing elements and common membranes with...the individual personality."<sup>10</sup> Isaacs writes that

Individual or personal names also usually serve as badges of the basic group identity. To be sure, the personal name remains primarily the symbol of the single and unique person who bears it. Indeed, it establishes the fact of his existence. To be without a name is almost not to be. 'Nameless fear' is worse than any other kind of fear. The penalty of namelessness imposed on bastardy in our culture is one of the heaviest short of death a group can lay. Names, like social norms, provide a minimum security, the bearings that every individual has to have around him or else be hopelessly lost.<sup>11</sup>

Anthony Calvello in his 1983 dissertation called *Lived Body and Personal Name: a Philosophic Description of the Constitutive Structures of a Person's Sense of Identity* holds a view that is similar to Isaac's. Calvello writes, "As named, I can be 'more' than human; I can become a person."<sup>12</sup> For Isaacs this phenomenon is explained by the group response that a name evokes. Isaacs writes,

For the uttering of the name itself can and does serve as an instant signal for behavior based on group affiliation, producing its almost automatic response, open or closed, welcoming or rebuffing, including or excluding the stranger who up to that instant has done nothing else but tell you who he is."<sup>13</sup>

Jonson's dichotomization of his *Epigrammes* into two camps via the deployment of two recognizably different types of names suggests the action of group inclusion and exclusion that Isaacs relates to the name and the action of naming. Jonson's use of the name for this purpose is hardly original. Jonson would have found such a paradigm of naming readily available in Scripture.

The idea of using the name as a basis of including or excluding individuals from the protection of the group is enshrined in the Scriptures. More importantly though, throughout Scripture the name is linked to ideas of reward and punishment. Thus, in Proverbs we read that "The memory of the just is blest: but the name of the wicked shall rot."(Proverbs 11:7) In Isaiah we read "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off."(Isaiah 56:5) In the Gospel of Luke it is promised to the holy that "...your names are written in heaven."(Luke 10:20). And in The Book of Revelations we read that

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.  
(Rev. 5:5)

Further on St. John the Divine reports,

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.  
(Rev. 20:12)

Jonson's book of *Epigrammes* operates in an analogous fashion: the good are reserved proper names and those who do not do good are symbolically placed in perdition by use of

the mock-name. In this respect in *XLIV. ON CHUFFE, BANCKS THE USURER'S KINSMAN* Jonson writes,

CHuffe, lattely rich in name, in chattels, goods,  
 And rich in issue to inherit all,  
 Ere blacks were bought for his owne funerall,  
 Saw his race approach the blacker floods:  
 He meant they thither should make swift repaire,  
 When he made him executor, might be heire. (20)

In this epigram both the state of the Chuffe's soul as well as the state of Chuffe's inheritance are in doubt. Jonson implies that, like his kinsman the usurer, Chuffe's soul is heading towards death (symbolized by the reference to the river *Styx*), rather than the eternal life promised by the resurrection.

The analogy between poet and God, which forms the greater significance of the book of *Epigrammes*, casts Jonson in the role of a mediating God doling out justice to his creations. The Biblical paradigm of the name, which Jonson uses in the *Epigrammes*, can be found with hardly any significant modifications in William Camden's discussion of names in *Remains Concerning Britain*.

William Camden, Jonson's teacher at Westminster School and later a close friend, was a thoroughly progressive humanist scholar of the late English Renaissance. His *Britannia* (1586), a work which comprises a chorographical description of the British Isles, is a text that consciously attempts to avoid "fable" and to strive for

"truth and fidelity."<sup>14</sup> His *Remains Concerning Britain* (1605, 1614, 1623)<sup>15</sup> was created as a miscellaneous collection of material which did not find its way into *Britannia*. R.D. Dunn calls the *Remains* "a guide to how an educated Elizabethan viewed a wide range of topics."<sup>16</sup> It was used widely in its time as a source book after 1605, according to Dunn. Moreover, Dunn notes that Camden's chapter on names "remained the authority on their subject until the mid-nineteenth century."<sup>17</sup>

Camden's endeavor to describe and present the history of his country in *Britannia* inevitably led him to the consideration of names. Names are a constant preoccupation for Camden in *Britannia*, consequently, names are also considered at length in *Remains*. In effect, Camden set out to rediscover the origins of his nation's civilization. For Camden this meant linking his nation's present to the definitive moment in his nation's history: the Roman occupation of the island. Thus, in his *Preface* to the 1610 English version of *Britannia*, he writes,

Truly it was my project and purpose to seeke, rake out, and free from darknesse such places as *Caesar*, *Tacitus*, *Ptolemee*, *Antonine* the Emperor, *Notitia Provinciarum* and other antique writers have specified and TIME hath overcast with mist and darknesse by extinguishing, altering, and corrupting their old true names.<sup>18</sup>

In *Remains*, Camden presents a brief discussion of names which primarily construes them in terms of their function.

Nevertheless, Camden attributes a magical potency to the name:

Names called in Latine *Noma quasi Notamina*, were first imposed for the distinction of persons, which wee now call Christian names: After for difference of families which we call Surnames, and have beene especially respected as whereon the glorie and credite of men is grounded, and by which the same is conveyed to the knowledge of posteritie.<sup>19</sup>

Jonson's *Epigrammes* use names in accordance with this paradigm. In this text names act as highly charged symbols which relate identity to social behaviors and to eternal rewards, which correspond to these behaviors. Thus, in the *Epigrammes* the reward of merit is grounded in Jonson's praising of the name of the subject. The proper name in this context becomes a symbol of acceptance and reward itself. The punishment of vice is symbolized by the mock-name which Jonson attributes to his subject.

A study of the list of mock-names in figure one shows that these names have the qualities of what are commonly known now as "nick-names". In *Remains*, Camden makes an interesting note concerning the nick-name and its use. He writes,

Yet to these single names [proper names] were adjoynd oftentimes other names, as Cognomia, or Sorbriquetts, as the French call them, and By-names, or Nicke-Names, as we terme them, if that word be indifferent to good and bad, which still did die with the bearer, and never descended to posteritie.<sup>20</sup>

Unlike the proper name which lives on in "posteritie," for an unspecified number of generations, the nick-name dies with its owner. This is especially true of the malevolent, tendentious nick-name; Camden notes later that "Many names also given in merriment for By-names or Nicke-names have continued to posteritie."<sup>21</sup> It requires only a shift in emphasis to construe the malevolent nick-name as a symbol of death itself. This, I will argue, is exactly what Jonson does in his providential interpretation of the social performance.



### III

Ben Jonson's writing has been viewed traditionally as being philosophically inspired by Christian humanism; politically inclined towards a conservative position favoring the monarchy, order and propriety, and as artistically devoted to an appreciation of proportion and clarity. John S. Mebane writes, in *Renaissance Magic and the Return of the Golden Age*, that

Ben Jonson's neoclassicism is grounded firmly upon the moderate Christian humanism which was cultivated in England by scholars and educators such as Thomas More, Erasmus, Roger Ascham, John Cheke, and William Camden. Jonson's art is typically of this tradition in that he is concerned primarily with social and ethical problems, and his sense of civic duty and propriety is derived in large part from those Roman authors -- especially Horace, Virgil, Seneca, and Cicero -- whom he deeply revered.<sup>1</sup>

The high value that Jonson places on the handling of social and ethical problems is at the core of his thinking about poetry.

Above all else, Jonson perceived that the end of poetry was to communicate ideas in a forceful and convincing manner. Again and again in the *Discoveries* Jonson indicates that the conveyance of an argument grounded in reason is the most important aspect of poetry: "The common rhymers pour forth verses, such as they are, extempore, but there never

come[s] from them one sense worth the life of a day. A rhymmer and a poet are two things."(585) In a section concerning some of the errors of poets he writes,

Others there are that have no composition at all, but a kind of tuning and rhyming fall in what they write. It runs and slides and only makes a sound. Women's poets they are called, as you have women's tailors.

They write a verse as smooth, as soft, as cream, In which there is not torrent, nor scarce stream.

You may sound these wits, and find the depth of them, with your middle finger. They are cream-bowl- or but puddle-deep.(541)

Jonson is not usually interested in an evocation of feeling unrestrained by ethical purpose.<sup>2</sup>

Jonson's social and ethical thought was conditioned, according to Mebane, by Plato. Mebane notes that, like More, Jonson "reverenced" Plato as the "social theorist of *The Republic*. However, Mebane writes,

From the perspective of the early 1600s it was painfully obvious that the Golden Era predicted by Renaissance humanists from Erasmus through Spenser would never materialize, and Jonson was intensely aware of the limitations imposed upon reformers. From his later position in history Jonson could perceive, as Erasmus and More initially could not, that an insistence on the immediate relation between the individual soul and God would tend to destroy institutional authorities. Having witnessed revolutions led by religious and political radicals such as the Anabaptists of Munster, Jonson feared that if one fails to exercise rational control over one's personality, one may unleash powers that are bestial or Satanic, rather than those which are godlike. His conception of human nature is thus somewhat more pessimistic than that of many of the earlier

humanists, and his insistence upon adherence to the limitations and restraints of rational law is more rigorous. In his self-conscious adherence to authority and his fear of social innovation he is closer to Samuel Johnson or Jonathan Swift than to More or Erasmus.<sup>3</sup>

The dramatizing of these concerns, according to Mebane, made Jonson "the acknowledged founder of a new literary movement."<sup>4</sup> My study will not attempt to radically reshape this picture of Jonson. In my discussion of the use of names in the *Epigrammes* the influence of Scripture will be emphasized to a greater degree than the influence of Classical authors.

Ben Jonson's *Epigrammes*, as the titles of the individual epigrams suggest, do deal mostly with secular subjects. Nevertheless, Jonson, in a dialectical manner, deals with secular subjects according to a Christian mythos. Jonson's argumentation in his *Epigrammes* is contracted upon a belief in the resurrection and an afterlife. The providential vision that operates in Jonson's *Epigrammes*, however, works mostly on a subtextual level. This subtext is often overlooked by critics who are comfortable with thinking of Jonson as being a secular poet whose moral code is mainly derivative of classical literature.

What I am arguing here is that Jonson's world view is more complex than many critics make it out to be. As we have already seen regarding the matter of form, Jonson's

thought is often dialectical. Similarly, Jonson's observations of temporal matters do not exclude him from thinking of them within a schema that acknowledges an eternity beyond the boundaries of the temporal world. Further, it is according to a faith in a timeless world that Jonson comes to fashion a response to the temporal world of his sensual experience. Jonson, accordingly, may be interpreted as possessing a dimedate world view. Basil Willey, in *The Seventeenth Century Background*, argues that such an experience was common to the thinkers of the century:

It was one of the privileges of the seventeenth century to be able to believe, without any effort or striving, that 'truth' was not all of one order. It would be more accurate to say that this was unconsciously assumed, or felt, rather than consciously 'believed'. Thus however eager one might be for the 'exaltation' of one kind of truth, the new kind, the old order of numinous truth was still secure in its inviolate separateness. The feeling was that there was a divine meaning, an *otherness*, in the universe, as well as a mechanical order, was still natural and inevitable.<sup>5</sup>

More current scholarship on seventeenth century thought, especially Theodore K. Rabb's,<sup>6</sup> differs significantly from Willey's view by suggesting that there was no comfortable balance on the issue of where the authority of "truth" resided.

Rabb's hypothesis, as presented in *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe*, is that the abundance of

intellectual systems in this century had the effect of creating the perception of a crisis in which order had become fragmented. For Rabb, this crisis traces its origins to 1500 and is not resolved until the last third of the 1600's. Rabb's interpretation of this period holds that a vacuum of "authority" was perceived as existing in which thought itself was liable to be seen as dangerously superfluous:

The sixteenth century thus came to be a time of anguished attempts to assimilate and comprehend these strange new forces and ideas. And the disarray, the searching is dramatically apparent in the culture of the age. For the bewilderment was well-nigh universal, stimulated by shock after shock, and fed and rendered uniform by that great new accelerator of the spread of ideas, printing. In religion, politics, economics, and society, cherished authorities by the score were under attack, and centuries-old values no longer commanded unquestioned adherence. Fanatical self-confidence may have blossomed, but always in opposition to equal fanaticism. Assurance somehow seemed elusive unless it was sustained by blind dogmatism, because single standards were almost nowhere to be found.<sup>7</sup>

In order to counter the unsettling effects of this situation intellectuals of the day, according to Rabb, either turned from the disarray into themselves or attempted to raise a new authority which would overcome all doubt and dissolution. Rabb notes that these reactions were not mutually exclusive; in fact, he sees these two reactions as being manifestations of each other:

All the themes and manifestations of the culture of the last two thirds of the sixteenth century and first third of the seventeenth that we have considered either as a means of escape from, or as an acceptance of, confusion, could also be regarded as desperate attempts to find a new order amidst disintegration. The witches, the astrologers, the alchemists, the hermeticists, the cabbalists, and even some of the neoplatonists, hungered to find the key that could unlock some all-encompassing secret. They would have access to the true structure of the universe if only they discovered the proper method.<sup>8</sup>

This double reaction to experience is linked to, but not dependent upon, an ambivalent interpretation of the character of humankind. Rabb argues that the age perceived humanity as simultaneously possessing a laudable unlimited potential for improvement and a lamentable baseness and corruptibility. To apply Rabb's observations on the period to Jonson I will argue that the operation of a Christian mythos in the subtext of his *Epigrammes* is an expression of a tendency to turn away from temporal realities. Jonson's espousal of a brand of absolutism in which the king is elected by "God" and his celebration of a nobility whose privileged status is justified by "merit" will be read as an expression of a tendency to impose a synthetic order upon a temporal and social experience. Both responses will be interpreted as being ways by which Jonson grapples with the problem of humanity's dual nature.

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Sara J. van den Berg, although she does not specifically recognize the operation of a Christian mythos in her critical interpretation of the *Epigrammes*, notes that

Unlike classical poets who advocate ethical action for its own sake, Jonson grounds his judgements and exhortations in hope for a life to come. That hope frees him to indulge an aesthetic impulse toward wit and form, and at the same time serves as a counterweight to any overvaluing of the poetic act. The poet can commemorate; he cannot revive the dead.<sup>9</sup>

The context of this quotation directly pertains to Jonson's elegiac epigrams, especially "XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER" and "XLV. ON MY FIRST SON." However, Sara van den Berg's criticism of Jonson's elegiac epigrams can also be taken as being true of the entire collection. Also, Edward B. Partridge, although he also overlooks Jonson's conformity to the Christian mythos, argues that Jonson's *Epigrammes* create a great society of "The noble Living and the noble Dead."<sup>10</sup> As we have already noted, according to Partridge, in this noble society the great men of his own society are made "exemplars for all time and not merely for the present."<sup>11</sup>

Two epigrams in particular directly relate to the matter of the Christian mythos. These are XXXIV. *OF DEATH* and LXXX. *OF LIFE AND DEATH*. *OF DEATH* reads,

HE that feares death, or mournes it in the just,  
Shewes of the resurrection little trust.(16)

LXXX. *OF LIFE AND DEATH* is the more significant of these two existentially-minded epigrams:

The ports of death are sinnes; of life, good deeds:  
 Through which, our merit leads us to our meeds.  
 How wilfull blind is he then, that would stray,  
 And hath it, in his powers, to make his ways!  
 This world deaths region is, the other lifes:  
 And here, it should be one of our first strifes,  
 So to front death, as men might judge us past it.  
 For good men but see death, the wicked tast it.  
 (34)

In both of these epigrams and especially in *OF LIFE AND DEATH* Jonson emphasizes the primacy of the human free will in spiritual matters.

In *OF LIFE AND DEATH* the Christian individual must earn his "merit" through his "good deeds." For Jonson, the possession of merit leads the Christian individual to his reward which is the eternal life promised by the Resurrection. There may be room here for the operation of grace between "merit" and "meed" but it is not explicitly mentioned. In *OF DEATH*, however, Jonson implies that the Christian individual should "trust" that grace will work in favour of the "just."

In *OF LIFE AND DEATH* Jonson does not give the sinner the benefit of grace. Jonson's thinking concerning sin in this epigram is simple and laconically expressed: "the ports of death are sinnes." (34) In this epigram Jonson argues that those who sin do so intentionally and are therefore "wilfull blind." Jonson argues that each individual has the "power" to "make his way." This



position, furthermore, determines the role of the poet. The poet's "first strifes," according to the epigram, should be to "front [confront] death in order that men might make reform from sin." The reason for this is given in the final line of the poem. "For good men but see death, the wicked tast it." (34) This line redoubles the judgement of the first line and acts as a synopsis for the argument of the epigram.

In the final line of this epigram Jonson alludes to the Gospel of Matthew in which Christ says,

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Matt. 16: 25-28)

This passage also provides a key for interpreting *OF DEATH* for inasmuch as the "just" are saved by virtue of their good works it shows a lack of faith to mourn them.

In *OF DEATH* and *OF LIFE AND DEATH* the most important aspect of the Christian faith is taken to be the idea of the immortality of the soul and the corresponding existence of an eternity beyond the finite temporal duration of the human life. The belief in an timeless world to which individuals can gain access after death and the belief in a supreme

being, who enables such a place to exist, constitute the core beliefs in what I will refer to as the "Christian mythos." The Christian mythos opens up this space beyond the event of the death of the individual for the purpose of rewarding or punishing his soul. Although a Christian's rewards in this afterlife are always dependent upon the will of God, there is an assurance that no individual will be able to escape God's judgement and his justice.

The Christian mythos holds that judgement is guaranteed to everybody to the extent that it is linked to death. Nobody is so great as to escape this trial. In this respect, Jonson writes in *Discoveries* that

But above all, the prince is to remember that when the great day of account comes, which neither magistrate nor prince can shun, there will be required of him a reckoning for this whom he hath trusted, as for himself, which he must provide. And if piety be wanting in the priests, equity in the judges, or the magistrate be found rated at a price, what justice or religion is to be expected?(555)

Accordingly, the souls of those who sin can always be expected to suffer punishment of some sort in the afterlife, even if the bodies they are temporarily attached to evade the suffering of punishment in their own life time. In this way the existence of a bifurcated afterlife containing regions corresponding with the concepts of reward and punishment acts as the over-riding motivation by which human behavior may be modified in one's temporal life. Hence,

with respect to the promise of an afterlife in which he shall be rewarded or punished, the Christian is to be always preoccupied with the rightness of his performance in this world.

The operation of the Christian mythos is most evident in Jonson's elegiac epigrams. *XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER* and *XLV. ON MY FIRST SON* are perhaps the most famous and most endearing epigrams in the collection. Their simple presentation of human grief is lent gravity by an assertion of faith which is so assured that it colours both pieces with a sense of understatement while convincing the reader that everything that need be said has been said. Both are marked by a tender compassion by which the sadness of life is expressed. Thus, the real subject of these epigrams is the response of the poet to the death of that which was loved.

*XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER* is one of only four epigrams not written in heroic couplets. These four epigrams are all elegies: *XII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER*, *XL. ON MARY RATCLIFFE*, *CXX. EPITAPH ON S.P. A CHILD OF Q. EL CHAPPEL* AND *CXXIV. EPITAPH ON ELIZABETH L.H.* (It is odd that most commentators count only *XL.* to be not written in iambic pentameter). *XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER* reads,

HEre lyes to each her parents ruth,  
*Mary*, the daughter of their youth:  
 Yet all heavens gifts, being heavens due,

It makes the father, lesse, to rue.  
 At sixe moneths end, shee parted hence  
 With safetie of her innocence;  
 Whose soule heavens Queene, (whose name she beares)  
 In comfort of her mothers teares,  
 Hath plac'd amongst her virgin-traine:  
 Where, while that sever'd doth remaine,  
 This grave partakes the fleshly birth.  
 Which cover lightly, gentle earth.(11)

In this epigram the name of the child is tied in with the idea of her receiving eternal life at the time of resurrection. She is linked by name and by her virgin state to the Virgin Mary. Also, Jonson may be making a witty allusion to the biblical Ruth in the first line of the epigram. An allusion to Ruth would be entirely in keeping with the concept of the poem and the emphasis on the child's name. In *The Book of Ruth* we read,

Then said Bo'-az What day thou buyest the  
 field of the hand of Na-o'mi, thou must buy *it*  
 also of Ruth the Mo'-ab-i-tess, the wife of the  
 dead, to raise up the dead upon his  
 inheritance, (Ruth 4:5)

and also

Moreover Ruth the Mo'-ab-i-tess, the wife of  
 Mah'-lon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise  
 up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that  
 the name of the dead be not cut off from among his  
 brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are  
 witness this day. (Ruth 4:10)

*XLV. ON MY FIRST SONNE* is very similar to *XXII. ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER* except that Jonson's portrayal of grief seems a little more intense than in *XXII*.

XLV. *ON MY FIRST SONNE* is written in the heroic couplet that Jonson uses for the bulk of his epigrams and this extended line makes the matter of the epigram sound loftier than the tetrameter couplets he uses in XXII. In this elegy the comforting effect of the poet's faith has to be supplemented by a disciplining of the his own emotions in the final line:

FArewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;  
 My sinne was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy,  
 Seven yeeres tho' wert lent to me, and I thee pay,  
 Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.  
 O, could I loose all father now. For why  
 Will man lament the state he should envie?  
 To have so soone scap'd worlds, and fleshes rage,  
 And, if no other miserie, yet age?  
 Rest in soft peace, and, ask'd, say here doth lye  
*Ben. Jonson* his best piece of *poetry*  
 For whose sake, hence-forth, all his vowes be such,  
 As what he loves may never like to much.(20)

There is a play here on the idea of naming and possession. Like his book Jonson's son carries his name. Moreover, like his book (given that Jonson was right-handed) his son is the child of his "right hand." The etymology of the name "Benjamin" strengthens this allusion. However, in this case, Jonson's name does not guarantee the rights of ownership. As Jonson points out, his son rightfully belongs to God.

The importance of the Christian mythos and the relation of names and naming to this mythos must be taken into consideration if Ben Jonson's use of names is to be

read as preforming a social performance. The Christian mythos is teleological to the degree that it suggests that the social performance to which it is to motivate people is already preformed. Without entering into details, an astute observer can readily see how ideas of freewill and predestination might be supported by such a schema.

The Christian mythos provides the authority for Jonson's own preforming of the social performance. Too often critics fail to grasp the necessity of reading Jonson's *Epigrammes* with a view to Scripture. Too often the matter of the *Epigrammes* is read as pertaining only to secular considerations. This is regrettable, for when Jonson's belief in the Christian mythos is overlooked his personal and poetic dimensions are necessarily diminished.

In *LXXX. OF LIFE AND DEATH* Jonson implies that the entrance into the eternal life is dependent upon merit leading individuals who have done good deeds to their final reward. This action is exactly analogous to the role that Jonson sees himself performing in the writing of the *Epigrammes*. Jonson promises to lead "great names" to a "remembrance with posteritie" -- which must be considered a type of immortality. Indeed, Jonson's gift of "the ripest of my studies, my Epigrammes" is given to Pembroke in recognition of his "merit," his being "THE GREAT EXAMPLE OF HONOR AND VERTUE" and his good deeds.

In the epistle of dedication, prefixed to the *Epigrammes*, Jonson both anticipates and returns the future services of the Earl of Pembroke. Jonson asks for the "protection of truth, and libertie" in accordance with Pembroke being constant to his own "goodnesse." The promise of immortality is also made by Jonson to the Earl of Salisbury in a letter written to him during Jonson's 1605 imprisonment. In this letter, as in the dedicatory epistle to Pembroke, Jonson asks for Salisbury's protection and aid in securing him a release from prison. Here Jonson writes,

But least in being too diligent for my excuse, I may incurre the suspicion of being guilty: I become a most humble sutor to yor Lo: that wth the ho: Lord *Chamberlayne* (to whome I haue in like manner petition'd) you wilbe pleas'd to be the gratefull meanes of our comming to answeare; or if in yor Wisdomes it shall be thought vnnecessary, that yor LLo: will be the most honor'd cause of o'r Liberty, where freing vs from one prison you shall remoue vs to another, wch is aeternally to bind vs and o'r muses, to the thankfull honouring of you and yo'rs to Posterity; as your owne vertues haue by many descents of Ancestors ennobled you to time.(sic)<sup>12</sup>

The immortality that Jonson promises to confer upon his politically powerful patrons is a type of immortality that he also reserves for himself.

While in prison in 1605 on the charge that "Eastward Ho," a play that Jonson co-wrote with John Marston and George Chapman, was seditious, Jonson writes to a Lord (assumed to be the Earl of Suffolk)<sup>13</sup>,

And I appeale to posteritie that will hereafter  
 read and Iudge my writings (though now neglected)  
 whether it be possible, I should speake of his  
 Maiestie as I have done, without the affliction of  
 a most zealous and good subject.<sup>14</sup>

Jonson was clearly interested in providing his poetry with elements which would ensure its ability to transcend time. Jonson was not the only individual who believed his works would be immortal. In *Remains*, in the chapter entitled *Auncient Poets*, William Camden counts "Ben: Jonson" among the "most pregnant witts of these our times, whom succeeding ages may justly admire."<sup>15</sup> Sara J. van den Berg writes of the *Epigrammes* that "the newly created context of the book preserves the ethical significance of the occasion in the new aesthetic context of the printed book." Thus, she notes that there is a "dialectic of history and poetry"<sup>16</sup> in the collection.

Sara J. van den Berg argues that Jonson's attempt to explore that dialectic sets him apart from other English epigrammatists of the period who were content to consider their work ephemeral. John Weever, an epigrammatist Jonson refers to in epigram *XVIII. TO MY MERE ENGLISH CENSURER* as being popular with the public, writes of epigrams that

Epigrammes are much like unto Almanacks serving  
 especially for the year of that which they are  
 made...being for one yeare pen'd, and in another  
 printed: they are post date before they come from  
 the presse.<sup>17</sup>



Jonson provides his *Epigrammes* with a "legitimate fame" by building upon a classical model that had already proven its durability and by paying strict attention to the ethical content of his poems.

Jonson's classical model is the epigrams of Martial. Martial, a first century Roman poet, wrote urbane and witty epigrams which provided an astute and detached criticism of his society. He relied on Martial heavily so that "many of Jonson's poems either echo Martial or are derived from him."<sup>18</sup> It is to Martial's epigrams that Jonson is most likely referring when in *XVIII. TO MY MEERE ENGLISH CENSURER*. He writes,

To thee, my way in Epigrammes seems new,  
 When both it is the old way and the true.  
 Thou say'st that cannot be: for thou hast scene  
 Davis, and Weever, and the best have beene,  
 And mine come nothing like. I hope so.(10)

Jonson's poems are "true" because they strike a high moral tone. Thus, at the end of his epistle of dedication to the Earl of Pembroke, he writes that "in my Theatre...CATO, if he liv'd, might enter without scandall."<sup>(4)</sup> Here, Jonson alludes to Martial's *Letter to the Reader* but slightly alters the context of the passage so that the morality of his collection is emphasized. Martial, unlike Jonson, "forbids the stern Cato to enter the "theatre" of his licentious writings since Cato would not approve of them."<sup>(4)</sup>

Those upon whom Jonson confers immortality are set against a group of people to whom he affords only obscurity, assorted invective, and stern redressing. In the epistle of dedication he writes,

But I forsee a neerer fate to my booke, then this:  
 that the vices therein will be own'd before the  
 vertues (though, there, I have avoyded all  
 particulars, as I have done names) and that some  
 will be so readie to discredit me, as they will  
 have the impudence to belye themselves...Nor, can  
 I hope otherwise. For, why should they remit any  
 thing of their selfe-love, and other inherent  
 graces, to consider truth or vertue; but, with the  
 trade of the world, lend their long eares against  
 men they love not: and hold their deare  
 Mountebanke, or Jester, in farre better condition,  
 then all the studie, or studiers of humanitie?

(3-4)

His epistle of dedication separates virtuous individuals from those given to vice, the cultured from the vulgar, and the poet who writes with a clear conscience from those whose poetry is only a commercial venture. While those deemed good by Jonson are given remembrance in name as examples to others, the vulgar are reproached and are not referred to by a proper name. Thus, in Jonson's pedagogical poetics the good are rewarded and those who sin are punished.

In *Remains*, Camden interprets the function of Epigrams as didactic and two-fold. He defines epigrams as being "Poems, framed to praise or dispraise, or some other sharpe conceit which are called Epigrammes."<sup>19</sup> Like Sir Philip Sidney -- whose *An Apology for Poetry* defends poetry

on the grounds that it is more able than either philosophy or history to convince men to lead a virtuous life, Camden envisions poetry as having an educational and evangelistic function. Thus, Camden advises that epigrams are to be written "against lewde love."<sup>20</sup> R.D. Dunn writes that Camden's view of epigrams were contrary to the opinions of other literary critics of his time. Puttenham, for instance, "argued 'that this type of poetry had to exist' because 'men would and must utter their spleens in all ordinarie matters.'"<sup>21</sup> Camden, however, like Sidney and Jonson, views the epigram as not being exclusively about "ordinarie matters," but about ordinary matters interpreted in a ethical and religious light. Moreover, poetry *in toto* is interpreted as functioning to persuade men to behave in a moral and religious way. Jonson, Camden and Sidney all affirm the ability of poetry to fashion this type of social performance.

In his *Preface to Britannia* Camden argues that the end of praise is to fashion social behavior. He notes that

whatever a writer says of his contemporaries, posterity will do justice to every character; and it is for posterity, and not for the present age, that I write. Meantime let it be remembered, that to praise worthy men is to hold a light for them to follow; and it is a true observation of Symmachus, 'the honours paid to merit are incitements to imitation, and virtuous emulation is kept alive by examples of respect paid to others.'<sup>22</sup>

Praise, then, does not only affects those who are praised. Ideally, this type of praise evokes a type of respectful social performance which is then perpetuated by being conformed to through "imitation" and "virtuous emulation."

The contrast between loving praise of faith and the hateful denunciation of sin can be seen in Jonson's epigram *XL. ON MARGARET RATCLIFFE* and epigram *L. TO SIR COD. XL. ON MARGARET RATCLIFFE* was written in the late 1590's and is, perhaps, the earliest of the epigrams in the collection. In his elegiac epigram to Margaret Ratcliffe Jonson interprets her as being the essence of piety, loyalty and love. The name is all important in this endeavor. Written as an acrostic, a form of poetry that Jonson would later come to renounce, Jonson implies that the matter of the epigram is generated out of the name of his subject itself. The name, thus, appears to contain the very essence of the subject:

MArble, weepe, for thou dost cover  
 A dead beautie under-neath thee,  
 R ich, as nature could bequeath thee,  
 G rant then, no rude hand remove her.  
 A ll the gazers on the skies  
 R ead not in faire heavens storie,  
 E xpresser truth, or truer glorie,  
 T hen they might in her bright eyes.  
 R are, as wonder, was her wit;  
 A nd like Nectar ever flowing:  
 T ill time, strong by her bestowing,  
 C onquer'd hath both life and it.  
 L ife, whose grieffe was out of fashion,  
 I n these times. Few so have ru'de  
 F ate, in a brother. To conclude,  
 F or wit, feature, and true passion,  
 E arth, thou hast not such another.(18)

This epigram stands in stark contrast to *L. TO SIR COD* in which the subject is reduced to a mere object of disgust:

LEave Cod, tabacco-like, burnt gummes to take,  
Or fumie clysters, thy moist lungs to bake:  
Arsenike would thee fit for societie make.(22)

"Cod" denotes a perfume bag and testicles. In epigrams *XIX. ON SIR COD THE PERFUMED* and *XX. TO THE SAME SIR COD* Cod is chastised for his vanity and his lasciviousness. In keeping with these characteristics, in *L.* Cod is identified with venereal disease. Tobacco and Arsenic were both considered to be cures for venereal disease at this time. In Jonson's epigram these cures become part of a curse that he aims at the behavior of his subject.

Jonson does not interpret the social performance according to a religious vision alone; he also incorporates a political vision in his *Epigrammes*. The political aspects of Jonson's epigrams, as I have noted, work in conjunction with a Christian subtext to direct and legitimate an ideal social performance.

#### IV

Among other things, Ben Jonson's *Discoveries* contains a partially formed treatise on political theory. Jonson's discussions of political matters here are rarely sustained but they do present a consistent and well defined attitude towards politics and political power. Jean Le Drew Metcalfe, in *Subjecting the King: Ben Jonson's Praise of James I*, neatly condenses Jonson's attitudes on this subject: "The marriage of right to might, moral pre-eminence, and hereditary prerogative, is for Jonson, the essence of true authority."<sup>1</sup> In *Discoveries* Jonson notes, quoting H. Farnese's *Diphthera Iouis* (1607)<sup>2</sup>, that "The strength of empire is in religion"(553) and in keeping with this judgement he views all those who stand opposed to the power of the state and the authority of the sovereign as being enemies of religion and God:

After God, nothing is to be loved of man like the prince; he violates nature that doth it not with his whole heart. For when he hath put on the care of the public good and common safety, I am a wretch, and put off man, if I do not reverence and honour him, in whose charge all things divine and human are placed...He is the arbiter of life and death; when he finds no other subject for his mercy, he should spare himself. All his punishments are to correct rather than to destroy. (548)

Jonson also writes that "a prince is the pastor of his people." (155) Moreover, he notes in *Discoveries* that "He is the soul of the commonwealth, and ought to cherish it as his own body." (555) Alluding to Euripides, Jonson argues that "where the prince is good" "God is a guest in a human body." (554) Jonson's appraisal of the sovereign is in keeping with both Sidney's and Camden's view of his proper role.

In *The Poetry of Conservatism*, Isabel Rivers writes that "the achievement of the Tudors in breaking the power of the nobility and harnessing them to the purposes of the monarchy" provides Sidney with a political perspective in which "a weak monarchy is seen as the first link in a chain of social decay, resulting in the destructive antagonism of the parts of society that should coexist by mutual support."<sup>3</sup> Thus, Rivers says of Sidney's *Arcadia* that

when Euarchus sets out to restore his kingdom, he does not make the mistake of asserting unlimited power; in addition to setting a standard of conduct himself, he is careful to recognize his own dependence on his people.

Quoting from *Arcadia* she writes,

Where most princes (seduced by flattery to build upon false grounds of government) make themselves (as it were) another thing from the people; and so count it gain what they can get from them: and (as if it were two counter-balances, that their estate goes highest when the people goes lowest) by a fallacy of argument thinking themselves most kings, when the subject is most basely

subjected: he contrariwise, virtuously and wisely acknowledging, that he with his people made all but one politic body, whereof himself was the head; even so cared for them, as he would for his own limbs:...in all his actions showing a delight to their welfare, brought that to pass, that while by force he took nothing, by their love he had all.<sup>4</sup>

In *Britannia*, Camden's description of kingship is in keeping with the spirit of Sidney's version of it. It should be noted that Camden emphasizes the potency of the very name of this unique social position:

The KING, stiled by our Ancestors *Coning*, and *Cyning* (a name under which is coucht both *power* and *wisdom*) [Camden footnotes this parenthetical statement by noting the etymology of the Saxon terms: "Either relating to *cene*, which in Saxon signifies *stout*, *valiant*, &c. or to *cunnan*, which signifies to *know* or *understand*; from whence a designing subtle man is called a *Cunning man*] by us contracted into *King*, has in these Kingdoms the supreme power, and a *meer* government: nor holds he his empire by vassalage, neither does he receive Investiture from another, nor own any superior, but God. And as that Oracle of Law has delivered it [The note "Bracton, l. I.c. 8." is given in the margin here] , *Every one is under him, and himself under none, but only God*. He has very many *Rights of Majesty* peculiar to himself, (which the learned in the law term *The Holie of Holies* and *Individuals*; but the common people, *The King's Prerogative*;) and those they tell us are denoted by the *flowers* in the King's Crown. Some of these the King enjoys by a *written Law*, others by Right of custom, which without a law is established by a tacit consent of the whole body: and surely he deserves them, since by his watchfulness everyman's house, by his labour every man's ease, by his industry every one's pleasure, and by his toil every one's recreation is secured to him [The note "*Seneca*." is given in the margin here].<sup>5</sup>



Camden, like Sidney, takes a position that advocates the divine right of kings. The king, in their view, is invested with the power of God and acts as God's representative in the temporal world. The king's position binds him to certain obligations but these obligations are not set by those whom he governs. Jonson's political theory is committed to this view of the authority of kingship. Thus, in *Discoveries*, he writes, "Let no man therefore murmur at the actions of the prince, who is placed so far above him. If he offend, he hath his discoverer. God hath a height beyond him."(554)

Jonson's view of kingship, it should be added, is reminiscent of Augustinian and, also, Pauline doctrine. In his epistle to the Romans Paul writes,

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist will receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.(Romans 13: 1-6)

Jonson's high appraisal of the authority invested in the sovereign is matched by an equally low appraisal of what Camden refers to as the "common people". This feature of Jonson's thinking may be a vestige of a predilection for an Augustinian brand of theology, a reaction against the growing boldness of this segment of the population, or an expression of the vision of the dual nature of man which enchanted his era. The reason for Jonson's uneasiness is not clear and deserves further study. The idea of a public governed by its own will and by its own chosen values both fascinates and frightens Jonson. Like George Orwell, he is drawn to confront the dangers of the power of a public open to the oppressive manipulation of those whose aim is to exploit this power for their own ends.

Jonson's entries concerning the nature of the public in *Discoveries* would seem to indicate that he saw this segment of the population as being fated to fall into the sin of not loving its sovereign enough. Usually, when speaking of the public, he is found to be lamenting their lack of respect for and obedience to the authority of the king:

The vulgar are commonly ill-natured, and always grudging against their governors; which makes that a prince has more business and trouble with them than ever did a bull or any other beast by how they will have more heads than will be reined with one bridal. There was not that variety of beasts on the ark, as is of beastly natures in the

multitude; especially when they come to that iniquity to censure their sovereign's actions. Then all councils are made good or bad by their events. (547-548)

In *XCII. THE NEW CRIE* Jonson criticizes just such a horde.

In this epigram Jonson uses an obvious pun on the word "ripe" to suggest that the political activities of these men is rotten and stinks:

Ere Cherries ripe, and straw-berries be gone,  
 Unto the cryes of London Ile add one;  
 Ripe statesmen, ripe: They grow in every street.  
 At six and twenty, ripe. You shall 'hem meet,  
 And have 'hem yeeld no savour, but of state.  
 Ripe are their ruffes, their cuffes, their beards,  
 their gate, (39)

He argues that such men have an insatiable appetite for information pertaining to the political climate:

11 The counsels, projects, practices they know,  
 And what each prince doth for intelligence owe,...  
 15 They carry in their pocket *Tacitus*  
 And the *Gazetti*, or *Gallo-Belgicus*:...  
 31 ... All forbidden bookes they get.  
 And of the poulder-plot they will talke yet.  
 At naming the *French* king, their heads they shake,  
 And at the Pope and Spaine slight faces make.  
 35 Or 'gainst the Bishops, for the Brethren raile,  
 Much like those Brethren; thinking to prevaile  
 With ignorance on us, as they have done  
 On them: And therefore doe not only shunne  
 Others more modest, but contemne us too,  
 40 That know not so much state, wrong as they do. (40)

The irony of the situation, as Jonson interprets it, is that with all their newspapers (the *Gazetti* and *Gallo-Belgicus* were both contemporary news sheets, the latter published in Cologne [40]) and books these men still remain ignorant in political matters.

The last few lines of XCII. THE NEW CRIE are especially interesting with regards to Jonson's political views. Here, Jonson indicates that these men confuse religion and political power to the degree that they seem to feel that public policy should be fashioned to support the cause of religious groups like the Puritan "Brethren". The text of the epigram implies that such radicalism is a perversion of the Christian credo. Lines 36-38 echo the text of the Lord's Prayer but replaces "forgiveness" with "ignorance." In this way, Jonson points out that by aligning themselves with radical Protestant sects these politicians only double the wrongs perpetrated by Catholic aggressors. Jonson dismisses this extremism and attempts to promote a more moderate view.

The argument that Jonson appears to be making in XCII. THE NEW CRIE is that by overvaluing their own poorly conceived political ideas these street statesmen have become bellicose and dangerous. Thus, Jonson notes that they "doe not only shunn / Others more modest, but contemne us too."(40) The text of the epigram does not commit itself in favor of any religious group. However, it seems to be that "us" refers to moderate, royalist Catholics. Jonson consciously avoids aligning himself with any religious movement in this epigram. His delicate phrasing of the epigram's argument reflects his sensitivity to the pressures

of being of the Catholic faith during the period following the Gunpowder Plot (1605) in which Catholic extremists unsuccessfully attempted to blow up the Parliament and the King. His renunciation of all religious extremism and those addicted to political intrigue is, perhaps, Jonson's response to the Oath of Allegiance of 1606, in which Catholics were called upon to renounce the Pope's right to call for assassinations on religious grounds.

Jonson's political vision is akin to the one Thomas Hobbes expounds in his *Leviathan* (1651) to the extent that he views the supreme authority of the sovereign as the only way to keep society from slipping into the chaos of sectarian violence and civil war. Jonson's position holds that Catholics and Protestants can only be guaranteed peace amongst themselves if they live under the protection of a non-partisan, all-powerful priest-king who upholds rationally conceived laws. This rather idealistic political vision, again, suggests a crossing of a Christian ethos with Platonic philosophy. In epigram V. *ON THE UNION* Jonson interprets Britain under James according to this vision.

When was there contract better driven by fate?  
 or celebrated with more truth of state?  
 The world the temple was, the priest a king,  
 The spoused paire two realmes, the sea the ring.

(6)

The marriage described here is not one between Catholic and Protestant. Nevertheless, symbolically, a schism of sorts is closed under the scepter of King James.

Jonson's evaluation of the king's ability to properly govern the state according to Platonic reason and Christian ethics necessarily diminishes Jonson's trust in the Parliament. The separation between the two mechanisms of government in his dichotomized interpretive schema becomes a difference between legitimacy and effectiveness and illegitimacy and impotence. For Jonson, legitimate authority is invested in a divine law of love, piety and fealty which extends itself by means of divinely sanctioned, and thus natural, obligation and which finds its embodiment in the name of the king. Thus, in XXXV. TO KING JAMES he interprets James as being nearly one with God:

Who would not be thy subject, James, t'obay  
 A Prince, that rules by 'example, more than sway?  
 Whose manners draw, more than thy powers constraine.  
 And in this short time of thy happiest raigne,  
 Hast purg'd thy realmes, as we have now no cause  
 Left us of feare, but first our crimes, then lawes.  
 Like aydes 'gainst treasons who hath found before?  
 And than in them how could we know god more?  
 First thou preserved wert, our king to bee,  
 And since, the whole land was preserv'd for thee.  
 (16)

The legitimate authority of the king is matched against the failure of the Parliament to regulate the behavior of the public in XXIV. TO THE PARLIAMENT:

There's reason good, that you good lawes should make:

Men's manners were never viler, for your sake.(12)  
 Like Camden and Sidney before him, Jonson is adamant that the authority of the sovereign be unquestioned. His epigram to the Parliament not only constitutes an attack against its authority, it acknowledges that it is the king (with the aid of the divinely inspired poet, like Jonson) who has the ability to uphold the morality of the common people.

In order to bring out the strength of Jonson's faith in the authority of the sovereign I will turn to an epigram not included in the *Epigrammes*. In *An Epigram to K[ing] Charles, for a Hundred Pounds He Sent Me in My Sickness*. 1629, he reminds Charles that the governance of the morality of the people is reserved for the king:

Great Charles, among the holy gifts of grace  
     Annexed to thy person and thy place,  
 'Tis not enough (thy piety is such)  
     To cure the called king's evil with thy  
 touch;  
 But thou wilt yet a kinglier mastery try,  
     To cure the poet's evil, poverty;  
 And in these cures dost so thyself enlarge  
     As thou dost cure our evil at thy charge.  
 Nay, and in this thou show'st to value more  
     One poet, than of other folk ten score.  
 O piety, so to weigh the poor's estates!  
     O bounty, so to difference the rates!  
 What can the poet wish his king may do,  
     But that he cure the people's evil too?(389)

The argument of this epigram turns on the conceit of the king's ability to cure disease. Jonson refers to the belief that scrofula, "the king's evil" "was curable by royal touch.(701) Parliamentarians of the day, according to Ian

Donaldson, "attempted to discredit the practice." In the last couplet of the poem Jonson underscores the authority of the king to reform the morals of his people. There is, however, a sense of resignation in this epigram. The poet's wish itself suggests that the king has failed and that the people are now incurable. In March of 1629 King Charles dissolved the Parliament.

For Jonson, being subject to the law of God means being an obedient subject of the king. Moreover, it is in recognition of the absolute authority of the sovereign and in serving the sovereign that the individual comes into harmony with truth and attains righteousness. Accordingly, Jonson interprets James as being the ultimate judge of the worthiness of his *Epigrammes*.

And such a Prince art, wee daily see,  
 As chiefe of those still promise they will bee.  
 Whom should my Muse then flie to, but the best  
 Of Kings for grace; of Poets for my test?(6)

Jonson, then, strongly emphasizes the political dimension of Sir Philip Sidney's apotropaic model of poetry in which the poet acts as an evangelistic pedagogue. The type of poetry which emerges is unmistakably propagandistic in its inclinations. Thus, Jonson writes in *Discoveries in De malign[itate] studentium* "[on the malignity of the learned]," (745)

There are some men born only to suck the poison  
 out of books...it shows they themselves would



never have been of the professions they are, but for the profits and fees. But if another learning, well used, can instruct to good life, inform manners, no less persuade and lead men than they threaten and compel, and have no reward, is it therefore the worse study? I could never think the study of wisdom confined only to the philosopher, or of piety to the divine, or of state to the politic. But he which can feign a commonwealth, which is the poet, can govern with counsels, strengthen it with laws, correct it with judgements, inform it with religion and morals, is all these. We do not require in him mere elocution or an excellent faculty in verse, but the exact knowledge of all virtues and their contraries; with an ability to render the one loved, the other hated by his proper embattling them. (745)

In the epistle of dedication to *Volpone* Jonson writes that it is "the office of a comic poet is to imitate justice, and instruct to life, as well as purity of language, or stir up gentle affections." (3) The social performance that is represented in the *Epigrammes* is structured according to these beliefs. Jonson's *Epigrammes* support a vision of a polite and politically conservative social performance by dichotomizing society into two groups. The function of naming is all important in this endeavor. Jonson's *Epigrammes* use names as symbols of correct and incorrect social behavior and, consequently, of reward and punishment. Thus, in accordance with Sidney's *Apology*, Jonson directs his *Epigrammes* toward a consideration of what "may be, and should be" (6) with the aim of "the winning of the mind with wickedness to virtue." (7) In the *Epigrammes*, social reality

is to be transformed through the interpretive capabilities  
of the poetic imagination.

In *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* Ben Jonson is recorded as saying that "in his narrations of great ones...he never esteemed a man for the name of a lord." (602) Indeed, he makes the same argument poetically in *IX. TO ALL, TO WHOM I WRITE*.

May none, whose scatter'd names honor my booke,  
For strict degrees of rank, or title looke:  
'Tis 'gainst the manners of an *Epigram*:  
And, I a *Poet* here, no *Herald* am. (7)

The implications of this epigram are that Jonson refuses to rank nobles according to their titles. His reference to "manners" here implies that such a ranking would be a recognition of the superficial qualities of his subject. In the role of "a Poet" Jonson removes himself from the herald's duty of catering to outward signs of rank, position and wealth and reserves for himself the representation of the essence of his subject's being.

In the first few encomiastic epigrams in the collection, a subtle form of ranking does seem to exist. Most of the encomiastic epigrams that appear early on in the collection are written to or on people for whom Jonson's bonds of love were the strongest: King James, William Camden, an "esteemed" critic, his deceased daughter, John

Donne and Sir John Roe, King James, Martial, Margaret Ratcliffe, Robert Earl of Salisbury, his deceased son. It would be a difficult task for a critic to prove decisively that Jonson ranked the subjects of his *Epigrammes* according to how much he personally loved them. Nonetheless, the idea of love is of crucial importance in the encomiastic epigrams.

In *Discoveries*, under the heading of *Nobilium Ingenia*, (551) ("characteristics of the nobility" [746] ) Jonson quotes Machiavelli's *The Prince* (ch. ix. 4). Jonson notes that, "I have marked among the nobility some are so addicted to the service of the prince and commonwealth, as they look not for spoil; such are to be honoured and loved." (551) To those whom Jonson interprets as acting in the service of the state he offers his love in the form of obsequious praise.

The governing principle of the encomiastic poems, then, is to return love and honour for loyalty. In his epigrams to honour an individual is to praise his name by relating it to the individual's notable deeds. In this respect, he duplicates the performance of the king who offers titles in return for service. The extent of this duplication can be gauged if we compare Jonson's poetical actions to the political and ritualistic actions undertaken by the king. In *Britannia* Camden notes that "Knighthood"

was without question a wise contrivance of our Kings, when they had no more *fees* to give away. For nothing could be more effectual to excite brave men, and lay an obligation upon their best and most deserving subjects, such as were nobly descended, and men of great estates; than as an instance of their good will and favour, to bestow the honourable title of Knights upon them, which before was always a name of great dignity. For when the Prince conferr'd advisedly upon merit, it was thought a great reward and favour, and look'd upon as a badge of honour. Those that were thus Knighted, esteem'd this as the price of Virtue, and as an encomium upon their family, a memorial of their race, and the glory of their name. (sic)(clxxxi)2

One might recall that Camden speaks of the effects of the poet's praise in identical terms. Jonson's poetic repetition of the king's social performance has the effect of recognizing its potency and authority.

The principle of loving those who render their services to their king on principle is demonstrated in *LXVI. TO SIR HENRIE CARY*. Sir Henry was a participant in a battle near the confluence of the Ruhr and Rhine. In this battle a Dutch and English army was routed by a smaller Italian force. Sir Henry "attempted to stem the rout and was captured." (28) "Broeck" is the castle near where the ill-fortuned engagement took place:

That neither fame, nor love might wanting be  
 To greatnesse, Cary, I sing that, and thee.  
 Whose house, if it no other honor had,  
 In onely thee, might be both great, and glad.  
 Who, to upbraid the sloth of this our time,  
 Durst valour make, almost, but not a crime.  
 Which deed I know not, whether were more high,

Or thou more happie, it to justifie  
 Against thy fortune: when no foe that day,  
 Could conquer thee, but chance, who did betray.  
 Love thy great losse, which a renowne hath wonne,  
 To live when *Broeck* not stands, nor *Roor* doth runne.  
 Love honors, which of best example bee,  
 When they cost dearest, and are done most free,  
 Though every fortitude deserves applause,  
 It may be much or little in the cause.  
 Hee's valiant'st, that dares fight, and not for pay;  
 That vertuous is, when the reward's away. (28-29)

Cary's great accomplishment, according to this epigram, is his loyalty to values that have become anomalies in a corrupt age. The epigram argues that Cary was vertuous on principle in that there was not an immediate financial award in sight. Jonson's epigram interprets Cary's action as finding a greater reward than "pay." This reward is interpreted as being an eternal "renowne," which symbolically outlives the topography of the location in which the battle itself took place.

In his paper "'Authors-Readers' Jonson's Community of the Same", Stanley Fish recognizes this other economy operating in Jonson's poetry. Fish writes that "this perfect economy in which loss is impossible because benefits are continually and effortlessly multiplying is elaborated against the background of more usual conditions of monetary exchange"<sup>3</sup> Fish, however, interprets this within a purely secular frame of reference. He writes,

the idea here is exclusivity deed = merit. This is a mystifyingly circular argument unless one sees that merit is largely defined by being of

service (if not in service) to the interests of the dominant class whose wealth enables such service to exist in the first place.<sup>4</sup>

This argument is correct up to a point. However, it would be hard to argue that Jonson's eulogies to his dead children are motivated by a will to serve the interests of a dominant class. Fish's assumption that Jonson is interested in guarding the prized exclusivity of a certain social elite is undeniably valid, but it should not be thought that this exhausts the relevance and goals of the Jonson's *Epigrammes*. Although the sub-text that Fish interprets suggests that the *Epigrammes* are concerned with creating a self-reflexive aesthetic whose aim is to preserve the privileges of a plutocracy, their context suggests that Jonson's interest in writing them serviced a broader set of concerns.

In Jonson's encomiastic epigrams the name functions as the "grounding" for social performances relating to Christian virtues such as love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. The strategy of the encomiastic epigrams is, thus, to argue that the subject whom Jonson refers to by his proper name exemplifies the sort of social performance that is in keeping with the spirit of his political-theology.

In the encomiastic epigrams the argument often turns around the impression that the subject leaves on Jonson's mind and how he poet feels overwhelmed by the task of

celebrating so great a personage. Accordingly, he will apologetically confess his inadequacy and decide that disseminating the proper name of the subject is the most appropriate way of communicating his respectful praise.

*CII. TO WILLIAM EARLE OF PEMBROKE*, perhaps the greatest encomiastic poem in the collection for the magnitude of its praise, employs all of these strategies:

I Doe but name thee *Pembroke*, and I find  
 It is an *Epigramme*, on all man-kind;  
 Against the bad, but of, and to the good:  
 Both which are ask'd, to have thee understood.  
 Nor could the age have mist thee, in this strife  
 Of vice, and virtue; wherein all great life  
 Almost, is exercis'd: and scarce one knowes,  
 To which, yet, of the sides himselfe he owes.  
 They follow vertue, for reward, to day;  
 To morrow vice, if shee give better pay:  
 And are so good, and bad, just at a price,  
 As nothing else discernes the vertue' or vice.  
 But thou, whose noblesse keeps one stature still,  
 And one true posture, though besieg'd with ill  
 Of what ambition, faction, pride can raise;  
 Whose life, ev'n they, that envie it, must praise;  
 That art so reverenc'd, as thy comming in,  
 But in the view, doth interrupt their sinne;  
 Thou must draw more: and they, that hope to see  
 The common-wealth still safe, must studie thee.  
 (49)

Jonson fashions Pembroke's name into a symbol of the entire credo of his poetics. Thus, Pembroke's very name is interpreted as doing precisely that which Jonson sets out to achieve: preform a social performance.

In arguing that a consideration of Pembroke's name generates the governing arguments of the *Epigrammes* Jonson obviates his own creative faculties as poet. He indicates



that there is an element of *sprezzatura* involved not only in the epigram to Pembroke, but in the collection as a whole. This would not be so convincing if it were not for the belief that the name of a person was not insolubly linked to his history. His conceit, which implies that the matter of the *Epigrammes* flows out of a consideration of Pembroke's name alone, loses its seriousness if it is not read within this context. It is not just the name that evokes Jonson's response, but the history that he interprets as being an inherent part of the name.

The attitude that Jonson dramatizes towards Pembroke's name accords with the concept of *obsequentia*. He delineates this concept in *Discoveries*:

Next a good life, to beget love in the persons we counsel, by dissembling our knowledge of ability in ourselves, and avoiding all suspicion of arrogance; ascribing to all their instruction, as an ambassador to his master, or a subject to his sovereign; seasoning all with humanity and sweetness, only expressing care and solicitude. And not to counsel rashly, or on the sudden, but with advice and mediation. (524)

Thus, the good counsellor makes it appear to his subject as if he is being instructed by the subject. Thus, his efforts at instructing are obviated. This is a form of gentle persuasion, to be sure, but more importantly it is an expression of submissiveness on the part of the counsellor. In this view, to show respect is an integral part of counselling well.

Today, it seems, obsequiousness is generally seen as a form of flattery practiced only by sycophants. For Jonson, however, there is a great difference between obsequiousness and flattery. He views obsequiousness as a proper, polite, politic practice and a way of showing respect; whereas flattery is viewed as deceitful and mercenary. Matched with slander, flattery in a person's discourse, for Jonson, is a sign of moral corruption and a general disregard for authority. In *LXXII. TO COURT-LING*, Jonson criticizes his subject for practicing both forms of deceitfulness:

I Grieve not, *Courtling*, thou are started up  
 A chamber-critick, and dost dine and sup  
 At *Madames* table, where thou mak'st all wit  
 Goe high, or low, as thou wilt value it.  
 'Tis not thy judgement breeds the prejudice,  
 Thy person only, *Courtling*, is the vice. (30)

Obsequiousness does, however, entail a self-censoring process in which only positive and vaguely general aspects of the subject are revealed. Personal details are suppressed in favour of an idealized version of the individual's public performance. Accordingly, as Jonson notes in *Discoveries*, facts often have to be rearranged to suit the social dynamics of the situation: authority and social status must be given their due.

Jonson's obsequious praise of Pembroke may leave the reader feeling as if he does not get much of the historical Pembroke at all. Jonson only characterizes Pembroke to the

extent that he notes that Pembroke keeps "one true posture, though besieged with ill" and that he is "reverenc'd".(48)

Stanley Fish calls attention to this aspect of the *Epigrammes*. He argues that Jonson

invokes the distinctions which structure (or at least appear to structure) his material existence -- distinctions of place, birth, wealth power -- but then he effaces them by drawing everybody he names in a community of virtue in which everyone is, by definition the same as everyone else. He calls his heroes and heroines by their proper titles -- Lady, Sir, Lord, Knight -- but then he enrolls them in his list under the title they all indifferently share.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, according to Fish, "despite the signs of specificity that are everywhere in the poetry, everyone is finally interchangeable."<sup>6</sup> Fish argues that the Jonsonian encomiastic epigram negates the process of judgement by eliminating differences between individuals. Finally, for Fish, "representation is bypassed in favour of instantaneous recognition, in another and in the work of another, of what one already is,"<sup>7</sup> so that "as objects and as discourses Jonson's poems are themselves gathered and closed in exactly these ways: rather than embracing society they repel it; rather than presenting a positive ethos in a plain style, they labour to present nothing at all and to remain entirely opaque."<sup>8</sup> Fish's reading of the encomiastic epigrams is supported by Don E. Wayne's view of the double metonymy that operates in these poems.

In "Poetry and Power in Ben Jonson's Epigrammes: The Naming of 'Facts' or the Figuring of Social Relations", Don E. Wayne writes that "the chief method of drawing each of the individuals that make up this 'great society' is metonymy."<sup>9</sup> Wayne argues that

The name has no meaning nor even the power to refer to a meaning by itself. It is only the sign of such a power; it points to a situation, a context, and to assumptions which are shared by the poet and the reader with regard to the power so named, i.e., it is deictic.<sup>10</sup>

Whereas Fish points to the circularity in the logic of the "deeds = merit" argument in the encomiastic epigrams, Wayne points to the circularity of the semantics of these epigrams.

Wayne notes that "there is a double metonymic operation occurring in these epigrams: the proper name is a metonymy for the poem, and the qualities enumerated in the poem are metonymies for the person praised."<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Isabel Rivers argues that the Jonsonian encomiastic epigram and masque act as "a promise, and a reward, both true and ideal. The poet is the means of fusing office and individual, ideal and actuality; the masque is the image of the fusion."<sup>12</sup> Rivers sees the Jonsonian project in his masques and *Epigrammes* as two-pronged. She argues that Jonson is engaged in the "social ritual of publicizing symbols" and in expanding the "function of king and

nobility."<sup>13</sup> These views are all in keeping with the view that Jonson is performing a social performance by using names as symbols of good performances and bad performances, reward and punishment.

Jonson's artistic strategies in figuring these relations, as Mark Anderson points out, in "Defining Society: The Function of Character Names in Ben Jonson's Early Comedies," are recognizably allegorical. Angus Fletcher, in *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* argues that "Allegories are the natural mirrors of ideology."<sup>14</sup> By this Fletcher means that the mode of representation favored by allegories tends to be idealistic. He writes,

Whatever area the abstract ideas comes from, these agents give a sort of life to intellectual conceptions; they may not actually create a personality before our eyes, but they do create the semblance of a personality. This personifying process has a reverse type, in which the poet treats real people in a formulaic way so they become walking ideas. When they are historical persons taking part in God's providential structuring of time...the procedure is called *Figura* or *typology*.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, Fletcher writes, "Allegory perhaps has a reality of its own, but it is certainly not the sort that operates in our own perceptions of the physical world."<sup>16</sup> The "symbolic action" of allegory, like the obsequious discourse, is aimed more at conforming to and confirming a preformed interpretation of experience than at suggesting novel and noticeably individualistic interpretations of it.

Accordingly, Fletcher says of the reader of an allegorical text that

He is not allowed to take up any attitude he chooses but is told by the author's device of intentional control just how he shall interpret what is before him...If it seemed necessary to speak of allegory as a type of 'symbolic action,' then we might wish to say that the lack of freedom is not in any way important in the work. In that case what matters is the way that an allegory prompts a person to act rather rigidly, after he has read the work rather than during the period when his reading experience is going on.<sup>17</sup>

Jonson, likewise, manipulates his subject in order to fit him within the confines of his political-theology and, thus, disseminates the values inherent in his interpretive schema to an anticipated reader. This procedure becomes evident when his encomiastic epigrams are compared with historical fact.

William Herbert the third Earl of Pembroke may very well, according to Jonsonian precepts, be interpreted as not being a very good example of "honor and vertue" at all. Even less could it be said that he was always constant to virtue. Pembroke was not known to be a particularly good courtier in the court of Elizabeth I. He was judged as serving in a "cold and weak manner." It was noted that "There [was] a want of spirit laid to his charge, and that he [was] a melancholy young man. (*Sidney Papers* ii. 43, 122.)"<sup>18</sup> Moreover, he was known to be swayed by his passions, which were many: "All his life he was

'immoderately given up to woman.' and indulged himself in 'pleasures of all kinds, almost in all excess.' (Clarendon, *History*, i. 72)"<sup>19</sup> In 1600 he had an illicit affair with Mary Fitton, a favorite of the Queen. For his part in the affair Pembroke was afforded a short stay at Fleet Prison and banished from the Court. In March 1601 Fitton gave birth to a stillborn child. Pembroke was also beset with "pecuniary difficulties due to his personal extravagance" throughout his life.

Despite these failings Pembroke was a powerful, politically active man who supported the literary arts. He gave Jonson twenty Pounds every year to buy books. Pembroke was also more successful in James's court than in Elizabeth's. It is noted that "although James never 'loved or favoured him' he regarded and esteemed him from the first. (Nichols, *Progresses*, i. 254)"<sup>20</sup> It is the service to James and the service to Jonson himself which seem to form the link between social reality and the interpretation of the social performance in the *Epigrammes*. The name of the nobleman acts as a bridge between these two realities.

In the end, Pembroke's name is co-opted by Jonson and used as a vehicle by which to represent Jonson's political theology. It is with reference to Jonson's interpretation of the social performance that he says

regarding Pembroke that "they that hope to keep the commonwealth still safe, must studie thee."(48)

Jonson's epigram to Pembroke also completes a cycle of reciprocity which binds Pembroke to Jonson. Pembroke gives Jonson his support gratis and in return Jonson dramatizes his interpretation of the service afforded him. In Fish's view it is by virtue of his interpretation of the celebrated party that Jonson maintains independence while working in a world of patronage. Fish holds that "by a willful act of assertion" Jonson is able to "reverse his subordinate position and declare himself the center of a court and society more powerful and more durable than any that may seem to contain him."<sup>21</sup> Fish's statement is correct in that Jonson's ratification of a certain discourse is necessarily a celebration of himself -- in which his function as the disseminator and teacher of his political theology is idealized. In this respect, William Drummond's opinion of Jonson as being "a great lover and praiser of himself"(610) is born out in Jonson's praise of the names of others.

In all of the encomiastic epigrams prior service to Jonson appears to be a prerequisite. The fact that many of the individuals he interprets as exemplary were written to by Jonson during his 1605 imprisonment for the unauthorized publication of *Eastward Ho* 22, is, consequently, a



significant fact. Many letters written during his imprisonment of 1605 (Jonson was jailed three times in his career) are extant and reproduced in *Herford and Simpson*. The letters written by Jonson during this imprisonment were addressed

I to an unnamed lord, perhaps the Earle of Suffolk, then Lord Chamberlain; II, to the Earle of Salisbury; III, to another unnamed lord; IV to a noble lady 'most honor'd of the Graces, Muses, and mee', probably the Countess of Bedford; V, to a third unnamed lord, probably D'Aubigny; VI, to the Earle of Montgomery; VII to the Earle of Pembroke.<sup>23</sup>

Each one of these named individuals is celebrated in the *Epigrammes*.

Robert Cecil, a Court bureaucrat (secretary of State under Elizabeth and Lord Treasurer under James) made Earl of Salisbury by King James in May 1605, is afforded three epigrams in the collection. In *XLIII. TO ROBERT EARLE OF SALISBURY*, Salisbury, like Pembroke, is interpreted as being a great example to others because of his service to the king. In *LXIII.* and *LXIV.* his appointment to the position of Lord Treasurer is celebrated and defended. We have already seen that Jonson, writing to Salisbury from prison, promises to return the Lord's service with poetry. In epigram *XLIII.* he delivers on this promise. The device that Jonson uses in his epigram to Salisbury is to suggest that

Salisbury's actions have legitimately afforded fame to his name and that the poet only has to acknowledge this:

What need hast thou of me? or of my *Muse*?  
 Whose actions so themselves doe celebrate;  
 Which should thy countries love to speake refuse,  
 Her foes enough would fame in thee their hate.  
 'Tofore, great men were glad of *Poets*: Now,  
 I, not the worst, am covetous of thee.  
 Yer dare not, to my thought, lest hope allow  
 Of adding to thy fame; thine may to me,  
 When in my booke, men reade but *Cecill's* name,  
 And what I write thereof find farre, and free  
 From servile flatterie (common *Poets* shame)  
 As thou stand'st cleere of the necessitie. (19)

Salisbury, like Pembroke, is celebrated for his service to the state. Jonson interprets Salisbury's name as standing as a symbol of the love of vertue and hatred of vice to which, in a reciprocal manner, the love of his country, the love of the poet and the hatred of his foes is returned in measure. In recognition of the subject's heroic status he acts obsequiously towards his name.

In keeping with the obsequious performance of the poet towards Salisbury the answer to the question that begins *XLIII. TO ROBERT EARLE OF SALISBURY* is precisely "none." It is "Cecil" who is interpreted as "adding" to Jonson's fame by having his name appear in Jonson's book. Jonson's use of Cecil's name and his refusal to flatter it automatically, according to Jonson's interpretation, lifts Jonson above the ilk of the "common" poet who relies on "servile flattery." Thus, it is finally by Jonson's own

extraordinary taste in men, as guided by the precepts of his political theology, that Salisbury is celebrated. In *LXIII*. he interprets Salisbury as a symbol of the righteous individual guided to success by the operation of his own free will:

Who can consider thy right courses run,  
 With what thy vertue on the times hath won,  
 And not thy fortune; who can clearly see  
 The judgement of the king so shine in thee;  
 And that thou seek'st reward of thy each act,  
 Not from the publike voice, but private fact;(26)

In the second half of the poem he interprets Salisbury's "equal [impartial] mind" as being in "constant suffering." Salisbury's humility is exemplified by Jonson's suggestion that the lord never wanted his name to be made famous at all. Accordingly, he has the lord "forbid" his muse from honouring him.

Part of the Jonsonian encomiastic poem is usually devoted to an appraisal of how the knowledge of the names of those whom Jonson considers as possessing exemplary qualities is much needed by society. In *LXIII. TO ROBERT EARLE OF SALISBURY* he argues that if his Muse remains silent it will be to "times injury,"(26) that is, to the detriment of the times in which he lives. Likewise, in *LXVII. TO THOMAS EARLE OF SUFFOLKE* he writes,

Since men have left to doe praise-worthy things,  
 Most think all praises flatteries. But truth brings  
 That sound, and that authority with her name,  
 As, to be rais'd by her, is onely fame.

Stand high, then, *Howard*, high in eyes of men, (29)

In *Remains*, William Camden writes that "How" means a high place.<sup>24</sup> Thus, in epigram *LXVII*. Jonson is playing on the etymological sense of the Suffolke name. The effect of this device is to suggest, in the manner of the acrostic *XL. TO MARGARET RATCLIFFE*, that Suffolk's role in the social performance is essentially signified by his very name. The same idea is disseminated with regard to truth's name in the second and third lines of the poem.

It is noteworthy that when Jonson plays on the etymological sense of a name, or otherwise suggests that he can read his subject's character in his or her name alone, he usually uses the Christian name or the surname of the subject. *CII. TO WILLIAM EARLE OF PEMBROKE* is exceptional for playing on the titular name of the subject. The significance of this is that it suggests that it is not the title that makes the man, but the man who makes the title. Accordingly, in *LXVII. TO THOMAS EARLE OF SUFFOLKE*, he remarks,

High in thy bloud, thy place, but highest then,  
When, in mens wishes, so thy vertues wrought,  
As all thy honors were by them first sought:  
And thou design'd to be the same thou art,  
Before thou wert it, in each good mans heart.  
Which, by no lesse confirm'd, then thy kings choice,  
Proves, that is gods, which was the peoples voice.  
(29)

Edward B. Partridge traces the language of the last lines of this epigram to Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593-1597). Jonson greatly admired Hooker and names him in *Discoveries* with Sir Philip Sidney as a master of "wit and language..in whom all vigour of invention and strength of judgement met."(546) In *Conversations* he recommends that "for church matters" Drummond read Hooker's *Ecclesiastical History*.(598) Partridge writes,

The connection [in epigram LXVII.] amounts to this. First, Suffolk deserves to be one of Jonson's examples of virtue because he fulfils a type of virtue founded in each good man's heart by those very laws of nature which are the voice of God. Hooker phrased this truism for his age when he described the signs to know goodness by:

The most certain token of evident goodness is, if the general persuasion of all men do so account it...The general and perpetual voice of men is as the sentence of God himself. For that which all men have at all times learned, Nature herself must needs have taught; and God being the author of Nature, her voice is but his instrument." (*The Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. John Keble (Oxford University Press, 1836), 1, 282-84)}25

There is clearly an emphasis here on tradition and continuity. Moreover, authorship is presented as the means by which moral and social values are kept constant. These aspects of the Jonsonian encomiastic epigram come together again in XCIII. *TO SIR JOHN RADCLIFFE*. In this epigram the name of the subject is likened to a monument:

How like a colunne, Radcliffe, left alone

For the great marks of vertue, those being gone  
 Who did, alike with thee, thy house up-beare,  
 Stand'st thou, to shew the times what you all were?  
 (41)

In this way Jonson's praise of the name of his subject always corresponds with the pedagogical function of his political theology.

Jonson, to exemplify that the name of the subject of the encomiastic poems is a symbol of the type of performance which his political-theology validates, often argues that the name of the subject evokes the idea of a golden age. The golden age that is presented in these poems is one in which the authority of the values of Jonson's political-theology totally directs the social performance. In this respect, he writes in *LXXIV. TO THOMAS LORD CHANCELOR* -- alluding to *Astrea*, the goddess justice.

As in thy conscience, which is alwayes one:  
 The *Virgin*, long-since fled from earth, I see,  
 T'our times return'd, hath made her heaven in thee.  
 (31)

Ian Donaldson notes that *Astrea* "dwelt on earth during the Golden Age, and later fled to heaven." (656) The golden age in the encomiastic epigrams signifies a time in which worth was not calculated in monetary terms. Jonson's political-theology, as I have noted, places value only in the loving and, thus, freely given deeds of the individual. It is slightly ironic that Jonson commemorates Salisbury's

inheritance of the treasurership with a reference to a golden age in *LXIV. TO THE SAME*:

NOT glad, like those that have new hopes, or sutes,  
 With thy new place, bring I these early fruits  
 Of love, and what the golden age did hold  
 A treasure, art: contemn'd in th'age of gold.  
 Nor glad as those, that old dependents bee,  
 To see thy fathers rites new laid on thee.  
 Nor glad for fashion. Nor to shew a fit  
 Of flatterie to thy titles. Nor of wit.  
 But I am glad to see that time survive,  
 Where merit is not sepulcher'd alive.  
 Where good mens vertues them to honors bring,  
 And not to dangers. When so wise a king  
 Contends t'have worth enjoy, from his regard,  
 As her owne conscience, still, the same reward.  
 (27)

In this epigram the consideration of Salisbury's rise to the treasurership as a sign of the survival of the values of a golden age is finally connected with a consideration of Salisbury's name and this in turn is linked to the idea of the state:

These (noblest *Cecil*) labour'd in my thought  
 Wherein what wonder see thy name hath wrought?  
 That whil'st I meant but thine to gratulate,  
 I'have sung the greater fortunes of our state. (27)

Jonson's argument in these epigrams recognizes that the golden age has past but holds that the values of this fabled time have not been irreparably lost in the modern age. In *Discoveries* he writes,

I cannot think nature is so spent and decayed that  
 she can bring forth nothing worth her former  
 years. She is always the same, like herself; and  
 when she collects her strength is abler still.  
 Men are decayed, and studies: she is not. (525)

The hope of regaining paradise resides in the ability of individuals to behave in the manner advocated by Jonson's political-theology.

In *Discoveries* Jonson writes, "But they are good men that must make good the times; if men be naught, the times will be such.(528) In the sentence which follows this statement he quotes from *Vives Libri de Disciplinis* which links goodness to a realization of a time to come: "*Finis expectandus est in unoquoque hominum; animali ad mutationem promptissimo.*(528) ("The end of everyman's life should be awaited, since a man is most likely to change." [739]) In that these subjects' names are interpreted as symbolizing the lost golden age and act as a trace by which it might be remembered, they are treated as being indispensable to the pedagogical aims of the *Epigrammes*. It is in this respect that Jonson celebrates William Uvedale in *CXXV. TO SIR WILLIAM UVEDALE* as a man in whom the values of the golden age are reconstituted:

UV'dale, thou piece of the first times, a man  
 Made for what *Nature* could, or *Vertue* can;  
 Both whose dimensions, lost, the world might finde  
 Restored in thy body, and in thy minde!(62)

Likewise, Uvedale's wife's name is used as a symbol of the reappearance of classical beauty. In *CXXVI. TO HIS LADY, THEN MRS. CARY* it is "Cary" rather than "Daphne" who is Phoebus's lover.



In *CV. TO MARY LADY WROTH* Jonson uses a conceit which is similar to the one used in epigram *CXXVI*. His obsequiousness finds expression in epigram *CV*. in his argument that the names of the goddesses of classical antiquity are to be drawn out of a consideration of the subject:

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

He concludes this epigram by saying,

So you are *Natures Index*, and restore,  
 I' your selfe, all treasure lost of th'age  
 before. (50)

Jonson's obsequiousness is not just a facet of his response to the names of the king and his courtiers but also of his encomiastic epigrams on other artists and scholars whom he names.

Poems to other "studiers of humanitie" make up a significant portion of Jonson's encomiastic epigrams. In all, nineteen of the fifty-two encomiastic epigrams are addressed to such men. The praise that Jonson affords the names of these scholars does not differ significantly from the praise by which he esteems the names of courtiers. In these epigrams he admires the accomplishments of the scholar and argues that, according to these accomplishments, the

subject's merit is such that his poetic praise is legitimate and deserved. He praises scholars, like courtiers, for acting in harmony with the values of his political-theology. The greatest of these epigrams is certainly *XIV. TO WILLIAM CAMDEN*:

*Camden*, most reverend head, to whom I owe  
 All that I am in arts, all that I know.  
 (How nothing's that?) to whom my countrey owes  
 The great renowne, and name wherewith shee goes.  
 Then thee the age sees not that thing more grave,  
 More high, more holy, that she more would crave.  
 What name, what skill, what faith hast thou in things!  
 What sight in searching the most antique springs!  
 What weight, and what authority in thy speech!  
 Man scarce can make that doubt but thou canst teach.  
 Pardon free truth, and let the modestie,  
 Which conquers all, be once overcome by thee.  
 Many of thine this better could, then I,  
 But for their powers, accept my pietie.(9)

In this epigram Jonson interprets Camden as being something of a high priest of his political-theology. Camden, for Jonson, exemplifies Christian virtues and a sense of duty to the well-being of the state.

Obsequiousness is an important part of Jonson's epigram to William Camden, as it is with his encomiastic epigrams to courtiers. Jonson uses a rather commonplace obsequious claim when he says that his subject would decline having his name praised because of his humility and meekness. In the case of Camden, Jonson's claim is not exaggerated. In his texts, at least, Camden makes a point to strongly emphasize the extent of his modesty. Thus, in

the *Epistle Dedicatorie of Remains*, he refers to his text as "this silly, pittiful, and poor Treatise...being only the rude rubble and outcast rubbish...of a greater and more serious worke."<sup>26</sup> In the Preface of *Britannia*, the work to which Camden refers in the above quotation, he writes that his reason for writing the book was

But to speak the truth ingenuously, the love of my country which includes all other affections, the glory of the British name, and the advice of my friends, have done violence to my modesty, and forced against my will and judgement to undertake this task, to which I acknowledge myself unequal, and thrust me into publick.<sup>27</sup>

The most successful obsequious device of the epigram comes when Jonson claims that Britain owes both its "renowne and name" to Camden's efforts. By this conceit Jonson alludes to Camden's masterwork and greatest public achievement.

Among the obsequious devices used in *XIV. TO WILLIAM CAMDEN* the initial device, in which Jonson contends that his subject is a better scholar than himself, becomes a common device in all of the epigrams of praise to literary figures. In *XXIII. TO JOHN DONNE* Jonson catalogues all Donne's achievements only to assert in the last couplet of the poem that he must refrain from doing so: "because I cannot as I should."<sup>(12)</sup> *LV. TO FRANCIS BEAUMONT* is built around such an obsequious device. Here, Jonson examines the paradox that an obsequious discourse creates for the admirer. In

working through this dilemma Jonson takes his obsequiousness to a new level of intensity:

HOw I doe love thee *Beaumont*, and thy *Muse*,  
     That unto me dost such religion use!  
 How I doe feare my selfe, that am not worth  
     The least indulgent thought thy pen drops forth!  
 At once thou mak'st me happie, and unmak'st;  
     And giving largely to me, more thou tak'st.  
 What fate is mine, that so itselfe bereaves?  
     What art is thine, that so thy friend deceives?  
 When even there where most thou praysest mee,  
     For writing better, I must envie thee.(24)

The social performance that Jonson enacts here through the discourse of his epigram, although dependent upon the idea of being indebted and inferior to another, stands on its own as a demonstration of his own paradigm that a poet's manners "should proceed his wit." (61) Jonson's "envie" is interpreted as being a righteous one. Jonson would have the reader believe that he is not envious of Beaumont's wealth, or fame but of his goodness. In this respect his envy is a symbol of the reverence he holds with respect to the name of "Francis Beaumont."

## VI

In the social performance which Ben Jonson interprets in his *Epigrammes* proper names are symbols of reward for social performances which are in harmony with the values of his political-theology. His mock-names, on the contrary, are symbols of shame and of punishment for social performances which do not accord with the values of his political-theology. The mock-name performs a retributive function by which unacceptable behavior becomes marked as such. Thus, in *X. TO MY, IGNORANT LORD* he writes,

Thou call'st me *Poet* as a term of shame:  
But I have my revenge made, in thy name. (7)

It is worth noting that such forms of retributive justice were commonly used in Elizabethan England. Stephen Greenblatt notes that one of the governing ideas of Tudor justice was "to teach through reiterated terror."<sup>1</sup> He further notes that

Each branding, or hanging or disemboweling was theatrical in conception and performance, a repeatable admonitory drama enacted on a scaffold before a rapt audience. Those who threatened order, those on whose nature nurture could never stick -- the traitor, the vagabond, the homosexual, the thief -- were identified and punished accordingly. The idea of the 'notable spectacle,' the 'theatre of God's judgements,' extended quite naturally to the drama itself, and, indeed, to all of literature which thus takes its

rightful place as part of a vast interlocking system of repetitions, embracing homilies and hangings, royal progresses and rote learning.<sup>2</sup>

Shame, though a less drastic reaction against socially disruptive behavior than disemboweling, was also part of the enactment of justice. Thus, in this period, the process of identification and its expression in the conferring of a mark is an integral part of the ritual of justice. In keeping with this practice, the punishment suffered by Jonson for killing fellow actor Gabriel Spencer in a duel was to have his thumb branded (XIX).

In terms of Stephen Greenblatt's paradigm of self-fashioning the proper name in the *Epigrammes* acts as a symbol of authority and the submission to that authority. In keeping with this context, Jonson's encomiastic epigrams ratify an obsequious discourse. Greenblatt argues, however, that submission to authority, in fact the existence of authority at all, is always partially formed by a struggle against that which is not, or cannot, be co-opted by authority. Accordingly, Greenblatt notes that "self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile." He goes on to note that

The alien is perceived by the authority as that which is unformed and chaotic (the absence of order). Since accounts of the former...organize and thematize it, the chaotic constantly slides into the demonic and consequently the alien is always constructed as a distorted image of the authority.<sup>3</sup>

In *Discoveries*, Jonson participates in such a dialectical process in considering a paradigm of society which is constructed on the basis of the difference between inclusion and exclusion:

For it is virtue that gives glory; that will  
endenizen a man everywhere. It is only that which  
can naturalize him. A native, if he be vicious,  
deserves to be a stranger, and cast out of the  
commonwealth as an alien. (561)

The name, as we have seen, can be thought of as being, primarily, a vehicle for facilitating such actions. Accordingly, in the *Epigrammes* Jonson's use of the mock-name symbolizes an exclusion from the society of those who are named. Moreover, according to the Christian mythos which colours the subtext of all his epigrams, the mock-name symbolizes an exclusion from life itself. In this way the alien and the demonic become one in Jonson's satiric epigrams.

The two types of exclusion that the mock-name symbolizes are made manifest in the subject of *XI. ON SOMETHING THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE*:

AT court I met it, in clothes brave enough,  
To be a courtier, and lookes grave enough,  
To seeme a statesman: as I neere it came,  
It made me a great face, I asked the name.  
A Lord it cryed, buried in flesh, and blood,  
And such from whom let no man hope least good,  
For I will doe none: and as little ill,  
For I will dare none. Good Lord, walke dead still.

(7)

The subject of this epigram, unlike the courtiers and scholars praised in the encomiastic epigrams, has no merit by which to claim the title of a lord, according to Jonson's interpretation, except for its clothes and countenance. The subject of the epigram only feigns the appearance of a noble man. However, his epigram conveys that to the judgement of the subject such accoutrements do, in fact, make him a Lord. Thus, when asked his name by the implied speaker of the poem the subject responds with "A Lord...buried in flesh and blood." The indication here is that the subject feels that he has the qualities to be a nobleman but lacks the correct lineage to realize his ambition of a title.

In terms of Jonson's political-theology the intimation that the nobility distinguishes itself by any other measure than service to the king, or "merit," counts as an instance of sacrilege. As newly made knights like William Jephson prove, according to Jonson's interpretation of the social performance, title does not make merit. Rather it is merit that makes the title. In *CXVI. TO SIR WILLIAM JEPHSON* he writes,

Jephson, thou man of men, to whose lov'd name  
 All gentry, yet, owe part of their best flame!  
 So did thy vertue'enforme, thy wit sustaine  
 That age, when stood'st up the master-braine:  
 Thou wert the first, mad'st merit know her strength,  
 And those that lack'd it, to suspect at length,  
 'Twas not entayl'd on title.(58)

Also,



That bloud not mindes, but mindes did bloud adorne:  
 And to live great, was better, then great borne.  
 These were thy knowing arts. (59)

A title lacking the grounding of merit is no title at all according to Jonson.

It should not be thought, however, that hereditary titles are discredited by Jonson. Indeed, I have noted that in the epistle of dedication to the Earl of Pembroke Jonson sees names as having the power to transfer the qualities of an individual to his progeny. Partridge and Wayne single out the name of "Sidney" as possessing such "magical" powers. Like Camden, Jonson strongly emphasizes the idea that a title is earned on the basis of services rendered to the king, but does not in any way question the validity of a hereditary claim to a title.

In *XI.*, following the description of the subject and his claims, Jonson delivers a brief judgement of the character of the subject. The judgement of the subject in the epigram comes in line six. Here, he concludes that no good can come from such a subject. As a consequence of this Jonson argues that he need not even attempt to mock the subject because the state of limbo in which he exists, by his own misplaced ambition, is all that is necessary to impugn the subject. Hence, Jonson argues that he will do

neither good nor "ill" to the subject but let the subject remain in the condition he found him.

The context of *IX. ON SOME-THING THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE* is notably secular; however, the sub-text of the poem evokes the Christian mythos and Christian doctrine. Jonson constructs this epigram around the conceit of being stillborn. To be stillborn -- according to Catholic doctrine, which Jonson alludes to here -- is to be in a state of limbo since the sacrament of Baptism has not conferred on the child membership into the religious society and hence into the promise of resurrection. Jonson refers to the subject as "Some-thing" and "it" because, being stillborn, the subject does not constitute a person. Thus, the subject's lack of a proper name symbolizes a lack of personhood itself. The subject of the epigram, in keeping with his being stillborn, is "buried in flesh and blood." In the sixth line he puns on "no man" as it resembles the Latin word "*nomen*" meaning "family name." It is the lack of a family name, of course, that the subject points to as being at the heart of his dilemma.

Jonson agrees with the subject's interpretation of the matter to the degree that he interprets the subject as being stillborn and, thus, lacking both name and status. Moreover, he views the subject's ambition as being stillborn. In the *Epigrammes* selfish ambition always

carries the seed of its own failure and is never rewarded. Jonson's final exclamation "walke dead still" is not only the synopsis of Jonson's consideration of the subject but an allusion to the term "stillborn" itself.

In *XI. ON SOME-THING THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE* Jonson uses allusion to efface, but not erase an invective statement. Moreover, he uses the allusion to add to and illustrate his argument. However, he does not allow the allusion to dominate the narrative of the epigram. It is this sort of technique that he is probably advocating when he notes to William Drummond of Hawthorden that "A great many epigrams were ill because they expressed in the end what should have been understood by what was said." (603) In *LXII. TO A WEAK GAMESTER IN POETRY* Jonson asserts that poetry is a "subtile sport." (55) His allusion to the idea of being stillborn is indeed subtile in that the connection between the subject and this state of non-being appears to be logically, even organically, connected. The allusion appears to grow out of the discussion of the subject matter itself. Thus, the allusion is unobtrusive and blends into the argument of the epigram

The circle that Fish interprets as being the sum of Jonson's calculation of merit is interrupted by Jonson's deference to the Christian mythos. As we have noted, according to this mythos, to not have one's performance in

the temporal world governed by desire for the well-being of the spirit is to be physically and spiritually dead. In this doctrine any valuation of immediate gratification of desire counts as a transgression in that it necessarily devalues the gratification to be afforded by the life to come. By the use of the mock-name Jonson symbolizes the spiritual death of the ill-behaved subject.

In *LXII. TO FINE LADY WOULD-BE*, Jonson links infatuation with the life at court with death. He charges the subject with having procured an abortion in order to prolong her enjoyment of the pleasures of the court.

Fine Madame Would-bee, wherefore shoulde you feare,  
 That love to make so well, a child to beare?  
 The world reputes you barren: but I know  
 Your 'pothecarie, and his drug sayes no.  
 Is it the paine affrights? that's soone forgot.  
 Or your complexions losse? you have a pot,  
 That can restore that. Will it hurt your feature?  
 To make amends, yo'are thought a wholesome creature.  
 What should the cause be? Oh, you live at court:  
 And there's both losse of time and losse of sport  
 In a great belly. Write, then on thy wombe,  
 Of the not borne, yet buried, here's the tombe.(26)

The mock-name that Jonson uses to begin this epigram, like the mock-name in epigram *IX*, suggests the subject is in a state of non-being. Moreover, this mock-name also suggests the existence of ambitious desire in his subject. Thus, the desire of the subject of this epigram comes to stand for the entirety of her being in the way in which a part comes to stand for the whole in synecdoche.

Don E. Wayne notes that synecdoche is the dominant trope in Jonson's satirical epigrams. Synecdoche, Wayne argues, is a particularly useful trope to the satirist in that "in most instances the satirist's intention is to censure only what he claims to be an abnormality in the social and institutional order of things."<sup>4</sup> In keeping with this remark in *From Poetaster to the Reader* the voice of the author notes, "My books have still been taught to spare the persons and speak the vices."<sup>5</sup> Lady Would-Bee's sin, as her name indicates, is a product of her ambitious desire which creates a disjunction between who she is and who she thinks she is.

Jonson interprets a disjunction between appearance and reality as typifying the performance of the subject in *LXII. TO FINE LADY WOULD-BEE* as he does in *IX. ON SOME-THING THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE*. He argues that Lady Would-bee appears wholesome but, in fact, is furthering her own ambitions. It is, of course, Jonson who ascertains that it is because of the indulgence of her ambition that the Lady remains barren. Finally, Jonson's appraisal of what should be done to the Lady at the end of the epigram is in keeping with the retributive justice which characterizes his political-theology. The lady is told to mark herself as a servant of death, rather than the law of love which is at

the heart of Jonson's vision of the way the social performance should be.

In *Discoveries*, under the heading of *Nobilium Ingenia*, Jonson notes that there are two types of noblemen to which "no obligation will fasten." These two sorts are identified as those who love their own ease" and those who "avoid business and care" out of either "vice of nature" or "self-direction." (552) In the *Epigrammes*, Jonson goes about "battling them" against a sort that, according to *XCVIII. TO SIR THOMAS ROE*, "...is round within himself, and streight." (45) A person who possesses these qualities, according to Jonson,

Need seeke no other strength, no other height;  
 Fortune upon him breakes her selfe, if ill,  
 And what would hurt his vertue makes it still. (45)

Accordingly, he commends Sir Thomas Roe to

Be alwayes to thy gather'd selfe the same:  
 And studie conscience, more then thou would'st fame.  
 Though both be good, the latter yet is worst,  
 And ever is ill got without the first. (45)

Unlike the subjects of his encomiastic epigrams the subjects of his satirical epigrams are motivated by the desire for fame, or reward in this world. They strive towards something that is an illusion, which has no spiritual reality and, thus, they lose their own spiritual reality. These subjects, who are constantly deluded by their own

desires, do not have the ability to be either humble or pious.

Epigrams XXXVI. *ON SIR VOLUPTUOUS BEAST*, XXVI. *ON THE SAME BEAST*, XXXIX. *ON OLD COLT*, LXXXIII. *TO HORNET*, CXVII. *ON GROVNE* and CXVIII. *ON GUT* have mock-names in their titles which are specifically related to fleshly vices for which they are reprimanded. These epigrams are quite graphic. Unlike the encomiastic epigrams in which Jonson responds to the name of his subject in an obsequious manner, in CXVIII. *ON GUT* he represents his moral superiority over the subject by demeaning him:

Gut eates all day, and lechers all the night,  
 So all his meate he tasteth over, twice:  
 And, striving so to double his delight,  
 He makes himselfe a thorough-fare of vice.  
 Thus, in his belly, he can change a sin  
 Lust it comes out, that gluttonly went in.(59)

In this epigram the vice equals the totality of the subject's being. The mock-name corresponds to this interpretation and signifies that the individuality of the subject has been entirely lost to the degenerative effects of sin itself.

Jonson's use of the mock-name symbolizes this loss of personhood and belonging. Accordingly, in *Discoveries* he writes,

I know what kind of persons I displease, men bred  
 in the declining and decay of virtue, betrothed to  
 their own vices, that have abandoned or  
 prostituted their own good names; hungry and

ambitious of infamy, invested in all deformity,  
 enthralled to ignorance and malice, of a hidden  
 and concealed malignity, and that hold a  
 concomitancy with all evil.(582)

In *CXV. ON THE TOWNES HONEST MAN* he asserts that because the  
 subject serves vice he has lost his personhood and,  
 accordingly, cannot be given a name:

YOU wonder, who this is! and, why I name  
 Him not, aloud, that boasts so good a fame:  
 Naming so many, too! But, this is one,  
 Suffers no name, but a description:  
 Being no vitious person, but the vice  
 About the towne; and knowne too, at that price.  
 (57)

In his style of social performance and his discourse the  
 "townes honest man" contrasts sharply with the discourse  
 Jonson prefers as the model for the type of social  
 performance his political-theology sanctions. According to  
 Jonson, the discourse of a proper social performance is  
 polite and reciprocating in an obsequious manner. He  
 interprets this type of discourse as being a

subtle thing, that doth affections win  
 By speaking well O' the company it's in.(57)

Unlike the boasting of the "townes honest man" Jonson  
 characterizes his own poetic discourse, in *II. TO MY BOOKE*,  
 as being

...not covetous of the least selfe fame,  
 Made from the hazard of anothers shame:  
 Much lesse with lewd, prophane, and beastly phrase,  
 To catch the world's loose laughter, or vaine gaze.  
 (5)

In this epigram Jonson judges that



He that departs with his owne honesty  
 For vulgar praise, doth it too dearly buy.(5)

In the social performance which is preformed in Jonson's *Epigrammes* such fame is bought at the price of one's own name. In this manner Jonson's interpretation of the social performance echoes the teachings of the Scripture: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver or gold."(Proverbs 22:1)

In '*Authors-Readers*': *Jonson's Community of the Same* Stanley Fish writes of *CXV. ON THE TOWNES HONEST MAN* that

he is the exact opposite of those (like Pembroke and Lady Bedford) who can be named, but not described, because description can only "catch" surfaces and coverings and is itself a covering. The point, of course, is that the towne's honest man is all surface; he has no stable moral identity and therefore there is nothing *in* him to which the name could be consistently attached.  
 (19)

In fact, the explanation given by Jonson, as to why the "towne's honest man" cannot be permitted a name ("suffers no name") is that there is no person to be named. Thus, he explains that the "townes honest man" is "no vitious person" -- that is, not merely a person corrupted by vice but the vice itself.

The "townes honest man," the subject of *XI. ON SOMETHING THAT WALKES SOME-WHERE* and the subject of *LXII. TO FINE LADY WOULDDE-BEE* are ciphers according to Jonson's

interpretation. The paradox that is inherent to this situation is that in punitively castigating these subjects, by bequeathing them with a mock-name, Jonson does give them an individual identity as rich and full as the identity he gives to those whom he names properly. Thus, in reading the satirical epigrams one finds that the more Jonson redresses his erring subject the more real the subject becomes.

Stephen Greenblatt notes that in the process of self-fashioning, in which identity is produced as the product of the conflict between authority and that which is excluded in the act of constructing and maintaining that authority,

The power generated to attack the alien in the name of authority is produced in excess and threatens the authority it sets out to defend. Hence, self-fashioning always involves some experience of threat, some effacement or undermining, some loss of self.<sup>6</sup>

Jonson's use of the mock-name does, in effect, undermine the authority of his vision of a polite social performance to the degree that the authority of the social performance he envisions is based on the persuasiveness of love and not on coercion. The king and poet, who together act as directors of the social performance are both interpreted, by Jonson, as teaching by example and not through violence. Moreover, according to Jonson's political theology, those whose actions are reprehensible are punished to the extent that

they are recognized as evil and their schemes fail to net them the satisfaction of their desires. The mock-name is, however, enacted as a punitive measure and, thus, is itself a form of coercion.

In Jonson's view no such discrepancy exists because, of course, any mobilization of punitive force is aimed not at an individual, whose free-will enables him to be as good or as bad as any other individual, but at sin itself. Thus, in *Poetaster to the Reader* he argues that "ill men haue a lust to t'heare others sinns and good men haue a zeale to heare sinne sham'd."(sic)<sup>7</sup> The problem is that sin only ever exists in relation to a body on which it works its effects. Inevitably, when this axiom is put into practice the line distinguishing the sin from the individual is erased.

The erasure of the difference between sin and the sinner is implicitly acknowledged in Edward B. Partridge's discussion of the effects of naming in the satirical epigrams. In this respect, his observations constitute a misreading of the Jonsonian epigram of dispraise. In effect, Partridge debunks the precepts which govern the use of names in the satirical epigrams by reading the mock-names as being damaging, even fatal, to a "person." Such a misreading is understandable considering Jonson's tendency to think of the sin and the sinner as being synonymous with

each other. The erasure of the difference between sin and the sinner is most clearly evident in *To My Detractor*, an epigram not included in his 1616 *Workes*:

My verses were commended, thou dar'st say,  
 And they were very good: yet thou think'st nay.  
 For thou objectest (as thou hast been told)  
 The envied return of forty pound in gold.  
 Fool, do not rate my rhymes: I've found thy vice  
 Is to make cheap the lord, the lines, the price.  
 But bawl thou on; I pity thee, poor cur,  
 That thou hast lost thy noise, thy foam, thy stir,  
 To be known what thou art, a blatant beast,  
 By barking against me. Thou look'st at least  
 I now should write on thee? No, wretch, thy name  
 Shall not work out unto it such a fame.  
 Thou art not worth it. Who will care to know  
 If such a tyke as thou e'er wert or no,  
 A mongrel cur? Thou shouldst stink forth and die  
 Nameless and noisome as thy infamy.  
 No man will tarry by the as he goes  
 To ask thy name, if he have half his nose,  
 But fly thee, like the pest! Walk not the street  
 Out in the dog-days, lest the killer meet  
 Thy noddle, with his club; and dashing forth  
 thy dirty brains, men smell thy want of worth.  
 (466-467)

The refusal to name the subject in this epigram works in unison with his envisioning the subject as a "cur." Finally, the negation of existence that namelessness implies is fully developed and enacted in the last couplet of the epigram in which the subject is imagined to be destroyed.

The effacement of the difference between sin and the individual who is interpreted as sinning seems to be the inevitable weak spot inherent in the project of imposing a ideologically motivated interpretation on "ordinaire"

matters". Inevitably Jonson's own language disrupts the integrity of his ideological constructs.

The coercive effects of nicknames such as Jonson uses in the satiric epigrams are recognized today as an "important instrument of social control."<sup>8</sup> Dietz Bering in *The Stigma of Names: Anti-Semitism in German Daily Life 1812-1933* notes that psychologist J. Morgan demonstrated the coercive effects of the nickname in "an extensive monograph on the naming groups of children." J. Morgan, according to Dietz, assigned to nicknames a "group-creating force within a population."<sup>9</sup> The groups created by the children's use of nicknames in this study parallel those produced by Jonson's use of names in the *Epigrammes*. J. Morgan reported the "division into 'people and non-people,'" "the privileged group," and "the scapegoats." Bering notes that the studies of German researchers Kranz Kiener and Hannelor Nitschke support the hypothesis that nicknames can be used to divide up society into groups. Bering writes that in 1972 these researchers

Produced proof of the negative effect of these nicknames: subjects were confronted with passport photos, first without names and then after two months, the same ones with positive, negative and neutrally assessed nicknames placed beneath them. The two judgements significantly differed from one another. The negative nicknames procured the greatest difference between the first and second judgement. Deep breaches were above all to be observed in those very features which could be

summed up as factors of 'social relations' and 'personality value'.

But the impact of nicknames thus revealed was also expressed in more extensive remarks by pupils themselves. The authors' final thesis therefore seems well supported: alongside the manipulation of the image, the malicious name-giving also represents a kind of mental possession...it signifies the activation of the dependent relationship which is imposed with the name. This, doubtless, particularly happens to a teacher when his nickname...is shouted after him in the corridors of the school or in the street, is written on the blackboard, etc. The pupil's intention is to make the teacher experience his powerlessness and to rattle him.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover,

The fact that the function of nicknames intensifies when war is declared on somebody has also been underlined by J. Morgan and his collaborators...They had seen nicknames used as weapons in conflicts between races, as boundary signs which mark a social direction from 'inside' to outside.<sup>11</sup>

Jonson, of course, was no stranger to the insidious effects of the nickname.

In *Ben Jonson*, Rosalind Miles notes that Jonson bore the brunt of mocking nicknames throughout his lifetime:

Jonson's stepfather was a bricklayer and the ignominy of this trade hung about the poet all his days. Anyone offended by Jonson thereafter fell at once to reminding him of this connection; he was called a 'mortar-treader,' a 'whoreson lime-and-hair rascal,' and 'the wittiest fellow of a bricklayer in all England.'<sup>12</sup>

It is not surprising, considering these observations, to find that Jonson's satirical epigrams often degenerate into

a poetical taunting when the subject of his epigram happens to be his personal adversary.

*Herford and Simpson* apply *XCVII. ON THE NEW MOTION* and *CXXIX. TO MIME* to Jonson's collaborator and hated adversary Inigo Jones. Jones collaborated with Jonson in the creation of the court masques by designing their elaborate and lavish sets. The relationship between the two men, however, was a stormy one. In *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden* Drummond reports that Jonson once "said to Prince Charles of Inigo Jones, that when he wanted words to express the greatest villain in the world, he would call him an Inigo." (605) Such vituperation is hardly disguised in *XCVIII*. Here, the subject of the epigram is likened to a puppet whose every move is at the mercy of the whims of others. However, this ill-mannered obsequiousness, which ironically seems barely distinguishable from Jonson's own obsequiousness, is interpreted as always failing to gain the subject the respect that it is implied he so eagerly seeks:

He is no favourites favourite, no deare trust  
 Of any *Madames*, hath neadd squires, and must.  
 Nor did the king of Denmarke him salute,  
 When he was here. Nor hath he got a sute,  
 Since he was gone, more then the one he weares.  
 Nor are the Queenes most honor'd maides by th'eares  
 About his forme. What then so swells each lim?  
 Onely his clothes have over-leaven'd him. (45)

In such cases Jonson falls afoul of his own vision of a proper and mannered social performance using language that exposes his enviousness. His own poetic discourse, then, becomes the image of the viciousness which he is committed to combat.



## CONCLUSION

From the outset I envisioned this paper as fully exploring the implications of the very purposeful way in which Ben Jonson uses names in his *Epigrammes*. To me, Jonson's deployment of names not only worked in cooperation with the critical and uncritical attitudes of the text, but were the starting and ending points for these exercises. I felt, because of this, that naming was more than simply a way of gaining acclaim from the mouths and gold from the purses of a coterie of patronizing courtiers. The placement of the names themselves, in the titles of the epigrams, suggested to me that the reader of these poems was being made aware of names and the power of naming. As I studied the use of names in the text and the connections between naming, the individual epigrams and the collection as a whole, I became convinced that the name was being used in a political way as a means by which to facilitate a reformation of society.

Jonson's politics upon further study proved to be conservative in nature, favouring restraint in all levels of human endeavor. Jonson's politics of restraint, I found, were influenced by, and made use of, a wealth of written material made available by humanist scholarship. I

interpreted Jonson as using these materials to fashion a social performance. Jonson's interpretation of society, I believe, is, in the end, thoroughly devoted to the viewpoint of the humanist scholar. What is best for Jonson and other "studiers of humanitie" inevitably appears as that which is best for humanity itself. What is best for scholars is a calm environment where upheaval is kept to a minimum and where those who traditionally have patronized scholarship have the power and the funds to continue to do so. Unfortunately, many of these insights are only touched upon in this paper.

At this point I should comment on the scholarship of this paper. This study was conceived of, researched and written in a little under four months. My conception of what Jonson is doing in the *Epigrammes* constantly evolved during this period and continues to do so. As my view of the *Epigrammes* shifted so did my treatment of the subject of names. Nevertheless, my core insight, that Jonson uses names as a way of symbolizing the actions of reward and punishment has remained constant, even though my understanding of the context in which this manipulation of names takes place has been repeatedly updated and improved.

The connection between name and identity remains a subject which invites exploration and promises discoveries about ourselves, our history and our literature. The

literature of the seventeenth century is a marvelous place to study this connection. This is perhaps because the early seventeenth century saw the passing of an era in which the role of the name as a mark of social position was an accepted norm. Names, of course, are less remarkable in our democratic, industrialized society.

In regards to the emphasis placed on names in this period, it seems significant to me that the Earl of Clarendon, in the conclusion of *A Brief View and Survey of the Dangerous and pernicious Errors to Church and State, in Mr. Hobbes's Book, Entitled Leviathan* (1667), can sum up the event of the English civil war in a sentence by characterizing it as a struggle between those who possessed names and those who did not. In a consideration of Hobbes's version of the life and legacy of poet and courtier Sidney Godolphin, Clarendon writes,

And I would be very willing to preserve the just testimony which he gives to the memory of *Sidney Godolphin* who deserved all the Eulogy that he gives him, and whose untimely loss in the beginning of the War, was too lively an instance of the inequality of the contention, when such inestimable Treasure was ventur'd against dirty people of no name, and whose lamentable loss was lamented by all men living who pretend to Virtue, how much divided soever in the prosecution of that quarrel.<sup>1</sup>

Ben Jonson's treatment of the name in his *Epigrammes* underlines its crucial importance in relation to ideas of ethics, society and politics. Accordingly, names should be

considered as the key element in his endeavor to preform a social performance.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Sara J. van den Berg, The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987) 88.

2. Ben Jonson, "Timber," Oxford Authors: Ben Jonson, ed. Ian Donaldson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985) 543. Further references to materials found in this text will be documented in the body of the thesis. Page numbers will appear in parenthesis immediately following the quotation.

3. Stephen Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) 201.

4. Ben Jonson, "Epigrammes," The Complete Poetry of Ben Jonson, ed. William B. Hunter, Stuart ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1976) 3. Further references to this text will be documented in the body of the thesis itself. Page numbers will appear in parenthesis immediately following the quotation.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. David Wykes, "Ben Jonson's 'Chaste Booke': *The Epigrammes*," Renaissance and Modern Studies 13 (1969): 77.
2. Wykes, 79-80.
3. Wykes, 78.
4. Wykes, 79.
5. Wykes, 80.
6. Wykes, 81.
7. Wykes, 82.
8. Wykes, 83-84.
9. Wykes, 83.
10. Wykes, 85.
11. Wykes, 85.
12. Wykes, 85.
13. Edward B. Partridge, "Jonson's *Epigrammes*: The Named and the Nameless," The Literary Imagination 1 April 1973) : 190.
14. Partridge, 155.
15. Partridge, 158.
16. Partridge, 163.
17. Partridge, 185.
18. Partridge, 164.
19. Partridge, 183.
20. Partridge, 193.
21. Partridge, 194.

22. Partridge, 191.
23. Partridge, 192.
24. Don E. Wayne, "Poetry and Power in Ben Jonson's *Epigrammes*: The Naming of Facts or the Figuring of Social Relations?" Renaissance and Modern Studies 23 (1974): 97.
25. Partridge, 195.
26. Partridge, 195.
27. Mark Anderson, "Defining Social Relations: The Function of Character Names in Ben Jonson's Early Comedies" Literary Onomastics Society 8 (1981): 180.
28. Anderson, 184.
29. Anderson, 185.
30. Anderson, 186.
31. Anderson, 181.
32. Anderson, 188.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. "Names," The New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. X. (New York: Mc Graw-Hill, 1967) 201.
2. Julia Kristeva, Language -- the Unknown: an Initiation into Linguistics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) 98.
3. Kristeva, 108.
4. Kristeva, 109.
5. Kristeva, 109.
6. All references to the Bible in this paper refer to the King James Version.
7. Jacques Lacan, Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis. trans. Anthony Wilden (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968) 39.
8. Lacan, 64-65.
9. Max K. Adler, Naming and Addressing: A Sociolinguistic Study. (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1978.) 93-94.
10. Harold R. Isaacs, Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1975) 76.
11. Isaacs, 76.
12. Calvello's findings are quoted in Dietz Bering, The Stigma of Names: Antisemitism in German Daily Life, 1812-1933. trans. Neville Plaice. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992) 186.
13. Isaacs, 76.
14. William Camden. Britannia. facsimile of the 1806 edition, ed. Richard Gough (New York: Georg Olms Verlag Hildensheim, 1974) xxxvii.
15. Hereafter, Remains Concerning Britain will be referred to as "*Remains*".
16. William Camden, Remains, ed. R.D. Dunn (Toronto: U of T Press, 1984) xxv.
17. Camden, Remains, xxv.



18. This text is taken from Stuart Piggot's introduction to William Camden, Britannia, facsimile of the 1695 edition, Edmund Gibson ed. (Devon: David and Charles Ltd. 1951) 8.

19. Camden, Remains, 45.

20. Camden, Remains, 90.

21. Camden, Remains, 113.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. John S. Mebane, Renaissance Magic and the Return of the Golden Age: The Occult Tradition and Marlowe, Jonson, and Shakespeare (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989) 156.
2. This point was offered by Dr. W.G. Roebuck.
3. Mebane, 157.
4. Mebane, 173.
5. Basil Willey, The Seventeenth-Century Background (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1934) 66.
6. Theodore K. Rabb, The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975)
7. Rabb, 37.
8. Rabb, 52-53.
9. van den Berg, The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry, 102.
10. Partridge, 190.
11. Partridge, 155.
12. Jonson's solicitations appear in letters collected in C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson eds., Ben Jonson, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925) 195-196
13. Herford & Simpson, 190.
14. Herford and Simpson, 194.
15. Camden, Remains, 294.
16. van den Berg, The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry, 89.
17. van den Berg, The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry, 89.
18. D. Heyward Brock, A Ben Jonson Companion, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983) 169.
19. Camden, Remains, 302.

20. Camden, Remains, 302.
21. Camden, Remains, 417.
22. Camden, Britannia (1806), xxxvi.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Jean Le Drew Metcalf, "Subjecting the King: Ben Jonson's Praise of James I," English Studies in Canada, Vol. XVII, (June 1991), No. 2: 138.
2. D. Heyward Brock, 235.
3. Isabel Rivers, The Poetry of Conservatism: (1600-1745) A Study of Poets and Public Affairs, (Cambridge: Rivers Press, 1973) 43.
4. Rivers, 44.
5. Camden, Britannia (1695), clxxi.
6. Sir Philip Sidney, "An Apology for Poetry," The Critical Tradition, ed. David . Richter (New York: Bedford Books, 1989) 138.
7. Sidney, 144.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Hereafter, *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden*, will be referred to as "*Conversations*."
2. Camden, Britannia (1695), clxxxii.
3. Stanley Fish, "Authors-Readers: Jonson's Community of the Same," Representations, 7 (1984): 51.
4. Fish, 38.
5. Fish, 38.
6. Fish, 38.
7. Fish, 14.
8. Fish, 39.
9. Wayne, 85.
10. Wayne, 85.
11. Wayne, 86.
12. Rivers, 52.
13. Rivers, 70.
14. Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (New York: Cornell University Press, 1964) 368.
15. Fletcher, 27.
16. Fletcher, 104.
17. Fletcher, 323.
18. The Dictionary of National Biography, eds. Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee, Vol. IX. (London: Oxford University Press, 1917) 678.
19. The Dictionary of National Biography, 678.
20. The Dictionary of National Biography, 679.

21. Fish, 57.
22. Jonson and Chapman were arrested without being formally charged. The precise reason for their arrest is still a mystery.
23. Herford & Simpson, 190.
24. Camden, Remains, 116.
25. Partridge, 159. Partridge quotes from The Works of Richard Hooker, ed. John Keble (Oxford University Press, 1836), 1, 282-284.
26. Camden, Remains, 3.
27. Camden, Britannia (1806), xxxv.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Greenblatt, 201.
2. Greenblatt, 201.
3. Greenblatt, 9.
4. Wayne, 87.
5. Ben Jonson, Workes, 273.
6. Greenblatt, 9.
7. Ben Jonson, Workes, 273.
8. Bering, 196.
9. Bering, 196.
10. Bering, 197.
11. Bering, 198.
12. Rosalind Miles, Ben Jonson: His Life and Work (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986) 7.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

Graham Roebuck, "Sidney Godolphin," Dictionary of Literary Biography: Seventeenth-Century British Non-Dramatic Poets 2nd Series, ed. M. Thomas Hester (Detroit: Gale Research Inc. 1993) 131.



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