

**FAMILIAL POLITICS
AND THE STUART COURT MASQUE**

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by

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Michelle Haslem: *Familial Politics and the Stuart Court Masque*

This thesis contends that the monarch-centred view of the masque, which has prevailed since the publication in the 1960s and 1970s of Stephen Orgel's seminal works on the genre, needs to be challenged in the light of recent scholarship on the cultural agency of other members of the royal family. In my introduction I argue that while the New Historicism has been crucial in elucidating the theatricalization of power in the early Stuart court, its insistence on the inevitability of the collusion between art and sovereign power needs to be questioned.

The masque has long been seen as a monolithic and univocal celebration of monarchical power, despite the fact that it was promoted at court not by King James but by other members of the royal family. Adopting a loosely chronological approach, this thesis retells the story of the 'Jacobean' court masque by recovering the role played in the commissioning and performance of masques by James's wife, his children, and his male favourites. The chapters set out to hear voices other than that of the King, and discover that, while panegyric was part of each masque, it was rarely as unequivocal as traditional criticism has suggested. On the contrary, the annual masques were frequently appropriated to express the oppositional agendas of factions at court, and above all, of members of James's own family.

I argue that Queen Anne set a precedent for the disruptive use of the masque which she exploited to present herself as independent from the King, and to emphasise her importance as the mother of the royal children. Prince Henry, and later Prince Charles, both used the masque to contest the pacifist policies of the King, while Buckingham's success as a favourite was linked to his skilful exploitation of the masques as an integral part of his self-fashioning.

Above all by shifting the focus away from King James to consider the more active participation in the masque of other members of the royal family, this thesis offers a possibility of moving beyond the current impasse of the subversion / containment debate to a more nuanced reading of the culture of the early Stuart court which recognises the delicate process of negotiation and accommodation in which the masquers and their audiences were engaged.

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Chapter one: The King, the Family and the Masque

King of England

This, and the whole frame, was couered with a curtaine of silke, painted like a thicke cloude, and at the approach of the K. was instantly to be drawne. The Allegorie being, that those clouds were gathered vpon the face of the Citie, through their long want of his most wished sight: but now, as at the rising of the Sunne, all mists were dispersed and fled.¹

The entry of James I into the city of London on 15 March 1604 was thus troped by Ben Jonson as the beginning of a new dawn, with James as the sun, whose accession to the English throne a year earlier had dispersed the clouds of uncertainty regarding the succession that had darkened the last years of Elizabeth's reign. This, the first of seven triumphal arches, was located at Fenchurch, and depicted the City of London, carved in miniature, with niches for the actors, one of whom, representing the Genius of the city, welcomed James by declaring, 'Neuer came man, more long'd for, more desir'd' (VII, 93, l. 336). Similar spectacles greeted James as he progressed from the Tower to Westminster, most reiterating in some way Jonson's presentation of the King as the bringer of new light and new life.² Thus the Soper Lane End arch at

¹ Ben Jonson, *Part of the King's Entertainment in passing to his Coronation*, in *Ben Jonson*, ed. by C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson, 11 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925-52), VII (1941), 90, ll. 235-238. All quotations from Jonson's masques and entertainments are from this edition, hereafter H&S, and are given in the text by volume, page and line reference. The quotation comes from Jonson's description of his device for the first of the seven triumphal arches, at Fenchurch (pp. 83-94), and is followed by a description of the arch at Temple Bar and the concluding speech at the Strand (pp. 95-109). James's triumphal entry took place on 15 March 1604, having been postponed from the previous year as a result of the plague.

² The arches are depicted and described in Stephen Harrison, *The Arches of Triumph* (London, 1604), and there is an eyewitness account by Gilbert Dugdale entitled *The Time Triumphant* (London, 1604). Jonson's rival, Thomas Dekker, who was

Cheapside depicted the Fount of Virtue sucked dry by the vices of Detraction and Oblivion, until the 'glorious presence of the King' instantaneously defeated the Vices, causing the fountain to run with milk, wine and balm (Dekker, II, 278). The next arch, at Little Conduit in Cheap, developed the theme of James's regenerative power, by crediting him with the miraculous reinvigoration of the drooping garden of plenty.

These scenes, functioning to mystify sovereign power, were on one level conventional commonplaces, none more so than the depiction of the King as the sun whose beams heralded not only a new day, but the new life of spring. However, the striking transformations exemplified in my opening quotation might equally be seen as expressing the genuine and dramatic sense of change felt by the nation when James came to the throne. Despite attempts to achieve continuity in iconographic terms by blending the English rose and the Scottish thistle, the differences were tangible.³ The successor to the Virgin Queen was a male monarch and a foreigner, who brought with him a new political élite of Scots, and perhaps most importantly of all, a family - the first royal family since the reign of Henry VIII. He was a writer, whose political theories had been reprinted and devoured at an unprecedented rate by his new

responsible for three of the arches, published his part as *The Magnificent Entertainment* (London, 1604). See *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by F. Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953-1961), II, 229-309. For a convenient summary of the royal entry see David M. Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), pp. 71-89.

³ A similar gesture towards iconographic continuity can be seen in the claim made in the speech at the arch at Fleet Street that Astraea 'Who with our last Queenes spirit, fled up hither' has returned to earth, *Dekker*, II, 298.

English subjects.⁴ As well as his ideas about kingship, James brought with him a commitment to peace, a pacifism that was both personal - a reaction against the violent events of his own youth - and political. An awareness of James's programmatic pacifism prompted the Dutch merchants to sponsor an arch at the Royal Exchange, 'intreating wee may be sheltered under your winges now, as then under hers' (Dekker, II, 274). This was a thinly disguised attempt to ensure a continuation of the English monarchy's support for the Dutch cause against Spain, but the plea fell on deaf ears; one of the earliest events of James's reign was the cessation of hostilities with Catholic Spain, and a little under five months after the royal entry, the Anglo-Spanish peace treaty was signed.

The domestic counterpart to James's pursuit of European peace was his project for the unification of Scotland and England. This was alluded to at the Fleet Street arch which depicted James's four kingdoms - England, Scotland, Ireland and France - and expressed the hope that James would reunite the realms divided by Brutus. In 1604 James was already styling himself King of Great Britain.⁵ Yet, as was so often to be the case in the next twenty-one years, the reality fell far short of the ideal, as

⁴ Dekker's device for the arch at Gracious Street made reference to the King as author, depicting Apollo, who, as patron of the civilizing arts, would become strongly associated with James, the poet-king. Apollo was shown 'poynting to the battel of *Lepanto*, fought by the *Turks*, (of which his Majestie hath written a *Poem*)', Dekker, II, 265. For a discussion of James's construction of himself as author in the metaphorical sense of originator, as well as the literal sense, see chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis.

⁵ He issued a proclamation announcing his assumption of the style on 20 October. See *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, ed. by J. F. Larkin and Paul Hughes, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), I, 94-98.

projects for union were fraught with division and plans for peace collapsed into war.⁶

In March 1604, future peace must have seemed assured. The Gracious Street arch depicted James receiving the sceptre from Henry VII, another attempt to rewrite the change from the Tudor to the Stuart dynasty as sameness rather than difference, and a visual affirmation of the new King's genealogy.⁷ Jonathan Goldberg comments on the fact that 'kings more and more stressed their legitimacy by pointing to their lineage and invented ancestries to further the sense that genealogy was destiny', and James was certainly adept at manipulating the rhetoric of the family.⁸ He had achieved the prize of the English throne by distancing himself from, if not sacrificing, his own mother and replacing her with Elizabeth as a surrogate mother, sister and (at one stage) a possible wife. However, the complexity of James's relationships with the parental figures of Mary and Elizabeth, together with slurs on his legitimacy,

⁶ The tensions between unity and division provide the dominant theme of chapter 4 of this thesis, while the ongoing struggle between peace and war, pacifism and militarism, are discussed in the context of the King's relationships with his heirs, Prince Henry and Prince Charles in chapters 3 and 5 respectively.

⁷ Henry VII was an appropriate figure to link with James, since he had united two warring houses bringing peace to a country racked with civil war, just as James had peacefully resolved the succession issue, and united in his person the kingdoms of England and Scotland. Interestingly, Henry VII was to feature prominently in a number of Prince Henry's entertainments, affirming the Prince's, rather than his father's, links with the Tudor dynasty. Henry's exploitation of the nostalgia for an Elizabethan golden age is discussed in chapter 3.

⁸ Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images', in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), pp. 3-32 (p. 7).

prompted him to redefine the notion of claiming authority through genealogy, and he set about locating his legitimacy less in his own descent than in a line of heirs proceeding from him.⁹

The enthusiasm with which James was welcomed on his southerly progress in 1603 celebrated not just the man in whose person the succession issue had been peacefully resolved; it also focused on his roles as paterfamilias, husband and father. The snapshot of James's royal entry offered at the beginning of this account is only part of the picture, and should be supplemented by stepping back a year to glance at the speeches with which James was greeted in London in 1603, which expressed the hope that James's 'Princely offspring' might sit 'upon the throne of their fathers for evermore'.¹⁰ While James offered immediate political stability in his own right, his role as father reproduced that possibility, extending the promise beyond his own lifetime through his children. Yet that same role would soon prove problematic, especially when his wife and children began to stage themselves as alternative focal points to the King, thereby fragmenting the single unified image of monarchical power. The 'cult of a dynasty' as Roy Strong describes it, increasingly became a source of anxiety for James, rather than a source of security, and it is to the

⁹ James's relationships with Mary and Elizabeth are discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Like Elizabeth before him, the new King was periodically haunted by the spectre of illegitimacy, his critics claiming that he was the son not of Mary's husband, Lord Darnley, but of her murdered secretary David Rizzio. Goldberg follows G. R. Elton in claiming that 'James's only real contribution to Divine Right theory lay in identifying his prerogative with the production of a legitimate male successor', 'Fatherly Authority', p. 4.

¹⁰ John Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First*, 4 vols (London: J. B. Nichols, 1828), I, 132. Cited hereafter as Nichols.

complexities of the relationships between James and his royal family that this thesis repeatedly returns.¹¹

The 'Jacobean' Masque?

The primary vehicle chosen by the members of the new royal family through which to stage themselves was the masque. In England the genre had its roots in medieval mummings and disguisings, but it reached its maturity during the Stuart dynasty, through the work of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, and the patronage of the royal family. The essence of the masque was the arrival of a group of noble men or women in elaborate costume to honour the monarch. Jonson subsequently transformed the practical division between the professional actors who took the speaking parts, and the noble masquers who danced in silence, into the structural division of antimasque and masque, a development that was made possible by the technological advances of Inigo Jones in staging spectacular transformation scenes. The 'antimasque-transformation scene-masque-revels' form that was to become the 'norm' was established by 1609, with the *Masque of Queens*. The antimasque began in chaos, with discord threatened by the antimasquers, who might be anarchic, grotesque or comic. This was effortlessly and instantaneously overturned by the revelation of the noble masquers, whose invitation to the dance allowed a merging

¹¹ Roy Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales, and England's Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), p. 10.

between audience and participants that gave the masque its distinctively ritualistic character.¹²

The designation 'Jacobean' is deliberately avoided here, and throughout this thesis, as a misnomer, implying - incorrectly - that the masque had its origins in King James. In fact, one of the aims of this thesis is to marshal the considerable evidence that suggests that the evolution of the masque owed more to the patronage and cultural agency of James's wife, Queen Anne, and his sons, Henry and Charles. For the time being, it is revealing to note that the first masque of the Stuart dynasty was presented in October 1603 by Anne to Henry, when, as Thomas Edmonds reported to the Earl of Shrewsbury, 'The Queen did the Prince the kindness at his coming hither to entertayne him with a gallante Maske'.¹³ Instances like this support the argument advanced by Leeds Barroll that the annual Christmas masques were an innovation of Queen Anne along the lines of continental models.¹⁴ Moreover, the

¹² This standard account of the masque is given here for convenience, but will be problematised in the discussion which follows. An account of the development of the genre is beyond the scope of this thesis, but can be found in Enid Welsford's still useful work *The Court Masque: A Study in the Relationship between Poetry and the Revels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927). Stephen Orgel's seminal work, *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1965) also describes the evolution of the genre. A convenient introduction to the genre is provided by David Lindley in the essay which opens the collection he has edited, *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 1-15.

¹³ Nichols I, 291.

¹⁴ Barroll's work on the subject of cultural patronage in the Stuart court has been an important influence on chapter 2 of this thesis. His most recent essay, 'Inventing the Stuart Masque', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 121-143, credits Queen Anne with the 'invention' of the Stuart masque. See also his 'A New History for Shakespeare and His Time', *SQ* 39 (1998), 441-464, and 'The Court of the First Stuart Queen', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 191-208.

fact that, in November 1604 we find Sir Walter Cope writing to Robert Cecil to tell him that ‘there is no new play the Queen has not seen’ is testimony to the extent of Anne’s interest in and patronage of the theatre.¹⁵

The history of masque criticism is a chequered one. The form had its opponents in its own day, and Bacon’s dismissal of masques as ‘but toys’ is only the best known example.¹⁶ However, Bacon’s accusation of triviality is belied by the fact that vast sums of money, not to mention time and effort, were invested in the performance of masques. His comment is further compromised, appearing as it does in an essay which offers advice on how best to stage a masque, something of which he had first-hand experience, gained from his involvement in the masques staged by the Inns of Court for the wedding of Princess Elizabeth (discussed in chapter 4).¹⁷ Yet while the level of expenditure on masques may help to counter charges of triviality, it was also a source of considerable anxiety amongst James’s advisers, who might well have sympathised with the complaints of Plutus, the god of wealth, when he appeared as an opponent of masquing in one of Jonson’s own antimasques.¹⁸

¹⁵ Quoted in Ethel Carleton Williams, *Anne of Denmark: Wife of James VI of Scotland: James I of England* (London: Longman, 1970), p. 99.

¹⁶ Francis Bacon, ‘Of Masques and Triumphs’, in *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*, ed. by Michael Kiernan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 117-118.

¹⁷ John Chamberlain reports that Bacon was the ‘chief contriver’ of *The Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray’s Inn* by Francis Beaumont, performed on 20 February 1613; a little over a year later Chamberlain notes that Bacon had paid the £2000 cost of *The Masque of Flowers* out of his own pocket. See *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. by N. E. McClure, 2 vols (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), I, 425; 493.

¹⁸ The masque is *Love Restored*, and it demonstrates the beginnings of a trend that emerges more strongly in Jonson’s later masques, namely, an increasing self-

The most biting criticism of the genre is to be found in a number of public theatre plays, which seized on masques as a symbol of all that was corrupt and luxurious about the (usually Catholic) courts in which their action was set. In Middleton's *Women Beware Women* the masque provides the working out of the plot, in which the lust and greed of the characters turns inward to destroy them. Marlowe's *Edward II* portrays the masque as symptomatic of the effeminacy and indolence of the court, as Gaveston plans to use masques to appeal, in a specifically homoerotic way, to the King. Finally, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy*, Strato complains that masques are 'tied to the laws of flattery'.¹⁹

The criticisms articulated in the seventeenth century, and the negative portrayal of masques in the public theatre plays of the period, have plagued modern criticism of the genre for many years. Since the Commonwealth and Protectorate periods, historical narratives have been dominated by a Whiggish perspective which has disseminated the stereotype of the corruption of the Stuart courts of James and Charles, with the result that the masque came to be seen as the last gesture of a nation divided between court and country and heading for civil war.²⁰

consciousness about the difficulties of masque writing, which is discussed in chapter 5 of the present thesis in relation to the masques of the 1620s.

¹⁹ There is a substantial corpus of work on the representation of masques in plays, including Sarah Sutherland, *Masques in Jacobean Tragedy* (New York: AMS Press, 1983), and Inga Stina Ewbank, '“These pretty devices”: A Study of Masques in Plays', in *A Book of Masques in Honour of Allardyce Nicoll*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 407-448.

²⁰ Prime examples are the accounts by Anthony Weldon, *The Court and Character of King James* (London, 1651), and Arthur Wilson, *The History of Great Britain, Being the Life and Reign of King James the First* (London, 1653).

Text and Performance; Word and Deed

Literary scholars working on the masque have consequently felt the need to justify their undertaking, and most have done so by approaching the masque as a work of literature, which can be analysed and praised in aesthetic terms. By playing down the political dimension of the masque, early critics also allayed the discomfort experienced by post-Romantic sensibilities when faced with the spectacle of an author 'prostituting his muse' by writing to order for material or financial gain. The reading of the masques as literature has been perpetuated by Orgel's seminal work, *The Jonsonian Masque*, in which he reads the masque as poetry, emphasising the 'removed mysteries' over the political contingencies of the 'present occasion'. Orgel justifies his undertaking by citing Jonson's own treatment of the masque not merely as literature, but as a transcendent poetic object, in the frequently quoted preface to *Hymenaei*:

It is a noble and just advantage, that the things subjected to *understanding* have of those which are objected to *sense*, that the one sort are but momentarie, and meere taking; the other impressing, and lasting: Else the glorie of all these *solemnities* had perish'd like a blaze, and gone out, in the *beholders* eyes. So short-liv'd are the bodies of all things, in comparison of their *soules*. And, though *bodies* oft-times have the ill-luck to be sensually preferr'd, they find afterwards, the good fortune (when *soules* live) to be utterly forgotten. This it is hath made the most royall *Princes*, and greatest *persons* (who are commonly the *personaters* of these actions) not onely studious of riches, and magnificence in the outward celebration, or shew; (which rightly becomes them) but curious after the most high, and heartie *inventions*, to furnish the inward parts: (and those grounded upon *antiquitie*, and solid *learnings*) which, though their voyce be taught to sound to present occasions, their *sense*, or doth, or should alwayes lay hold on more remov'd *mysteriess* (VII, 209, ll. 1-19).

This is Jonson's most coherent statement of his persistent elevation of the literary soul of the masque over its corporeal realisation, what Jonas A. Barish has called the

‘anti-theatrical prejudice’.²¹ However, Jonson has for too long been taken at his word, and the pervasiveness of this approach has had serious implications, prioritising Jonson, and obscuring the active participation of members of the royal family and other noble men and women in the masque.

Masque criticism has long been marred by an identification of the masque with the extant literary text, and the labelling of that text as the product of a single author. This approach has elided the distance between the performance - an ephemeral, one-off event involving stage designer, composer, choreographer, commissioning agent and noble performers as well as the writer - and the text - a fixed enduring entity produced by one person.²² I feel strongly that the prevalence of the tendency to approach the masque as literature has contributed to the over-emphasis of the genre’s conservatism, not least because the written accounts often described an ideal performance, what was *supposed* to happen, rather than what actually *did* happen. This is evident in Jonson’s selective editing of his account of *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, in which he claims, inaccurately, that ‘This pleas’d the KING so well, as he would see it againe, when it was presented with these additions’ omitting to mention the fact that James was bored and dissatisfied with the dancing (VII, 491). The King’s angry outburst on that occasion constitutes an example of the instability of

²¹ Jonas A. Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

²² Jerzy Limon, *The Masque of Stuart Culture* (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1990) devotes his first chapter, pp. 17-51 to a discussion of these issues, and notes in particular the tendency amongst scholars to elide the distinct phenomena of the extant literary texts, and their past theatrical realizations at court (p. 18).

the masque in performance, which was subject to the ‘authorial interventions’ of the watching King, who frequently asked for dances to be repeated, and in so doing completely changed the shape of the masque.²³ Jonson’s *Neptune’s Triumph* provides an even more extreme example, since the performance it describes never even took place. The extent to which Jonson’s own tendency to idealise and stabilise the masque in print has been repeated by critics is demonstrated by Orgel’s assertion that the *Masque of Blackness* can be read as functioning as the antimasque to the *Masque of Beauty*, despite the fact that the performances were separated by three years.²⁴

The distance between the masque in performance and the literary masque might be seen as an instance of a more general divide between word and deed, ideal and real, that will become increasingly evident in the story this thesis tells. Jonson’s tendency to rewrite the past is not restricted to his descriptions of the masques, but appears in the masques themselves, a number of which, notably *Golden Age Restored* and *Neptune’s Triumph*, undertake to rewrite recent political events, in order to present the King in a more favourable light (see chapter 5). Similarly, the masques continued to develop an iconography of union and Britishness, despite the fact that James’s planned union of England and Scotland was repeatedly frustrated.

²³ James’s outburst is recorded in an account by the Venetian ambassador, Orazio Busino in *CSP Ven XV*, 113-14, and is discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis. James asked for the antimasque dances of Beaumont’s *Masque of the Inner Temple* to be repeated, a gesture which overturns the theoretical model of the subversive antimasque being subdued and contained by the ordered masque.

²⁴ Orgel, *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 128. This point is discussed more fully in chapter 2 of this thesis.

An analogous disjunction between word and deed emerges from a consideration of James and his own political writings. In the *Basilikon Doron* he warned his son of the dangers of marrying a wife of a different religion; yet James had married a Catholic, and would later plan Catholic matches for first Henry, then Charles.²⁵ He continued to invoke the rhetoric of marriage in his political speeches even when it was obvious to all that his own relationship with Anne was characterised by division rather than unity. Perhaps most interesting of all in this respect are James's own strategies of rewriting the past, evident in the process by which he revised his relationships with Elizabeth and Mary after their deaths, to

suit the image of himself as a dutiful son [...] to impose his fiction on the world [...] and to create a romantic narrative to replace the damning and tragic world. James the writer and poet would represent himself in a new familial fiction as a son who valiantly tried to save his mother.²⁶

The printed versions of the masques constitute Jonson's attempt at preserving, (and sometimes rewriting) the transient moment of the performance. He and other masque writers also reacted against the ephemeral nature of the show by using schemes of mythical and allegorical characters together with elaborate symbolism, in an attempt to give the masque a seriousness and permanence. Yet ironically, the 'more remov'd mysteries' of the Platonic ideal, which have occupied and taxed the ingenuity of modern critics, probably remained mysteries for most of the audience.

²⁵ *Basilikon Doron*, in *The Political Works of James I*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1918; repr. New York: Russell & Russell, 1965). James warns that the 'dissention' between a husband and wife who are 'members of two opposite Churches', will 'breed and foster a dissention among your subiects, taking their example from your family', p. 35.

²⁶ David M. Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers: King James of England and Scotland* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), p. 45.

Contemporary accounts, such as the letters of Dudley Carleton, reveal a keen interest in the outward show, while failing to mention the mysteries of the 'inward part'. Carleton's description of the *Masque of Blackness* demonstrates his preoccupation with the costumes of the masquers, but makes no reference to the hieroglyphics or their symbolic importance, suggesting that, contrary to Jonson's best efforts, at least some members of the audience were content to remain spectators rather than becoming understanders.²⁷ Jonson's 'more remov'd mysteries' were certainly not readily accessible to every spectator - and while the printed versions of the masques offer a textual apparatus, a good deal of Jonson's iconography remains elitist and abstruse.

Masques cried out to be interpreted, but more often than not they were misinterpreted. The perennial complaint of the masque writer - Jonson, Chapman and Campion included - bemoaned the incomprehension of the audience.²⁸ It is not surprising therefore that the same masque writers produced literary versions of the masques, in which the dramatic elements (the speeches and lyrics) were dwarfed, if not overwhelmed by prefatory material, dedications, descriptions, commentaries and notes. This further exemplifies the stabilising function of print, and I shall be suggesting that masque writers operated in this way in an attempt to avoid

²⁷ From a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, quoted in H&S X, 448. Carleton's scandalised response to the appearance of the Queen and her ladies in this masque is discussed in detail in chapter 2.

²⁸ Jonson's masques for the 1620s, discussed in chapter 5, display a particular anxiety about being misinterpreted, which surfaces in their increased self-consciousness.

misinterpretation, and ensure that the masque was understood correctly, even if that understanding was only achieved retrospectively.²⁹

The literary masque claims to speak with a single voice, and in so doing misrepresents the quintessentially dialogic nature of its earlier performance.³⁰ The main consequence of reading the masque as literature has been a narrowing of the critical focus onto James and the masque-writer, usually Jonson, which has obscured the roles of those who commissioned, sponsored and performed in the masques.³¹ This is an idea to which I will return later in the introduction and throughout the thesis as a whole, which undertakes to challenge the dominance of the literary masque, and reinscribe a sense of performance, by widening the focus from James to other members of his family and court.

The Monarch and the Masque

For many years masque criticism has been dominated by the seminal works of

²⁹ My argument that the printed versions of the masque were conservative and stabilising is complicated by the democratising force of print, and the commercial commodification of texts in a print culture, ideas discussed by Arthur Marotti in *Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995). The initial audience, members of a socio-political elite, watching an exclusive and elitist spectacle performed only once, were replaced by a wider readership, whose experience of the masque would have differed radically from that of the audience at a performance.

³⁰ The theories of Bakhtin will provide a useful theoretical model in my subsequent attempts to disrupt the univocal, monolithic masque, through the recovery of 'other' voices. See *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

³¹ This tendency is attested to by Orgel's assertion that masques were 'as much the creation of the King's sensibility as of Jonson's', *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 63.

Stephen Orgel. He countered the criticisms of masques as trivial and tied to flattery by emphasising the importance attached to the princely virtue of munificence, and by advancing the Renaissance belief in the educative potential of praise. Most importantly, he insisted on the seriousness of the masque and its socio-political role, asserting that the masque was a vehicle for the display of the court's power and well-being to itself and to the wider political world, represented by the ambassadors who competed for invitations to each performance.³²

The figure of the King is central to Orgel's model. The masque is predicated on his presence; the action does not begin until the King has taken his seat, the banishment of the antimasque is achieved by him, and he provides the answer to the masquers's quest, the solution to their problem. For Orgel, the masque is 'the projection of the monarch's will, the mirror of his mind', an assertion that he supports by pointing to the spatial arrangement of the audience after the introduction of perspective scenery.³³ This was undeniably a crucial development, since it allowed James, as non-participating spectator, to remain at the centre of the theatrical experience, by locating the State directly opposite the vanishing point. As a result the King was the only member of the audience to have perfect access to the perspective illusion. The space around the King was immediately politicized, and since proximity to the King was an indicator of favour, the audience was transformed

³² Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

³³ Orgel, *Illusion*, p. 45. Jerzy Limon, *The Masque of Stuart Culture*, similarly argues that masques can be read as the theatrical version of the book of James's wisdom, pp. 79-82.

into a 'living emblem of the structure of the court' (*Illusion*, pp. 10-11). This arrangement also functioned as a literalisation of the *arcana imperii*, James's favoured trope of his kingly inscrutability, since James, who frequently asserted that he and he alone had access to the mysteries of state, was given exclusive access to the 'more remov'd mysteries' of the masque.³⁴ Orgel is also emphatic on the subject of the antimasque and the masque, arguing that the conquest of the disorderly forces of the former is effortlessly accomplished by the King, allowing the masque to conclude with a confident assertion of the order and virtue of the court. For Orgel the communal dances of the revels are both the high point and the distinguishing feature of the Stuart masque, transforming theatre into ritual, by breaching the barrier between performer and audience, masquer and spectator (*Illusion*, p. 39).

This summary cannot do justice to Orgel's work, to which the current thesis, in common with the work of generations of scholars on the masque, is heavily indebted. However, in the discussion that follows I hope to problematise a number of his ideas, not least his emphasis on the victory of the masque over the antimasque, order over chaos. Martin Butler has usefully suggested that the masque be seen as a play

³⁴ This must have been particularly satisfying for James, a King whose pride in his interpretative ability is exemplified by his speech to parliament on 9 November 1605, in which he described how he had 'cracked the code' leading to the discovery of the Gunpowder plot, in *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, pp. 281-289. James claimed 'I did vpon the instant interpret and apprehend some darke phrases therein [...] to be meant by this horrible forme of blowing vs all vp by Powder', pp. 283-284. James's use of the trope of *arcana imperii* is discussed by Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and their Contemporaries* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 65-85.

within a play, with the outer framing play as a game played by the audience amongst themselves'.³⁵ If this is the case, it is clear that Orgel's approach removes the idealisations of the inner performance - the masque - from the contingencies of the outer performance - the court - especially since the court was often characterised on these occasions by conspicuous consumption, competition, disorder and destruction. The hierarchical order which Orgel prioritises was constantly under threat, as a result of arguments over ambassadorial precedence, and through the presence of 'undesirables' who had managed to invade, despite the 'white staff' of the Lord Chamberlain, which he did not hesitate to use with force.³⁶ Dudley Carleton's account of the chaos at the performance of the *Masque of Blackness* provides a sharp corrective to Orgel's vision of order:

The confusion in getting in was so great, that some Ladies lie by it and complain of the fury of the white staffs. In the passages through the galleries they were shutt up in several heapes betwixt dores, and there stayed till all was ended. And in the cumming owt, a banquet which was prepared for the k: in the graet chamber was overturned table and all before it was skarce touched. It were infinit to tell you what losses there were of chaynes, Jewels, purces and such like loose ware, and one woeman amongst ther rest lost her honesty, for which she was carried to the porters lodge being surprised at her business on the top of the Taras.³⁷

Such disorder was by no means unique. Robin Goodfellow, in Jonson's *Love*

³⁵ Martin Butler, 'Private and Occasional Drama', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama*, ed. by A. R. Braunmuller and Michael Hattaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 127-159 (p. 128).

³⁶ Jonson reports how he himself was ejected from a masque: 'Sir John Roe loved him & when they two were ushered by my Lord Suffolk from a mask, Roe wrott a moral epistle to him, which began that next to plays the Court and the State were the best', *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden*, in H&S I, 136.

³⁷ From Dudley Carleton's letter to John Chamberlain, quoted in H&S X, 449.

Restored, complains about the difficulty of gaining entry to the masque performances.³⁸ Once they were in, people were unable to get out again, with the rather unpleasant consequence that when ‘some o’ the whimlen’s <had> had too much; [...] one shew’d how fruitfully they had watered his head, as hee stood under the grices; and another came out complaining of a cataract, shot into his eyes, by a planet, as hee was starre-gazing’ (H&S, VII, 380, ll. 111-115). Far from being an idealized emblem of aristocratic community, the audience at the masque provide an impromptu antimasque, and exemplify the characteristics of Bakhtin’s grotesque communal body, engaged in acts of consumption, excretion, and sexual activity, from the ‘groping’ experienced by Robin when he assumes the form of a citizen’s wife, to the intercourse that is apparently alluded to in Carleton’s account quoted above. Such an assertion is supported by Harington’s infamous account of the drunken masque performed before James and King Christian of Denmark in July 1606 at Theobalds.³⁹

But there were more subtle and arguably more damaging threats to order than the unruliness of the audience. Graham Parry asserts that the entertainments were ‘occasions to consolidate the affections of the foremost members of the realm by spectacles that gave expression to shared ideals and common loyalty’, but his claim

³⁸ The shortage of space was such that women were forbidden from wearing farthingales at the masques for the wedding of Elizabeth and Frederick. See G. P. V. Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant or the Court of King James the First* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), p. 153.

³⁹ John Harington, *Nugae Antiquae: being a collection of original papers in prose and verse*, ed. by Henry Harington, 2 vols (London: Printed for W. Frederick, 1769-1775), I, 348-353.

is founded on the erroneous assumption that the court was an homogeneous entity, sharing the same ideals and beliefs.⁴⁰ This thesis aims to challenge such assumptions. Drawing on the work of those revisionist and post-revisionist historians who have investigated the factionalised and divided nature of the Stuart court, I will argue that the members of the royal family, and the aristocratic men and women who performed in the masques, were, at least on some occasions, less interested in any shared ideals than in achieving advancement for themselves and / or their kinship groups, or in putting forward a particular political agenda, which was not always in accord with royal policy.⁴¹

New Historicism and the Masque

The emphasis on order and hierarchy I have described as problematic in Orgel's work on the masque is symptomatic of a broader difficulty with the New Historicist

⁴⁰ Graham Parry, 'Entertainments at Court', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 195-211 (p. 195).

⁴¹ The impact of the revisionist movement is assessed in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1994), which describes the aim of revisionism as 'a renewed attention to the details of day-to-day political manoeuvre. Careful narrative reconstruction of [...] the political intentions and trajectories of particular individuals and groups', p. 2. However, for all their focus on faction, many revisionists ultimately emphasised 'the relative homogeneity of political values, and the practical and ideological difficulties of effective dissent', p. 2. Sharpe and Lake articulate the post-revisionist challenge to this focus on harmony as does the collection *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642*, ed. by Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London: Longman, 1989). These critiques of revisionism echo the concerns expressed below about the New Historicism in literature.

approach.⁴² As the argument of this thesis is influenced by New Historicism at some points, while departing from it on others, it seems appropriate to devote part of this introduction to a discussion of the theory which has had such a dramatic effect on studies of Renaissance literature in general, and which has seized on the masque as an embodiment of its premise that art is appropriated by the dominant ideology to establish and perpetuate its own authority. New Historicism is immediately useful to scholars of the masque for its insistence on the collocation of the aesthetic and the political, which Louis A. Montrose has neatly described as ‘the historicity of the text and the textuality of history’.⁴³ In an attempt to consider the masque less as a transcendent aesthetic object than as a culturally operative agent, deeply embedded in the society which produced it, my discussion of the masques aims to situate them in a social, political and cultural moment. This is achieved through an emphasis on the intertextual relationships between masques, royal speeches, proclamations, portraits and ‘events’. My approach invokes another valuable facet of New Historicism, namely its project to move reading beyond the boundaries of the literary text. While traditional literary critics have been preoccupied with the poetic elements of the masque, the New Historicist ‘reads’ other equally significant elements such as the dances, costumes, scenography, and even the fireworks, and is justified in doing so because the masques encouraged

⁴² While Orgel’s work on the masque predates Greenblatt’s coinage of the term ‘New Historicism’, the fact that it is usually seen as New Historicism is confirmed by the inclusion of an essay by Orgel as the first piece in *The New Historicism Reader*, ed. by H. Aram Veenser (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁴³ Montrose, ‘The Poetics and Politics of Culture’, in *The New Historicism*, ed. by H. Aram Veenser (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 15-36 (p. 20).

contemporary audiences to do likewise. Thus, in *The Masque of Queens* the audience are required to *read* a dance ‘graphically disposed into letters, and honoring the Name of the most sweete, and ingenious *Prince, Charles, Duke of Yorke*’ (H&S VII, 315-316, ll. 750-752), and the exhortation to analyse dances semiotically is reiterated in both *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* and *The Masque of Augurs*. The impulse towards reading all aspects of the performance will prove invaluable in the chapters which follow, which attempt to decentralise the focus away from James and onto the performers, reinstating their bodies, costumes and dances as a subject for investigation.

Moreover, the New Historicist project of endowing all the aspects of the masque with a textual significance, approximates the seventeenth-century audience’s experience not only of dramatic performances, but of life, in which the whole world constituted a text to be read. Milton asserts in *Areopagitica* that ‘what ever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing may be fitly call’d our book, and is of the same effect that writings are’.⁴⁴ New Historicism’s insistence on the ‘textuality of history’ similarly facilitates the reading of events as texts, a method I employ frequently, as exemplified in my discussion of the betrothal and wedding ceremonies of Princess Elizabeth and Count Frederick in chapter 4. Such an approach is particularly appropriate to discussions of a court in which so many aspects of life were theatricalized. Courtiership, prestige, status and identity were essentially performative with tremendous emphasis being placed on clothing,

⁴⁴ *Areopagitica*, in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. by Don M. Wolfe and others (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953-), II, ed. by Ernest Sirluck (1959), p. 528.

deportment and gesture; and these aspects of the day-to-day performance of identity manifested themselves in heightened form in the masque as costume and dance.⁴⁵

My discussion of the royal family sees them as living out James's assertion that the King is 'as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold', and invokes Stephen Greenblatt's concept of self-fashioning achieved through theatrical strategies.⁴⁶ The royal family were constantly and self-consciously involved in staging themselves and others. When Greenblatt refers to 'mak[ing] a part of one's own, [...] liv[ing] one's life as a character thrust into a play', one might call to mind James scripting himself in a romantic drama when, throwing himself into the role of the passionate lover, he determined to sail to Norway to claim his Danish bride.⁴⁷ The same role was re-enacted, albeit unsuccessfully, by Charles, when, accompanied by Buckingham, he rode in disguise to Madrid to claim the Spanish infanta. James's letter to the two, whom he describes as his 'sweet boys and dear venturous knights [...] worthy to be put in a new romance', acknowledges the strength of the impulse to write, and to play out

⁴⁵ Skiles Howard, 'Rival discourses of dancing in early modern England', *SEL* 36 (1996), 31-56, describes dancing as 'an indispensable element of self-fashioning', p. 31.

⁴⁶ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 43. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980).

⁴⁷ Greenblatt, p. 31. James authored this part of his life in the sonnet sequence *Amatoria*; see *Poems* ed. by James Craigie, 2 vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1955-1958), II, 68-78. Asheby's dispatch to Elizabeth similarly fictionalized James the lover committing himself 'Leanderlike to the waves of the ocean, and all for his beloved Eroes sake', *CSP Scot* X, 181, quoted in Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 51.

one's own part.⁴⁸ James also seems to have enjoyed scripting roles for his male favourites, although they were not always as willing to conform to their parts as James would have wished.⁴⁹

These examples confirm the validity of an approach which sees history as a literary narrative, and a 'fiction-making' process.⁵⁰ An awareness of the 'textuality of history' exposes the traditional view of history as monolithic and unified as false, a construct imposed by those in power to serve their own interests. It becomes clear that, while James sustained his dominant position by imposing his narratives on others, those royal narratives were soon replaced by the anti-monarchical histories of the Commonwealth and Protectorate periods which conditioned the modern view of the Stuart court for centuries to come. This thesis strives to disrupt the unity of history, just as it fractures the smooth surface of the masque, in an attempt to recover not one but many histories. In so doing I am, of course, producing my own narrative, which does not and cannot purport to be complete or unified, but self-

⁴⁸ *The Letters of King James VI and I*, ed. by G. P. V. Akrigg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 388-390.

⁴⁹ For example, when James tried to engineer a reconciliation between his favourites Carr and Villiers, arranging for Villiers to call on Carr with offers of devotion and service, Carr proved intransigent, responding to Villiers's offer of friendship with the assertion 'I will, if I can, break your neck'. The episode is quoted in Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592-1628* (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 21-22.

⁵⁰ A theory advanced by Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1978). David Lindley's excellent study, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993) investigates the process by which 'events are accommodated to patterns that are already donated by a narrative and moral tradition' (p. 8), elucidating the extent to which the ideological assumptions already embedded in the literature of the period conditioned the way that Frances Howard was seen and the manner in which her story was recorded by her contemporaries.

consciously acknowledges the fact that it, like other historical narratives, is cast into pre-existent story patterns, and is conditioned by the cultural contingencies of my own position in history.

Beyond the New Historicism

Having outlined the usefulness of a New Historicist approach to the masque, I now want to offer a critique which is concerned primarily with the polarisation of the subversion / containment debate, terms which have become 'so reductive, polarized and undynamic, as to be of little or no conceptual value'.⁵¹ The masque has become an important territory in the intense struggle between those who emphasise the hegemonic capacity of the state, and those who cling to the existence of a possibility for subversion and contestation. The overwhelming majority of critics writing on the masque have traditionally focused on the dynamics of the relationship between masque and monarch, with the result that the masque has been characterised as a voicing of sovereign power.⁵² One might expect such assertions to be problematised by the inner tensions of the genre - particularly its division into antimasque and masque. However, while critics have recognised the antimasque as a site where the dominant ideology is contested, the fact that it is superseded in time by the masque proper has led to a continued emphasis on the hegemonic power of state and monarch, not only to contain subversive gestures, but furthermore to *produce* them

⁵¹ Montrose, p. 22.

⁵² See Stephen Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque*, Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature*, and Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd: The Culture of the Stuart Court* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981) amongst others.

in order to contain them. According to this model, the whole show proceeds from the dominant power, which sanctions a temporary inversion of its values, a limited period of subversion, so that the subsequent and inevitable restoration of order reinforces the status quo.⁵³ Thus New Historicists see art as co-opted into legitimating the dominant ideology, even when it seems to challenge it; in Greenblatt's words, 'the apparent production of subversion is [...] the very condition of power'.⁵⁴ Jonathan Goldberg's incisive and stimulating study, *James I and the Politics of Literature* has at its heart an analogous belief that opposition is always produced by the monarch in order that it can be seen to be contained, and he links this reading of the masques to a more general sense of James as a monarch who ruled through division or 'sustaining contradictions'.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, British Cultural Materialists such as Graham Holderness complain wearily that New Historicism reproduces a 'model of historical culture in which dissent is always already suppressed, subversion always previously contained, and opposition always strategically anticipated, controlled and defeated'.⁵⁶

Jerzy Limon has accused New Historicists of believing that 'a literary work has one invariant meaning and that the role of literary studies is to elucidate this meaning

⁵³ See Jonathan Dollimore's formulation of 'ritual inversion' in *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Brighton: Harvester, 1984), pp. 26-27.

⁵⁴ Greenblatt, p. 57.

⁵⁵ Goldberg, *James I*, p. 116. Goldberg argues that 'contradiction defines the essence of the discourse of power', p. 7.

⁵⁶ Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare Recycled: the Making of Historical Drama* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p. 34.

by reconstructing the contemporary connotations of a given work'.⁵⁷ This is unfounded, because as I hope my thesis demonstrates, the accurate historicisation of the masque recovers many voices rather than imposing a single authoritative reading. However, Limon's complaint may well have been prompted by an underlying anxiety about the inadequacy and unsophistication of the subversion / containment argument. Martin Butler has recently complained that the effect of New Historicism's insistent privileging of the King and an absolutist ideology has been to make all masques seem to be engaged in the same ideological process. Masques have been 'homogenised [...] endlessly reiterating the same symbolic function within the courtly economy', and critics have run the risk of 'substituting a snapshot for what ought to be the whole movie'.⁵⁸

In many ways, it is a testimony to the persuasiveness of Orgel's monarch-centred view of the masque that, despite the interest of historians in the dynamics of factional division, criticism of the masque is still so monolithic. My own project constitutes an attempt to replace the static view of Stuart court culture with a model which finds room for oppositional forces. One of the most pervasive assumptions which I challenge is the characterisation of the antimasque as always subversive, and the masque as always a reassertion of hegemonic power. For many of the masques I discuss this model is an inadequate one, not least because, in my readings, the

⁵⁷ Limon, *The Masque of Stuart Culture*, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Martin Butler, 'Courtly Negotiations', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 20-40 (p. 24; 26). This stimulating collection of essays was published too late for me to engage with in any detail, but the introduction and

masque itself frequently emerges as a site of contestation. This is particularly true of the masques for Anne and Henry in which both the Queen and the Prince affirm their value and identity as separate from, and at times in opposition to, James. For example, in *Oberon*, the masque-proper with its martial and chivalric iconography centred on Henry, is the focus for tensions and divisions which are more deep-seated than those of the antimasque (see chapter 3). The argument of this thesis rests on my conviction that the active involvement of other royal powerbrokers in the masque radically destabilised its relationship with James.

Another longstanding assumption which needs to be challenged is that the masque dances always functioned to restore order. This claim has been problematised by the work of dance historians such as Skiles Howard, who notes that dancing was ‘discursively appropriated and debated by competing social interests’, and became a ‘battle line in various social struggles’.⁵⁹ The early modern belief in dance as a morally beneficial experience, thought to imitate the ordered movement of the cosmos, thereby instilling virtue in the spectator and participant, is invoked by Jonson in *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, and underlies Orgel’s assertions about the function of the revels. However, this is only one side of the story, since for every apologist who justified dancing, there were adversaries, such as Phillip Stubbes, who saw dancing as providing ‘an introduction to whordom, a preparation to

Butler’s essay signal that the collection accords with my sense of the need for a less monarch-centred approach to the masque.

⁵⁹ Howard, p. 31. The masque dances are discussed in relation to dance writings by John Meagher in *Method and Meaning in Jonson’s Masques* (Notre Dame, IND.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), pp. 81-106.

wantoness'.⁶⁰ Moreover, while Thomas Elyot's discussion of the capacity of dance to reinforce hierarchies of status and gender might be marshalled in support of Orgel's assertion that the masque dances and revels integrated the court with an ideal version of itself, Elyot's arguments are themselves problematic.

While defending dancing on ostensibly moral grounds, Elyot simultaneously acknowledges the possibility of using dancing to achieve material gain and worldly success. Thus, instead of (or as well as) functioning as an assertion of a community and its values, dancing could provide individuals with a means of disrupting that community. The process of achieving upward social mobility because of a distinguishing virtuoso performance is exemplified by Buckingham's appearances on the masque stage, discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis. This argument also problematises the conventional construction of masques as elitist and exclusive, with the audience functioning as a perfect version of the aristocratic hierarchy, since the example of Buckingham and his family shows clearly that masques might provide a vehicle for new upwardly mobile groups to challenge the dominance of the old aristocracy, precipitating an unravelling of the hierarchy rather than its perpetuation.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomy of Abuses* (1583), ed. by A. Freeman (New York: Garland Press, 1973), quoted in Howard, p. 32. The standard defence of dancing is found in Thomas Elyot's *The Boke named the Governour* (1531), ed. by R. C. Alston (Menston: Scolar Press, 1970).

⁶¹ While in theory the body of the dancing courtier was classically finished and closed, the actions controlled and the passions contained, it is clear in the case of James and his male favourites that the masque dances (and dancers) might inflame the passions of the royal spectator. The eroticisation of the male (and female) bodies of the masque dancers compromises any straightforward assertions of order,

Another reason why the monarch-centred view of the masque as an assertion of hierarchical order and sovereign power has been so enduring is the fact that it can readily be marshalled in support of New Historicism's broader thesis of the inter-relatedness of art and power. In this model the arts of stage designer and poet are appropriated to express sovereign power, and the designer's control over his stage is subsumed by the superior authorising and controlling force of the monarch. For instance, the transformation of the masquers in Campion's *Lord Hay's Masque* from trees to men which is accomplished, on one level, through the ingenuity of the stage designer, becomes an expression of the power of Phoebus - James in his customary role of *le roi soleil*. Yet despite the fact that the Stuart masques advertise their dependency, and the dependency of the artists, on the king, one should recall that the king was equally indebted to the artists who manufactured fictions of sovereign power. The mutuality that New Historicism usefully applies to the relationship between history and literature, society and culture, might be used to elucidate the relationships between patron and poet, king and courtier, which have too often been seen as a one way transmission of power from top to bottom, but are actually characterised by a degree of reciprocity.⁶²

Moreover, those artists who were producing masques to mystify James's sovereign power, frequently had their commissions not from the King himself, but

an idea which is discussed in relation to Queen Anne in chapter 2, and in relation to Buckingham in chapter 5.

⁶² Louis Montrose, '“Eliza, Queen of shepherdes” and the Pastoral of Power', *ELR* 10 (1982), 153-82, discusses the 'dialectic by which poetic power helps to create and sustain the political power to which it is subservient', p. 168. Robert C. Evans, *Ben Jonson and the Poetics of Patronage* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press;

from other members of the royal family, or the court. Despite the assumption that masques 'invariably ratified the royal observer and immersed performers and spectators alike in a scenario of dazzling disempowerment', common sense would suggest that those who invested in the masques must have done so because they believed it would benefit them in some way.⁶³ If we accept the notion that power lies in the ability to impose one's fictions on the world, it seems more than likely that masques might have provided their sponsors with an opportunity to impose their fictions on the King. This raises the tantalising possibility that on occasions it might have been the King who was disempowered, interpellated into a subject position which he may not have chosen for himself, by masques which attempted to influence policy, or to reconfigure the power relations at court.⁶⁴ This constitutes a dramatic shift away from the belief that subversion is produced by the dominant order, so that it can be seen to be contained, to an acknowledgement that marginal or oppositional figures might appropriate the culturally sanctioned form of the masque to voice their own agendas.⁶⁵

London: Associated University Presses, 1989) offers a useful discussion of the political implications of the patronage system, pp. 31-88.

⁶³ Butler, 'Courtly Negotiations', p. 26.

⁶⁴ This process can be seen in, for example, *The Golden Age Restored* which made a bid for favour on behalf of the Essex faction, which had long been overshadowed by the dominance of Somerset and the Howards. Similarly, Charles's involvement in the masques of the last years of his father's reign should be seen in the context of his attempts to rally the 1624 parliament around a policy that was not the King's. See chapter 5.

⁶⁵ The extent to which the genre of the masque could be made to serve different agendas is demonstrated by David Norbrook's essay 'The Reformation of the Masque', in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 94-110, which discusses the Puritan adoption of the

While panegyric was an element of every Stuart masque, it was only one element amongst many. New Historicist accounts of the masque have disallowed the possibility of different responses, and yet Jonson's written versions of masques express an anxiety about misinterpretation, which suggests that the victory of the dominant ideology was by no means certain, but was something altogether more contingent and provisional. Moreover, a number of the Jonsonian masques from the second decade of James's reign are markedly analytical and critical of the culture which produces them. Is it possible therefore that some members of the audience might have seen the praise of James in an ironic light? It is worth reminding ourselves that most of the audience saw parts of the performance at right angles, and literally had a skewed perspective. While most accounts of the masque have emphasised the King's privileged access to the truth of the spectacle, other seventeenth-century art forms had played with the idea that truth might be accessible from the periphery rather than from the centre.⁶⁶ The possibility that members of the audience found a truth at odds with the dominant ideology is an issue that has long been overlooked in masque criticism. While it is difficult, if not impossible to ascertain individual responses to the masques, or to isolate which aspects of a masque the original audience might have found interesting or radical, and

genre. Norbrook's argument is invoked in the discussion of Henry's masques in chapter 3 of this thesis.

⁶⁶ Paintings manipulating perspective were popular, and the trend is most famously exemplified by the distorted skull in Holbein's *The Ambassadors*. Tom Bishop comments that 'if the King saw the show as "naturally" oriented on him, other courtiers - the further off, the more - saw it as artificially so, as in fact distorted in order to be so', 'The gingerbread host: tradition and novelty in the Jacobean masque', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook, pp. 88-120 (p. 105).

which they might have seen as conventional to the point of irrelevance, my own belief is that the closing praise of the monarch which has been so central to New Historicist arguments might have been disregarded by the audience.⁶⁷

The acceptance by masque critics of the panegyric as the whole picture is challenged in the chapters that follow. I am indebted to work by Revisionist historians which has complicated the New Historicist focus on the mystification of power, with a return to the practical mechanics of power-sharing, negotiation and accommodation, showing that the Jacobean court was characterised by faction and diversity.⁶⁸ It is commonplace to note that the court was ideologically divided over issues such as religion and foreign policy, but more detailed research produces a picture of a complex and unstable configuration of relationships with individuals negotiating between allegiances not simply on the basis of ideology, but as a result of kinship and patronage networks. Relationships were in a constant state of flux, being reconfigured by deaths, marriages, rises to favour and falls from grace. Lockyer

⁶⁷ Orgel accepts the possibility that the masque and its praise of the monarch might become merely a 'perfunctory epilogue', but his focus on aesthetics rather than on politics means he blames this on a lapse in Jonson's art, *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 76. That spectacles produced by the state to display its own power and inspire obedience and loyalty did not invariably achieve the desired end can be demonstrated by considering the response of crowds to executions. These frequently functioned less to inspire obedience than to engender opposition, and even produce rebellion, as the crowd expressed its sympathy with the victim, and became hostile to the state. My discussion earlier in this introduction of the idealising tendency of the printed texts of masques should already have destabilised any simplistic acceptance of the masque's closing panegyric as coterminous with reality, and this idea will be pursued in chapters 2 and 3.

⁶⁸ Kevin Sharpe's collections, including *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), and, with Peter Lake, *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1994), have

offers a sense of the court as a place where ‘conflicting factions struggled for ascendancy [...] personal ambitions, family interests, religious beliefs and political ideals were all mixed up in a kaleidoscopic pattern that was perpetually changing shape’.⁶⁹

Not surprisingly, this far from cohesive group had radically different aesthetic tastes and the court was characterised by a diversity of cultural production. Malcolm Smuts insists that ‘Jacobean court culture will always be misunderstood so long as scholars portray the court as a homogeneous body dominated by a single outlook. For Stuart court society was remarkably complex and heterogeneous’, and the idea of a ‘uniform Jacobean court culture’ is a ‘myth’.⁷⁰ Smuts advances a convincing case for cultural diversity, pointing to the dramatic architectural contrasts between Audley End and the Banqueting House, and between the classicist poetry of Jonson and the neomedievalism of Drayton. The fact that such radically different cultural productions existed side by side is evidence for the remarkable heterogeneity of court culture, and more importantly for my purposes, problematises any claim for a straightforward link between art and the ruling hegemony.

Smuts disputes the belief that court culture was centralised, controlled by James

been important in shaping the argument of this thesis. Also useful is *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck.

⁶⁹ Lockyer, *Buckingham*, p. 13. The interaction of these factors can be demonstrated by the fact that despite Anne’s Catholicism she favoured the Protestant Sidney / Herbert circle, rather than aligning herself with the pro-Spanish and Catholic Howards.

⁷⁰ Malcolm Smuts, ‘Cultural diversity and cultural change at the court of James I’, in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck, pp. 99-112 (pp. 111-12).

and reflecting his perspective, pointing out that James's court 'never developed any effective system for supervising cultural patronage'.⁷¹ James was relatively passive in matters of patronage, and his absence from London for as much as half of each year at his hunting lodges in Royston and Newmarket meant that court culture in general, and the masque in particular, was more often the product of other members of the royal family, and leading powerbrokers at court, rather than of the King. In fact, James's assertions in *Basilikon Doron* notwithstanding, it was clear to observers like the French ambassador de Beaumont, and the Venetian, Molin, that the King disliked the public gaze. The latter commented in a dispatch of 1607 that

He does not caress the people nor make them that good cheer the late Queen did, [...] they like their King to show pleasure at their devotion, as the late Queen knew well how to do; but this King manifests no taste for them but rather contempt and dislike. The result is he is despised and almost hated. In fact his Majesty is more inclined to live retired with eight or ten of his favourites than openly, as is the custom of the country and the desire of the people.⁷²

James, recognising the need for a royal presence during his prolonged absences, instructed councillors to meet weekly at Anne's court.⁷³ This simple physical fact

⁷¹ Smuts, pp. 101-102 and 106-107. In this respect James's cultural patronage differed from that of his predecessor; Elizabeth had exercised strict control over the production of the royal image, the face in her portraits being based on a pattern supplied by her authority. The typical assumption that James exercised a tremendous amount of power over the cultural productions of his court is expressed by Jerzy Limon, who claims that 'the overall plan of celebration was always established in consultation with the monarch who had the final say', *Masque of Stuart Culture*, p. 112.

⁷² *CSP Ven X*, 513. Molin's dispatch and that of de Beaumont are quoted and discussed in Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 83-84.

⁷³ Carleton reported in January 1605 that, while James was away on a hunting trip, 'The Lords of the Council are tyed to attendance at the Queen's court', quoted in Barbara Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 26.

of the existence of a number of courts meant that the Queen's residences and Henry's palace at St James's provided alternative focal points of power and patronage.⁷⁴ Smuts's assertion that innovations in court culture rarely originated from the King is confirmed by the investigation in chapters 2 and 3 of the present thesis into the cultural agency of Anne and Henry, and by the brief discussion in chapter 5 of Buckingham's promotion of amateur theatricals in provincial locations.⁷⁵

After the death of Henry in 1612 and the withdrawal of Queen Anne from the masque stage, there was a period, discussed in chapter 5, when masquing returned to the figure of James. Subsequently, the 1620s, like the first decade of the reign, witnessed a re-emergence of different focal points. Buckingham's York House became as important as Whitehall, providing the venue for a number of entertainments staged for foreign ambassadors. Buckingham and his circle emerged as speaking actors, rather than silent masquers, in a series of entertainments performed not at the court, but at various locations around London, and at Burley, which hosted the first of several performances of *The Gypsies Metamorphosed*, a showcase for Buckingham's histrionic abilities.

The fact that the masques could be produced in locations other than in James's

⁷⁴ Pauline Croft discusses the skill with which Robert Cecil served the King, while simultaneously ensuring that he retained the favour and good will of Queen Anne and Prince Henry, 'Robert Cecil and the early Jacobean court', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck, pp. 134-147 (pp. 137-138).

⁷⁵ The literal mobility and activity of the bodies of the Queen and royal children in masque dances, while James remained a static observer, is similarly suggestive of their association with novelty and change.

court and presence, by people of radically different allegiances and beliefs, shows how wrong critics have been to read each and every masque as doing essentially the same thing.⁷⁶ The masque did *not* always function in support of the status quo; on the contrary it was available to, and was frequently appropriated by, other groups and discordant voices, which made it a site of contestation and negotiation. This thesis acknowledges variety and range rather than sameness, something that Jonson himself had to do constantly, as he negotiated between the often conflicting demands of the commissioning agent and James as spectator.

The main danger of New Historicism, namely its tendency to reproduce early modern society's ideological misdescription of itself, is beginning to be recognised by critics who point out that if the practices, doctrines and apparatuses of the ruling groups - in this case the absolutist ideology of the King - were able to achieve complete dominance they would not need continual legitimation. Critics who have seen the masque as simply a symbolic reproduction of sovereign power have accepted the absolutist ideology as reality, and in doing so have colluded in its suppression of discordant voices, just as surely as James did when he forbade the inclusion of notes in the new translation of the Bible.⁷⁷ Goldberg claims to be aware

⁷⁶ Amongst the non-court performances I deal with are those at Althorp (for Anne and Henry) in chapter 3 and Buckingham's provincial performances in chapter 5, while chapter 4 acknowledges the role of the Inns of Court in the masques for the wedding of Elizabeth and Frederick. The issue of non-court performances in London and beyond is an area ripe for further research.

⁷⁷ Linda Levy Peck, 'The mental world of the Jacobean court: an introduction', in Levy Peck, ed., pp. 1-17 quotes James's order for the translation of the Bible: 'Marry withal he gave this caveat, [...] that no marginal notes should be added, having found in them which are annexed to the Geneva translations [...] some notes

of the problem, yet his assertion that ‘as the articulate and visible centre of society, James I is my focus’, functions not only to construct James as central, visible and articulate, but implicitly characterises Anne, and by extension woman, as marginalized, invisible and silent, thereby colluding with the patriarchy of the period in its suppression of the female voice.⁷⁸ My project of recovering other voices simulates a Bakhtinian move from monologic to dialogic imagination. It is to the point that Bakhtin’s insistence on the interanimation of languages and on double-voiced discourse was a reaction against the Stalinist move towards hegemonic centralisation, a fact which makes it appropriate to invoke his ideas to disrupt the hitherto relentlessly monarch-centred criticism of the masque.

Familial Politics

Foremost amongst those who used masque as a vehicle for self-promotion were the members of the royal family. I shall be using that family to problematise monarch-centred readings of the masque, focusing especially on Anne, Henry, Charles and Buckingham, the last and greatest of James’s favourites who was described by James in familial terms. The activities of these other royal power brokers on the masque stage literalised James’s metaphor of the King as actor, ‘one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold’, while all the time

very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of slanderous and traitorous conceits’, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁸ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I*, p.xi. Goldberg’s more recent work has been more sensitive to gender issues, but for useful feminist critiques of New Historicism see Lynda E. Boose, ‘The Family in Shakespeare Studies; or - Studies in the Family of Shakespeareans; or - The Politics of Politics’, *RQ* 40 (1987), 707-42, especially pp. 727-42, and Leeds Barroll, ‘A New History for Shakespeare and His Time’, *SQ* 39

the King himself looked on, a passive, immobile spectator, identified, in the terms of his own metaphor, with the wondering gaze of the common people he despised.⁷⁹

As the successor to the Virgin Queen, it was inevitable that James should make as much political capital as possible out of his family. He had become skilled at manipulating the rhetoric of the family in his correspondence with Queen Elizabeth, addressing her in his letters as ‘madame and mother’, and signing himself ‘Your most loving brother and son’.⁸⁰ Political expediency had necessitated the adoption of Elizabeth as a surrogate mother to replace his natural mother Mary, but once James was on the throne he set about rewriting his relationships with the two women.⁸¹ In 1605 the first of the Stuart royal children to be born on English soil was christened Princess Mary; and finally in 1612 Queen Mary’s body was interred at Westminster in a tomb rivalling that of Elizabeth.

James repeatedly invoked the rhetoric of the family in speeches to parliament. While this strategy of justifying and naturalising hierarchical relationships was already a commonplace, since ‘virtually all social relationships [...] were regarded as patriarchal or familial in essence’, James’s usage derived a particular potency from

(1998), 441-64, particularly for Queen Anne.

⁷⁹ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 43.

⁸⁰ *Letters*, ed. by G. P. V. Akrigg, p. 64; 66. In January 1585 Patrick Gray reported to Elizabeth that James’s disposition ‘at this time is such to your majesty as though he were your natural son’, *CSP Scot* VII, 540, quoted in Bergeron, p. 47. Bergeron also cites a 1586 document from Elizabeth expressing ‘a speciall and motherlye cair over our said darrest brother and cousing ever since his byrthe, respecting him as our owne sone’, *Royal Family*, p. 48.

⁸¹ The replacement of his real family with surrogates was to be a characteristic of James’s familial politics, and was repeated by his son Henry, who found a surrogate father figure in Henri IV of France. See chapter 3 of this thesis.

the collapse of metaphor and reality in his person.⁸² The roles he used to trope his relationship with the country he also fulfilled in reality. Lawrence Stone speculates that the growth of the nuclear patriarchal family was encouraged by the Stuart state to increase its own authority ‘on the traditional grounds that subordination of the family to its head is analogous to and also a direct contributory cause of subordination of subjects to the sovereign’.⁸³ Debora Kuller Shuger similarly notes that the roles of father, king and God have long been considered analogous in a ‘triple tiered patriarchy [...] where the subordination of subject to ruler mirrors the subjection of wife and child to husband and father, both being justified and “naturalized” by the monarchical patriarchy of heaven’.⁸⁴ However, work on James’s rhetorical and political ‘use’ of the family often fails to take into account the altogether more messy realities. As this thesis demonstrates, the royal family functioned not as a cohesive unit, but as an arena for competition, and in the chapters that follow I consider the extent to which the increasingly obvious divisions in the familial sphere undermined the political metaphors on which James constructed his kingly authority as husband and father of the nation.

⁸² Gordon Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought : The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), p. 65.

⁸³ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977; abridged and rev. edn Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979; repr. 1990), p. 110. Stone’s influential but oversimplified notion of the relationship between patriarchal and monarchical power is problematised in the discussion below.

⁸⁴ Debora Kuller Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics and the Dominant Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 218.

James's patriarchal model of the family was not the only one in circulation, and contending representations of the family in the late sixteenth to the mid seventeenth century marked out the family as a site of ideological struggle. James's figure of the *parens patriae* situates all families within a single hierarchy over which he and he alone has the authority of the father:

In the Scriptures Kings are called Gods, and so their power after a certaine relation compared to the Diuine power. Kings are also compared to Fathers of families: for a King is trewly *Parens patriae*, the politique father of his people. And lastly, Kings are compared to the head of this Microcosme of the body of man.⁸⁵

This speech, and others like it, underlie Stone's assertion of the complicity between the patriarchal family and the absolutist state. However, such a relationship was increasingly problematised by the emergence of an alternative Puritan paternalistic model. Tennenhouse analyses the way in which the latter, by representing the family as a 'fiefdom within the state over which the monarch had little or no authority', engineered a clash between the law of the father and the rule of the King, threatening to restrict the power of the throne by taking authority away from the head of the state and putting it in the hands of the head of the household. In the paternalistic model, families were still political units, but they were independent of the state and the paterfamilias exercised an authority that was not subject to the authority of the monarch.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 307.

⁸⁶ Leonard Tennenhouse, *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986), p. 172. Debora Kuller Shuger also offers a useful account of the range of Renaissance patriarchies, in which she suggests that patriarchy did not invariably function as a legitimation of oppressive power.

In 1589, on the eve of his marriage to Anne, James had articulated the lack of any family as a 'nakedness' which made him weak and empowered his enemies.⁸⁷ He quickly found that, far from protecting him, the family simply brought the enemy within and internalised the 'other'. James responded by replacing his real family with an extended family of male favourites, in the hope that these creatures of his own making would be easier to control. Linda Levy Peck asserts that 'instead of deifying the Virgin Queen, the Jacobean court celebrated family and uxoriousness; even male favourites were brought within an ideology of family'.⁸⁸ I would differ slightly by suggesting that James *replaced* his family with the extended families of his male favourites. Thus James's eagerness to give first Robert Carr, then George Villiers, a political education and role should be contrasted with his reluctance to allow his sons any political influence.⁸⁹ Similarly, Antony Weldon notes the incongruity of James's fondness for Buckingham's wife and children: 'Little children did run up and downe the Kings Lodgings [...]. Here was a strange change, that the King, who formerly would not endure his Queen and children in his lodgings, now you would have judged that none but women frequented them'.⁹⁰ Seeing in the royal

⁸⁷ 'Letter to the People of Scotland', dated 22 October 1589, in *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, pp. 97-100.

⁸⁸ Levy Peck, p. 6.

⁸⁹ Strong, p. 74, notes that from 1607 it was not James but Robert Cecil who kept Henry and his tutor, Adam Newton, abreast of political events. After Cecil's death in May 1612, Carr effectively functioned as the King's secretary, while Henry was deprived of the information which Cecil had provided. Similarly, Buckingham was made a Privy Councillor in February 1617, a privilege that was denied Charles until 1622.

⁹⁰ Weldon, *The Court and Character of King James* (London, 1651), p. 125.

children the successors who would ultimately succeed him, James attempted to defer the moment of his own replacement by substituting his male favourites and their families for his own children.

This thesis argues that the presence in the court masques of the royal family and members of James's extended family of male favourites, fragments the image of monarchical power projected in those masques. Chapter 2 begins the process of disrupting the traditional monarch-centred view of the masque by shifting the focus from James the spectator to Anne the performer. Beginning by recuperating Anne from an ill-deserved reputation for 'frivolity', I give her masques the serious consideration they deserve, as examples of the avant garde cultural production of the Queen's court. In view of the silence of the masquers, reading the Queen's masques necessarily involves the critic in a reading of the significant and signifying female bodies.

I argue that Anne deliberately staged herself as separate from James and as the mother of the royal children, in a way that engaged with and destabilised James's familial rhetoric, which troped his relationship with his country as a marriage, and as a parent-child bond. In the context of the ideological struggle between different models of familial organisation (discussed above), some Puritan writers of pamphlets and sermons were claiming that 'it is impossible for a man to understand to gouverne the commonwealth, that doth not knowe to rule his owne house [...] so that hee that knoweth not to gouverne, deserueth not to raigne'.⁹¹ Such assertions predicated

⁹¹ Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Form of Household Government* (London, 1598), p. 5, quoted in Tennenhouse, *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 173.

the monarch's authority on the ability to rule his household as a good husband and father. However, Anne's self-presentations suggested that she was estranged and separate from her husband, leading some onlookers to wonder whether James was master of his own house. Moreover, Anne's masques insisted on the centrality of her maternal role, and, together with her struggles to retain control of the royal children, seem to have been designed to suggest that she was the better parent (and by implication the better monarch?) Her comment to the French ambassador, de Beaumont, that 'it is time that I should have possession of the Prince and gain his affection, for the King drinks so much and conducts himself so ill in every respect, that I expect an early and evil result', has long been sentimentalized as a mother's longing for her child.⁹² However, if Tennenhouse's assertion that 'to discuss family organization was to speak a political language' is accepted, it seems clear that Anne's speech and behaviour had a serious political dimension, which threatened to undermine James's monarchical authority by subscribing to a different familial politics.

Chapter 3 focuses on father / son tensions. James quickly became aware that the presence of a royal heir was a double-edged sword, and his increasing anxiety about Henry's popularity is evinced in his interventions to control Henry's self-fashioning. Widespread dissatisfaction with James's pacifist stance found a focus in the militant Protestantism of Henry's court at St James's Palace, and the problem was compounded by the natural human tendency to believe that the future will

⁹² *History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. by Frederick Ludwig Georg von Raumer, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1835), II, 209-10.

always be better than the present. James, associated with a status quo that was becoming increasingly unsatisfactory, found himself in competition with Henry, who presented himself as an agent of change. This relationship between King and Prince was acted out and embodied in the masques in which Henry's mobility, his virtuoso performances in the masque dances, must have drawn the admiring gaze away from the static figure of the King.⁹³

Chapter 4 considers James's use of marriage as a political, rather than simply a rhetorical tool. Elizabeth's marriage, following hard on the heels of the devastation of Henry's sudden death, looks to modern eyes like a public relations exercise, and constitutes another example of James's strategy of rewriting tragedy as romantic fiction. James arranged his children's marriages to further his programmatic pacifism and accomplish his aim of becoming *rex pacificus*, yet ironically Elizabeth's marriage was to embroil the country in continental wars, while James's attempts to procure a Catholic bride for Charles aroused serious domestic opposition.

The extension of James's familial rhetoric to his male favourites is evident in his desire to arrange their marriages. His role in procuring the divorce of Frances Howard from her first husband the Earl of Essex was intended to put an end to opposition between the powerful Howard faction and his favourite, Robert Carr, but culminated in one of the most damaging scandals of James's reign. Moreover, the present occasion of Howard's first marriage had been used to expound James's scheme for the union of England and Scotland, with the result that here, as in other

⁹³ After Henry's death his strategies were taken up by the aristocratic opposition to royal policy, led in the 1620s by members of the old nobility including Essex and Arundel. See chapter 5.

cases, the collapse of the marriage problematised the rhetoric of union.⁹⁴ The common theme which emerges in my discussion of these marriages and their masques is a recognition of the extent to which projected unity was all too often undercut by deep-seated division, in the immediate context of the court, or in the wider arena of European politics.

Chapter 5 discusses some of the masques of the last decade of James's reign, which I divided into the masques of the middle period and those of the 1620s. I suggest that with the death of Henry, the departure of Elizabeth, and Anne's absence from the masque stage, the division which had been generated by the presence on the masque stage of other members of the royal family initially focused on James himself. The expanded comic antimasques of this middle period functioned at once to please the King, but also to implicate him in the misrule he should have been controlling. However, by the 1620s, when James's foreign policy was generating widespread opposition, Jonson's masques became preoccupied with defending the King against the ignorance of public opinion. The masques praise James as the producer of a wise, if inscrutable foreign policy, a strategy which allows Jonson to align himself, as the creator of abstruse and intellectually elitist masques, with the King. However, James's sensitivity to challenges to his prerogative made Jonson's task increasingly difficult in the 1620s, and the strain of producing entertainments

⁹⁴ James's paranoia about the concept of family being mobilised against him is in evidence in the rigour of his controls over his cousin, Arbella Stuart. Arbella's attempts to script a role for herself played out the romance motifs of cross-dressing and escape from imprisonment, but her narrative was eventually forced to conform to that of the King. See David N. Durant's biography, *Arbella Stuart: A Rival to the Queen* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1978).

for a court that was divided in its opinions over the Spanish match surfaces in the self-consciousness and self-referentiality of the later masques. This trend culminated in *Neptune's Triumph*, in which the antimasque is dominated by a discussion of the problems of writing masques.

Chapter 5 also considers the rise of the last and greatest of James's favourites, George Villiers, who was to prove adept at using the masques to fashion himself in a way that appealed to the King. James was troped in the masques of this period as the source of life and light, and I argue that these conventional ideas gained additional resonance from James's enjoyment of the fact that he had 'made' Buckingham, indulging the male fantasy of parthenogenesis that was a pervasive patriarchal strategy in this period.⁹⁵ Significantly, James liked his favourites to be completely and exclusively dependent on him for their advancement, and his pleasure in the role of creator and father was uncompromised in his relationship with Buckingham. By contrast, in his relationships with his own children, James had been initially troubled by the spectre of illegitimacy, finding himself embroiled with Anne in struggles to control them, and fearing that his sons might be used to usurp him, as he had been used against his own mother.⁹⁶

The masques of the 1620s, the last of James's reign, belong to a period of domestic divisions and Europe-wide disputes. After the collapse of Charles's proposed match with the Spanish infanta, the Prince and Buckingham allied

⁹⁵ Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', p. 16.

⁹⁶ For James's anxieties about Henry's paternity see *CSP Scot XI*, 397, and for his 'dislike' of the newborn Prince Charles see *CSP Scot XIII*, 748-749.

themselves with parliament in its calls for war. As the masques once again negotiated between the heir to the throne, committed to a confessionally motivated war, and his peacemaker King and father, James might well have thought back to the struggles of the previous decade between himself and Henry. Yet whereas in the past the father-son relationship had been complicated by the presence of a male favourite - Somerset - who had marginalised the true heir, the last years of James's reign saw a shift in the trinity of power as Buckingham attached himself firmly to the rising star of the future King.

The primary aim of this thesis is to offer a long-overdue reevaluation of the masques of the Stuart court, which widens the focus from King James to consider the roles played by other members of the royal family in the interanimating spheres of cultural and political agency. In complicating the absolutist ideology of divine right monarchy by superimposing the familial politics of the period I am not seeking to deny the centrality of the monarch; rather I hope this thesis redresses the imbalance of earlier studies of the period by hearing more than one of the many voices of the Stuart court. The conclusion widens the focus still further, looking outward from the court to the public theatres to offer a brief reflection on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. These closing thoughts demonstrate how the broader arguments of the thesis, especially its attempt to disrupt, or at least complicate, the mutually reinforcing link between art and sovereign power, stagecraft and statecraft, might be applied to other texts of the period. *The Tempest* is an obvious starting point for such a project, since it dramatically stages the familial politics which are at the heart of my

discussions of the masque, and, as Tennenhouse rightly observes, the 'Jacobean theater was never more political than when it staged a king as a father and a court as a household', for to do so was to engage in the ideological struggle over the relationship between family and state.⁹⁷ Prospero's voice, like King James's, exemplifies the voice of the monarch and patriarch, which has been heard and believed for long enough. It is time to interrogate the strategies of King and father, and recover the other voices that have been silenced and ignored for too long.

⁹⁷ Tennenhouse, p. 175.

Chapter two: Making a spectacle of herself: Queen Anne and the early Stuart Masque

A King's Words and a Queen's Body

And for your behaviour to your Wife [...] teach her not to be curious in things that belong her not: Ye are the head, shee is your body; It is your office to command, and hers to obey [...] suffer her never to meddle with the Politicke gouernment of the Commonweale, but hold her at the Oeconomicke rule of the house; and yet all to be subiect to your direction [...], for women are the frailest sexe.¹

James's advice to the young Prince Henry on how to manage a wife echoes the conduct books of the period, which proclaimed and endorsed the subordination of woman to man, wife to husband.² However, as a number of scholars have suggested, theoretical ideals should not be accepted as offering an insight into real practices, since there was ample opportunity for such ideals to be ignored or subverted. Indeed, since the most vocal assertions of a culture usually mark out a site of strain or tension, it seems likely that, if the ideal construction of woman as chaste, silent and obedient was a reality, it would not have been articulated with such anxious

¹ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, pp. 36-37.

² See Suzanne W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient: English Books for Women, 1475-1640* (San Marino, CA.: Huntington Library, 1982), Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540-1620* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), and Peter Stallybrass, 'Patriarchal Territories: the Body Enclosed', in *Rewriting the Renaissance: the Discourse of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), pp. 123-142.

frequency.³ In the narrative on which I am about to embark, James's words of advice to his son will take on the aspect of wish-fulfilment. I will suggest that, faced with the intransigent disobedience of his own wife, James could only project an ideal of male dominance and wifely submission onto his son's future marriage, since he was unable to impose such a fiction onto Queen Anne.⁴

The New Historicist approach to literature outlined in chapter 1 claims to pose a radical challenge to the older historiography by rejecting the model of a single, seamlessly unified history, in favour of a multiplicity of histories, heterogeneous and fragmented. Yet despite these claims, New Historicist critics of the masque have repeatedly tended to privilege the monarch's perspective, offering a univocal and monolithic reading of the masques of the Stuart court as symbolic reproductions of sovereign power. As Marion Wynne-Davies notes

The interpretation of the masque form which has come to be accepted over the last twenty years suggests that it reinforces the dominant hierarchy of the power it encodes: monarch over subject, King over Queen, parent over child, man over woman, and the conservation of order over the usurping forces of chaos.⁵

In emphasising the power of the monarch to contain subversive energies, New Historicist criticism of the masque has effectively effaced the other voices it initially

³ The danger of accepting early modern society's ideological misdescription of itself has been discussed in chapter 1 with reference to the absolutist discourse of sovereign power.

⁴ Anticipating the discussion of *The Tempest* at the conclusion of this thesis, it is noteworthy that Prospero's attempts to impose his fictions on others are similarly thwarted when a number of the characters, notably Sebastian and Antonio, remain intransigent and refuse to play the scripted role of remorse and repentance.

⁵ Marion Wynne-Davies, 'The Queen's Masque: Renaissance Women and the Seventeenth Century Court Masque', in *Gloriana's Face: Women Public and Private in the English Renaissance*, ed. by S. P. Cerasano and M. Wynne-Davies (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), pp. 79-104 (p. 99).

purported to recover. When, in his seminal study of the politics and culture of the court of James I, Jonathan Goldberg asserts that King James is the focus of the work because he is ‘the articulate and visible centre of society’, he implicitly characterises James’s wife, Queen Anne of Denmark as silent, invisible and marginal, typifying the gender-blindness for which New Historicism has been criticised by feminist scholars.⁶ During the course of this chapter I hope to challenge New Historicist criticism both for its prioritisation of containment over subversion, and for the gender-blindness which has resulted from such a focus on the dominant monarchical and patriarchal order.⁷

The tendency to read masques as poetry or literature rather than as performance, has been discussed at some length in chapter 1, with reference to Jonson’s own insistent privileging of the enduring text over the more ephemeral non-verbal elements. This approach has two serious drawbacks for anyone attempting, as I am, to recover the role played by Queen Anne in the commissioning and performance of masques. Firstly, it imposes a twentieth-century concept of authorship as single and exclusive, on what was a collaborative art form, and in so doing obscures the involvement not only of stage designer, choreographer, composer et al, but of Anne

⁶ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne and their Contemporaries* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1983), p. xi. Goldberg’s more recent work is more gender conscious, but for useful feminist critiques of New Historicism see Lynda E. Boose, ‘The Family in Shakespeare Studies; or - Studies in the Family of Shakespeareans; or - The Politics of Politics’, *RQ* 40 (1987), 707-42, especially pp. 727-742, and Leeds Barroll, ‘A New History for Shakespeare and His Time’, *SQ* 39 (1998), 441-64.

⁷ Interestingly, the method for my challenge - reading the body of the Queen in performance - is suggested by New Historicism’s own willingness to read all aspects of the past with the attention hitherto reserved for literary texts.

herself who, as commissioning agent, played what can be called an ‘authorial’ role. Secondly, reading the masque as literature neglects the spectacular element in general, but in particular overlooks the very real significance of the female body in performance. My approach in this chapter constitutes a self-conscious challenge to what Keir Elam has described as the hegemony of the linguistic model in Renaissance studies, ‘a mode of sanitization that tended to delete the unrepentant physicality of the performer’s being and doing on stage [...] evading the crucial corporeality of the role’.⁸

The anti-corporeal thrust of masque criticism replicates a familiar Renaissance hierarchy, which Jonson invokes to express his anti-theatrical prejudice, namely the subordination of the corruptible human body to the immortal soul.⁹ This hierarchisation of soul over body, and by implication of text over performance has a gendered dimension, since in Renaissance discourse women were strongly associated with the corporeal, the fleshly body, while men were linked with the higher functions of the mind and soul, the rational and spiritual. In the case of Queen Anne’s masques, critics have perpetuated the ideological assumptions of both James and Jonson that the feminised body is naturally subject to the authority of the masculine head and soul. By placing the male-authored word above the physical realisation of the masque in the bodies of the Queen and her noblewomen the critical

⁸ Keir Elam, ‘“In what chapter of his bosom?”: Reading Shakespeare’s Bodies’, in *Alternative Shakespeares II*, ed. by Terence Hawkes (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 140-163 (p. 143).

⁹ In the preface to *Hymenaei*, H&S VII, 209, discussed in chapter 1.

tradition has rendered the female body all but invisible.¹⁰ Approaching the early Stuart court as ‘a text to be perpetually interpreted, an inexhaustible collection of stories’, I want to re-tell the story of the Queen’s masques, prioritising the physical elements of the performance, to recover a series of striking stagings of the body and intentions of the Queen.¹¹

As part of that process of re-evaluation, this chapter reinscribes the Queen’s body in her masques, giving specific consideration to the radical nature of women’s presence on the masque stage at a time when the public theatres still employed all-male acting companies. The fact that the staging of female bodies was something unusual must have prompted the contemporary audience to engage in a ‘close reading’ of the female body, and on a number of occasions the appearance of noble women on the masque stage functioned less to honour the monarch than to pose a challenge to him and to the dominant patriarchal order.¹² I will consider a variety of ways in which Anne and her ladies used their physical appearance to challenge the dominant order, and to represent themselves in a positive and empowered light. By attempting to reconstruct, at least in part, the visual spectacle, I hope to show the

¹⁰ Hardin Aasand, ‘“To blanch an Ethiop, and revive a corse”: Queen Anne and *The Masque of Blackness*’, *SEL*, 32 (1992), 271-285, makes a similar point, commenting that ‘The body of the masque and the body of the queen are curiously homologous’, p. 274.

¹¹ Louis Montrose, ‘Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture’, in *The New Historicism*, ed. by H. Aram Veenser (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 15-36 (p. 19).

¹² One of the reasons that the swindler, Richard Vennar[d] promoting the play ‘England’s Joy’, to be performed at the Swan on 6 November 1602, took so much advance entrance money may well have been his claim that it would be acted by gentlemen and *women*. See E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, 500-503.

extent to which Anne's body became a focus for subversive gestures, which, as she was both woman and Queen, were replete with sexual and political significance.¹³

At the centre of my argument is the conviction that Anne used the masques to move into the hitherto masculine spheres of authorship and the stage, and that in so doing she was able to participate, often disruptively, in the political realm from which the patriarchal Jacobean establishment strove to exclude her. Taking James's speeches and political writings as the intertexts for my narration, I show how Anne used her physical appearance in the masques to engage on a specific level with James's political rhetoric - particularly his favoured tropes of king as husband, father, and actor - in response to which she represented herself as a wife estranged from her husband, a mother, and an actress.¹⁴ Indeed, it became evident early in the reign that Anne was more adept than James at staging herself for the public gaze. The warmth of her response to the crowds at her entry into London in 1604 was noted admiringly by Gilbert Dugdale, who described how 'our gracious Quene Anne, milde and curteous [...] did all the way so humbly and with mildenes, salute her

¹³ After the example of Peter Stallybrass in his excellent essay 'Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed'.

¹⁴ See *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain. In his first speech to parliament James asserted 'I am the Husband and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife', p. 272. In a 1610 speech James can be found identifying royal power with that of a natural father, comparing Kings to 'Fathers of families: for a King is trewly *Parens Patriae*, the politique father of his people', p. 307. The trope of the king as actor is employed extensively in James's *Basilikon Doron*, where he describes a king as 'one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold', p. 43.

subjects, [...] that women and men in my sight wept with joy' and contrasted this with James's habitual posture of cold reserve.¹⁵ One of the aims of this chapter is to

reconsider not only our traditional notions of Jacobean patriarchy, according to which women silently, obediently and unquestioningly acquiesced to the directives of the head of the family / state, but to rethink the very assumption that a clear distinction between the public (male) and the private (female) spheres was popularly understood and accepted.¹⁶

As Kirsten Poole's discussion of mother's manuals of advice to their children convincingly demonstrates, the maternal role could be used by all women to extend their sphere of influence beyond the threshold of the home, but this was particularly true of the mother of the heir to the throne. The first reported masque of the reign was presented by Anne for Henry, and the fact that the figures of the Queen and the Prince of Wales often coincide in the masques of the first decade attests to the importance of familial politics as a context for the masque. Mother and son appeared side by side at the Althorp entertainment of 1603 (discussed in chapter 3), and as well as staging masques for Henry (notably *Tethys' Festival*) Anne also arranged for him to perform alongside her in *The Masque of Beauty*, suggesting that one of the motives informing her masque appearances was the desire to affirm her links with her son and the heir to the throne.¹⁷

¹⁵ Gilbert Dugdale, *The Time Triumphant* (London, 1604), sig. B2v.

¹⁶ Kirsten Poole, ' "The fittest closet for all goodness": Authorial Strategies of Jacobean Mothers' Manuals', *SEL* 35 (1995), 69-88 (p. 70).

¹⁷ The relationship between Queen and Prince was blighted by their antithetical religious and political beliefs. However, as has already been noted (p. 34 fn. 69), Anne's Catholicism and her pro-Spanish stance in matters of foreign policy were complicated by her behaviour on the domestic political stage, where, in the organisation of her court, discussed in more detail below, she displayed a clear preference for members of the Protestant Sidney / Essex families.

The first Christmas masque was commissioned by Anne from Samuel Daniel, whose recommendation by Lucy Countess of Bedford gives an indication of the extent to which the new Queen's court was already operating as a site of patronage and cultural innovation. Leeds Barroll has argued convincingly that the institution of the annual Christmas masques was largely due to Queen Anne, while Graham Parry has described Anne as 'culturally adventurous' and Somerset House as the 'home of the aesthetic avant garde'.¹⁸ Moreover, while the masques I will be discussing in this chapter are today catalogued under the names of their male authors, contemporary accounts invariably refer not to Jonson or Daniel, but to the Queen, whom Barbara Lewalski has suggestively described as the 'midwife' of the genre.¹⁹ Dudley Carleton described *Blackness* as 'the Queen's Maske', and even Jonson, notably proprietorial about his work, complied in the attribution to the Queen, publishing *Blackness and Beauty as The Queen's Masques* in his 1616 *Workes*.²⁰ By drawing attention to this, I do not mean to suggest that Anne was the 'author' in the twentieth-century sense. However, the seventeenth-century meaning of the word 'author' was much looser, denoting initiator or instigator, and an acknowledgement of this permits us to ascribe some degree of authorial involvement to Anne as

¹⁸ Barroll, 'Inventing the Stuart Masque', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 121-43, (pp. 123-24). Graham Parry, 'Entertainments at Court', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 195-211 (p. 200).

¹⁹ Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 28. Wynne-Davies similarly points to the extent of female involvement in the 'nurturing' of artists through the 'maternal patronage system', p. 91.

²⁰ Carleton, in H&S X, 448.

commissioning agent which is not necessarily at odds with the common sense recognition that the words proceeded from the pen of Ben Jonson.²¹

Clearly, the projection of a twentieth-century concept of authorship onto the seventeenth-century court masques has obscured a recognition of the involvement of Queen Anne and other noblewomen who commissioned and enacted the masques. However, even where Queen Anne's role in the court masques and entertainments has been recognised, it has been trivialized and dismissed as a manifestation of her 'frivolity', a trait which has been associated with Queen Anne by generations of (predominantly male) historians. D. H. Willson is perhaps the most damning, describing her as 'frivolous and empty-headed', and asserting that 'she confirmed the foolish contempt with which he [James] regarded women. Alas! The King had married a stupid wife'.²² Interestingly, the terms of Willson's condemnation echo James's own comments on women as 'beautie without bountie, wealth without wisdom [...] the deceitfull masques of infinite miseries', demonstrating the implications of listening only to the voice of the King.²³ The *Dictionary of National Biography* describes Anne's 'passion for these entertainments and the extravagance they entailed in dress and such-like matters', and the Venetian ambassador's account of *The Masque of Beauty*, which names the Queen as 'authoress of the whole', is peremptorily rejected by Herford and Simpson as nothing more than a 'polite fiction' (H&S X, 457). There has been either an unwillingness to entertain the

²¹ Marion Wynne-Davies makes the same observation, pp. 79-80.

²² D. H. Willson, *King James VI and I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), pp. 94-95.

²³ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 35.

possibility of Anne's involvement in the masques, or a refusal to see her participation as politically significant, which is symptomatic of the pervasive patriarchal bias of masque criticism.²⁴ And yet a glance at the comments of contemporary observers, such as the Venetian ambassador Molin, reveals that Anne's involvement in masquing was by no means seen as inappropriate. He notes that she 'likes enjoyment and is very fond of dancing and fetes', and continues, 'she is intelligent and prudent; and knows all the disorders of the government in which she has no part'.²⁵ It is to the point that this description locates Anne's cultural agency alongside her political astuteness and her desire to distance herself from the perceived abuses of the King's court.

In spite of ample evidence for the involvement of the Queen in the commissioning and performance of masques, critics have traditionally - and erroneously - ascribed all masques to the King's prerogative. Stephen Orgel is prepared to modify the author-based approach of his book *The Jonsonian Masque* to allow for the inscription of the royal - and specifically kingly - will. He asserts that 'it is under King James that the really significant changes in the masque take place, and in a way the form is as much the creation of the king's sensibility as of Jonson's'. Yet while Orgel is ready to cast the King as co-author, he plays down the role of the Queen -

²⁴ Roy Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), demonstrates these pervasive double standards. He comments that Anne 'deliberately avoided politics, devoting herself instead to dancing, courtly entertainments and the design and decoration of her houses and gardens', p. 16. However, the rest of his book-length study discusses Henry's involvement in similar activities, which, when pursued by the Prince of Wales, are endowed by Strong with political significance.

²⁵ *CSP Ven X*, 513.

even though her influence figures in the very next paragraph, where he speculates as to the 'reasons Queen Anne may have had for preferring Samuel Daniel to Jonson in 1604'.²⁶ Thankfully, recent years have seen the beginnings of a re-evaluation of Jacobean pageantry which gives due consideration to the cultural agency of Queen Anne.²⁷ The work of scholars in this field has also been instrumental in beginning the larger task of disrupting the smooth surface of the masque, revealing a site where ideologies of gender, class and politics are contested rather than simply affirmed.

The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses: The new Queen's Court

The first Christmas masque of the Stuart reign in England, *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, was commissioned by Anne from Samuel Daniel, at the recommendation of her leading courtier, Lucy Countess of Bedford, and performed by the Queen and her ladies at Hampton Court on 8 January 1604.²⁸ The collaboration of the two women, Anne and Lucy, in the field of cultural patronage sets the scene for a

²⁶ Orgel, p. 63.

²⁷ Leeds Barroll has led the call for such a revaluation. Other scholars whose work on the cultural agency of Queen Anne of Denmark has influenced the present thesis include Marion Wynne-Davies, Barbara Lewalski in *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 15-43, Katherine Schwarz, 'Amazon Reflections in the Queen's Masque', *SEL*, 35 (1995), 293-319, and Clare McManus, 'Silenced voices / speaking bodies: female performance and cultural agency in the court of Anne of Denmark (1590-1619)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 1997).

²⁸ Daniel's *Twelve Goddesses*, ed. by Joan Rees, in *A Book of Masques in Honor of Allardyce Nicoll*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 19-42. Subsequent references are to this edition, and are given parenthetically in the text to page and / or line number, as needed. See p. 25 for the dedication to 'the Right Honourable the Lady Lucy, Countess of Bedford'.

performance which Anne used to showcase herself and her recently established court.²⁹

Even before her arrival in England, Anne had demonstrated her determination to exercise control over the appointment of her courtiers.³⁰ In May 1603 James asked the English Privy Council to send a few ladies to Scotland to accompany Anne on the journey south; but Anne snubbed the official welcoming party, in favour of a group of younger women, who had travelled north independently. Surprisingly, in view of Anne's Catholic and Spanish proclivities, many of the women she initially favoured, and later made members of her inner circle, had strong links with the Essex / Sidney group of families. Lucy, Countess of Bedford, was the wife of one of Essex's co-conspirators, and her father, John Harington, was a cousin of the Sidneys. Penelope Rich, another of Anne's early favourites, was the sister of the rebellious 2nd Earl of Essex, and the aunt of the present Earl; her lover, Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, was a prominent patron of Samuel Daniel. Anne's attempts to cultivate links with the 'Essex' group may be seen as an early indication of her oppositional politics, since despite James's initial displays of favour towards the Essex faction,

²⁹ With regard to female cultural agency see David Bergeron, 'Women as Patrons of English Renaissance Drama', in *Patronage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Stephen Orgel and Guy Fitch Lytle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 274-290. In *Twelve Goddesses* it is suggestive that the vision of the goddesses is generated by Somnus at the request of his mother, Night.

³⁰ See Leeds Barroll, 'The Court of the First Stuart Queen', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 191-208, especially pp. 200-208 for Anne's determination to control access to her circle and appointments to her household. Barroll's most recent essay, 'Inventing the Stuart Masque', is also extremely useful in illuminating the identities and social and political importance of the women who performed in the first two masques commissioned by Anne.

he rapidly became closely associated with the powerful Howard family, on whom he bestowed a number of important posts in his household.³¹

Anne's desire to retain her separate identity, and to distinguish her own court and activities from those of the King, may have been one factor in her decision to favour the Essex group. However, her attraction to this group might also be attributed to the fact that they were part of an elaborate network of patronage, with links to a number of artists, providing Anne with a vehicle for the creation and dissemination of her public image. Her insistence that Sir Robert Sidney (brother of the late Sir Philip) serve as her Lord Chamberlain is especially significant, since, as Barroll points out, the Queen's chamberlain was responsible for dealings with the London acting companies on Anne's behalf.³² The appointment of Samuel Daniel as licenser for the Children of the Queen's Revels is part of a similar trend of favouring members or associates of the Essex group, and points to an area of Anne's cultural patronage in which she was, at least for a time, independent of the authority of the King, since the Children of the Queen's Revels were not subject to the censorship of the Master of the Revels. The contemptuous comments of de Beaumont on the 'state and condition of a prince [James] [...], whom the comedians of the metropolis bring upon the stage, whose wife attends these representations in order to enjoy the laugh against her husband' attest to the fact that Anne's company took advantage of

³¹ The powerful Howard faction was headed by Henry Howard, first Earl of Northampton, who was appointed Lord Privy Seal in 1608. His nephew, Thomas Howard was created 1st Earl of Suffolk in 1603 and served as James's Lord Chamberlain from 1603-14, after which he became Lord High Treasurer.

³² Barroll, 'The court of the first Stuart Queen', p. 203.

the protection afforded them by her patronage to stage plays, such as *Eastward Ho!* which were seen as oppositional.³³

Another important factor influencing Anne during the early years of her court may have been her desire to maintain a link with her children (this aim, and the strategies she employed to achieve it, are discussed in greater detail below in relation to the *Masques of Blackness and Beauty*). The discussion of familial politics and the masque in the previous chapter has already cited a number of masquing occasions on which Anne and her children, especially Prince Henry, appeared together. It is equally significant to note the links between a number of Anne's leading courtiers, and the circles and households being established around Prince Henry, and, to a lesser extent, Princess Elizabeth during the early years of the reign. Prince Henry's militant Protestant sympathies meant that he found role models in the heroes of the Elizabethan age, including Philip Sidney (the brother of Anne's Lord Chamberlain, Robert) and the 2nd Earl of Essex, whose son had inherited the title, and had become one of Henry's companions. In view of Anne's determination to retain some degree of influence over her son, the heir to the throne, it is perhaps not surprising to find her cultivating a friendship with the young Earl's aunt, Penelope Rich, who danced alongside the Queen in *Twelve Goddesses and Blackness*. Another of Henry's close associates was John Harington, the younger brother of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, Anne's chief courtier. Moreover, Lucy's parents, Lord and Lady Harington, were appointed the guardians of Princess Elizabeth, who was brought up by them at

³³ Quoted by Marion Wynne-Davies, p. 86, from Ann Jenalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers in Shakespeare's England, 1576-1642* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 115.

Combe Abbey in Warwickshire. Consequently, Anne had, through her leading courtier and the rest of the Harington family, an important channel of contact with and possible influence on, her two elder children.³⁴

Twelve Goddesses functioned as an occasion for the Queen to display herself and some of the ladies whom she had elevated to her circle. As Barroll has recently pointed out, a masque of women constituted a radical break with English tradition, given that masquing had hitherto been the prerogative of men.³⁵ It is ironic, therefore, that the masque which marked such a momentous occasion has so frequently been dismissed by contemporary critics because of its old-fashioned processional nature and iconography which, figuring a line-up of classical goddesses such as Pallas, Astraea and Diana, is derivative of Elizabeth's self-presentations.

The piece is undeniably backward-looking, but rather than criticising Daniel for a lack of inventiveness, I want to contend that the Elizabethan mood is not only intentional, but constitutes a meaningful statement from the Queen.³⁶ The masque

³⁴ The foregoing discussion is much indebted to Barroll, 'The Court of the first Stuart Queen', pp. 205-207. He comments interestingly on the fact that two versions exist of Peake's portrait of Prince Henry *à la chasse*; one figures John Harington, the other Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. The portrait is discussed in more detail in chapter 3 of the present thesis.

³⁵ Barroll, 'Inventing the Stuart Masque', p. 122. The gentlemen of the Inns of Court had held a virtual monopoly on masquing during Elizabeth's reign

³⁶ Daniel's masques are discussed by Stephen Kogan in *The Hieroglyphic King* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986) and by Douglas Brooks-Davies in *The Mercurian Monarch: Magical Politics from Spenser to Pope* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), pp. 85-87. As the titles of both books demonstrate, the authors are more concerned with James than with the Queen who commissioned and lead the masque.

should be seen in the context of attempts by other writers to create a sense of continuity between the Tudor and Stuart dynasties, and in this early appearance before the English court, Anne deliberately presents herself (rather than James) as the successor to the late Queen. Dudley Carleton tells us that Anne and her ladies raided Elizabeth's wardrobe for their costumes; perhaps Anne hoped that the allegiances of the Queen's subjects would find a natural focus in her rather than in the King.³⁷ Her choice of the role of Pallas Athena, the virgin warrior, was certainly deliberate and perhaps a little unexpected. Juno, the wife of Jove and the goddess of marriage, might have been a more predictable and appropriate choice for the new consort Queen, who was, after all, a wife and mother, but Anne's decision to represent herself as the virgin Pallas rather than the married Juno anticipates her strategy in subsequent masques of asserting her separate and independent identity from the King. Moreover, by invoking the memory of the dead Queen, Anne was deliberately defying James's desire to avoid all mention of Queen Elizabeth. The Duke of Sully reported that the King would not permit anyone to come into his presence wearing mourning for his predecessor, and observed that 'so strong an affectation prevailed to obliterate the memory of that great princess, that she was never spoken of, and even the mention of her name studiously avoided'.³⁸ By perpetuating Elizabeth's spirit in the iconography of the masque, and especially in her own role, Anne was clearly flouting the wishes of the King.

³⁷ Quoted in Lewalski, p. 30.

³⁸ Quoted in David M. Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 85-86.

Daniel's intention in the masque, as outlined in his dedicatory epistle to the Countess of Bedford, is to 'present the figure of those blessings, with the wish of their increase and continuance, which this kingdom now enjoys by the benefit of his most gracious Majesty' (p. 25). To this end, the Queen and her noble women represent various goddesses who descend to the Temple of Peace, which functions as the masque-mirror's reflection of England under James's rule. The Sibylla or priestess of the temple comments on the appearance and attributes of the goddesses, after which they each present a symbol of their power at the temple, beginning with Juno's sceptre, representing the blessing of imperial power, and Pallas's lance and target, representing armed policy. Yet, despite Daniel's claim that the goddesses represent blessings brought by James's accession, and enjoyed now, in the present, the action of the masque immediately complicates that assertion. The prayer of the Sibylla, 'that these fair blessings which we now erect / In figures left us here, in substance may / [...] / Make glorious both the sovereign and the state' (ll. 375-76; 383), suggests that the blessings have *not* already been realised by James's accession. Furthermore, the physical movement of the masquers, processing down from the mountain towards the Temple of Peace, and down the hall towards the King, later mingling with the audience, implies that *they*, not the King, are the source of the blessings. James, a fixed and motionless figure in his seat of state, is merely the passive recipient of the goddesses' blessings, an impression which is confirmed by the Graces' song about desert, reward and gratitude.³⁹

³⁹ Lewalski makes the same point, noting that the ladies are 'the active forces, the earthly embodiments of the deities who bring to James qualities and gifts which (by implication) his reign does not yet have', p. 30.

The effect of the whole is to imply that James's reign is authorised and legitimised by women. Behind the goddesses, and behind the Queen and her new court, lurk the two powerful female figures on whom James's accession to the thrones of England and Scotland had depended. Yet, as we have seen, the new King, successor to both Mary, Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth, Queen of England, did not like to be reminded of the dominance of the female line in his royal genealogy. A masque which staged his dependence on the female would have been a disconcerting spectacle for James, who made no secret of his contempt for women. In representing herself as a successor of Elizabeth, a virgin warrior, and part of a female community, Anne implied that her husband's reign derived its potency from her, rather than the other way around. This claim was enhanced by the fact that, for the first time in England, it was not male masquers who penetrated the watching audience to pick out a partner, but female masquers who exercised the power of choice, the power to withhold or confer favour on the watching men. Like the blessings of the goddesses, the honour conferred on those who were 'taken out' in the masque dances had its source in the Queen, not the King.

Twelve Goddesses sets the pattern for the rest of the Queen's masques by disrupting the expected relationship between the royal spectator and the masque as a mirror in which he sees reflected the virtues embodied by himself and his court. Initially, all appears to be well, as 'twelve female bodies construct a collective vision of male sovereignty', and the goddesses purport to represent the blessings of James's reign.⁴⁰ However, as Kathryn Schwarz rightly notes, that vision quickly

⁴⁰ Kathryn Schwarz, p. 297.

breaks down: ‘the claim that women’s bodies represent the virtues of men wavers when confronted with the bodies themselves [...] and the body of the masquer is read, not as the wisdom of the king, but as the excess of a queen’ (pp. 299-300). Anne’s masques construct a gap between James and the spectacle, to the extent that the relationship between the King and the masque is no longer one of complacent self-confirmation, but one of confrontation with the (armed) Queen. Thus, when King James looks into the masque he sees, not a reflection of his own court, but an assertion of the independent existence of a rival court and a separate locus of power focused on his Queen.⁴¹

Amongst the spectators of *Twelve Goddesses* was Dudley Carleton who, commenting on the costume of the Queen as Pallas, joked that ‘her clothes were not so much below the knee that we might see a woman had both feet and legs which I never knew before’.⁴² His remark registers the disruption of socially constructed gender identities triggered by the collocation of Anne’s female body with the trappings of masculine power (the short skirt or bases, buskins, a helmet, a lance and target). I will be discussing the implications of this transgression in more detail in relation to Anne’s staging of herself in the more overtly martial *Masque of Queens*.

⁴¹ One final challenge extended to James in this masque lies in the martial nature of a number of the goddesses, which was clearly at odds with his pursuit of a policy of peace with Spain. Interestingly, Anne’s self-presentation runs into difficulties here, since despite the martial nature of her role, her own politics were pro-Spanish, and she welcomed the improvement in Anglo-Spanish relations. It seems to me that the warlike attributes of some of the goddesses should be seen as an assertion of the power and potency of the Queen and her court, rather than a call for a more militant approach to foreign politics.

⁴² Quoted in *Twelve Goddesses*, ed. by Joan Rees, p. 41.

However, *Twelve Goddesses* demonstrates Anne's early awareness of the fact that, as a silent masquer, it was necessary to locate her voice in her body. Over the next five years we find the Queen staging her body in dramatic, sometimes shocking, ways to secure the attention of the spectators, and to assert her identity as independent from the King.

Blackened Bodies: 'A Troop of lean-cheek'd Moors'⁴³

The most striking staging of the Queen's body took place in *The Masque of Blackness*. Oceanus, guardian of the realm of Albion, is approached by Niger and his daughters, twelve Ethiopian river nymphs (the roles taken by Queen Anne and her women). Niger explains how, after reading what poets have written about western beauties, his daughters have become dissatisfied with their dark skins. To find a remedy they must seek a land whose name ends in -tania, and which is lit by a more than natural sun, whose beams 'are of force / To blanch an AETHIOPE and reuiue a *Cor's*' (VII, 177, ll. 254-255). Suddenly, the moon goddess Aethiopia appears and tells them their search is at an end; the realm, under James, has recovered her ancient name of Britannia, and its sun-king has the power to transform the nymphs's blackness into beauty. The masque concludes with the nymphs promising to return in a year's time when the transformation is complete.

The dynamics of the relationship between patron and poet in the literature of the early modern period have been the subject of much critical attention, and Jonson's prefaces offer a revealing insight into his handling of the terms of his commissions.

⁴³ From Dudley Carleton's description of *Blackness*, in H&S X, 448.

Jonson asserts that the device is his invention, but at its centre is Anne's will that she and her ladies appear as '*Black-mores*'; while Jonson initially encloses 'her Maiesties will' in parentheses and continues with an assertion of his own agency, 'the inuention was deriued by me', there is a strong sense of his being forced to comply, submitting his poetic prerogative to her royal prerogative (H&S VII, 169, ll. 21-22). Hardin Aasand offers an interesting reading of the printed version of *Blackness*, suggesting that far from sharing credit with the Queen, Jonson's prefatory remarks are intended to ensure that the blame for the scandalous appearance of the lady masquers - about which more later - lies with the Queen. In this light, the heavy annotations, which attempt to offer an erudite justification for the masque narrative, can be seen as a poetic disclaimer, a deliberate attempt to publicise the fact that the unconventional appearance of the female masquers was a manifestation of the Queen's will, not Jonson's own.⁴⁴

The contemporary accounts of *Blackness* make it quite clear that the most striking aspect of the masque was the visual spectacle.⁴⁵ Dudley Carleton describes the staging of the masque but does not relate the plot, and was evidently scandalised by what he saw:

⁴⁴ Aasand, p. 274. Jonson had already been imprisoned for his part in *Eastward Ho!*, so it seems reasonable to suppose that he might have used the printed version of the masque to distance himself from the scandal it had provoked. This is suggestive of the tendency of the printed text to operate in a stabilising or idealising way, as discussed in chapter 1. *Eastward Ho!*, which had offended the King with its unflattering portrayal of Scots, had been performed by the Children of the Queen's Revels, whose oppositional activities have already been mentioned.

⁴⁵ David Lindley, 'Introduction', in *The Court Masque* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 1-15, comments that 'It is indeed symptomatic that

Their Apparell was rich but too light and Curtizan-like for such great ones. Instead of Vizzards, their Faces, and Arms up to the Elbows were painted black, which was Disguise sufficient, for they were hard to be known; but it became them nothing so well as their red and white, and you cannot imagine a more ugly sight than a Troop of lean-cheek'd Moors.⁴⁶

theyr apparel rich, but too light and curtisan-like. Theyr black faces, and hands which were painted and bare up to the elbows was a very lothsome sight, and I am sorry that strangers should see our court so strangely disguised.⁴⁷

Carleton objects to the appearance of the masquers on two counts; firstly that it is inappropriate to their physical identity as fair-skinned European women, and secondly, that it is inappropriate to their social identity, as 'great ones'. His response to the visual spectacle of the masque shows him reading the body of the Queen as physical and social form, a site of sexual and political tensions. He reacts to the presence of Anne as woman, and to the presence of Queen Anne as sovereign, and rejects her appearance as doubly transgressive. The decorum of the masque requires that there be a basic identity between the masquer and his / her mask.⁴⁸ Anne's conceit disrupts that correspondence, prompting Carleton's comment that 'they were hard to be known'.

Carleton's anxiety stems from the fact that the masquers stage themselves in a way which has troubling implications for the construction not only of class and gender, but also of race and national identity.⁴⁹ He is concerned that, by staging

there is scarcely any contemporary comment on the iconology of masques, but abundant testimony to the splendour of the "outward show", p. 6.

⁴⁶ From a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, quoted in H&S X, 448.

⁴⁷ From a letter to John Chamberlain, quoted in H&S X, 449.

⁴⁸ See Orgel, *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 117.

⁴⁹ The most useful and incisive discussions of the manipulation of race and foreign difference in this masque are: Yumna Siddiqi, 'Dark Incontinents: The Discourses of

themselves in such a way before ‘strangers’ - the ambassadorial representatives of other European nations - the Queen and her ladies are somehow subverting or degrading their (and his) national identity. For Carleton, who disliked the Scots, and was opposed to James’s project of Anglo-Scottish union, that identity was English. Yet *Blackness*, like many of the masques of the Stuart court, strove to cultivate a British identity, and its allegory of racial assimilation has obvious links with the planned union of the kingdoms of England and Scotland.⁵⁰

The English had long defined themselves on the grounds of their superiority to their Scottish neighbours.⁵¹ However, the notion of the empire of Great Britain brought - or at least attempted to bring - the Scottish ‘other’ within. At the same time the discourse of nationhood and the emergent discourse of colonialism sought new and more exotic ‘others’ in opposition to which it could define its identity, in a process that Emily Bartels describes as a ‘widespread ideological exploitation of the other’.⁵² The ‘otherness of the other’ was usually invoked to justify English

Race and Gender in Three Renaissance Masques’, *RenD* 23 (1992), 139-63, Kim F. Hall, ‘Sexual Politics and Cultural Identity in *The Masque of Blackness*’, in *The Performance of Power: Theatrical Discourse and Politics*, ed. by Sue-Ellen Case and Janelle Reinelt (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), pp. 3-18, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, ‘Temperature, Temperance, and Racial Difference in Ben Jonson’s *The Masque of Blackness*’, *ELR* 28 (1998), 183-209.

⁵⁰ The link between the masque and concepts of nationhood is discussed in relation to Jonson’s *Irish Masque*, in chapter 4.

⁵¹ Opponents of the Union expressed an anxiety that England would be infected by an influx of poor and barbarous Scots, which has its counterpart in Carleton’s fear that the black make-up worn by Anne and her ladies would stain the men who danced with them. See Floyd-Wilson, pp. 198-199. The Union is discussed in chapter 4 of the present thesis, in relation to *Hymenaei*.

⁵² Emily C. Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation and Marlowe* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), p. xv. Bartels’s introduction and chapter

dominance over Ireland, or British dominance in the New World. However, the ideological exploitation of the categories of self and other was by no means limited to cross-cultural discourse, but was employed in domestic patriarchal discourse to construct women as other. In the discussion which follows, Anne's blackness in the masque will be seen as a symbol of her literal otherness, as Scottish queen, Danish princess, and as a woman in a patriarchal culture and a misogynist court. However, while the 'rhetoric of difference' was being appropriated elsewhere for a 'project of domination', Anne's 'moorish' appearance in the masque functions in a way that resists this dominant discursive trend.⁵³ By putting the other centre stage, with the Queen of England appearing on a state occasion as a blackamoor, *Blackness* interrogates rather than perpetuates the dominant ideological construction of self and other as it applies to race and gender. In this striking staging of her body, Anne does not protest about her otherness, rather she exploits her appearance as racially and sexually 'other' to assert her difference from the King and his court. Thus, the appearance of the masquers invokes Bakhtin's spirit of the carnival, presided over by Anne, who as the Lady of Misrule, challenges the normative constructions of self and other, of royalty (class), femininity (gender) and race, and in so doing subverts the cultural function of the genre of the masque itself.

Masque critics frequently comment that the formal elements of the masque confined the women who performed in them to passivity and silence, complying

I offer a convenient discussion of the issues involved, although they are applied to the Elizabethan rather than the Jacobean period.

⁵³ Siddiqi, p. 139.

with patriarchal restrictions on women's movement and speech.⁵⁴ Yet the point should not be laboured, because the masque imposed identical constraints on male as well as female masquers. The issue here is not one of gender, but rather of class, since the speaking parts were taken by professional actors, while noblemen and women appeared only as silent dancers. It is more significant to recognise as radical the fact that noble women appeared on the masque stage at all. Moreover, despite the literal silence of the masquers, I will argue that the masque nonetheless provided the opportunity for the expression of Anne's female and queenly prerogative. In contemporary conduct books indecorous clothing and bared limbs were almost synonymous with linguistic forwardness:

It is proper [...] that not only arms but indeed also speech of women never be made public; for the speech of a noble woman can be no less dangerous than the nakedness of her limbs.⁵⁵

Thus, during the performance Anne's literal silence was more than adequately compensated for by her costume, a potent non-verbal signifier, permitting her to locate her voice in her physical appearance.

Carleton's comments register the fact that the masquers's blackened faces and arms posed a challenge to the conventional (masculine) definition of (feminine) beauty as 'red and white'.⁵⁶ But there is more at issue here than a question of

⁵⁴ Marion Wynne-Davies notes that female performers were 'contained within the formal elements of the entertainment', p. 81.

⁵⁵ Francesco Barbaro, *On Wifely Duties*, cited by Stallybrass, p. 127.

⁵⁶ The contrast between blackness and fairness must have been particularly striking in Anne's case, since she was extremely fair, and seems to have been valued for this attribute, D. H. Willson, p. 91. The collocation of her black skin with her fair hair and European features indicates that, while using her blackened body to assert her

aesthetics, since the insistence on fairness of complexion can be seen as symptomatic of broader patriarchal attempts to circumscribe women, containing them within pre-determined roles. The idealization of the pale complexion occurs within a culture which formulates ideologically acceptable behaviour for women in terms of (sexual) purity, chastity and containment. The definition of feminine beauty correlates with the construction of feminine virtue, and the blackness of the masquers - a worrying signal of sexual lustiness and depravity - challenges both.⁵⁷ The cumulative effect of the women's blackened faces, their exposed arms and their 'light and curtizan-like' clothes, was a blatant display of female sexuality, to which Carleton objected.

The bodies of the masquers can be theorised in terms of the Bakhtinian grotesque body, which transgresses itself and outgrows its own limits, a tendency literalised by Anne's heavily pregnant body. The rejection of all but a relatively scanty amount of clothing signals a refusal to be contained, which correlates with the fictional motif that their tears have caused the flooding of their father-river, and their incursion into the west.⁵⁸ Early modern medical treatises frequently described female bodies as leaky, a trope which was taken up in the drama of the period, which elided

autonomous identity, Anne's appearance had the simultaneous effect of interrogating the construction of self and other, and radically undermining categorical certainties.

⁵⁷ Karen Newman, ' "And wash the Ethiop white": Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello*', in *Shakespeare Reproduced*, ed. by Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O'Connor (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 143-162, comments that both male and female Africans were commonly seen as highly sexed and licentious, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁸ Yumna Siddiqi makes the same point, p. 147. She also notes that, like the female body, the African body is 'repeatedly portrayed as uncontrollable and potentially overwhelming', p. 145.

menstruation, urinary incontinence, and sexual promiscuity.⁵⁹ The flooding caused in the masque by female tears might be linked to the tendency of Shakespeare's jealous husbands to describe their wives, and their sexually active bodies, as water.⁶⁰ The masque enacts the failure of patriarchal attempts to contain the female body, an anxiety confirmed by the fact that, according to Carleton, a woman was arrested for having sex at the masque. As Kathryn Schwarz remarks, 'The visible transgression of the queen's conceit becomes the sexual impropriety of a woman's "business"'.⁶¹

The manner in which the female masquers staged their bodies also complicates the notion that the courtly dancing of the masque invariably produced a classically regulated body. However ordered the motions of the dancers' bodies were, the revealing nature of their clothing meant that the spectacle of their dance was at least as likely to be, in Stubbes's words, 'an introduction to whordom, a preparation to wantonness', as it was to be morally beneficial to the participants and spectators.⁶²

Nor would the masque dances be successful in asserting hierarchical relations. Just

⁵⁹ Gail Kern Paster's work on 'leaky' female bodies provides a fascinating context here, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

⁶⁰ Leontes imagines Hermione as a 'pond' which 'has been sluiced in's absence, [...] fished by his next neighbour', *The Winter's Tale*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), I. 2, ll. 192-93.

⁶¹ Kathryn Schwarz, p. 301. Even Jonson's grammar attempts to contain the unruly female bodies by relegating them to the object position in phrases like 'These induced the masquers', and 'The masquers were placed', a strategy which is in keeping with the arguments outlined in chapter 1 that the printed versions of the text were often conservative, and attempted to stabilise the contingencies of performance.

⁶² Phillip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), ed. by A. Freeman (New York: Garland Press, 1973), sig. A3v, discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis. Anne's costume for the performance of Daniel's *Twelve Goddesses* the previous year had been similarly provocative, exposing her legs.

as the fiction declares that the tears of leaky female bodies caused the incursion of Niger into the west, the masque would end with the blackened bodies of the female masquers penetrating the white-skinned audience to take out male partners, enacting a troubling inversion of the hierarchies of both gender and race. Thus, while the men waited passively to be chosen by the female masquers, they also witnessed the incursion of black faces into the British territory of the audience space in a parodic reversal of the colonial project.

Female sexuality is undeniably and powerfully present in the masque. The particular role played by the pregnant Anne was that of Euphoris, which D. J. Gordon, in his invaluable essay on the imagery of the masque, glosses as a symbol of fertility. Her partner, and chief courtier, Lucy Countess of Bedford, impersonated Aglaia, one of the three Graces, and similarly associated with the fertility and productiveness of the earth.⁶³ Their device - a golden tree laden with fruit - completed the presentation of a specifically female fertility. Anne was frequently described as a tree who had borne the precious fruit of the royal children. In 1608 George Chapman praised Anne as the source of all Henry's merit:

With whatsoeuer Honour wee adorne
 Your Royall issue; we must gratulate yow
 Imperiall Soueraigne. Who of you is borne,
 Is you; One Tree, make both the Bole, and Bow.⁶⁴

⁶³ D. J. Gordon, 'The Imagery of Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness* and *The Masque of Beautie*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*, 6 (1943), 122-141. Reprinted in *The Renaissance Imagination*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 134-56.

⁶⁴ *The Poems of George Chapman*, ed. by Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (New York: Modern Language Association, 1941), p. 389

Likewise Henry Peacham in his *Minerva Britanna* represented Anne as a fruitful tree with three branches, labelled 'H', 'C', and 'E', denoting the royal children.⁶⁵ The fact that Anne herself engaged in such assertions and manipulations of her subject role as mother suggests that this was a conscious strategy intended to enhance her status (an idea to which I will be returning in my discussion of the *Masque of Beauty*).

Anne's appearance not only challenged the boundaries of ideologically acceptable female conduct, it was also at odds with her political identity as the Queen. Her appearance as a figure in need of improvement and transformation inverted her royal status. Stephen Orgel recognises this, commenting that the masque 'does not take into account the fact that she is the queen', but his overriding concern with Jonson as author leads him to dismiss this as a poetic indecorum. Like many critics he fails to consider why Anne should have chosen to appear in such a guise, or the possibility that she made a conscious decision to cast herself in the role of the alien and outsider.⁶⁶

Whereas Anne's self-presentation in *Twelve Goddesses* advanced her claim as the successor of Elizabeth, her appearance in *Blackness* was in stark contrast to the persona cultivated and projected by her predecessor, whose portraits emphasise the fairness, even pallor, of her complexion, perhaps as a correlative to her legendary

⁶⁵ Peacham, *Minerva Britanna; or a Garden of Heroical Deuises* (London, 1612), ed. by John Horden (Menston: Scolar Press, 1969), p. 13.

⁶⁶ Orgel, *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 69. Orgel solves the 'lapse' by reading *Blackness* alongside *Beauty* as literature, in order to transcend the troubling aspects of performance, and to sanitize the Queen's blackened and pregnant body.

chastity. On this occasion, Anne presents herself as the antithesis of the Virgin Queen, appearing black and heavily pregnant, a 'marginal figure, an alien princess indelibly stamped with an inferior colour and in search of a social legitimacy in the Jacobean court'.⁶⁷ Aasand argues that it is possible to see an 'autobiographical resonance' in the *Masque of Blackness*, since as a woman in a patriarchal and often misogynist culture, Anne's existence, in common with the lives of her attendant noblewomen, must have been characterised by marginalisation. Her sex certainly ensured her exclusion from direct participation in affairs of state, and her sense of otherness must have been augmented by her foreignness, and by her religious and political adherences to Catholicism and Spain respectively. The ministers of the Scottish kirk had publicly denounced Anne's inclination towards 'popery' and when she became Queen of England (the first crowned consort since Anne Boleyn) she caused a scandal by refusing to take the sacrament at her coronation.⁶⁸ Although she publicly practised the faith of the Church of England, she continued to attend Catholic masses in her private chapel. However, her displays of favour towards Spain - which included actively promoting a Spanish match for Henry, and preferential treatment of the Spanish ambassadors - meant that her religious allegiances were betrayed by her political conduct.

⁶⁷ Aasand, pp. 276-77.

⁶⁸ See *CSP Ven X*, 81. Interestingly James's own behaviour at the coronation also provoked adverse comment, when he allowed Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, one of his early English favourites, to kiss him on the cheek. This episode typifies the type of homosocial behaviour which marginalized Anne and prompted her to use the masques as a strategy of self-valorization.

Despite Anne's marginalization on the grounds of her sex, her ethnic origins and her religious beliefs, one might imagine that her central position as sovereign would have compensated for this. However, unlike Queen Elizabeth, who had been the ruling sovereign in her own right, Anne was limited to the position of a consort queen; and like any married woman of the period she derived her status from her husband and children. Yet contemporary accounts hint at fissures within the royal family. Bishop Goodman writes 'it is true that some years after they did not keep much company together [...] yet they did love as well as man and wife could do, not conversing together', but even viewing the situation through his rose-coloured spectacles, the division at the heart of the royal marriage is self-evident.⁶⁹ James's homoerotic interest in his male favourites displaced Anne from her position at the centre of the royal partnership.⁷⁰ In this context, Anne's appearance in *Blackness* can be seen as challenging not only conventional constructions of womanhood and royalty, but also as playing out her estrangement from James and his court.

The intimations of division between King and Queen would have augmented the disconcerting effect of the masque for the contemporary audience. The Queen had her own household, and was rapidly beginning to acquire her own coterie within the court. As fractures appeared in the official facade of marital harmony, there was a danger that she would be less a wife and more a rival to James. Moreover, by

⁶⁹ Goodman, *The Court of King James the First*, ed. by John S. Brewer, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), I, 168.

⁷⁰ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), argues that there a link between male homosocial (and homosexual) bonds and the mechanisms for the transmission of patriarchal power.

presenting herself as divided from James, Anne was manipulating the familial metaphors employed by the King as a rhetorical strategy. In his first speech to parliament James had asserted ‘I am the Husband and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife’, setting up a patriarchal model of kingship which depended on the marital subordination of the wife.⁷¹ Clearly, any division in the royal marriage which threatened to dissolve this metaphor would have serious implications in the public and political sphere, particularly in view of the assertions by Robert Cleaver and other Puritan pamphleteers that ‘it is impossible for a man to understand to gouerne the commonwealth, that doth not knowe to rule his ownne house [...] so that hee that knowth not to gouerne, deserueth not to raigne’, which made monarchical power contingent on familial authority.⁷²

Anne’s representation of her otherness in *Blackness* was in keeping with her desire to assert her own value as something more than James’s consort.⁷³ She strove to create and maintain a persona separate from the King’s, making persistent claims

⁷¹ *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, p. 272

⁷² Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Form of Household Government* (London, 1598), p. 5, quoted in Tennenhouse, *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare’s Genres* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986), p. 173. My argument follows that of Hardin Aasand, who asserts that ‘any debilitation of the kingly authority within the domestic realm undercuts his authority in the extended domestic realm of his kingdom’, p. 280. Stephen Orgel, ‘Jonson and the Amazons’, in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, ed. by E. D. Harvey and K. E. Maus (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991), pp. 119-39, advances the slightly different argument that the failure of James’s rhetoric was due to the reluctance of parliament to play the role of the submissive wife / child, p. 126, an idea to which I return in chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁷³ Barbara Lewalski advances a similar argument, although her discussion is marred by her desire to see Anne as a champion of the position of Jacobean women; my own belief is that Anne was more concerned with accruing power to herself rather than with any larger idealistic goal of vindicating her sex against Jacobean patriarchy.

to independent status and dignity as the daughter and sister of Kings, and emphasising that her royalty came as much from her own family as from her marriage to James. That this strategy disconcerted James is evident in a letter he wrote to her in May 1603 at the time of their arguments about Henry:

My heart [...] I thank God I carry that love and respect unto you which, by the law of God and nature, I ought to do to my wife and mother of my children. But not for that ye are a king's daughter, for, whether ye were a king's or a cook's daughter, ye must be all alike to me, being once my wife. [...] I beseech you excuse my rude plainness in this, for casting up of your birth is a needless argument to me.⁷⁴

One can only wonder what James made of the inscription above Anne's portraits of her motto - 'my greatness comes from God' - which, especially in view of Anne's Catholicism, reads as a rejection of the authority of her husband.⁷⁵ Furthermore, in claiming that her greatness came from God she was appropriating to herself the theory of Divine Right on which James founded his own authority. Anne's affirmations of her separate identity and independent worth show the extent to which James's ideal of marital relations was open to subversion, with the Queen establishing herself as an alternative locus of power in her own court. Her separation from the King, her husband, allowed her the space to assert her own identity and cultural agency by patronising her choice of artists, and advancing the courtiers whom she chose, while distancing herself from the disorders of James's court.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 214.

⁷⁵ The Venetian ambassador, Foscarini, in a dispatch of 1618, described Queen Anne as the 'daughter, sister and wife of a king, which cannot today be said of any other. She claims that her greatness comes not from the King but from God alone, and her motto runs "La mia grandezza dal eccelso"', *CSP Ven XV*, 392.

⁷⁶ As an interesting aside, it is worth noting that Penelope Rich, who had danced with Anne in *Twelve Goddesses*, and appeared as Ocyte in *Blackness*, was living in

Another dimension of James's familial rhetoric was the construction of himself as both father and mother to the nation, and the masques frequently contributed to the mythography of James as the author and source of all things.⁷⁷ The text of *Blackness* is demonstrably preoccupied with paternity, and figures an abundance of father figures. Niger, the 'sonne to great OCEANVS' is, in his turn, the father of a beauteous race which is perceived as proceeding from and belonging to him. The absence of a mother figure is compounded by the construction of the male personifications of Oceanus and the sun as creators. Jonson's notes describe Oceanus as 'the father and source of gods and things', while the sun is the 'formall cause / Of all dames beauties' (VII, 173, ll. 141-142) until superseded by James who 'formes all beauty, with his sight' (VII, 175, l. 195). The masque concludes by locating the source of the nymphs's future beauty in immersion in the (masculine) ocean (from which the motherless Venus herself proceeded) and in the refining rays of the temperate sun which is James. This trinity of male progenitors exemplifies the operation of a familiar strategy of early modern patriarchy, whereby female procreative power is appropriated by men, in a male fantasy of parthenogenesis.⁷⁸

open adultery with her lover, Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy. In a demonstration of the instability of marriage she divorced her husband and married her lover in 1605, H&S X, 443.

⁷⁷ This is especially true of the wedding masques, discussed in chapter 4, and the masques in which Buckingham made his early appearances, discussed in chapter 5.

⁷⁸ One need only glance at the array of absent mothers in Shakesperean drama for a demonstration of the pervasiveness of this strategy. Mothers are notably absent from a number of father-daughter relationships, including those in *King Lear*, while in *The Tempest* Miranda's vaguely-remembered mother functions only as a 'piece of virtue' to guarantee her child's legitimacy. See Janet Adelman *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, 'Hamlet' to 'The Tempest'* (London: Routledge, 1992) for a discussion of the maternal role and the frequency

However, such an impression is complicated when one juxtaposes the text of the masque with a reconstruction of the performance, in which the textual privileging of paternity would have been contradicted by the visual image of maternity presented so forcefully in the person of Anne.

Displaced from the centre of the royal partnership by James's attachment to a succession of male favourites, Anne fought tenaciously to retain control of her offspring, and with it a maternal role which was not confined to the private and domestic sphere, but which, in view of the fact that her children were heirs to the throne, had public and political significance. Anne's struggles with James over Henry began even before his birth. A note from James to Robert Bruce in June 1593 expressing his irritation with his pregnant wife's 'wilful' determination to go riding, suggests his attempt, and failure, to exercise control over the unborn child.⁷⁹ Once Henry was born, and despite Anne's pleas, James handed him over to the guardianship of the Earl of Mar. The terms of the warrant are emphatic that, even in the event of James's death, Mar must under no circumstances hand Henry over to the Queen: 'And, in case God call me at any time, that nather for Queen nor Estates' pleasure ye deliver him'.⁸⁰ However, Anne seems to have bided her time, until in 1603, when James had left for England, she took advantage of his absence to lead an armed force to Stirling Castle to reclaim Henry. When repulsed she reputedly

with which its importance is denied. Also useful is Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', especially pp. 16ff.

⁷⁹'My wife has this day given command to her servants to make all things ready for her riding against Tuesday next, and she has said to myself flatly that she will ride', *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 127.

⁸⁰*Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 142, dated 24 July 1595.

became so overwrought that she miscarried - according to one account she 'flew into a violent fury' and 'beat her own belly'.⁸¹ She then refused to come to join James in England until she was given custody of Henry, and James, to avoid embarrassment on his accession to the throne, capitulated to her demands.

Historians analysing this episode have usually seen James as making sensible decisions according to rational political criteria, and point to the fact that royal children were traditionally raised in aristocratic households. By implication, Anne's motivations are characterised as emotional and irrational. Bergeron is typical in claiming that 'to be denied care and nurture of her children shocked and angered Anne', who wanted to 'fulfil her maternal instincts'.⁸² This line of reasoning is flawed by its easy acceptance of a clear distinction between public (male) and private (female) spheres; a model which is problematised by an acknowledgement of the fact that mothers - especially of male children, and not to mention mothers of

⁸¹ *CSP Ven X*, 40. The episode is recounted by (amongst others) Lewalski, pp. 20-21, and Barroll, 'The Court of the first Stuart Queen', pp. 196-199. Barroll sees Anne's struggles with James in this instance as exemplifying her 'politically relentless streak', p. 197. He does not comment on Anne's evident or perceived determination to jeopardise the unborn prince or princess, which, juxtaposed with the earlier dispute over her riding while pregnant, seems to provide compelling evidence for her determination that the children be seen as deriving life from her rather than from James.

⁸² Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 54. His account is one of the more sympathetic in its attitude towards Anne, and can be contrasted with, for example J. W. Williamson's assertion that Anne was 'the indignant and frequently hysterical victim of James's anti-female policy' who 'hatched pathetic little plots' against her husband, *The Myth of the Conqueror: Prince Henry Stuart: A Study of 17th Century Personation* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 15.

royal sons - were by no means restricted to the private domestic sphere, since their maternal role had a political dimension.⁸³

Blackness was performed about eighteen months after Anne's triumph over James, and it seems highly likely that she was using her appearance to publicly restate her 'claim' to all the royal children, represented in the masque by the unborn baby that was still a part of Anne's body.⁸⁴ In this assertion of her maternal claim to her children, Anne's colour in the masque would have been hugely significant. As Lynda E. Boose points out, the taboo nature of the white man / black woman match in narratives of the early modern period is due to the discovery that blackness is more powerful than whiteness in marking out lineage. Thus, while the offspring of a black father and white mother confirm the fantasy of patriarchy, the offspring of a black woman and white man worryingly overturn gender hierarchies and 'resignify all offspring as the property of the mother'.⁸⁵ Moreover, while the issue of

⁸³ Kirsten Poole's discussion of the mixture of public and private in relation to the maternal role in Jacobean mother's manuals, quoted on p. 56 of this chapter is suggestive here. A twentieth-century parallel presents itself in the person of Princess Diana. At the time I was writing this chapter, Diana had just given her infamous and revealing television interview to Martin Bashir, in which she repeatedly asserted that 'the boys', her two sons Princes William and Harry, were all that mattered. Yet this gesture of maternal concern could also be seen as interacting with other motives, including a strategy to empower herself in the anticipated battle with the Establishment by foregrounding her claim to the heirs to the throne. Perhaps I should make it clear that I am by no means denying the presence and power of a genuine maternal affection; I am merely pointing out the possibility that such behaviour need not be regarded as being separate from other political aims.

⁸⁴ Over that period Anne had been structuring her own court to ensure that she retained links with and influence over her children, as discussed above in relation to *Twelve Goddesses*.

⁸⁵ Boose, ' "The Getting of a Lawful Race": Racial Discourse in Early Modern England and the Unrepresentable Black Woman', in *Women, Race and Writing in the*

miscegenation is apparently forestalled by the promise of the nymphs's transformation, the power of the blackened female body over the white male body is very much in evidence in the threat that the men's white skin may be stained during the masque dances. Thus, while Graham Parry concludes that in Anne's masques the 'gestures of feminine authority were in truth more spectacular than substantial', I would argue that he is missing the point, since in my reading the spectacle *is* the substance, and the meaning is inherent in the bodies of the female masquers.⁸⁶ In this case, Anne uses her body to emphasise her claim to the royal children in a corporealization of Chapman's assertion, 'Who of you is borne / Is you'.

Although the present account is deliberately concerned with the masque in performance, it should be noted that there are signs of tension within the literary masque, as well as between the literary masque and its physical realization. The central fiction demands that the Queen and her ladies appear as defective creatures in need of transfiguration; however, Jonson has to accomplish this without insulting the Queen. He does so by establishing two sets of aesthetic criteria, one insisting on the inferiority of blackness, and the other maintaining that beauty is innate, unaffected by colour. The lengthy speech made by Niger in defence of the beauty of his daughters goes one step further, dismissing the fashionable definition of beauty altogether. His challenge to the conventional construction of beauty is suggestively located in a speech which also describes an inversion of the usual hierarchical relationship between parent and child, and male and female, since Niger, as father,

Early Modern Period, ed. by Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 35-54 (p. 46).

⁸⁶ Parry, p. 203.

submits to the will of his daughters, whose desire is sanctioned by a female moon goddess.

However, the potential radicalism of this inversion of gender hierarchies is subsequently undercut, because the nymphs allow themselves to be defined on the basis of male judgements of their external appearance. They identify themselves with the view of the dominant order, which defines beauty as white, and blackness as alien and inferior. Moreover, they display the stereotypically negative female traits of vanity and jealousy.⁸⁷ Even the moon goddess, a potential personification of female power (especially in view of the association of Elizabeth I with the moon) proves to be utterly conservative in her vision of beauty, and just as blackness relinquishes its earlier claim to authority, the feminine goddess, whose beams ‘cannot hold / You longer light’ (VII, 179, ll. 326-327) defers to the greater light which is James.

However, the nymphs’s transformation is not as straightforward as it first appears. We are told that James’s rays ‘are of force / To blanch an AETHIOP and revive a *Cor’s*’, (VII, 177, ll. 254-255) but the transformation retains a feminine aspect in so far as they are to immerse themselves in the ocean in a cycle which is presided over by the moon. And in contrast to the active pursuit of beauty by the nymphs under the governance of the moon goddess, James’s role in the process is merely passive - ‘in the beams of yond’ bright *Sunne* / Your faces dry, and all is

⁸⁷ Suzanne Gossett argues that the recurrent phrase ‘As women are’ suggests ‘women are an [...] unteachable essence’, and confirms the impression of women stubbornly persisting in irrational error, despite the best efforts of men ‘To frustrate [their] strange error’. Gossett, ‘“Man-Maid Begone!”: Women in Masques’, *ELR* 18 (1988), 96-113 (p. 100).

done' (VII, 180, ll. 349-350). James's role would have been minimised even further in performance because the transformation attributed to him could not be enacted on the masque stage and was relegated to the narrative and temporal hiatus which separated *Blackness* and *Beauty*.

The fact that the *Masque of Blackness* resists closure is frequently noted by critics, and it has serious implications for the revels. In most formulations of the masque, the revels are seen as the climactic moment when the idealized fiction opened outward to embrace the spectators, marking the symbolic initiation of the whole court into the higher reality and triumphant moral values espoused by the masque.⁸⁸ However, with *Blackness* this was patently not the case because, despite the promise of perfection in the future, the female masquers were still imperfect. The noblemen who danced with them, far from being initiated into an ideal, risked contamination in a very literal sense. Carleton observes that '[the Spanish ambassador] forgot not to kiss her [the Queen's] hand though there was a Danger it would have left a Mark on his lips'.⁸⁹ Interestingly, a number of modern critics have reiterated and exaggerated Carleton's expression of distaste for the spectacle of the blackened female body of the Queen. Williamson's assertion that Anne 'embarrassed many of the men by attempting to kiss them with her greasy lips' not only has no foundation in the historical evidence, it also demonstrates the tendency amongst twentieth-century critics to perpetuate the assumptions of the early modern period: Williamson unhesitatingly accepts and advances a view of black

⁸⁸ See Orgel, *Jonsonian Masque*, p. 39, and *Illusion of Power*, pp. 6-7.

⁸⁹ Quoted in H&S X, 448.

female sexuality as corrupting and repulsive.⁹⁰ The fact that Anne's staging of herself can induce anxiety even in modern critics is an indicator of its radicalism. She presents herself as divided from her husband, and displays female sexuality as an uncontrollable force, which is not only capable of overcoming patriarchal restraints, but can mark out the children as the product and property of the body of the mother. At the high point of *Blackness*, the watching court does not merge with an ideal version of itself, but is confronted with a spectacle of racial and sexual alterity. Moreover, just as the nymphs are exhorted to 'indent the *Land*' of Britain, Queen Anne and her ladies penetrate the male audience to take out partners who will be 'marked' by the experience (VII, 177, l. 260). As Carleton sees it, the male courtiers risk being soiled by the black make-up of the masquers, but they are more subtly marked out as the creatures of the Queen, being those whom she chooses to honour.

Queen as Mother: 'In which one title you drown all your other'⁹¹

Two years later, *The Masque of Beauty* began with the appearance of Boreas, the North Wind, who entered the court with a message from the daughters of Niger to explain their failure to appear before the King in the last two years. The twelve nymphs were on their way to Britain when they learnt that four of their sisters, in search of a similar transformation from blackness to beauty, had been imprisoned on

⁹⁰ Williamson, p. 132. He goes on to suggest that Prince Henry's commitment to chastity was a reaction against his mother's so-called 'sensuality'.

⁹¹ At the Fenchurch arch in the 1604 entry, the Genius of the city paid tribute to Anne in the terms she so enjoyed, as 'You daughter, sister, wife of seuerall kings: / Besides alliance, and the stile of mother, / In which one title you drowne all your other', H&S VII, 94, ll. 359-361.

a floating island by the malicious goddess Night. The twelve nymphs had set off to rescue their sisters but had been kept wandering ever since by Night. No sooner has Boreas finished his tale when Vulturnus, the East Wind, arrives with better news. The moon goddess has broken Night's charms and all the nymphs are on their way to Britain on the floating island on which their goddess has raised a Throne of Beauty.

In *Beauty* the lady masquers appear purged of their blackness, conforming with the formulation of beauty by the dominant (male) order. The Queen is restored to a dignified and legitimate position on a throne (if not *the* throne, its political significance being slightly diminished by its identification as a Throne of Beauty). Her appearance now conforms with her physical and social identities, as woman and as (consort) queen, and the grotesquely uncontained female bodies of *Blackness* appear confined within a classically ordered architectural structure.⁹² This miraculous transformation and restoration of order is credited to James, who is told to 'loue the miracle, which thy selfe hast done', as the masque ends with the female space of the floating island fixing itself to Albion (VII, 186, l. 160).

Compared with the obvious subversions of *Blackness*, *Beauty* seems to be more closely in line with the dominant ideology, and it is no surprise to learn that after the

⁹² The appearance of masquers within such structures can also be seen in *The Masque of Queens*, discussed below. While the containment of the female bodies of the masquers might be seen as according with patriarchy's insistence that the female body should be physically confined, I would argue that the initial appearance of the masquers is complicated by their active descent and penetration of the audience for the dances. Moreover, the revelation of the masquers in a structure placed at the focal point of the perspective stage ensured that they appeared as a rival spectacle to the King, a fact discussed at greater length with regard to Prince Henry's masques in chapter 3.

scandal provoked by *Blackness*, its sequel and the Queen who commissioned it 'reaped universal applause, and the King constantly showed his approval'.⁹³ This instinctive characterisation of *Blackness* as heterodox and *Beauty* as orthodox has been given a more paradigmatic formulation by Stephen Orgel who suggests that the two stand in relation to each other as antimasque and masque.⁹⁴ However, as I explained in the previous chapter, such polarisations between subversion and containment, antimasque and masque seem inadequate. There is a need to move beyond this impasse, and I believe it is possible and illuminating to see not only the 'antimasque' of *Blackness*, but equally the 'masque' of *Beauty* as sites where dominant and subordinate positions are in a state of flux. Having argued that, in *Blackness*, Anne resisted the identity imposed on her by the dominant ideology, I propose to show that, in *Beauty*, she produces for herself a new and empowered subject position. For all its apparent conservatism, *Beauty* nonetheless provided Queen Anne with an opportunity to manipulate her subject role, and to assert herself as a mother and source of life.

The floating island, the revelation of which is the high point of the masque, is a realm not simply of beauty but of generation and fertility. The female sexuality which Dudley Carleton felt had been so scandalously flaunted in the bare limbs and light clothing of *Blackness* appears in *Beauty* as a powerful generative force. The promise of the golden tree laden with fruit which was Anne's device in *Blackness* is

⁹³ From the dispatch of the Venetian ambassador, Giustiniani, quoted in H&S X, 457.

⁹⁴ Orgel, *Jonsonian Masque*, pp. 127-128.

fulfilled in *Beauty* by the ‘*Groue*, of growne trees laden with golden fruit’, and most importantly by the crowd of cupids who surround the Throne of Beauty (VII, 189, ll. 238-29). Female sexuality appears in a positive light in this celebration of fecundity - or does it? One might argue that a legitimation of female sexuality only within the narrow context of child-bearing (and by implication, marriage), far from empowering women, confines them to an ideologically acceptable (re)productive and utilitarian role, enslaving them to biology.⁹⁵ Moreover, Jacobean ideology consistently denigrates the mother, while elevating the father and the patriarch, a tendency manifest in *Blackness* with its proliferation of father figures and absence of mothers. The male appropriation of the female capacity for reproduction was a commonplace of the art and literature of the period. Just as *Beauty* ends with the female fertility of the floating island being fixed to the realm of James / Albion, James liked to present himself as the sole parent of his kingdom, a ‘louing nourish-father’ combining in his person the attributes of mother and father, to supply his subjects with their ‘nourish milk’.⁹⁶

Nevertheless, the patriarchal need to control and to appropriate the procreative potential of the female body, signals a recognition of the power and importance of its generative capability, especially to a culture which was so concerned with genealogy. Queen Anne and her ladies must have realised that their roles as (future) mothers of

⁹⁵ This was James’s own attitude towards women, whom he seems to have regarded as necessary evils for the continuance of the male line. See his ‘Letter to the People of Scotland’ on the subject of his marriage, in *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, pp. 97-100.

⁹⁶ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 24. Goldberg, ‘Fatherly Authority’, notes that ‘the natural event of procreation becomes an extension of male prerogative and male power’, p. 16.

(male) heirs could be empowering, and I have already argued that such an awareness was at the heart of Anne's struggles with James over Henry. With this in mind, the fact that the young Prince Henry took part in the masque as one of the cupids who surrounded Anne and her ladies should be recognised as resonant with political significance. Just as in *Blackness* Anne's pregnancy had characterised her as the source of life not only of her unborn child, but of all the royal children; likewise in *Beauty* she presents her audience with an assertion of her claim to those children.⁹⁷

For all the male spectators, especially those whose wives took part, the masque must have provided a disconcerting reminder of their dependence on women to continue their line. The fact that men's only assurance as to the legitimacy of any heir was the word of a woman gave rise to cultural anxieties about the potential of uncontained female sexuality to corrupt the blood-line. Such fears recur repeatedly in the literature of the period, as when Prospero responds to Miranda's enquiry, 'Sir, are not you my father?', with the cynical retort 'Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and / She said thou wast my daughter'.⁹⁸

The same spectre of female promiscuity or 'wantonness' surfaces in the masque's references to blind Cupids: 'If all these CVPIDS, now, were blind / As is their wanton brother' (VII, 192, ll. 341-342). Jonson adds the note that his cupids are

⁹⁷ Anne may have found a reconfirmation of her maternal role particularly necessary at this point, since the intervening years between *Blackness* and *Beauty* had seen the deaths of two royal princesses. Mary, with whom Anne had been pregnant at the performance of *Blackness*, was born on 8 April 1605, and died in September 1607. In the interim Anne had given birth to another daughter, Sophia, who was born in June 1606, but died within a few hours. See Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 78-83.

⁹⁸ *The Tempest*, ed. by Anne Barton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), I. 2. ll. 55-57.

‘chaste *Loues*, that attend a more diuine beautie than that of *Loues* commune *parent*’, but once the figure of a concupiscent Venus has been raised it is never entirely suppressed (VII, 192). Moreover, the motif of the paradisaical bower on a floating island also flirts with subversive manifestations of female sexuality, since such locales were frequently associated in early modern texts with temptresses such as Spenser’s *Acrasia*. Thus, while female sexuality is explicitly present in the masque only in the legitimate context of child-bearing, the implications are that it is a powerful and potentially dangerous force that constantly threatens to overcome the constraints imposed on it by patriarchy, as one of the songs in the masque warns, conflating eroticism with violence and incest:

It was no polity of Court,
Albee’ the place were charmed,
To let in earnest, or in sport,
So many *Loues* in, armed.
For say, the *Dames* should, with their eyes,
Vpon the hearts, here, meane surprize;
Were not the men like harmed? (VII, 192, ll. 349-355)

In one of the last speeches of the masque *Januarius* describes how ‘*Beautie*, at large, brake forth, and conquer’d men’ (VII, 193, l. 395), reconstructing quite accurately the aggressive outward movements of the female masquers who, having ‘broken forth’ from the Throne of Beauty did indeed conquer the watching men by exercising their prerogative to choose their partners for the dances.

The early modern paranoia induced by the threat of unruly female sexuality has its most frantic expression in *Posthumus*’s speech from *Cymbeline*, which leaps from patriarchal anxiety about the female role in procreation to the assumption that illegitimacy is inevitable:

Is there no way for men to be, but women
 Must be half-workers? We are all bastards,
 And that most venerable man, which I
 Did call my father, was I know not where
 When I was stamp'd.⁹⁹

King James was sensitive to accusations that he was illegitimate, and his reactions to the births of his sons, Henry and Charles, betrayed Posthumus's fear of 'the woman's part' in procreation. In July 1594 John Colville wrote to Robert Cecil, reporting that 'the King has conceived a great jealousy of the Queen, which burns the more he covers it', and between Henry's birth and baptism, James began 'to doubt of the child'.¹⁰⁰ These anxieties were replayed in the tensions surrounding Charles's baptism, when 'the Queen being advertised that the King in his secret dislike of her, did also dislike this newborn son and therefore cared not with how little honour it should be baptised'.¹⁰¹ Janet Adelman's discussion of patriarchal fears concerning female sexuality suggests the extent to which the male fantasy of parthenogenesis envisaged by Posthumus was invoked as a defence against the woman's part.¹⁰² The pervasiveness of masculine attempts in art and literature to appropriate the female capacity for (pro)creation illuminates the fact that, faced with another powerful assertion of Anne's maternal role, James felt the need to recast the occasion as a masculine birth proceeding from him. The Venetian ambassador reports that James 'intended this function to consecrate the birth of the Great Hall which his

⁹⁹ *Cymbeline*, ed. by J. M. Nosworthy, (London: Methuen, 1955; repr. London: Routledge, 1988), II. iv. 153-57.

¹⁰⁰ *CSP Scot* XI, 386-7 and 397, quoted in Bergeron, p. 55.

¹⁰¹ *CSP Scot* XIII, 748, quoted in Bergeron, p. 60.

¹⁰² Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, pp. 200-219.

predecessors had left him built merely in wood, but which he had converted into stone'.¹⁰³

Queen as Queen: 'the most absolute in all State, and Titles. Anne Queene of Great Britaine'¹⁰⁴

The motifs of masculine birth and new buildings which figure in James's attempt to rewrite the occasion of *The Masque of Beauty* provide a useful perspective on *The Masque of Queens*. James's warrant to the exchequer authorising payment for the masque claimed that 'the Queene our deerest wife hath resolved for our greater honor and contentment to make us a Maske this Christmas'.¹⁰⁵ However, in the light of the previous discussions this takes on the aspect of a pre-emptive strike, an attempt to appropriate the Queen's masque as his own, while reinscribing Anne in her proper (and properly subordinate) role as wife and consort. James's vision of the masque places himself firmly at its centre, describing both the masque and Queen Anne only as they relate to him; the masque is for *his* 'greatest honor and contentment', and Anne is *his* 'deerest wife'. However, James's own construction of the masque is complicated by the fact that agency is ascribed to Anne, who resolutely occupies the active subject position in the sentence. The very terms of the warrant register the fact that Anne's masque was an expression of her own agency, rather than a straightforward celebration of her husband's power.

¹⁰³ Quoted in H&S X, 447.

¹⁰⁴ The title-page of the 1609 quarto of *Queens*, in H&S VII, 278.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in H&S X, 492.

Despite being commissioned for the Christmas season of 1608-09, *Queens* was not performed until 2 February 1609, delayed by the wranglings over ambassadorial precedence which seem inevitably to have accompanied each new entertainment at court, and which are a testimony to the political identity of the genre. The Queen's involvement in the process of inviting ambassadors to the masques demonstrates that she was well aware of the socio-political significance of the masque form, and used the masques to participate disruptively in politics, specifically foreign policy.

The Queen's Spanish preferences had caused problems the preceding year when she had invited the Spanish (and Venetian) ambassadors to the *Masque of Beauty*, but had omitted the French ambassador, la Boderie, who was deeply offended. Then, in late 1608, Spain sent an ambassador extraordinary, de Girone, to thank James for his help with the truce in the Netherlands. De Girone, taking advantage of the extra status attached to an embassy extraordinary, pressed for an invitation to the forthcoming *Masque of Queens*, and Queen Anne would presumably have been sympathetic to the Spanish contingent. However, Henri IV had instructed La Boderie that if the slight of the previous year was repeated, he was to leave London. In view of this, James persuaded the Queen to postpone the masque till Candlemas, when the Spanish ambassador had departed. In this instance, Queen Anne submitted to James's will, but the episode exemplifies the extent to which she used the masques to facilitate her incursions into the masculine domain of politics and diplomacy.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ See the account of the diplomatic difficulties in H&S X, 496-99.

The Masque of Queens centres around the opposition between twelve hags and twelve queens, and Jonson's preface credits Queen Anne with the innovative transformation of the antemasque (a prefatory dance or show) into the antimasque:

Her Ma.^{tie} (best knowing, that a principall part of life in these *Spectacles*, lay in they^r variety) had commaunded mee to think on some *Daunce*, or shew, that might praecede hers, and haue the place of a foyle, or false-*Masque* (VII, 282, ll. 10-13).

The performance opened with an ugly hellmouth from which the hags emerged to proceed with their infernal charms and dances until dispelled from the stage by a loud blast of music and the descent of Heroic Virtue. The hell-mouth and its hags were spectacularly replaced by the House of Fame in which the twelve masquers were enthroned. Eleven of the masquers represented the greatest Queens of history and myth, while the twelfth masquer, Queen Anne, appeared as Bel-Anna, Queen of the Ocean (a persona created for her by Jonson) and was said to be the present day epitome of the virtues of all the other Queens. The masquers then entered the hall in three chariots, with the conquered hags bound before them, and took partners from the audience for the masque dances and revels.

Jonson's preface to *Queens* mirrors the strategy adopted in the prefaces to his earlier masques for Anne, submitting his poetic prerogative to her royal prerogative, while including assertions of his own agency. Jonson is at pains to associate himself with the moral and exemplary nature of the argument, while distancing himself from the subversions of the antimasque, and his concern that the 'Nobilyty of the Invention should be answerable to the dignity of they^r persons' (VII, 282, ll. 4-5) suggests his determination that on this occasion the (fictional) roles should be appropriate to the (real) identities of the masquers, a relationship which had been

disrupted by Anne's appearance in *Blackness*. Suzanne Gossett's useful discussion of the interplay between the real identity of a masquer and his / her role concludes that, after *Blackness*, the Queen 'took parts which effectively eliminated the discrepancy between her historical and dramatic roles'.¹⁰⁷ The 'otherness', which in *Blackness* had been associated with Anne, is displaced in *Queens* onto the witches of the antimasque, who hold the stage for a limited period only, before being conquered by the virtuous queens. Thus, the development of the 'antimasque-transformation scene-masque' form can be linked to what Barbara Lewalski sees as an attempt to 'obviate the subversive associations of the black Africans in *Blackness* by dividing the female image: on the one hand, the monstrous witches (personated by male actors) and on the other, the noble Queens'.¹⁰⁸

The relationship between antimasque and masque is central to my arguments about the masque as a genre, as outlined in chapter 1. In the discussion which follows I will begin by outlining a conventional approach in which the subversive antimasque of hags is seen as being unproblematically vanquished and contained by the orderly masque of queens, with the whole spectacle functioning to celebrate the court and James's sovereign power. I then want to demonstrate my sense of the inadequacies of such an argument, and by pursuing my project to reinscribe the body of the Queen into her masque, I will suggest that, far from functioning to confirm the dominant ideologies, the masque should be seen as the focus for tensions and divisions at once more subtle and more threatening than those of the antimasque.

¹⁰⁷ Gossett, p. 99.

¹⁰⁸ Lewalski, p. 37.

The hags are immediately marked out as agents of anarchy and chaos by the 'hollow and infernall musique' and the 'confused noyse' which accompanies their emergence from the hell-mouth (VII, 283, l. 30; 35). From the first the hags are dissociated from the court; they are liminal beings, occupying a middle realm between natural and supernatural. They inhabit a bleak and inhospitable world akin to the blasted heath of *Macbeth*, and come from dark and fetid places:

From the lakes, and from the fennes,
 From the rockes, and from the dennes,
 From the woods, and from the caues,
 From the Church-yards, from the graues (VII, 284, ll. 55-58).

They share their nocturnal world with animals, with whom they compete for pieces of flesh or bones from corpses, and are characterised as barely-human scavengers, abusing dead bodies, killing animals, and, most gruesome of all, murdering 'an infant, to haue his fat' (VII, 291, l. 176). The overwhelming impression is one of death and destruction: 'A Murd'rer, yonder, was hung in Chaines, / The Sunne and the Wind had shrunke his vaynes: / I bit of a sinew, I clip'd his hayre' (VII, 292, ll. 180-81).

The single most significant characteristic of the hags is their association with darkness. On a literal level, they dwell in dark places, only emerging at night; they favour such nocturnal creatures as the owl and the bat; they gather ingredients for their charms before the cock crows at daybreak, and even the names of the plants they gather - nightshade and moon-wort, for instance - contribute to the nocturnal atmosphere. It is in terms of their allegiance to darkness that the hags formulate their opposition to the court, whose 'bright Nights / Of Honor blaze, thus, to offend [their] eyes' (VII, 288, ll. 133-34). Their avowed intention is to 'Darken all this roofe, / W^h present fogges. Exhale Earths rott'nest vapors; / And strike a

blindnesse, through these blazing tapers' (VII, 295-6, ll. 241-43). Of course, the antithesis of darkness and light has a deeper symbolic significance. Jonson elucidates this by presenting the hags as enveloped by the allegorical darkness of ignorance which, for Renaissance humanists, was not only synonymous with, but was also the source of, the moral darkness of vice and sin. Jonson's comment that 'the opposition to all *vertue* begins out of *Ignorance*', explains his decision to make Ignorance the head of his chain of vices (VII, 287). The hags are therefore the 'faythfull Opposites' not only of the literal light of the court, but of Virtue, Fame, Glory, Justice and Faith (VII, 288, ll. 132ff).

The present and 'great purpose' of the hags is 'To ouerthrow the glory of this night'(VII, 287, l. 113), and the implications of rebellion and treason would surely not have been lost on the King, who was so paranoid about the threat of assassination that he wore padded clothing, and who only five years earlier had escaped the attempt of the Catholic gunpowder plotters to overthrow his reign. The danger posed by the hags is augmented by what, for a seventeenth-century audience, would have been the very real power of witchcraft. King James's personal belief in the existence and practice of witchcraft is attested to in his *Daemonologie*, which was written in response to Scot's sceptical *The Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584). Moreover, James believed he had been the target of a conspiracy led by witches under the direct control of the devil. During the Scottish witch trials of the early 1590s, reported in a pamphlet entitled *Newes from Scotland* (1591), one Agnes Thompson, admitted that she had caused the storms and bad weather experienced by James on his voyage to meet his bride, having been commanded by the devil to kill

the King.¹⁰⁹ Jonson's annotations to his masque text demonstrate the extent to which a belief in witch-lore was embedded in the national consciousness. His references to classical sources are sprinkled with remarks on the subject of 'our witches'.¹¹⁰ The subject matter of the antimasque, and the fact that Jonson quotes from James's own work on witches is a useful reminder of the complexity of the masque-writer's position, which required him to meet the terms imposed by the commissioning patron and / or the performers, while also attempting to please the watching King.

In view of their opposition to the world of official order, the antimasque hags can usefully be theorised in terms of the Bakhtinian grotesque, which was invoked in the earlier discussion of *Blackness*. Dame Ate's appearance, 'naked-arm'd, bare-footed, her frock tuck'd, her hayre knotted and folded w^h vipers' enacts a transgressive exposure of bare limbs (VII, 286, ll. 95-97). The subversiveness of this gesture is heightened by the fact that it becomes a precondition to the summoning of spirits: 'But, first, see euery foote be bare; / And euery knee' (VII, 296, ll. 246-47).¹¹¹ Dame Ate's description of the hags as vices attributes to each a disfigurement which is not only appropriate to the particular vice they represent, but which focuses on the orifices and openings of the grotesque body. The eyes of 'wild *Suspicion* / [...] do

¹⁰⁹ Discussed by Orgel in 'Jonson and the Amazons', pp. 124-125.

¹¹⁰ For example, in the note to line 76 (VII, 285), Jonson gives as an instance of 'our modern witchcraft' the story of 'certain pictures of wax found in a dunghill, near Islington, of our late Queen's, which rumour I myself (being then very young) can yet remember to have been current.'

¹¹¹ One need only recall Carleton's response to *Blackness* at this point to show just how subversive bared limbs were, although in this instance the effect is complicated by the fact that the hags were played by male actors. See the discussion below.

neuer sleepe’, and the single ear of Credulity is ‘allwayes ope’, while the descriptions of Malice ‘whetting of her forked tongue’ and ‘black-mouth’d *Execration*’ invoke the always open mouth (VII, 288, ll. 119-20, 122, 125). It is striking that these vices are associated with the exchange of unreliable information, the passage of rumours from one person to the next. This is what we would call ‘gossip’, traditionally a female activity (as the etymology of the word suggests) trivialised and reviled by men, which appears here as posing a threat to the dominant (male) order.¹¹²

The linguistic ‘fullness’ of the open-mouthed hags is another (metaphorical) instance of the grotesque and its tendency to outgrow itself, but at times the hags go a stage further and reject language altogether, lapsing into shouts and clamours, of ‘Hoo, *Har, Har, Hoo*’ (VII, 300, l. 324). This refusal to be contained, which goes beyond linguistic excess to a rejection of language itself, is matched in a physical sense by references to the ability of the hags to move through the air. Their freedom from physical constraint would have been realised for the audience in their dances, which were ‘full of praeposterous change, and gesticulation [...] with strange phantastique motions of they^r heads, and bodyes’ (VII, 301, ll. 345-50).

The spectacle of the physically and linguistically liberated hags is readily contrasted with the appearance of the queens, who are silent and initially static, confined within the House of Fame, and most critics have commented on the

¹¹² The rumour of popular opinion figures in the antimasques for the marriage of Frances Howard and Robert Carr, and recurs again in the masques of the 1620s, where the hostile public opinion which was challenging the King’s prerogative and criticising his policies is villified as ignorant, benighted and damaging. See chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

polarisation of the female image, invoking such binaries as true versus false, good versus evil, and the classical versus the grotesque body. Yet such an approach simply accepts the ideological values underpinning the masque's representation of femaleness, rather than interrogating them. The hags are formulated as monstrous and unnatural because they oppose the dominant order, and more specifically because they are transgressive *women* rejecting the *patriarchal* construction of what a woman should be. Thus the antimasque plays out the anxiety which is at the heart of early modern conduct books, namely that the female body is naturally grotesque, and must therefore be subject to constant surveillance.¹¹³ The hags can be viewed as a group of women who have successfully resisted male attempts to repress their voice and contain their movement. The arrival of heroic and *masculine* Virtue, banishes the spectacle of what is putatively vice, but which is, on another level, female transgression of prescribed gender identities. The construction of Virtue as masculine is inevitable, because the fact that the dominant patriarchal order has been challenged by transgressive women demands not only a restitution of order, but also a reassertion of gender hierarchies. The choice of Perseus as the representative of heroic and masculine virtue confirms this, since he successfully encountered and killed the destructive feminine evil embodied in Medusa.¹¹⁴

The victory of order over chaos is enacted at a symbolic level even before a word is spoken. The 'confused noyse' associated with the hags is superseded by a 'sound

¹¹³ See Stallybrass, p. 126.

¹¹⁴ Orgel, 'Jonson and the Amazons', pp. 128-130 discusses the implications of Jonson's choice of the figure of Perseus rather than Hercules or Bellerophon.

of loud Musique, as if many Instruments had giuen one blast', the auricular impression being one of strength and unity (VII, 301, ll. 335-36). Visually the transformation of the scene must have been spectacular, a physical manifestation of the triumph of light over darkness, as articulated by Heroic Virtue: 'So should at FAMES loud sound, and VERTVES sight / All poore, and envious Witchcraft fly the light' (VII, 302, ll. 368-69).

The hags are replaced by the queens who are silent and immobile, their conformity to the prescriptions of patriarchy literalised by their confinement within the structure of the House of Fame. The passivity of the queens opposes them to the activity of the hags, and their allowed function in the formal dance is contrasted in specific ways with the antimasque dances. The courtly dancer, striving to attain the perfection of the classically contained body, was concerned with the regulation of those bodily apertures to which attention had been drawn in the antimasque dance; amongst the pieces of advice offered in dance treatises of the period was the recommendation to keep one's mouth closed and refrain from hollering.¹¹⁵ Another distinguishing characteristic of courtly dancing was the suppression of gesture, the absence of hand movements functioning to demarcate the class boundaries which

Perseus is a more complex figure than I have suggested here, but I will return to the ambiguities that cluster around him later in the discussion.

¹¹⁵ Skiles Howard, 'Rival discourses of dancing in early modern England', *SEL* 36 (1996), 31-57 (p. 36) cites the dance treatise of Antonius de Arena, *Ad suos compagnones studiantes* (Lyon: Benoist Rigaud, 1572), trans. and ed. by John Guthrie and Mario Zorzi as 'Rules of Dancing', in *Dance Research* 4 (1986), 3-52, in which the dancer is instructed to keep his mouth shut, and refrain not only from hollering but from belching, breaking wind and blowing his nose.

separated Anne and her women from the professional actors who took on the role of hags.¹¹⁶

The contrasts I have been outlining between the hags and the queens are undeniably part of the meaning of the masque, but as the comments of the last paragraph suggest, they arise first and foremost from the aesthetic conventions of the masque form and the norms of courtly dancing. An acknowledgement of the fact that the genre of the masque imposed limitations of silence and formal movement on all noble performers, whether male or female, opens up the possibility of seeing the queens as challenging rather than conforming to the patriarchal construction of woman.

The queens are martial figures, and as Marion Wynne-Davies points out, only two of them - 'chast' Artemesia and 'fayre-hayr'd' Berenice - are given 'ideologically acceptable feminine qualities' (VII, 303, ll. 402-3).¹¹⁷ These two anomalies provide a foil to the other queens, who are 'braue', 'victorious', 'warlike' and 'bold', demonstrating active and public virtues more appropriate to 'heroic, masculine virtue' than to women (VII, 303, ll. 399-409). The designs of the costumes for the queens heighten the martial context.¹¹⁸ However, tensions arise from the fact that a

¹¹⁶ Howard, p. 43.

¹¹⁷ Wynne-Davies, p. 85.

¹¹⁸ The designs are reproduced in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, 2 vols (London, Berkeley and Los Angeles: Sotheby Parke Bernet and University of California Press, 1973), I, 140-153, plates 16-32. The design for Penthesilea is plate 16, p. 140, but other designs show or suggest the visibility of the female breast, especially those for Berenice, plate 22 and Candace, plate 24. It is useful to compare the costume designs for *Queens* to the costume for Prince Henry in *Oberon*. Not only are there some similarities between the headress designed for Anne as Bel-Anna, plate 29, p. 151, and that for Henry as Oberon, plate

number of the designs clearly show that the breasts of the masquers were visible; thus, Penthesilea's bodice is shaped like a breastplate, but is made from a transparent material. The effect would have been to confirm to the audience that, despite their masculine virtues, the queens were as female as the masquers who represented them, and this was a crucial part of the meaning of the masque.

A further contrast, on a representational level, begins to suggest itself between the hags played by male actors, and the queens, impersonated by Anne and her ladies. The subversiveness of the antimasque, which derives from the appropriation by the 'female' hags of the masculine freedoms of speech and movement, is undercut by the fact that they are 'really' men, and as such are entitled to such liberty. The presence of the male actors beneath the costumes effectively neutralises the possibility of female agency the hags appear to offer. By contrast, the figures of the queens are more genuinely subversive, because they embody masculine qualities, but remain unequivocally female, showing that biological femaleness need not necessitate femininity.¹¹⁹

70, p. 204, both of which use feathers, but the design for Henry as Oberon also uses a gauzy material, through which the prince's muscular torso, and his navel are clearly visible.

¹¹⁹ Suzanne Gossett offers a useful discussion of the implications of the appearance on the masque stage of transvestite actors alongside real women, although I disagree with her conclusions. She argues, as I have, that the 'male actors emphasize the symbolic distance between the antimasque witches and the masque queens' (p. 100), but sees the transvestism of the male actors / hags as functioning in a conservative way to reinforce the dialectic between false women and true women - the hags are false 'women' because they are 'really' men. By contrast, I believe that the presence of male bodies in the antimasque undercuts the subversiveness of the hags, while heightening the transgressive aspects of the presentation of the real women as masculine queens. Moreover, Gossett emphasises the masque's restoration of gender hierarchies, insisting on the dependence of the queens's (and Queen Anne's) qualities on the masculine virtue of Perseus (and King James). However, as I point

The fact that it is possible to see both hags and queens as ‘women’ rejecting the conventional and ideologically-sanctioned female role, and thereby challenging gender stereotypes, highlights the inadequacies of the assumption that the antimasque is always subversive, while the masque-proper necessarily restores order. The pervasiveness of this paradigm has led commentators to emphasise the opposition between the hags and the queens, while ignoring the basic underlying similarities which are implicit in the terms of the antithesis they discuss. The hags and the queens are related by analogy as well as antithesis, and reading the masque with an emphasis on the similarities between the hags and queens is a revealing exercise. Firstly, the military exploits of some of the queens link them with the same destructive tendencies which emerge in relation to the hags. If anything, the queens wreak more actual destruction than their counterparts, just as the female bodies of the masquers are more genuinely transgressive than the transvestite hags. The ‘Victorious *Thomyris*’ not only conquers her enemy, but with him an army of two hundred thousand soldiers, leaving ‘not a Messenger surviving, of his side to report the *Massacre*’; by comparison the hags’s scavenging from dead bodies seems almost tame! (VII, 307, ll. 524-25).¹²⁰ Similarly, the hags dance ‘contrary to the custome of Men’, but their rebellion against male dominance is much more bloodily enacted by Valasca,

Who, for her courage, had the surname of *Bold*. That to redeeme her selfe, and her sexe, from the *tyranny* of Men, which they liu’d in, vnder Primislaus, on a

out below, the victory of the queens over the hags clearly constitutes a victory of female masquers over male actors, and enacts an inversion of gender hierarchies.

¹²⁰ In view of my focus on familial politics, and mother-son relationships, it is interesting to note that this massacre is prompted by the treacherous murder of her son.

night, and at an hower appoynted, led on the Women to the slaughter of their barbarous *Husbands*, and *Lords* (VII, 312).

Finally, the hags, despite their association with chaos and disorder, nevertheless invoke the concept of hierarchy, demonstrated in their respectful attitude towards their Dame. This clearly parallels the hierarchical relationship between Bel-Anna (Anne) who is seated at the top of the pyramidal throne, and the other queens (her women). The correspondence is made more precise by the description of Dame Ate as comprising the vices of all the hags, while Bel-Anna ‘Queene of the Ocean [...] / Possest all vertues, for w^ch, One by One, / They were so fam’d’ (VII, 304, ll. 416-18).

The traditional approach to antimasque and masque has tended to polarise the hags and queens into figures of subversion and containment respectively, thereby denying the queens the radical potential for which I have been arguing. Suzanne Gossett’s assertion that ‘from this point on women in masques must be either true or false, queens or hags’ is a typical example.¹²¹ However, more radical feminist readings of the masque have argued that

the mutual opposition between masque and antimasque figures is not sustained. The defeat of the hags cannot finally suppress the linguistic and physical freedom of the women in the masques, as these qualities have already emerged in the characters of the queens.¹²²

In other words, the masque does *not* require us to see women as either transgressive

¹²¹ Gossett, p. 99. Kathryn Schwarz similarly suggests that the division of antimasque and masque presents the ‘violence of witches and the agency of queens as perfectly separable fictions’, p. 306.

¹²² Wynne-Davies, p. 85. Barbara Lewalski also notes that ‘the Queens appropriate rather than destroy the power of the witches’, p. 37.

hag or obedient queen, because it allows for a continuity of hag-like characteristics into the queens. More generally, it is too simplistic to label antimasques as subversive and masques as assertions of hegemonic values, since the masques themselves have a radical potential which is belied by such a formulation.

This process of collapsing the binaries of witch and queen, antimasque and masque, is supported by a glance at the figure of Perseus. Chosen by Jonson to represent heroic masculine virtue, the Perseus of myth actually functioned as little more than a mediator, an agent for the transfer of power between two powerful female figures. His victory over Medusa was accomplished only with the aid of the shield given to him by Pallas (Minerva), and he presented Medusa's head, a symbol of female power, to Pallas, the warrior goddess, who carried it into battle, just as the queens enter the hall with the witches bound to their chariots.¹²³

Eleven of the queens are 'of Times, long gone', and are actual figures of myth and history (VII, 303, l. 398). However, the fact that Bel-Anna is 'alive', and exists only as the persona created by Jonson for Queen Anne, eliminates any distance between Anne and her role. Anne is not playing a role; on the contrary, she is re-presenting herself, in an exhibition of her own royal nature. This is important, because discussions of this masque often focus exclusively on the hags and queens, forgetting

¹²³ See Orgel, 'Jonson and the Amazons', p. 129, and Barbara Lewalski, p. 37 for accounts of Perseus's exploits, although Orgel does not see the collapsing of binaries as undermining the conventional subversion / containment paradigm of antimasque and masque. There are numerous other details that function in a similar way to challenge the antimasque-masque antithesis, including the suggestion that the rumour associated with the hags is actually analogous to the Fama Bona of the masque. The first set of the hags's incantations conjure up Ate, and the second produce heroic Virtue and Fama Bona.

that there is a third group of women - namely the Queen and her noblewomen - whose presence is of tremendous significance, and allows us to relate the masque to the political realities of the court world in which it was performed.

Margaret Maurer does search for the actual women who participated in the masque, and finds them 'lurking in the shadows of Jonson's text, daring us to imagine them and the threat they pose to the masque's meaning'.¹²⁴ She is right to see the women as an unruly element in the masque, disrupting its relationship with James. However, she disappointingly goes on to argue that the masque is 'beset by [...] tensions between the Queen's fondness for spectacular display of herself and her court, and Jonson's determination that the display would mean something' (p. 250). Maurer assumes that Anne's interest in costume is nothing more than female vanity and frivolity; but, as I have demonstrated already in this chapter, the costumes of the masquers were a crucial part of the process of fashioning an identity which was performed by locating their voice in their appearance. It is not that Anne was uninterested in Jonson's meaning, rather that she was aiming at a different one. Thus, far from having 'nothing to say to us' (Maurer, p. 256) the appearance of the female bodies in the masque is resonant with meaning. The movement of these noblewomen onto the male-dominated world of the stage can be interpreted as an impetus towards the male world of public action. In this way, Anne and her female followers provide a clear parallel to the queens they represent; both have entered

¹²⁴ Margaret Maurer, 'Reading Ben Jonson's *Queens*', in *Seeking the Woman in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Writings: Essays in Feminist Contextual Criticism*, ed. by Sheila Fisher and Janet E. Halley (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), pp. 233-64 (p. 235).

into the masculine realms of martial and political activity, and reenact the hags's rejection of 'proper' female behaviour.

Anne, at least on occasions, favoured a fairly masculine style of dress, exemplified by the riding clothes in which she is portrayed by Paul van Somer in a portrait of 1617, and demonstrating a degree of consistency between her self-fashioning on and off the masque stage.¹²⁵ In view of this, a possible intertext for the masque presents itself in James's proclamations against crossdressed women.¹²⁶ Notwithstanding James's hostility to the phenomenon of the female virago, a number of pamphlets on the woman question had blamed the trend on the effeminacy of men, and James's court was criticised as a domain of effeminate indolence and self-indulgence. One of the recurrent problems James faced during his reign was the difficulty of presenting his non-interventionist stance as something courageous and honourable, when his opponents described it as cowardly and effeminate; indeed the hags want to disrupt his 'soft peace'. Yet in the context of James's pacifism, Anne's decision to stage herself in a martial way is problematic, since Anne's pro-Spanish policies would have been in broad agreement with James's commitment to improving Anglo-Spanish relations. Perhaps the problem is that Anne's gesture was an attempt to present

¹²⁵ The portrait is reproduced and discussed in *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, ed. by Karen Hearn (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), pp. 206-7. This is the catalogue which accompanied the exhibition at the Tate Gallery 12 October 1995-7 January 1996.

¹²⁶ John Chamberlain reports that James instructed the clergy to 'inveigh vehemently and bitterly in their sermons against the insolency of our women, and their wearing of broad-brimmed hats, pointed doublets, their hair cut short or shorn, and some of them stilletos or poniards', in Chamberlain, *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, II, 286. An excellent discussion of the *Hic Mulier* and *Haec-Vir* pamphlets can be found in Linda Woodbridge, pp. 139-151.

herself as powerful, and constituted a bid for status and respect rather than any explicit expression of her politics.

This certainly seems to have been the claim made by the van Somer portrait, in which Anne appears as a masterful figure, dominating the landscape behind her, which she has shaped and created (the background depicts the classical gateway to the entrance to Oatlands commissioned by her from Inigo Jones). Her posture is proud and assertive, one hand being on her hip, while the other holds the leads of her hunting dogs and controls them. She engages the viewer's eye with the steadiness one would expect from a Queen whose motto affirmed 'My greatness comes from God'. Perhaps the most important aspect of the scheme is the fact that, as Karen Hearn notes, the portrait 'places the Queen on the left hand side, and thus cannot be seen as a pendant to any of those of her husband'.¹²⁷ The portrait unequivocally reiterates Anne's claims to a status that was independent of James, rather than deriving from him, something which she affirmed in her masques.

Anne's appropriation of the left hand side of the portrait, has its counterpart in her appropriation of the masque stage, and the latter acquires a specific political significance when related to the frequent construction of the monarch as an exemplary figure, on whom his / her subjects fixed their gaze, as an audience watching an actor. Both Queen Elizabeth and King James regularly employed this metaphor to describe their relation to the people. However, while James was fond

¹²⁷ Hearn, p. 206. Contrast the Mytens portrait of Thomas Howard, 14th Earl of Arundel, in which Arundel is seated on the left hand side of the portrait, and its pendant, in which the Countess is seated on the right, reproduced and discussed in Hearn, pp. 209-11.

of constructing himself as the focus of his subjects' admiring gaze, he never exercised his royal prerogative to appear on the stage. James's non-appearance on the masque stage has traditionally been compensated for by an allusion to the perspective scenery which placed him at the focal point of the courtly entertainments. Yet in my narrative, the fact remains that Anne, by her appearance on the masque stage literalised James's metaphor, and in so doing was neither objectified nor demeaned, but drew the collective gaze, which was synonymous with power, to herself. Once the public gaze was trained on her she used her body to claim status independently of her husband, and to claim the royal children as her own.

Queen Anne's intention in her masques seems to have been to set herself up as a rival to James. She was constantly striving for a recognition of her separate and royal identity on the basis of natal rather than marital bonds, and it is this separate and royal identity that she asserts in *Queens* when she appears enthroned in triumph in the House of Fame. The dominant presence of the Queen clashes at the close with the speeches of Heroic Virtue which identify King James as the epitome of the merits of all the queens, and as the source of Bel-Anna's worth. This last-ditch attempt to impose upon Queen Anne the role of consort-queen, a role which denies her any worth beyond that which she derives from James, suggests that the conquest of the hags was only a superficial victory of order over chaos; the real threat of disruption persists in the person of the Queen herself. Whereas the hags can be subjected to an ignominious defeat, and can appear bound before the chariots of the queens, the dignity of the Queen's person (with which Jonson is so concerned in his preface) precludes her being treated in a similar way. Furthermore, the fact that the

hags are represented by male actors 'effeminised' by their assumption of women's clothing (the equivalent of the womanish man condemned by the *Haec Vir* pamphlets), and are conquered by martial queens who are represented by actual women, means that the closing scene enacts an inversion of the gender hierarchy. The final speeches read as a last-minute realisation that the 'enemy' to order threatens the court from within, and there is an attempt to contain that threat by restoring the balance of power to the King. However, the speeches are undermined by the sense that they are simply the conventional compliment to the King which concluded each masque. Words alone seem ultimately inadequate to contain the powerful corporeal presence of the Queen.

Yet in view of the heterogeneous nature of the court it is not unreasonable to hypothesise a broad range of audience responses to this masque. Linda Levy Peck's suggestion that James associated himself with the written word, while Anne's patronage focused on visual culture, offers a potential paradigm for differential responses.¹²⁸ Perhaps James, the scholar and writer, was pacified by the conservatism of the words, not least the closing speech which attributes the worth of Anne as Bel-Anna to him, while Anne and the courtiers attached to her circle found their meaning in the more radical visual spectacle. These may seem like crude oversimplifications, but they constitute a crucial step towards the important

¹²⁸ Levy Peck, 'The mental world of the Jacobean court: an introduction', pp. 4-6. It is worth noting that this division between King and Queen may have been conditioned by their different religious beliefs, since it corresponds to the stereotypical prioritisation of word over image in the Reformed faith, and the Catholic faith's attachment to the visual.

realisation that the masque was genuinely multi-voiced, and spoke in different ways to different people.

This narrative is further complicated by the presence of Henry, to whom I shall shortly be turning. Jonson produced a manuscript of *Queens* at Henry's request, annotated with details about the lives and martial exploits of the queens, and the text is much more emphatic than the performance about the queens' militancy and subversive masculinity.¹²⁹ As Orgel rightly observes, the *Masque of Queens* in its final form 'appears very much as a family affair', and it is possible that, a few years later, when Henry was planning his own masques, he recalled and sought to recreate the aggressively militant mood of his mother's *Queens*.

The constraints of space mean that my discussion of Anne's masques must end here, but she did not immediately disappear from the masque stage, and will figure in the subsequent chapters, especially in the narrations of the unfolding lives of the royal children. The year after *Queens* saw Queen Anne commissioning and performing in *Tethys Festival*, which is discussed in the next chapter in the context of the celebrations for Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales, of which it was a part. Her

¹²⁹ It would be interesting to know how much the women knew about the figures they were representing, since it might be possible to envisage a discrepancy between the 'informed' masquers, conscious of the gender and political transgressions they were enacting, and their relatively naive audience.

Jonson's dedication of the copy he presented to Henry appears in H&S VII, 280-81, and it is worth noting that Jonson felt it necessary to explain his action to the Queen, in whose presentation copy he wrote that it was 'his Highnesse command, to haue mee adde this second labor of annotation to my first of Invention', but dedicates 'both to the Honor' of Anne, ending with the caveat that 'a hearty desire to please deserues not to offend', which may register the difficulty of striving to please three members of the royal family with one entertainment (VII, 279, ll. 11-13).

last appearance as a masquer took place on 3 February 1611, in *Love Freed from Ignorance and Folly*, which, like *Tethys Festival*, can also be linked to the emergence of Prince Henry onto the masque stage, since it was originally planned for Twelfth Night, following the performance on New Year's Day of Henry's *Oberon*. Although Anne subsequently withdrew from the masque stage, she still staged herself for the public gaze on her progresses, notably in the spring and summer of 1613 when she visited Bath and Bristol.¹³⁰ She also remained an important spectator of performances, witnessing elaborate civic displays, pageants and artificial sea-fights, which delighted her so much that she declared 'she never knew she was a Queen till she came to Bristoll'. Her enjoyment, and her avowed determination to 'make many more such progresses' probably derived less from the entertainments themselves than from the fact that she revelled in the opportunity of being the centre of attention in her own right, rather than as an appendage to the King. During the same progress she was entertained and feasted at the country seats of provincial noblemen, and in *The Caversham Entertainment*, which took place at Lord Knollys's Caversham House near Reading, and was written by Thomas Campion, she was feted as 'Fair goddess and sole queen of grace'.¹³¹

Anne's presence in the audience is made explicit in a subsequent work by Campion, namely the *Somerset Masque* for the wedding in December 1613 of

¹³⁰ Ethel Carleton Williams, pp. 159-164, gives some information about Anne's 1613 progress.

¹³¹ *The Caversham Entertainment* appears in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments 1605-1640*, ed. by David Lindley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 92-101. The quote comes from p. 96, l. 175.

James's favourite Robert Carr and the recently divorced Frances Howard. This masque, discussed in chapter 4 of the present thesis, was unusual in assigning the agency for the masque's transformation scene to Queen Anne. However, it seems unlikely that Anne would have relished her role, since she was opposed to the wedding being celebrated, which, in consolidating the power of Carr and the Howard faction, threatened her own position at court.¹³² Anne's organisation of the celebrations for the wedding of one of her favourite ladies, Jane Drummond, to Lord Roxbrough, the following February, might be read as her reply to the Carr-Howard match organised by James, suggesting that Anne could engineer marriages at the court just as well as the King.¹³³

Leeds Barroll suggests that Anne's withdrawal from the masque stage be seen as a movement 'beyond the politics of public ritual [...] to affairs of state', in the pursuit of more direct ways of participating in the politics of the kingdom.¹³⁴ His claim might be supported by her active involvement in the advancement of George Villiers (discussed in chapter 5 of the present thesis) and by the fact that, in 1617, Anne hoped to be made regent during James's absence in Scotland. Although she was

¹³² This supports the argument advanced in chapter 1 that masques might interpellate the royal spectator(s) into a subject position (s)he / they may not have chosen for themselves; what Queen Anne's masques did to James, Campion's masque did to her. Arthur Wilson outlines a number of possible reasons for Anne's animosity towards Robert Carr, including her 'apprehension that the Kings love and company was alienated from her, by this Masculine conversation and intimacy', p. 79.

¹³³ The celebrations are described in Nichols, II, 749-50 and included the performance of Daniel's *Hymen's Triumph*. Ethel Carleton Williams, p. 161 notes that Anne met the expense of the wedding and the entertainment, but incorrectly describes *Hymen's Triumph* as a masque.

¹³⁴ Barroll, 'Inventing the Stuart masque', p. 135.

disappointed in this aim (Francis Bacon was appointed), she was elected to the Council which governed in James's stead.¹³⁵ Moreover, since Anne enjoyed being the focus of attention in her own right, rather than as an appendage to James, she must have relished his absence which allowed for moments such as the performance staged for her by the pupils of the Ladies school at Deptford.¹³⁶

Anne died on 2 March 1619, but there was an undignified delay before her funeral, because of the lack of funds in the royal coffers.¹³⁷ James stayed away from the funeral which eventually took place on 13 May, with Prince Charles as chief mourner. A little over a month later, in June 1619, James returned to London in attire which was deemed by Chamberlain to be more appropriate to a 'wooer than a mourner'.¹³⁸ In this context, and as David Bergeron points out, James's continued use of the marriage metaphor in his political speeches must have had a hollow ring.¹³⁹ Yet, while James revised the story of his relationship with Anne, and 'rewrote history from a masculine, self-centred perspective', this chapter has attempted to redress the balance a little, telling the story of Anne through her masques.

¹³⁵ On Anne's desire to be appointed Regent see John Chamberlain, in *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, II, 47.

¹³⁶ See C. E. McGee, 'Cupid's Banishment: A Masque Presented to Her Majesty by the Young Gentlewomen of the Ladies Hall, Deptford, May 4, 1617', *RenD* 19 (1988), 227-64.

¹³⁷ See David Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 139-143 for an account of Anne's sickness, death and funeral.

¹³⁸ Chamberlain, *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, II, 242.

¹³⁹ Bergeron, p. 143.

Chapter three: Warrior Prince and Peacemaker King

Glory of knights, and hope of all the earth,
 Come forth; your fostresse bids; who from your birth
 Hath bred you to this hower, and for this throne.
 This is the field to make your vertue knowne. (H&S VII, 328, ll. 154-157)

Thus was Prince Henry Stuart, a month before his sixteenth birthday, exhorted to step forward, not merely onto the stage constructed for the Twelfth Night entertainments at Whitehall, but, by the ‘reversibility of the metaphor which declares all the world a stage’¹ onto the world-stage of public affairs. Not that the ambitious young prince would have needed much encouragement; he must have welcomed the year 1610, and his investiture as Prince of Wales, convinced that his hour had indeed come. The voice of the Lady of the Lake (in the verses quoted above, from Jonson’s *Prince Henry’s Barriers*) could be speaking for the countless poets, preachers and artists who had been constructing for Henry the role he now publicly assumed.

Henry had been the focus of a ‘powerful mythologizing force’ since his birth in 1594.² The spirit of the early tributes is exemplified by this offering from Andrew Melville, which welcomed the infant prince as a new Hercules who would champion the reformed religion over the demonic forces of Catholic Europe:

¹ Jonathan Goldberg, *James I*, p. xiii.

² J. W. Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror: Prince Henry Stuart: A Study of Seventeenth Century Personation* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 1. This chapter is indebted to and influenced by three book-length studies on Henry: Williamson’s *Myth*, E. C. Wilson, *Prince Henry and English Literature* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1946), and, of course, Roy Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales and England’s Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986).

having laid low proud Spain, bright from your triumph over anointed Geryon, you trample under foot the triple diadem of the Cerberus of Rome, who duplicates the din of Hell with fearsome thunderings from the Capitoline crag.³

Throughout his early childhood, Henry functioned as a *tabula rasa*, appropriated by different religious groups and political factions as a blank canvas onto which they could write their hopes for the future. The fiery rhetoric of militant Protestantism found a focal point in the young prince, but alternative roles were also being scripted for him. Those closest to home included the hopes of his parents: the King's expectation that his son would prove a copy of himself, not least in his commitment to peace, and Queen Anne's wish that her eldest son might be converted to the Catholic cause. Williamson suggests that Henry took refuge from the rivalry of his parents in the Protestant myth of the conqueror.⁴ At any rate, Henry did not long remain content to be fashioned by others, and by 1610 he was more than ready to make his own contribution to his personal mythography. Following the precedent established by his mother (although rejecting her pro-Spanish and Catholic affiliations) one of the main vehicles employed by Henry to manufacture and disseminate his image to the English court and beyond were the masques and entertainments of 1610-11.

Of the entertainments I will be considering in this chapter, the *Barriers* constituted Henry's most powerful assertion of his military and expansionist

³ Andrew Melville, *Principis Scoti-Britannorum Natalia* (Edinburgh, 1594). The translation from the Latin, by Barbara N. Lindsay, is quoted in Williamson, p. 4. See also B. N. Lindsay and J. W. Williamson, 'Myth of the Conqueror: Prince Henry Stuart and Protestant Militancy', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 5 (1975), 203-222.

⁴ Williamson, p. 15.

ambitions. Yet however single-minded Henry's intention to represent himself as Protestantism's long-awaited warrior prince, the masques and entertainments which paid tribute to him, and those in which he performed himself, were anything but simple. The expression of Henry's political agenda in the masques was complicated by the interposition of the different agendas of poet and designer, and most importantly, of Queen Anne and King James. As I have argued in previous chapters, the Stuart masque was a multi-layered, multi-voiced discourse, a site of unresolved tensions and ideological disputes. In the case of Henry's masques, these tensions arose from the diametrically opposed standpoints of the warrior prince who commissioned them, and the peacemaker king before whom they were performed.

Father and Son

Prince Henry's birth on 19 February 1594 was a 'great comfort and maiter of joy to the haill pepill, and movit thame to great triumphe, wantonnes and play, for beanefyres wer set out, and dancing and playing vsit in all pairtes, as gif the pepill had bein daft for mirthe'.⁵ James's firstborn was a son and heir whose very existence promised continuity and stability not only for the realm of Scotland, but also for England, which was already looking to James as Elizabeth's eventual successor. It was with an eye on the prize of the English throne that James named the new prince Henry, thereby linking his son with the Tudor tradition and, through

⁵ David Moysie, *Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1755), ed. by James Dennistoun (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1830), p.113.

Henry, strengthening his construction of himself as Queen Elizabeth's 'heir'.⁶

Elizabeth's influence was powerfully felt at Henry's baptism, when the infant prince was carried into the Chapel Royal by her representative, Robert Radcliffe, the Earl of Sussex.⁷ The entertainments following the baptism included martial exploits, notably a tilt in which James took part as one of three Christian knights challenged by three Turks and three Amazons (men in women's attire!). Indoors, a banquet was held, at which the pageant wagons bearing the allegorical figures of Ceres and Fecundity denoted James's hopes that his son would be a seconder and preserver of the peace and plenty James himself was trying to establish. The divided nature of these ceremonies - the exercises at arms, as opposed to the allegorical scheme of the banquet - comprise a suggestive foreshadowing of the future ideological clashes between the warrior prince and the peacemaker king. With hindsight, James may well have regretted the tilt which associated his infant son with martial exploits and confessionally motivated battles, especially since the sermon at Henry's baptism had been on Genesis 21, the birth of Isaac. This characterisation of Henry as the typological successor of Isaac, a child chosen to do God's work, heightened the

⁶ James's decision to name his daughter after Elizabeth was similarly politically motivated. It is tellingly ironic that the first of James's children to be born after his accession to the English throne was named Mary, after the executed Queen of Scotland; only after James had the throne could he begin his attempts to recuperate his mother's memory.

⁷ For the baptism see *A True Report of the Baptisme of Henry Fredericke, Prince of Wales* (London, 1603) and the description in Thomas Birch, *The Life of Henry, Prince of Wales* (London, 1760), pp. 4-10. A convenient account of the childhood years of Henry and Charles can be found in Walter R. Seton, 'The Early Years of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Charles, Duke of Albany', *The Scottish Historical Review* 13 (1916), 366-379.

sense of expectation among militant Protestants that the new Prince would be the long-awaited warrior of the Reformed Church.

James used the occasion of Henry's birth to his own advantage, setting the pattern for a future in which James would make much political capital out of his children, invoking his literal paternity as a support for his patriarchal model of kingship, and pointing to the stability promised by his heirs to strengthen his own persona as peacemaker king. Yet, as David Bergeron notes in his work on the Stuart royal family, royal children are a double-edged sword, a political liability as well as a political strength.⁸ The birth of the son who would (in the expectation of all) succeed him, must have been an unwelcome reminder to James of his own mortality and expendability. South of the border the ageing Elizabeth was trying to forestall her own replacement by imprisoning those she perceived as possible successors, including Arbella Stuart, and steadfastly refusing to name an heir; do not 'require me in mine own life to set my winding sheet before my eyes', she is reported to have declared when pressed on the subject of the succession.⁹ James's own history provided a worrying precedent for the threat posed to a monarch by his / her heir. His fear that Henry would be used against him, as he 'himself had been against his unfortunate mother' must have been a factor in his attempts, throughout Henry's

⁸ David Bergeron, *Royal Family, Royal Lovers: King James of England and Scotland* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1991), pp. 92-92.

⁹ Quoted in Williamson, p. 11. For Arbella Stuart see David N. Durant, *Arbella Stuart: A Rival to the Queen* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1978), and Sara Jayne Steen, 'Fashioning an Acceptable Self: Arbella Stuart', *ELR* 18 (1988), 78-95. The latter is useful for its focus on self-fashioning and the performative nature of identity in the Stuart court.

minority, to ensure his containment, both literal and metaphorical.¹⁰ Thus, in July 1595, we find James, in a letter which has the tone of a warrant for imprisonment, charging Mar to retain the Prince, and not to deliver him to anyone without the King's command:

Because in the surety of my sonne consistis my surety, and that I have concredited unto you the charge of his keeping upon the trust I have of your honesty, this present therefore shall be a warrant unto you not to deliver him out of your hands except I commande you with my own mouth, and being in such company as I myself shall best like of - otherwise not to deliver him for any charge or message that can come from me. And, in case God call me at any time, that neither for Queen nor Estates' pleasure ye deliver him till he be eighteen years of age and that he command you himself.¹¹

James's 'surety' would increasingly come to depend on the sheer existence of the royal children, as he set about locating his own legitimacy not in his descent, but in the line of heirs proceeding from him.¹²

Eight years on, in March 1603, James's letter to his son, written before the King's departure for England, insists on a similar, if less literal containment. Henry is to

¹⁰ Ethel Carleton Williams, *Anne of Denmark: Wife of James VI of Scotland and James I of England* (London: Longman, 1970), p. 54. Williams does not give a reference, and appears to be putting words in James's mouth. Nonetheless, a similar meaning is implied in James's warrant to the Earl of Mar concerning his guardianship of Henry, quoted below. The spectre of usurpation to which James seems to be alluding here is raised in *Oberon*, discussed below. James's fears need not be seen as paranoia, since one of the aims of the gunpowder conspiracy was to kidnap Princess Elizabeth from her Warwickshire home and place her on the throne as a substitute for her dead father and brothers.

¹¹ *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, pp. 141-42. James is not only concerned to retain control over Henry; he wants to ensure that the Prince does not fall under the control of anyone else, even, and especially, his mother, a fact which provides an interesting context for Anne's struggles with James over Henry, discussed in the previous chapter.

¹² This is discussed in more detail in chapter 1, but see also Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', pp. 4-5.

ensure his behaviour remains within the limits of what James delineates as appropriate: 'Let not this news make you proud or insolent, for a king's son and heir was ye before, and no more are ye yet. [...] Be therefore merry but not insolent'.¹³

Along with this letter James sent the latest (and the first public) edition of his *Basilikon Doron: or his majesty's instructions to his dearest sonne, Henry the prince*.

The earliest (1599) edition of the *Basilikon Doron*, which had been printed privately in Edinburgh, was prefaced with the following dedicatory sonnet:

Lo heere (my Sonne) a mirroure viue and faire,
Which sheweth the shaddow of a worthy King.
Lo heere a Booke a patterne doth you bring
Which ye should preasse to follow mair and maire [...]
Your father bids you studie here and reede
How to become a perfite King indeede.¹⁴

James offers Henry a book-as-mirror in which Henry will see reflected not himself, but the 'shaddow of a worthy King'. The image in the book / mirror, the 'worthy King', suggests James's perception of himself as an exemplar of kingship.¹⁵ James's desire that Henry should be a copy or imitation of him seems a natural enough gesture of paternal feeling, but coming from a King to a Prince it has a political dimension which is worth considering in more detail. Debora Kuller Shuger notes:

In English law the child is *pars patris*. He remains 'part' of the father rather than being perceived as a clearly individuated and separate entity. [...]. Often this [...]

¹³ *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 211.

¹⁴ Sig. A2, quoted in Wilson, p. 8.

¹⁵ Spenser had invoked the trope of the mirror in a variety of ways in the proems to *The Faerie Queene* Books I, III, and VI. See Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by Thomas P. Roche (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978). In the proem to Book I Elizabeth herself is the mirror 'of grace', whereas in the proem to Book III, Spenser characterises his poem as the mirror in which Elizabeth can see herself pictured: 'Ne let his fairest *Cynthia* refuse, / In mirrours more then one her selfe to see' (III. Proem. 5. 5-6).

is expressed in terms of imaging; the beloved child reflects the father and is loved as his reflection.¹⁶

Jonathan Goldberg also comments on the extent to which the desire that the son should be a copy of the father pervades the portraits of the period. The tendency is most strikingly exemplified in the portrait of Walter Raleigh with his son Walter, which 'in stance and expression [...] proclaims that children are the images of their parents'.¹⁷ Goldberg might more accurately have said that children are the images of their fathers, since there is no mother in the portrait he is discussing, nor is Anne, as Queen or mother, allowed to disrupt the dialogue between father and son in *Basilikon Doron*.

Such strategies, whether verbal or visual, constitute an attempt to affirm the primacy of the father as the source of life for the son who reflects him. Goldberg argues, quite rightly, that the construction of the father-son relationship in these terms deliberately occludes the mother's part in procreation. Thus, Leontes, convinced of his wife's infidelity, seeks, and finds, reassurance in Mamillius's face - father and son are 'almost as like as eggs'.¹⁸ Paulina's awareness of the potency of this desire is evident in her description of Perdita as a copy of Leontes.¹⁹ James's

¹⁶ Shuger, p. 236.

¹⁷ Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', p. 12.

¹⁸ William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), I. 2. 129.

¹⁹ She affirms, 'Behold, my lords, / Although the print be little, the whole matter / And copy of the father: eye, nose, lip', II. 3. 97-99. The fact that, on this occasion, Leontes is not reassured by the visual imaging of himself in his child may have something to do with the fact that the female child is perceived to have stronger links with the mother in a play which brands all females as unfaithful wives.

desire for his son to be a copy of himself might usefully be placed in the context of his (apparently unfounded) anxieties over the paternity of both his sons, a deep-seated fear linked to the allegations that he himself was illegitimate.²⁰ The longing that the child be the image of the father is given added significance in James's case by the royal nature of the family. By setting himself up as the source and pattern for Henry's existence James was reminding his son of his subordinate and dependent position, putting Henry firmly in his place.²¹

Yet the trope of the mirror is problematic in ways that James could not have realised, because it is not Henry who is the reflection, but James, whose appearance in the book as 'the *shadow* of a worthy King', allows for the possibility that the young Prince might turn that shadow into substance.²² Moreover, while a mirror image is on one level the same, on another level it is inverted, opposite, and as Henry grew up he became increasingly polarised away from James, like a negative image. Roy Strong's summation of James and Henry, if rather exaggerated, conveys the point adequately:

The bloated pedantic middle-aged father, careless of affairs of state, prepared to accept appeasement at any price, bent on the pleasures of the chase, totally unaesthetic, whose penchant for handsome courtiers was hardly becoming and whose court was certainly no model for decorum. And in contrast, the young Prince, a man-at-arms who shone at tilt and tourney, who courted public

²⁰ See *CSP Scot* XI, 386-387 and 397, for an account of James's anxieties: 'the King has conceived a great jealousy of the Queen', and 'begins to doubt of the child'.

²¹ Ironically, in November 1611, Chamberlain wrote to Carleton asserting 'the Prince in favor growes very like the Quene his mother', in *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, I, 313.

²² In a number of the masques discussed in this chapter Henry is credited with the ability to confer substance and reality on James's schemes, just as the moment of his revelation in *Barriers* and *Oberon* precipitates the transformation of a two-dimensional stage picture into a three-dimensional architectural feature.

popularity, who excelled in the art of riding, tennis and all manly sports, who, if not a scholar himself, yet was devoted to men of learning, who was an aesthete and whose court was about to be established as a model of virtue.²³

Henry did not choose his father as his 'pattern' of a 'perfect King', but replaced James with the surrogate father figure of Henri IV of France, in much the same way as James had replaced his own mother with Elizabeth I. This erasure of James was repeated in a 1603 offshoot of James's *Basilikon Doron* produced by William Willymat and entitled: *A princes looking glasse, or a princes direction, very requisite and necessarie for a Christian prince to view and beholde himselfe in.*²⁴ Willymat's translation of the precepts of James's text into Latin and Greek verse, invited Henry to find, not an image of his father as exemplary monarch, but a reflection of himself and his own virtues, and concluded with an acrostic poem on 'Henrie Prince of Wales'.

To an extent, the path of Henry's development as the opposite rather than the image of his father had already been inscribed in James's own text. For instance, the anti-Catholic and anti-feminist sentiments that were to become part of Henry's persona were enshrined in James's warning against marrying a Catholic princess: 'what can all these worldly respects auaille, when a man shall finde himselfe coupled with a diuel, to be one flesh with him, and the halfe marrow in his bed'.²⁵ Yet James's approach to government, and especially to foreign policy, was characterised by compromise and conciliation, and he conveniently forgot such ideals when it

²³ Strong, p. 15.

²⁴ Quoted in Wilson, pp. 20-21. Strong, p. 76 reports that when Henri IV was assassinated, Prince Henry took to his bed, declaring, 'My second father is dead'.

²⁵ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 35.

became expedient to marry Henry to a Catholic princess. By contrast, Henry was not content to let this and other points of conduct - such as the recommendation of abstemiousness from alcohol - languish in the realm of the ideal, and he set about trying to give them substance, to become the embodiment and realization of a perfection that, in James's eyes, was far too uncompromising and inflexible.

Queen and Prince: *The Entertainment at Althorp*

As James rode into his new kingdom in April 1603, the enthusiasm with which he was welcomed was heightened by the knowledge that following behind him was a royal family, England's first for fifty years. The cult of the Virgin Queen was at its root sterile, and the country embraced a new dynasty with its promise of generativity. Yet, as the discussion of Queen Anne and her masques suggests, the political advantages of the royal family had a price. The singleness of Elizabeth, like Spenser's Una, had at least forestalled the threat of division. However, the multiplicity of the royal family fragmented the image of power, meaning that the 'other' could no longer be located on the margins, characterised as a threat from the outside, but had been internalised as the danger, if not enemy, within. In the previous chapter I discussed the way in which Queen Anne's court became an alternative focal point and source of patronage for those disenchanted with James's court. Similarly, Henry would rapidly emerge as a charismatic figure and future leader for those radical Protestants who eschewed James's policy of religious toleration, and for those who wanted war with the Catholic forces of Europe. Moreover, the crucial and inevitable dialectic between the aspiring younger

generation and its conservative elders was sufficient to ensure that Henry's appeal reached beyond these specific groups to all who believed, as humankind will, that the future promised something better than the present. Just as Shakespeare's plays almost invariably conclude with the accession of a new generation, Henry was the focus of an intense national expectation about a golden age yet to come.

ARCHIDAMUS You have an unspeakable comfort of your young prince Mamillius.

It is a gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came into my note.

CAMILLO I very well agree with you in the hopes of him. It is a gallant child, one that, indeed, physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh. They that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man.²⁶

James's decision to travel southward without his family was presumably dictated by protocol, but if James was also motivated by the desire to be the sole focus of his new subjects' gaze he would have been disappointed, since the speeches which greeted him made incessant reference to his wife and children. Samuel Daniel's *A panegyrike congratulatory delivered to the Kings most excellent majesty at Burleigh Harrington in Rutlandshire* is typical:

Chaste mother of our Princes, whence do grow
Those righteous issues, which shall glorifie
And comfort many Nations with their worth,
To her perpetuall grace that brought them forth.²⁷

Conversely, Anne and Henry had the opportunity to stage themselves independently, rather than being part of the King's pageant.²⁸ On 25 June they

²⁶ *The Winter's Tale*, I. 1. 32-38

²⁷ *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel*, ed. by A. B. Grossart, 5 vols (London: Hazell, Watson and Viney, 1885-1896; repr. New York, 1963), I, 162, quoted in Wilson, p. 17.

²⁸ Due to his youth and fragile physical condition, Charles did not travel south until August 1604; see Seton, pp. 372-373. Elizabeth did travel at the same time as Anne and Henry, but at a slower pace, which meant she only caught up with them at

reached Althorp, where they were received with an entertainment. Walking through the woods they first encountered a satyr who, unaware of their identities, nonetheless recognised their innate superiority, exclaiming ‘Sure they are of a heauenly race’ (VII, 121, l. 122). Mab, Queen of the Fairies, and her elves then danced and presented Queen Anne with a jewel, assuring her that it was not a gift from the Lord of the house, but from the fairies who fear Lord Spencer’s courtesy may prove lacking. The satyr reappeared to defend Lord Spencer, whose withdrawal from the court and its customs does not necessarily make him ‘a sorry entertayner’ (VII, 126, l. 163). Lord Spencer’s son was then introduced dressed as a huntsman to present Henry with a bow, horn and dog, an apposite preamble to the subsequent hunt, in which, by careful contrivance, the deer were killed before the royal party.²⁹

In tone the entertainment is optimistic and forward-looking. The satyr hopes that James will improve the court, and the song to Anne culminates in the wish that she will live long ‘To exceed (whom shee succeeds) our late DIANA’ (VII, 125, l. 124), but, not surprisingly, the air of expectancy is at its height in relation to Henry.³⁰

However, despite the focus on the future, the form of the entertainment belongs

certain points along the route, and was not present at Althorp. For the text of *The Entertainment at Althrope* see H&S VII, 119-131. The entertainment is discussed briefly in Wilson, pp. 15-16, and Williamson, pp. 22-23.

²⁹ The fact that even hunts were stage-managed in this way demonstrates the extent to which the court culture was theatricalized.

³⁰ Early presentations of Queen Anne often linked her with Queen Elizabeth, a strategy which Anne seems initially to have encouraged, as exemplified in the iconography of *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, discussed in chapter 2, which recycled dresses from the dead Queen’s wardrobe.

firmly to the old reign, closely resembling the entertainments produced for Elizabeth's progresses. The use of the pastoral mode, which was to some extent an inevitable choice for an outdoor summer entertainment, assumes an added significance given that this is a provincial location, distanced from the courtly centre not only geographically, but, given Earl Spencer's posture of withdrawal, politically. The entertainment occupies a liminal space, mediating between court and country, and between past, present and future, invoking tradition, while calling for change.

The fairy beings who greet Anne and Henry are creatures of the land, and there is a sense that the country itself welcomes its new Queen and Prince through the spirits of its woodlands. Mab, the fairies and the satyr are domestic, country spirits who interact, usually mischievously, with the chores of 'country wenches':

Shee, that pinches countrey wenches,
If they rub not cleane their benches,
And with sharper nayles remembers,
When they rake not Vp their embers (VII, 122-23, ll. 58-61).³¹

Some of the mischief ascribed to Mab and her fairies is more sinister, and the undercurrent of violence in the pinching and scratching of the passage quoted above is realised in the action when the satyr is punished: 'Fayries pinch him black and

³¹ There seems to be an attempt to invoke a peculiarly English rusticity here, as well as a sense of enduring tradition. Jonson would return to such figures in *Love Restored*, which establishes a similar contrast between the artificialities of the court, and the older, and by implication, more genuine values of the English countryside. *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* attempted to combine the two, reflecting James's policies on country hospitality and rural sports. However, perhaps the most interesting intertext for the *Althorp* entertainment is the *Masque at Coleorton*, staged by the Earl of Essex, the son of the rebellious earl whom Spencer had supported. The *Coleorton Masque* claims that the fairies at Coleorton are the only ones left in England. The similarity between the two entertainments suggests that fairies functioned to symbolise an older aristocratic way of life.

blue / Now you haue him, make him rue' (VII, 124, ll. 96-97). However, while Mab and the satyr are both, in their ways, agents of disruption, neither pose a real threat to order, since both spontaneously acknowledge the authority of the queen. They might even be called 'conservative' figures inasmuch as they symbolise a continuity which is more than mere tradition, a set of values rooted in the English countryside which endure despite changes of dynasty.

Having the royal party greeted by satyrs and fairies conveys a sense of the country embracing them from its very roots, and lends the entertainment an artless sincerity. The ingenuousness of the fairies is developed at some length in the verses culminating in the presentation to Anne of a jewel:

We prepar'd this *complement*,
And as farre from cheape intent,

In particular to feed
Any hope that should succeed,
Or our glorie by the deed,
As your selfe are from the need (VII, 125, ll. 140-145).

The fairies assert that the gift is unconditional; they have no desire or need to gain advancement from it, just as the Queen has no need of the gift. Anne might have begged to differ, since, coming from the relative penury of Scotland she was eager to embrace the jewels and finery befitting the Queen of this land of milk and honey. In any case, the artlessness of the fairies (and indeed of the entertainment as a whole) is a cleverly manufactured fiction. Mab claims that the jewel is given only by the fairies, without the knowledge of Lord Spencer; however they are prompted to bestow the gift in recognition of his 'bountie' in allowing them alone 'of the female race / [...] to trace / All his grounds' (VII, 125, ll. 135-37). Thus Lord Spencer's

‘bountie’ to the fairies is, albeit indirectly, the source of the gift to Anne ‘Of him vnknowledgde, or vnsent’ (VII, 125, ll. 138-39). Yet Lord Spencer was indeed the source not only of the gift but of the whole entertainment, which despite all protestations to the contrary is self-evidently an exercise in gaining favour. So why the artifice of artlessness? The reasons become clear in the ensuing speech by the satyr, and are linked with the provincial setting, the pastoral mode, and more specifically the motif of withdrawal to a pastoral world purportedly distant from the artificialities of the court.

The satyr begins by defending Lord Spencer against Mab’s suggestion that he may prove a less than satisfactory host. However, the defence of the way of life of the provincial nobleman rapidly becomes an indictment of the artificialities of the (Elizabethan) court which advanced the undeserving who could deceive by appearances. The pastoral mode, in spite of its motif of withdrawal from the court, is invariably preoccupied with that same courtly world of wealth, power and ambition, which is anatomised and its faults laid open for criticism.³² Far from being ‘rude, or sauage’ Lord Spencer’s preference for the groves of Althorp is seen as a morally laudable rejection of all that is wrong with the court (VII, 126, l. 162).³³ The court is associated with ambition and acquisitiveness, not least in sexual matters, as

³² Pastoral was frequently used for political ends as a vehicle for social or moral criticism. The allegorical mode could be used to praise or indict the behaviour of individuals with relative safety. See S. Chaudhuri, *Renaissance Pastoral and its English Developments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

³³ Compare Jonson’s poem ‘To Sir Robert Wroth’ (*The Forest III*) whom he praises for a moral choice involving the rejection of the court in favour of the pastoral idyll, in H&S VIII, 96-100.

the references to the pursuit of 'forraine loves' and the straining 'after painted Nymphs for favours' suggest (VII, 126, l. 160; 165). The vanity and artificiality of women implied by that epithet 'painted' is a pervasive characteristic of courtly life where appearances are all-important and shallowness is the order of the day:

And then telling some mans iest,
Thinking to preferre his wit,
Equall with his suite by it,
I meane his clothes? (VII, 126, ll. 172-175).

By contrast, at Althorp favour is not to be procured with bribes or flattery: 'He can neither bribe a grace, / Nor encounter my lords face / With a plyant smile, and flatter' (VII, 126, ll. 177-179). Yet, if one adopts a cynical perspective on the entertainment as a whole, it could fairly be described as an exercise in seeking favour which does indeed employ, amongst other techniques, bribery (Anne and Henry are given gifts), and flattery ('Sure they are of a heauenly race').³⁴

It is important to acknowledge that the court which the satyr reviles, and which Lord Spencer has eschewed, is identified as Elizabeth's. The abuses (which in real terms not only continued but were exacerbated under James) are consigned to the past as Spencer sues to be readmitted to the courtly circle:

Now he hopes he shall resort there,
Safer, and with more allowance;
Since a hand hath gouernance,
That hath giuen those customes chase,
And hath brought his owne in place (VII, 127, ll. 182-6).

In fact, Spencer's disenchantment with the Elizabethan court, far from being as moral

³⁴ However, the entertainment has already cleverly minimised the chance of Spencer, the commissioning agent, being accused of the courtly vices it derides, by the earlier insistence that the jewel does not come from Spencer.

as the entertainment suggests, sprang from his personal experiences as an adherent of the disgraced Essex faction. His hopes for the new reign would indeed be realised as noblemen such as Southampton, who had been imprisoned for his part in the Essex rebellion, were pardoned and restored to favour.

The entertainment negotiates between the past, present and future. Spencer commissions a pastoral genre associated with the progresses of the previous reign to call on James to make changes - specifically to restore the Essex supporters to favour - which are actually a return to the *status quo ante*. This association of James with both continuity and change did not last for long. Once James was established on the throne he was, inevitably, seen as the representative of the unpopular *status quo*, and it was Henry who portrayed himself as providing both continuity and innovation, as he linked himself with the Tudor dynasty, distanced himself from the perceived abuses of his father's court, and promised a new and glorious future.³⁵

Spencer's concern for the future extends beyond himself to his son, who at the conclusion of the speeches is presented to Anne and Henry. Until this point in the entertainment Henry has not been the focus of much attention; when he has been mentioned he has been scarcely individualized, demonstrating the pervasive tendency to see the child as part of the father, rather than as a separately individuated being. Thus, Henry functions symbolically as the 'kingdoms happiness', and as a substitute for the absent king, James's 'kingly image' (VII, 125, l. 119; 127, l. 192). Indeed, the gifts presented to Henry - a bow, horn, and hunting dog, would have

³⁵ Despite James's early conciliatory gestures towards members of the Essex faction, the positions in his household increasingly came under the control of the Howard family, and it was Henry who linked himself with the son of the executed Earl.

been more appropriate to his father, whose reputation as an enthusiastic hunter may have preceded him into his new kingdom.³⁶

Robert Peake's portrait of Henry, showing the prince *à la chasse* with his friend John Harington of Exton, could almost be an artistic impression of the last few moments of the entertainment at Althorp, with its stage-managed hunt. Roy Strong draws attention to the innovative form of the portrait, which is the first English royal hunting portrait. Yet, as so often with Henry, innovation coexists with tradition through the visual allusions to the Tudor past: 'the Prince's pose is based on Holbein's famous likeness of Henry VIII as reinterpreted by William Scrots for the boy-king, Edward VI'.³⁷ Henry, who was invested as a Knight of the Garter at Windsor on 2 July 1603, wears the George medallion depicting St George riding down the dragon.³⁸ Such an allusion to Christianity's victory over paganism, was, in the wake of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and other texts in the Protestant apocalyptic tradition, widely understood to denote the victory of the reformed religion over devilish popery. Prince Henry's link in the popular imagination with the ongoing

³⁶ In this, as in many things, Henry was unlike his father, and the former's relative lack of enthusiasm for hunting led to the exchange of angry words on a subsequent occasion, *CSP Ven XII*, 142. The idea of Henry as the 'image' or copy of his father has the troubling implication that as soon as a king has a son, he becomes dispensable, easily replaced in entertainments, as on the throne.

³⁷ Strong, pp. 114-15. For a more detailed interpretation of the symbolism of the hunting portrait see Williamson, pp. 27-29. The existence of two versions of the portrait, one depicting the Prince with John Harington, the other figuring Robert Devereux, has been noted in the previous chapter's discussion of the influence of Anne's desire to maintain links with Prince Henry on the establishment of her court.

³⁸ An account of the investiture can be found in Nichols I, 193-194, and it is commented on by Wilson, p. 18, and Williamson, p. 27.

battle against popery is evident in the words of a ballad, associating him with his namesake Henry VIII, and hoping he would continue the latter's reforming work: 'Henry the Eighth pulled down monks and their cells / Henry the Ninth should pull down Bishops and their bells'.³⁹ The combination of innovation and tradition which characterises both the hunting portrait and the ballad would become one of the distinguishing features of Henry's iconography. This representation of himself as an agent of both continuity and change meant Henry held all the cards. By linking himself to the Tudor past as a champion of the glorious Elizabethan values, he distanced himself from the status quo in the person of James, presenting himself as a dynamic agent of change achieved by a return to the values of the past.

In 1603 all this lay in the future. The more immediate aim of parents like Spencer was to associate their sons with Henry, whose collegiate court, established from July 1603 at Oatlands, was recommended by James Cleland to the nation's noble born youth, as a place to:

learne the first elements to be Privie Counsellor, a Generall of an Armie, to rule in peace & to commande in warre [...] . Here is the true Panthaeon of Great Britaine, where Vertue her selfe dwelleth, by patterne, by practise, by encouragement, admonitions & precepts of the most rare persons in Vertue and Learning that can be found.⁴⁰

Accordingly, the parting speech of the entertainment presented this new generation gazing in expectation to Henry as their future leader. The ambitions focused on Henry are unambiguously martial and expansionist:

³⁹ Quoted in G. P. V. Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant or the Court of King James* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), p. 135, and in Williamson, p. 29.

⁴⁰ James Cleland, *Institutes of a young Noble Man* (Oxford, 1607), sigs E2-E2v. Quoted in Wilson, p. 51.

And when slow Time hath made you fit for warre,
 Looke ouer the strict Ocean, and thinke where
 You may but lead vs forth, that grow up here
 Against a day, when our officious swords
 Shall speake our action better than our words (VII, 131, ll. 312-315).

Such praise of Henry is rather incongruous in an entertainment which has been concerned with the immediate political situation at home, rejoicing in a peaceful succession and hoping that James will reform the abuses of the old queen's court. Williamson notes this, suggesting that the address to Henry appears as a separate appendage because the prince's personation 'would not blend well with the poet's vision of nature and benevolent spirits'.⁴¹

It may also be significant that Jonson took the precaution of publishing the *Entertainment at Althorp* as an appendage to the speeches for the royal entry. The title page to the 1604 Quarto printed by Edward Blount (and reproduced in H&S VII, 80) makes explicit reference to Jonson's *Part of the Kings Entertainment in Passing to his Coronation*, and to the *Panegyre* on James's first entrance into parliament, but relegates the *Althorp Entertainment* to the level of 'other Additions'. The quarto edition also rewrites the time scale, dating the speeches for the entry as March 1603 (although in reality they took place in March 1604) so that they can come before *The Entertainment at Althorp* (June 1603) in order to give James - at least on paper - his pre-eminent place as head of the royal family.

Perhaps the fact that Henry was still so evidently a minor (he was nine years old) made the opposition between his father's pacifism and his own rapidly emerging warrior myth less problematic. Henry might one day be a great military leader, but

⁴¹ Williamson, p. 22.

for the moment, as Jonson points out, Time is 'slow' and 'Peace' ushers Henry's steps. Yet the entertainment proves that there was a deep-seated desire for a military leader, and the account offered below of the intervening years between *Althorp* and *Prince Henry's Barriers* demonstrates that Henry was more than ready to respond to the nation's desires by taking on the militaristic role offered here. The time would soon come when the son would be associated with deeds more powerful and charismatic than his father's words, and when Jonson could no longer take refuge from the clash of ideologies in 'slow Time'.

Prince as Patron

In the years that intervened between Henry's arrival in England and the first of his own festivals early in 1610, his role was still being fashioned largely through the words of others, as he figured as the dedicatee of countless books. E. C. Wilson's thorough survey demonstrates the extent to which the dedications to Henry invoked him as a martial figure, the new hope of the reformed religion. Veteran soldiers such as Barnaby Rich offered Henry advice in *A souldiers wishe to Britons welfare* and its sequel *The fruites of long experience* (1604). Sir Clement Edmond's hopes for Henry are self-evident in the dedication of his *Observations upon Caesars Comentaries setting forth the practise of the art militarie in the time of the Romaine empire for the better direction of our moderne wars*.⁴² James is mentioned as having set down 'manie principles of warre [...] by way of precept to informe you'. However, simply by writing the book Edmond implies the inadequacy of abstract

⁴² See Wilson, p. 30.

principles alone, and since James will not demonstrate those principles for his son by putting them into practice, an alternative exemplum is found in Caesar. The dichotomy between James as a scholar, a man of the intellect, of words, and Henry as the archetypal man of action recurs constantly, and in 1609, it was articulated perceptively by Paolo Sarpi:

from all sides one hears about the great *virtu* of the Prince, son to the King of England. But the world must wait a great while to reap benefit therefrom: for the King of England, however accomplished in the reformed religion, appears for the rest not to be worth much: *he* would like to do everything with words.⁴³

A similar division between words and deeds would be played out in a number of Henry's entertainments, notably the *Barriers* and *Oberon*, and the association of Henry with action was heightened in all the masques by the simple fact that he appeared as a mobile, kinetic dancer, while James remained a static observer.

Accounts of Henry's daily exertions confirm this impression of almost frenetic activity:

hee used in a manner daily to ride and manage great horses, with which hee had his stables most excellently furnished, oftimes to runne at the Ring, and sometimes at Tilt, [...]. His other exercises were dancing, leaping, and in times of yeare fit for it learning to swimme, at sometimes walking fast and farre to accustome and enable himselfe to make a long march when time should require it.⁴⁴

Descriptions of this sort abounded and helped to disseminate and perpetuate Henry's personation as a warrior prince. As Henry and his court became an alternative focal point for foreign ambassadors they responded to his self-fashioning by offering him gifts of weapons, armour and horses. The French were particularly

⁴³ Quoted in Strong, p. 76.

⁴⁴ Cornwallis, *A Discourse of the most illustrious prince, Henry, late Prince of Wales* (London, 1641); repr. in *Harleian Miscellany* IV, 333-40. Quoted in Wilson, p. 54.

active in cultivating Henry as a possible ally against Spain. In April 1606, when Henri IV appointed la Boderie as ambassador, he instructed him to pay special attention to the Prince, to whom Henri had just sent Monsieur de St Antoine, a riding master.⁴⁵

However, as Strong's study demonstrates, Henry used his European links not only to bring himself up to date with the latest advances in arms and warfare, but also to recruit artists who could disseminate his myth in painting, architecture, and court festivals.⁴⁶ Interestingly, Henry's revivalist attitude towards the values of the Elizabethan golden age was accompanied by a desire to reinvigorate the arts, by moving beyond the cultural insularity that had characterised Elizabeth's reign. Ironically, Henry's presentation as a future conqueror of Catholic Europe was enhanced by the expertise of artists who had originated from those same Catholic courts. Moreover, such a cultural exchange with continental Europe was, to an extent, predicated on James's pursuit of peace which had improved Britain's relations with the rest of Europe.

It was above all as Protestantism's defender of the faith that Henry captured the popular imagination. Dedications to him in this role originated largely from opponents of James's 1604 peace treaty with Spain, and proliferated in the aftermath of the Catholic gunpowder plot of 1605. Both James and Henry made considerable political mileage out of their preservation, which they constructed as proof of divine favour. However amongst Henry's Protestant followers the incident

⁴⁵ Strong, pp. 63-64.

⁴⁶ For Henry's patronage of the visual arts see Strong, pp. 86 ff.

was viewed as confirmation that Henry was the anointed saviour they had been waiting for; why else would the Catholic world plot his destruction?⁴⁷ Amongst the most violently anti-papal tract of this period was William Crashaw's *The sermon preached at the crosse, Feb 1607*, which hopes Henry will 'giue the Whore of Babylon that foil, & fall, from which she shall never rise [...] hate the whore and make her desolate, & eate her flesh, and burne her with fire'.⁴⁸ Not surprisingly such sentiments were frequently combined with the invocation of Henry as a warrior, a modern-day Red-crosse knight, and it was as an exemplar of Protestant chivalry that Henry made his first appearance on the masque-stage at Whitehall.

The revival of chivalry and *Prince Henry's Barriers*

The years 1609-10 saw Henry busy forming his own household at St. James's Palace. The Venetian ambassador, Antonio Correr, reports revealingly that 'although his Highness does nothing without the King's permission, yet he is extremely particular that everything shall be the result of his own choice'.⁴⁹ This comment lays bare for observation the tensions of the relationship between the royal father and his son and heir. The hierarchy of parent over child, which initially seems to be in place, is subsequently exposed as merely nominal. The prince gets everything his own way, and the fact that he does so with his father's permission should be seen less as

⁴⁷ The Catholic 'enemy' had tried to gain control of Henry in 1603, when Pope Clement VIII had offered James substantial sums of money, to secure himself on the English throne, if he would hand Henry over to the Holy See to be educated. See Williamson, pp. 13-14, and Birch, p. 22.

⁴⁸ Quoted from the dedication to the 1609 edition, in Wilson, p. 73.

⁴⁹ *CSP Ven XII*, 79-80.

a testimony to his filial obedience than as evidence of his ability to manipulate James for his own ends. Comparable declarations of obedience characterise much of Henry's uneasy correspondence with his father, but are increasingly problematised by Henry's assertions of his own will. Henry continues to construct himself as James's 'most duetifull and obedient son', but the perpetuation of this fiction requires James's collusion.⁵⁰ And it was in James's interests to collude. With Anne staging herself in ways that engaged with and challenged James's rhetorical constructions of himself as husband and father to the nation, it was vital that James be seen to retain control over his children, even, and especially, if he could not control his wife, their mother. Maintaining the illusion, if not the reality, of control over Henry was crucial for James, who had constructed his monarchical authority around filial submission. Henry's determination that 'everything shall be the result of his own choice' extorts from James a 'permission' that arises from his desire to maintain at least the appearance of fatherly, and thus kingly, authority. For James to withhold his permission would bring the prince's muted rebellion into the open; so we learn (again from Correr) that when Henry planned to appear in a ceremonial exercise of arms for Twelfth Night 1609/10, he 'found some difficulty in obtaining the King's consent, but his Majesty did not wish to cross him'.⁵¹

It is against this backdrop of kingly and fatherly authority held to ransom that I want to consider Henry's first festival, the aforementioned *Barriers*, performed on

⁵⁰ For examples of letters from Henry to James see Nichols I, 304 and II, 161-162, 213. They are often formal and laboured compositions, confirming the suggestion that the declarations of obedience they contain are disingenuous.

⁵¹ *CSP Ven XI*, 401.

Twelfth Night 1609/10. Up to this moment Henry had to an extent been the product of other people's mythologizing, but in this entertainment, his first public staging of his persona, a number of the distinctive aspects of Henry's self-presentation emerge, including his militancy, his revivalist attitude towards the Elizabethan golden age, and his preoccupation with the cult of history.⁵² The iconography of the entertainment unequivocally presents Henry as the heir to Elizabethan chivalry and ideals of knighthood.⁵³

Jonson's *Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers* has been the subject of some enlightened literary criticism in recent years; yet this has had the consequence of drawing attention to the speeches *per se*, at the expense of the action which they framed, and which comprised the high point of the evening's entertainment - namely the barriers.⁵⁴ Jonson's choice of title registers the pervasive tension between word and deed, text and performance. The fact that here, as in the printed texts of his masques for Queen Anne, Jonson prioritises the speeches, and marginalises the

⁵² A number of Henry's projects strengthened his association with the Elizabethan age, in particular his keenness to reform the Navy, restoring the Elizabethan policy of sea-supremacy over Spain, a plan which overlapped with his support for the establishment of English colonies in the New World, and his patronage of the Virginia company. See Strong, pp. 57-63. Henry's commitment to naval reform and colonization led him to cultivate a friendship with Walter Raleigh, who, while imprisoned in the Tower, produced innumerable books and pamphlets for the Prince on these subjects, and also embarked on his *History of the World* in response to Henry's interest in history, Strong, pp. 146-48.

⁵³ In view of the fact that James did not even like Elizabeth being spoken of, the revivalism of Henry's self-presentations must have been witnessed by his father with a sense of irritation, if not anxiety.

⁵⁴ The emphasis on the speeches is exemplified by Mary C. Williams in a nonetheless useful article, 'Merlin and the Prince: *The Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers*', *RenD* 8 (1977), 221-229.

action, which is denoted simply as ‘The Barriers’, has the effect of detracting attention from Henry’s active and martial role.⁵⁵

The barriers were an exercise at arms conducted indoors in which knights fought with pike and sword across a central bar (the principle being the same as the outdoor tilts on horseback). Such displays of chivalry, which had been a regular feature of Elizabeth’s court, had witnessed a decline since James’s accession, but Henry was evidently determined to revive the flagging chivalry in all its stylised glory. Henry modernised the barriers by providing a dramatic context for the action, appropriating tradition and revitalising it to better serve his own purposes, but there is no doubt that his prime concern was with the exercise at arms. An eye-witness offers an account of the spectacle of bodily combat which Jonson’s text denies us:

Every Challenger fought with eight severall defendants, two severall combats at the two severall weapons, viz. at push of pike, and with single sword, the Prince performed this challenge with wonderous skill, and courage, to the great joy and admiration of all the beholders [...]. These feates of armes with their triumphant shewes began before ten a clocke at night, and continued there untill the next morning being Sunday.⁵⁶

Simply in terms of time the barriers dominated the evening, standing in exactly the same relation to the speeches as the dances did at other masques. An attempt to recover the action of the barriers engages me in a similar project to that undertaken in

⁵⁵ Jonson was also engaging in self-promotion, highlighting his part in the entertainment. However, the fact that Jonson seems to have sympathised with James’s enlightened humanist policies of religious toleration and European peace, suggests his erasure of the spectacle of Henry’s military activity from his text had a political as well as an artistic motivation.

⁵⁶ John Stow, *Annales* (London, 1631), sig. Ffff4v.

relation to the Queen's masques, namely a reinscription of Henry's body into the extant text.

From the little information we have about the barriers it seems clear that Henry was concerned to observe the proper conventions of chivalric engagement. The Christmas challenge (which provided the pretext for the Twelfth Night Barriers) was issued on behalf of Henry as Meliadus and places the *Barriers* firmly within the medieval tradition of Christmas challenges which received its finest literary treatment in *Gawain and the Green Knight*. Henry's conservatism, his desire to recreate the past in the present will be a recurrent theme of this discussion, but, far from being prompted by naive nostalgia, his revival of the traditions and rituals of chivalry was imbued with political significance. Exercises at arms such as the barriers were not simply theatricalized displays of military skills; they were regarded as a crucial part of the training for war, and accounts of the *Barriers* record that Henry's performance astounded onlookers. He reputedly sustained thirty pushes of the pike and three hundred and sixty strokes of the sword, and while it is impossible to know for certain whether Henry's victories were genuine, (or whether the 'defendants' prudently let him win), it is evident from a wide range of sources that Henry was almost obsessive in his practice of martial skills and his interest in the theory of warfare. Charles Cornwallis recalls:

He did also practise Tilting, Charging on Horseback with Pistols, after the Manner of the Wars, with all other the like Inventions. Now also delighting to confer, both with his own, and other strangers, and great Captains, of all Manner of Wars, Battle, Furniture, Arms by Sea and Land, Disciplines, Orders, Marches, Alarms, Watches, Stratagems, Ambuscades, Approaches, Scalings, Fortifications, Incampings.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ *An Account of the Baptism, Life, Death and Funeral of the most incomparable*

Biographical information of this nature demonstrates quite clearly that the type of chivalry Henry was concerned to revive was in fact the spirit of warfare, and the performance of the *Barriers* coincided with the presentation to the Prince, from members of the old Elizabethan war party, of a manuscript ‘Inciting him to affect arms more than Peace’.⁵⁸ Moreover, as Roy Strong has noted, the historical moment of Henry’s performance in the *Barriers* finds a wider context in the so-called Julich-Cleves crisis, when the disputed succession of a small German state threatened to precipitate a European conflict.⁵⁹ Henri IV, the Prince’s hero and adopted father-figure planned to challenge Hapsburg domination by allying with German, United Provinces and, hopefully, English forces against the might of the Empire and Spain. It seems likely that Henry intended to march with Henri IV on Cleves some time after his investiture as Prince of Wales in 1610. In the event, the assassination of Henri IV in May 1610 put a halt to the threat of war, but Henry’s

Prince, Frederick Henry, Prince of Wales, by Sir Charles Cornwallis, knight, his highness’s treasurer (London, 1751), p. 26. The *Account* was first published in 1641 as *The Life and Death of our late most incomparable and heroic Prince, Henry, Prince of Wales*. Strong, p. 227, argues that the *Life* was not written by Cornwallis, who produced his own account of Henry in the 1626 *Discourse of the most illustrious prince Henry, late Prince of Wales*, and suggests the author of the *Life* may have been John Hawkins.

⁵⁸ Strong, p. 70. James commissioned Robert Cotton to write a reply, and the two were published together as *An answer made [...] to certaine propositions of war and peace* (London, 1655).

⁵⁹ After the death of Duke William of Cleves, and in spite of the strong claims to the succession of a number of Protestant princes from the German states and the United Provinces, the Holy Roman Emperor, assisted by Spanish forces, installed his brother, Archduke Leopold in the walled city of Julich. Henri IV of France, despite his (expedient) conversion to Catholicism, rallied the rest of Europe to the aid of the German Protestants in Cleves in an attempt to drive a wedge into the imperial territories. See Williamson, pp. 110-113, and Strong, p. 76. The pattern of alliances anticipates the division of Europe in the Thirty Years War, discussed in chapter 5.

martial appearance at the *Barriers*, and his demonstration of his prowess in battle, was surely intended as a prelude to his first assay into battle for real.

For an idea of the picture of physical strength Henry presented at the *Barriers* it is worth considering the visual correlative provided by Simon van de Passe's engraving of Henry with the pike.⁶⁰ Henry is an impressive figure, his muscular legs braced to thrust the lance, with his sword beside him. The scheme has a medieval feel, suggested by the plumed helmet and the jousting knights in the background, while Henry's face, seen in rigid profile, demonstrates the influence of Renaissance classicism, epitomised in Oliver's miniature of Henry.⁶¹ The combined effect of these allusions to both chivalric medievalism, and to classical antiquity, is not only to link Henry with the glorious past, but also, and conversely, to take him out of time, to make him seem transcendent and immutable, since, as Williamson notes, 'figures seen in profile traditionally transcended time, for there was no eye contact with the viewer which might localise the subject and identify him along with the viewer in the here and now'.⁶²

The effect of the engraving is to suggest Henry's dominance, establishing him as a figure towering over past, present and future, and the verses which accompanied van de Passe's engraving (when it appeared as a frontispiece to Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*) achieve a similar effect:

⁶⁰ The van de Passe engraving is reproduced in *The Works of Michael Drayton*, ed. by J. William Hebel 5 vols (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1931-41) alongside the poem discussed below, p. iv*.

⁶¹ For the Oliver miniature see *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, ed. by Karen Hearn (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), p. 137.

⁶² Williamson, p. 66.

BRITAINE, *behold here portay'd, to thy sight,
 Henry, thy best hope, and the world's delight;
 Ordain'd to make thy eight Great Henries, nine:
 Who, by that vertue in the trebble Trine,
 To his owne goodnesse (in his Being) brings
 These severall Glories of th'eight English Kings;
 Deep Knowledge, Greatnes, long Life, Policy,
 Courage, Zeale, Fortune, awfull Majestie.
 He like great Neptune on three Seas shall rove,
 And rule three Realms, with triple power like Jove;
 Thus in soft Peace, thus in tempestuous Warres,
 Till from his foote, his Fame shall strike the starres.*⁶³

Placing Henry in a wider historical context of the 'eight Great Henries', then emphasising his total superiority over all that has preceded him, Drayton constructs Henry as the present heir to all that is great in Britain's past, which he will use to establish a glorious future. Drayton had used this strategy of placing the future Henry IX amongst his illustrious namesakes before, in *A paeon triumphall*, his 1604 poem describing the members of the royal family at their entry into London; and Robert Fletcher's *The nine English worthies* (1606) is just one among many other examples of this popular mode of praising Henry.⁶⁴ Although James had chosen Henry's name to benefit himself rather than his son, tributes like these demonstrate how far Henry's personal mythography was boosted by his being one in a long line of great Henrys. Interestingly, James's own given names (James and Charles) placed him only within a Scottish tradition - James VI of Scotland, but James the *first* of England.

Yet Henry's association with these British kings is complicated by the fact that

⁶³ In *Drayton*, ed. by J. W. Hebel, IV (1933), p. iv.

⁶⁴ For Fletcher see Wilson, pp. 46-48.

the language of chivalry had been invoked by Essex and his supporters as a mode of aristocratic opposition to the crown, and is appropriated by Henry to articulate his own opposition to the King.⁶⁵ In modelling his martial appearances on Elizabethan exemplars such as Essex, Henry was marking himself out as an oppositional figure, a gesture compounded by the appearance in the *Barriers* of Henry Wriothesley, the third Earl of Southampton, who had been one of Essex's co-conspirators, and who remained an outspoken opponent of James and his favourites throughout the reign.⁶⁶

Another oppositional strategy Henry had taken over from the second Earl of Essex was an interest in seeking out precedents. Just as Essex had initiated research into the privileges attendant upon his ancient office of Earl Marshal, Henry displayed a keen interest in the origins and rights of his role as Prince of Wales.⁶⁷

That James perceived such enquiries as a challenge to his prerogative is evident in his

⁶⁵ The valences of chivalry as a language of baronial or aristocratic opposition to the crown are registered in Shakespeare's history plays. See for example Hotspur's invocation of 'honour' in *I Henry IV*, and even more strikingly the challenge scenes in Act 1 of *Richard II*. The case of Essex is discussed by Vernon F. Snow, 'Essex and the aristocratic opposition to early Stuarts', *Journal of Modern History* 32 (1960), 224-33. See also Richard McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood: the Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), and 'Old English honour in an evil time: aristocratic principle in the 1620s', in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture*, ed. by R. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 133-155, which is discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁶⁶ Another of the participants in *The Barriers* was Thomas Howard, the 14th Earl of Arundel (1585-1646), who in the 1620s was also an exponent of the aristocratic opposition to the King and Buckingham. See Kevin Sharpe, 'The Earl of Arundel, His Circle, and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-1628', in *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* ed. by Kevin Sharpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 209-44. Aristocratic opposition to Buckingham's involvement in the sale of titles is discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁶⁷ For Essex as Earl Marshal, see McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood*, pp. 88-102.

suppression in 1614 of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries, which used original documents to scrutinize the origins of English institutions.⁶⁸ The seeking out of precedents threatened James's construction of himself as an originating force and the source of the nation's political power and energy (the role in which many of the masques cast him). James's concerns as to where such research might lead were more than justified; amongst the problems he would face in the parliaments of the 1620s was the assertion of an aristocratic constitution deriving its authority from a source independent of the monarch, and a Protestation from the Commons that they held their privileges by right not grace (discussed in chapter 5).

Henry's *Barriers* were linked with the past, but were also innovative in having a dramatic context, with speeches by Ben Jonson, and a movable set designed by Inigo Jones. The performance opened with the Lady of the Lake who, notwithstanding her praise of James as a second Arthur who has restored Britain's 'ancient name' and revived 'the glories of this place', laments the decay of the House of Chivalry (VII, 323, l. 18; 24). Arthur appears transformed into a star, and anticipates the restoration of 'these ruin'd seates of vertue' by the Lady's knight Meliadus (VII, 325, l. 85). Arthur exhorts Meliadus to make himself famous by crossing boundaries and conquering realms, but concludes by presenting the Lady with a shield for Meliadus, with the reminder that 'Defensiuē armes th'offensiuē should foregoe' (VII, 326, l. 99). Merlin is liberated from his tomb by the Lady in time to witness the transformation of the ruined House of Chivalry into St. George's

⁶⁸ James's suppression of the Society of Antiquaries is noted in Levy Peck, 'An introduction', pp. 8-9.

Portico, in which are seated Henry / Meliadus and his six assistants. The Lady guides the knights to their tent, but before the barriers, Merlin 'reads' the shield, inscribed with the actions of past English monarchs intended to serve as an example to Henry. The name of Meliadus revives Chevalry herself, who summons 'kighthood' to come 'like a flood' from 'the shores / Of all the world' (VII, 335, ll. 398-399).

The Arthurian material was probably specified by Henry as commissioning agent, since, as Roy Strong notes, 'Jonson was not attracted to Arthurian themes, and indeed this forms his only use of the material'.⁶⁹ Strong identifies a possible source in the thirteenth century *Les Prophecies de Merlin*, and notes that Jonson departs from this in making Meliadus the foster child of the Lady of the Lake, not her lover.⁷⁰ This is consonant with the refusal of Jonson's text to present its romance material 'romantically', summed up in Merlin's scathing rejection of a nostalgic and romanticised notion of chivalry as 'the deedes / Of antique knights to catch their fellowes steedes, / Or ladies palfryes rescue from the force / Of a fell gyant, or some score to un-horse' (VII, 328, ll. 167-170).

⁶⁹ Strong, p. 142.

⁷⁰ *Les Prophecies de Merlin*, ed. by Lucy Allen Paton, 2 vols (New York: Modern Language Association, 1926), I, 184, cited by Mary C. Williams, 'Merlin and the Prince', pp. 223-224. Williams retells the episode in which Meliadus, the lover of the Lady of the Lake persuades her to take him to Merlin's tomb, and through Meliadus, Merlin's prophecies are transmitted to scribes in other places. Williams notes that Jonson passed over another, more obviously heroic, Meliadus, in order to choose one linked with prophecies, and argues that since, in the source, Meliadus is second in importance to Merlin as prophet-poet, Jonson may have been establishing himself in an educative role to the young prince Henry.

Norman Council argues that Renaissance humanism opposed the chivalric mode because it encouraged 'bold bawdry and open manslaughter'.⁷¹ While for Henry the revival of chivalry was a vehicle for his revival of the spirit of war, his poet and designer, under the influence of humanism, would have been eager to disrupt the equivalence between chivalry and war. The extent to which the speeches and the stage design negotiate between different ideas about chivalry is discussed below. However, the fact that the entertainment eschews the 'bold bawdry' which had also become associated with the chivalric mode accords well with Henry's self-fashioning as the chaste warrior knight of God.⁷² Bacon remarks that

of love matters there was wonderfully little talk, considering his age insomuch that he passed that extremely slippery time of his early manhood, in so great a fortune, and in very good health, without being particularly noted for any affairs of that kind.⁷³

⁷¹ Norman Council, 'Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones and the Transformation of Tudor Chivalry', *ELH* 47 (1980), 259-275 (p. 261), quoting the opinion of Roger Asham, *The Scholemaster: or Plaine and Perfite Way of Teaching Children* (London 1570; Menston: Scolar Press, 1970).

⁷² His choice of the figure Meliadus is explained by William Drummond of Hawthornden who points out that the hellenised form Moeliades is an anagram of 'Miles a deo' or 'God's knight', *Teares on the Death of Moeliades*, in *The Poetical Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden*, ed. by L. E. Kastner, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Scottish Text Society, 1913), I, 75.

⁷³ *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. by James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, & Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longman, 1857-74), VI, 328. Some sources suggest that the Prince had a love affair with Frances Howard, who having married Henry's childhood companion the Earl of Essex, divorced him to remarry Robert Carr (see chapter 4). However, David Lindley's clear-sighted account of events in *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 64-67, points out that suggestions of an affair seem to originate in sources such as Wilson's *History of Great Britain* (London, 1653) which postdate the event.

Chastity was similarly a crucial part of the persona of one of Henry's closest friends, John Harington, Lord Exton (1594-1614), who reputedly 'kept himself as undefiled, as Lot in the midst of Sodom [...]. He spent not his time in courting of Ladies, and amorously contemplating the beauty of women, which are bellows of lust and baits of uncleanness'.⁷⁴ For Henry and his companions women were clearly a temptation, a distraction from their self-imposed discipline as knights of God.⁷⁵

The Barriers can be seen as exemplifying the possibilities for what David Norbrook has termed the 'reformation' of the masque, since the spectacle of young men engaged in active trials of strength would have more than answered those who criticised the genre for encouraging an effeminate indolence at court.⁷⁶ And yet for all that the aggressive masculinity of Henry and his companions may have been intended as a counter to the effeminised decadence of James's court, their prioritisation of male-male bonds and their rejection of women effectively re-enacted and replicated the homosexual and misogynist bias of James's court, with the result

⁷⁴ *The Life of John, Lord Harington, Baron of Exton in Nugae Antiquae: being a collection of original papers in prose and verse*, ed. by Henry Harington 2 vols (London: Printed for W. Frederick, 1769-1775), II, 114-15.

⁷⁵ In his anti-feminism, if in nothing else, Henry was his father's son, and this aspect of his self-fashioning was in line with the dislike of women enshrined in James's *Basilikon Doron*. It is interesting that, despite the privileging of homosocial bonds, and the marginalisation of women at James's court, it was nonetheless perceived as effeminising in its influence, with the vices of the court being troped in feminine terms. This misogynist perspective characterises the anti-court sentiment of a number of the masques of the middle period, notably *Mercury Vindicated*, which is discussed in chapter 5.

⁷⁶ Norbrook, 'The Reformation of the Masque' in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 94-110, although this assertion is complicated by the possibility, discussed below, that the male bodies of the masquers were eroticised by the spectators.

that this point of supposed difference between son and father collapsed into sameness.

The suppression of the 'courtly love' dimension of the Arthurian material was necessary because the tilts had been eroticised in the reign of Elizabeth, as male courtiers engaged in trials of strength to gain the Queen's favour, which at least in the early days, was potentially sexual. Under Elizabeth, 'kighthood was not the performance of heroic deeds in battle but service to a lady. Chivalry became, in her hands, a myth that disarmed her heroes as it idealized her, and the language of heroism became the language of submissive love'.⁷⁷ It is clear, therefore, that Henry did not simply 'revive' Elizabethan chivalry in any straightforward way, but had to redefine it to serve his own self-fashioning. But notwithstanding the textual suppression of the romantic and erotic dimensions of the tilt, Henry had no control over the responses of spectators - female and male - to his bodily display. Given that James had become besotted with Robert Carr after he fell from his horse at the Accession Day Tilt of 1607, Henry's staging of the chaste masculinity of himself and his fellows would have been vulnerable to subversion by the homoerotic gaze of James, as well as by the heterosexual desiring gaze of female spectators. Thus, the arena of ceremonial combat provided an occasion for the display of individual

⁷⁷ Stephen Orgel, 'Jonson and the Amazons', in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and Seventeenth Century English Poetry*, ed. by Elizabeth D. Harvey and Katherine E. Maus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 119-139 (p. 119).

charisma which Henry intended to be read in terms of political power, but which might equally be read in sexual terms.⁷⁸

Henry's choice of Arthurian material was not only in keeping with his passion for the ceremonial exercise of arms, it also provided an efficient means of associating himself with the Elizabethan age and the Tudor dynasty. Arthur had figured prominently in the Tudor myth, not least in the propaganda employed by Henry VII to bolster his claim to the throne. The same Henry Tudor appears in the *Barriers's* list of kings and his landing at Milford Haven and the founding of the Tudor dynasty would be alluded to in the celebrations for Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales later in 1610. Henry's concern with the past and his own relation to it was by no means unique in an age obsessed with genealogies, but he knew better than most the power of history for political and propaganda ends. He commissioned Sir John Hayward to write a 'universal history of this kingdom', and the dedication of Hayward's *History of the III Norman Kings of England* describes a conversation between Hayward and the Prince, in which the latter asserted his conviction that history played a crucial role in the self-fashioning of the monarch, because 'there is no monument, either so durable or so largely extending, or so liuely and faire, as that which is framed by a fortunate penne'.⁷⁹ Such a concern with the function of history is at the heart of the *Barriers*.

⁷⁸ The eroticisation of the body of the male masquer is discussed in more detail in chapter 5, which focuses on the display of Buckingham's body in the masque. Buckingham's career as a masquer demonstrates that political and sexual charisma were by no means mutually exclusive.

⁷⁹ Hayward, *The Lives of the III Norman Kings of England* (London, 1613), sig. A2v, quoted in Williamson, p. 70. See also Strong, pp. 146-48.

In 1600, Walter Quin had hailed Henry as Arthur's heir, promising 'Arthur's sceptre with his throne shall be prepared for you'.⁸⁰ In the *Barriers* Henry was still no more nor less than Arthur's heir, since the fiction necessarily acknowledged the reigning monarch, James, as a second Arthur.⁸¹ James is praised by the Lady of the Lake for having restored Britain to the entirety and perfection it enjoyed under Arthur, while Arthur himself recognises James as his superior, 'I ioy to find my selfe so'out-shone; / And for the greater, wish, men should him take, / As it is nobler to restore then make' (VII, 325, ll. 79-81). Yet while the Lady of the Lake, looking out over the splendidly attired audience, might legitimately claim that restoration has been accomplished, James and the audience are faced with a scene depicting ancient ruins, which immediately undercuts this assertion. The Lady's speech registers these contradictions. The court boasts 'All that is high and great, or can comport / Vnto the stile of maiesty' - with one exception, the ruined House of Chivalry (VII, 324, ll. 28-29). The 'carcasse' presented to the audience was once the source of the nation's greatness, of truth, virtue, light and life itself, while the armour, now rusty, was 'wont to giue / Light to the world, and made the nation liue' (VII, 324, ll. 41-42). The suggestion is that, for all its superficial glories, James's court is at its centre dark and lifeless. The restoration James has accomplished is incomplete without Henry,

⁸⁰ Walter Quin, *Sertum Poeticum, in honorem Iacobi sexti* (Edinburgh, 1600), sig. B4v. The Latin is 'Ille tibi ARTVRI sceptrum, cum sede, parabit'. Quoted and translated in Williamson, p. 11.

⁸¹ *For the Honour of Wales* makes much of the anagrammatizing on James's given names, 'Charles James Stuart' which were rearranged to form 'Clames Arthurs Seate' (VII, 509, ll. 372-73). James's projected union of England and Scotland was presented as the counterpart of Arthur's union of England and Wales.

who is the animating, reviving force in this drama. James is associated with restoration in word alone, whereas Henry is represented as the cause of the restoration enacted in deed before the audience at Whitehall, complying with the familiar dialectic between James as a man of words, and Henry as man of action. Merlin even cuts short the Lady's speech in praise of Henry with the demand 'let his actions speake him' (VII, 328, l. 165). Even James's supposed union of England and Scotland, the combination of '*Rose and Thistle*' which re-enacts Arthur's union of England and Wales, and for which James is praised in this, as in other masques, was not realised in fact; thwarted by parliament the Union remained no more than a poetic ideal to which James aspired. Perhaps this is why Morgan Colman's dedication to his book of royal genealogies hailed Henry as the heir 'Of thy great Parents worke, his Vnion, / For that which when thou wert a childe began, / Thou shalt enjoy, and finish when a man'.⁸² James's project of union is seen as depending on Henry for its completion, just as, by stepping onto the masque stage, Henry, like his mother, literalised James's metaphor of the King as actor. Henry was crucial to many other aspects of James's self-fashioning as peacemaker king and father of the country, and one senses that while the father needed the son for his own myth, the son needed the father only as the figure against which to define himself.

The construction of Henry as a source of revitalising light and energy, far from being peculiar to the *Barriers*, was already a widespread motif in dedications to him. Thus Gervase Markham declared in the dedication of *Caularice; or the English*

⁸² Morgan Colman, *The genealogies of King James I and Queen Anne, his wife, from the Conquest* (1608), quoted in Wilson, pp. 64-65.

horseman that ‘it hath pleased God through the glorie of your countenance to give a new life to this Art, which not long agoe was so much neglected’.⁸³ Drayton’s dedication of his *Poly-Olbion* to Henry similarly hoped that ‘The influence of so glorious and fortunate a Starre may also reflect upon me: which hath power to give me new life, or leave me to die more willingly and contented’.⁸⁴ The fiction of the masque concurs in this presentation of Henry as a source of new life, since his appearance in the *Barriers* not only revives the drooping lady, Chevalry, but heralds a new life for Merlin as he rises from the tomb. The series of epiphanies about which the performance is constructed have a quasi-divine aspect, heightened by the fact that, in the source, Merlin’s release is accomplished by the coming of Christ.⁸⁵ The analogy between Henry’s life-giving power and that of Christ is more fully developed in *Oberon*, and is discussed below in relation to that masque. However, in view of the fact that James was frequently troped in the masques as originator and progenitor, in accordance with his role as *parens patriae* and his personation as a ‘little god on earth’, it is clear that, while Henry was fashioning for himself a role antithetical to that of James, some of the strategies used by the King were being appropriated by Henry and his supporters to enhance the power and authority of the Prince.

⁸³ Sigs C2-C2v, quoted in Wilson, p. 61. Wilson cites a similar motif in the dedication of Jacob de Gheyn’s *The exercise of armes*, which describes how the Prince, ‘through the light of his owne proper example, doth so much beautifye and ennoble the practise of Armes’, sig. A2.

⁸⁴ Drayton, *Works*, ed. by J. W. Hebel, IV, iii*.

⁸⁵ This observation is made by Mary Williams, p. 224. Williamson, *Myth*, p. 93 points out that the idea of Henry as a source of life-giving power is at odds with the destructive implications of the conqueror myth.

The same might be said of Henry's determination to stage himself in the masques as the focal point to which all eyes were drawn. While countless dedications claimed that those Henry looked on with favour would be revived or given new life, he was not only the active looker, but was also the focus of the collective gaze. For Daniel Price, one of Henry's chaplains, as for so many others, Henry's '*Magnetique vertue drewe all the eies, and hearts, of the Protestant world*'.⁸⁶ Conscious of his position as the symbolic centre of all lines of sight and indeed of national affection - 'Centre where lines of all hearts loues do meete' - Henry ensured the laws of perspective were used in the *Barriers* to make him the literal centre of attention.⁸⁷

J. W. Williamson notes the pervasiveness in portraits, masque and verse of the construction of Henry as 'a center which defined perimeters; all other things were secondary and took their position and function from their relationship to him'.⁸⁸ He argues that this developed into a 'psychology of perception' among partisan English Protestants, as, from a vantage point skewed by perspective, Catholic Europe dwindled into an insignificant background detail beside the impressive figure of the prince. The effect of the perspective in the *Barriers* was more local, but no less

⁸⁶ Daniel Price, *Prince Henry His First Anniversary* (Oxford, 1613), p. 6. Quoted in Strong, p. 54.

⁸⁷ Francis Davison, *A Poetical Rhapsody, 1602-1621*, ed. by H. E. Rollins, 2 vols (Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press, 1931), I, 305, no. 245, 'To my Lord the Prince', l. 14. Strong, p. 169, notes the use of perspective in the *Barriers* and *Oberon* to 'focus the eye on the central masquer', but his comment that 'there is no evidence in any of the earlier masques that perspective had ever been used in this way', overlooks the precedent established by Queen Anne's staging of herself in *Beauty* and *Queens*. Strong's account displays a typical androcentric bias in assuming that innovation must originate if not with the King, then with the Prince.

⁸⁸ The discussion of Henry as focal point is much indebted to the ideas of Williamson, pp.77-78. The quotation is from p. 78.

significant, and has been overlooked by many commentators. The use of perspective in the masques has traditionally been considered only in relation to the figure of the monarch, who was placed at the point at which the illusion achieved its fullest effect, and was privy to a truth which was inaccessible (or at least only partially accessible) to the rest of the audience, in a self-confirming embodiment of James's own rhetorical trope of the 'mysteries of state'.⁸⁹ Yet in this instance, as in other masques in which members of James's royal family staged themselves, the 'truth' James saw was neither a revelation, nor was it welcome. The laws of perspective combined to remind James that 'the stile of majesty, [...] knowes / No riual, but it selfe', as the flawed mirror of the masque failed to reflect James's own glorious light, presenting instead the son who had been hailed as his 'kingly image' and was now threatening as his rival.

In scenic terms, the transformation from the ruined House of Chivalry to the restored St. George's Portico constituted a movement from one-dimensional picture to three-dimensional architecture which would have further strengthened the formulation of Henry as a man of action, able to give substance to ideals. It is also likely that Henry was exploiting the association of architecture with an imperial vision of the British monarchy. John Peacock's discussion of the masque puts it in the context of a shift from passive nostalgia for antiquity to a desire to reconstruct past glories, and it is surely no coincidence that, a week after the *Barriers*, Inigo

⁸⁹ See the discussion in chapter 1 of this thesis, together with Orgel, *Illusion of Power*, pp. 10-11. On the use of *arcana imperii* as an absolutist trope see Goldberg, *James I*, pp. 68-69.

Jones was made Surveyor to the Prince.⁹⁰ The shift from passive admiration to active reconstruction observed by Peacock is exemplified by Henry's proposal, in July 1612, to rebuild Richmond Palace in the classical style.

Peacock, who has fascinatingly elucidated the stage designs for the *Barriers*, notes that 'the perspective which, in Scene 1, is waveringly implicit, becomes schematically visible in Scene 2, with converging lines traced on the stage floor', an observation which confirms my earlier suggestion that Henry was keen to exploit the potential of perspective to place himself at the focal point of the scene (p. 290). His discussion of the architectural schema of St. George's Portico draws attention to its combination of classical and Gothic features, which, Peacock argues, supports the presentation of Henry as 'a paragon of Christian chivalry, who is also an antique hero' (p. 69).⁹¹ Thus, Henry appears as the heir to both periods of the country's history, an assertion which links back to the combination of medieval and classical elements in van de Passe's engraving.

However, in the world of the masque the scenic elements rarely offer a single meaning, and one of the 'truth[s] of *architecture*' embodied by St. George's Portico

⁹⁰ John Peacock *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 286. Subsequent references to Peacock are given parenthetically in the text. For the relationship between Henry and Jones see Strong, pp. 110-112. Henry's interest in architecture prompted Robert Peake to dedicate *The first booke of architecture*, his translation of Serlio, to the Prince in 1611.

⁹¹ Norman Council also points to the mix of classical and medieval elements in both the ruined House of Chivalry and the restored St. George's Portico, but his interest in the humanist reformation of chivalry leads him to see the classical elements as dominant, pp. 269-270.

is a reference to union (of disparate styles, historical periods, or indeed kingdoms) which, by extension, suggests a policy closer to James's compromise than to Henry's almost fanatical insistence on (religious) purity (VII, 324, l. 53). Peacock describes the design for the Portico as

mixed in type, form and style. It seems a compound of three building types: a triumphal arch (the front), a temple or church (the main body) and a portico (the roofed colonnade beyond) [...]. And in style it extends over a whole spectrum: from late antique or early Christian, through Romanesque to Gothic and Renaissance (p. 70).

The architectural eclecticism of the structure in which Henry sits, subtly undercuts the presentation of Henry as a warrior prince whose single-minded commitment to Protestantism necessarily entails the obliteration of all that is 'other' or different. Further ambiguities arise from the fact that the revelation of Henry seated in the Portico functions at once to focus the eyes of the audience on him, but also to present him as physically contained.⁹²

The competing claims of boundlessness and containment, or in political terms, of an internationalist, expansionist foreign policy as opposed to a policy of non-involvement, are evaluated in the speeches. The message of the speeches is as intentionally ambiguous as the meaning of the stage designs, negotiating a path between the conflicting political agendas of Henry and James. Arthur's speech exhorts Henry as Meliadus to be ambitious, to overleap boundaries in his quest for greatness, but simultaneously reinforces Henry's duty of submission:

⁹² The same is true of the revelation of Anne and her masquers in *Queens* seated in the House of Fame, which, like St George's Portico, draws on a mixture of architectural styles. Anne, like her son, displayed a real interest in building works, and, in 1616 she commissioned Jones to build the Queen's House in Greenwich.

Beyond the paths, and searches of the sunne
 Let him tempt fate; and when a world is wunne,
 Submit it duely to this state, and throne,
 Till time, and utmost stay make that his owne (VII, 325-6, ll. 90-93)

The prizes and '*ghyrlands*' he achieves must adorn not his own person, but his father's throne (VII, 336, l. 426). Presumably, James would prefer Henry not to be so determined to win the trophies of war, but in this construction of James as the feudal lord whom Meliadus 'must only serue', the father and king at least retains the all-important semblance of authority (VII, 334, l. 369). William Alexander in *A paraenesis to the prince* deals with the issue in an identical way: 'thou doest thy fathers forces leade, / And art the hand, while he is the head'.⁹³

The difficulty of pleasing both king and prince reaches its height in the history of Britain's monarchs read by Merlin from the shield.⁹⁴ The antithesis between the two halves of the speech has been widely noted. The first group of kings are praised for their skill in domestic government, exemplified in the promotion of agriculture, trade, and industry, and the consolidation of the nation's defences. The lesson they exemplify - 'That ciuill arts the martiall must precede. / That lawes and trade bring honors in and gayne, / And armes defensiuie a safe peace maintayne' - would undoubtedly have been endorsed by James (VII, 329, ll. 212-214). Conversely, Henry would have been attracted to the procession of warrior princes and kings, whose battles for religion 'That cause that should all warres begin and end', or to

⁹³ Quoted in Wilson, p. 28. Alexander, later Earl of Stirling, was an active exponent of the colonization of the New World, which was one of Henry's projects.

⁹⁴ As Mary Williams points out, the fact that Merlin is needed to interpret the shield, and functions as a poet-prophet figure, suggests that Jonson is advancing himself as a possible guide for the prince in his planned revival of chivalry, p. 222.

(re)claim British territories, are described in fiercely patriotic terms. (VII, 330, l. 230). Comparisons are made between Henry and such warlike exemplars as Edward the Black Prince, Richard the Lionheart and Henry V, who ‘had no more yeeres then you’ or ‘to whom in face you are / So like’(VII, 331, l. 257, ll. 286-7). A more subtle similarity emerges in the description of a benign Providence preserving certain of the kings from assassination attempts: ‘*Fate* her selfe did bid / To saue his [Henry V’s] life’, and Elizabeth is so ‘deare belou’d of heaven’ that the very elements are called to preserve her (VII, 331, ll. 290-91; 332, l. 307). The belief that all kings were divinely appointed was a central tenet of James’s political ideology, but with Henry the sense of his status as the ‘chosen one’ approached a religious fervour. The *Barriers* depict him embarking on his destined path, ‘preserved for his times’, ‘bred [...] to this hower’ (VII, 325, l. 83; 328, l. 156).

Strong summarises this historical section of the *Barriers* as presenting ‘two views of the Prince [...] how the King wished him to be, contrasted with how he wished himself to be’, and he goes as far as to wonder whether the first half of the speech, ‘this feeble parade [...] might not have been an afterthought added to appease the King’.⁹⁵ Such an interpretation, while it has the merit of acknowledging the radically opposed political agenda of James and Henry, is reductive and over-simplistic, failing to do justice to the subtleties of Jonson’s verse. The lists of kings are by no means as antithetical as Strong suggests, since they are not mutually exclusive. The same Edward who, as prince, lets out ‘riuers of the bloud / Of *Infidels*’, becomes the Edward I renowned for domestic legal reform (VII, 330, ll. 239-40). The

⁹⁵ Strong, p. 143.

'peacefulness' of some of the kings in the first part of the list is far from self-evident; for example, Edward I led his father's forces in the baronial wars, while Edward III was involved in the Hundred Years War. The more one probes the history presented in *The Barriers*, the more complications and ambiguities emerge. The gaps in the text's history are as telling as what is actually said, since the murdered Edward II, renowned for his homosexual relationships with his male favourites, is conspicuous by his absence from a list which figures his father and his son.⁹⁶ The presence of Edward II's son and successor in *The Barriers* may also have troubled James, since Edward III had come to the throne at the age of ten, after the murder of his father, raising the spectre of usurpation James so feared. This unwelcome reminder of James's own expendability now that he had a son old enough to rule in his place was reiterated in the closing speech which looks forward to the moment when Henry 'shall relieue / Your [James's] cares in gouernment' (VII, 336, ll. 426-27).

It is notable that the entertainment presents Henry as the heir of the legacy of Elizabeth, who figures in both lists, her military triumph over the Spanish Armada placed in the context of her building up a wall of shipping as a defensive measure. The simplistic identification of Henry only with the aggressive militarism of the

⁹⁶ A speech by Henry Yelverton in the parliament of 1621 caused great offence by linking Edward II's name with King James, suggesting that comparison was too close to home. Yelverton was actually criticising Buckingham's assumption of the royal power to place and displace officials, but by comparing Buckingham to the Despencers, the hated favourites of Edward II, Yelverton cast aspersions on James, who replied, 'To reckon me with such a prince is to esteem me a weak man, and I had rather be no king than such a one as King Edward II', quoted in Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of*

second set of kings overlooks the historical fact that he had already begun to display a keen interest in shipping which, since the Armada had demonstrated, had been seen as crucial to the defence of the realm as well as being associated with more aggressive acts, such as contesting the Spanish domination of the New World. Similarly, the Prince's study of the arts of war extended to a concern for the renewal of the domestic fortifications which had been erected by Henry VIII, one of the 'peaceful' kings.⁹⁷ To claim, as Strong does, that the two parts of Merlin's speech are incompatible is to belie the skill of Jonson, who on this martial occasion does not simply associate James with peace and Henry with war, but attempts to convince the warrior prince of the virtues of a middle way.

Prince of Wales and the theatre of state

Although Henry had long been functioning symbolically as Prince of Wales, he had yet to be invested formally with his principality. In 1609 the Venetian ambassador reported that:

The Prince of Wales, who is now old enough, shows a wish to enter on his estates [...]. The Council, however, have pointed out to the King that it would be greatly to his service that the Prince should leave him the revenues for another two years in order to facilitate the payment of Crown debts. The Prince has been persuaded by the Earl of Salisbury, who took him a jewel worth six thousand crowns.⁹⁸

Buckingham, 1592-1628 (London: Longman, 1981), p. 102. For the conflicts in the 1621 parliament see chapter 5 of the present thesis.

⁹⁷ As early as 1607 he had sent an engineer to France in the train of Prince de Joinville, to study the fortifications at Calais, and from 1612 the Dutch military engineer Abraham van Nyevelt was employed in Henry's household making plans for fortifications. Strong speculates that 'the Prince was aiming at some long term reconstruction of the defences of the realm, the garrison forts built by Henry VIII in 1539-42 which were now hopelessly old-fashioned', pp. 68-69.

⁹⁸ *CSP Ven XI*, 227.

Aside from these financial reasons, James's anxiety about his son's ever-increasing popularity was probably another factor militating against the investiture which would complete Henry's youthful authority, since, in addition to land and revenue, the title brought with it a seat on the Privy Council, and greater involvement in affairs of state.

However, by 1610 the sorry state of the royal coffers forced a shift in policy. Well aware of Henry's popularity, James and Salisbury decided to play his investiture as an emotive card in their negotiations with parliament to increase its subsidy to the King. The impetus for this plan may have originated with Salisbury, who was pursuing the Great Contract, whereby James would surrender certain feudal dues in return for a secured annual income.⁹⁹ Repeatedly in Salisbury's speeches, as well as James's own, Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales was linked to, and made contingent upon, his father's financial well-being. Salisbury insisted that,

as it is an exceeding greate comfote for us to see a king and a prince live together, so it must needs be a greate perell and danger if either of theyme should want meanes sufficient for theyre maintenance. For the branch cannot prosper and florish except the roote be fedd.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Pauline Croft, 'Robert Cecil and the early Jacobean Court', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck, pp. 134-147, especially pp. 141-142 for Cecil's anxieties about the cost of establishing Henry's household and his involvement in Henry's investiture. Interestingly, given Henry's own interest in historical precedents, Cecil engaged in extensive research about the position of Prince of Wales, and resurrected a statute requiring landowners to give feudal aid on the occasion of the knighting of an heir to the throne.

¹⁰⁰ *Parliamentary Debates in 1610*, ed. by S. R. Gardiner (London: Camden Society, 1862), p. 3.

Despite the assertion that James was the root on which all life depended, the reality was that James was becoming increasingly reliant on the popularity of his heir.

This was the uneasy context for Henry's creation. The shadow of increasing royal debt recurred at intervals, often as a disguise for the spectre of James's jealousy. The Venetian ambassador noted that Henry's intention to process to London and to parliament on horseback was smartly vetoed by James, 'the reason is the question of expense or, as some say, because they did not desire to exalt him too high'; the same source later remarks that 'the King has some reasonable jealousy of the rising sun'.¹⁰¹ James's restraining hand is repeatedly in evidence in the spectacles for the creation, attempting to manipulate the public perception of his son, heir, and rival. Not only was the triumphal entry of 31 May reduced to an entry by water, but the City was given only six days in which to prepare, further minimising the potential for pageantry. Roy Strong notes that the published account of the hurriedly penned *Londons Love, to the Royall Prince Henrie*, registers the City Fathers' frustration that 'their zealous forwardnes' was not given the opportunity to appear in a 'more flowing and abundant manner'.¹⁰² King James may have been anxious that Henry would use the civic pageantry associated with his investiture to consolidate the links he had begun to establish with the city on earlier

¹⁰¹ *CSP Ven*, XI, 507; 516.

¹⁰² p. 154. The author of *Londons Love* complains at the outset that 'Your time for preparation was verie short, and mine, for your service, much shorter', sig. A3. For *Londons Love* see Nichols II, 315-323. A general account of the festivals for the investiture is given in David M. Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), pp. 94-96, and the same author's 'Prince Henry and English Civic Pageantry', *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 13 (1968), 109-16.

occasions, such as his admission, in July 1607, to the Merchant Taylors company.¹⁰³ Perhaps this was amongst the reasons why, on the day of the ceremony itself, James decided to travel (by water) with Henry, preventing him appearing as the single focus of the public gaze.

On 30 May, 1610, Henry and a number of his followers rode to Richmond, from where, the next morning they sailed into London. At Chelsea they were met by the Lord Mayor, the aldermen and the companies of the City of London, aboard richly decorated barges. Two actors, riding artificial sea monsters in the likenesses of a whale and a dolphin, represented Corinea the Queen of Cornwall and Amphion, the genius of Wales. The former delivered a speech of welcome, the latter a farewell speech as the barges reached Whitehall. The significance of the creatures, as expounded by Anthony Munday, is that they are sent by Neptune (to be equated with James) as symbols of the titles he is to bestow on Henry. However, the comments prefixed to the published version of the entertainment complicate the construction of James as the source of Henry's new titles, by insisting on the importance of the role to be played by Parliament in the creation of the prince. Munday claims that since the Conquest there have been eleven princes of Wales; the litany includes some by now very familiar figures, not least Edward the Black Prince, Henry V and Henry VIII, all of whom had figured in the *Barriers*. However, the

¹⁰³ Bergeron, 'Prince Henry', discusses the frequency with which Henry figured in civic pageantry during his lifetime and even after his death, noting that Dekker's Lord Mayor's show of October 1612 for the Merchant Taylors alluded to Henry seated in the House of Fame alongside other kings who had been free of the company, p. 113. Henry was invoked in the Lord Mayor's show of 1624, over a decade after his death.

author imposes a moral on the brief histories of Henry's eleven predecessors to the effect that 'those that were created out of Parliament, were Princes of hard and disaster fortune'.¹⁰⁴ While three of the princes created without parliamentary sanction did meet unhappy ends, the reasoning is clearly specious, since the Black Prince, and Prince Arthur, both legitimately created, never lived to come to the throne. Nevertheless, the democratic bent of the argument is evidently to the effect that the investiture of a Prince of Wales, an act which constitutes a recognition of the successor to the throne, should not be carried out without the sanction of the Parliament which represents the people. Henry, of course, was to be invested before both houses of parliament, a fact which, coupled with his gracious appearance in public, promised well, and was a pointed contrast with James's own deeply troubled relationship with parliament and his dislike of crowds. The author of *Londons Love* praises 'the Royall respect and affabilitie of the Prince, not only to my Lord Maior and his Bretheren, but to all the Companies in generall', contrasting with James's reluctance to stage himself for the 'greedy eyes' of the populace.¹⁰⁵ It is not surprising that, deprived for so long of their King as the focal point of their admiring gaze, the public collectively turned their eyes on Henry. James's attempt to mitigate this by travelling with his son to and from the ceremony was too little too late.

¹⁰⁴ *Londons Love*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ *Londons Love*, p. 17. Parallels have been drawn by some critics between James and the Duke in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. James was criticised by foreign ambassadors for his reluctance to appear in public. See the dispatch of Molin, *CSP Ven*, X, 513, quoted in chapter 1.

Henry's investiture, and the creation of the twenty-five Knights of the Bath which preceded, it exemplify the theatricalisation of Jacobean culture.¹⁰⁶ The complex rituals for the Knights of the Bath lasted two days, 2 and 3 June, and entailed not only the ceremonial bath, lined inside and out with white cloth and canopied with red, but the initiates donning 'heremeticall weedes' of grey gowns and hoods. As with the masques, such ceremonies had a quasi-religious dimension which made them a sanitised counterpart to the outlawed rituals of Catholicism. Popery's theatre of religion with its cult of religious images had been transmuted into a theatre of state. It was perhaps this habitual association of ritual and display with Catholicism which underlay the unease of Puritan MPs such as John Noies; in his account of the investiture ceremony Noies describes himself as 'a crowe in the middes of a great manie of golden feathered doves'.¹⁰⁷ Williamson incisively comments that Noies and Puritans like him were Henry's most ardent supporters and 'though they came to watch him invested among the trappings of a court they disliked, they somehow assumed him not really a part of it [...] not realising how thoroughly their conqueror prince was a child of such theater'.¹⁰⁸

Henry's procession into the Parliament House was headed by the new Knights of

¹⁰⁶ The ceremonies of the Order of the Bath were also used by James to make a profit out of the investiture by offering the knighthoods for sale. This resulted in an argument with Henry, who, objecting to his father's sale of honours, crossed one of the candidate's names off the list, as being of 'inferior blood', *CSP Ven*, XI, 516.

¹⁰⁷ *Report on Manuscripts in Various Collections* (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1904), III, 260, quoted in Williamson, p. 68. See also Daniel's account in *The order and solemnitie of the creation of the high and mightie prince Henrie* (London, 1610), to which is appended Daniel's masque *Tethys' Festival*.

¹⁰⁸ Williamson, p. 68.

Bath, followed by a number of the great nobles bearing the requisite 'props' including the purple robes, the sword, the rod, the ring and the coronet. Henry came last and, after three bows before his father, knelt while Salisbury read his letters patent and his titles - Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothsay, Earl of Chester and Baron Renfrew.

The evening after the investiture, 5 June, saw the performance by Queen Anne and her noblewomen of Samuel Daniel's *Tethys' Festival*, commissioned by her to celebrate her son's investiture.¹⁰⁹ The device had Anne as Tethys, Queen of the Ocean, and her women, representing the main rivers of England and Wales, sending congratulations and gifts to James, the Ocean King and his son, Henry, the Prince Meliades. In the first scene, which was enacted before a perspective of 'a port or haven, with bulwarks at the entrance, and the figure of a castle commanding a fortified town', Zephyrus (played by Charles in the role of the messenger of Tethys) presented the Ocean King and Meliades with gifts whose significance was expounded in the speech of the tritons (p. 57, ll. 104-5). After a dance by Charles and a group of young girls representing the naiads, the scene shifted to an underwater cavern where Tethys and her river nymphs were revealed. They processed to a raised mount where they offered sea-flowers 'To deck Apollo's tree / The tree of victory' (p. 62, ll. 317-8). The revels followed, with Queen Anne and her women taking out the lords, but the retiring dance, which usually marked the conclusion of a

¹⁰⁹ A good modern edition of *Tethys' Festival* can be found in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Entertainments 1605-1640*, ed. by David Lindley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 54-65, and page and line references to this edition are given in the text.

masque, was followed by a final scene with Anne, Charles and the other noble masquers restored to their own shapes, and revealed in a 'most pleasant and artificial grove' from whence they processed towards the King (p. 64, l. 407).

For a critic interested, as I am, in familial politics, the most intriguing aspect of *Tethys' Festival* is that all the members of the royal family were involved in it to some degree. The masque was commissioned by Anne who performed alongside Charles as Zephyrus, and Elizabeth as the nymph of the Thames, while the watching James, and Henry, whose investiture the masque celebrated, were also given roles in the fiction. The appearance of Anne and her women in a masque which contains a dance for a number of noble children, including Prince Charles, recalls the 'crowd of cupids' (of whom Henry was one) in the *Masque of Beauty*, and might be linked with the assertion of the maternal role I have traced in Anne's earlier masques. It may be that Anne, conscious that Henry's investiture had moved him beyond her control (he is described in the masque as being of James's blood) was deliberately presenting herself as retaining some influence over her younger children, Elizabeth, who was almost fourteen and Charles, who was ten and was just beginning to move into the public gaze. The presence of a group of young children in this masque functions, as in *Beauty*, to promote the importance of fertility and motherhood, and it is appropriate that in *Tethys' Festival*, as in *Blackness*, Anne and her women are associated with the life-giving element of water and the ocean. The sea-flowers presented at the tree of victory, and even more the 'new flowers, which yet were never known / Unto the Spring, nor blown / Before this time', are symbolic of new

life, the ‘birth’ of ‘new types of State’, namely the creation of Henry as Prince of Wales (p. 57, ll. 135-39).

I want to suggest that the masque does more than simply valorise motherhood; it draws attention to the fact that women were responsible for the formative years of noble children (although the children they reared may not have been their own), and controlled their socialisation. The performance of young children in the masque dances which symbolise their preparation for admission to the court culture is presided over by women. Moreover, in view of Anne’s earlier attempts to gain control over Henry, and her sustained efforts to pursue a Spanish match for him, it seems likely that she would have taken advantage of her performance on this momentous occasion to offer Henry some advice about his forthcoming role as Prince of Wales. Since the masques have often been regarded as embodiments of James’s political writings, including his advice to his son in *Basilikon Doron*, it seems reasonable to address the possibility that Anne’s masque for Henry’s investiture functioned as a dramatic version of the mother’s manual. As Kirsten Poole points out, the manuals, one of the few genres in which it was acceptable for women to write, frequently concealed a political significance, as mothers exploited the genre to offer advice to their adult sons, and even their own husbands.¹¹⁰ In this case, Anne’s suggestions for Henry would have been influenced by her Catholic and pro-Spanish stance, so the recommendations to be peaceful, which masque critics have been quick to see as a reference to James’s pacifism, may equally have

¹¹⁰ Poole, ‘“The fittest closet for all goodness”’: Authorial Strategies of Jacobean Mothers’ Manuals’, *SEL* 35 (1995), 69-88. See chapter 2, p. 56 of this thesis.

originated with her. These sentiments, in line with a policy that (unusually) saw King and Queen united, were, of course, at odds with Henry's own militant Protestant stance with which Daniel himself would have sympathised. Yet, leaving aside the specific political implications, it is clear that, simply by staging a masque for her son's investiture, Anne was striving to consolidate her links with the son who had just taken an important step closer to the throne. The Venetian ambassador confirms that Anne made much of Henry after his creation as Prince of Wales: 'The Queen especially caresses him and tries by every means in her power to secure his good will [...] her object is to secure her fortunes and increase her income in case of accidents'.¹¹¹

The masque deliberately pursues the links, already established in *Londons Love*, between Henry and the beginnings of the Tudor dynasty, by setting the first scene at Milford Haven, a Welsh port, and the place where Henry Tudor landed in 1485. As ever, Henry VII is a convenient figure for the masque writer trying to please both James and Henry. In this case, Daniel exploits the Welsh theme for its appropriateness to the present occasion of Henry's investiture, but, as well as invoking the Tudor myth, he alludes to James's project for the union of Great Britain. Here, as in the *Barriers*, Henry VII's union of the houses of York and Lancaster is invoked as the pattern, on a smaller scale, for James's union of kingdoms: 'the blest conjunction that begat / A greater, and more glorious far than that' (p. 59, ll. 187-88). Yet overshadowing this conventional compliment to James,

¹¹¹ *CSP Ven XI*, 276. The 'accident' against which Anne is said to be safeguarding her future seems to be James's death.

a number of factors conspire to make not James but Henry the successor ‘to that great hero’. Most obviously, Henry shares the name of the founder of the Tudor dynasty, but also, the scene of Milford Haven, ‘the happy Port of Union’, with its ships and fortifications would be associated more readily with Henry and his interests than with James. Moreover, *Tethys’ Festival* confirms the earlier identification of Henry as ‘the typological as well as dynastic successor of Henry VII’ in the water pageant, *Londons Love*.¹¹² We may well see in Henry, Prince of Wales’s journey from Richmond towards London and the throne, an allusion to the arrival of Henry Earl of Richmond in Wales in 1485: ‘Prince Henry was in 1610 re-enacting, or more precisely reformulating, the beginnings of the Tudor dynasty: he was another Henry of Richmond arriving by water to become Prince of Wales’.¹¹³ What John Pitcher fails to note is that the implications of the link were troubling to say the least, since Henry of Richmond had become king only by violent means, invading the country and killing Richard III. The watching King James may have wondered where the similarities between his son and Henry of Richmond would end, since if pursued to its bitter conclusion, the comparison cast James as the usurped and murdered Richard III.

The model of Henry VII, like the litany of kings in *The Barriers*, is not an uncomplicated one; while his courage in fighting for the throne might appeal to the

¹¹² John Pitcher, ‘“In those figures which they seeme”’: Samuel Daniel’s *Tethys’ Festival*’, in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 33-46 (p. 34). Pitcher argues convincingly for the intertextuality of the two entertainments.

¹¹³ Pitcher, p. 34.

warrior prince, his subsequent actions demonstrated a commitment to peace promoted by concession and compromise, a policy closer to James's own. The gifts given to James and Henry provide an occasion to praise such pacifism. James is presented with a trident which makes explicit his identification with Neptune, figured as a golden statue on one side of the proscenium. Henry as Meliades receives first a sword, whose potential for aggression, Roy Strong suggests, is muted by the caveat that it is 'not to be unsheath'd but on just ground' (p. 59, l. 198) - just as he was warned in the *Barriers*, 'He doth but scourge him selfe, his sword that drawes / Without a purse, a counsaile and a cause' (VII, 333, ll. 333-34). Of course, one wonders what, if any, impact such exhortations would have had on a young man surrounded by zealous Puritans who represented Catholicism as demonic, the Pope as an Antichrist, and had invested their hopes in Henry as their champion, fashioning for him the role he readily assumed as God's knight. The sword bestowed on Henry / Meliades by the classical goddess Astraea, (and the shield presented by Arthur in *The Barriers*) are 'divinely-sanctioned' pieces of armour, and as such would no doubt represent to Henry and his followers the armour of God described in Ephesians 6: 12, 14-17:

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the assaults of the devil [...]. Stand therefore, and your loins gird about with verity, and having on the breast plate of righteousness, And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye may quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

Henry presumably believed himself to be as justified in unsheathing his sword against the might of Catholic Spain as Spenser's Red-crosse knight in slaying Error.

The Elizabethan link is a crucial one, and Roy Strong is right to suggest that *Tethys' Festival* draws on the iconography of the famous Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth standing 'on her island kingdom on which the rivers are delineated'.¹¹⁴ While the presentation of Astraea / Elizabeth's sword to the prince would have pleased the old Elizabethan war-party, Henry's second gift, the scarf of love and friendship, has connotations that would have been altogether less agreeable to those who wanted war. 'Enfigur'd' on the scarf is 'all the spacious empery / That he [Henry] is born unto another day', but the adjective 'spacious' is immediately contradicted with assertions of limits and boundaries (p. 58, ll. 202-3). The kingdom to which Henry is heir is described as 'world enough to yield / All works of glory', invoking the tradition of Britain as a fortunate isle, a separate and specially favoured world (p. 58, ll. 204-5).¹¹⁵ This implication of Britain's insularity from the rest of the world was a state of affairs James's policy of non-involvement was attempting to maintain, while his son anticipated war with Catholic Europe and was promoting the exploration of the New World. The scarf conveys its political message through the recurring figure of a circle. Firstly it 'engird[s]' the sword like another sheath; then, simply by representing the kingdoms Henry will inherit, it limits Britain's empire to what is pictured; and finally, taking on the magical properties of a fairy circle, the scarf encloses Britain, and the verse assumes the tone of an incantation: 'Let him not pass the circle of that field / But think Alcides pillars are the knot'

¹¹⁴ Strong, p. 156.

¹¹⁵ The motif is discussed in relation to *The Fortunate Isles and their Union* in chapter 5. See also J. W. Bennett, 'Britain Among the Fortunate Isles', *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956), 114-40.

(p. 59, ll. 206-7). Since Henry's future kingdom is specially favoured by a bountiful ocean goddess, there is no need for him to venture into the world beyond, 'For Nereus will by industry unfold / A chemic secret, and turn fish to gold' (p. 59, ll. 212-3). One can only wonder what Henry made of such a mundane recommendation to abandon his ambitious projects for expansion and colonisation, and be contented peacefully fishing his home waters!

In fact, recent years had seen a resurgence of the colonization projects that had been begun by Raleigh during Elizabeth's reign. An expedition arrived in Virginia in April 1607, and in the following month Jamestown was founded. Yet it was not James but Henry who became the figurehead of the Virginia Company into which he had invested part of his own revenue, 'so that he may, some day, when he comes to the crown, have a claim of the Colony'.¹¹⁶ The Prince's reputation flourished in the colonies with the foundation in mid 1611, of Henrico, and plans for Henrico College where savages would be converted to the true religion. The enterprise appealed to Henry as an expansion of the Empire of Great Britain in geographical, political and religious terms. 'Primarily a commercial undertaking which piously claimed the salvation of souls as a valuable by-product of trade', the Virginia enterprise lent another dimension to Henry as the exemplar of Protestant chivalry, engaging with the devil not only in Catholic Europe but further afield.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ *CSP Ven*, XI, 237.

¹¹⁷ Williamson, p. 54. Henry's involvement with the colonial project is discussed in Strong, pp. 61-62. Dedications intended to appeal to Henry's interest in colonial expansion included Pierre Erondelle's *Nova Francia* (1609), cited by Wilson, p. 71 and Williamson, p. 52. Edmund Wright's *Certaine errors in navigation* (1610) described the advances in navigation which made the new wave of colonisation and

Henry Peacham had predicted that Henry would be a new Alexander, and claimed that ‘thy Britaine scarcely shall thy courage hold’, but to a number of writers Henry’s insatiable ambition was beginning to seem more of a liability than an asset. *Tethys’ Festival* can be seen in the light of an attempt to mitigate the prince’s warrior role by insisting on the need for containment and moderation. In addition to the masque, Daniel dedicated his tragedy of *Philotas* to Henry. The play related the story of a rebellion against Alexander, and in a thinly-disguised reworking of the events of the Essex rebellion against Elizabeth warned Henry of the dangers of ambition.¹¹⁸ While Daniel’s masque negotiated between Henry’s militant and expansionist goals and James’s pacifism, the play registers the tensions inherent within Henry’s self-presentation which simultaneously asserted that he was the heir to the legacy of Elizabeth, the Fairy Queen, but also invoked Essex’s language of chivalric honour and aristocratic opposition to the crown.

The Fairy Prince and the Elizabethan legacy

Oberon, the Fairy Prince was the last of the entertainments commissioned and performed by Henry himself. Staged on 1 January 1611, it can be regarded as the culmination of the year-long festivities for Henry’s investiture, and one of its prime concerns is what it means to be a prince, a monarch-in-waiting, treating such

evangelisation possible; see Wilson, p. 90 and Williamson, p. 52.

¹¹⁸ *Daniel*, ed. by Alexander B. Grosart, III, 99. Daniel also wrote an answer to the *Arguments for War* that had been presented to Henry, as did Robert Cotton who warned Henry against ‘enthraling’ his mind ‘with ambitious desires of extending territories’ or being one of those ‘exorbitant spirits who turn the edge of their own sufficiency upon whatsoever they can devour in their ambitious apprehensions, seeking rather a great than a good fame’, quoted in Williamson, p. 80.

domestic affairs as the Prince's household at St. James's and its relationship with the King's court. The masque's project of mediating between King and Prince, and between the Elizabethan past, the Jacobean present and the Henrician future, is indicated from the outset by the curtain, which was painted with the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. The map, like the personifications of British rivers in *Tethys' Festival*, and like Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, evokes a sense of the extent, wealth and fertility of the realm over which Henry will one day rule. The depiction of the kingdoms alludes to James's pursuit of a unified Britain to which Henry will be heir, while the unmistakably Elizabethan matter and tone of the ensuing masque, which recreates a Spenserian world of faery, insists that Henry is heir not just to James but to the Fairy Queen herself.

The opening scene is '*all obscure, & nothing perceiu'd but a dark Rocke, with trees beyond it*' (VII, 341, ll. 1-2). This wild world is peopled by satyrs whose Bacchanalian indulgence in drink and lustfulness is presided over by the moon, here representing inconstancy, change and the transience of earthly pleasures. However, with the instruction of their 'tutor' Silenus the satyrs's expectation is directed towards a more worthy event, namely 'the shining rites / Of the *Fayrie* Prince, and Knights' (VII, 343, ll. 51-52). This comment is doubly significant, functioning both within the fictional world, where the satyrs await the coming in glory of Oberon, and speaking in a direct way to the audience at Whitehall who are similarly anticipating Prince Henry's entry.

The implicit alignment of the two 'audiences' of the ensuing spectacle, the satyrs on-stage and the King, Queen, ambassadors and courtiers off-stage, is an idea I will

be pursuing later. For the moment, I want to give further consideration to the function of the satyrs as antimasque. As Stephen Orgel has rightly noted, *Oberon* represents a significant evolution in Jonson's use of the antimasque.¹¹⁹ The relationship between the two parts, antimasque and masque, is no longer one of irreconcilable opposition, but one of evolution and progress. The energies of the satyrs do not need to be banished, but with Silenus as their guide, they are educated into redirecting those energies away from the inconstant moon and towards the divine light exuded by Oberon and his palace. Thus we move from the dark wild world of the antimasque to the light, harmonious world of the masque 'not through a momentary confrontation but through the gradual ordering of chaos, a creative act'.¹²⁰

The satyrs' first movement towards the service of Oberon is rewarded by a vision of the exterior of his palace, the architecture of which, progressing 'from foundations of primitive roughness to the heights of civilised delicacy paraphrases the action of the masque from the natural to the civilised'.¹²¹ John Peacock elucidates the ascent in more specific terms as a progression from rustic Tuscan to Doric to the neo-Platonic ideal of the dome, and explains the particular appropriateness of the Doric order to Prince Henry, since its association with soldierly figures such as St. George provides a visual reminder of Henry's ideal of Christian - or rather Protestant - chivalry. Yet the aggression of Henry's usual self-presentation as the militant

¹¹⁹ Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque*; *Oberon* is discussed on pp. 82-91.

¹²⁰ Orgel, p. 84.

¹²¹ Peacock, *Stage Designs*, pp. 77-78.

champion of Protestantism is mitigated in this masque which banishes confrontation in favour of an educative process which necessitates tolerance. The satyrs do not have to be banished or destroyed; they can be given the opportunity to convert.

The religious overtones of the masque have hitherto received scant attention, but, while the allusions are non-specific their cumulative effect is unmistakable.

Oberon's arrival has long been prophesied by Silenus, and when he comes his deeds will exceed all that can be anticipated, just as he will deserve more service than the satyrs can offer: 'Hee'le deserue / All you can, and more, my boyes' (VII, 344, ll. 81-82). The gates of his kingdom are guarded by sylvans, whose sleep recalls that of the apostles in the Garden of Gethsemane, or the unready servants in the parable. Yet although they sleep the sylvans keep 'guard enough', because Oberon's kingdom is not of this world, and as such is invulnerable to any threat the satyrs might pose. Most importantly, Oberon's palace is peopled with virtuous knights 'Once, the noblest of the earth, / Quick'ned by a second birth', who enjoy a reward which far exceeds the satyrs' expectations, namely, eternal life (VII, 347, ll. 146-147). The opening of the palace is nothing less than a vision of divine transcendence, portrayed with lights and music. The effect approximates the apocalyptic vision of the new Jerusalem exploited in Protestant texts:

Having all the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; [...] And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. [...] And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof (Revelation 21: 11; 18; 23).

For Henry-as-Oberon's coming to assume the proportions of the coming of the kingdom might seem more than a little blasphemous to modern sensibilities, but it

was entirely in keeping with the ideology of Divine Right in which Henry had been instructed by his father, and which appears in Silenus' eulogy of James, who is described as 'a god, o're kings; yet stoupes he then / Neerest a man, when he doth gouerne men' (VII, 353, ll. 344-345). Ironically, the left-wing religious forces which had seized on Henry as their champion, advocated the rights of parliament over monarchical prerogative. However, their mythologizing of the Prince as 'a celestial light, an intimation of divinity, a revelation of God's promise for a new heaven and a new earth' had, if anything, heightened Henry's sense of his power and privileges, creating a future ruler who, having assumed the mantle of omnipotence, would have proved just as unwilling as his father to subject himself to parliament.¹²²

Another dimension of James's Divine Right ideology concerned the mystification of the royal prerogative, and he warned parliament against encroaching 'upon the Prerogative of the Crowne. If there fall out a question that concerns my Prerogative or mystery of State deale not with it'.¹²³ In an incisive discussion of the motif of state secrets, Jonathan Goldberg has highlighted the masque's adoption of the

¹²² Williamson, pp. 77ff. The clash between Henry and the Puritan members of the Commons who had been amongst his most ardent supporters was, of course, forestalled by his death. Nonetheless, an acknowledgement of the fact that, if Henry had become king, he may well have proved to be a more staunch, and more unpopular absolutist than his father, is a useful counterbalance to the idealising tendency of many studies of Henry, which perpetuate the unrealistic assumption that, if Henry had survived, Britain would have been assured a more 'glorious' future. On the contrary, if Henry had become king his reign would almost certainly have been characterised by conflicts between himself and parliament at least as serious as those that plagued Charles; moreover, Henry would in all likelihood have embroiled the country in bloody European wars.

¹²³ *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 332.

language of abstruse and removed mysteries.¹²⁴ Yet in *Oberon* there is a strong sense of penetrating those mysteries, as the action moves inward toward the source of the masque, Prince Henry. The spectator's gaze is drawn successively deeper by the use of the *scena ductilis* (flats in grooves), and the staging allows the audience to move successively closer to the inner sanctum of Henry's, not James's, royal power. On the first set of flats are painted rocks which part to reveal the facade of the palace; when this opens in its turn it reveals a perspective scene, at the focal point of which Henry and the masquers are seated. As in *Barriers*, the sense of depth afforded by the perspective is heightened by the flatness of the preceding scenes.

Henry had, on occasions, challenged his father's royal prerogative by invading the mystical sphere of state secrets. Bishop Goodman describes how the Prince 'did sometimes pry into the King's actions and a little dislike them', and, in a clear infringement of the bounds of *arcana imperii*, Henry once sent his friend, John Harington, 'certaine matters of ancient sorte, which I gained by searche in a musty vellome booke in my fathers closet'.¹²⁵ Such encroachments upon the royal prerogative are embodied in the masque, in which Henry draws the audience in to the centre of royal power, at which he locates a thoroughly mystified version of himself, exploiting his father's rhetoric of mysteries of state for his own self-aggrandisement.

The action then flows outward as Henry / Oberon processes forward in a chariot drawn by bears. This is the type of triumphal entry, imperial in style, that Henry

¹²⁴ Goldberg, *James I*, pp. 55-65.

¹²⁵ Godfrey Goodman, *The Court of King James the First*, ed. by J. S. Brewer, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), I, 250-51, and Harington, *Nugae Antiquae* II, 305.

had been denied at his investiture the previous year, and which the Prince may have remembered from his mother's *Masque of Queens*. For Stephen Orgel, this moment and the ensuing revels constitute the high-point of the masque, the point at which 'the fiction opened outward to include the whole court, as masquers descended from the pageant car or stage and took partners from the audience'.¹²⁶ My reading is very different, and arises out of the earlier identification of the Whitehall audience with the on-stage audience of satyrs. I want to suggest that Oberon's heavenly palace had, for the Whitehall audience, a clear earthly correlative in Henry's court at St. James's Palace. From its very beginnings Henry made it clear that his would be a godly court, 'the antechamber (as it were) to God's heavenly throneroom, for was he not as a divinely anointed prince a mirror of God's will?'.¹²⁷ The members of Henry's household were men of action, required to be skilled 'in some activity, as wrestling, tossing the pike, shooting or suchlike', and his court was to be a meritocracy, eschewing the practices of favouritism and bribery which pervaded James's court: 'he will have his officers choose his servants without partiality or bribes [...] and those places of the guard shall not be trafficked or sold'.¹²⁸ Discipline was rigidly enforced, above all in religious matters:

especial notice shall be taken by the yoemen of the vestry of those, that shall omit, or at any time fail (being in the house) to repair to divine service, and to the sermons, that there shall be preached, to the end, that due animadversion may be

¹²⁶ Orgel, *Illusion*, p. 39.

¹²⁷ Williamson, *Myth*, p. 123.

¹²⁸ G. B. Harrison, *A Second Jacobean Journal, being a record of those things most talked of during the years 1607-1610* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958) from the entry for 16 October 1610, p. 229.

used to such defaulters.¹²⁹

Oberon's palace represents an ideal specifically embodied at St. James's, rather than by the court in general terms. In fact, the courtiers at Whitehall had more cause to identify themselves with the satyrs. Beyond the basic similarity that both the satyrs and the Whitehall court are audiences of the Prince's 'shining rites', the drunken and lustful conduct of the satyrs held a mirror up to the life of the court. Before the climactic opening of Oberon's palace, the satyrs enact what Orgel describes as a 'brilliant parody of two central masque conventions, the masquer's invitation to his lady and the final dance'.¹³⁰ The satyrs's song to their mistress, the moon, inverts moral values; it is 'wise, and free' to indulge in sexual pleasures, and the satyrs's (sexual) acts are 'endew'd / With [...] vertue' (VII, 351, l. 275; ll. 279-80). The mock revels are full of frenetic energy, lustfulness and drunken debauchery; but before we dismiss this as an antithesis to the order of the court, it is worth recalling that on at least one infamous occasion, masques did degenerate into such chaos:

Now did appear in rich dress, Hope, Faith and Charity: Hope did assay to speak, but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew [...] Faith [...] left the court in a staggering condition: Charity [...] returned to Hope and Faith who were both sick and spewing in the lower hall. [...] Now did Peace make entry, and strive to get foremoste to the King; but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants; and much contrary to her semblance, most rudely made war with her olive branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Birch, p. 443.

¹³⁰ Orgel, *Jonsonian*, p. 86.

¹³¹ John Harington, *Nugae Antiquae*, I, 133-36, from a letter to Mr. Sceretary Barlow.

Harington's account of the drunken representation of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba before James and King Christian of Denmark, in 1606 exemplifies the extent to which the court often transformed masques into impromptu antimasques, an inversion mimicked by the satyrs's appropriation and perversion of masque conventions. To the debauched court at Whitehall, Henry presents himself and his court as an ideal, and moreover as an ideal to which the courtiers can have access if they, like the satyrs, convert to the path of righteousness and abstemiousness. The motif of conversion finds a more specifically religious correlative in Henry's programme of colonial expansion which had an evangelical dimension. However, it was Henry's desire that the 'savages' be converted not simply to Christianity but to the Reformed religion, and at home he pursued a programme of persecution rather than toleration towards Catholics, exemplified by his sending John Holles to raid the home of the Catholic Countess of Shrewsbury in 1611.¹³²

While Henry's masque insists on the prince's difference from his father, it does so by appropriating James's rhetoric of Divine Right and *arcana imperii*, to mystify his own body and court, which he then offers to the audience as a preferable alternative to his father's. Of course, such criticism remains implicit, and at the moment of Henry's mystical apotheosis, the verse turns to James who is praised as an authority superior to Oberon. The masque, in a series of manoeuvres nothing short of acrobatic, now declares itself to be Oberon's 'homage to the *British* court, / And ceremony, due to Artvr's chair' (VII, 352, ll. 322-323). Silenus's eulogy attempts to construct James as 'the matter of vertue[...] / [...] a kin to heauen', the

¹³² Strong, p. 53.

source of light and life, and of course a 'god, o'er kings'(VII, 353, l. 341, 343, 344). But these are only words, which lack the force to compete with the vision of Henry, who, as Oberon, embodies and literalises all these qualities. Moreover, the verse is complicated by the spectacle; for the actors who speak the lines, looking out from the stage towards James and his court, they may have had a limited validity, but for the audience mesmerised by the lights of Oberon's fairy palace, the greater light would have been not James but Henry.

The verse attempts to restore the proper hierarchy of father over son, king over prince, but in the world of the masque, as in reality, actions speak louder than words. Henry's incursion into the hall would therefore have been a troubling experience for James, enacting before the whole court Henry's active pursuit of power, and demonstrating the omnipresent threat of usurpation. Ever-conscious of the threat posed to him by the popularity of his charismatic son, James might have interpreted the penetration of the masquing hall by Henry and his companions as a threat to his kingly prerogative. James sent word about midnight that 'they should make an end'; the jealousy of the sun conventionally referred to in masques being literalised here in James's expedient weariness. James's 'kingly image', his son, had inserted himself into the mirror of the masque, where James no longer found his own reflection, but was confronted with the rival twin, the doppelganger who would engineer his decline.

The spectre of usurpation could only be allayed by Henry's death, which occurred almost two years later; and even then, John Holles in his tribute to the Prince felt it

was necessary to clear him from the imputation that he had intended to seize power from James.¹³³ Henry's death on 6 November 1612 at the age of eighteen threw the country into a paroxysm of grief, which was expressed in innumerable elegies.¹³⁴

Many of these literary outpourings had a theatrical dimension, as if in acknowledgement of the fact that the power of Henry's myth lay in its theatricality.

George Chapman made Fever a character in his *Epicede*, while Death similarly

figured in Peacham's *Period of Mourning*, and Wither offered a 'Supposed

Interlocution between the spirit of Prince Henry and Great Britaine' in his *Prince*

Henries Obsequies.¹³⁵ The tendency is epitomised in Heywood's elegy:

This Vniuerse imagine a Theater
 Nations spectators, and this land a stage.
 Was euer Actor, made by the Creator,
 That better scean'd his part vnto his Age?
 'Mongst all compos'd of fire, aire, earth and water,
 So grauely yong, and so vnmellowed sage:
 Whose Trunke the Tombe exacts, as of a detter,
 Subiect or Prince, none euer acted better.¹³⁶

¹³³ Quoted in Strong, p. 9.

¹³⁴ The national hysteria precipitated by Henry's death was difficult to imagine, until the sudden death of Diana, Princess of Wales provided a modern day parallel. The fact that both died unexpectedly, and at a young age, meant that the sorrow of the nation was heightened by the sense of the loss of unfulfilled promise, which in both cases prompted the tendency to transform the deceased into an icon of saintliness. Interestingly, Queen Anne believed that Henry had been poisoned, and Mohammed Al Fayed similarly subscribes to a conspiracy theory surrounding the crash that killed his son and Diana.

¹³⁵ See Williamson, p. 184. For these and other elegies see John Philip Edmond, 'Elegies and Other Tracts Issued on the Death of Henry, Prince of Wales, 1612', *Publications of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society* VI (1906), 141-158, and Ruth Wallerstein, *Studies in Seventeenth Century Poetic* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1950), pp. 59-96.

¹³⁶ From Thomas Heywood's elegy for Henry, quoted by Williamson, p. 182.

Henry had been a charismatic performer, and the nation had sat back to watch him stage himself. With the princely actor gone from the stage of life, attention turned to his siblings, and most immediately to Princess Elizabeth, who, with her husband-to-be, became the focus of the national affection, filling the emotional and patriotic vacuum left by Henry's death, and specifically, becoming the new hope for Protestant militarism in Britain and beyond.

Chapter four: Wedding Masques: Family and Nation, Union and Division

Marriage and the dynastic game

The death of Prince Henry, who had been the embodiment of England's future hopes, was a devastating blow to the nation, and for a time the members of the royal family were prostrate with grief:

The King received the news of the Prince's death at Theobalds; it affected him greatly and made of the happiest the saddest father in the world. [...] The Queen's life has been in the greatest danger owing to her grief. She will receive no visits nor allow anyone in her room, from which she does not stir, nor does she cease crying. The Princess has gone without food and cries incessantly. [...] The Duke of York [...] shows a grief beyond his years.¹

Politically, however, Henry's death was of less importance than it would have been if he had been James's only son. As it was, the interchangeability of one heir for another was demonstrated when, only a month after Henry's death, James wrote to his ambassador in France instructing him to pursue marriage negotiations between Charles and Princess Christine, the second daughter of Marie de Medici, who had been one of the potential brides for Henry.²

James also had a more imminent marriage with which to concern himself, namely that of his daughter, Elizabeth, to Frederick, the Elector Palatine of Germany.

Taking place a matter of months after Henry's sudden death, the pomp and splendour of the royal wedding looks to modern eyes like a well-planned public relations exercise, but, if this exemplifies James's habitual strategy of rewriting tragedy as romantic fiction, it was a narrative with which the rest of the nation were only too willing to collude, finding in Elizabeth and her husband-to-be an alternative

¹ *CSP Ven XII*, 449.

² *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 329.

focus for their disappointed hopes. Many of the poetic tributes expressing joy at the marriage of Elizabeth and Frederick are permeated by a sense of tragic loss. Henry Peacham's *Nuptiall Hymnes*, which was appended to his elegy for Henry, *The Period of Mourning*, alludes to Henry's death as 'the late Eclipse' and goes on to describe how

Heauen, the first, hath throwne away
Her weary weede of mourning hew,
And waites *Eliza's* Wedding-day
In Starry-spangled Gowne of blew.³

This chapter examines the familial politics of marriage through the masques and entertainments performed not only at the wedding of Princess Elizabeth, but at the two weddings of Frances Howard (to the Earl of Essex, in January 1606 and to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, in December 1613). King James's use of marriage as a rhetorical trope to represent his own relationship with the country and the planned union of the kingdoms of Scotland and England, has already been touched on in the discussion of Queen Anne's masques in chapter 2 of this thesis, where I argue that Anne used her masques to engage disruptively with James's construction of himself as the husband to the nation. However, James's use of marriage extended beyond the purely rhetorical and into the sphere of action. Marriage was a potent political tool, and James organised the marriages not only of his children, but of some of his leading courtiers and male favourites to enhance his self-styled role as *rex pacificus*, the peacemaker King, both at home and abroad. Yet as the previous chapters have

³ Henry Peacham, *The Period of Mourning. Disposed into Sixe Visions. In Memorie of the Late Prince Together With Nuptiall Hymnes in Honour of this Happy Marriage betweene the Great Princes Frederick, Count Palatine of the Rhene, and the Most Excellent, and Aboundant President of all Virtue and Goodnes, Elizabeth* (London, 1613). I quote from the version reprinted in *Literary Museum, or a selection of scarce old tracts*, ed. by Francis Godolphin Waldron (London, 1792), p. 31.

shown, James's desire for peace and union was rarely translated into reality, and ironically, the marriage of Elizabeth, part of James's scheme of programmatic pacifism, would embroil the nation in European wars. This collapse of peace into militarism was anticipated in some of the wedding masques (notably George Chapman's *Memorable Masque*) which bore the traces of the dead Prince Henry's militant Protestantism, an agenda antithetical to the aims of the King.

The discussion of the masques for the royal wedding of 1613 is supplemented by an analysis of the masques for the Somerset wedding which took place in December of the same year, and warrants inclusion because it demonstrates the extent to which James's familial rhetoric extended to his male favourites. The favourite in question was Robert Carr, and the bride, Frances Howard, had been married once before. The story steps back to the occasion of her first marriage to the Earl of Essex, which was celebrated with Jonson's *Hymenaei*. The masque offered an eloquent meditation on the theme of union, specifically between England and Scotland. However, the couple's subsequent divorce threatened, if not to undermine the political metaphors, then at least to destabilise any simple equation between marriage and union, with the result that the masques for Frances Howard's second marriage to Robert Carr, are more concerned with division - between different factions at court, or between James's kingdoms of England and Ireland - than with unity. The common theme which emerges in my discussion of these marriages and their masques is a recognition of the extent to which projected unity was all too often undercut by deep-seated division, whether in the immediate context of the court, or in the wider arena of European politics.

The process of procuring matches for one's children was a crucial aspect of what Neil Cuddy describes as the 'dynastic game', through which parents secured

politically desirable links and financial gain, as well as ensuring the continuation of their line.⁴ While Queen Elizabeth had exploited her own availability on the marriage market as a political tool, this strategy was predicated on her continued virginity and childlessness. The result is illustrated in an allegorical depiction of the Tudor succession by Lucas de Heere (c. 1572).⁵ Although she was the reigning monarch, Elizabeth does not occupy a central position in the composition, which is dominated by Henry VIII. The lineage of the childless Queen can only extend backwards; her legitimacy and authority are derived from her father. This is in sharp contrast to James's strategy in the 'dynastic game', since the presence of marriageable children not only ensured the continuation of the Stuart dynasty, but was a vital political tool in his dealings with the rest of Europe. The engravings of the Stuart royal family by Willem van de Passe provide a visual representation of James in his central role of paterfamilias, the source of his children's lives, and the presiding genius behind their marriages.⁶ The discussion which follows relates James's role in arranging the marriages of his children to the trope of the King as progenitor / father-figure, and the metaphor of union, as these appear in the masques. However, just as James's projects for peace and union frequently collapsed into war, the ideology of the family united in harmonious submission to the word of the father, captured in van de Passe's engravings, belied the reality of division between husband and wife, and of rivalry between father and son, which

⁴ Neil Cuddy, 'Dynasty and Display: Politics and Painting in England, 1530-1630', in *Dynasties: Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, ed. by Karen Hearn (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), pp. 11-20 (p. 11).

⁵ Reproduced and discussed in *Dynasties*, ed. by Karen Hearn, pp. 81-82.

⁶ The van de Passe engravings are reproduced in Goldberg, *James I*, pp. 90-94.

has been outlined in the preceding chapters, and which continued to surface disruptively in the wedding masques.

A Second Elizabeth: Princess Elizabeth and the Elizabethan Golden Age

Elizabeth spent the early years of her father's reign (1603-08) in the care of Lord and Lady Harington of Exton (the parents of Lucy Countess of Bedford) at Combe Abbey in Warwickshire.⁷ A portrait by Robert Peake depicts the small figure of the seven or eight-year-old princess in an outdoor setting. In the background on the left are two ladies (probably of the Harington family) and on the right are two male figures engaged in the chase. Karen Hearn suggests that this portrait was commissioned by the Haringtons to mark the beginning of their official charge of the princess, and it may have been a pendent portrait to that of Prince Henry and John Harington, then embarking on a lifelong friendship.⁸

Lord and Lady Harington devoted themselves to the princess' upbringing, and in many ways her education followed the programme the King had outlined for his son in *Basilikon Doron*. Although she did not learn Latin or Greek (possibly because of James's opposition to classical studies for women), she appears to have been proficient in French and Italian, displaying an aptitude for languages which was further in evidence when she mastered German and Dutch following her wedding.

⁷ For biographical information see Carola M. A. Oman [after Lenanton], *Elizabeth of Bohemia* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938; rev. edn, 1964) and Alison Plowden, *The Stuart Princesses* (Gloucestershire: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1996)

⁸ The portraits are reproduced and discussed in *Dynasties*, ed. by Karen Hearn, pp. 185-88. The significance of the fact that Elizabeth was brought up by the parents of Queen Anne's leading courtier has already been noted in chapter 2, where I suggest that Anne's attachment to Lucy Countess of Bedford and the links of both Prince Henry and Princess Elizabeth with the Harington family, might be seen in the context of the Queen's attempts to retain some degree of influence over her children.

She also wrote poetry, fulfilling another of James's recommendations for the education of a prince. Her thirty-three quatrains on the *De Contemptu Mundi* theme are unusual for their use of a repetitive rhyme scheme, and the editors of *Kissing the Rod* hypothesise that Princess Elizabeth seems to be challenging King James's advice to Prince Henry that 'if yee write in verse, remember that it is not the principall part of a Poeme to rime right'.⁹

A number of the princess' letters survive from this period, and her correspondence with Henry, which frequently expresses her sadness at their separation, is a testament to the strong mutual bond which linked brother and sister.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, when Elizabeth was resident at court (from 1608 onwards) she became increasingly associated with Henry's internationalist Protestant values. In 1610 her presence is alluded to in *Prince Henry's Barriers* (discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis), which, having set Henry in a warrior line descending from Arthur, concluded by aligning his sister with similar values:

[T]hat most princely *Mayd*, whose forme might call
The world to warre, and make it hazard all
His valure for her beautie, she shall bee
Mother of *nations*, and her Princes see
Riuals almost to these (VII, 336, ll. 431-35).¹¹

Elizabeth was indeed to have a prodigious progeny, and the generativity of her womb would repeatedly be appropriated in this way by Protestant propaganda.

However, the first part of the prophecy was to prove false, since when Elizabeth as

⁹ *Kissing the Rod: An Anthology of Seventeenth-Century Women's Verse*, ed. by Germaine Greer and others (London: Virago, 1988), p. 39. James's advice to Henry comes from the *Basilikon Doron* in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 48.

¹⁰ See Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 106-7 and 111-12 for Elizabeth's relationship with Henry.

¹¹ Barbara Lewalski makes the same observation, *Writing Women*, p. 49.

the beleaguered and exiled Queen of Bohemia 'call[ed] / The world to warre', her appeal was largely ignored.

The widespread nostalgia for an Elizabethan golden age which focused on Henry also extended to Elizabeth, whose name inevitably prompted comparisons with her illustrious predecessor. Thomas Ross's Latin panegyric on James and his family is one of many examples of Elizabeth being represented as Elizabeth Rediviva, and claimed, 'whatever was excellent or lofty in Queen Elizabeth, is all compressed in the tender age of this virgin princess'.¹² Yet while Elizabeth was politically aligned with her older brother, she was also overshadowed by him. The fact that she was female reduced her political importance by placing her behind both Henry and Charles in the line of succession. Her role as a royal princess was to make a dynastic marriage which would serve her father's political ends, and the years 1610-1612 saw various potential matches for both Henry and Elizabeth rise and fall in their prospects. Interestingly, while Henry was surprisingly compliant with his father's plans for his own marriage (at his death he was destined to marry Maria, the third daughter of the Catholic Duke of Savoy), he played a more active role in negotiations for his sister's marriage.¹³ The suit of the recently widowed King Philip of Spain, which was supported by Queen Anne, was vehemently denounced by Henry on religious grounds, while the suit of Frederick, head of the Protestant union of German states, met with Henry's approval, and succeeded despite the opposition of the Queen. The value of a royal princess (albeit only third in line to the throne) on the marriage-market was not to be underestimated, since, as the

¹² Ross, *Idae Sive de Jacobi* (London, 1608), p. 323, quoted by Bergeron, p. 111.

¹³ Some sources suggested that Henry's co-operation was designed to appease his father and conceal his plan of accompanying Elizabeth to Europe to find a Protestant bride for himself.

Venetian ambassador Foscarini noted, 'the Princess is eligible for the succession to these realms if her two brothers died childless'; when Henry died in November 1612, only one sickly life stood between Elizabeth and the English throne.¹⁴

The Staging of a Marriage

The first ceremony associated with the wedding took place on 27 December 1612 when, in the words of Chamberlain, 'Frederick Count Palatine and Elector was affianced and contracted in the Banqueting House att Whitehall in the presence of the King sitting in state'.¹⁵ This betrothal consisted of the 'contractors' exchanging the vows from the Book of Common Prayer. Although 'contract' in sixteenth and seventeenth-century usage frequently denoted an engagement followed by marriage (*OED3*), the sense of a legal or business agreement was also current, and when the wedding being contracted was of such political significance the latter sense must have informed the former. The personal dimension of the contract between the two individuals was far less significant than the alliance it effected between dynasties and Protestant nations. The sense of a 'contract' or business agreement also informed the treaty drawn up prior to the marriage which (rather like a modern-day prenuptial agreement) stipulated the sums to be settled on Elizabeth, in case of various situations (Nichols, II, 623-24).¹⁶ One of the conditions is that 'should there

¹⁴ *CSP Ven XII*, 405-6.

¹⁵ The letter, dated 27 December, 1612 appears in Nichols, II, 513. Subsequent references to Nichols are given in the text. An account of the betrothal appears in Alison Plowden, p. 23.

¹⁶ The contract stipulates that in the event of Frederick's death, Elizabeth should be free to reside in England and receive an annual sum of £10 000. Ironically, after the outbreak of the Thirty Years War James refused to allow either Elizabeth or her children to return to England, fearing they would become a focus for militant Protestant sentiments, as Henry had been before them.

be children, none should be married without the advice and consent of the King of Great Britain, his heirs, and successors', demonstrating James's desire not only to retain some degree of control over his blood line, but also to protect the position of himself and his heirs on the throne (Nichols, II, 623).¹⁷ James's anxiety about the regulation of his future grandchildren may have been compounded by the fact that tracts like Peacham's *Nuptiall Hymnes* looked forward to the birth of Elizabeth's first child less as a continuation of James's line than as a replacement for Henry, another warrior prince who would take up the fight against Catholic Europe: 'That one day we might live to see / A Frederick Henry on her knee'.¹⁸

The betrothal ceremony, in common with the ensuing celebrations, demonstrates the theatricalization of Jacobean court culture, its obsession with display, and the determination of the royal family to stage themselves before domestic and foreign observers as a powerful force. The ceremony bears some specific resemblances to the masques which were also performed in the Banqueting House. In both cases the King's presence was a prerequisite, his installation in his chair of state providing the signal for the action to begin: 'when he [the king] was set in state they descended to a Turkish carpet spread just below the chair of state' (Nichols, II, 513-14). The 'action' of the ceremony, involving the (contr)actors moving towards the chair of

¹⁷ James's desire to control the marriages of his grandchildren can be illuminated by recalling that he exercised a similarly rigorous control over Arbella Stuart, whose claim to the throne was strong enough to make James anxious about her. Her request to marry William Seymour was denied by James because Seymour, like Arbella, was of the blood royal, and James clearly felt that the conjunction of the two might pose a threat to his own position. When the two married in 1610 in defiance of James, he responded by imprisoning Arbella in the Tower, where she remained until her death five years later.

¹⁸ Peacham, p. 36. James's anxieties about another Frederick Henry may have been linked to the suspicion that persisted after Henry's death that he had intended to usurp his father, discussed in chapter 3.

state, re-enacted the characteristic movement of the masquers down from the stage and onto the carpeted dancing place.¹⁹

The centrality of the King's presence can be contrasted with the absences of other family members. Henry's absence was denoted by the black clothes worn by Frederick and Elizabeth. The Queen was also absent, 'either on account of an inflammation in her foot, as she pretended, or for another reason, as others believe'.²⁰ This exemplifies Anne's habitual strategy of asserting her political opinions by absenting herself from important occasions, a technique employed here to express her disapproval of the match - 'the Queen is noted to have given no great grace nor favour to this Match and there is doubt will do less hereafter' (Nichols, II, 515).²¹ Her opposition apparently stemmed not only from her religious and political adherence to Catholicism and Spain, but from her belief that the Palsgrave, who was not a king, was an inferior alliance for her daughter. An apocryphal story describes how the Queen used to call her daughter Goody Palsgrave, to which Elizabeth reputedly replied that 'she would rather be the Palsgrave's wife than the greatest Papist Queen in Christendom' (Nichols, II, 515).²² Perhaps Queen Anne, whose

¹⁹ In another example of the 'theatre of state', Jones's Banqueting House employed perspective to great effect to dazzle ambassadors with the spectacle of the King enthroned in state at one end of the room, towards which they gradually processed.

²⁰ Quoted by Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 113. Chamberlain, in a letter of 31 December 1612 notes 'the Quene was absent, beeing troubled (as they say) with the gowte', in *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, I, 399.

²¹ This strategy of voicing an opinion through her physical absence or presence is not dissimilar from the technique of locating her voice in her body in the masques.

²² The story is reported by (amongst others) G. P. V. Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant or the Court of King James the First* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), p. 143; Ethel C. Williams, *Anne of Denmark: Wife of James VI of Scotland: James I of England* (London: Longman, 1970), pp. 154-55, and Alison Plowden, *The Stuart Princesses*, p. 20. Interestingly, by the month of the wedding, Anne had not only reconciled herself to her daughter's choice of husband, but had followed popular opinion in finding in Frederick a surrogate son to replace the dead Prince Henry. An

sensitivity on the question of her own royal and queenly dignity is discussed in chapter 2, was disappointed that her daughter did not display the same determination to protect her status and identity.

Despite Elizabeth's assertion of agency, Chamberlain's description of the event obscures both her will and that of Frederick: 'Frederick, Count Palatine and Elector, was affianced and contracted'. The grammatical construction is interesting, firstly because it renders Frederick passive, and secondly, because the verbs 'affianced' and 'contracted' are used intransitively. The object position which might have been occupied by Elizabeth's name is empty, with the result that the bride-to-be is as linguistically absent from this account as her brother and mother were physically absent on the day. The centrality of James's presence (whose raised chair of state set up a vertical hierarchy) marginalised the bridal couple in terms of physical space, and that marginalising process is re-enacted at the level of grammar in the description, which denies Frederick's agency and obscures Elizabeth's presence altogether.

The tension between the powerfully present will of the father, and Elizabeth's earlier assertion of her own agency (when faced with Anne's opposition) might usefully be seen in the wider cultural context of the conflict between parental authority and individual self-determination, which was inevitably at its height on the subject of marriage. As David Lindley points out in an illuminating discussion of this issue, *The Tempest* enacts a convenient, if artificial reconciliation of the interests of parent and child.²³ On one level, Miranda and Ferdinand's relationship is, as they

anonymous letter quoted in Nichols, II, 524 reports how Anne 'caresseth the Palsgrave whensoever he cometh to her, as if he were her own son'.

²³ Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 38-39.

believe it to be, a love-match, and Prospero plays out the stereotypical role of the opposing father. However, his pretended opposition belies his manipulation of circumstances to achieve the dynastic match which is his aim. Similarly, James apparently allowed Elizabeth some degree of autonomy, but it was fortunate that she found her personal choice coincided with her father's political aims, since one imagines that, in the case of dispute, the will of the royal father would have prevailed. A number of the masques confirm Chamberlain's presentation of James as a Prospero-like figure, presiding over the marriage which is seen as a display of his wisdom and power, and are frequently more concerned with the figure of the monarch than with the bridal couple themselves.²⁴

The wedding was a momentous occasion, being the first royal wedding in England since 1554 (when Mary Tudor married Philip of Spain) as well as the first royal wedding ever to be conducted according to the rites of the Reformed Church. The extent to which contemporary spectators regarded the wedding festivities as an opportunity for the display of royal power is demonstrated by a number of the tracts issued to commemorate the occasion. The author of *The Magnificent Marriage* refers to 'the great content as well of foraigne nations as of our owne country people', while John Taylor, author of *Heaven's Blessing and Earth's Joy* explains:

I did not write nor publish this description of Fire and Water Triumphs to the intent that they should onely read the relation that were spectators of them [...] but I did write these things that those who are farre remoted, not onely in his Majestie's dominions, but also in forraine territories, may have an understanding of the glorious pomp and magnificent domination of our high and mighty Monarch King James; and further, to demonstrate the skills and knowledges that our warlike nation hath in engines, fire-workes and other military discipline, that

²⁴ This is particularly true of Campion's *Lords Masque* which, I will argue, constructs James / Jove not only as the instigator of the marriage and the masque, but as the source of poetic inspiration and life itself. By contrast, in the Inns of Court masques by Chapman and Beaumont, the praise of James is disrupted by the shadowy presence of Prince Henry.

thereby may be knowne, that howsoever warre seems to sleepe, yet (upon any lawfull ground or occasion) the command of our dread Sovereigne can rouse her to the terrour of all malignant opposers of his Royall state and dignity.²⁵

Taylor was writing out of a patently propagandist desire to disseminate the image of King James's glorious authority underpinned by the military prowess of the nation.

However, the urgency with which he asserts the 'skills and knowledges [of] our warlike nation' betrays the anxiety of a country which had recently been deprived of a prospective martial leader by the death of Prince Henry. The juxtaposition of James, the self-styled peacemaker-king, with war, does not ring true, and the figure of the dead Prince Henry seems to lurk between the lines of Taylor's prose.

Taylor's tract describes the mock sea-fight and the fireworks which took place on the Thames, and most readers would have recalled the last occasion on which the Thames had been the venue for such pageantry, namely Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales. The link is compounded by the fact that *Heaven's Blessing* was published with two woodcuts of large and small ships, which Nichols speculates were 'very probably the same as those used in "Londons Love to Prince Henry"'.²⁶

The ghostly presence of Prince Henry which informs Taylor's account clearly influenced some of the entertainments, which propounded internationalist Protestant values closer to the ideological position of Henry than to that of the King. Thus, the construction of James in the masques as a Prospero-like controlling presence behind

²⁵ *The Magnificent Marriage* is reproduced in Nichols, II, 536-553; the quote appears on p. 541. *Heavens Blessing and Earth's Joy; or a true relation of the supposed sea-fights and fire-workes as were accomplished before the royall celebration of the all-beloved marriage of the two peerlesse paragons of Christendome, Frederick and Elizabeth*, appears in Nichols II, 527-35. The very title of this tract, with its allusion to the religious significance of the match, and the implication, which appears in a number of such works, that the marriage is divinely sanctioned, signals its Protestant propagandist intent; the quote is from pp. 527-28.

²⁶ Nichols, II, 527.

the festivities is compromised by the fact that, as Barbara Lewalski notes:

In their martial motifs and themes of Christian conquest, some entertainments for the wedding still bore the impress of Prince Henry's planning, though in muted form. He reportedly had planned tilts, barriers, and jousts, but the only martial exercise to survive was a running at the ring.²⁷

The fireworks took place on Thursday 11 February, and the account of them in *The Magnificent Marriage* revels in the tremendous noise: 'First for a welcome to the beholders, a peale of ordnance like unto a terrible thunder, ratled in the ayer, and seemed as it were to shake the earth'.²⁸ One doubts that such 'thundering musick' gave James any pleasure at all, though it is worth recalling that Henry's childhood pastime of observing the gunners' demonstrations of the firing of cannons had to be curtailed because of the cost to the Treasury.²⁹ Taylor's description of the fireworks distinguishes five displays and names the devisers.³⁰ The first three sections depicted the romantic adventures of St. George who, in order to liberate the Lady Lucida from a castle in which she has been imprisoned by an evil magician, must defeat a dragon, a giant, and ultimately the magician himself. The fourth display continued the theme of the conflict between good and evil with an allegorical

²⁷ Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 52. This seems to me to understate the case, since Henry's legacy can be seen in a number of the entertainments discussed below, including the fireworks, with their rendering of the ideologically-charged theme of George and the dragon, the sea-fight, which enacted a Christian victory over the Turks, in Chapman's *Memorable Masque* and in Beaumont's *Inner Temple Masque*, not to mention the cancelled *Masque of Truth*.

²⁸ Nichols, II, 537.

²⁹ J. W. Williamson, *The Myth of the Conqueror: Prince Henry Stuart: A Study of 17th Century Personation* (New York: AMS Press, 1978), p. 12.

³⁰ Taylor's account gives a very detailed plot summaries especially of the parts involving Lady Lucida and the necromancer Mango, which would almost certainly have been missed by the spectators, in Nichols, II, 530-535.

spectacle in which a castle peopled by figures including Discord and Lawless was besieged and overcome by three ships called Good Will, Assurance and True Love. The fireworks concluded with an emblematic scene celebrating the triumph of good over evil and consisting of a pyramid or obelisk surmounted with a globe.

The theme of the fireworks could be summarised as the eternal conflict between good and evil. However, Jerzy Limon argues convincingly that, in the context of the marriage between Frederick and Elizabeth, the fireworks have more specific meanings.³¹ The use of St. George as the central figure was particularly appropriate in view of Frederick's instalment as a Knight of the Order of the Garter which had taken place on the previous Sunday. This ceremony linked Frederick to an English tradition and to a set of knightly values which, although theoretically epitomised by James, had been more convincingly embodied by Henry's revival of chivalry.³² Moreover, George's defeat of the dragon, which was the insignia of the Order, had long been allegorised by Protestant propagandists as the victory of the one true reformed church over Rome and Catholicism. The fact that the encounter between the firework St. George and the dragon was followed by a 'fiery hunting' was obviously intended to please James, but might also have invited a Protestant interpretation, recalling Peake's hunting portrait of Prince Henry, wearing the Order

³¹ Jerzy Limon, *The Masque of Stuart Culture* (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1990), pp. 127-33.

³² In *Prince Henry's Barriers* Henry had appeared as the champion of revived Chivalry, enthroned in St. George's Portico, while the architectural design for the palace in *Oberon* had also alluded to St. George. See the discussion in the previous chapter of this thesis.

of the Garter, in which his killing of the stag became the counterpart of St. George's victory over the dragon.³³

The implications are clear: Frederick, already head of the Protestant league of Princes, now linked to a particularly English chivalric tradition by virtue of his instalment as a Knight Garter, naturally provided new hope for those whose desire to see Protestantism triumph on the European stage had recently been dealt a double blow by the deaths of Prince Henry and of Henri IV. The extent to which such sentiments conditioned interpretations of the festivities for the wedding is demonstrated by a contemporary poem entitled *Of the Most Auspicious Marriage*, by M. Joannes Maria de Franchis, which juxtaposes descriptions of the actual events with a mythological plot.³⁴ The poem begins with Religion complaining to the synod of the gods that she is persecuted on earth; the solution ordained by Jove is to bring about a marriage which, by linking two royal lines, will bring about the reform that Religion desires.³⁵

³³ The readiness of some spectators to impose a religious dimension on the spectacle of the fireworks is exemplified by the author of *The Magnificent Marriage*, who sees the ships besieging the castle not in terms of abstract qualities of good and evil, but as the 'Christian Navie opposed against the Turks', Nichols, II, 538; although his interpretation of the firework ships may have been influenced by the mock sea-fight which took place the following day and did indeed depict a battle between Christian and Turkish ships.

³⁴ Cited and discussed in Limon, pp. 129-132.

³⁵ The presentation of the marriage as ordained by the classical gods, and divinely sanctioned by the Christian God, recurs repeatedly. It is exemplified in the title of John Taylor's tract *Heaven's Blessing*, and informs the devices of all the masques, perhaps especially Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn* (discussed below) in which Jove claims precedence over Juno, the goddess of marriage, because this particular match has been pre-ordained by him. Of course, divine right ideology meant that such invocations of a deity, whether classical or Christian, could be read as an allusion to King James.

A similar theme of religious triumph was enacted in the mock sea-battle on the Thames, which must have prompted the spectators to recall the celebrations for Henry's investiture as Prince of Wales. The sea-battle represented the forces of Christian Europe - Venetian, Spanish, and English - united against their common enemy, the pagan Turks. According to Taylor's version of events, and in spite of his allusion to the famous Christian victory at Lepanto, the battle ended with neither side victorious: 'all victors, all triumphers, none to be vanquished, and therefore no conquerors' (Nichols II, 529). However, the author of *The Magnificent Marriage* tells a different story, describing how the defeated and captured 'Turks' were 'conveyed to the King's Majestie' (Nichols, II, 541). Moreover, although the sea-battle nominally presented a Christian victory over the infidel, the most recent victory at sea, and the one foremost in the mind of the audience, would have been the English victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588. Thus, while on one level the sea-battle realised James's plan for a united Europe, striving to achieve common aims, this meaning was complicated by the inevitable projection onto the event of the desires of those who wanted a confessionally motivated war with Catholic Europe.³⁶ The rivalry between European nations, supposedly allies in the common cause of Christianity, is hinted at in *The Magnificent Marriage*, which describes how the Turkish fleet captured first the Venetian then the Spanish vessels, before being defeated themselves and forced to liberate their captives by the superior force of the English navy (Nichols II, 539-41).

The invocation of past victories as a precedent for future triumphs was part of the process by which first Henry, and now Elizabeth and Frederick, were exhorted to

³⁶ The defeat of the Armada was depicted on the wall-hangings which decorated the hall in which the banquet was held after the wedding, *CSP Ven*, XII, 499.

bring about a restoration of the Elizabethan golden age. The concern with the past and the future, to the virtual exclusion of the present, had been an important aspect of Prince Henry's self-presentations, and functioned in some of the wedding entertainments in a similar way, with the focus on the Elizabethan past and its future restoration decentralising James and the Jacobean present. James's marginalisation was evident at the fireworks and sea-battle, since the peacemaker king was an anomaly in the context of such martial activity.

The wedding itself took place on 14 February, St. Valentine's Day, 1613 in the Chapel Royal at Whitehall. Restrictions on space meant that the rules of hierarchy had to be strictly observed, and 'by the extraordinary care of the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Chamberlain, the Chapel was so kept, as not one person but of honour and great place came to it' (Nichols, II, 546). However, in order to reconcile such exclusivity with the requisite display of magnificence, the procession took a circuitous route to the chapel. The Palsgrave, wearing 'a white sute, richly beset with pearle and gold' was attended by the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Nottingham followed by 'the batchelery of the nation', of whom only sixteen (one for each year of his age) were permitted to enter the chapel (Nichols II, 542). Elizabeth, preceded by Lord Harington in his capacity as surrogate father, was accompanied by Charles and the Earl of Northampton.

upon her head a crown of refined gold, made Imperiall by the pearles and diamonds thereupon placed, which were so thicke beset that they stood like shining pinnacles upon her amber-coloured haire, dependantly hanging playted downe over her shoulders to her waste; between every plaight a roll or liste of gold spangles, pearles, rich stones and diamonds; and withall, many diamonds of inestimable value, embrothered upon her sleeves, which even dazzled and amazed the eies of the beholders (Nichols, II, 542-43).

The impression conveyed by this description is of a small figure encrusted with jewels. It is tempting to read this account as evidence of the commodification of

women in a patriarchal culture, where, as Neil Cuddy comments, ‘daughters endowed with marriage portions were essentially negotiable commodities in a marriage market, [...] at once a source of mobile wealth, and pledges of alliance between families’.³⁷ However, while Elizabeth is clearly functioning as an object of exchange not simply between individual men but between patriarchal families, she is not the only figure in the account who is, by modern standards, the focus of an objectifying and commodifying gaze.

The account continues with a description of ‘the King’s Majestie himselfe in a most sumptuous blacke suit, with a diamond in his hatte of a wonderfull great value’ and we are informed that James’s jewels were ‘esteemed not to be less worth than six hundred thousand pounds’ (Nichols, II, 544; 546). If the Princess is being commodified, so too is the King himself, and the episode demonstrates the need for modern day commentators to be sensitive to the importance of display in the Stuart culture. In our post-cinematic age to be looked at, especially to be the female object of a gaze, is frequently deemed to be demeaning, yet in the Stuart court staging oneself in such a way as to attract the gaze of the public was a strategy of empowerment. Hence the royal party were seated on a ‘stately stage or scaffold [...] raised in the midst of the Chapel [...] that the whole assembly might better see all the ceremonies (Nichols, II, 545-46). The theatricality of the occasion surfaces in the allusion to a ‘stage’ to which only the most important actors were allowed to ascend, ensuring that the eyes of the ‘audience’ were focused on the right people.

³⁷ Cuddy, ‘Dynasty and Display’, p. 12.

'A nuptial by his will / Begun and ended': James as creator³⁸

Campion's *The Lords' Masque*, the first of the masques performed as part of the wedding festivities, was also the only one of the three to be commissioned by James, and, I will argue, makes much of the fact that its authority is derived from the monarch.³⁹ Indeed, while the masque has been much maligned by critics for its lack of coherence, I propose to show that the presence of the monarch (represented in the masque as Jove) does in fact impose order and provide a unified structure.⁴⁰ The 'plot' of the masque is simple. Orpheus summons Mania, the goddess of madness, from her cave, and in Jove's name commands her to release Entheus, the spirit of poetic fury, who has been mistakenly imprisoned with her madmen. An antimasque dance is performed by twelve 'frantics', after which order is restored by Orpheus's music. When Orpheus explains to Entheus that Jove wants him to 'create / Inventions rare, this night to celebrate', Entheus responds with a vision of

³⁸ Campion, *The Lords' Masque*, ed. by I. A. Shapiro, in *A Book Of Masques in Honour of Allardyce Nicoll*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer and S. Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 95-123. All quotes from the masque are from this edition, and are indicated by line number in the text. The masque survives in a quarto of 1613, appended to Campion's *Caversham Entertainment*, STC 4545.

³⁹ The masque is discussed by Jerzy Limon, pp. 137-142. I do not agree with all of Limon's arguments - in particular his account of the wedding masques overemphasises the importance of James and fails to consider the presence in some of the masques of the oppositional policies of Henry and militant Protestantism. Similarly, while his readiness to see the masques as part of a cycle which includes court ceremonies and other types of pageantry is in line with the method I have adopted, he overstates the case by claiming that the elements 'make sense *only* when treated as parts of one text' (emphasis added) and that they comprise 'one surprisingly consistent text', p. 125. On the contrary, I will be suggesting that there was a considerable difference between Campion's masque, commissioned by the King, and the Inns of Court masques.

⁴⁰ I. A. Shapiro complains that 'unity of action, with logical and explicit connexion between episodes is not, however, among [its] merits', p. 98. Chamberlain acknowledged that the masque was 'very rich and sumptuous', but complained that it was also 'long and tedious', *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, I, 428.

Prometheus amongst the stars, which is made visible to all by the power of Orpheus's music (ll. 89-90). The stars are subsequently transformed into eight male masquers and descend to the lower stage where they encounter female statues who are transformed into ladies for the masque dances. The masquers dance with each other before taking out members of the audience, including Frederick and Elizabeth. The masque concludes with an emblematic scene of an obelisk, symbolising fame, flanked by gold statues of the bride and groom, before which a sibylla speaks a Latin blessing on the couple.⁴¹

Since the masque begins with the figure of Orpheus, he seems an appropriate starting point for this discussion. He, or at least his music, is a representative of order, and a seventeenth-century audience would have been familiar with the power traditionally ascribed to Orphean music of being able to move rocks and trees, tame wild beasts, and subdue passion and disorder in nature. In this case, the masque shows the perfectly harmonious music of Orpheus calming the mad men and women presided over by Mania. Despite the superficial similarity between the antimasque of frantics and the antimasque of hags in *The Masque of Queens*, there is an important distinction. Whereas *Queens* plunged its audience without warning into an antimasque world of darkness and destruction which threatened to overturn the order of the court, *The Lords' Masque* begins with a representative of order (Orpheus) and introduces the forces of chaos only after the audience have been assured of the masque's capacity to control it. The hags are dangerous in a way that

⁴¹ The already elitist form of the masque becomes even more exclusive in its use of Latin, which would only have been understood by some members of the audience. While James, who took pride in his learning, might have enjoyed the opportunity to exercise his interpretative ability, it is worth remembering that his daughter, the bride, would not have understood the prophecies about her future, since, as I have already noted (p. 200) she had not been taught Latin.

the frantics cannot be, because the latter exemplify Dollimore's principle of 'allowed subversion'.⁴² Orpheus appears first and reminds the audience of the power of his music to make 'frantics bow', effectively negating the possibility that Mania and her frantics might represent any genuine threat. The frantics are paraded for their entertainment value, and once the audience has enjoyed the spectacle of grotesquerie they offer, they obligingly leave the stage. This rigorously controlled relationship between antimasque and masque is especially significant given that the mythological Orpheus was dismembered at the hands of frenzied (frantic) women. Perhaps the reason that the masque-Orpheus escapes the fate of his counterpart in myth is that he is the messenger of Jove, and it is Jove who inspires his music with the 'power of passion', to bend the frantics 'to any form or motion we intend' (ll. 50-51).

The masque is self-conscious about the process of artistic creation; its three main characters, the masque-presenters, are a musician, a poet, and a sculptor.⁴³ However, in all three cases, their art is powerful and effective only because (or in the case of Prometheus, only when) it is divinely inspired and sanctioned. We have already seen how Orpheus describes his music as inspired by Jove in order to accomplish Jove's express command, the release of Entheus, whose poetic fury is 'all divine / Full of celestial rapture' (ll. 37-38). Such assertions inevitably have resonance for the artists behind the masque. Shapiro comments that 'the choice of Orpheus as the prime mover of the action is an interesting reflexion of Campion's personal preoccupations', as musician, and as poet (p. 98), and Campion's masque is

⁴² Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1984), pp. 26-27.

⁴³ Prometheus, who made images of men out of clay, then stole fire from heaven to bring them to life.

so self-reflexive that it is possible to see the presenters as representations of himself.⁴⁴ The claims they make for their art, and particularly the protests they voice against an unreceptive world, are characteristic of the anxieties that permeate the work of many of the masque-writers of the period, who feel the need to defend their work against accusations of vanity and triviality. Orpheus's outburst is worthy of Jonson himself:

O mad age
Senseless of thee, and thy celestial rage
Nor are these musics, shows, or revels vain,
When thou adorn'st them with thy Phoebian brain,
They're palate-sick of much more vanity,
That cannot taste them in their dignity (ll. 79-86).

While *Campion*, through Orpheus and Entheus, lays claim to divine inspiration, the masque also demonstrates his awareness of the realities of the poet's relationship with his commissioning agent. Orpheus and Entheus never act independently; rather they enact the commands of Jove who, we are repeatedly informed, 'must be obey'd' (l. 24; 53). Shapiro's description of Orpheus as the 'prime mover of the action' is mistaken, because behind him is the controlling figure of Jove who commands and facilitates Entheus's release and instructs him to produce the spectacle which constitutes the rest of the masque:

Jove therefore lets thy prison's sprite obtain
Her liberty and fiery scope again
And here by me commands thee to create
Inventions rare, this night to celebrate,
Such as become a nuptial by his will
Begun and ended (ll. 87-92).

⁴⁴ The same self-consciousness about the creative process, coupled with the concern that the audience will not appreciate or understand the masque, is displayed in Jonson's masques for the 1620s, a number of which also use the strategy of including one or more figures representing the poet. See chapter 5, especially the discussions of *News from the New World* and *Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion*.

This is a tremendously significant moment, most obviously because it is the first reference to the occasion of the marriage the masque has been commissioned to celebrate, but more importantly because the description of Jove as commissioning agent confirms the identification of him with James, which has been implicit from the outset. Another crucial detail is the construction of Jove / James as the source not only of the masque but of the nuptial itself. On one level this reflects the political reality of James in his doubly authoritative patriarchal roles of father and monarch, negotiating and deciding on an appropriate match for his royal daughter. However, these lines also concur with the frequently voiced description of the marriage as divinely inspired.

The first episode of the masque, which deals with the subject of artistic creativity, is in some ways a prologue to the ensuing action, which could be seen as a 'masque-within-a-masque', but the two sections share a common and unifying concern with creation, and the role played by Jove in that process. The second episode is based around the myth of Prometheus who, having created human images from clay, brought them to life by means of fire stolen from heaven, thereby creating the first men. His presumptuous act enraged Jove, who, in one version of the legend, punished Prometheus by chaining him to a rock and having a vulture feed on his liver. Prometheus appears in this masque 'attired as one of the ancient heroes', and is hailed as the 'patron of mankind, powerful and bounteous'. Since Jove has been firmly established as the authorising principle in the masque, we can only assume that Prometheus appears by Jove's sanction, and are told that Jove's wrath 'now at last / [...] by degrees relents' (ll. 244-45). What we witness is a re-writing of the myth in which Prometheus, instead of rebelling against Jove, simply implores his aid

to animate the statues. The masque hints at an harmonious union between heaven and earth, ruler and subject, which is further elucidated in Sibylla's prophecies.

The masque dances, which bring together the male and female masquers in another instance of union, are dependent on the power of Jove to animate the female statues. Interestingly, the rigid gender stereotyping of 'men fit for wars' and 'women fit for love' is undercut by the description of courtship as a battle in which the women are not only 'arm'd with wit' to bear the 'best encounters' and 'bold assaults' of the men, but, initially at least, have the odds in their favour: 'Woo her, and win her, he that can, / Each woman hath two lovers, / So she must take and leave a man' (ll. 262-64). However, Jove soon puts an end to this 'wooing strife', and by providing enough women, he 'make[s] all friends' (ll. 280-81). In fact, Jove acts in the interests of the men, ensuring that 'No man need fear a rival in his love' (l. 292). In so doing he closes down the possibility of female agency which was glimpsed in the description of women choosing their lovers, and ensures that the potentially dangerous force of female sexuality is safely contained within a 'chaste' relationship with one man. The interaction described in these lines, between female choice and the sanction of a male authority, recalls the fact that Elizabeth, having been wooed by a series of suitors, made a choice of one man, which was ratified by James. Like the statue-women in the masque Elizabeth exercised her free will, but we are left in little doubt that such female autonomy is allowed only while it concurs with the will of the father.

From these matches, the masque finally moves to a consideration of the particular marriage being celebrated. The dominant concern is that the marriage should be productive: 'Live you long to see your joys, / In fair nymphs and princely boys' (ll. 418-19). Of course, the 'princely boys' are of far greater political importance than

the female children, as Sibylla's blessing demonstrates, describing Elizabeth as 'Parens futura masculae prolis, parens / Regum, imperatorum', the future parent of a *male* child, the parent of kings, of emperors (ll. 363-64).

Throughout the masque, Jove / James has been associated with acts of creation. The marriage and the masque that celebrates it are attributed to him. He is the source of inspiration, both poetic and literal, who inspires the masque-presenters and animates the female statues. Ultimately, the assertion of the King's generative powers ends in an appropriation of the female capacity for reproduction: 'Debetur alto iure, principium Iovi', 'the beginning is rightly owed to high Jove' (l. 356). Goldberg's discussion of the Jacobean tendency to see procreation as an extension of male prerogative and power has already been invoked in the analysis of Queen Anne's masques, in which, I have argued, the Queen resists patriarchal attempts to absorb female creativity, and marginalise and sacrifice the maternal figure.⁴⁵ However, although she was present at *The Lords' Masque*, Anne is conspicuously absent from its panegyric, with the result that all Elizabeth's worth is troped as deriving from James; he is the source of her royal descent, her beauty (!) and even, by implication, of her reproductive capacity. James as 'author' in its widest sense of 'originator' is the dominant figure in this masque, which makes only the most perfunctory references to the bride and groom. The latter are represented by statues, and in view of the preceding action, the implication is that they remain passive until inspired and directed by the King.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', p. 16.

⁴⁶ The construction of James in *The Lords' Masque* as monarch and father, controlling his daughter's wedding and the masque that celebrates it finds a convenient parallel in Shakespeare's Prospero. Miranda's mother (like Queen Anne in *The Lords' Masque*) is a notoriously shadowy figure, alluded to only as a pattern of chastity to guarantee Miranda's legitimacy. However, whereas Campion's

The legacy of Prince Henry: Chapman's *Memorable Masque* and the 'conversion' of the Virginian princes

The next day, Monday, saw the male members of the royal family, including Frederick, in a competition of running at the ring. The contest was begun by James, who is described unconvincingly by the author of *The Magnificent Marriage* as 'a most noble martialist' (Nichols, II, 549). Having taken the ring three times James gave way to his new son-in-law, who, perhaps in tactful deference, took the ring only twice. The climax of the occasion occurred when Charles 'most courageously and with much agilitie of hand took the ring clearly four times [...] a sight of much admiration and exceeding comfort to all the land' (Nichols, II, 550). The authors of *The Magnificent Marriage* and similar tracts were eager to take advantage of the marriage, which had focused the eyes of the rest of Europe on events in London, to affirm that Britain's might had been unshaken by the death of the martial Prince Henry. The satisfaction expressed in the performance of Charles on this occasion is symptomatic of the desire to find - in Charles, Elizabeth or Frederick - an alternative focus for the hopes and expectations which had attached to Henry.

Henry's presence permeates the second masque of the three performed for the wedding, written by George Chapman who had served Henry and dedicated his translation of Homer to him. *The Memorable Masque of the two honourable houses*

masque is dominated by male creators, the betrothal masque that Prospero stages acknowledges female (pro)creative power, and is presided over by female goddesses, notably Juno and Ceres. Juno also occurs as a potent force in *The Inner Temple Masque* and is invoked in Jonson's *Hymenaei*, both of which are discussed below. The earlier performance of *The Tempest* during the Christmas season of 1612-13 must have gained a peculiar resonance from the parallels between fiction and reality, and some critics, finding it difficult to accept that life may have followed art in this case, have argued that the version of *The Tempest* that survives must have been rewritten to suit the occasion.

or inns of Court; *The Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn* was commissioned, paid for and performed by members of the Inns, and this fact, combined with the allusions it makes to the internationalist policies associated with Henry and his circle, complicates the construction of James as originating source which had been advanced in *Campion's masque*.⁴⁷ The argument of the masque concerns the arrival to Britain of Paeana, a south-sea island, inhabited by Virginian princes, and Plutus, the god of Riches, who have been prompted by Honour to 'cross the Briton ocean / To this most famed isle of all the world, / To do homage to the sacred nuptials / Of Love and Beauty, celebrated here' (ll. 466-69). The motif of visiting worthies coming to pay homage to the British court was a familiar one, which had seen its first Stuart realisation in Anne's *Blackness*. The masquers on this occasion did not wear blackface, but were disguised by vizards or masks of an olive colour, and the exoticism of their appearance was heightened by the use of gold and feathers in their costumes. Having gone to considerable expense to produce and stage their masque, the gentlemen of the Inns of Court, presumably wanting their largesse to be witnessed by as large an audience as possible, processed through the streets of London.⁴⁸ In addition to the actors and masquers, the procession involved several hundred gentlemen, ensuring that, while the number of masquers had to be limited,

⁴⁷ Chapman, *The Memorable Masque*, in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments 1605-1640*, ed. by David Lindley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 74-91. Subsequent references to the masque are to this edition and line references are given in the text. The iconographic scheme of the masque is discussed by D. J. Gordon, 'Chapman's *Memorable Masque*', in *The Renaissance Imagination*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Berkeley; University of California Press, 1975), pp. 194-202, and Jack E. Reese, 'Unity in Chapman's *Masque of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn*', *Studies in English Literature* 4 (1964), 291-305.

⁴⁸ Lindley, *Court Masques*, p. 237 reports that the two Inns of Court involved raised £2255.

as many as possible of the members of the Inns could be involved in this display of the importance and wealth of their legal institutions:

Fifty gentlemen, richly attired, and as gallantly mounted, with footmen particularly attending, made the noble vanguard of these nuptial forces. Next [...] march'd a mock-masque of baboons [...]. After them were sorted two cars triumphal [...] and in them advanc'd the choice musicians of our kingdom [...] attir'd like Virginian priests [...]. Then rode the chief masquers (ll. 31-47).

The triumphal chariot, bearing the chief personages of Honour, Eunomia (her priest), Phemis (her herald) and Plutus, was 'strongly attended with a full guard of two hundred halberdiers' (ll. 111-12).

As well as being (in the words of John Chamberlain) 'the best shew that hath ben seen many a day', the procession had a number of important implications.⁴⁹ It was not subject to the regulating gaze of the monarch (at least until its final moments) and thus had more in common with the civic pageantry of a Lord Mayor's Show than a masque, in that it allowed the Inns of Court to display their prestige to the city of London. The fact that the masque assigns a specific role to virtue as law (Eunomia) is clearly an assertion of the dignity and worth of the Inns of Court, but most importantly, the fact that they are seen to process *to* James's court, rather than beginning the performance *from* there implies the independence of law and the lawyers from the King.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the man from whose house the procession set out, Sir Edward Philips, Master of the Rolls, seems almost to take on the role of originator conventionally ascribed to James, and is described by Chapman as having

⁴⁹ Chamberlain, *Letters*, I, 425. The importance of the procession to Chapman, and, by implication, to those who commissioned it, is confirmed by the amount of text he devotes to its description.

⁵⁰ This contradicted James's assertion that laws came from the King and were subject to him, a claim he had made in 1598 in his *Trew Law of Free Monarchies* where he described kings as 'the authors and makers of the Lawes, and not the Lawes of the kings', in *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, p. 62.

effected the combination of Honour and Virtue in a rival 'marriage': 'Honour having never her fair hand more freely and nobly given to Riches [...] than by yours' (ll. 9-10).

The procession was in keeping with the masque's central device of the visit of foreign worthies to honour the British royalty, and recalled the ceremonies which surrounded the arrival of foreign visitors such as King Christian of Denmark. Just as on any real state occasion, and at the wedding ceremony itself, a strict hierarchy was observed, and accordingly, 'Highest of all in the most eminent seat of the triumphal sat, side to side, the celestial goddess, Honour, and the earthly deity, Plutus, or Riches' (ll. 102-3). The 'two marshals (being choice gentlemen of either house) commander-like attired, to and fro coursing, to keep all in their orders' (ll. 112-14) had the unenviable job of imposing order, and prompt one to recall the feat of the Lord Chamberlain in managing to exclude any one beneath the degree of baron from the wedding ceremony!

A similar concern with hierarchy, and the desire to maintain exclusivity applied to the performance of the masques for the wedding festivities. A ban on farthingales failed to relieve overcrowding, and Beaumont's *Inner Temple Masque* had to be postponed because 'the hall was so full that yt was not possible to [...] make roome for them [the masquers]'.⁵¹ The politics of access in relation to the hierarchical structure of the court has been interestingly discussed by Neil Cuddy, who argues that those who monopolized positions in the King's Bedchamber used their physical proximity to the King to control court patronage and politics.⁵² It is significant,

⁵¹ Chamberlain, *Letters*, I, 426; he also notes the ruling that 'no Lady or gentlewomen should be admitted to any of these sights with a verdingale'.

⁵² 'The Revival of the Entourage', in *The English Court* ed. by David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987), pp. 173-225 (p. 197).

therefore, that the inner sanctum in Chapman's masque, the Temple of Honour, is guarded by Eunomia (Law) who judges whether those wishing to enter are sufficiently virtuous. Plutus invokes Eunomia's aid:

And since to Honour none should dare access,
 But helped by Virtue's hand (thyself, chaste Law
 Being Virtue's rule, and her directful light)
 Help me to th'honour of her speech and sight (ll. 452-55).

D. J. Gordon's elucidation of Chapman's use of classical sources argues that this arrangement is an allusion to 'the Roman temples of Honour and Virtue [...] placed so that one had to go through that of Virtue in order to enter the Temple of Honour'.⁵³ The masque identifies the Temple of Honour with the Kingdom of Britain, but it might be seen more specifically as the masque-mirror's reflection of James's court, which 'is guarded by legal institutions that prevent the unvirtuous from entering'.⁵⁴ Yet here, as in many cases, the masque exposes a gap between the ideal and the reality, since access to the court and the King was rarely effected according to such ethical and moral criteria. James's court was far from being a meritocracy, given his habit of promoting young men such as Robert Carr who did nothing to 'deserve' the privilege of access to the monarch, and the political power that brought, beyond having an attractive face. By contrast, the court of the dead Prince Henry had gained renown for his determination to assign places of honour fairly, and to admit only men of honour.⁵⁵

⁵³ Gordon, p. 196.

⁵⁴ Limon, p. 149.

⁵⁵ The disciplined nature of Henry's household is discussed in the previous chapter in relation to *Oberon*. The members of his household were required to be men of action and the places were not to be sold.

Prince Henry is strongly invoked in the masque's central motif of Virginia. The colony, associated by its name with the Virgin Queen (and thus appropriate to the occasion of her namesake's passage from virginity to married life), was also nominally linked to King James by the foundation of Jamestown in 1607. However, Reese's assertion that the Virginia theme was 'both politic and fitting in the light of James I's continued interest in colonisation' is mistaken, because the most recent schemes had been pursued and sponsored not by the King but by Henry.⁵⁶ Henry had invested in the Virginia Company and regarded the colonisation of the New World in religious as well as territorial terms, a site of Protestant expansionism, where the English engaged in a struggle not only with the demons of paganism, but with Catholicism and Spain. In 1609 Pierre Erondelle had dedicated his translation of Marc Lescarbot's *Nova Francia* to Henry, describing how 'your poore Virginians do seeme to implore your Princely aid, to helpe them to shake off the yoke of the diuel, who hath hitherto made them liue worse than beasts'.⁵⁷ Plutus's light-hearted complaint 'Rocks? Nothing but rocks in these masquing devices?' is an allusion to the masque of *Oberon*, which I would argue, provides an important intertext for Chapman's masque with which it shares the central motif of conversion.

Plutus's opening remark sets the tone for a masque which is as self-reflexive as *Campion's Lords' Masque*. His speech continues by playing on the audience's expectation that the rocks will shortly be metamorphosed. However, when the rocks do part they reveal not the glorious vision of the masque, but the absurdities of the antimasque. Chapman's preface to the printed version of the masque follows *Campion* in distinguishing genuine poetic inspiration from the madness of 'rack-

⁵⁶ Reese, p. 294.

⁵⁷ Quoted by J. W. Williamson, *Myth*, p. 52.

brained' writers, and also expresses the anxiety, common among masque-writers, that the audience will not be sufficiently perceptive to appreciate the vision of beauty and truth he offers.⁵⁸ Campion's masque had figured the relationship between artist and patron in a quite conservative way, but Chapman's treatment of the question of patronage and reward, coming as it does in the antimasque, is more challenging in its attitude towards authority.

Capriccio is a 'creator' of sorts, but is the equivalent of the 'vulgarly esteemed upstart' condemned in Chapman's preface, who, rapt with *insania* 'dares break the dreadful dignity of ancient and authentical poesy' (ll. 203-4), and is transported with 'humour, vainglory and pride, most profane and sacrilegious' (l. 221). The bellows he wears on his head 'show [he] can puff up with glory all those that affect [him]', and, as Plutus recognises, he is 'a dangerous fellow' (ll. 370-71; 373). Unlike the true artist, Capriccio aims simply to entertain rather than educate, so it is difficult to know how much importance to attach to his words. However, one of his comments pointedly criticises the injustices of the patronage system:

I know sir, a man may sooner win your reward, for pleasing you, than deserving you. But you great wise persons, have fetch of state, to employ with countenance, and encouragement, but reward with austerity and disgrace, save your purses and lose your honours (ll. 391-95).

Capriccio resents miserliness among great men, and his disapproval is sanctioned by the Renaissance ideology which placed great emphasis on the princely virtue of

⁵⁸ The mood of the masque prefaces, which often expressed anxiety about the value of masques, and the (in)ability of the audience to understand them, began to feed into the masques themselves, often resulting in the type of antimasque discussion seen here which interrogates issues associated with artistic production. The argument of Plutus and Capriccio might usefully be seen alongside the Plutus of *Love Restored* who is an opponent of masquing, or compared to the discussion between the Cook and the Poet in *Neptune's Triumph* about the problems of writing a masque which pleases everyone. The latter instance is considered in chapter 5.

magnanimity. Plutus reassures Capriccio that his love for the goddess Honour, has not only restored his sight and wit, but has also made him bountiful. The theme of the union of Plutus or Riches with Honour is, as D. J. Gordon suggests, a continuation of ‘the old dispute about true nobility and the part played in it by wealth [...]. But if wealth did not confer nobility, the true use of wealth was nevertheless an element of nobility: this was the virtue of liberality’.⁵⁹ Yet despite his assurances, Plutus initially tries to send Capriccio and the antimasquers packing without payment: ‘I have employed you, and the grace of that is reward enough’ (ll. 421-22). This may be a proper response to the worthlessness and vanity of the spectacle provided by Capriccio and his fantastically attired baboons, but the withholding of payment leaves the audience feeling slightly uneasy, and Plutus relents.

Plutus’s response to the masque proper is rightly more generous; he promises the masquers - the Virginian knights and their priests - that they will be feasted in the Temple of Honour. This had earlier been identified with the Kingdom of Great Britain, and James rose to the occasion, feasting the performers who had participated in the wedding masques. However, James’s taste was more often pleased by the grotesquerie of the antimasques than by the moral didacticism of the masque proper (after the performance of Beaumont’s *Inner Temple Masque* he asked for the antimasque dances to be repeated). Capriccio’s claim that ‘for breaking a clean jest’ he might be ‘advanced for court or council, or at least served out for an ambassador to a dull climate’ might not be an impossibility in James’s court (ll. 353-55). Plutus’s rather jaded comment that ‘he that cannot be a courser in the field, let him

⁵⁹ Gordon, p. 198. Compare the entertainment entitled *Riches and Love* performed before Henry VIII and discussed by Orgel in *The Jonsonian Masque*, pp. 29-30.

play the jackanapes in the chamber' may be another buried allusion to the contrast between James's court and Henry's, and a criticism of the former's tendency to advance men for trivial reasons.⁶⁰

Plutus sees his own union with Honour as a way of gracing the nuptials being celebrated, which are presented in heavily platonised terms as 'the sacred nuptials / of Love, and Beauty' (ll. 468-69). Plutus urges Honour, 'Tis now high time, that th'end for which we come / Should be endeavoured in our utmost rite, / Done to the sweetness of this nuptial night' (ll. 462-64). However, what follows, rather than being the anticipated celebration of the nuptials, are the hymns sung by the Virginian priests to their sun-god. These are counterpointed with praise of the 'Briton Phoebus', as the masque turns outward to the monarch, James as *roi-soleil*.

The iconographical commonplace of king as sun (which we have already seen in Jonson's entertainment for the 1604 entry into London, and in *The Masque of Blackness*) is manipulated with considerable skill by Chapman. The hymns of the Phoebades in praise of the setting sun are offset in every detail by the songs directed to King James. Britain has already been constructed as a separate and specially-favoured world which is immune to the rotation of the earth 'and defies the world's mutability' (l. 297). This 'all exceeding island' is presided over by James, a brighter and more constant source of light than the 'real' sun which sinks slowly at the back of the masque stage:

Rise, rise O Phoebus, ever rise,
 Descend not to th'inconstant stream,
 But grace with endless light, our skies;

⁶⁰ An intriguing parallel suggests itself in the fact that Robert Carr, the King's current favourite, had come to James's attention after falling from a horse at the Accession Day tilts, after which he had been advanced to the position of Groom of the Bedchamber: 'He that cannot be a courser in the field, let him learn to play the jackanapes in the chamber' indeed.

To thee that sun is but a beam (ll. 526-29).

However, the motif is not without its ambiguities, since the distinction between James and the literal (and setting sun) is not as clear cut as the above account suggests. The first hymn, beginning 'Descend fair sun', describes the descent of the literal sun into the sea to embrace Tethys. Yet the use of this name may be interpreted as an allusion to Queen Anne (who had performed in the role of Tethys at her masque for Henry's investiture), thereby raising the possibility that James was to be identified with the setting sun. This troubling suggestion is dismissed in the next song, 'Rise, rise, O Phoebus', which is directed to the King, and makes clear that he, unlike the literal sun, will never sink to the 'inconstant streams'. But this has the effect of forestalling the Phoebus-Tethys union in a manner which reflects the division of the royal couple.⁶¹

In the second song addressed to James, 'Rise still, clear Sun, and never set', the light which proceeds from him is associated more specifically with wisdom and virtue, in which he exceeds all other kings. He also appears in the (by now) familiar role of progenitor. The only relic of his mother's race, he has founded the genealogical 'tree' which is the Stuart dynasty, and the song anticipates the flowering of his 'endless seed' into 'human deities'. However, it is worth pausing to consider the masque's allusion to James's mother, since, as we have seen, James had constructed for himself a genealogy that extended forward through his children rather than backwards to his own problematic progenitors. The fact that this masque invokes, and almost sanctifies, Mary Queen of Scots, may be a defensive response to

⁶¹ Jack Reese, p. 296, points out the number of unions in the masque between mythological couples, including Phoebus-Tethys, Heaven (Uranus) and Earth (Gaea), and Eros and Panthaea, culminating in the nuptials of Love and Beauty, but does not see, as I do, the possibility for division as well as union.

the blow dealt to James's forward genealogy by the loss of the eldest son.

Interestingly, while the masque refers to James's mother, his father is absent, a position which is exactly reversed in the presentation of Princess Elizabeth, which emphasises James's paternal role but erases Elizabeth's mother, Anne. The reference to James's genealogical 'tree' reads in this context as an appropriation of Anne's iconography which represented *her* as the tree bearing the branches and fruit that were the royal children.⁶²

The masque's construction of James's mother as 'blest' and his children as 'human deities' is in line with James's claim to rule by divine right. The hymns sung by the Phoebades comprise the ritualistic worship of their sun god, and consequently the songs praising James construct him not simply as *roi soleil* but quite explicitly as sun-as-God. It is possible to see a parallel between James as earth's 'only light' and Christ as 'the light of the world', and Eunomia's command to the Virginian princes to renounce their 'superstitious worship of these suns' is unambiguously religious in tone (l. 569).⁶³ The Virginians are exhorted to accept 'heaven's true light', the Christianity offered by James (l. 575). Yet, as elsewhere in this masque, the motif of conversion seems to allude more to Henry than to James, and the masque invokes the type of Protestant expansionism James disliked. In the eyes of Protestant reformers superstition was an attribute of the Catholic faith, and

⁶² The trope is exemplified by Peacham's emblem for Anne in *Minerva Britannia*, as well as in her hieroglyphic of a golden tree laden with fruit in the *Masque of Blackness*, and is discussed in chapter 2 in relation to Anne's attempts to assert and defend her maternal role. In *The Somerset Masque* (discussed below) Anne would be asked to break off a branch from a tree in order to liberate the masquers from the spells of evil enchanters.

⁶³ Pushing this comparison to its very limits, we unearth a daring comparison between Mary Queen of Scots and the Virgin Mary, an identification which obscures and marginalises James's other 'mother', Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen.

with the result that the exhortation to the Virginians to renounce 'black Error's night' evokes not simply a conversion to Christianity, but a victory of the Reformed church (l. 574). The depiction of the conversion of a nation to Protestant Christianity was a particularly appropriate theme to celebrate a marriage which aimed to unite the Protestant forces of Northern Europe. However, while for James the union of the two Protestant nations was simply that, for spectators with more militant sympathies, the union was the first step towards the defeat of the popish Antichrist. Chapman's masque skilfully negotiates between these two positions, and the possibilities for Protestant aggression against the Catholic world remain implicit. As a result, *The Memorable Masque* was able to escape the fate of the cancelled *Masque of Truth*, which, as David Norbrook has shown, was probably a legacy of Prince Henry's involvement in the planning of the entertainments for the wedding, and made its militant Protestantism all too apparent by depicting a global conversion to the true religion under the leadership of England, the home of Alatheia (Truth), and King James.⁶⁴

The final segment of Chapman's masque, which is heavily neo-platonic, seems at first to constitute a deliberate withdrawal from the political and religious significance of the wedding. The nuptial hymn constructs the genealogy of Love and Beauty, twin children born of the union of Heaven and Earth, represented by Eros and Panthaea. The union of Love and Beauty is so complete that the two become one: 'Mine, and thine, were then unus'd, / All things common' (ll. 618-19), and Honour's speech clearly invokes the 'constant troth' of the marriage vows:

⁶⁴ Norbrook, 'The Masque of Truth: Court entertainments and international Protestant politics in the early Stuart period', *The Seventeenth Century* 1 (1986), 81-109. The masque is also discussed in Limon, pp. 166-68.

That one being merry; mirth the other graced,
 If one felt sorrow, th'other grief embraced,
 If one were healthful, health the other pleased,
 If one were sick the other was diseased (ll. 588-91).⁶⁵

According to neoplatonic thought, love for the idea of beauty had the power to raise man's condition higher up the ladder of existence and towards heaven, and the song suggests that the union of Frederick and Elizabeth might effect a similar rapprochement between heaven and earth. The union of Frederick and Elizabeth as Love and Beauty has two aspects; the marital union is coupled with a natal union - they are twins by birth.⁶⁶ While the idea of birth looks back once again to James as the father of the bride and the originator of the marriage, I would argue that the allusion to a filial bond supports my argument that the masque is pervaded by the presence of the dead Prince Henry. Elizabeth had been extremely close to her brother, and their Tudor names had linked them both to hopes for a revival of the Elizabethan golden age. Frederick was already being seen as a kind of double or substitute for Henry (even by Anne, who, we recall, 'caresseth the Palsgrave whensoever he cometh to her, as if he were her own son') and Elizabeth's union with him in marriage recalls her attachment to her brother.⁶⁷ This implies that the children that result from the union of Frederick and Elizabeth should be seen as the heirs of Henry rather than of his father, an assertion supported by the very last line of the masque, an allusion to the birth of a Hercules, which is not merely thematically appropriate in the light of the antimasque choice between vanity and

⁶⁵ This resonance is significant, given that this was the first royal wedding to have been performed according to the rites of the Church of England

⁶⁶ Chapman explains that the bride and groom are regarded as twins because they are both sixteen years old.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Nichols II, 524.

virtue, but pointedly recalls the earlier tributes to Henry as an infant Hercules who would crush the monstrosities of Rome (see chapter 3).

'Hatefull Juno' and Olympian knights: disruptive presences in Beaumont's

Inner Temple Masque⁶⁸

While the praise of James in Chapman's masque was compromised by the shadowy presence and oppositional agenda of his son, Beaumont's *Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, taking up the theme of the marriage as divinely sanctioned or inspired, presented the celebrations of the union as under threat from the political rivalry between a husband and wife, Jove and Juno. Due to have been performed on 16 February, the masque was postponed until 20 February, partly because of the overcrowding in the Great Hall (noted above), but also because 'the King was so wearied and sleepe with sitting up almost two whole nights before, that he had no edge to yt'.⁶⁹ The King, in a demonstration of his ultimate authority over the wedding festivities, sent the masquers away, instructing them to come again on Saturday. Within the fictional world of the masque Jove exercises a similar power, and it is his 'high will' which, when enacted, provides the main masque, 'the Olympian games / Which long have slept, at these wish'd nuptials, / He pleas'd to have renewed' (ll. 268-70). However, the implementation of Jove's will is not entirely unproblematic, and the main masque is preceded by two antimasques which

⁶⁸ Beaumont, *The Masque of the Inner Temple and Gray's Inn*, ed. by Philip Edwards, in *A Book Of Masques*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer and S. Wells, pp. 125-148. All quotes from the masque are from this edition, and are indicated by line number in the text. Juno is 'hatefull' in one of James's *Amatoria* poems, in *Poems*, ed. by James Craigie, II, 68., and discussed below.

⁶⁹ Chamberlain, *Letters*, I, 426.

arise from the contention between Jove's messenger, Mercury, and Juno's messenger, Iris.

It seems strange that a masque celebrating the union of marriage should begin with a portrayal of division between the sexes, originating from the marital discord between Jove and Juno. Of course, the troubled relationship between the king of the gods and his queen consort is a commonplace of classical mythology. Jove's infidelities produced a progeny which swelled the number of the Olympian gods and heroes, and provoked Juno's jealousy. Mercury refers to the 'angry power / Of your curst mistress', a power which transformed a number of Jove's unfortunate lovers into animals (l. 111; 107). On this occasion, Juno, as goddess of marriage, has sent Iris 'to celebrate the long-wish'd nuptials, / Here in Olympia, which are now perform'd / Betwixt two goodly rivers'(ll. 113-15). The marriage of the Thames and the Rhine has been accomplished to Juno's satisfaction. However, her claim to exercise jurisdiction over these nuptial rites is impinged upon by Jove who has foreseen and 'to himself reserv'd / The honour of this marriage' (ll. 139-40). Jove, the king of gods, presiding on Olympia, is the masque's fictional correlative for James, the earthly deity presiding over Britain, and the link is confirmed by the assertion that the 'match concerns his general government', which draws attention to the political significance of Elizabeth's marriage. Further evidence for the Jove-James alignment is offered when the veils of the Olympian knights, who are consecrated to Jove, fall from them 'upon the sight of the King' (l. 298).

However, once we accept the Jove-James correlation, we are forced to acknowledge the presence in the masque of Anne as Juno.⁷⁰ Jove and Juno are

⁷⁰ The fact that Juno's messenger is Iris might be an intertextual link with *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, in which Iris was the messenger who announced the

presented as political rivals, and Iris (on Juno's behalf) objects to Jove's intervention in a sphere of activity which rightly belongs to her mistress.⁷¹ Mercury replies that Juno has power only because Jove has granted it to her, which gives him the right to 'abridge' her power as he sees fit. This speech establishes Juno as subordinate to Jove in the same way that *Queens* attempted (not entirely successfully) to construct James as the source of all Bel-Anna's worth. The fact that the match is described as 'concern[ing] his [Jove's] general government' alludes to James's policy of using the marriage of his children to achieve his political goals; however, Anne had tried to participate disruptively in this sphere, pursuing Spanish matches for both Elizabeth and Henry. Anne's oppositional activities, and her initial refusal to countenance the Palatine match, are displaced in the masque into an argument over who should preside at the celebrations.

A further intertext for the Jove-Juno conflict presents itself in the poems of James's own sonnet-sequence, the *Amatoria*, many of which are addressed to Anne. In one poem the figure of the mistress (Anne?) is strangely identified with 'hatefull Juno', in a way which, as Goldberg suggests, allows James's 'epic fulminations [...] against incorrect marriages and the mother goddess who sanctifies such unions'.⁷² Goldberg's perceptive reading of the *Amatoria* sequence links them with James's frustration at the political necessity of his own marriage, which he felt to be an infringement on his power: 'His claims to absolute power were undercut by the

descent of Anne and her ladies. In Daniel's second masque for Anne, *Tethys' Festival*, Elizabeth had played the nymph of the Thames, anticipating Beaumont's mythologising of the marriage of the rivers of Thames and Rhine.

⁷¹ A precedent for the authoritative role of the female Juno as the presiding genius of marriage might be found in Jonson's *Hymenaei*, which had been performed in 1606, and is discussed below. In Beaumont's masque the altar of Juno is replaced by the altar of Jove thereby containing any possible challenges to the gender hierarchy.

⁷² *Poems*, ed. by Craigie, II, 68. Goldberg, *James I*, p. 25.

opposing powers of Juno' (Goldberg, p. 25). Although the poem goes on to convert 'hatefull Juno' to 'our earthlie Juno', the attempt to transform the tyrannous goddess of marriage into an obedient human wife falls short of providing a resolution.

Similarly, the reconciliation between the Jove-Juno factions which precedes the masque is provisional; Juno apparently submits (just as Anne eventually accepted the marriage of Elizabeth and Frederick), but with the caveat that the celebrations instigated by Jove should not be to his honour, but 'merely in honour of the state' *she* governs.

The masque continues with the revelation of the masquers seated in pavilions 'trimmed on the inside with rich armour and military furniture', behind which are represented 'in perspective the tops of divers other tents, as if it had been a camp' (ll. 283-86). Behind them is Jupiter's altar, and the knights appear 'first as consecrated persons', their veils falling to reveal their knights' attire 'upon the sight of the King' (l. 288; 298). Despite the fact that it is James who causes the veils to fall and who, in his role as Jove, has supposedly commanded the renewal of their sports, the military encampment revealed at the beginning of the masque is clearly at odds with his role as peacemaker king. The main masque, with its central motif of the reinvigoration of knightly and 'active sports', recalls the revival of chivalry effected by Prince Henry in his *Barriers*, which figured a similarly martial arrangement of tents to which the combatants were led prior to their encounter in the barriers. Moreover, the presentation of the Olympian knights as 'consecrated' persons gives their endeavours a religious dimension which was in keeping with Henry's self-fashioning as a chaste warrior-knight of God, the divinely appointed champion of the Protestant church. It is telling that, after the masque dances, the knights are called away to the Olympian games, the martial nature of which is

suggested by the fact that, as they re-ascend the mountain, they put on their sword and belts. For the duration of the masque, the knights' activities have been those of peacetime, but the suggestion is that they must answer the call to the sports of war.

Like Chapman's *Memorable Masque*, *The Inner Temple Masque*'s presentation of James as father-figure, the originator of the marriage and the source of peace and union, collides at every turn with division, and is challenged particularly by the presence of the legacy of Henry's oppositional agenda. The promised celebration of marital harmony is undercut by the discord between Jove and Juno; but once that dispute has been resolved, James is faced with a spectacle of militarism that, in reviving the sports of Olympian knights, seems to bring the ambitions of his dead son back to haunt him.

After Elizabeth's departure from England she remained a beloved figurehead of English Protestants. The militant Protestant sentiments I have discussed in relation to the masques and entertainments for the wedding would resurface with greater force within a few years when she and her husband were crowned as the King and Queen of Bohemia, an action which brought them into direct conflict with the might of the imperial and Spanish branches of the Catholic Hapsburgs. Defeated in battle and exiled from Bohemia and the Palatine, the peregrinations of the Winter Queen attracted the sympathies of the English people and the parliament which voted the peacemaker King subsidies to go to war on her behalf. The marriage which had been part of James's project to effect a European peace had triggered a European conflict, but the impossibility of achieving peace and union had already been registered by the masque writers, whose panegyric was never quite capable of suppressing the oppositional voices at court.

‘Some friendship between man and man prefer’: Marriage and James’s favourites⁷³

The tensions and divisions which characterised the relationships between the members of the royal family were heightened by the attachments James formed to a series of attractive young men. While James’s relationships with his wife and children were characterised by a distance that was physical as well as emotional, his relationships with his favourites entailed proximity, since the rise of a new favourite was signalled by his appointment as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber.⁷⁴ The fact that James’s favourites occupied such central positions at the court moved the members of the royal family further from view, to what Bergeron describes as ‘the outer edges of a growing silence’.⁷⁵ This ‘silence’ was compounded by James’s appropriation of familial rhetoric to formulate his relationships with his favourites, which nominally and linguistically deprived his wife and children of their familial roles. The most extreme example of this occurs in a letter to Buckingham, which addresses him as ‘My only sweet and dear child’, and closes: ‘And so God bless you, my sweet child and wife, and grant that you may ever be a comfort to your dear dad and husband’.⁷⁶

⁷³ The quotation is from a song in *Campion’s Somerset Masque* which debates the relative value of male-male friendships and married life, and is discussed below. See *Campion’s Works*, ed. by Percival Vivian (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 155, l. 7.

⁷⁴ Even before Somerset’s final disgrace, George Villiers’s rise had begun, confirmed by his appointment to the Bedchamber in April 1615. See Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592-1628* (London: Longman, 1981), pp. 19-20, and chapter 5 of this thesis.

⁷⁵ Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 88.

⁷⁶ *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 431. The letter is undated, but Akrigg argues for a date of late 1623.

At the time of Elizabeth's wedding, James's current favourite was Robert Carr, and the Christmas season 1613-14 saw his wedding to Frances Howard celebrated with a magnificence which rivalled that of the wedding of the royal princess. Carr had come from Scotland to England with James's household in 1603 as a page of honour.⁷⁷ He then spent several years in France before returning to England and entering the service of Lord Hay, and it was while serving as a page to Lord Hay during the Accession Day Tilt that an auspicious accident brought Carr to the King's attention. Carr's horse threw him, and the fall broke his leg; the King, enquiring after his injury, was immediately taken with his good looks, and a new favourite was born.

James was soon visiting Carr daily to teach him Latin, and this seemingly trivial fact is interesting for what it reveals about the roles that James fashioned for himself, and the accompanying parts he projected onto his favourites. James was fond of constructing himself as a patriarchal schoolmaster to his kingdom, and the letters of his children, which invariably make some report on their academic progress, demonstrate that they conceived of him in a similar role.⁷⁸ James's relationship with Carr allowed him to literalise this aspect of his persona and the docile Carr was, at least initially, a malleable enough pupil. As Jonathan Goldberg points out, James had begun his *Short Treatise* on poetics by defining his ideal audience as 'neither the ignorant, nor the wise, nor the inquisitive; all these are ineducable because they either know nothing or think they know all, or think they

⁷⁷ The story of Carr's rise and fall is related in, amongst others Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant*, pp. 177-204, and Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 86-88 and 126-32.

⁷⁸ An early letter from Charles reads quite simply 'Sweete Father, i learne to decline substantives and adjectives / give me your blessing', quoted in Bergeron, p. 120.

are capable of such knowledge'.⁷⁹ James seeks 'the docile bairns of knowledge' like Carr.⁸⁰ The submissiveness of pupil to teacher and subject to king would have been guaranteed in this situation by the fact that James was teaching Carr a language. The King was not only creating a role which Carr was expected to play, but was literally speaking through Carr, putting words in his mouth.

In his relationships with his favourites, James lived out the role of creator which had been ascribed to him in so many of the royal wedding masques, and clearly wanted to fashion this young man in his own image, instructing him in statecraft and educating him to serve as a minister under him. Significantly, James devoted himself to the political education of his favourite while neglecting that of his son and heir, and it is not difficult to surmise the underlying motivations for such conduct. Longing to bestow his wisdom and favours on a grateful and adoring recipient, James had to be sure that his pupil could not become a threat to him, and he probably feared that any instruction he gave to the son who was fast becoming his rival might be used against him. Roy Strong observes that it was Cecil who, filling the vacuum generated by James's anxieties about his son as a potential usurper, kept Prince Henry abreast of political developments, while contriving to keep real political power out of Carr's hands.⁸¹ However, when Cecil died in May 1612 Henry found himself cut off from information about the affairs of state, and James swiftly appointed Carr to the Privy Council. By making Carr his protégé, James

⁷⁹ Goldberg, *James I*, p. 19

⁸⁰ Quoted in Goldberg, from *Poems*, ed. by James Craigie, I, 66. Villiers, the most successful of James's favourites, could hardly be described in this way, but he was wiser than Carr in realising the necessity of playing to perfection the roles James scripted for him.

⁸¹ Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales*, p. 74.

may have hoped to present Henry with a rival on whom to focus his opposition; even if the strategy was not wholly conscious on James's part, it functioned to displace Henry's muted aggression from the King to Carr. Arthur Wilson notes that Carr was 'drawn up by the Beams of Majesty, to shine in the highest glory, grappling often with the *Prince* himself in his own *Sphear*, in divers *Contestations*'.⁸²

Ironically, James's hopes for Carr would be disappointed. He had given him wealth, status and power, but the favourite was unable to sustain the role of the docile pupil for long, and eventually proved to be as intransigent as Caliban, refusing to respond even to James's demands for affection.⁸³

But in 1613 Carr was still securely established as the king's favourite, and an influential man, who had formed an attachment to Lady Frances Howard. The Howard family must have been delighted at the prospect of securing to themselves one of the brightest stars in the firmament of the Jacobean court. However, Frances was already a married woman - in 1606 at the age of thirteen she had been married to Robert Devereux, third Earl of Essex. That match had been of considerable political importance, contrived to reconcile deep-seated enmities between the Devereux and the Cecil families, whose feud dated back to Elizabeth's reign.⁸⁴

Molini, the Venetian ambassador, describes the plan 'to reconcile the young Earl of Essex to Lord Salisbury if possible', through two marriages, in which Essex would be married to one of the daughters of Thomas Howard, the Earl of Suffolk, and

⁸² Wilson, *History of Great Britain*, p. 55.

⁸³ The Prospero-Caliban parallel suggests itself since James's earliest encounters with Carr were an attempt to teach him Latin, a counterpart to Prospero giving Caliban the language he later uses to curse him.

⁸⁴ Robert Cecil, now the Earl of Salisbury, had been the prime mover behind the downfall of the second Earl of Essex (the bridegroom's father).

another of Suffolk's daughters would be married to Salisbury's son, thereby 'creating ties of relationship to cancel the memory of these ancient enmities'.⁸⁵ The Essex-Howard marriage was mythologized in Jonson's *Hymenaei*, which used the present occasion of the nuptial to expound on an array of more mystical unions.⁸⁶ The masque, which was only Jonson's second court production, betrays the fact that it belongs to the early period in James's reign because of the optimistic assumption that union, in all its forms, is an attainable ideal. In the discussion which follows, I propose to develop a contrast between *Hymenaei* and the masques for Frances Howard's second marriage, which I see as being symptomatic of a larger shift in the court from a belief in the possibility of union to a more cynical outlook which was resigned to the inevitability of division.

***Hymenaei* and the politics of union**

The central device of *Hymenaei* is the ritual celebration of a Roman marriage. Hymen leads the bridegroom and bride to the altar of Juno, goddess of marriage, who (by a fortuitous anagram) also appears as Unio, or Union.⁸⁷ The ceremony is temporarily interrupted by the descent of the eight male masquers, representing the humours and affections, from a globe which represents the world, but also figures

⁸⁵ *CSP Ven X*, 308. The arrangements for the marriages enact a common elision between familial and political interests. It is striking that Suffolk's daughters are not even named in this account, but are simply exchanged between men, functioning simply as tools in a political game.

⁸⁶ The celebrations for the Essex-Howard marriage - the masque and the Barriers - are discussed by David Lindley in *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 18-27.

⁸⁷ The bride and groom did not literally appear in the masque, but saw themselves represented by actors in the mirror it provided, just as the royal spectators saw themselves in the classical gods who appeared or were invoked in most masques.

the 'little world of man'. Their opposition to the union is subdued by the appearance of Reason. The revelation of Juno and the descent of the eight female masquers who represent her 'powers' confirms the nuptial, in preparation for the union of the male and female masquers in the masque dances. Jonson's plan had been to conclude the masque with an epithalamion, but only the first stanza was performed; its anticipation of the sexual union of the bride and groom was presumably deemed inappropriate for a match between two teenagers, where consummation would be deferred until the parties were older.⁸⁸

I want to begin by considering the representation of marriage itself, which is more central in this masque than in any of the others I have or shall be examining.⁸⁹ The marriage ceremony is described as a sacred mystery, to which the 'profane' may not be admitted, a trope in keeping with Jonson's 'more removed mysteries', the counterpart to James's assertions of the inscrutability of the mysteries of state. The aura of mysticism exudes from Juno's altar, and is supplemented by the beams of James the '*priest of peace*' and his '*Empresse*' Anne, who embody the ideal of marital union to which the bride and groom are to be sacrificed (VII, 212, ll. 92-93).⁹⁰ Although Reason explains to the disruptive male masquers that the motif of sacrifice is purely metaphorical, its recurrence is disconcerting, not least because in

⁸⁸ The marriage was eventually annulled on the grounds of Frances's claim that it had never been consummated. The irony of the fact that the marriage celebrated in Jonson's great masque of union ended in divorce and the bride's remarriage is considered below.

⁸⁹ Its centrality is confirmed by the fact that the bride and groom are actually represented on stage, which does not occur in any of the other wedding masques discussed in this chapter, with the possible exception of Campion's *Lords' Masque*, where Frederick and Elizabeth are represented not by actors, but by statues of themselves.

⁹⁰ This version of the royal marriage was an idealising fiction, envisaging union where there was really division.

a very real way the young couple watching the masque had indeed been sacrificed for political ends.

Initially, the sacrificial rhetoric is applied jointly to bride and groom; however, as the masque progresses it becomes evident that its implications are far more serious for the bride. The change in her condition focuses on the 'Zone of wooll about her waste' whose Herculean knot will be broken before the night is over (VII, 216, l. 192). While both bride and groom are constructed as virginal, the bride is a fearful figure, initiated into the mysteries of sexual union by her husband, who is by implication the dominant and knowing party. The 'faint, and trembling *Bride*' is a stock figure of epithalamia, but such a recourse to classical precedent cannot eradicate the disconcerting effect of lines such as the following, where the groom is told to 'keepe the *Brides* fayre eyes / Awake, with her owne cryes / Which are but *mayden-feares*' (VII, 224, l. 411; 227, ll. 521-23). The most disturbing images of the bride's sacrifice on the wedding bed occur in the epithalamion which was suppressed in performance, but they have important implications for the nature of the unions celebrated in the masque. The fact that the promise of 'mutual joys' is undercut by the presentation of female submission to male dominance, suggests that the types of union enshrined in the masque are not between equals, but are predicated on the dominance of one principle over the other.⁹¹ Similarly, whenever James discussed union, often by invoking the metaphor of marriage, he envisaged a

⁹¹ In the *Barriers*, which were performed the following night, and comprised a debate on the relative value of virginity and the married state, Opinion, the defender of virginity, marshalled an array of examples of the constraints imposed on married women by their husbands. However, the insistence in the epithalamion on the subordination of the bride to her husband is at odds with the rest of the masque, which, presided over by the female powers of Reason and Juno, enacts a challenge to the gender hierarchy, notably by forcing the submission of the male to the female masquers, a reversal which is discussed below.

relationship not of mutuality, but one in which the power balance was skewed to ensure the dominance of one partner. Thus, his description of his relationship with Parliament and the country as a marriage, which seemed at first to offer the country a degree of autonomy, actually confirmed its subordination to the King.

The masque displays the familiar concern with procreation, and advances the Protestant ideal of the chaste marriage bed:

O IUNO, HYMEN, HYMEN, IUNO! who
 Can merit with you two?
 Without your presence, VENVS can doe nought,
 Saue what with shame is bought,
 No father can himself a *parent* show,
 Nor any *house* with prospe'rous issue grow (VII, 221, ll. 332-37).

This marriage hymn expresses a preoccupation with the legitimacy of children characteristic of a culture which attached such importance to genealogy. The same anxiety appears in the epithalamion which anticipates the birth of a child with the hope that there will be enough visual evidence to confirm its legitimacy, and especially its paternity: 'Let it be like each *Parent* knowne; / Much of the *fathers* face, / More of the *mothers* grace' (VII, 228, ll. 550-552).⁹²

The consummation of the marriage is seen as bringing to both parties a new perfection, but the initial impression of mutuality is once again undercut when it becomes clear that the bride/wife cannot attain perfection unless and until a child is conceived. Patriarchy dictates that woman must fulfil her procreative function, but Lady Frances was to turn this construction of the wifely role against the patriarchal authority of her husband and the church, by raising the spectre of male impotence. She would claim in her suit for divorce that 'desirous to be made a mother' she had

⁹² The parallel with *The Winter's Tale* is striking. See the discussion in chapter 3 of the father's desire to see in his children (especially in his sons) a copy of himself.

‘yielded herself to his power, and [...] offered herself and her body to be known; and earnestly desired conjunction and copulation’ with him.⁹³

The capacity of women to exploit their procreative potential as a force to oppose patriarchy has been demonstrated in the discussion of Queen Anne’s manipulations of her maternal role in chapter 2. The royal marriage is invoked early in the masque as an ideal and fruitful union:

O you, whose better blisses
Have proou’d the strict embrace
Of VNION, with chast kisses,
And seene it flow so in your happie *race* (VII, 212, ll. 95-98).

In fact the relationship between James and Anne was far from blissful, and was characterised more by ‘the fighting *seedes of things*’ than by union (VII, 212, l. 100). The tensions can be glimpsed fleetingly in the description of Anne as ‘his [James’s] *Empresse*, she / That sits so crowned with her owne increase’ (VII, 212, l. 94). Stereotypically, Queen Anne is defined in relation to her husband and children, but it is interesting to note that the children are emphatically described as belonging to Anne; they are not just hers, but her *own*. This acknowledgement of the generative power of the female body can be related to the masque’s gendering of its presiding powers as female, an idea to which I will be returning.

James is constructed in by now familiar terms as an earthly deity, a source of ‘more than vsuall light’ (VII, 212, l. 83). It is appropriate that he should grace this union since he is a ‘*priest of peace*’, a reference to his *rex pacificus* persona, and in

⁹³ *Complete Collection of State Trials*, ed. by T. B. Howell (London, 1816), II, 785 quoted in Lindley, *Trials*, p. 81. The poems and masques which celebrated Howard’s second marriage invoked the unnatural barrenness of her union with Essex as a justification for her seeking a new and (hopefully) productive union with Carr.

real terms he would have approved of the match which was an attempt to promote harmony in his court (VII, 212, l. 92). Moreover, the masque's association of James with union was intended to evoke and praise the proposed union of England and Scotland, which was James's pet project during the years immediately after his accession to the English throne.⁹⁴

James proclaimed himself the uniter of England and Scotland, playing the role of priest by joining them both together as man and wife into the married kingdom of Britain. In October 1604, despite the opposition of parliament, he assumed the style of King of Britain by proclamation, and had a coin issued to commemorate the occasion, bearing the motto 'Quae Deus conjunxit nemo separet'.⁹⁵ In a 1607 address to parliament he elucidated the terms of the union, asserting 'You are to be the husband, they the wife: you conquerors, they as conquered, though not by the sword but by the sure and sweet bond'.⁹⁶ Once again it is clear that union does not imply a partnership on equal terms. England, as the husband, is the dominant partner, and although the union is to be a peaceful one, the fact that the sword is mentioned at all warns that the force which is currently muted is always a possibility.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ See D. J. Gordon's authoritative essay, 'Hymenaei: Ben Jonson's Masque of Union', in *The Renaissance Imagination*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 157-184, especially pp. 168-74, where Gordon relates the masque's representation of Anglo-Scottish union to some of the contemporary propaganda which reflected royal policy.

⁹⁵ *Proclamations*, ed. by J. F. Larkin and P. Hughes, I, 94-97. See also Gordon, pp. 170-71, who notes that the motto on the coin constituted a direct response to critics of the Union, who had been accused in James's proclamation of trying to separate what God had joined.

⁹⁶ *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 294.

⁹⁷ This might be compared with the construction of the relationship between England and Ireland in *The Irish Masque*, discussed below, where the threat of force

The political dimension of the union symbolised by the nuptial means that the rebellion of the humours and affections against Reason in the microcosm raises the spectre of civil insurrection in the macrocosm.⁹⁸ The humours and affections issue from the globe ‘with a kind of contentious Musique’ which is an aural indicator of their disruptive potential (VII, 212, ll. 109-110). Although they are represented by eight noblemen, their role can more properly be seen in terms of an antimasque than a masque, since, like the hags in *The Masque of Queens*, they are associated with darkness and ignorance, and their behaviour constitutes a rebellion against a higher principle.⁹⁹ The exact significance of the humours is difficult to establish. They may represent the unruliness of parliamentary opposition to James’s project of union. Gordon notes that a new parliamentary session was due to open a fortnight after the performance of *Hymenaei*, and the masque’s spectacle of the subduing of the opponents of union might have functioned at once as a sort of wish-fulfilment for the King, and as a last-minute warning to his opponents.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, members of the audience, who, like Dudley Carleton, were opposed to the union on the grounds that it would precipitate an influx of barbaric, rude and uncivil Scots may have seen the humours and affections as representatives of that nation. For

is present, although it is displaced onto the comic antimasque and appears in the muted form of the Lord Chamberlain’s white staff.

⁹⁸ Jonson’s rather grudging elucidation of the allegory makes the correspondence between natural and politic bodies explicit, VII, 213.

⁹⁹ The antimasque-masque division which emerged in *Queens* had not yet been consolidated, with the result that, as in *Blackness*, the noble masquers were associated, at least temporarily, with disorder, as well as with the ideals espoused by the main masque. Later entertainments, notably those commissioned by Buckingham, came full circle and like the early masques transcended the rigid division of antimasque and masque; in *The Gypsies Metamorphos’d* members of the court wore blackface and took on the roles of the notoriously dishonest gypsies.

¹⁰⁰ Gordon, p. 169.

such spectators, the masque aimed to allay their fears by showing that, just as Reason could subdue the passions of the natural body, King James was capable of imposing order on his Scottish subjects.¹⁰¹ D. J. Gordon quotes a 1604 sermon which was typical of the pro-union propaganda, and makes the link between Reason and King James explicit:

for euen as *Mens* or *Ratio* is the king who ruleth, and keepeth in order his subjects [...] euen so the king and head of this lland must keep his subjects in the *South* and in the *North* [...] in good order [...]. So that I conclude if we be vnited vnder one head and one king, we must be vnited amongst our selues, or els be disobedient to *Reason* our *King*.¹⁰²

The sermon genders Reason masculine, just as James had gendered the ‘head’ (and by implication the rational faculties) masculine in his assertion, ‘I am the Husband and the whole Isle is my lawfull wife. I am the Head and it is my Body’.¹⁰³ Both the sermon-writer and the King were drawing on a long-established hierarchy which associated masculinity with the rational and spiritual, while associating women with the corporeal. However, what Gordon fails to notice, or chooses to ignore, is the fact that any equation of Reason and James in the *masque* is problematised by the presentation of Reason as female. Jonson’s decision to represent Reason as female may have arisen simply from the iconographical tradition on which he was drawing, but whatever his rationale, the result is an

¹⁰¹ For Carleton’s opposition to the union and anti-union propaganda, see Mary Floyd-Wilson, ‘Temperature, Temperance, and Racial Difference in Ben Jonson’s *The Masque of Blackness*’, *ELR* 28, (1998), 183-209, and the brief discussion of this issue as a possible context for Carleton’s negative response to *The Masque of Blackness* in chapter 2 of this thesis. In his speech of 1607, James was still trying to dissuade parliament from the opinion that ‘this Vnion will be the *Crisis* to the overthrow of England [...]: England will then be overwhelmed by the swarming of the Scots, who if the Vnion were effected, would raigne and rule all’, in *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, p. 294.

¹⁰² Gordon, p. 171.

¹⁰³ *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, p. 272.

uneasy tension at the heart of this putative masque of union.¹⁰⁴ For, at the moment of the restoration of Reason's rightful authority over the unruly passions, we also witness an inversion of gender hierarchies, as the male masquers are forced to submit to their female sovereign, and to the female powers of the goddess Juno: 'These, these are they, / Whom *humour* and *affection* must obey' (VII, 218, ll. 259-60). Jonson may have been aware of the problem, since the printed version of the masque includes a rather defensive note in which he justifies, on grammatical grounds, the presentation of the irrational passions as masculine.¹⁰⁵ And for at least two of the performers, namely the Count and Countess of Montgomery, Philip Herbert and Susan de Vere, who had been married two years earlier, the inversion of gender hierarchies must have assumed a particular and personal resonance. It is tempting to conjecture whether they and / or the audience registered the gendered dimension of the victory of the powerful female forces of Reason, Juno and her powers as significant. In my analysis of the masque, the authority vested in the female figures disrupts the representation of male dominance in marriage, and in doing so undermines the power relations which have been troped as a marriage, including the King's rule over his country, and the superiority of England in the Anglo-Scottish union.

¹⁰⁴ Amongst Jonson's sources would have been Ripa's *Iconologia*, in which Reason is a woman. See Gordon, pp. 160-61.

¹⁰⁵ The male body was usually seen as classically contained and controlled, whereas the female body was humoural and unstable. See Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), especially pp. 23-63 where she discusses the discourse which 'inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness - its production of fluids - as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful [...]. The issue is [...] the representation of a particular kind of uncontrol as a function of gender', p. 25.

The crucial force in *Hymenaei* is Unio(n), and a fortuitous anagram allows Jonson to equate Unio with Juno (Iuno). Her influence reaches far beyond the joining of two people in marriage; she joins all creatures with one another and with God, in a universal union represented by the chain of being which is formed during one of the masque dances:

She that makes *soules*, with *bodies*, mixe in loue,
Contracts the *world* in one, and therein IOVE;
Is *spring*, and *end* of all things: yet, most strange!
Her selfe nor suffers *spring*, nor *end*, nor *change* (VII, 214, ll. 141-44).

Moreover, as D. J. Gordon, tracing Jonson's sources in Renaissance Platonism, observes:

as well as being *Unio* - Juno - Union is Unity, the state of being united, of being one [...]. This is the *monas* of Macrobius, at once male and female, at once even and odd, not itself a number, but the source and origin of number, the beginning and end of all things, itself knowing neither a beginning nor an end [...]. One represents, says Macrobius in the passage Jonson quotes, the supreme God.¹⁰⁶

Gordon notes that it was a daring move to equate Unio with the supreme God, but my reading of the gender dynamics of the masque reveals an even greater radical potential, and problematises the masque's attempts to present James as the bringer of union.

In performance, the dominance of the female masquers, representing the powers of Juno, over the male masquers, representing the humours and affections, may have been contained by the masque dances, which contemporary theorists such as Thomas Elyot saw as performative of the gendered order of the social hierarchy, enshrining the ideal marital relations of male dominance and female

¹⁰⁶ Gordon, pp. 163-64.

subordination.¹⁰⁷ However, even if such a last-minute reversal was achieved by the masque dances, the speeches in praise of the King cannot match up to the epiphany of Juno and the description of Unio's powers. The result is that in a masque, which on one level is 'about' James's project to unite his kingdom, James himself is decentralised and marginalised. One could almost be forgiven for missing him, just as one might overlook the presence onstage of a statue of Jove, which, in the description of the scene merits only the briefest of mentions.

The celebrations of the marriage continued the evening after the performance of *Hymenaei* with the ceremonial barriers. A dramatic context was provided by Jonson's speeches, which presented a conflict between Truth and Opinion over the relative value of married life and virginity. Opinion, who argues for virginity, is eventually defeated, but her complaints against the limitations imposed upon women by their husbands comprise a bitter critique of the type of male dominance that had been envisaged in the Epithalamion to *Hymenaei*:

And then, what rules *husbands* praescribe their *wiues*!
 In their eyes circles they must bound their liues [...]
 But your poor *wiues* farre off must neuer come,
 But wast their beauties, neere their *lords*, at home (VII, 235, ll. 774-5; 778-9).

Despite the proto-feminism of Opinion's complaints on behalf of oppressed wives, the supporters of the bride fought not on the side of Opinion, but on the side of Truth, who as the representative of the married state, carried the day. The

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Elyot, *The boke named the governor* (London, 1531), ed. by R. C. Alston (Menston: Scolar Press, 1970). According to Elyot's theoretical ideal, the 'good nature' of a woman, which is expressed in her dancing, is to be 'milde, timerouse, tractable, benigne'; and dancing reinforces such gender distinctions: '[T]he meuing of the man wolde be more vehement, of the woman more delicate, and with l[e]sse aduancing of the body, signifienge the courage and strenthe that oughte to be in a man, and the pleasa[n]t sobrenesse that shulde be in a woman, fols. 82v-83r.

combatants were aligned broadly according to their allegiance to the Essex or Howard factions, and the reconciliation between the two parties had a political dimension in keeping with the goal of the marriage. However, as the discussion of *Hymenaei* has demonstrated, union and reconciliation are frequently predicated not on equality, but on the superiority of one of the partners. In the *Barriers*, the Essex party, fighting on the part of Opinion, are revealed to be misguided, and while Truth tries to mitigate their defeat, asserting that ‘valour wins applause / That dares but to maintayne the weaker cause’, and ‘it is a conquest to submit to *right*’, the union seems to be based on the superior strength at court of the Howard family and their supporters (VII, 240, ll. 920-21; 931).

The contest between virginity and married life was a common Renaissance topos, but its assumption that the two states are mutually exclusive would be challenged seven years later when the marriage of Essex and Frances Howard was dissolved because the wife had claimed, and was ‘proved’ to be, still a virgin.¹⁰⁸ The vision of nuptial union presented in Jonson’s *Hymenaei* was never realised, and the annulment of the marriage, amid much scandal and prurient gossip, left Lady Frances free to marry Robert Carr, which she did in December 1613. With hindsight *Hymenaei* became fraught with irony, and a source of embarrassment for Jonson, who included the masque in his 1616 Folio, but suppressed all references to the occasion for which it was commissioned, demonstrating his awareness of the

¹⁰⁸ Frances had been subjected to a physical examination by a group of matrons, but the gossip surrounding the divorce proceedings cast doubt on the reliability of their findings; it was even suggested that she had substituted another lady for herself. See Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant*, pp. 184-85. The interaction between fact and fiction in the affair has been elucidated in Lindley’s admirable work, *The Trials of Frances Howard*; he discusses the annulment proceedings on pp. 77-122. The constraints of space mean I cannot pursue the implications of the ‘trial’ in any detail, but I will

‘uncomfortable disparity between the idealized vision his work attempted to create and the stubborn intractability of the real world’.¹⁰⁹ The problem is endemic in the genre of the masque, but is particularly pronounced with *Hymenaei* because of the link Jonson had posited between the present occasion of the marriage and the more removed mysteries. This correspondence meant that the collapse of the marriage threatened to undermine the masque’s larger claims for universal union between God and man, between king and subject, and between England and Scotland; hence Jonson’s anxiety to suppress references to the corrupted ‘present occasion’ in his folio edition.

Storms, sea-monsters, and the Queen’s ‘Sacred Hand’: Champion’s *Somerset Masque*

While marriage had been invoked as a pattern for other types of union in *Hymenaei*, the masques and poems produced to commemorate Lady Frances’s second marriage are more circumspect in their claims. Many of the writers use myth to interpret the events surrounding the second marriage, and in so doing, distance themselves from their poetic tributes.¹¹⁰ Chapman’s *Andromeda Liberata* caused offence among the supporters of Essex for mythologising the bride’s divorce to make the second marriage seem a deliverance for the heroine; she is Andromeda, chained to a ‘barraine Rocke’ (Essex) from which she is rescued by her Perseus (Somerset).¹¹¹

refer to aspects which influenced the masques written for Howard’s second marriage.

¹⁰⁹ David Lindley ‘Embarrassing Ben: the Masques for Frances Howard’, *ELR*, 16 (1986), 343-59 (p. 345).

¹¹⁰ See Patricia G. Pinka, ‘Donne, Idios and the Somerset Epithalamion’, *Studies in Philology* 90 (1993), 58-73.

¹¹¹ *The Poems of George Chapman*, ed. by Phyllis Bartlett (New York: Modern

'*The monstrous beast, the rauenous Multitude*' (l. 80), who, in Chapman's poem, represent the opponents of Howard's divorce and remarriage, have their counterparts in Campion's masque for the wedding night, which presents four evil enchanters - Error, Rumour, Curiosity and Credulity - who create storms at sea, impeding the journey of the knights who have come to celebrate the nuptials.¹¹²

The masque opens with four squires relating to the King how the knights have been enchanted, suffering stormy weather and then being transformed into gold pillars. The enchanters appear and together with the four winds, the four elements and the four continents, they dance an antimasque, which must have been a striking visual representation of universal confusion. They are vanquished by Eternity who brings in the Destinies and Harmony, but although the evil forces have been banished from the masque stage, the knights have not yet been liberated. A golden tree is placed before Bel-Anna (Queen Anne in the persona Jonson created for her in *Queens*) who is asked to break a bough from it. She does so and the now 'blessed' branch is used to restore the knights to human form.

The nuptials which provided the present occasion for this masque are conspicuous by their absence. The first squire mentions a 'nuptial feast' as the reason for the knights' voyage, but in the remainder of the masque the marriage is referred to only

Language Association, 1941), p. 313, l. 143; her 'Innocence' is protected by heaven, l. 144. Chapman responded to the outrage of the Essex party in *A Free and Offenceless Justification: Of a lately publisht and most maliciously interpreted Poeme; Entituled Andromeda Liberata*, pp. 325-335.

¹¹² For the *Somerset Masque* see *Campion's Works*, ed. by Percival Vivian (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), pp. 147-156. Subsequent references to this edition are given by page and line number in the text. The association of a marriage with storms generated by evil powers recalls the storms which had kept James and Anne apart, and which Agnes Thompson admitted to producing at the command of the devil. See the discussion of the Scottish witch trials in chapter 2 of this thesis, and in Orgel, 'Jonson and the Amazons', in *Soliciting Interpretation: Literary Theory and*

in a single song and in the most conventional of blessings. The reason for this may be that the topicality of Campion's masque resides less in any claims for union, than in the confusions of the antimasque. The disruptive forces of Error, Rumour, Curiosity and Credulity recreate the atmosphere of scandalous gossip which surrounded the relationship between Frances and Robert Carr. One such *rumour*, which Lady Frances would presumably have deemed *erroneous*, believed only by the *credulous*, was that in the physical examination to establish her virginity, she had substituted another young woman for herself.¹¹³ The appearance of the enchanters recalls the antimasque hags in *Queens* - especially the ever-open ears and eyes of Credulity and Curiosity, as well as the winged tongue of Rumour; the latter figured in emblem tradition as a potentially dangerous instrument, unless subject to the control of Reason.¹¹⁴ However, the masque's presentation of the victory of divinely produced harmony over the ignorance of public opinion was never to be achieved in reality, since the scandal of the divorce proceedings had been barely laid to rest when the Somersets were implicated in the murder of Thomas Overbury, plunging the court into a new round of scandal, with all the ingredients of a modern day tabloid story - sex, violence, and suggestions of the supernatural. Indeed, from the 1613 marriage of the Somersets onwards, James seems to have become

Seventeenth Century English Poetry, ed. by E. D. Harvey and K. E. Maus (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991), pp. 119-39 (pp. 124-125).

¹¹³ See Pinka, pp. 59-60 and Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant*, pp. 184-85 for this and other rumours. Middleton's virginity-test scenario in *The Changeling* (which postdates this affair by some ten years) begins to look less fantastical.

¹¹⁴ Limon, *Masque of Stuart Culture*, pp. 173-74 elucidates Campion's dependence on the emblem tradition in the creation of the antimasque.

increasingly troubled by gossip at the court, and took a range of measures which attempted, with little success, to minimise it.¹¹⁵

The squires seek the grace and protection of the King on behalf of the beleaguered knights who have come to honour the marriage, and the fact that amongst the knight-masquers were three members of the Howard family demonstrates the extent to which the masque was intended to reflect the situation at court. James was not only a keen supporter of the marriage, but had effectively made it possible by rigging the annulment hearings. Yet in this masque his presence seems to have little effect, with the disruptive elements melting away not because of the King's presence, but because of the appearance of Eternity, Harmony and the Destinies. The presence of the destinies advances the claim that this marriage, like Princess Elizabeth's, has been ordained by Fate, but whereas in the case of the royal wedding such claims were founded on the religious hopes that focused on the couple, in *The Somerset Masque* the same claims seem rather weak.¹¹⁶

While James's role in this masque is less significant than one might expect, given the fact that he had facilitated the marriage, the crucial transformation and release of the masquers is effected by Queen Anne. This begs an obvious question; why, when the squires have sought the protection of James, should it be Anne and Anne alone

¹¹⁵ James's proclamations at the time of the Somerset's arrest and trial for murder, instructing members of the court to return to their country residences, may have been motivated by a desire to reduce the numbers of people at court in an attempt to contain the scandal. Similarly, in the 1620s, while James was pursuing the Spanish match for Charles, he issued proclamations prohibiting the discussion of affairs of state, which he felt was an infringement on his prerogative. Jonson responded with a series of masques in which public opinion is presented as ignorant and monstrous. See chapter 5 of this thesis.

¹¹⁶ Perhaps Jonson's recognition of the insubstantiality of attempts to attach any great significance to the wedding is what prompts him, in *The Irish Masque*, to mock Campion's use of numerology, especially the apocalyptic imagery that builds up around the number four, and which is discussed below.

whose 'blest' and 'sacred' hands produce the 'diuine-touch't bough' able to break the enchantment? (p. 153, l. 3; 18; 22). The invocation of Anne is especially surprising given the fact that she had made no secret of her opposition to the match, and had supported Essex during the divorce hearing, but the masque is obstinately emphatic in its assertions that '*she, she, only she / Can all Knotted spels unty*' (p. 153, ll. 1-2).¹¹⁷ One possible explanation for this surprising move is that, in requiring the Queen, before the whole court, to effect the liberation of the masquers, whose number included members of the Howard family, Campion's masque effectively negated her opposition. Her actions in breaking off the bough as requested, and colluding with the masque fiction, may have been interpreted as her sanctioning the marriage she had hitherto opposed. If this was indeed how Anne experienced the masque, being interpellated into a subject position she disliked, she might have recalled that her own masques had often tried to put James in a similarly uncomfortable position.

However, it may be that Anne enjoyed the fact that the transformation scene was dependent on her rather than on James, and revelled in her role as the source of power that can free the world from the forces of evil. The self-consciousness of Campion's decision to cast the Queen rather than the King in the central transforming role is indicated by his acknowledgement of the reversal of the gender stereotypes of male activity and female passivity: '*since Knights by valour rescue Dames distrest, / Let them be by the Queene of Dames releast*' (p. 153, ll. 13-14). Campion's unconventional 'casting' decision may therefore have functioned as a covert criticism of James's involvement in the affair. The Queen is a source of virtue, and by implication James, motivated by his infatuation with his current

¹¹⁷ Anne's support for Essex is discussed in Lindley, *Trials*, p. 84.

favourite to behave unjustly, is not. Moreover, while Chapman's *Memorable Masque* had troped James as the beginnings of a genealogical tree, the association here of the Queen with a 'Tree of Grace and Bountie' allows her to reclaim this aspect of her iconography from James (p. 152, l. 43).

Anne's active role is all the more striking given that the masques and entertainments for this marriage seem to have marginalised not only the bride but all female influence, demonstrating the extent to which the homosocial and homosexual bonds between men at James's court generated a misogynist ethos which was contemptuously dismissive of women.¹¹⁸ The reluctance of the masques to refer to the wedding they are supposedly celebrating means that Juno, who had figured as a powerful force on at least two earlier occasions, is absent. Moreover, all the masques for the Somerset wedding were danced by men, with no double masques (for both male and female masquers) of the sort that had figured in *Hymenaei* and in *Campion's Lords' Masque* for Elizabeth's wedding.¹¹⁹

Another problematic aspect of *The Somerset Masque* is its use of apocalyptic imagery. Jerzy Limon cites a range of biblical analogies for the emphasis on the number four, including Daniel 7: 2-3, 7, 16-18:

¹¹⁸ The marginalisation of Frances from her own wedding is at its height in the dedication of *The Masque of Flowers* to Francis Bacon, who had commissioned it: 'This last masque, presented by gentlemen of Gray's Inn, before his Majesty, in honour of the marriage and happy alliance between two such principle persons of the kingdom as are the Earl of Suffolk and the Earl of Somerset'. Not only is the marriage specifically conceptualised as being between Howard's father and husband, but the masque, commissioned by Bacon and performed by the men of Gray's Inn before the King also erases her. See *The Masque of Flowers*, ed. by E. A. J. Honigmann, in *A Book of Masques*, ed. by T. J. B. Spencer and Stanley Wells, pp. 149-77 (p. 159).

¹¹⁹ The withdrawal of women from the masque stage, or more accurately, the masculine reappropriation of the masque stage that took place at this time is discussed in the next chapter.

Daniel spake, and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great Sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea [...]. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it [...]. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom, for ever, even for ever and ever.

Limon points out that Renaissance commentators had identified the four beasts with the empires of Babylon, Assyria, Greece and Rome, and explains that ‘since the Reformation the Protestants believed that the Fourth Monarchy and the fourth beast represented the papacy, being the Head of the Holy Roman Empire’.¹²⁰ However, while Limon makes a convincing case for the presence of such meanings in the masque, he fails to consider the fact that they are at odds with a marriage which had little significance on the European stage. The importance of the marriage was on a local level, where its effect in religious terms was, if anything, detrimental to the Protestant interest, since it attached Carr to the pro-Spanish and Catholic Howards, who could expect to gain more influence over the King through their link to his favourite.

David Norbrook has argued that the reign of James saw the beginnings of the ‘reformation’ of the masque, which culminated in its being recast in terms of an apocalyptic Protestant ideology in Milton’s *Comus*.¹²¹ Campion’s *Somerset Masque* pre-empted Milton in a significant respect, by making the transformation scene, which had conventionally been achieved through the mere presence of the monarch, dependent on effort, just as the Lady in *Comus* can only finally be freed by Sabrina.

¹²⁰ Limon, pp. 175-76.

¹²¹ Norbrook, ‘The Reformation of the Masque’, in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 94-110.

If *Campion's* masque does exemplify the possibilities for the reformation of the genre, it is ironic that its shift from aristocratic complacency towards the new Protestant work ethic should be achieved by the Catholic Queen. Yet notwithstanding her Catholicism, Anne aligned herself with the Essexians to oppose the growing power of the Howard faction at court.

Campion's masque is fraught with such ambiguities, generated by its attempt to negotiate between the power of the King and Queen, and between the different factions at court. One of the songs raises the issue of whether 'th'affection between man and wife' is preferable to the 'friendship between man and man', a traditional topos, which recalls the contest between Truth and Opinion, defenders of the married state and virginity respectively, at the *Barriers* for Howard's first wedding (p. 155, ll. 6-7). Not surprisingly, on this occasion as on the earlier one, married love is favoured, on the grounds that it bears the fruit of children. However, this seemingly straightforward conclusion invites different interpretations. Most obviously, the insistence on the fruitfulness of a relationship might be seen as a reference to the infertility of Lady Frances's last marriage, which would legitimise James' intervention in the annulment, since 'Set is that Tree in ill-houre / That yeilds neither fruite nor flowre' (p. 155, ll. 10-11). Yet it is equally possible to read the rejection of male-male relationships as a critique of James's relationships with Carr and his other male favourites, which, the song advises, should be subordinate to his marriage, advice which takes on a political dimension when it is recalled that James's marriage was not just to his wife, but to his country, which was vulnerable to the power being placed in the hands of Carr.

Union or Conflict ? : Jonson's entertainments for the Somerset marriage

The theme of division, particularly between the sexes is continued in Jonson's *Challenge at Tilt*, a two-part entertainment which took place on 27 December and 1 January. On the first of these evenings two Cupids entered the court and explained that one had been the bride's page and the other the groom's during the nuptials. They struggle to gain precedence - 'I serue the man and the nobler creature / But I the woman and the purer; and therefore the worthier' - and the ensuing debate is supposed to prove which of the two is the real Cupid and by extension, whether the love of the man or the woman is the 'most true and perfect' (VII, 389, ll. 4-6). Words prove inadequate to resolve the argument, and one of the Cupids issues the challenge, which took place on New Year's Day.¹²² Even after the tilting, the contention is still not resolved, until Hymen descends, explaining to the Cupids that they are both the true sons of Venus by Mars, but one is Eros, the other Anteros. Their relationship is seen as figuring the mutual and reciprocal affection which is essential to marriage.

This entertainment, like Campion's masque, displays a concern with the division at court that had resulted from Frances's divorce and remarriage. As David Lindley observes, 'the fact that this entertainment is a tilt, rather than a masque, means that the contest which the spectators witness is directly translatable into a[n] image of jarring factions within the court'.¹²³ The topicality would have been heightened by the fact that members of the Howard family fought on the side of the groom, demonstrating their intention to prosper from their connection with the King's favourite. The combatants on the other side included the Earls of Pembroke and

¹²² The tilt is described by Chamberlain, *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, I, 498.

¹²³ Lindley, 'Embarrassing Ben', p. 345.

Montgomery, opponents of the Howard faction and the match, who fought in the colours of the bride. The tilt is not only a striking visual representation of the divided nature of the court, but, by ending in a draw, it offers a vision of reconciliation which is explicitly extended to the court in Hymen's closing blessing:

let your Knights [...] affect the like peace, and depart the lists equall in their friendships foreuer, as to day they haue bene in their fortunes. And may this royall court neuer know difference in humours; or these well-grac'd nuptials more discord in affections, then what they presently feele, and may euer auoid (VII, 395, ll. 221-27).

However, the ideal is undercut in a number of ways, notably by Chamberlain's comment that the 'current and praise, you must think, ran on her side'. The dominance of the bride's champions would have been small comfort to those amongst them, including Pembroke and Montgomery, who had opposed the Carr-Howard alliance, but whose participation indicates the necessity of compromise, and of accepting what was a *fait accompli*. However, the Agent of Savoy's report that many of the lords invited to participate had refused 'because they are relatives of the Earl of Essex', demonstrates the extent to which Hymen's prophecy of future harmony was provisional, an attempt to manufacture a union which was far from having been effected.¹²⁴

Jonson's second contribution to the occasion, *The Irish Masque*, performed on 29 December and repeated on 3 January, was commissioned and paid for by James. The masquers were chosen from amongst James's own men on the grounds of their dancing ability.¹²⁵ As I have already noted, all of the masques for the Somerset wedding were danced by men, and, given the evidence that James enjoyed watching

¹²⁴ John Orrell, 'The London Court Stage in the Savoy Correspondence, 1613-75', *Theatre Research International* 4 (1979), 79-94 (p. 80).

¹²⁵ See the warrants from Suffolk to Thomas Lake quoted in H&S X, 541.

attractive young men dance, the debates which extolled married love over the friendship between men would have been undermined by the focus of the King's homoerotic gaze on the male masque dancers. It may also be significant that the dancers included five Englishmen and five Scots, invoking the Anglo-Scottish union as a precedent for James's plans to pursue the issue of Anglo-Irish religious conformity. Chamberlain wrote to Carleton that:

the new loftie maskers were so well liked at the court the last weeke that they were appointed to performe yt again on Monday yet theyre devise (which was a mimicall imitation of the Irish) was not pleasing to many, who thincke yt no time (as the case stands) to exasperat that nation by making yt ridiculous.¹²⁶

His comments make it clear that the topicality of this masque lies in its engagement with the Irish question, rather than with the marriage it was commissioned to commemorate. Despite the unease expressed by Chamberlain about the masque's presentation of the Irish, it was performed a second time, presumably at the request of the King himself, whose policies it endorsed. It may also have reassured James by restoring to him the power to effect the masque transformation, a prerogative which had been temporarily usurped by Anne.

The masque employs the familiar scenario of foreigners come to the English court to celebrate the nuptials.¹²⁷ A comic opening section is provided by four Irish footmen, who, in broad Irish accents, assure James of the loyalty of his Irish subjects:

Der.: Tou hasht very goot shubshechts in Ireland.
 Den.: A great goot many, o' great goot shubshechts.
 Don.: Tat loue ty mayesty heartily (VII, 402, ll. 102-4).

¹²⁶ Chamberlain, *Letters*, ed. by McClure, I, 498.

¹²⁷ Compare, for example, *The Memorable Masque* and *The Somerset Masque*.

They describe how twelve Irish gentleman who have come to pay their respects have lost their fine masquing costumes in a storm at sea and must appear before James in their mantles. However, in the presence of the King the masquers are exhorted to 'come forth new-borne creatures all', and they drop their mantles revealing their masquing costumes (VII, 404, l. 182). This transformation is the culmination of a series of progressions from the 'rudeness' of the footmen to the 'civility' of the gentlemen. The comically rendered accent of the former is replaced by 'proper' English, the pipes give way to the 'solemn music of harps', and prose is metamorphosed into poetry. James is the source of the masquers' new life - they are effectively transfigured by his light, which is the source of 'vigour, youth and spright' (VII, 405, l. 194), and he is constructed as a long-awaited Messianic figure, who can effect the salvation of Ireland:

This is the man thou promis'd should redeeme,
 If she would loue his counsels as his lawes,
 Her head from seruitude, her feete from fall,
 Her fame from barbarisme, her state from want,
 And in her all the fruits of blessings plant (VII, 404, ll. 161-65).

The masque's presentation of James is in keeping with contemporary propaganda on the Irish issue which credited James with having 'reclaimed the Irish from their wildness, caused them to cut off their glibs and their long haire, to conuert their mantles into cloaks, to conform themselves to the manner of England in all their behaviour and outward form'.¹²⁸ The masque should be seen, as Lindley has explained, in the specific context of the failure in early 1613 of the Irish parliament,

¹²⁸ John Davies, *A Discoverie of the State of Ireland* (London, 1613), p. 272, quoted by Lindley, p. 353. See also Barnaby Rich, *A new description of Ireland* (London, 1610). The concurrence of this masque with propaganda which supported royal policy recalls Jonson's treatment of the Anglo-Scottish union in *Hymenaei*, which, as the discussion above illustrated, engaged with James's speeches and pro-Union propaganda.

which James had attempted to rig to ensure a Protestant majority, and from which the Catholic 'Old English' members had withdrawn, in protest at James's plan to impose religious conformity.¹²⁹

The masque offers the by now familiar vision of a union which is predicated not on equality, but on the submission of one party to the other. The transformation enacted in the masque is presented as a 'civilising process', but in colonialist discourse this is an attempt to aestheticize an insistence on uniformity, and an elimination of national difference. In order to be redeemed by James, Ireland must love and obey him, entering a new servitude rather than the state of liberty that seems to be promised, a contradiction which emerges in the gentleman's promise that James will free Ireland's 'head from servitude', if she will 'stoupe but to the musique of his peace' (VII, 404, l. 163; 159).¹³⁰ The disorderly presence of the Irish footmen in the antimasque allows James's power to be mystified and aestheticized as a beneficent and creative act, which brings order out of chaos. This effect is compounded by the class politics which are invoked by the unruliness of the servants and the spontaneous obedience of their masters. As Lindley points out, the real rebels in Ireland *were* the gentlemen, but the masque's rewriting of the events of the parliament displaces the rebelliousness of the upper classes onto the comic figures of the footmen. This 'enables the "white-stick" to be used as an acceptable manifestation of royal power' - the power which is aestheticized and mystified in

¹²⁹ Lindley, 'Embarrassing Ben', p. 351. James's strategy of manufacturing a sympathetic majority in the Irish parliament was, of course repeated when he added two new members to the commission considering Frances Howard's divorce to ensure they reached the outcome he wanted.

¹³⁰ This recalls the fate of Ariel; freed by Prospero from the tree in which he had been imprisoned by Sycorax, Ariel's physical liberation marks his entrance into a new life of servitude.

the masque proper appears in the antimasque as a violent and coercive force, but its operation is sanctioned on the grounds of class (Lindley, p. 356). A similar process can be seen in *The Tempest*, where, in the closing scenes, the fact that Sebastian and Antonio have usurped Prospero and attempted to kill Alonso is obscured by Prospero's silence on the subject, while violent punishment is reserved for the comic underclass of masterless men in opposition to whom the divided nobility can present a united front.¹³¹

The *Irish Masque* includes no descriptions of scenic devices, and, since the transformation was achieved through the bodies of the masquers, none were needed.¹³² The performance of the masque on a bare (or nearly bare) stage, would have heightened its claim to 'realism', presenting all the Irish characters, footmen and gentlemen alike, as real people who had really come from Ireland. The irony was, of course, that the masque's miraculous transformation, bringing sameness out of difference, and producing union out of division was a sham, because the masquers were and always had been the King's own English and Scottish servants, not his Irish subjects. Of the Irish men who had come to England, and are ventiloquized in the masque, at least two had been imprisoned in a reminder that

¹³¹ See Paul Brown, "“This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine”": *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism', in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 48-71. The notion that the 'masterless function to bind the rulers together in hegemony' by forcing the aristocrats to recognise the necessity for solidarity (p. 53) is discussed in the next chapter in the context of *Pan's Anniversary*. This masque preceded the 1621 parliament, and tried (unsuccessfully) to rally the court faction to the defence of James's policies, against the threat posed by the demonised under classes, namely the unruly Commons and the citizens of London.

¹³² Buckingham's *Gypsies Metamorphos'd* constructed its transformation scene on a similar premise for the practical reason that it was a provincial performance.

James's power in the real world depended less on magical transformations than on using force against those who opposed him (Lindley, p. 357). This more than anything is the single fact that emerges from the masques and entertainments for the Somerset wedding; despite the attempt to celebrate union and unity, the overwhelming impression is one of conflict and division.

James's use of marriage as a political tool was intended to ensure peace in Europe and effect harmony in the court. As the accounts of Elizabeth's wedding, and the two marriages of Frances Howard have shown, this strategy rarely achieved that end, and was more often a source of division. The masques of the middle years of James's reign, discussed in the next chapter, were devoted in large part to rewriting the King's involvement with the disgraced Somersets and the Howard faction.

Jonson had the sensitivity to be 'embarrassed' about the gaping chasm that had opened up between his mythologised versions of union and the reality, and removed all references to the 'present occasions' from his 1616 Folio. However, James, despite these spectacular failures, and his own preference for the company of young men rather than of his wife, continued to use the metaphor of marriage in his political rhetoric, apparently unaware of, or blithely unconcerned about the extent to which it had been tainted by the reality of division between husbands and wives, between the Howard and Essex factions, and between the constituent countries of his own kingdom of Great Britain.

Chapter five: Divided families, unruly parliaments, and the war in Europe

The last ten years of James's reign witnessed a progressive process of disintegration and conflict in a number of connected spheres. The royal family, already fractured by the death of Henry, was diminished still further by the departure of Elizabeth. Then in 1615/16 the court was shaken by the trial and conviction of the Somersets for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, a scandal which opened the way for the rise of a new favourite, George Villiers. By the 1620s, factional division at court, heightened by domestic political conflicts, and the deteriorating situation in Europe, seemed to mirror the collapse of any remaining vestiges of unity within what remained of the royal family.

As James's literal family disintegrated, his relationship with parliament, his metaphorical wife and child, was increasingly characterised by conflict over the perennial problem of the royal finances, which in turn raised more fundamental issues such as the relative claims of royal prerogative and the common law. After the dissolution of the notoriously unproductive 'addled' parliament of 1614, James ruled by proclamation for seven years. When he eventually did summon parliament again in 1621, it cast off its role of obedient wife and child to launch an attack on the King's favourite, Buckingham, for his role in the sale of titles and monopolies, and offended the King by daring to offer him advice on foreign policy and the marriage of the Prince. During the last decade of his reign, James's relationships with his

children, Charles and Elizabeth, and his favourite, Buckingham, would become increasingly intertwined with his difficulties in parliament.¹

On the European stage, the peacemaker king's foreign policy had been driven by the expectation that, in marrying Elizabeth to a Protestant prince and Charles to a Spanish princess, he would eventually hold the key to peace in Europe. However, with the beginnings of the Thirty Years War, it became increasingly difficult for James to maintain his non-interventionist stance, and he reluctantly became embroiled in the conflict. This made him dependent on parliamentary subsidies, and the Commons proved itself to be a shrewish wife, refusing to vote subsidies until domestic abuses were resolved, and attempting to impose its own demands on the King's prerogative. Moreover, by the time James summoned parliament in 1624, he found himself marginalised by an alliance between parliament and his 'sweet boys', Charles and Buckingham, forged to advance a policy of war that was in opposition to James's advocacy of continued diplomacy.²

¹ For instance, the failure of the addled parliament to provide James with any financial assistance, coupled with the the vehemence of its attacks on his prerogative, strengthened his resolve to pursue the Infanta Maria as a bride for Charles, both for the dowry she would bring and because James wanted the support of the King of Spain against his own unruly parliament. See Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham, 1592-1628* (London: Longman, 1981), p. 15. Foremost amongst the issues which concerned both the royal children and parliament was James's policy of linking the peaceful restitution of the Palatinate to Charles's marriage with the Infanta. This generated opposition in parliament who advocated war with Spain and the marriage of Charles to a Protestant princess.

² A succinct account of the Stuart parliaments can be found in Conrad Russell, *The Crisis of Parliaments: English History 1509-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); Russell offers a different interpretation in his *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979). A number of useful studies of individual parliaments exist, including Robert Zaller, *The Parliament of 1621: A*

In contrast to the divisions hinted at in this brief sketch of the politics of the last decade of James's reign, literary critics have argued that the masques from the same period became more unified and 'settled down in a steady praise of the king'.³ The assumption has been that, with the death of Henry and the withdrawal of Anne from the masque stage (discussed below), the focus of the masques during these years was inevitably narrowed onto the King. Yet while such a shift did take place, the result was a long way from the uncomplicated panegyric that one might expect; and far from being unified or settled, the masques continued to register the political and factional divisions outlined above.

A trinity of power: James, Charles and Buckingham

Although the eighteen year old Prince Charles stepped onto the masque stage in 1618, it was not until several years later that he emerged as a genuine political player, and a potential rival to the King.⁴ The young Prince initially found it difficult, if not impossible, to fill the void at the centre of the royal family - and of

Study in Constitutional Conflict (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), and Robert. E. Ruigh, *The Parliament of 1624: Politics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1971).

³ Graham Parry, 'Entertainments at Court', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. by John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 195-211 (p. 204). The supposedly 'unified' masques from the middle years of James's reign, including *The Golden Age Restored*, and *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, tend to be those most frequently cited as offering a paradigm for the genre. The latter is anthologised in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 6th edn, ed. by M. H. Abrams and others, 2 vols (New York: Norton, 1993), I, 1233-1245.

⁴ I will argue below that Charles only began to take the political initiative with his trip to Spain in 1623, and asserted himself more forcefully in his subsequent commitment to a policy of war.

the nation - that had been left by his brother's death. Henry had been actively involved in fashioning a political identity for himself from a very early age, but Charles's emergence into the gaze of a public which hoped to find in him a substitute for his brother, was much slower and less spectacular. At his investiture as Prince of Wales in November 1616 Charles was unfavourably compared to Henry by the Italian ambassador who commented that 'the festivities did not attain to the splendour of those which were celebrated for the dead prince'.⁵ The Queen's refusal to attend the ceremonies 'lest she should renew her griefe by the memorie of the last Prince who runs still so much in some mens mind' demonstrates the extent to which Charles was overshadowed by the figure of his more charismatic older brother, enshrined like a saint in the collective imagination of the nation.⁶

Meanwhile, Charles's relationship with his father, like his brother's before him, was complicated by the presence of a favourite, George Villiers, who, having begun his meteoric rise in 1614, was created Earl of Buckingham and admitted to the Privy Council in 1617, attaining a level of political influence denied Charles until 1622. However, unlike the insurmountable antipathy which had divided Somerset from both Henry and Anne, Buckingham cultivated a good relationship with Charles and his mother, and frequently functioned as a mediator between James and the other

⁵ *CSP Ven*, XIV, 350. The minimalism of the city's pageantry is evident in their attempt to adapt props from the previous Lord Mayor's Show to the muted festivities for Charles. See David Bergeron, *English Civic Pageantry 1558-1642* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), p. 101.

⁶ Chamberlain, *Letters*, ed. by N. E. McClure, II, 32.

members of the royal family.⁷ By the 1620s, Buckingham had managed to gain the favour of the Prince while retaining the affection of the King, and thus achieved the remarkable feat of surviving the transition from one reign to the next.

During these years, and until her death in 1619, Queen Anne's strategy of absenting herself from the court became almost habitual. On earlier occasions, notably the betrothal of Frederick and Elizabeth, Anne had employed this technique to great effect, as a potent public statement of her oppositional stance (see chapter 4 of this thesis). However, as her absences became more frequent, the gesture was emptied of political significance, betraying only her resignation to her marginalisation from the court.⁸ She seems never to have completely recovered from Henry's death; perhaps, having expended her energies in the struggle to retain some political influence over Henry, she could not muster the strength to repeat the whole process with Charles. While she continued to display some political ambition and influence, playing a part in the advancement of Villiers, and striving (albeit unsuccessfully) to

⁷ For example, in 1618, when Charles approached the favourite to ask for his help after an argument with the King, Buckingham responded with a feast at Wanstead House at which father and son were reconciled, Lockyer, p. 34. Anne's letters to Buckingham refer to him as 'my kind dog', quoted in Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 138.

⁸ For Anne's absences in 1617-18 see Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 47; 129; 152. Chamberlain attributes these absences to physical ailments such as gout, but frequently alludes in vague terms to 'somewhat els' (II, 47) which suggests Anne's illness was as much emotional as physical. It is telling that Anne's involvement in theatrical activities simultaneously witnessed a shift away from the court to more provincial locations. She was deeply touched by the civic pageantry that greeted her at Bath and Bristol during her 1613 progress, and in 1617 she watched a performance of *Cupid's Banishment* at the Ladies's School in Deptford. The text of the latter has been edited by C. E. McGee in *RenD* 19 (1988), 227-64, and is discussed at length by Clare McManus in 'Silenced voices / speaking bodies: female performance and cultural agency in the court of Anne of Denmark (1590-1619)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 1997).

be appointed Regent prior to James's departure for Scotland in 1617, it is striking that Anne's last appearance as a masquer at court, in *Love Freed From Ignorance and Folly* dated back to February 1611.⁹ Leeds Barroll has suggested that Anne stopped masquing when it no longer served her purposes, and sees her departure from the masque stage as a sign of her commitment to a more direct pursuit of political power at court.¹⁰ However, it is equally possible that, after the death of her eldest son and the departure of her daughter, Anne became aware that her earlier masques - which had emphasised the importance of her maternal role - had been overtaken by a reality which would have emptied any such subsequent stagings of significance.¹¹

It is perhaps stating the obvious to observe that after *Love Freed* there were to be no more all-female masques at court until the accession of Charles and Henrietta Maria, but it is worth pursuing the reason why, after Campion's *Lords' Masque* in 1613 (which was a double masque of eight men and eight women) women ceased to appear as masquers even alongside men.¹² Anne's non-participation, while a contributory factor, seems insufficient to account in itself for the abrupt exodus of

⁹ Anne's role in the advancement of Villiers is discussed below in relation to *Mercury Vindicated*.

¹⁰ Barroll, 'Inventing the Stuart Masque', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 123-45, (p. 135).

¹¹ Just as the persona Anne had cultivated for herself in her masques had been deconstructed by reality, James's role of peacemaker king became increasingly difficult to sustain in the masques of the 1620s.

¹² Women did continue to appear as masquers in non-court performances, notably *Cupid's Banishment*, *The Coleorton Masque*, and the *Masque of Amazons* planned by Lady Hay (see note 15).

women from the masque stage. It is true that there was no other royal female to take on the role of principal masquer, but the participation of a member of the royal family in a masque was not a prerequisite, and indeed, prior to Charles's appearance on the masque stage in 1618, masques were led by (male) members of the nobility.¹³ In theory at least there was nothing to prevent a masque of women, and there were a number of prominent female courtiers who would have been able to lead it, but in practice no such performance took place at court.¹⁴

The tastes of the King undoubtedly had their part to play in the departure of women from the masque stage, and a number of the masques I will be discussing in this chapter are characterised not only by the absence of female masquers but by a misogynist mood which reflects James's own attitude towards women as 'the deceitfull masques of infinite miseries'.¹⁵ The reappropriation of the masque stage by men also suggests that James had initially been slow to realise the political potential of the masque, but now began to follow the precedent set by Anne in exploiting the annual Twelfth Night performances in support of his own policies.

¹³ However, masques such as *Mercury Vindicated* and *The Vision of Delight* placed Villiers in a prominent role, and his status as the King's favourite meant he was virtually a member of the royal family; as such he merits a place in the following discussion.

¹⁴ Chamberlain reports the cancellation of a masque scheduled for performance at the home of Lord Hay and his second wife Lucy Percy: 'There was a maske of nine Ladies in hand at theyre owne cost, wherof the principall was the Lady Hays as Quene of the Amazons [...], but whatsoever the cause was, neither the Quene nor King did like or allow of yt and so all is dasht', in *Letters*, ed. by McClure II, 125-26. Perhaps the Queen, while no longer commissioning masques herself, did not want her place as chief masquer filled by anyone else, especially not in a masque which may have drawn on the martial iconography of her *Masque of Queens*.

¹⁵ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 35.

While there is no evidence to suggest that James ever negotiated with Jonson over the masques he commissioned in the way that the Queen and Prince Henry had done, most of the masques from 1613 onwards were clearly calculated to appeal to his taste. That James enjoyed the company of attractive young men was common knowledge, and presumably he would have derived greater pleasure from watching the young Gentlemen of the Bedchamber dancing than from a masque of women.¹⁶ The first performance of *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, discussed in more detail below, was famously redeemed from complete failure, and from the King's displeasure, by the virtuosity of Buckingham's dancing:

[the masquers] because they were tired began to lag; and the King, who is by nature choleric, grew impatient and shouted loudly, 'Why don't they dance? What did you make me come here for? Devil take all of you, dance!'. At once the Marquis of Buckingham, his majesty's favourite minion, sprang forward, and danced a number of high and very tiny capers with such grace and lightness that he made everyone admire and love him, and also managed to calm the rage of his angry lord.¹⁷

The appearance of Buckingham on this and other occasions exemplifies the politics and poetics of sexual display. In view of James's enthusiastic response, it comes as no surprise that Buckingham began to commission his own entertainments in which he could engage in a similar self-fashioning, staging himself before the King and the

¹⁶ Dr. James Knowles, has drawn attention to the importance of the homoerotics of the masque, and his paper entitled 'Toys and boys: the (homo)erotics of the Jacobean masque', given at the conference on 'Disputing Manliness in Early Modern Britain' held at Birkbeck College at the University of London in July 1997 has influenced my thinking on this issue.

¹⁷ *CSP Ven XV*, 113-14.

court as an object of the desire and admiration.¹⁸ To an extent it was Buckingham more than Charles who seems to have inherited the understanding displayed by Anne and Henry of the potency of performance as a political tool. However, whereas they had exploited their appearance in the masques to challenge the King, Buckingham staged himself in such a way as to gain and retain the King's favour.¹⁹

The foregoing chapters have argued that the presence on the masque stage of Anne and Henry complicated the genre's praise of James, and prevented the masque from functioning simply to confirm his kingly authority. There has been a tendency to assume that, once the disruptive influence of these other royal powerbrokers was withdrawn, the hitherto fragmented image of sovereign power was superseded by a more unified panegyric, with the masque-writers producing masques to please and to praise the King, and only the King. However, while the performance of exclusively

¹⁸ When, in March 1615, Buckingham appeared in a play before the King at Cambridge University, James 'became confounded between his admiration of Villiers and the pleasure of the play', quoted in Lockyer, p. 18. Buckingham was not content to remain a silent dancer, and by the 1620s he had begun to display his histrionic talents in provincial performances in which he took a speaking role, notably *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* commissioned for James's visit to Buckingham's new home at Burley in August 1621, which is the subject of a book-length study by Dale B. J. Randall, *Jonson's Gypsies Unmasked: Background and Theme of 'The Gypsies Metamorphos'd'* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975). Buckingham's promotion of amateur theatricals is a subject which falls beyond the scope of this thesis, but the issue of provincial performances during the Stuart period is ripe for re-evaluation. James Knowles's work in this area has yielded some fascinating discoveries, including the text for the running masque which Buckingham was promoting in January 1620. See also Martin Butler, *Jonson's News from the New World*, the "Running Masque," and the Season of 1619-20', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 6 (1993), 153-78, which is discussed below.

¹⁹ That said, it is possible to see Buckingham's involvement in both the court masques and provincial entertainments in the last years of James's reign in the context of his attempts and Charles's promotion of an 'oppositional' policy of war.

male masques, together with features like the expanded comic antimasque, attest to the influence of the King's taste on the evolution of the genre, the focus on a single royal patron did not automatically close down the divisions which had been evident in the earlier masques. On the contrary, the masquers who danced before the King did so in an atmosphere of politically charged rivalry. Busino's account of *Pleasure Reconciled* vividly demonstrates how the masques of this period functioned as the occasion for a ritualised performance of competition between the male masquers striving for the ultimate accolade of James's favour, which in this case (as in countless others) went to Buckingham, whom the King 'honoured [...] with extraordinary signs of affection, touching his face'.²⁰ Moreover, such competition between individual masquers was heightened by the dynamics of factional politics which informed many masques, notably those from 1620 onward, performed before a court which was ideologically divided by the issue of the Spanish match and the situation in Europe.

The focus on the King not only generated competition amongst the masquers, but presented problems for Jonson (who by this stage had achieved complete dominance over the Twelfth Night performances at court). The taste of the royal patron Jonson had to please was most readily satisfied by the bawdy and scatological humour of

²⁰ The potential for eroticism in the spectacle of male dancers competing for the King's affection, which would be bestowed on the 'victor', recalls the eroticisation of the Accession Day tilts during the reign of Elizabeth, and indeed of James, whose affection for Carr dated back to just such an occasion. The idea of competition between dancers provides the central motif for *Pan's Anniversary* (discussed below); see also chapter 3 for a discussion of how Prince Henry, during his participation in martial competitions such as the barriers, attempted to minimise the erotic dimension of such occasions, which were always inevitably subject to the disruption of the erotic and desiring gaze of both male and female spectators.

the comic antimasque, but decorum demanded that the King be praised by identifying him with the high moral terms of the masque proper. Thus the familial and political conflict which had characterised the masques of Anne and Henry was not banished from the masques for James, but was generated by the division between the King's words and his deeds.²¹ Leah Marcus describes the strategy of Jonson's masques as being 'to pit King James against himself, to muster his laudable ideals in defeat of his less exalted practice', and the masques of the middle period lace their compliment with criticism by implicating James's self-indulgent excess in the misrule of the antimasque that he is then praised for controlling.²²

²¹ In the wake of Goldberg's extremely influential discussion of contradiction as 'the sustaining condition of power', it has become a critical commonplace to see James as a divided figure, *James I*, p. 11. Goldberg argues that James derived political power from the deliberately unstable and ambiguous nature of his self-presentations. Notwithstanding Goldberg's argument that James's supporting contradictions had the effect of making all art serve the King, because attempts at criticism were always-already contained, I argue in this chapter that the gaps between James's words and deed did not always function as a source of empowerment, but exposed him to criticism. Similarly, in masques such as *The Golden Age Restored* and *Neptune's Triumph*, Jonson's strategy of rewriting political embarrassments as successes was thwarted by similar gaps between the ideal and the reality, between words and deeds, which undermined and disrupted the celebratory rhetoric.

²² Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 11. See also Marcus's discussion of *Pleasure Reconcoiled*, pp. 121-25. The work of scholars such as Martin Butler has revealed the extent to which panegyric can have a critical edge. See Butler, 'Early Stuart Court Culture: Compliment or Criticism?', *Historical Journal* 32 (1989), 425-35, and especially 'Ben Jonson and the Limits of Courtly Panegyric', in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 91-115. In the latter article Butler captures the essence of the middle period masques which 'veer wildly between scurrilous demystification of the life of the court and the transcendental eulogy of kingship', p. 98.

The masques I will be discussing in this chapter can be divided into two groups: the masques of the middle period (from 1615 to 1619), and the masques of the 1620s. In the masques of the middle years the praise has a critical edge, as Jonson attempts to educate the King through a deliberate exposure of James's failure to realise his ideals. However, by the 1620s, the King's commitment to a non-interventionist foreign policy was generating widespread and vocal public opposition. As James became increasingly jealous of his prerogative, it was no longer expedient or safe for Jonson to focus on the fractures in the royal rhetoric. Instead, the later masques re-enact the defeat of popular opinion, which is troped as ignorant and benighted, by the divinely-inspired and inscrutable wisdom of the King. Thus, while the masques of the middle period hint that division originated from the royal misrule of James and his court, the masques of the 1620s respond to the King's heightened sensitivity by displacing disorder onto the enemies of his policy, who are satirised in the antimasque.

However, Jonson's strategy of ridiculing the opponents of James's pacifism and presenting the war party as monstrous and fanatical became untenable in its turn, when both the Prince and the favourite returned from Spain convinced of the inevitability of war. The cancellation of *Neptune's Triumph* in 1624 testifies to the impossibility of Jonson's position, as he attempted to please both a pacifist King and a Prince committed to war.²³

²³ Jonson's position was complicated still further by his awareness of his own need to achieve the favour and patronage of Charles, while not alienating the old King. The 1620s saw Buckingham engaged in a similarly delicate attempt to attach himself to the rising star of Charles without incurring the jealousy of his old master and creator.

'Ridiculous monsters and absolute features': James the Creator²⁴

Buckingham, the most successful of James's favourites, who became the King's surrogate child and wife, stepped onto the masque stage for the first time as plain George Villiers on Twelfth Night 1615 in the first of two performances of *Mercury Vindicated From the Alchemists at Court*.²⁵ Chamberlain reported that 'for al this penurious world we speak of a maske this christmas towards which the King geves 1500^{li} the principall motive wherof is thought to be the gracing of younge Villers, and to bring him on the stage'.²⁶ The King had met Villiers on his 1614 summer progress, and the anti-Howard faction at court (including the Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbot, and the Earl of Pembroke) immediately set about promoting him in the hope of dislodging the King's current favourite, Somerset, from his position of power.²⁷ Somerset had provoked some antagonism on the grounds of

²⁴ The quote is from *Mercury Vindicated*, VII, 415, ll. 194-95, and contrasts the deformed antimasquers with the 'creatures of the Sunne', the male masquers generated by James.

²⁵ Most editors have followed Herford and Simpson's argument that *Mercury Vindicated* was the masque for January 1616, claiming that Jonson's 1616 folio, which placed *Mercury Vindicated* before *The Golden Age Restored*, departed from the order in which these two masques had been performed. See H&S X, 545-46. However, the discovery by John Orrell of a letter from the Florentine ambassador has proved that *Golden Age* was the 1616 masque, and by implication confirms the date of *Mercury Vindicated* as 1615, 'The London Stage in the Florentine Correspondence, 1604-18', *Theatre Research International* 3 (1977-78), 157-76 (pp. 173-74). The consequences of this discovery for criticism of *The Golden Age* have been elucidated by Martin Butler and David Lindley in an important article, 'Restoring Astraea: Jonson's Masque for the Fall of Somerset', *ELH* 61 (1994), 807-27, discussed below. I argue here that the identification of *Mercury Vindicated* as the first masque in which Villiers performed before the King provides a specific context for the masques's exploration of the creation of true and false men.

²⁶ Chamberlain, *Letters*, I, 561.

²⁷ For the evolving relationship between James, his current favourite (Somerset), and the new contender for that position (Villiers), including Anne's role, see Lockyer,

his Scottish origins, and James argued that 'by pushing Villiers forward as a showpiece English favourite he would shield Carr and turn the stream of English hatred away from him'.²⁸ Despite James's reassurances, Somerset reacted defensively, and blocked Villiers's appointment to the Bedchamber staff by procuring the post for one of his own kinsmen.²⁹ John Finett's account of the ambassadorial wranglings that preceded the masque includes a tantalising hint that Somerset may have used his position as Lord Chamberlain to invite ambassadors who would prove disruptive:

The Earl of Sommerset (then Lord Chamberlain) notwithstanding he understood how the yeare before the Spanish and Arch-Dukes Ambassadors had been invited to the Marriage of him the Earle of Sommerset, and not the French nor the Venetian [...] gave me directions to invite the Spanish and the Venetian (not usually coupled).³⁰

Buckingham's appearance in *Mercury Vindicated* launched a masquing career which had a significant role in assuring his success at court. Those courtiers who danced before the King did so in the knowledge that James might express his pleasure in their performance by conferring material rewards and advancement. A range of commissions and eyewitness accounts reveal the extent to which dancers were

pp. 16-24. Protestants wrongly blamed James's pro-Spanish policy on the influence of Somerset and the Howards. However, the Spanish match and alliance was an integral part of James's foreign policy, and when James continued in the same vein (even after the fall of the Howards) Buckingham found himself blamed as a crypto-Catholic and a Spanish agent.

²⁸ Lockyer, p. 16. James's project of effecting a reconciliation between his existing and aspiring favourites had its counterpart on a national scale in his promotion of Anglo-Scottish union, and it is worth noting that, according to Chamberlain, *Mercury Vindicated* was performed by 'both English and Scottes', *Letters*, I, 570.

²⁹ This episode took place in November 1614 and is reported in Lockyer, p. 16.

³⁰ Finett's account is quoted by H&S X, 554-557 (p. 554).

chosen on the basis of their skill, demonstrating that the ability to dance well was an indispensable tool in the repertoire of a courtier's self-fashioning.³¹ Rather than viewing the masque transformations in metaphysical terms, John Meagher argues that the appearance of the transfigured masquers might be seen more pragmatically as the effect of the King's favour, since 'those on whom it shines [...] may be beautified with the honors which James bestowed so freely'.³² In view of the fact that young men like Buckingham could dance their way into honours and financial rewards, it is interesting to note that Somerset, who would be ousted as favourite shortly after this performance, had never appeared as a masquer.³³ The competition between favourites, creatures made (and unmade) by the King, provides the context for *Mercury Vindicated* which presented James as the source of light and life, and examined the relationship between true and false creativity.

The masque opens with Mercury fleeing the persecutions of Vulcan and the Cyclops who, in this age of peace, have turned from their usual trade of armour-making to alchemy. Mercury exposes them as frauds who, with extravagant

³¹ Chamberlain notes that *Mercury Vindicated* was distinguished by 'excellent dauncing, the choise beeing made of the best', *Letters*, I, 570. The commission for *The Irish Masque* had specified that the performers should be 'good dauncers', H&S X, 541. Amongst the dancers from that masque were Abercrombie, whom Chamberlain describes as a 'Scottish dancing courtier', and Auchmouty, who travelled to France in James Hay's entourage as a dancer, (see H&S X, 428) both of whom later danced in *Pleasure Reconciled*, a masque in which most of the dancers were renowned for their skill.

³² Meagher, *Method and Meaning in Jonson's Masques* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), p. 111. Meagher discusses the importance of the masque dances on pp. 81-106.

³³ Although he had been an important spectator of the masques which celebrated his marriage to Frances Howard, (see chapter 4).

promises of wealth and immortality, have duped the servants below stairs at court into giving them 'victuals and house-roome' (VII, 411, ll. 67-68). In an attempt to prevent Mercury's escape Vulcan summons first his alchemists, and second a group of 'imperfect creatures' who are the product of Vulcan's misguided attempts to usurp 'the excellence of the sun and nature' by creating artificial men (VII, 414, l. 183; 187). Mercury defeats these antimasques of deformed beings by invoking James, the sun-king whose beams combine with Nature to create the perfection of the male masquers, revealed in a '*glorious bowre*' (VII, 415, l. 196).

Mercury Vindicated is an important masque, standing as it does at the threshold of what Orgel has observed as a radical shift in the presentation of the pastoral in the Jacobean court masque:

In the early years of James I, when a pastoral scene appears as part of a sequence, contrasted with cities or palaces, it invariably comes at the beginning, and embodies the wildness of nature, or the untutored innocence that we pass beyond to clear visions of sophistication and order, usually represented by complex machines and Palladian architecture. But after about a decade, from 1616 onward, this sequence is reversed. When pastoral settings appear they come at the end, and embody the ultimate ideal that the masque asserts.³⁴

Leah Marcus has convincingly linked this pattern with a series of proclamations in which James commanded the increasing numbers of nobility and gentry who had taken up residence in London to return to their country estates.³⁵ In the proclamation of 24 October 1614 James expressed concern that 'the ancient and

³⁴ Orgel, *Illusion*, pp. 49-50.

³⁵ The following discussion of *Mercury Vindicated* is indebted to Marcus's use of James's proclamations and his 1616 speech to the Star Chamber as an intertext for her reading of *The Vision of Delight* in *The Politics of Mirth*, pp. 67-76, which is a revised version of an earlier article, ' "Present Occasions" and the Shaping of Ben Jonson's Masques', *ELH* 45 (1978), 201-25.

lawdable customes of this Our Realme', namely the traditions of country hospitality, were being threatened by the new trend of living in London, which he blamed on the corrupting influence of foreign fashions.³⁶ He went on to argue that the absence of the nobility and gentry from their country seats would alienate them from the common people, and advanced a vision of union between the different echelons of the social hierarchy which would be achieved by their return to the country. Yet the union invoked here, as elsewhere in James's rhetoric, is predicated on the dominance of one partner, and the King calls upon the nobility to return to the counties in their capacities as Justices of the Peace and Lord Lieutenants, and to exercise their authority 'for the suppressing of Ryots, tumults and disorders' (*Proclamations*, p. 357). Interestingly, these proclamations invoke two antithetical constructions of the country, which can be either an antimasque of 'tumults and disorders' or a masque-like haven of harmony, depending on whether James's rule is communicated to the country via his officers. The King's avowed aim is to forestall the collapse of the countryside into the unruliness of an antimasque by imposing on it the order of the masque.³⁷

³⁶ *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, ed. by J. F. Larkin and Paul Hughes, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), I, 323-24. For a similar proclamation, issued in December 1615, see I, 356-58. Subsequent references to James's proclamations are given by page number in the text, and refer to volume I. Many of James's proclamations constructed Britain as essentially pure, blaming the nation's problems on the infiltration of the polluting 'other'. His proclamation on 4 February 1614 against private challenges and combats, condemned the practice of duelling as having been 'first borne and bred in Forraine parts; but after convaied over into this Island', p. 307.

³⁷ This exemplifies the characteristically fluid quality of James's rhetoric in which at one moment the country is presented as an ideal, and at the next is described as being in danger of falling into anarchy.

Invoking these proclamations as an intertext for *Mercury Vindicated* is a revealing exercise, since, while James exhorts a move from the crowded and diseased city to the country, the movement of the masque is *not* from the city but from the *court* to the country. The alchemists from whom Mercury must be vindicated are engaged in their fraudulent activities below stairs at court, and Mercury delivers his comic prose speeches looking out from the stage to the members of the audience at Whitehall whom he satirizes. The masque's agenda is therefore almost impossibly self-defeating - Jonson sets himself the task of presenting an idealized vision of the country as preferable to a life amidst the cheats at court, whilst simultaneously praising James as the sun-king who presides over both.³⁸

The masque itself, perhaps in an attempt to overcome this difficulty, deals less in terms of an explicit dialectic between court and country than in the ostensibly antithetical relationship between art and nature. Yet to claim, as Herford and Simpson do, that the masque unproblematically privileges nature and humiliates art is to miss the point in this most artificial of genres, in which the action progresses from the drama of the antimasque to the formal and highly-choreographed masque dances, via a transformation accomplished through the artistry of a *scena versatilis*.³⁹ Jonson would hardly be one to deny the importance of his own art, and the Mercury who is liberated is the patron of learning, the god of eloquence and rhetoric, and the

³⁸ The depiction of the corruption occurring below stairs at court seems to allude to the type of wastefulness and corruption that Cranfield's programme of reform, initiated a few years after the masque, was intended to curb.

³⁹ See H&S X, 547, for the assertion that 'Nature and natural forces triumph, while "Art" is humiliated'.

inventor of Apollo's lyre. Thus the court is criticised not for its association with art *per se*, but for countenancing those false arts which practise to deceive, such as alchemy and cosmetics. Art cannot be condemned out of hand, because the revelation of Nature in her glorious bower is dependent on the true art that gives an insight into divine truth.⁴⁰

The masque's opening song invokes the idea that Nature is spent and decayed, and the impression of weakness is compounded by the conventional gendering of Nature as female, especially as she is presently deprived of the sun on whose warmth she depends.⁴¹ The suggestion that the female principle - even in this case Dame Nature herself - is passive in the process of generation reflects contemporary medical theories about the cold female womb as the recipient of the life-giving powers of the male seed.⁴² This hierarchization of male (pro)creative potential over female proves to be integral to the masque's meaning, and further complicates any

⁴⁰ Similarly, in the final scene of *The Winter's Tale* Leontes legitimises Paulina's 'magical' art, declaring it to be as 'lawful as eating'. The distinction between true and false art is crucial in the masques of the 1620s, discussed below, in which Jonson defends not wholesale censorship, but the suppression of a bad art which is produced by opponents of the King and purveyors of false politics.

⁴¹ The remark that 'the Sunne her friend' has 'growne cold' is ostensibly a reference to the winter season of the masque's performance, but becomes ambiguous in view of the familiar identification of James as sun and may function to implicate James in the corruption and wastefulness of the court (VII, 409, l. 10).

⁴² It also recalls the device at the arch at Little Conduit in Cheap, during the royal entry in 1604, which presented James as reviving the drooping garden that symbolised the kingdom. Just as the (feminine) Nature is revived by the (masculine) warmth and light of James as Sol and Jupiter, Mercury is saved not by the women of the court, to whom he addresses his first appeal for help, but by his recognition of the power of the male monarch.

attempt to read it as a victory of nature over art, which were conventionally gendered feminine and masculine respectively.⁴³

Nature seems to be 'lamed' as much by the age's turning away from her as by old age: 'Looke, but how few confesse her now, / In cheeke or browe! / From euey head, almost, how she is frighted!' (VII, 409, ll. 12-14). The effect of this reference to the use of cosmetics is important, since it is specifically the women of the audience who are implicated in a duplicitous preference for art over nature. This standard misogynist trope is subsequently invoked by Mercury, whose search for 'an olde Gentle-woman [...], that has a wrinkle about her, to hide mee in' refers to the use of mercury in cosmetics, and whose appeals to the watching women quickly descend to lewd innuendo. In a striking example of the mutually constitutive relationship between society and literature, the same rhetoric about women's use of art to conceal nature conditioned the Venetian ambassador's observations about the women in the audience: 'The dress worn by these ladies is very beautiful, for those who like it, and for some of them it serves to hide the defects of nature [...] any deformity, however monstrous, remains hidden'.⁴⁴

As Leah Marcus has rightly observed, the establishment of a pastoral idyll in the masques of this period involves the expression of anti-court sentiment which is,

⁴³ Portraits of the period provide a visual instance of the association of the female with nature and the male with the greater civilization of culture. See Goldberg, 'Fatherly Authority', pp. 22-24.

⁴⁴ *CSP Ven XIII*, 317. It is typical of the no-win situation in which Renaissance women were so often placed that they are associated both with a Nature that is powerless without masculine intervention, and with a type of art which is the enemy of Nature.

paradoxically, generated by the court and by the royal policy of repastoralization.⁴⁵ However, Mercury's criticisms do not amount to a wholesale condemnation of the court; rather, the masque's anti-court satire focuses on women. The misogyny of the masque is in line with James's proclamations, which attribute the growth of the city not only to the pernicious influence of foreign fashions, but to the pride of women: 'For if they bee wiues, then their husbands; and if they be maydes, then their fathers must bring them vp to London'.⁴⁶ Blame is attached to those who practise or are deceived by false art - namely the alchemists (whose culpability is confirmed by their assumption of foreign names, aligning them with the alien 'other' of James's proclamations), the servants and women.

The alchemists, having arrogated to themselves 'the great act of generation, nay, almost creation', produce 'not common or ordinary creatures, but of rarity and excellence, such as the times wanted' (VII, 413, ll. 133-34; 140-41). The products of such creativity gone awry are creatures of art in more ways than one, associated as they are with duplicity and false dealing, their ingredients including only 'a drop of truth' and the 'faeces of honesty' (VII, 414, l. 164; 168-69).⁴⁷ The creation of the imperfect creatures of the antimasque is linked to the bourgeois pursuit of artificial novelties, which James's proclamations had condemned. James's defence of

⁴⁵ Marcus, *Politics*, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁶ *Political Works*, ed. by McIlwain, p. 343. The misogyny continues into the masque proper with the allusion to the myth that the first woman, Pandora, was made in order to punish Prometheus and man for the theft of fire.

⁴⁷ Amongst them is a 'master of the *Duel*', one of whose constituent ingredients is tobacco. James had issued a proclamation against private combats, and his dislike for tobacco was well-known; significantly both duelling and smoking were imported fashions.

tradition against 'those giddie spirits that out of vaine glorie or new-fanglenesse [...] take a pride to swarve from the Reverend Impressions of elder times'

(*Proclamations*, pp. 306-7), is invoked in *Mercury Vindicated* and reworked in a more extreme form in the 1617 masque *The Vision of Delight*.⁴⁸ Here the first dream of delight evoked by Phant'sie is an almost nightmarish vision of a world upside down which depicts the consequences of an uncontrolled addiction to artificiality:

If a dream should come in now to make you afeard,
With a windmill on his head and bells at his beard,
Would you straight wear your spectacles here at your toes,
And your boots o' your brows, and your spurs o' your nose?
(VII, 466, ll. 79-82).

Phant'sie's speech, like the antimasque in *Mercury Vindicated*, depicts and reproves the fantastical tastes of the court by showing what happens when lesser beings try to play the roles of god and king, arrogating to themselves the divine, monarchical (and masculine) prerogative of creation. In both cases the imperfect and deformed antimasque creatures are superseded by a bower in which the glories of Nature are enshrined. Thus, the masques create 'through art the transformations his [James's] policies were intended to produce in reality', namely, the movement 'out to an idealized, revitalized countryside' (*Politics*, p. 70).

In *Mercury Vindicated*, James's light invigorates Nature and combines with her to bring forth the masquers, while in *The Vision* the answer to Wonder's question,

⁴⁸ *The Vision of Delight* has been elucidated in considerable detail by Leah Marcus in *Politics of Mirth*, pp. 67-76, who argues that the 'present occasion' for this masque is to be found in James's 1616 speech before the Star Chamber in which James diagnosed his kingdom's ills and proposed a remedy in the return of the nobility and gentry to the country. As I am broadly in agreement with her analysis I will deal with it only briefly here.

‘Whose breath or beams have got proud earth with child, / Of all the treasure that great Natur<e>’s worth’ (VII, 469, ll. 176-77), is provided by gesturing outwards to the King. Interestingly the female role in creation is presented as passive; the active principle is masculine, the prerogative of the sun, or of God himself, forces which find their correlatives in James as *roi soleil* and as a god on earth. For many years, James had represented himself as a paternalistic authority, father and god, a construction reflected in the masques which praised him as the source of light, beauty and life.⁴⁹ However, a number of earlier attempts to represent James as a source of (pro) creative power had been complicated by Anne’s promotion of a specifically female fertility in keeping with her maternal role and her claims to the royal children (as discussed in chapter 2). By 1615, Anne’s withdrawal from the masque stage may have made the praise of James as the personification of masculine generative energy less problematic, although her presence in the audience must have lent a certain poignancy to the masque song between Prometheus and Nature:

PRO. How many, ’mongst these Ladies here,

Wish now they such a mother were!

NA. Not one, I feare,

And read it in their laughters,

Ther<e>’s more, I guesse, would wish to be my daughters. [...]

’Tis yet with them, but Beauties noone,

⁴⁹ For James as the source of light and life see, amongst others, the masques for the marriage of Princess Elizabeth, discussed in chapter 4. James’s desire to be seen as the sole originating source had political repercussions in his conflict with common lawyers like Edward Coke. When James asserted that kings were the source of the laws and not laws of kings, Coke responded by developing the doctrine of the ‘ancient constitution’ which claimed that parliament had existed from time immemorial and was independent of the monarch. Such seeking out of precedents in a deliberate attempt to find a source other than himself angered James, who, in 1614, suppressed the Society of Antiquaries for their presumption in enquiring into the origins of English institutions. The 1621 parliament, discussed below, was plagued by difficulties of this nature.

They would not Grandames be too soone.

PRO. Is that your Sexes humor?

'Tis then since *Niobe* was chang'd that they haue left that tumor (VII, 416, ll. 226-30; 235-38).

The surface compliment to the youth and beauty of the ladies cannot entirely conceal the song's subtextual refusal to identify the women of the court with motherhood. Women have not really left the 'tumor' or 'passion' to be mothers; rather, in the terms of this masque, procreativity has been redefined as a masculine and kingly prerogative. This male appropriation of female procreativity enacts a marginalisation of the mother figure which has its counterpart in the misogynistic treatment of women in the masques of the middle period and the 1620s, and which may be linked to James's relationship with Villiers. Significantly, James liked to cultivate a similar fantasy of male parthenogenesis in relation to his favourites, and when Anne agreed to assist George Abbot in the promotion of Villiers, she accurately predicted how her own role in the creative process would be erased: 'The King will teach him to despise and hardly entreat us all, that he may seem to be beholden to none but himself'.⁵⁰

James must have enjoyed the spectacle of his latest 'creature' dancing in the masque, and, as I have shown in the previous chapter, he relished his role as mentor in shaping the lives of his young male favourites.⁵¹ His expression of the bond

⁵⁰ Quoted in Lockyer, p. 19. Despite Anne's misgivings she asked James to knight Villiers on 23 April 1615 and to make him a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. Anne's role in Villiers's advancement is also discussed by Ethel Carleton Williams, pp. 170-72 and in Bergeron, *Royal Family*, pp. 137-38.

⁵¹ Notwithstanding the masque's depiction of James as a powerful creative force, Villiers was at this stage less the creature of James than he was the product of a

between himself as 'thy dear dad' and Buckingham as his 'only sweet and dear child' reveals how the fantasy of a creative process from which women were excluded functioned to strengthen the homosocial bonds between the two.⁵² However, while women do not figure in the masque as mothers, the relationship between James and Villiers is complicated by the presentation of women as the proper objects of the desires of the male masquers, who are exhorted to prove their masculinity by 'stealing fire, from Ladies eyes and hearts' and taking them out in the masque dances (VII, 415, l. 215). This seems to invoke the notion, advanced by such defenders of dancing as Thomas Elyot, that partnered dances functioned to affirm gender roles.⁵³ However, to see the masque dances as somehow containing homoerotic desire within a heterosexual framework is to impose an anachronistic bipolar construction of sexuality, in which homosexuality and heterosexuality are perceived as mutually exclusive, when in fact, James's relationships with his male favourites never precluded their marriages.⁵⁴ It is also to the point that, for all its praise of women, the masque proper nonetheless perpetuates the vein of misogyny from the antimasque, by invoking the myth that Pandora, the first woman, was created in

group of powerful backers who had provided financial support to secure him a place at court, and had lobbied the Queen to ensure the advancement of their protégé.

⁵² These terms of address are exemplified in the many letters written by James to Buckingham, in *Letters* ed. by Akrigg, especially pp. 386-7 and p. 431, as well as the letters addressed jointly to Buckingham and Charles during their absence in Spain.

⁵³ Elyot, *The Boke named the Governour* (London, 1531), ed. by R. C. Alston (Menston: Scolar Press, 1970), fols. 82v-83r, cited and discussed in the previous chapter in relation to *Hymenaei*; see page 254.

⁵⁴ On the contrary, James would be as active in pursuing the match of Villiers and Katherine Manners as he had been in making the marriage of Carr and Frances Howard possible.

order to punish Prometheus and mankind. The masque implicitly aligns womankind, created by Vulcan, with the 'ridiculous monsters' of the antimasque. By contrast, James brings forth only male and therefore perfect creatures, whose relationships with women, the inferior sex, are less important than the bonds between men.

While James took pleasure in his 'creatures', he was also prepared to deconstruct what he had made, and the following year was to see the destruction of Somerset. In early 1615, at about the same time as the performance of *Mercury Vindicated*, James wrote to Somerset complaining about his behaviour, which no longer conformed to the obedient and compliant role James had scripted for him. The appearance of Villiers in the masque may have been intended to remind Somerset of his dispensability, reinforcing James's assertion that it lay in Somerset's power to 'make of me what you please, either the best master and truest friend or, if you force me once to call you ingrate, [...], no so great earthly plague can light on you'.⁵⁵ The presentation of the masquers as dependent on James for their very existence has a similarly warning note.

In view of the disgrace and humiliation of Somerset which was to occur between the performances of *Mercury Vindicated* and *The Golden Age Restored* it is significant that, in the former, Jonson simultaneously asserts and interrogates the power of art to bring forth a golden world. The alchemists purport to bring permanent unchanging ideals, represented by gold, beauty, and immortality, out of the changes and transformations of the alchemical process. However, the movement from the antimasque world of particulars to the enduring world of ideals is achieved

⁵⁵ *Letters*, ed. by G. P. V. Akrigg, pp. 335-40 (p. 340).

not by the alchemists, but by the masque proper authored by Jonson and authorized by James. Yet the distinction between the creations of the true and false artists is not so clear-cut, and there is a suggestion that the alchemists's promise to blow a soul into an old courtier differs little from the inspiring breath of the King.

Mercury's account of the alchemists's claims is disparaging:

They will calcine you a graue matron [...] and spring vp a yong virgin [...] Lay you an old Courtier o' the coales like a sausedge or a bloat-herring, and [...] and blow a soule into him with a paire of bellowes, till he start up in his galliard [...]. Get all the crack'd maiden-heads, and cast 'hem into new Ingots (VII, 412, ll. 94-104).

Nevertheless, it is possible to see in these transformations a grotesque parody of the masque's own panegyric, since in its attempts to educate through praise, the genre was in constant danger of descending to flattery, representing an old courtier as young or a promiscuous woman as chaste. Jonson acknowledged that he had 'too oft preferr'd / Men past their termes, and prais'd some names too much', and in the closing months of 1615 both Jonson and the King were brought abruptly face to face with the consequences of having 'preferr'd' one particular man 'past[his]termes'.⁵⁶

Rewriting the past and the power of poetry

On his return from the summer progress of 1615, James was met by the revelation that the death of Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower two years earlier had been by poisoning. In a dizzying series of trials between October and December 1615 Richard Weston (Overbury's keeper), Anne Turner (a confidante of the Countess),

⁵⁶ From the verse epistle to Selden, in H&S VIII, 159, ll. 20-21. Jonson justifies himself by invoking the educative potential of praise: 'But 'twas with purpose to have made them such'.

Sir Gervase Elwes (the ex-Lieutenant of the Tower) and James Franklin (an apothecary) all went to the scaffold. The Somersets, who had been implicated, were placed under arrest and at the time of the masque's performance were awaiting trial. In this context, the performance in January 1616 of *The Golden Age Restored*, with its central theme of the return to earth of Astraea, the goddess of justice, would have had a particular frisson of relevance for the audience.⁵⁷

James, facing what was potentially the most damaging scandal of his reign, acted quickly to distance himself from Somerset and protect himself from blame by association. He made it clear from the outset that he wanted justice to be done, even if it meant accepting the guilt of those close to him, and was praised for exercising his justice 'against [...] his own creatuer'.⁵⁸ In reality James's conduct was almost certainly motivated by an instinct for self-preservation, rather than by any great commitment to the abstract ideal of justice. At best he was, as Butler and Lindley describe it, 'acquiescing in a situation where he had been left little room for maneuver' (B&L, p. 811); at worst, it is possible that James may have welcomed the

⁵⁷ See note 26 for the dating of *Golden Age* as the 1616 masque, which has rendered much commentary and criticism of the masque redundant. The following discussion owes much to the insights of Martin Butler and David Lindley in their article 'Restoring Astraea: Jonson's Masque for the Fall of Somerset', *ELH* 61 (1994), 807-27. Subsequent references to this article (henceforth B&L) are given in the text by page number. See also their separate works, David Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London: Routledge, 1993) and Martin Butler, 'Ben Jonson and the Limits of Courtly Panegyric', in *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 91-115.

⁵⁸ From a letter from Sir John Throckmorton to Viscount Lisle, quoted in B&L, p. 811.

opportunity to rid himself of a favourite who had become troublesome, resisting his maker's attempts at fashioning his life.⁵⁹

Charged with writing the masque for this uneasy Christmas season, it is not surprising that Jonson departed from the comic realism he had been developing in *The Irish Masque* and *Mercury Vindicated*, in which the prose antimasques were set in the court and claimed the same ontological status as their audience. Instead, Jonson translates the entire action of *Golden Age* to a mythic realm, returning to the clear-cut conflicts between moral absolutes that had been central to such earlier masques as *Queens*. The masque begins with the descent of Pallas who proclaims Jove's decision to establish a new golden age on earth. Her plan is temporarily disrupted by the plot of Iron Age and her followers, a chain of vices including Ambition, Pride and Treachery, to overthrow the rule of Jove. They are effortlessly overcome and Pallas presides over the descent of Astraea and the Golden Age, whose fame on earth will be sustained by the poets laureate. The poets waken the masquers, who have been sleeping in the 'Elysian bowres', and are semigods 'of the straine / That iustice dare defend, and will the age sustaine' (VII, 425, l. 127; 130-31).

The masque attempts to produce an orderly rewriting of the politically damaging events of the past few months, and it is significant that it begins with the descent of

⁵⁹ Early in 1615 James had reproached Somerset for 'withdrawing yourself from lying in my chamber, notwithstanding my many hundred times earnest soliciting you to the contrary', in *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, p. 337. By the summer of 1615 Somerset's absence from James's bed had been filled by Villiers, and it is suggestive that in January 1616, Villiers was awarded the post of Master of the Horse, which Carr had pursued but failed to achieve, Lockyer, p. 25.

the goddess Pallas, whose presence from the outset ensures that the threat of the antimasque is always-already contained.⁶⁰ Her description of Jove as having been driven to his limits and forced to mete out punishment accords with James's own presentation of himself as 'either the best master and truest friend' or a 'great earthly plague' in his 1615 letter to Somerset (cited above). The reference to the even-handed treatment of both great and lesser subjects (VII, 421, ll. 5-8) seems also to be a specific allusion to the ongoing trials, about which Weston, one of the accused, had expressed the hope that 'they doe not make a nett to catch the little fish or flyes and lett the greate goe'.⁶¹

Evidently, Jonson's prime objective was to distance James from the conduct of his erstwhile favourite. He achieved this, as Butler and Lindley point out, by representing the Evils of the Iron Age as political subversives:

In representing the Evils as if they were opponents of kingship, Jonson's fable manipulated the issues in order to insulate James from blame by association. Far from having condoned the evil at his elbow, the king himself is cast in the masque's presentation as the main target of the Evils' violence (B&L, p. 822).⁶²

⁶⁰ Leah Marcus, 'City Metal and Country Mettle: The Occasion of Ben Jonson's *Golden Age Restored*', in *Pageantry in the Shakesporean Theater*, ed. by David Bergeron (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), pp. 26-47 similarly notes that Pallas presides over the entirety of the masque, but overstates the distinctiveness of such a device (p. 38). Compare for example Campion's *Lords' Masque* in which the authority of Orpheus, the representative of order, is established prior to the appearance of Mania and her frantics, and contrast the more genuinely threatening antimasque hags in *Queens*.

⁶¹ Quoted from B&L, p. 813, who suggest that the phrase 'seems to have become a standard topos in the aftermath of these hearings'. As it turned out, and despite the assertions of the masque, James's justice was indeed influenced by considerations of class, since the Somersets, unlike the unfortunate Weston, escaped execution.

⁶² This strategy of rewriting the past can be seen operating in *Neptune's Triumph*, discussed below, and has a parallel in Prospero's narrative in Act I of *The Tempest*, which places the blame for his usurpation on his brother while minimising his own culpability in neglecting his political duties.

Jonson follows James's lead in recasting a potentially damaging situation as an occasion for the demonstration of kingly authority and justice. However, the masque's narrative is fractured by the discontinuities between fiction and reality. Foremost among these gaps is the fact that both of the transformation scenes - the banishment of the Iron Age, and the revelation of the masquers - are accomplished without reference to the watching King. It is Pallas, not Jove or James, who with her shield turns the Iron Age rebels to stone, floods with light 'the shade' where the semigod masquers have slept, and provides the poets with their inspiration. Admittedly, Pallas functions as Jove's messenger and agent, but it is stretching the point to suggest, as Leah Marcus does, that, 'as a daughter of Jove sprung from his forehead, Pallas clearly represents on one level the wisdom of James himself, the Jove of the masque, whose power pervades the landscape'.⁶³ In *The Vision of Delight* the renewal of spring is unambiguously achieved by the King's presence, and 'The heards, the flocks, the grasse, the trees / Do all confesse him' (VII, 470, ll. 209-20); by contrast in *The Golden Age* James is conspicuous by his absence.

The fact that the transformations are accomplished without reference to the watching King complicates the panegyric which is at least as admonitory as it is

⁶³ Marcus, 'City Metal', p. 38. Once again *Queens* provides a useful contrast. In *Queens* the transformation was achieved by Pallas's shield wielded not by the goddess herself but by Perseus, who, as a personification of heroic masculine virtue, could function as a correlative for King James. However, the presence of Pallas as the transforming force in *Golden Age* typifies the gaps which disrupt its panegyric. Butler and Lindley see in the invocation of Pallas the masque's acknowledgement of a growing nostalgia for the Elizabethan golden age, associated with the Essex faction. However, it might also be possible to find a female correlative for Pallas not in Queen Elizabeth, but in the watching Queen Anne, who had played that role in Daniel's *Twelve Goddesses*, and more importantly, disliked Somerset and had supported Essex over the issue of the divorce.

celebratory (B&L, p. 814). The test of James's commitment to justice was still to come with the trial of Somerset himself; only then would James be able to prove himself fully worthy of the praise reserved in this masque for Jove. The fact that the masque ascribes to poetry the crucial role of sustaining the state of Astraea and the Golden Age on earth, may have functioned to remind James that only poetry could weave the mystifying narratives necessary to extricate him from this scandal. On one level, the masque enacts the dependence of the monarch on his artists, although Jonson's technique can equally be seen as deriving from James's strategy of authoring his own authorized version of the past.⁶⁴

The fall of Somerset had major implications for the standing of various factions at court, signalling as it did a serious blow to the Howard family who had profited from their connection to the favourite by monopolising positions of power at court.⁶⁵ However, with William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, taking Somerset's place as Lord Chamberlain to preside over this masque, the time seemed ripe for a resurgence to power of the old Essexians. For Essex himself, who had absented himself from court following the divorce trials and the remarriage of Frances, the spectacle of the

⁶⁴ See the discussion in chapter 1 of this thesis of James rewriting his relationships with Queen Elizabeth and with his mother, Mary Queen of Scots after both were dead and he was firmly established on the English throne.

⁶⁵ James's 1615 letter to Somerset reminds him of the favour that had been shown to his wife's family: 'Do not all court graces and places come through your office as Chamberlain, and rewards through your father-in-law's that is Treasurer?', in *Letters*, ed. by Akrigg, pp. 339-40. In fact, while Somerset was replaced as Lord Chamberlain, the members of the Howard family survived the scandal relatively unscathed and retained their places at court until 1618 when Thomas Howard, the Earl of Suffolk, was found guilty of corruption and removed from his position as Lord Treasurer.

Somerset's humiliation must have been particularly satisfying. Butler and Lindley, quoting the Italian Quaratesi's account, suggest that Essex may even have been among the masquers: 'In a few days there will be a beautiful ballet, whose head [capo] will be the Earl of Essex, who is continuously seen at Court now, after having been constantly absent from it after the now Countess of Somerset repudiated him' (B&L, p. 822).

Whether or not Essex actually performed in the masque, the presentation of the virtuous masquers returning to court after a period of absence spent in 'Elysian bowres' seems to recall Essex's withdrawal to his country seat, and his rejection of the court. Given the association of Essex with Elizabethan chivalric values, it was entirely appropriate that his vindication should be celebrated in a fable which invokes the return of a golden age through the Elizabethan iconography of Pallas and Astraea. Prince Henry's masques had successfully exploited a motif of revival and resurrection as an oppositional strategy, identifying him with a glorious past and a promising future, while distancing him from the here and now of his father's reign (as discussed in chapter 3). For James, by contrast, the implications of narratives of renewal were potentially troubling, since, as Butler and Lindley have noted, they implicitly denigrated the past decade of James's rule (B&L, p. 822). It could not have helped matters that Jonson's previous masque, *Mercury Vindicated*, had interrogated and demystified exactly that notion of renewal by suggesting that it was as much the province of the trickster and false artist as of the true artist and King.

The conclusion of the masque, with the retirement of the masquers to the sphere ordained for them by Jove seems, as Marcus comments, to collude with royal policy

by enacting the resettlement of the nobles and gentry in their country seats envisaged in James's proclamations.⁶⁶ Yet while implicitly accomplishing James's commands, this movement risks implying that the court is still a place of corruption, and that neither the restored virtues nor the goddess Astraea can remain there. This may explain why Jonson revised the ending of the masque, to ensure that the printed version emphasised the decision of the goddess of justice to remain on earth, and at the court. The performance may have deliberately cultivated ambiguity on this point as Jonson, with the court as a whole, waited to see whether James would allow justice to be done, and his favourite to be condemned. By the time of the publication of his 1616 folio Jonson, with the benefit of hindsight, and satisfied that the King had acted justly, could afford to be more confident.

But even in the printed version, which concludes with Astraea's joyous assertion of her desire to remain on earth, the goddess' volition is undermined by a description which implies compulsion: 'My silver feet, like roots, are wreathed / Into the ground, my wings are sheathed, / And I cannot away' (VII, 428, ll. 225-27). The goddess of justice wants to remain, but she cannot leave anyway; James is praised on the condition that his justice lives up to that of his fictional correlative; and the virtuous masquers retire once again to a pastoral setting. Despite its title, *The Golden Age Restored* is not a masque which allows the court to survey complacently its own well-being.

⁶⁶ Leah Marcus, 'City Metal', p. 36.

Sports at Court: *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* and the dancing favourite

James's project to restrict the growth of the city and court, while reviving the country, has been admirably elucidated by Leah Marcus, and provides a common context for the masques discussed so far. However, Marcus's analysis is sometimes flawed by its willingness to take James at his own word and by her acceptance of James's construction of himself as a doctor-king concerned for the well-being of his patient-kingdom. A closer consideration of James's proclamations reveals that his pose of beneficent altruism is compromised by his own self-serving motives. Thus, while many of the gentlemen and nobility who came to court did so in order to evade the expense of country hospitality, James's desire for them to return to the country was prompted, in part, by his own desperate need to economise.⁶⁷ Moreover, while James accused the gentry and nobility who came to London of wanting to evade their public duties and responsibilities to lead a more private life, he was to an extent guilty of the same crime. His habit of living in the company of a small group of favourites, coupled with his distaste for public occasions and civic pageantry, had led to a significant reduction in the number of progresses made during his reign compared with that of his predecessor, with the result that the provincial gentry and nobility *had* to come to court to see him. Finally, the proclamation of December 1615, issued when the scandal surrounding the Overbury trials was at its height, reads as a damage limitation exercise, an attempt to reduce the numbers of onlookers and gossipmongers at court, and anticipates similar proclamations of the 1620s when

⁶⁷ Overcrowding in the city resulted in an increased demand for basic commodities and inflated prices which stretched the already limited royal resources to breaking point.

James, becoming increasingly sensitive about his prerogative, not only ordered people away from court, but attempted to prohibit discussion of affairs of state altogether.

James had expressed concern about the tendency of subjects to ‘iudge and speake rashly of their Prince’ in his *Basilikon Doron*, where he proposed a number of solutions to this perennial problem, noting the existence of ‘Lawes that are to be used against vnreuerent speakers’, and advising his son to rule in such a way ‘as may iustly stop their mouths’.⁶⁸ He concluded with the recommendation that certain days be appointed for ‘publicke spectacles of all honest games, and exercise of armes’, promoting such pastimes as a way of ‘contenting the peoples mindes’, and by implication, silencing their unruly tongues.

Leah Marcus’s illuminating discussion of holiday pastimes in *The Politics of Mirth* neatly describes James’s policy as enshrining a ‘paradox of state’, in which allowed liberty becomes a sign of submission to royal authority. James regarded the survival of these customs as a crucial aspect of his own power, but the middle years of his reign had seen a steady increase in Puritan opposition to traditional pastimes on the grounds that they were relics of paganism, transmitted by a superstitious papist religion. The rhetoric of the Puritan anti-sport faction had been caricatured in a number of masques at court including *Love Restored*, and *Christmas His Masque*, where Christmas asserts, ‘though I come out of Pope’s Head Alley, [I am] as good a

⁶⁸ *Basilikon Doron*, in *Political Works*, ed. by C. H. McIlwain, p. 27.

Protestant as any i' my parish'.⁶⁹ In both cases, the figures who are guilty of rejecting masquing and other holiday festivities are exposed as selfish misers whose opposition is motivated not by religion or ideology but by a desire to save money.

James took advantage of the opportunity provided by his 1617 progress to Scotland to promote at the towns en route the holiday pastimes which he believed would content the populace, ensuring their obedience and loyalty.⁷⁰ However, he encountered extreme exponents of both the pro- and anti-sport factions: 'first the licentious popish prospouters who disrupted Anglican services, then the presumptuous Puritans who had challenged royal authority by railing against all sports'.⁷¹ He responded with the proclamation that became known as the Book of Sports, which defined the limits of acceptable festivity by placing the holiday customs in the context of the Anglican liturgy (*Politics*, p. 106). *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, the Twelfth Night masque for 1618 re-enacts James's defeat of extremism

⁶⁹ Faced with Puritan opposition to holiday pastimes and to the theatres the coincidence of interests between the King and dramatists on this issue resulted in the production of a stereotype of Puritanism as the enemy of all art forms, which has been largely perpetuated by modern commentators. However, as David Norbrook has pointed out, Protestants with Puritan leanings were opposed to festivals only when they functioned as the instruments of pro-Spanish propaganda at court; that they were quite prepared to use the masque and other dramatic forms to achieve their own ends is demonstrated in the discussion of Prince Henry's masques in chapter 3, together with the most famous instance of the reformed masque, Milton's *Comus*. See Norbrook, 'The Reformation of the Masque', pp. 100-102.

⁷⁰ James had advised his heir 'once in the yeere to visite the principall parts of the countrey', (*Basilikon Doron*, pp. 27-28) but in this case, as in so many others, James failed to follow his own words of wisdom, and his visit to Scotland in 1617 was the only one of his reign.

⁷¹ Marcus, *Politics*, p. 113. This discussion is heavily indebted to Marcus's elucidation of the context of *Pleasure Reconciled* and subsequent page references to *The Politics of Mirth* are given in parentheses in the text.

and his defence of the *via media* of Anglicanism.

The antimasque opens with the riotous excess of Comus and his followers, whose elevation of the appetite into a religion has transformed them into bottles and tuns. Their dance is interrupted by the entrance of Hercules, a representative of order before whom Comus and his crew disappear. However, Hercules's speech reveals that he banishes not festival *per se*, but excess and over-indulgence, and in the interests of balance Hercules is represented defeating the giant Antaeus and his brothers the pygmies, who embody the inhospitable spirit of Puritanism. Only when the representatives of both extremes have been defeated can the reconciliation between pleasure and virtue take place.

However, the celebratory rhetoric of *Pleasure Reconciled*, like that of *The Golden Age Restored*, is disrupted by the gap between the ideal and the reality, since for all James's proclamations, his own court remained a stronghold for excess and indulgence. The ambiguity of James's position is reflected in the figure of Hercules, who, as John Mulryan points out, is unable to achieve the final reconciliation of pleasure and virtue because, 'the one myth where he piously chooses Lady Virtue over Lady Pleasure cannot override the many spectacular accounts of his gluttony, lechery and drunkenness'.⁷² Hercules's negative attributes - his prodigious drinking and gluttonous eating - are implicated in the antimasque by the presence of his drinking cup.⁷³ Similarly, notwithstanding James's theoretical advocacy of

⁷² John Mulryan, 'Mythic Interpretations of Ideas in Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*', *The Ben Jonson Journal* 1 (1994), 63-76 (p. 69).

⁷³ Mulryan, p. 66, cites Cartari for a description of Hercules's cup which was so large he used it as a boat.

temperance and virtuous pleasures, for which he is praised in the masque, he and his courtiers were participants in the chaotic consumption which followed the performance, and which shocked the Venetian observer, Busino:

His Majesty [...] came to a hall where the usual supper was prepared for the performers [...]. He glanced round the table and departed, and at once like so many harpies the company fell on their prey [...] the first assault threw the table to the ground, and the crash of glass platters reminded me exactly of the windows breaking in a great midsummer storm. The story ended at two hours after midnight, and half disgusted and exhausted we returned home.⁷⁴

Neither James's condemnation of riotous excess, nor his contempt for foreign fashions had much impact on the life of his court, where the latest trend was the hugely expensive and decadent French style of feasting. Chamberlain describes a number of such feasts as being characterised by 'profusion and spoyle' rather than 'reasonable or honorable provision'.⁷⁵ Such practices marked out some of James's leading courtiers as followers of the belly god, implicating James in exactly the misrule he was supposed to have suppressed and reformed.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ *CSP Ven XV*, 114.

⁷⁵ Chamberlain is describing the feast held by James Hay, one of the most francophile of James's courtiers, for the French ambassador extraordinary, Baron de la Tour, at Essex House in 1617, in *Letters*, II, 57. Marcus, *Politics*, pp. 121-25, discusses the fashion for deliberately excessive feasts, and notes that three days before the performance of the masque Buckingham had feasted James 'after the French', p. 120. For Chamberlain this occasion, like the earlier one, represented 'rather spoyle then largesse', *Letters*, II, 127.

⁷⁶ Marcus suggests that James objected to the masque because its indictment of the court was too severe. Jonson rewrote the antimasque section, replacing the feast of Comus with an inoffensive parade of Welsh country folk and their goats in *For the Honour of Wales*. However, just as *Pleasure Reconciled* destabilised the antimasque-masque division by implicating the court in the disorder of the former, Patricia Fumerton argues that *For the Honour of Wales* subtly perpetuates the challenge to authority, in 'Subdiscourse: Jonson Speaking Low', *ELR* 25 (1995), 76-96. The rewritten version at first appears to conform to a model in which the low subdiscourse of the antimasque (Welsh) will be subordinated to the 'emergence in the

Marcus's argument, illuminating as it is on the context of the masque, is limited by its focus on the King, and pays little attention to the dynamics of the performance, which had the distinction of being Charles's first appearance as principal masquer. By juxtaposing the masque's presentation of James as author and artist, with a reconstruction of the physical conditions of performance, especially the presence and motion of the dancers, I argue below that it is possible to gain an insight into the interaction between King, Prince and favourite in a way which prefigures the political configurations of the 1620s.

The masque songs are preoccupied with the power of art to instil virtue, and their claim that dancing can have an edifying effect on both participants and spectators was frequently voiced in dance treatises:

*For Dauncing is an exercise
not only shews y^e mouers wit,
but maketh y^e beholder wise,
as he hath powre to rise to it (VII, 489, ll. 269-72).⁷⁷*

According to this description, the bodies of the dancers reflect and enact the precepts of divine harmony, filling the audience with virtue and wisdom and inspiring them to emulate the example of the dancers. The songs go on to associate

main masque of a stable, ruled, and "high" English discourse' (p. 87). However, Fumerton goes on to demonstrate that the expected victory of the major discourse over the minor subdiscourse never takes place, because 'Welshness' takes over the masque. The claims of the Welsh antimasquers that the English and Scottish masquers are Welsh go unrefuted, and because Jonson did not reprint the main masque, Welshness is not dispelled (pp. 91-2).

⁷⁷ Compare the arguments of Thomas Elyot in *The Boke named the Governour* that dancing offers 'meditation of vertue' (fol. 84r), and can be used to train children to behave virtuously (fol. 83v).

dancing with all the arts - of 'design and picture' (architecture and painting), and music and poetry - which share the power attributed to dance to improve the mind and morals of the beholder. The artist has the capacity to represent (through whatever medium) a golden world, while those who 'read' and interpret art correctly have the potential to make that vision a reality. The reconciliation of pleasure and virtue achieved in the masque by art has its counterpart in the Horatian dictum that the function of art is twofold: to teach and to delight.

The emphasis on art invokes and pays tribute to the King not only as the metaphorical artist of the masque's reconciliation of extremes, but as Jonson's fellow-artist. The King's folio edition of his collected works had been published in 1616, confirming him as a source of creative power whose words, if read aright and realised in fact, had the potential to take the nation closer to those ideals envisioned in the court masque. In *News From the New World* (discussed below), Jonson describes James not merely as a text, but as a properly-proportioned piece of architecture, a source of harmonious music and of well-measured poetry and dance:

*Read him as you would doe the booke
Of all perfection, and but looke
What his proportions be;
No measure that is thence contriv'd,
Or any motion thence deriv'd,
But is pure harmonie* (VII, 523-24, ll. 340-45).

In *Pleasure Reconciled* the audience are similarly exhorted to read the '*mysterious map*' of '*roial education*' (VII, 487, l. 220; 223). However, this is situated not in James / Hesperus but in Atlas, his 'brother', and the Hill of Virtue from whence the masquers descend.

This detail is significant because it implies that Charles, although he is identified as one 'of the bright race of *Hesperus*', has been bred not according to the precepts of his father, but has followed an alternative map of royal education (VII, 486, l. 205). The distinction is compounded by the physical separation of Charles and the masquers from the court. They descend from the rocky and austere hill of virtue equipped to participate in the 'soft sports' of the court without being damaged by them. Moreover, while the temptations of the court are largely troped as feminine - the masquers must negotiate the labyrinths of beauty and love - the real threat is posed not by women but by the excessively self-indulgent lifestyle practised by James and his courtiers, which makes men 'grow soft' and 'wax effeminat' (VII, 486, l. 211). When the masquers reascend the hill which is '*Vertues seat*', they re-enact the conclusion of *The Golden Age* in which the masquers retired to their Elysian bowers; in both cases the temporary nature of their stay, and the inevitability of their departure, implies that virtue is incompatible with the court. Furthermore, the presentation of virtue as something to be achieved only through hard work introduces a note of endeavour to the genre which is at odds with the effortless transformations of the masques of the previous decade.

The masque's alignment of the Prince with a set of values distinct from those of his father's court anticipates the masques of the 1620s in which Charles would appear as the exponent of a policy opposed to the pacifism of the King. The physical proximity of the Prince and Buckingham, appearing alongside one another in a masque which insists on their distance from the watching and static King also looks forward to the alliance of the two younger men against James in the last years

of his reign. Ultimately, and despite the fact that *Pleasure Reconciled* marked Charles's first appearance as the lead masquer, it is the figure of Buckingham who makes the most lasting impression on scholars of this masque. Whereas *Mercury Vindicated* had emphasised James's creative role with regard to his new favourite, the artistry of *Pleasure Reconciled* derives as much from the masquers themselves as from the watching King. They respond to Daedalus's call to '*again yourselues compose*', by creating themselves anew in the dances (VII, 489, l. 288). Thus, while the masque invokes an idealised notion of dancing as a means of regulating the individual body and offering an ordered image of society, it simultaneously disrupts that ideal by acknowledging that the masquers can exploit the dance as a tool of self-fashioning and a means to achieve material success.⁷⁸ The discussion below argues that the individuality of Buckingham's virtuoso performance challenged rather than reinforced hierarchies of class and gender, thereby undermining the notion that the masque dances functioned to provide a vision of an ordered society.

The physical appearance cultivated by Buckingham and others at court transgressed gender stereotypes:

Now as no other reason appeared in favour of their choice but handsomeness so the love the King showed was as amorously conveyed as if he had mistaken their sex and thought them ladies, which I have seen Somerset and Buckingham labour to resemble in the effeminateness of their dressings. Though in w[horish] looks

⁷⁸ As Barbara Ravelhoffer has noted, the celebrated lines (quoted above) which describe dance as a performance of virtue are undermined by the proliferation of modal verbs such as 'may' and 'should'. See Ravelhofer, '“Virgin wax” and “hairy men-monsters”: Unstable movement codes in the Stuart masque', in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, ed. by David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 244-272 (p. 246). Ravelhofer also addresses the difficult issue of how critics of the masque and dance historians can use the masque libretti and eyewitness accounts to reconstruct what was actually danced.

and gestures they exceeded any part of womankind my conversation did ever cope withal.⁷⁹

The effeminate gestures for which Buckingham was criticised by his opponents included his French style of dancing, which was distinguished by the turn out of the feet, a deep knee bend (like a *plié*), and leaping and rising on tiptoe.⁸⁰ To the moral guardians of the day, dances in the French style were a sign that the court, contrary to the assertions made by Mercury in the masque, had begun to ‘wax effeminate’ indeed, as the newly fashionable dances destabilised the gender codes they were supposed to confirm.⁸¹ From another perspective, the opposition generated by the ‘Frenchness’ of Buckingham and others of James’s leading courtiers might be a symptom of the hostility of some contemporary observers to the organisation of James’s court, which Henry Wotton described as ‘governed more in the French than in the English fashion’.⁸² The ‘English’ etiquette of the Elizabethan court ‘was designed for the preservation and manipulation of distance’ (p. 179), but the more informal style of James’s court was epitomised by the role of the Gentlemen of the

⁷⁹ Francis Osborne, *Historical Memoirs on the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James* (London 1658), II, 127-28, quoted in Ravelhofer, p. 247.

⁸⁰ Ravelhofer’s discussion of the charges of effeminacy levelled at the French style of dancing promoted by Buckingham adds a much needed layer of subtlety to the traditional assumption that leaping was a sign of (heterosexual) masculinity, p. 248.

⁸¹ There is an irony in the fact that James, who had condemned the craze for novelties and foreign fashions, countenanced and even praised them in his favourite, who had feasted the King in the French style prior to delighting him with his dancing.

⁸² For the organisation of James’s court see Neil Cuddy, ‘The revival of the entourage: the Bedchamber of James I, 1603-25’, in *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. by David Starkey (London: Longman, 1987), pp. 173-225, especially 178-180. The quote from Wotton appears on p. 180.

Bedchamber, who derived considerable political power from their proximity to the person of the King.

Dancing was also theoretically a mechanism whereby class hierarchies were performatively affirmed, since the courtly elite cultivated a style of dancing distinct from the popular dances of the lower classes, notably in its suppression of gesture. However, even Thomas Elyot's patriarchal treatise acknowledges the possibility that individuals could use their appearance in the dances to market themselves in such a way as to achieve social advancement, by making a profitable marriage (or, in Buckingham's case, by pleasing the King).⁸³ Thus, the association of dance with the maintenance of social distinctions is vulnerable to disruption by the ambitions of individuals.

The complex role of dance as part of a courtier's repertoire of gestures is discussed by Skiles Howard, who identifies at least three competing discourses, and notes that 'if in patriarchal discourse dancing shaped a virtuous body and in mercantile discourse marketed an appealing one, in moralistic discourse dancing fashioned a grotesque form'.⁸⁴ Depending on the attitude of the spectator, all of these aspects might be exemplified by Buckingham's performance. The songs of Daedalus echo the patriarchal view of the capacity of dance to maintain order, yet Buckingham's performance in the masque dances distinguishes his individuality rather than asserting any sense of community, and exposes the flexibility of class and gender roles rather than affirming them. His performance, informed by a 'mercantile

⁸³ See Elyot, fol. 82r, for the possibility that dancing could bring 'profite'.

⁸⁴ Howard, p. 38.

discourse', was intended to please the King, and succeeded in gaining James's approval which brought with it the rewards of titles and wealth. However, while Buckingham's dancing calmed the King's anger, it also demonstrated the capacity of dance which most alarmed its moralistic opponents, namely, its power to inflame the passions. Thus, Buckingham's dancing body could be read and interpreted in any number of ways. Buckingham was deliberately fashioning himself in a way that appealed to the King, who enjoyed the erotic spectacle of his own creature dancing for his entertainment, while opponents of the new favourite railed against the grotesque spectacle of his effeminised body.

One can only wonder how Charles responded to the public display of affection between the King and Buckingham. It is easy to assume that Charles would have been annoyed; Buckingham's dancing had after all denied Charles his rightful place as the focal point of the audience's gaze, and the favourite had publicly usurped the place of the son and heir in the affections of his father. However, it is worth recalling the fact that, later in 1618, Charles would again have recourse to Buckingham to assuage the King's anger, the favourite hosting a feast at which James and his son were reconciled after an argument. I have suggested elsewhere that James was more willing to indulge and promote his favourites than his own sons because he felt they posed less of a threat to his position, and did not raise the spectre of usurpation which James so feared. Perhaps Charles appreciated this fact, and viewed Buckingham less as a rival than as a potential ally, and a useful way of dissipating the hostility between a King and his heir which had characterised the relationship between James and Henry. The fact that the favourite and the Prince

danced together in the masque, which culminated in their withdrawal from the King and his court, signalled the favourite's ability to negotiate successfully between two masters, the present and future kings.

The Thirty Years War: Foreign Policy, News and Censorship

In the same year as Buckingham was cutting capers before the King, moves were afoot on the European political stage which would have a dramatic impact on the remainder of James's reign, pushing his *rex pacificus* persona to breaking point, and precipitating a series of divisions in domestic politics, both between the King and parliament, and amongst the trinity of King, Prince and favourite. The major European conflict that was to become known as the Thirty Years War was triggered in 1618, when the Bohemian nobles deposed their King, the Catholic Ferdinand of Styria. A little over a year later, in the summer of 1619, they offered the throne to Frederick, the Elector of the Palatine, and King James's son-in-law.⁸⁵ James was discomfited by such an illegal transfer of power, and, refusing to condone the deposition of a fellow monarch (no matter how Catholic), he advised Frederick not to accept the Bohemian crown. Frederick had other ideas, and before the end of

⁸⁵ Bohemia was of strategic importance: the Holy Roman Emperor was elected by seven Electors, comprising three Catholic bishops, three Protestant princes, and the King of Bohemia, who was usually a Hapsburg. Frederick's election to the Bohemian throne threatened to create a Protestant majority among the electors. See Conrad Russell, *The Crisis of Parliaments: English History 1509-1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 291.

1619 he and Elizabeth had been crowned King and Queen of Bohemia.⁸⁶ Frederick's move gained widespread popular support in England, where the anti-Catholic prejudice was deeply embedded in the national psyche, and he was celebrated as the 'protestant David going forth to attack the Catholic Goliath'.⁸⁷ The fact that he carried with him to Prague the Princess Elizabeth, namesake of the great Gloriana, who was (for as long as Prince Charles remained unmarried and childless) the second in line to the English throne, meant that the religious fervour aroused by Frederick's defiance of the Hapsburgs was heightened by the patriotic and chivalric sentiments which focused on Elizabeth. John Harrison, in *A Short Relation of the departure of the high and mightie Prince Frederick King Elect of Bohemia*, captured the popular mood, when he asked 'shall we suffer our sweete princess, our royall infanta, the only daughter of our soveraigne lord and king, to goe before us into the field and not follow after her?'.⁸⁸ Harrison's tract, and others like it, enshrined Elizabeth as an emblem of the true reformed church in her apocalyptic struggle against the forces of catholicism.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ For more detailed discussions of the situation in Europe see Lockyer, *Buckingham*, pp. 79-86, and C. V. Wedgwood, *The Thirty Years War* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938).

⁸⁷ Lockyer, p. 79.

⁸⁸ Harrison, *A Short Relation* (Dortmund, 1619), pp. 4-5, quoted by Jerzy Limon, in *Dangerous Matter: English Drama and Politics in 1623/24* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 51.

⁸⁹ Hans Werner, 'The Hector of Germanie, or The Palsgrave, Prime Elector and Anglo-German relations of early Stuart England: the view from the popular stage', in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture*, ed. by R. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 113-132, discusses the reflections of the Thirty Years War in the public theatre drama of 1620-1642; amongst the dramatic representations of Elizabeth's plight he cites are Dekker and Massinger's *The Virgin Martyr* (1620) and Drue's *The Duchess of*

By December 1619 the stage was set for a conflagration in which all the major European powers would eventually be embroiled. Frederick could hope for support from the German Union of Protestant Princes and from the United Provinces, while Ferdinand could draw on both the imperial and the Spanish branches of the Hapsburgs, the latter preparing to renew war against the Dutch rebels after the expiry of the Truce of Antwerp.⁹⁰ For James, the threat of war in Europe initially seemed to offer the opportunity to consummate the *rex pacificus* persona he had constructed for himself throughout his reign. He pursued his habitual policy of non-intervention, and continued negotiations with Spain over the proposed marriage between Charles and the Infanta, hoping to achieve a peaceful settlement in the Palatine through pressure from Spain on her imperial cousins. However, his foreign policy, especially his continued commitment to the Spanish match, which was intended to achieve peace in Europe, actually bred divisions at home, and the

Suffolk (1624), both of which represented her as a 'virtual protestant saint and martyr', p. 115. Jerzy Limon, in *Dangerous Matter*, also discusses the contemporary relevance of *The Life of the Duchess of Suffolk* in which the Duchess's flight from her Catholic tormentors provides a counterpart for Elizabeth's exile from both Bohemia and the Palatine, pp. 41-61. This is part of a broader thesis in which Limon argues, a little over-strenuously, that the large number of plays in the 1623-24 season which engaged with the foreign politics of the day, were part of a consciously contrived propaganda campaign orchestrated by leaders of the war party, and possibly by Prince Charles and Buckingham, pp. 1-13.

⁹⁰ By the time that Frederick was crowned in Prague, the deposed Ferdinand had become Holy Roman Emperor. His main allies during the military action the following year were Maximilian of Bavaria, whose forces combined with the Emperor's in the attack on Bohemia, and Spain, whose forces occupied the Palatinate. In return for their assistance Ferdinand had promised Spain the Lower Palatinate, an area of strategic importance for the Spanish, who needed to transport troops overland to the Netherlands in preparation for the renewal of war against the Dutch. The Upper Palatinate and the electoral title was promised to Maximilian of Bavaria. James's later attempts to bring about the restitution of the Palatinate through Spanish pressure on the Emperor overlooked Ferdinand's debt to Bavaria.

peacemaker King encountered vehement opposition from a populace who wanted a war of religion against the old enemy - Spain.

James had a strong sense of his kingly prerogative and believed that foreign policy was a mystery of state, one of those *arcana imperii* in which the king, and the king alone, had absolute authority. However, during the 1620s, unprecedented public interest in overseas affairs spawned an industry geared to meet the demand for news, and saw the publication of the first English newspapers. Faced with a situation in which his foreign policy was not only being discussed, but also widely criticised, James reacted by becoming jealously protective of his prerogative. In his long poem, *The Wiper of the Peoples Teares* he made clear his irritation with self-appointed critics and advisers, asserting that Kings 'need noe helpers in their choice / Their best aduice is their owne voyce', and exhorting his subjects to 'hold your pratling, spare your penn', otherwise 'state affaires' would degenerate into 'publique bables'.⁹¹

The same defensiveness underlies the proclamations he issued to restrain the 'excesse of Lavish and Licentious Speech of matters of State', but such attempts to impose restrictions on freedom of speech were impossible to enforce in practice, and were largely ineffectual, serving only to further undermine James's credibility in the eyes of his subjects.⁹² Moreover, the discussion which proliferated about foreign affairs soon engendered debate on subjects closer to home including kingly

⁹¹ *Poems* ed. by James Craigie, 2 vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1955), II, 182-91.

⁹² The proclamation was issued on 24 December 1620 and reissued on 26 July 1621; see *Proclamations*, I, 495-96 and 519-21. Another aspect of James's programme of censorship was the proclamation of 25 September 1623 against 'disorderly printing', I, 583-85.

prerogative and the nature of the monarch's relationship with parliament, the aristocracy and the law. In the last five years of his reign James not only had to face the deconstruction of his cherished peacemaker king persona; his very concept of kingship was challenged and contested.

The masques of the 1620s have as their backdrop James's increasingly desperate attempts to keep the peace in Europe, while resisting the pressures of public opinion at home.⁹³ For Jonson, working in the inherently politicised genre of the masque, James's heightened sensitivity to real or perceived challenges to his prerogative posed a particular problem, and the masque-writer had to tread carefully to avoid giving offence. Whereas the masques, and especially the antimasques, of earlier performances (notably *Pleasure Reconciled*) had articulated some criticism of James and his court, Jonson's masques for the 1620s support James's commitment to peaceful negotiation, and defend the inscrutability of his royal wisdom against the ignorance of public opinion. In view of the fact that Jonson had himself suffered at the hands of censors, having been punished by imprisonment on more than one occasion in the past, it is perhaps surprising that he should have produced a series of masques which acknowledge the need for censorship. In fact, as Pearl points out, the masques of the 1620s re-envision wholesale censorship as the right and needful suppression of bad art, which becomes synonymous with false politics.⁹⁴ Jonson

⁹³ See Sara Pearl 'Sounding to Present Occasions: Jonson's Masques of 1620-25,' in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 60-77. Pearl's essay elucidates the political context of the masques of 1620-25, which she rightly sees as defending James's pacifism and his kingly prerogative against the mounting popular support for war.

⁹⁴ Pearl, p. 63.

not only tropes himself as the true artist, but uses his intellectual elitism to align himself with the King. As the producer of abstruse masques, whose 'more removed mysteries' are beyond the interpretative capacities of most of his audience, Jonson speaks directly to the King, another true artist, and the creator of a just, if inscrutable, foreign policy, about the trials of being subjected to the misapprehensions of an ignorant public.⁹⁵

Jonson's drama frequently expresses the anxiety that his work will be misinterpreted; in the epistle to *Volpone* he denounces 'invading interpreters' who 'profess to have a key for the deciphering of everything', and in *Bartholomew Fair* he speaks out against the 'state-decipherer' and 'politic picklock'.⁹⁶ Yet while Jonson denounces inaccurate interpreters, his masques, which comment on affairs of state by using allegorical indirection, demand to be interpreted if they are to be meaningful.⁹⁷ In other words, Jonson's 1620 masques are able to engage with affairs of state only through indirect and figurative means, but in adopting this method, the masques become subject to the ability - or more often the inability - of

⁹⁵ A prime instance of Jonson's contemptuously dismissive attitude towards the ignorance of his audience occurs in his preface to *Hymenaei*, where he rails against those who 'squemishly crie out, that all endeuour of *learning* and *sharpnesse* in these transitorie *deuices* especially, where it steps beyond their little, or (let me not wrong 'hem) no braine at all, is superfluous', H&S, VII, 209, ll. 19-23.

⁹⁶ For the plays see *The Alchemist and Other Plays*, ed. by Gordon Campbell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), *Volpone*, p. 4, ll. 58-60; *Bartholomew Fair*, p. 333, ll. 22-23.

⁹⁷ Interestingly, in doing so Jonson was following the advice James had given in his *Ane Schort Treatise*, which recommended that poets wishing to discuss politics should adopt a figurative or metaphorical approach. Dale B. J. Randall makes this point in *Jonson's Gypsies Unmasked: Background and Theme of 'The Gypsies Metamorphos'd'* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), p. 43.

the audience to interpret them correctly. The physical arrangement of the masque theatre (discussed in chapter 1) implied that only the royal spectator was fully able to penetrate to the heart of the masque's mysteries, so, in theory at least, James would interpret Jonson's masques as they were intended. However, in the 1620s allegory was being mobilised against James with such frequency in the public theatres and from the pulpits that the King's interpretative ability became flawed by his hypersensitivity, which led him to see criticism at every turn. Thus, when Jonson's masque for 1623, *Time Vindicated*, defended James's policies against the misinterpretation of others, James misunderstood the attack on his opponents as an attack on himself.

News from the New World Discovered in the Moon, the Twelfth Night masque of 1620, was performed at a time of anxious uncertainty.⁹⁸ The coronation of James's daughter and son-in-law at Prague on 19 December 1619, left the rest of Europe looking expectantly towards England. Frederick and his allies were hoping that, if the Emperor took aggressive military action, the combination of family feeling and

⁹⁸ The following discussion of the political situation at the time of the performance of *News* is indebted to P. R. Sellin's article, 'The Politics of Ben Jonson's *Newes from the New World Discover'd in the Moone*', *Viator* 17 (1986), 321-37. Sellin's arguments are generally sound, but are marred in places by an earlier article, 'The Performances of Ben Jonson's *Newes from the New World Discover'd in the Moone*', *English Studies* 61 (1980), 491-97, in which he advanced a case for the identification of *News* with the running masque which received multiple performances at various London locations during the first week in January. Martin Butler's lucid account of the season's entertainments in 'Jonson's *News from the New World*, the "Running Masque," and the Season of 1619-20', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 6 (1993), 153-78 conclusively refutes Sellin's case, and has done much to clear up the confusion which has surrounded the dating of performances during the 1619-20 season. Subsequent references to Butler's article are given in abbreviated form as 'the Season'.

religious sentiment would be enough to galvanise the peacemaker King into active support for their cause. Baron Dohna, the ambassador who had been dispatched from Bohemia to gain some such assurance from James, arrived just prior to the first performance of *News*, as did James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, who had been dispatched on a diplomatic mission to mediate between Frederick and the Emperor. Doncaster's negotiations had been unsuccessful, and with war looking increasingly likely, the government of the United Provinces at the Hague had presented him with a formal statement urging James to commit himself to an anti-Hapsburg league to combat the combined might of Spain and the Empire.⁹⁹

At the time of the performance of *News from the New World* it was still not entirely clear what course of action the King would take; what was more certain was that James resented the fact that unsolicited advice and opinions were being pressed on him from all sides. Thus, while Jonson alludes to 'the music of [James's] peace', assuming, quite correctly, that James would respond to the new situation with a continued commitment to pacifism, his praise of James in this masque not only

⁹⁹ The United Provinces were preparing for a renewal of their own war with Spain, and their recent alliance with Venice formed the beginnings of an anti-Hapsburg league. However, James's commitment to the principle of divine right monarchy meant that he tended to regard the Dutch as rebellious subjects, and despite the fact that they were his co-religionists he was reluctant to trust them, preferring to deal with the King of Spain, who was at least a fellow monarch. In James's mind the Dutch 'rebels' were probably identified with the same 'popular' spirit of militant Protestantism which was posing a challenge to his own prerogative at home. The fact that the false artist, Vangoose, who produces the antimasque in *Augurs* (discussed below) speaks with a Dutch accent provides further evidence for the extent to which James would have been likely to associate the Dutch with the mounting domestic pressure for war. See Simon Adams, 'Spain or the Netherlands? The dilemmas of early Stuart foreign policy', in *Before the English Civil War: Essays on Early Stuart Politics and Government* ed. by Howard Tomlinson (London: Macmillan, 1983). pp. 79-101

excises any trace of criticism, it also eschews the admonitory tone of earlier masques.¹⁰⁰ Jonson distances himself from those who presume to criticise the King or to advise him on the *arcana imperii* of foreign policy by satirising them in the antimasque. Yet having presented a powerful defence of the King's prerogative, and a justification of his attempts to restrict public discussion of foreign policy, Jonson finds himself in a double bind; for even while defending and praising the King, Jonson is unavoidably entering the forbidden territory of mysteries of state. It is a powerful testimony to Jonson's tact that in most of his masques for the 1620s he successfully managed to defend royal policies, while appearing to comply with the royal dictum which forbade discussion of such matters.

The antimasque opens with the repetition of the word 'news' four times in as many lines, rendering the word empty and meaningless in a process of semantic derogation which enacts in miniature the larger movement of the antimasque. The conjunction of 'news' with novelty and fantasy makes the negative connotations of the word abundantly clear, as Jonson draws on earlier productions, notably *The Vision of Delight*, for a pre-established model in which the benighted operations of fantasy to satisfy a desire for novelty represent a false creativity. The antimasques of the 1614-19 period (discussed above) had figured the grotesque products of false

¹⁰⁰ James's proclamation of December 1620 against 'speech of matters of state' showed that he was alert to the way in which flattery could function as a vehicle for criticism: 'Neither let any man mistake Us so much, as to thinke, that by giving faire, and specious attributes to Our Person, they can cover the scandalls, which they otherwise lay upon Our Government', *Proclamations*, I, 496. This warning might explain why James had been offended by *Pleasure Reconciled*, which drew on Jonson's concept of the educative potential of praise, and used exactly the mixture of compliment and criticism James condemns.

art, and the race of Volatees, part man, part bird, who provide the antimasque of *News* are in the same tradition as the travesties of the human form which appeared in *Mercury Vindicated*, and *Pleasure Reconciled*. Moreover, while the Factor, Printer and Chronicler are not themselves outwardly deformed, they are implicated as false artists, since the news they pursue is as much the product of human creativity gone awry as are the Volatees.

P. R. Sellin has elucidated the rapid emergence in the 1620s of the news industry which provides the context for the antimasque's satire on 'news'. In view of James's conviction that mysteries of state were not for the common mind, it was inevitable that he should react with loathing to the new 'mass media' which made information about his foreign policy available in the public sphere. The emergent media culture was a capitalist venture, in which news was a commodity to be bought and sold, and the Printer describes himself as 'all for sale' (VII, 514, l. 15). The newsmongers are presented as greedy and materialistic, and their open concern with profit rather than truth puts the twentieth-century reader in mind of today's tabloid journalism.

The King had every reason to be anxious about the trade in news, since the majority of manuscript and printed news circulating in England at the time originated in the Dutch Republic, and was less concerned with objective information than with the dissemination of propaganda pandering to the popular desire for war.¹⁰¹ The

¹⁰¹ The first news-sheets originated in Holland in 1618/19 and by 1620 were being translated into English. A year later English publishers had begun to produce their own news-books. For the emergence of the news industry, see Sellin, pp. 326-29, and Limon, *Dangerous Matters*, pp. 3-4 and Richard Cust, 'News and politics in early seventeenth century England', *Past and Present* 112 (1986), 60-90.

handwritten news produced by the Factor deliberately encourages the religious bias of his anticipated readership: 'I have my Puritan newes, my Protestant newes, and my Pontificall newes' (VII, 514, ll. 42-3). While manuscript news of the type the Factor deals in would have been practically impossible to regulate, printed matter was, at least in theory, subject to licensing and entry in the Stationer's Register. However, as Sellin points out, a number of those pamphlets in circulation, particularly those more extreme in their militant Protestantism, such as Thomas Scott's *Vox Populi* and *Vox Coeli*, were either published in continental Europe, or by underground presses in England.¹⁰² Those which withheld the name of the publisher and place of publication claimed to originate in 'Elizium' or 'Paradise' giving their arguments an other-worldly authority with their claim to be licensed by God, if not by his earthly representative, the King.

The debate between the Factor and the Printer over the relative value of manuscript and printed news raises the crucial issues of 'truth' and interpretation. The Printer is not interested in the veracity of the stories he prints because he is confident that printing confers authenticity on the most outrageous fictions. It was just this power of print to make things 'true', to present fictions as fact, that was the essence of its potency as a tool of propaganda.¹⁰³ The printed word was at its

¹⁰² Sellin, p. 328.

¹⁰³ Interestingly, Jonson's own publications testify to the power of print, if not to falsify reality then certainly to bend the rules in reporting it. The 1640 folio version of *Pleasure Reconciled* glossed over the failure of the first performance, with the statement 'this pleas'd the KING so well, as he [w]ould see it againe, when it was presented with these additions', while the subtitle of *Neptune's Triumph*, claiming it had been 'celebrated in a masque at court on the Twelfth Night 1624' belies the fact that this masque was never even performed. See H&S VII, 491; 681.

most powerful - and its most dangerous - when the audience lacked the intellectual ability to analyse and interpret correctly. The Printer's lower-class readers believe the stories he disseminates 'of the serpent in *Sussex*, or the witches bidding the Devill to dinner at *Derbie*', and Jonson presents such an indiscriminating acceptance of the truth of all printed matter as an alarming phenomenon (VII, 515, ll. 48-9).¹⁰⁴

The exposure of the Factor and the Printer as false artists who deal in fictions rather than truth extends to the Chronicler who cannot comment on affairs of state and is reduced to recording trivial details.¹⁰⁵ By contrast, the true artist and poet can comment on the contemporary situation using figurative indirection, and once the falsehood of the narratives produced by the newsmongers is exposed, Jonson introduces a version of himself into the antimasque. The Heralds relate how a certain poet - and the details leave us in no doubt that this is Jonson - has recently returned from a journey to the moon which he undertook as the servant of poetry, the 'Mistris of all discovery', and the revealer of truth (VII, 516, l. 104).¹⁰⁶ The already

¹⁰⁴ By satirising the gullibility of readers who believe everything that is presented to them, Jonson may be attempting to generate a more questioning attitude amongst his own audiences by problematising any straightforward acceptance of the ideals presented by the masque as coterminous with reality. See Nathaniel Strout 'Jonson's Jacobean Masques and the Moral Imagination', *SEL* 27 (1987), 233-47, for a similar perspective on the effect of the increasing self-referentiality of Jonson's antimasques for the 1620s, an idea which is discussed in more detail below in relation to *The Masque of Augurs* and *Neptune's Triumph*.

¹⁰⁵ Sellin points out that James's sensitivity and censorship had effectively reduced contemporary historiographers to the level of the Chronicler, since none of the histories published during James's reign engaged with the King's foreign policy and the issues surrounding the Thirty Years War pp. 325-26.

¹⁰⁶ Amongst the details which confirm that the poet should be identified with Jonson is the reference to his journey to Edinburgh, which he undertook in imitation of the King. The significance of this allusion is discussed below.

loaded concept of 'truth' becomes increasingly problematic at this point. At the climactic transformation scene Jonson's true art will reveal the noble masquers led by Prince Charles as Truth, his poetry offering a glimpse of the transcendent truths of divine kingship. However, before that we encounter a puzzling antimasque in which Jonson purports to offer the truth about a patently fictitious journey to the moon. The relationship between truth and fiction in Jonson's journey is signalled when the newsmongers are mocked for their literal-mindedness which renders them unable to interpret the figurative indirection of Jonson's satire. Jonson hasn't literally been to the moon, but the imaginative truth of poetry speaks to those whose analytical ability is superior to that of the on-stage audience of newsmongers.

The truth which Jonson's news from the moon offers is a satirical insight into the follies which characterise London life. The first impression of the moon as a place where 'all the discourse [...] is harmonie' and where the population have 'no articulate voyces [...], but certaine motions to musicke', must have offered a glimpse of an ideal world for James, who was to spend the next few years of his reign trying unsuccessfully to impose a similar silence on the all too articulate voices of his populace (VII, 519, ll. 194-96).¹⁰⁷ In the new world lawyers are as 'dumbe as fishes, for they have no controversies to exercise themselves in', while the Doppers do not dare to 'prophecie' or to 'raise doctrine' (VII, 519, ll. 199-200; 207-8). The inarticulate state of such heterodox Protestants was in pointed contrast to the

¹⁰⁷ Interestingly, the same description - 'no articulate voyces [...], but certaine motions to musicke' - might be applied to the masque proper in which the silent dancing of the masquers denotes their acquiescence to James's royal wisdom.

vocality of their sublunary counterparts, whose prophesyings were encouraging the type of religious extremism and confessionally motivated hostilities which James tried to eliminate by taking steps such as prohibiting public prayers for the King and Queen of Bohemia.¹⁰⁸

In other ways the moon that the Heralds describe closely resembles London, not least with its 'Isle of Epicoenes' where 'they are fashioned alike, male and female the same, not heads and broad hats, short doublets, and long points', an allusion to the current fashion for women to dress in masculine attire, which James condemned (VII, 521, ll. 277-79).¹⁰⁹ The fact that Jonson's antimasque carefully satirises such well-known objects of royal dislike as lawyers, cross-dressed women, and Rosicrucians demonstrates his anxiety to align himself with the King's opinion. As Sellin rightly notes, the antimasque offers 'no news' to the King because it coincides so meticulously with royal opinion.¹¹⁰

Jonson's decision to insert a poet, clearly a version of himself, into the antimasque is clearly significant, and the trend, which continues in *Augurs* and *Neptune's Triumph*, is indicative of Jonson's increasingly self-conscious approach to the masque as a genre. The self-reflexiveness of the later masques betrays Jonson's

¹⁰⁸ The prohibition on prayers for Bohemia is reported in a letter from Francis Nethersole to Dudley Carleton on 8 January 1620, quoted by Butler, 'the Season', p. 172. Puritan prophets are satirised in *Pan's Anniversary*, discussed below.

¹⁰⁹ Later in 1620 Chamberlain reports that James had instructed the clergy to 'inveigh vehemently and bitterly in their sermons against the insolency of our women and their wearing of broad-brimmed hats, pointed doublets, their hair cut short or shorn', in *Letters*, II, 286-87. Perhaps this instruction was an attempt to divert the attention of the clergy from the plight of Elizabeth and Frederick.

¹¹⁰ Sellin, p. 323. Rosicrucianism is the target of the satire in the antimasque of *The Fortunate Isles and their Union*.

anxiety about his role as masque-maker in the face of the King's heightened sensitivity during the period. In this context the apparently casual allusion to Jonson's trip to Edinburgh takes on a greater significance because it suggests a faint but nonetheless deliberate parallel between the poet and his King. The antimasque presents Jonson's 'news' and shows that even true art is vulnerable to the misinterpretation of an ignorant audience; in so doing it insists that the King's predicament is shared by his poet. The Venetian ambassador reported that the silence which had settled on the court in the Christmas season of 1619-20 was so profound that 'anyone arriving in these islands would think that the people had lost their tongues'.¹¹¹ Jonson's masque was breaking those silences, and while it is unequivocal in its support for the King, Jonson could be forgiven for feeling anxious about speaking out at all. Once it entered the public arena the masque, like all discourse, would become vulnerable to (mis)interpretation, and as a precautionary measure Jonson respectfully reminds the King that the snares of misconstruction are as much a threat to the writings of poets as to the policies of their royal masters.

The main masque presents the King in the role of quasi-divine creator, the source of light and warmth, giving life to the masquers who are 'a race of [James's] owne, form'd, animated, lightned, and heightned' by the King (VII, 522, ll. 303-4). James's creatures are led by his literal son, Charles, and his surrogate son, Buckingham, but the masque insistently places James at the focal point of its fiction. It is by gazing on James that the masquers have been 'rapt' above the moone; their 'speculation' of James's virtues, has resulted in a version of the neoplatonic ascent, with not only

¹¹¹ *CSP Ven XVI*, 90.

their souls, but their bodies, aspiring heavenward (VII, 522, ll. 304-5). The injunction against talking about the King is literalised in the silence of the masquers, but is compensated for by a process which makes the King the object of an adoring gaze.¹¹² The first two songs simulate the gradual sharpening of the focus of the masquers' eyes as they gaze on James; initially dazzled they are gradually able to behold the King who is the source of the rays which bring light and life-giving warmth. They are significantly exhorted to '*Read him*' as '*the booke / Of all perfection*'; the book that is James is the source of the masque dances, and the harmonious motion of the dancers expresses their submission to his policy of peace (VII, 523, ll. 340-41).¹¹³ However, after the antimasque's interrogation of the issues of truth and interpretation, a lingering spectre of anxiety remains that even '*the booke / Of all perfection*' might be misinterpreted by unskilled readers, and the risk of error is present to the end.

Amongst the audience of the masque on whom the onus of interpretation rested, were the usual contingent of ambassadors. The Twelfth Night performance was attended by the Venetian, Savoyard and French ambassadors, and the Shrovetide performance by the ambassador from Bohemia and the representative of the Dutch States General. The invitations seem to have targetted countries which had an interest in the formation of an anti-Hapsburg league; for instance Venice was concerned about Spanish power and had just signed a defensive alliance with the

¹¹² Although James, who eschewed the public gaze as often as possible, might not have welcomed this development.

¹¹³ By describing James as a book, Jonson is drawing attention to the King as author / poet, the manifestation in which Jonson can feel most affinity for his royal master.

United Provinces. Yet as Sellin points out, if the watching ambassadors were hoping for a military lead from England, the message of the masque, which expressed James's dislike of unsolicited advice, and his determination to adhere to a course of peaceful negotiation, was intended to disabuse them of any such expectations.¹¹⁴

While Sellin's argument is convincing enough on theoretical level, it is weakened by its assumption that the ambassadors, became, in Jonson's terms, 'understanders'. In fact, it seems more than likely that some of the ambassadors attached greater significance to the fact of their invitation than to the content of the performance they attended, since their dispatches almost invariably devote more energy to describing the pattern of invitations than the masque itself.¹¹⁵ The possibility that the masque's argument against ill-informed militancy might have been undermined by the 'favour' shown to nations hostile to Hapsburg power, is confirmed by the Savoyard ambassador, who reported the opinion of the court gossips that the season's entertainments had been designed to favour France and irritate Spain.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ For Sellin's speculations on the experiences of the ambassadors who attended see 'Politics', pp. 334-335, although his argument is confused by his incorrect identification of *News* with the 'running masque'. He also suggests that the masque's pacifist message ultimately served the interests of Spain and the Empire, since its assertion of England's policy of non-intervention gave them carte blanche to invade Bohemia and the Palatinate, p. 336. For a useful corrective to this view see Butler, 'the Season', pp. 166-67 who counters Sellin's argument that *News* was a 'display of weakness and procrastination at a moment which really needed a show of strength' by interpreting the masque as an endorsement of James's concern that 'restraint and reason should prevail', p. 167.

¹¹⁵ This certainly seems to have been the case with regards to the running masque, led by Buckingham, and discussed below, since while almost no details of the performance have survived, more than one source records the names of those who attended and performed

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Butler, p. 173 from John Orrell, 'The London Court Stage in the Savoy Correspondence, 1613-75', *Theatre Research International* 4 (1979), 79-94 (p. 86).

A further complication arose in the masque from the presence of Charles and Buckingham. Charles appears as Truth, the ‘excellent likeness’ of James, in an idealised celebration of the conformity of the Prince and the other masquers to James’s policy. The interaction between Charles and Buckingham on the dance floor, and the watching King is described in the dispatch of the Venetian ambassador, Lando:

This night the prince’s masque took place, in which he and ten other cavaliers made a brave show. Among them Buckingham was the first, and apparently is as great a favourite with the prince as with his father. [...] His Majesty took part with much gaiety and greatly enjoyed the agility and dancing of his son and of the marquis, who contended against each other for the favour and applause of the king and to give him pleasure.¹¹⁷

In Lando’s account the trinity of ‘royal’ power is stable and well-balanced; the rivalry between the King’s ‘boys’ is amicable, and the developing friendship between Charles and Buckingham has not yet had the effect of marginalising the King. However, the fact that James remains static and fixed before the dancing bodies of the two younger men might almost be interpreted as an emblem of the political developments that were taking place. If James’s immobility on the margins of the dance floor is read as representing his continued commitment to a non-interventionist policy, the physical activity of his heir and favourite had the effect of associating them with change, and a new policy for the future. In fact, although Lando’s account of the stability of the ruling junta accepts the ideal advanced by the masque as reality, James’s creatures were not dancing to the music of his peace. Both Charles and Buckingham were eager to go to Elizabeth’s aid, and their presence

¹¹⁷ *CSP Ven XVI*, 138.

in the Twelfth Night masque complicated its endorsement of royal policy.

Moreover, the two men were using theatrical strategies distinct from the Twelfth Night masque to fashion their identities as agents independent from the King, and to advance their oppositional political agendas.

Rival spectacles: Charles's tilt and Buckingham's running masque

On 24 March 1620 Charles participated in a magnificent tilt, his first public appearance in a ceremonial display of arms, at a cost of £6500.¹¹⁸ Unusually, Charles was attended by members of London's trained bands, in a show of unity between the Prince of Wales and the city which recalled the way in which Prince Henry had courted popularity through his city connections (discussed in chapter 3).¹¹⁹ Charles's appearance in the tiltyard would inevitably have been seen in the light of the legacy of martial iconography cultivated by Prince Henry, suggesting that the current Prince of Wales was ready to take on the role of military leader which had lain unfulfilled since Henry's early death. James had recently agreed to send a volunteer force to defend the Palatinate, and the timing of Charles's tilt would have functioned as an unequivocal statement of the Prince's desire for more positive and

¹¹⁸ For Charles's tilt see Butler, 'the Season', pp. 168-69. Thomas Cogswell, *The Blessed Revolution: English Politics and the Coming of War, 1621-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 58-69 discusses Charles's militant pose, and his association of himself with the war party throughout the 1620s.

¹¹⁹ The Venetian ambassador noted that it was 'an unusual circumstance for the father to grant the prince a guard of some 500 citizens, admirably armed', *CSP Ven XVI*, 225. The implied alliance between Charles and the citizens is particularly significant given that a number of the court masques of the 1620s, notably *Pan's Anniversary*, satirised the citizens for the ignorance of their desire for war.

committed English intervention on the continent.¹²⁰ Butler summarises the tension between the Twelfth Night masque and Charles's ceremonial display of arms:

On the one hand there was a court masque which propounded a cautious attitude towards the European crisis, but which was presented to the King by a crown prince inclined towards more positive English support for Bohemia. On the other hand, there was a second, more public ceremonial in which the Prince gratified a London enthusiastic for war with an ostentatious display of courtly chivalry.¹²¹

While Charles was cultivating his new militant persona, Buckingham had been promoting himself, his family and clients, and his own political agenda in a smaller scale theatrical event known as a running masque. The running masque was so-called because of its mobility; it comprised a performance by a group of noble dancers led by Buckingham, who visited a number of aristocratic homes in London and beyond during January and February 1620.¹²² From contemporary accounts it is evident that the content of the performance warranted less attention than the pattern of participants and hosts. Buckingham seems to have used the running masque as an occasion for familial self-fashioning, promoting his network of supporters, and

¹²⁰ This force, led by Horace Vere, occupied the main garrisons of Mannheim, Frankenthal and Heidelberg prior to the invasion of the Palatinate by Spanish forces in September 1620; by the end of 1622 only Frankenthal had not fallen.

¹²¹ Butler, 'the Season', p. 169.

¹²² The running masque had its first performance at the home of the French ambassador on 3 January, and multiple performances followed in different venues around London on 4, 5, 7 and 8 January, as well as on several occasions in the countryside around Royston the following month. This account of the festivities of the 1619-20 season is heavily indebted to Martin Butler who has, with his usual lucidity cut through the confusion generated by the misdating and misconceptions of other scholars. The appendix to Butler's article, pp. 170-75 conveniently gathers a range of useful documents for the study of the 1619-20 season. I am also grateful to Dr James Knowles for his generosity in discussing his discovery of the manuscript which seems to be the text for the running masque, and for allowing me to read an unpublished paper on the theatricals of Buckingham and his circle.

consolidating the ties of kinship and clientage which bound them to him. Thus, the personnel of the masque included his brother John, Viscount Purbeck, along with lesser courtiers such as George Goring and John Maynard who were clients of Buckingham's. Similarly, some of the houses visited by the masquers may have been chosen on the basis of familial links; the performance on Tuesday 4 January was hosted by Lady Elizabeth Hatton, the mother of John Villiers's wife, Frances.¹²³

As well as functioning to consolidate the Villiers faction, and to promote their interests at court, it is tempting to speculate whether the running masque, like *News* and Charles's tilt, might have constituted a more direct intervention in the developing political situation.¹²⁴ The masque certainly functioned as a display of favour towards the French ambassador, whose residence was the venue for the first performance, and who was present with his wife and niece at all of the subsequent (London) performances.¹²⁵ Amongst the venues graced by the masque was Essex House, the home of James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, who, like Buckingham, was a notable francophile, and whose personal self-fashioning along French lines, accorded with his political belief in the desirability of an Anglo-French alliance.¹²⁶ In this atmosphere of the promotion of all things French, it is worth pausing over Chamberlain's comment that the promoters of the running masque invented a French provenance for it: 'which manner of running maske they *pretend* to borrough from the

¹²³ Through Elizabeth (Cecil) Hatton, the Villiers family had links to the Cecils, including the Earl of Exeter, whose house was visited the following night.

¹²⁴ Butler, p. 153.

¹²⁵ See the account of the Savoyard ambassador, quoted in Butler, pp. 173-74

¹²⁶ The promotion of a French style of feasting by both Doncaster and Buckingham is discussed above in relation to *Pleasure Reconciled*.

French (though for my part I remember no such thing in my time)' (emphasis added).¹²⁷ Buckingham's association with a (purportedly) French style of entertainment, designed to honour the French ambassador, was noted by the Savoyard ambassador, who believed the season's entertainments were held 'to favour France'.¹²⁸ Buckingham's promotion of an alliance with France rather than Spain was in tension with James's foreign policy. Moreover, the performers included the Earl of Oxford who was linked to a tradition of militant Protestantism, having fought with the English forces on the continent in 1620, and was an outspoken critic of the Spanish match.¹²⁹

The attention devoted by contemporary observers to the personnel of the running masque and to the venues at which it was performed suggests that it was understood first and foremost as a social ritual, organised to consolidate existing alliances and forge new ones, in a way that served the purposes not only of Buckingham's self and familial fashioning, but also participated in the sensitive area of foreign affairs.

Pan's Anniversary, the 1621 Parliament and the Popular War Party

In the event 1620 proved to be a dramatic year. The summer saw Hapsburg military action against Frederick not only in Bohemia, but in the Palatinate. By November

¹²⁷ Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 282.

¹²⁸ Butler, pp. 173-74. In the politically-charged atmosphere of the 1620s, Buckingham's French style of dancing, which is discussed above in the context of the allegations of effeminacy levelled at Buckingham by his opponents, may equally have taken on a political resonance, particularly towards the end of the reign when he was actively involved in the finalisation of Charles's match with Henrietta-Maria.

¹²⁹ Oxford's expression of his anti-Spanish views led to him being imprisoned in the Tower on more than one occasion in the early 1620s. See Butler, p. 169.

Frederick's army had been destroyed in the battle of White Mountain, outside Prague. Dispossessed of both his 'winter kingdom' and his hereditary lands in the Palatinate, Frederick fled with his family to the Hague. These developments clarified the situation for James; while he had been unwilling to defend Frederick's acceptance of the Bohemian throne, James was prepared to ensure that his daughter and son-in-law retained the territories that belonged to them by rights, and he summoned parliament to meet early the following year to raise funds for a possible war in defence of the Palatinate. In fact, James was hoping not to have to go to war at all; instead he planned to use parliament as a diplomatic instrument, countenancing the sabre-rattling of the Commons to increase the pressure on Spain to achieve a peaceful settlement. However, James was playing a dangerous game, and seems to have underestimated the strength of popular anti-Spanish feeling and the mounting war-fever. *Pan's Anniversary*, performed on 6 January 1621, responds to the domestic divisions between the King and his subjects by satirising the fanaticism of the popular war party. The masque looks forward to the forthcoming parliamentary session, calling for the various factions at court to put aside their differences and conform to the wisdom of James's policy.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ In identifying *Pan's Anniversary* as the Twelfth Night masque for 1621 which has traditionally been thought lost, I am following Martin Butler's argument in 'Ben Jonson's *Pan's Anniversary* and the Politics of Early Stuart Pastoral', *ELR* 22 (1992), 369-404. Butler shows that there is no evidence for the convention of dating *Pan's Anniversary* as a masque performed on 20 June 1620 for James's birthday. He goes on to demonstrate that Chamberlain's comments about the masque of January 1621, in which 'there was a puritan brought in to be flowted and abused', refer to the satire against the inflammatory rhetoric of the prophet / tailor figure in the antimasque, Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 333.

Pan's Anniversary opens in an idyllic pastoral setting where the masquers, the inhabitants of Arcadia, have gathered to pay homage to their shepherd-god Pan. Their rites are disrupted by the sudden and unwelcome arrival of their Boetian neighbours, who challenge them to a dancing contest. The antimasque dance, led by the Fencer, provides a foil to the harmonious order of the masque proper, and the temporary disorder is tolerated because it provides entertainment. However, when the antimasquers return with another challenge they are punished by being transformed into sheep. The masque closes with a hymn in praise of the multiple aspects of James as Pan.

Pan's Anniversary enacts the elision of secular holiday into religious holy-day that James had envisaged in his *Book of Sports*, and in assigning a central role to ritual the masque demonstrates the accuracy of David Norbrook's claim that the masques of the Stuart court functioned as a sanitized 'secular counterpart to the cult of religious images'.¹³¹ The structure of the masque is distinctive in a number of ways. Firstly, the masques from *Mercury Vindicated* onward had enacted a progression from the court or the city towards an idealized version of the country; by contrast, the entire action of *Pan's Anniversary* unfolds in the sylvan setting revealed at the outset. Moreover, the familiar antimasque-transformation scene-masque pattern is abandoned; the masquers are revealed *before* the entry of the antimasque, and the communal dances of the revels, which in Orgel's paradigmatic model represent the climactic merging of the real court with the ideal version of itself, are followed by the reappearance of the disruptive Boetian antimasquers.

¹³¹ Norbrook, 'The Reformation of the Masque', p. 97.

The antimasquers are led by a Fencer, who describes himself as a son of the sword and a servant of Mars, signalling to the audience that the Boetians represent those of James's subjects who were clamouring for war. The mindless noise of the war party has its correlative in the tinker beating the kettle drum, while the prophet is a representative of the type of apocalyptic Protestantism which interpreted the current European crisis as an opportunity for the destruction of the forces of catholicism.¹³² Martin Butler has rightly noted that the antimasquers, whose number includes a tinker, a tailor, a clock keeper and a bellows mender, are drawn not from the same pastoral world as the shepherd and nymphs who appear at the opening of the masque, but from contemporary London, and he argues that they represent the London citizens in their unthinking calls for war.¹³³ Thus, while masques like

¹³² Butler has rightly observed that the satire against the Puritan tailor / prophet was appropriate in the context of domestic politics, where James's policy of diplomatic negotiations with Spain was being threatened by the inflammatory rhetoric of religious extremists. However, the unexpected presence of the French ambassador placed the anti-Puritan satire in an international context, and risked implying that James condoned the persecution of the Huguenots by Catholic France. See Butler, '*Pan's Anniversary*', pp. 390-91.

¹³³ Butler's identification of the Boetians with the London citizens is convincing, but there is another possibility. When threatened with punishment the Fencer alludes to the 'law of nations', in an attempt to claim diplomatic immunity in his capacity as an ambassador. It might therefore be possible to see the Boetians as the representatives of nations who had come to England hoping to persuade James to commit himself to war. It is worth noting that at the time of the masque a Dutch embassy was present in England, and the alignment of the Dutch with the London citizens would have been in keeping with James's view of them as republicans and rebels with no respect for monarchical authority. If there is indeed an anti-Dutch thrust to the satire, it is developed in *Augurs*. For James's relationship with Spain and the Netherlands see S. L. Adams, 'Spain or the Netherlands? The dilemmas of early Stuart foreign policy', in *Before the English Civil War: Essays on Early Stuart Politics and Government* ed. by Howard Tomlinson (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp. 79-101.

Mercury Vindicated had invoked the traditional court-country dialectic, progressing from the corruption of the court to an ideal pastoral realm, *Pan's Anniversary* transcends this opposition from the outset by the revelation of the masquers in a pastoral setting. Instead of being antithetical, court and country are unified against the threat which originates from the aggression of the Boetians / citizens.

The dancing contest at the centre of the masque is, as Butler points out, an unusual motif in pastoral, and is particularly significant because it displays a level of self-consciousness about the extent to which the masque dances had, in recent years, been appropriated by factions and individuals eager to gain advancement at court. Buckingham was only the most prominent of the courtiers who had realised that the masque dances could be used to stage oneself in a way that attracted the attention and patronage of the King.¹³⁴ In their dances the masquers, striving to outdo each other in giving pleasure to the King, enacted a ritualized version of the competition that took place at court on a day to day basis. However, in *Pan's Anniversary* the personal and factional rivalry which ordinarily characterised relationships amongst the masquing courtiers is displaced onto the Boetians, and the masquers are presented as an homogeneous group. Faced with competition from outside the Arcadia of the court, the masquers transcend their internal differences and are unified in their unquestioning obedience to James / Pan.

¹³⁴ Other minor courtiers seem to have gained favour and material rewards for their dancing ability, notably John Auchmouty and Abercrombie who danced in *The Irish Masque*, *Pleasure Reconciled*, and *For the Honour of Wales*. Amongst the dancers patronised by the Prince were James Bowy and Henry Palmer, who appeared in *News*, *Pan's Anniversary* and *Augurs*, the costs of their masquing costumes being met by the Prince.

However unrealistic, the presentation of a harmonious community of courtiers would have been as pleasing to James as the hymns of praise which conclude the performance. James is identified with a Pan who is a universal force, and all-encompassing deity; a singer excelling Phoebus-Apollo, a leader of the dance superior to Hermes, a hunter more skilled than Sylvanus, and a shepherd better than Pales.¹³⁵ The construction of James / Pan as a benevolent shepherd has an obvious biblical resonance; like Christ, the good shepherd, James '*keepes our flocks, and us, and both leads forth / To better pastures*' (VII, 535, ll. 185-86). He resembles the omnipotent Christian God as the source of life and breath, and the final hymn is remarkable for its parallels to the 'Our Father'. James as Pan is beneficent, but authoritative, and while the initial presumption of the Boetians is tolerated, their second challenge to the rites of Pan is punished.

The depiction of James as hunter, exhorting his subjects to shun war in favour of the peacetime pursuit of hunting, is used by Jonson to broach the perennial problem of making James's policy of pacifism seem positive and heroic, rather than passive and cowardly. However, the trope of James the hunter brought its own ambiguities, since James was frequently criticised for his devotion to hunting at the expense of government; when Francis Osborne described him as the 'Sylvan prince', the tone was one of contempt not admiration.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Butler discusses Jonson's transformation of Pan from 'a puckish god of liquor and laughter' to 'a kind of cosmic overlord', pp. 372-73.

¹³⁶ Francis Osborne, *Historical Memoirs* (London, 1658), p. 54. For a more detailed discussion of the nuances of Jonson's presentation of James as hunter see Dale B. J. Randall, *Jonson's Gypsies Unmasked: Background and Theme of 'The Gypsies*

The climax of the masque's panegyric is a hymn to 'great Pan, the Father of our peace', which invokes James as Pan to protect the shepherds and their sheep. However, the speech of the shepherd sounds a warning note which suggests that the real danger comes not from outside but from within Arcadia; the masquers are exhorted to return to their flocks, and not leave the 'hirelings' unsupervised, 'if you often give this leave, / Your sheepe, and you they will deceave' (VII, 538, ll. 277-78). Such calls for action were a feature of the later masques and, like the increased self-referentiality of the antimasques, seem to have been an attempt to prevent the audience sinking into complacency.¹³⁷ In this case, the action required of the masquers - namely the proper supervision of those below them in the social hierarchy - is another strategy to cultivate unity at court by presenting the nobility and aristocracy with a common enemy in the lower classes.¹³⁸ The masque exhorts members of the court to put aside their differences in order to present a united front against the threat posed by the citizens.

The emphasis on the need for domestic unity in the face of external threats was reiterated by the King when parliament opened at the end of the month. James's intention was, as I have already suggested, to use parliament as a diplomatic

Metamorphos'd (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), pp. 93-101. A similar motif is used in *Time Vindicated*, discussed below.

¹³⁷ Similarly, *Pleasure Reconci'd* had exhorted the masquers to return the difficult ways of the hill of virtue.

¹³⁸ The closing scenes of *The Tempest* demonstrate the operation of this strategy; the divisions among the noble characters are resolved (at least superficially) by their shared antipathy to the masterless men represented by Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban. This idea has been discussed in relation to *The Irish Masque* in chapter 4, p. 269, where I cite Paul Brown, ' "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine": *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism'.

instrument, hoping that the threat of war would pressurise Spain into helping him achieve a peaceful settlement in the Palatinate. For James's plan to work, parliament would have to present a united front, and express their unconditional support for the King against their foreign enemies.¹³⁹ Unfortunately for James the domestic situation was as unstable as that in Europe. At a time of economic depression, unemployment, and famine, and in the first parliament for seven years, James's subjects were eager to address domestic grievances, notably the issue of monopolies, before agreeing to vote subsidies. Unable to criticise the King directly, the Commons focused their attack on Buckingham, who, despite his involvement in the programme of reform being implemented by Cranfield in the royal household and the Navy, was widely seen as a symbol of the corruption of the court. Almost simultaneously, a group of Buckingham's opponents in the Lords raised objections to the favourite's role in the sale of new titles in the Irish and Scottish peerages. These specific attacks took place against a wider background of opposition to Buckingham, whom many people, quite unjustly, blamed for the King's commitment to an alliance with Spain:

People persuaded themselves that their King *must* be on the side of righteousness, and that his hesitations were caused by the influence of evil counsellors. The most apparent of these was Buckingham, and the conviction spread that he was a crypto-papist or Spanish agent, standing between the King and his loyal subjects. [...] as an early historian of James's reign perceptively observed, the King made him 'his instrument and the only bosom counsellor in those affairs, which afterwards brought the hatred of the people with more violence upon him. For they look not upon the King in any miscarriage with an eye of anger [...] but upon such intimate ministers as he makes active in those things which are contrary to their affection.'¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ See Simon Adams, 'Foreign Policy and the Parliaments of 1621 and 1624', in *Faction and Parliament* ed. by Kevin Sharpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 139-171.

¹⁴⁰ Lockyer, p. 83.

By the 1620s, Buckingham was enjoying a virtual monopoly of power and influence at court, and his success seems to have been due at least in part to his readiness to construct himself as the King's creature. The lines which welcomed James to Buckingham's new home at Burley in August 1621 asserted that 'The *Master* is yo^r Creature, as the *Place*, / And euerie good about him is yo^r *Grace*' (VII, 565, ll. 15-16). The presentation of James's creative power was a familiar trope in the masques, but it also permeated the language of contemporary observers, a fact demonstrated by Henry Wotton's account of James moulding Buckingham

Platonically to his own Idea, delighting first in the choyce of the Materialls; because he found him susceptible of good forme; and afterwards by degrees as great Architects use to doe in the workmanship of his Royall hand.¹⁴¹

As James's creature, Buckingham occupied the pinnacle of the patronage pyramid, deriving considerable creative powers of his own from his proximity to the King, and the relationship between James as creator and Buckingham as his creature was replicated between Buckingham and his own clients.¹⁴²

Historians have generally been hostile to Buckingham, presenting him as a corrupt minister who manipulated the unwitting James for his own ends. However,

¹⁴¹ Quoted by Dale B. J. Randall, p. 150. Randall also cites a letter from James to his erstwhile favourite Robert Carr, languishing in the Tower in 1621, which reminded him that 'all your being, except your breathing and soul is from me'. The terms recall the recent performance of *Pan's Anniversary* in which James as Pan had been praised as the source of life, breath and being - '*by him we breath, wee live, / Wee move, we are*' (VII, 535, ll. 192-93).

¹⁴² Buckingham's efficacy as a title-monger is demonstrated by the increase in peerages from eighty-one in December 1615, to one hundred and twenty-six at the time of his death, figures cited by Lockyer, p. 54. Lawrence Stone suggests that the new order of Irish baronets created in 1619 was devised and operated on

while Buckingham accrued obvious material gains from the relationship, the benefits were by no means one-sided, and James seems to have been well aware of the political usefulness of his favourite. For instance, as the main channel of patronage, Buckingham was besieged with suitors, being ‘pestered and troubled at his chamber with projects or projectors’, and James, who disliked being exposed to the public gaze or surrounded by crowds, was conscious that Buckingham provided an alternative focal point for patronage-seekers.¹⁴³ The dedication of James’s *Meditation upon the Lord’s Prayer* in February 1619 expressed James’s gratitude to Buckingham for ‘your continual attendance upon my service’, which involved an ‘uncessant swarm of suitors importunately hanging upon you without discretion or distinction of times’.¹⁴⁴

With Buckingham operating as James’s representative in affairs of patronage, mediating between the King and his people, it was perhaps inevitable that the frustrations triggered by the King’s unpopular policies (including the sale of monopolies and titles, but above all his pro-Spanish bias) would be vented on the favourite. The 1621 parliament demonstrated the usefulness of a favourite to both the King and the discontented subjects; the Commons could vent their spleen on Buckingham without criticising the King himself, while the King could use his favourite as a ‘fallguy’. This may seem an overly cynical account of the relationship

Buckingham’s behalf, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 96.

¹⁴³ Quoted in Lockyer, p. 94 from a speech made by James to the Lords in the 1621 parliament.

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in Lockyer, p. 55.

between King and favourite, but James's experiences in the wake of the Somerset scandal had demonstrated how a favourite could be used to deflect hostile public opinion away from his own person. James could have sacrificed Buckingham to bolster his popularity; he did not, but his speeches in Buckingham's defence were clearly intended to remind the favourite (and to reassure parliament) that the ultimate power to create and destroy rested with the King.¹⁴⁵ Parliament were to look at Buckingham

not as adorned with these honours, as Marquis of Buckingham, Admiral of England, Master of my Horse, Gentleman of my Bedchamber, a Privy Councillor and a Knight of the Garter, but as he was when he came to me, as poor George Villiers.¹⁴⁶

The sale of titles was an important issue for the representatives of the old aristocracy not least because James's increasingly desperate attempts to exploit this as a means to raise money had resulted in the market being flooded. As titles and honours became devalued, the King was implicated in an unravelling of the hierarchical order that he should have been safeguarding.¹⁴⁷ However, James regarded the power to confer titles and honours as part of his prerogative, and the idea of King-as-creator had become a crucial part of his self-image, so it is not surprising that he was angered by the 'Humble Petition' presented by a group of dissident peers led by the Earls of Southampton, Warwick and Oxford. This document

¹⁴⁵ Instead, James sacrificed his chancellor, Francis Bacon, who had acted as the referee for some of the unpopular monopolies and patents. The revival of the process by which parliament could impeach the King's ministers was a considerable enhancement of the powers of parliament.

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in Lockyer, p. 94.

¹⁴⁷ Stone, *Crisis*, p. 93 reports that the price of the baronetcies created in 1619 dropped from £700 to £220 by 1622. See also Conrad Russell, pp. 280-81.

objected primarily to Buckingham's role in the sale of honours, but in so doing posed an implicit challenge to the prerogative of the King. Having articulated its criticism of the sale of titles, the Petition went on to assert the existence of an aristocratic constitution founded on, and deriving its authority from, a concept of honour linked with lineage and birth right, and most crucially, independent from the monarch.¹⁴⁸

Richard McCoy has argued convincingly about the connection between the revival of a spirit of militarism, and a renewal of interest in the rights of the nobility. The peers who in the 1621 parliament were articulating a sense of aristocratic independence from, and opposition to, the Crown, were the heirs to the legacy of the rebellious second Earl of Essex, and to a double tradition of martial valour and of aristocratic opposition.¹⁴⁹ The unpopularity of James's foreign policy throughout the 1620s provoked a burgeoning of anti-absolutist sentiment and a commitment to the role of aristocratic privilege and the common law. Both the Commons and the Lords refused to accept James's assertions that the monarch was the creator of parliament which existed only by his grace, and began their own enquiries into the origins of the parliament, producing alternative genealogies for themselves.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ This discussion of the Humble Petition and of the link between the prospect of war and the assertions of aristocratic privilege is indebted to the arguments of Richard McCoy, 'Old English honour in an evil time: aristocratic principle in the 1620s', in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in politics and political culture*, ed. by R. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 133-155.

¹⁴⁹ Essex's spirit was being invoked in contemporary pamphlets calling for a war of religion with Spain, notably Thomas Scott's, *Robert Earl of Essex His Ghost* (1624).

¹⁵⁰ McCoy notes that 'The House of Lords established a Grand Committee on Privileges in 1621, commissioning lawyers and antiquaries [...] to undertake research', and adds that 'notions of the 'ancient constitution' circulating in this period were partly founded on ideas of aristocratic privilege as well as parliamentary rule and common law', pp. 142-43.

The Commons, meanwhile, agreed to vote subsidies for the defence of the Palatinate, but attempted to pressurise James into a confessionally motivated war, advising him to enforce penal laws against English catholics, and recommending that he marry Charles to a Protestant princess. James was angered by the Commons' presumptuous intervention in foreign policy, and regarded their conduct as an infringement on his prerogative. However, the Commons were not chastened, and, emboldened by Coke's claims for the existence of an ancient constitution, penned a Protestation asserting that their privileges - which they claimed included freedom of speech - were a matter of right not grace. James tore the offending article from the Commons Journal.¹⁵¹ This sketch of the divisions between James and the representatives of both the upper and lower houses demonstrates the deep-seated implications of the European situation for the English monarchy. In the parliaments of 1621 and 1624, the discussion of foreign affairs posed a serious challenge to James's divine right ideology by raising questions about the relationship between kingly prerogative and parliamentary privilege.

The widening divide: King versus subject and father versus son

While the Commons had called for a confessionally motivated war with Spain, James's negotiations for the Spanish match were proceeding apace, and the 1622

¹⁵¹ See J. P. Somerville, 'James I and the Divine Right of Kings: English Politics and Continental Theory', in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. by Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 55-70, especially pp. 67-70 for a discussion of the Protestation and James's dissolution of the 1621 parliament. Another useful discussion of absolutism versus constitutionalism is Paul Christianson's essay 'The ancient constitution, 1604-21', in the same volume, pp. 71-95, especially pp. 91-95 on the 1621 parliament.

Masque of Augurs seem to have been intended to display James's continued favour towards Spain. The reality of division between the King and his subjects is rewritten as union in *Augurs*. The presenters of the first antimasque are a group of London citizens, who, upon hearing a rumour that 'the Christmas invention was drawne drie at Court; and that neither the KINGS Poet, nor his Architect had wherewithall left to entertaine so much as a Baboone of quality', try to compensate by presenting their own show (VII, 632, ll. 85-87). They are initially prevented from entering the court by a groom who is suspicious of them and misinterprets their intentions. The presentation of the groom satirises the type of petty corruption that had been a commonplace in the royal household, and which the programme of reform headed by Cranfield was trying to eliminate. However, in the groom's tendency to interpret everything as a slight on the honour of himself or the King, Jonson may also be alluding to the uneasy atmosphere that still pervaded the court. The supposed failure of the poet and architect to create a masque is Jonson's self-conscious expression of the difficulty of producing an entertainment for a court which was ideologically divided, and which was presided over by a King whose sensitivity about his prerogative was leading him to see challenges everywhere.¹⁵²

The citizens present the first antimasque in which three bears dance to a scurrilous ballad, which begins as a praise of ale, but descends to a scatological description of the drinkers in a London alehouse, who '*sit and drinke / Till the<y>*

¹⁵² The central fiction of James's loyal citizens voluntarily expressing their devotion to the King recalls *Christmas His Masque*, but in both cases the unity of King and subject is undermined by the reality that they are actors paid by the King, not citizens willingly expressing their devotion

spue, and stinke, / And often pisse out our fire' (VII, 636, ll. 205-7). The ballad closes with a call to the courtiers to take their place among the '*stiffe drinkers*', epitomising the tendency of the masques of the 1620s to present a juxtaposition of the extremes of high and low culture.¹⁵³

Despite the lowbrow nature of the entertainment, which draws on the quintessentially popular ballad form, its credentials are established by its Englishness. Its presenters are rooted in the city of London, and Notch refers to the masque by its 'old English' title of 'disguise' (VII, 631, l. 49). By contrast, the second antimasque is markedly foreign. Its presenter, Vangoose, is 'a *Brit[t]aine borne*', but speaks with a Dutch accent, having 'learn'd to misuse his owne tongue in travell', and the subjects he proposes for his presentation - including the Turk, the Tartar, the Mogul and the Sofie of Persia - are linked by their exoticism (VII, 633, ll. 111-12). Vangoose's accent may be a satirical jibe at those whose eagerness to commit themselves to an internationalist Protestant movement was causing them to abandon their loyalties to their own nation and King. The association of Vangoose with the advocates of a pan-European war of religion is confirmed by his initial proposal to present a great battle, and by the actual antimasque which is a dance of '*straying, and deform'd Pilgrims*' (VII, 638, ll. 71-72).

Vangoose is a false artist; his claim that his antimasque is intended to be 'absurd' rather than meaningful immediately distances him from Jonson, and the fact that his speeches are printed in blackletter associates him with the type of popular appeal to

¹⁵³ In *Gypsies Metamorphosed*, Jonson's phenomenally successful masque for Buckingham, the courtiers appear as gypsies and sing the ballad of Cocklorrel and the Devil's arse.

the lowest common denominator that Jonson deliberately eschewed in favour of an intellectual elitism.¹⁵⁴ Notwithstanding Vangoose's assertions, the antimasque he presents *is* meaningful, since the '*perplex'd Dance*' of the pilgrims provides a vision of the chaos of war, and exposes those who would embroil England in conflict as ignorant fanatics. The possibility of seeing meaning in an avowedly meaningless antimasque suggests that the discontinuity between antimasque and masque which Herford and Simpson have criticised in *Augurs* (and other masques of the period) might equally be significant, representing not a lapse in Jonson's art, but demonstrating the irreconcilable distance between the popular opinion and royal policy.

The masque praises James for keeping himself and his '*happie Iles*' aloof from the '*erring mazes of mankind*' (VII, 640, l. 314; 318). The divinely-inspired wisdom and prescience of the King as a little god on earth figures centrally in the masque proper which is dominated by the figure of Apollo. The god's four-fold attributes - archery, healing, song and prophecy - are relevant to James both in general terms, and with respect to his position in the early 1620s. As the teacher of the Muses, Apollo dismisses the false art of Vangoose, and the general compliment to James as a true artist (the poet-king) is made more specific by the emphasis on the harmonious qualities of Apollo's music which correspond to James's promotion of peace. Apollo's skill in archery, his ability to see to the heart of the target, is linked in myth

¹⁵⁴ Gothic blackletter was a form of printing designed to appeal to the lower classes, and works appearing in this format were often inflammatory and sensationalist. Both the so-called *English Faust Book* and Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* were blackletter publications.

with his ability to prophesy about the future; similarly, James prided himself on being a good hunter, but the metaphor of archery could also be applied to the King's intellectual penetration in seeking out the truth. The masque as a genre cast the King in the role of a hunter-out of meaning, with the physical arrangement of the audience placing the King in a position where he could see and understand more of the masque's mysteries than the rest of the audience.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, Apollo's role as the voice of heaven on earth is an obvious correlative for a King who constructed himself as God's representative on earth. The fact that Apollo creates a college of augurs who will communicate Jove's will to James functions to confirm the presentation of James as a monarch whose commands, however inscrutable, are divinely-inspired and should be obeyed by his subjects. Furthermore, the masque insists that augury is the prerogative of gods and kings, and the meaningful prophecies of the masque are contrasted not only with Vangoose's chaotic visions, but with the apocalyptic prophesyings of Protestant extremists, which had been satirised in *Pan's Anniversary*.¹⁵⁶

The prophecies are embodied in the masque dances, and are interpreted by Apollo as divine ratification of James's wisdom and his continued commitment to peace.

However, the fact that the augurs more than once assert that James will live free

¹⁵⁵ James's construction of himself as possessing a more than human, if not divine, insight, is evident from the account of the gunpowder plot, in which James claimed to have penetrated to the heart of the letter which exposed and foiled the popish plot. The episode is discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis.

¹⁵⁶ In the printed version of the masque Vangoose's visions are distinguished from the meaningful auguries of the masque proper both by the use of blackletter for the former, and by the heavy annotations which advertise the significance of the masque proper.

'*From hatred, faction, or the feare / To blast the Olive thou dost weare*', registers the fact that James's policy was generating considerable opposition in the realm, and betrays an anxiety that this might culminate in a threat to his safety, or to the security of his reign (VII, 643, ll. 387-88).¹⁵⁷

The most interesting aspect of the masque from my perspective is its engagement with the familial politics of the father-son relationship. Charles's dancing body generates the prophecy interpreted by Apollo, a fact which is particularly apposite given that his body was similarly crucial to the completion of James's cherished project, the Spanish match. However, it is surely significant that the college of augurs established by Apollo to communicate Jove's will to James is presided over by Charles. The implication that Charles, rather than James, has insight into the future is troubling because of the Prince's commitment to more active military intervention in the struggles in Europe. The Chorus's description of Charles '*triumphing over all*' offers a tantalising glimpse of military victory which would have been heightened by the memory of Charles's earlier appearance in the tilt (discussed above). In view of the possibility of division between King and Prince the sudden appearance of Jove, to whom Apollo humbly gives way, begins to seem like a deliberately engineered spectacle of filial obedience.

¹⁵⁷ James's fear of usurpation has been discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis. In the later years of his reign he became even more susceptible to conspiracy theories, including the far-fetched accusations levelled against Buckingham by the Spanish in 1624. The claim that Buckingham planned to prevent Charles's marriage, while marrying his own daughter to the eldest son of Frederick and Elizabeth, thereby ensuring that the English throne would pass to his own descendants, was believed by no-one but James, Lockyer, pp. 194-95.

A wife for the Prince: The Spanish match and anti-Spanish feeling

Augurs had been rather optimistic in its anticipation of the birth of Charles's sons, since the negotiations for his marriage continued at a painfully slow pace throughout 1622. While the Spanish were making promises concerning their commitment to the match and the peaceful restitution of the Palatinate, they were more reluctant to turn their words into reality; meanwhile the garrisons in the Palatinate occupied by English forces continued to fall to imperial forces. In late 1622 James sent Endymion Porter to Spain with an ultimatum, and when he returned in January with news that the match was imminent, James assumed his patient diplomacy had paid off. *Time Vindicated*, the masque for January 1623, celebrates James's policy and satirises the opinions of the masses, who are presented as deluded and ignorant.

The antimasque is the preserve of 'the Curious, the Ey'd, the Ear'd, and the Nos'd', who, like the newsmen in *News* 'come to spie. / And hearken. / And smell out', and 'censure those / they ought to reverence' by talking of matters of state and criticising the King (VII, 655, ll. 2-3; 656, ll. 10-12; 662, ll. 213-14).¹⁵⁸ When Fame explains that she has been sent by Saturn (the Time) to announce 'some great spectacle', the Curious hope for a 'A *Babel* of wild humours. / [...] all disputing of all things they know not, / And talking of all men they never heard of' (VII, 663, ll. 233-

¹⁵⁸ The costume designs for the Curious bear some similarity to those by de Servi for Campion's *Lords' Masque* for the marriage of the Somersets, which is discussed in chapter 4. The similarity between the two masques is quite striking, and clearly betrays the fact that both were written in circumstances where the court was divided whether by scandal, or by broader issues of religion and ideology.

35).¹⁵⁹ The Curious demonstrate how chaos can be generated by those who speak without understanding, and the presentation is intended to justify James's attempts to place restrictions on the freedom of speech, a subject which had generated some controversy in the 1621 parliament.¹⁶⁰ The fact that the antimasque unfolds before a backdrop depicting the new Banqueting House suggests that the Curious represent the gossips at court, a group targetted in James's recent proclamation ordering the gentry and nobility out of London and back to their country estates.¹⁶¹ The Curious also epitomise the type of audiences whom Jonson despised; they represent sense without understanding, and demand to be entertained by something 'unreasonable', 'impossible', or 'uncivill', that has no meaning (VII, 663, ll. 244-46). Their warning to the true artist, Fame, that they will 'spie out, that, which you never meant', raises the ever-present issue of mis- (or perhaps over?) interpretation, which had become an increasingly delicate problem in the 1620s for all artists, but especially Jonson, whose masques were scrutinised each year (VII, 656, l. 18). Ironically, in this case, it was the King who misinterpreted Jonson's satire, and for a time it was rumoured

¹⁵⁹ In the masque the Curious, along with Chronomastix, are associated with Infamy rather than Fama Bona, and have to be dismissed from the stage before Fame can carry out her true errand. By contrast, the ears, eyes and mouths which adorned Queeth's gown in the famous Rainbow portrait are interpreted by Frances Yates as representing Elizabeth's Fame, as she is seen, heard of and spoken of by many, in *Astraea: the Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (1975; repr. London: Ark, 1985), pp. 217-18. The iconography of the Rainbow portrait enshrines one of the most crucial contrasts between the style of rulership practised by Elizabeth and James. The former displayed herself to her subjects, whereas James eschewed the public gaze, and tried to suppress public opinion.

¹⁶⁰ See the discussion of the 1621 parliament (above) for an outline of the conflict between James's kingly prerogative, and the Commons's claims to privileges including the freedom of speech.

¹⁶¹ Issued in November 1622. See *Proclamations*, pp. 561-62.

that Jonson would lose his ears.¹⁶²

The antimasque targets those who wrote political satire, and the figure of Chronomastix not only represents the by now familiar figure of the false artist, but more specifically George Wither, a satirist whose claim that he spoke out against the abuses of the time is alluded to in the name Chronomastix, meaning ‘scourge of the time’.¹⁶³ Jonson criticises Wither’s satire, which is motivated not by any sincere desire to effect reform, but constitutes a shallow attempt to achieve fame. When Fame rejects Chronomastix as a follower of ‘Infamy’ and the ‘scorne of all the *Muses*’, the satirist retaliates by cataloguing those who recognise him (VII, 659, ll. 99-100). Not surprisingly, his admirers include the ignorant working classes and citizens of London who are satirised in other masques for their susceptibility to inflammatory rhetoric, while his supporters who are brought on to dance the antimasque comprise a ‘confederacie of *Folly*’, and a printer and a compositor who work by night in a hollow tree, and who represent the type of underground presses that operated to evade censorship (VII, 661, l. 189).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Chamberlain, *Letters*, II 507, wrote that Jonson was ‘like to heere yt on both sides of the head’.

¹⁶³ Sara Pearl offers a more detailed discussion of the portrayal of Wither, and points out succinctly that ‘Jonson’s careful distinction between writing political satire and writing an attack on political satire was evidently not sufficiently clear’, p. 69.

¹⁶⁴ Interestingly, Chronomastix’s list of his readers is dominated by women, including fishwives, a sempster (seamstress) and a pudding wife. The only reader who is not associated with a trade is a Lady who sends him ‘pensions’. The collocation of women and the the lower classes as the dupes of the false artist recalls *Mercury Vindicated*, discussed above. It is also to the point that Chronomastix’s monstrous conceptions are brought forth by a *woman*, who, in a grotesque parody of labour ‘Ha’s a male-*poem* in her belly now, Big as a colt’ (VII, 660, ll. 146-47).

When the stage is cleared of Chronomastix and the Curious, Fame reveals the masquers, who represent the glories of the Time, and descend to the court accompanied by Cupid and Sport. The idea of love as a battle, '*fair warres / [...] carried without scarres*' is a familiar trope, and functions here to displace the calls for war onto the relationship between the sexes (VII, 670, ll. 435-36). However, the male masquers, and even James, are warned to beware of Cupid's arrows, and of the conspiracy between Cupid and the ladies to '*keepe [them] in uxorious gives*', making them '*quit all thought of state*' to indulge in love (VII, 668, l. 398; l. 400).

The masque dances and the revels take place under the auspices of Saturn and Venus, but the union between the male masquers and the ladies, and the reign of Cupid and Sport, is only temporary. Diana descends to defend herself against Venus's accusation that she has deprived the time of its glories by arguing that she has been training them '*to serve the Time / By labour, riding, and those ancient arts, / That first enabled men unto the warres*' (VII, 672, ll. 495-97). Just as *Pleasure Reconciled* concluded with the return of the masquers to the difficulties of the hill of virtue, the masquers are exhorted to return to their active pursuits under the tutelage of Diana, goddess of the hunt. The final song praises hunting, which is extolled as a peaceful and preferable alternative to war. The hunt is invoked here, as in *Pan's Anniversary*, as a compliment to James. Moreover, the literal hunt takes on a moral dimension, as the masquers are told to reserve their aggression for vices: '*Man should not hunt Mankind to death, / But strike the enemies of man; / Kill vices if you can*' (VII, 673, ll. 532-34).

At a time when Charles's marriage seemed imminent it is strange that the masque should depict the goddesses of love and chastity, Venus and Diana, struggling for the control of the masquers. Venus and Cupid offer the pleasures of beauty and love, but the company of women seems to embody a potential threat to the masquers, who withdraw from the (effeminising and emasculating) court to the wood presided over by Diana, where they continue their education in the active life. With hindsight, this conflict would assume a startling relevance to the experiences of prince Charles over the next eight months.¹⁶⁵

The month after he danced in *Time Vindicated* Charles did indeed succumb to the threat that faces the male masquers of being distracted from affairs of state by 'amorous questions'. Believing himself to be in love with the Infanta he allowed himself to be ruled by his heart rather than his head in undertaking the dangerous journey to Spain in an attempt to bring the protracted negotiations for his marriage to a conclusion. During his time in Spain, Charles, in his eagerness to be married, risked putting himself and his father in an untenable position by agreeing to a series of concessions regarding toleration for English catholics that he would not ordinarily have countenanced. Charles's 'escape' from the womanly wiles of the Infanta is dramatised in *Neptune's Triumph* Jonson's masque for January 1624.

Charles's return from Spain a bachelor and a Protestant (disproving rumours of his conversion to catholicism) was a cause of national rejoicing, and the mood as he entered London on 5 October approached hysteria. John Chamberlain reported the

¹⁶⁵ Since Jonson could not have anticipated these developments, this must be seen as a case of life imitating art, rather than vice versa.

unprecedented 'demonstrations of public joy [...] such spreading of tables in the streets with all manner of provisions, setting out whole hoggsheads of wine and butts of sacke, but specially such numbers of bonfires', and described the people as being 'mad with excesse of joy'.¹⁶⁶ As the dust settled it became clear that James's hopes that the Anglo-Spanish alliance could be salvaged in order to effect a diplomatic solution in the Palatinate were no longer shared by the Prince and favourite. Instead, Charles, aided by Buckingham, set about promoting an alternative policy, pressurising James to break with Spain and to summon parliament. These antithetical policies came into conflict as early as November 1623 when James ordered Buckingham to feast the Spanish ambassadors at York House. Jerzy Limon convincingly argues that James organised and paid for the feast in an attempt to dispel rumours that Charles and Buckingham wanted to break with Spain. However, the King's aims seem to have been thwarted by Buckingham, who promptly commissioned a masque, written by John Maynard, which offended the Spanish guests.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 515. Charles's return was celebrated in a number of poems and tracts, including John Taylor, *Prince Charles his welcome from Spaine* and Samuel Ward, *A Peace offering to God, for the Princes safe return*, both published in 1623. The national rejoicing on this occasion seems to have been as extreme as the sorrow which followed the death of Prince Henry. The popular anti-catholic prejudice was fanned by a chance event on October 26, when the upper room of a building in which a group of Catholics had gathered to hear mass collapsed, killing and injuring a large number of people. The depth of anti-papist feeling was demonstrated by what Chamberlain calls the 'insolencie and inhumanitie of the multitude' who not only refused to assist the injured but pulled them out of the coaches taking them to the surgeons. Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 520-21.

¹⁶⁷ Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 527 reports that the main argument of the masque was 'a congratulation for the Princes returne'; but, as Limon rightly notes, this in itself could hardly have offended the Spanish, but in view of the policy being promoted by

By December James had succumbed to the combined pressure of his 'sweet boys' and agreed to summon parliament. Charles and Buckingham spent the last months of 1623 strengthening English links with foreign powers sympathetic to an anti-Hapsburg league, while Buckingham also took steps to reconcile himself with the leaders of the popular war party at home. At the same time, Charles and Buckingham were rehearsing the masque for Twelfth Night with an enthusiasm which was remarked on by a number of observers. Chamberlain's observation that 'there is much practising against the maske [...] and many meetings at noble mens houses in the afternoones', suggests that the preparations for the masque should be seen in the context of the commitment of the Prince and the favourite to a policy that was not the King's.¹⁶⁸

The masque was, of course, *Neptune's Triumph*, and given the involvement of Charles and Buckingham, newly converted to the war party, it was almost inevitable that it would not meet with the King's approval. James, perhaps recalling the embarrassing episode at York House the previous November, seems to have read the manuscript and commanded the alteration of some 'rather free remarks against the Spaniards'.¹⁶⁹ In the event the masque was cancelled altogether because the Spanish ambassador had been offended when the French ambassador was invited before him.

Charles and Buckingham it seems likely that the masque gave expression to anti-Spanish sentiment, Limon, *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 21-22.

¹⁶⁸ Chamberlain, *Letters*, II, 538. See also Edward Conway's comment that Charles and Buckingham 'practise the maske diligently every day', quoted in H&S X, 658.

¹⁶⁹ *CSP Ven XVIII*, 196, the Venetian ambassador continues with the observation that 'in others this might be the result of prudence, in him it is nothing but the fear of offending the Spanish'.

This preference for France over Spain was in line with the foreign policy Charles and Buckingham were preparing to promote in parliament, but at the time of the masque's cancellation (and in the months prior to and during the parliament) the Spanish were making renewed overtures to James who was wavering towards a renewal of his pro-Spanish policies.

Jonson, who had unwittingly caused offence in his masque for the previous year, faced the daunting task of producing an entertainment for a court that was thus divided. His awareness of the impossibility of pleasing everyone surfaces in the antimasque discussion between the Poet and the Cook, which makes explicit the difficulties of the masque-writer, who must satisfy the expectation of 'euery Nation, the Spaniard, the Dutch, the French' (VII, 683, ll. 50-51). Jonson's anxiety about being misinterpreted by an audience who 'expect more then they vnderstand' is evident in the way that the antimasque functions to elucidate the allegory of the main masque (VII, 683, l. 61). By directing the response of the audience, Jonson clearly hoped to forestall the misinterpretations of the previous year.¹⁷⁰ The Poet expresses Jonson's familiar complaints about the inability of the majority of the audience to understand aright, and the antimasque continues the satire of *News and Time Vindicated* against those who speak of affairs of state which are beyond their comprehension. The antimasque culminates with the presentation of a

¹⁷⁰ The Poet tells the Cook that he has no antimasque because they are meaningless, a remark which recalls Vangoose's description of his non-signifying presentation in *Augurs*. However, as Orgel has noted, the antimasques in both cases function to give meaning to the main masque, *Jonsonian Masque*, pp. 93-94.

'*metaphoricall dish*', in which the ingredients are those who 'relish nothing but *di stato*', the court gossips who 'know all things the wrong way' (VII, 689, l. 233; l. 245; l. 247).

Jonson's satire on the ignorance of public opinion was clearly intended to please James, who was as sensitive as ever to public discussion of affairs of state.

However, Jonson's position in this masque is complicated by the fact that, in the wake of the failure of the Spanish match, royal foreign policy had begun to realign itself with the same popular opinion he was condemning. Jonson attempts to distinguish his masque from the hysteria of the previous October, when Charles's return was the occasion for an outpouring of extreme sentiment expressed in bad art, 'th'abortive, and extemporall dinne / Of balladry' (VII, 687, ll. 163-64). However, the fact remains that his masque celebrates the same thing, and, as Sara Pearl notes, 'Jonson finds himself confronting the paradox (for him) that something so *popular* can also be right'.¹⁷¹

In fact, Pearl overstates the case somewhat, since while Charles had taken up the populist banner of militant and anti-Spanish feeling, James was resolutely clinging to his policy of pacifism and diplomacy. As a result Jonson's negotiation between the popular and the elite is complicated by his attempt to praise both King and Prince who were pursuing antithetical policies. Leah Marcus has argued that from the middle years of the reign, Jonson's masques became so preoccupied with defending royal policy against hostile public opinion that they lost the ability to criticise the

¹⁷¹ Pearl, p. 70.

King.¹⁷² However, by the time of the performance of *Neptune's Triumph* Jonson could not endorse the policies of the King without alienating the Prince, and while the masque does not presume to criticise the King, it returns to the strategy Jonson had adopted in his masques for Prince Henry, enacting a delicate balancing act between the ageing King and the heir to the throne who had suddenly emerged in a new and authoritative light.

The title page of *Neptune's Triumph* rewrites the masque's cancellation as performance, enacting in miniature the strategy of the masque as a whole, which recasts the events of the past year into a mythological narrative that strives to be acceptable to both James and Charles.¹⁷³ The masque narrative departs from reality in a number of significant ways, but most notably by avoiding allusions to the marriage which had been the purpose of Charles's journey.¹⁷⁴ In the fiction of the masque Albion is sent by Neptune to make a 'discovery', which he succeeds in doing, thereby recasting the failure of Charles's journey as success. The masque's account also makes James as Neptune more authoritative in sending his son to Spain, belying the reality that James had agreed to the journey with reluctance, succumbing

¹⁷² Marcus, *Politics of Mirth*, p. 127. She suggests that 'the revision of *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* marks the end of the most strenuous phase of the poet's efforts to "wound the wise"'.

¹⁷³ In the masques of the 1620s Jonson frequently aligned himself as the producer of the abstruse mysteries of the masque, with the King whose foreign policy was beyond the comprehension of his subjects, and in this masque he uses a strategy of rewriting the past that James had often exploited himself. See the discussion of the King's authorial strategies in chapter 1 of this thesis.

¹⁷⁴ The discussion which follows elucidates Jonson's rewriting of the Spanish fiasco into a mythologised success story and is influenced by Limon's discussion of the masque in *Dangerous Matter*, pp. 20-39.

to pressure from both Charles and Buckingham. By casting Neptune as the presiding genius of events the masque restores James to the position of absolute control that was slipping from him. However, the same strategy also serves the purposes of the Prince, who, as Albion, travels to Spain only in obedience to his father, a detail which effectively distances Charles from his earlier eagerness to accomplish the Spanish match.

While the version of the masque that was printed presumably excised the more virulent anti-Spanish sentiment which had been censored by James, several details remain which attest to the masque's engagement with the oppositional policies of the Prince. Notwithstanding the titular precedence of Neptune, which casts James in his usual role as the progenitor of the masque and of the events it commemorates, the hero is not James-Neptune but Charles-Albion, who successfully evades sirens and sea monsters. The anti-Spanish bias which remains is expressed in the masque in the more acceptable guise of misogyny. The Infanta, with whom the Prince had once professed to be in love, is indirectly alluded to in the monstrous female sexuality of the sirens, who threaten to immobilise and emasculate the Prince.¹⁷⁵

Charles's more active role in politics is noted in the masque but, not surprisingly, the attempts of Charles-Albion to 'ease [his father's] labours' were not welcomed by James (VII, 699, l. 542). The King, who had endured the hostility of his subjects to his foreign policy, now had to face the opposition of his son and his favourite. His realisation that the most dangerous enemy lay within his own family prompted

¹⁷⁵ Recalling the warnings about the power of female sexuality in *Time Vindicated*.

James to reprove his son on a number of occasions for making himself too popular.¹⁷⁶ The Venetian ambassador, writing in October 1624, reported that James ‘cannot bear to have his son far from his sight’, but this had little to do with paternal affection and everything to do with James’s increasingly desperate attempts to re-impose his kingly and fatherly authority on his unruly ‘children’, as both Charles and the nation as a whole asserted their independence.¹⁷⁷

As well as attempting to negotiate between father and son, Jonson also had to contend with the delicate issue of the favourite, who had aligned himself with the policies of the Prince. The masque glosses over Buckingham’s change of allegiances by presenting him as the loyal Hippius, to whom Neptune’s words are law, but during the ensuing months James more than once accused Buckingham of deserting his creator to attach himself to the rising star.¹⁷⁸ The fact that Buckingham-Hippius is praised for his resistance to the ‘steru’d snakes’ of envy casts him in a heroic role which seems to anticipate his appearance before the parliament in February 1624. In what was probably a carefully rehearsed performance, Buckingham gave a speech to both houses which related the experiences of himself and Charles in Spain, and raised the anti-Spanish prejudices of parliament to fever pitch, gaining Buckingham the support of his former opponents, including Southampton and Coke. At the same time, Thomas Scott’s propagandist pamphlet *Vox Coeli* was praising Buckingham as England’s saviour in the face of the expansionist ambitions of Spain.¹⁷⁹ With the

¹⁷⁶ A number of examples are quoted by Bergeron, *Royal Family*, p. 158.

¹⁷⁷ *CSP Ven XVIII*, 468.

¹⁷⁸ Lockyer, p. 185.

¹⁷⁹ Cited and discussed in Limon, pp. 79-84.

Commons pressing for a sea war with Spain (rather than James's preferred policy of a land war confined to Germany), Buckingham's role as Lord Admiral placed him in an important position which is registered in the masque's references to Neptune's fleet 'ready to goe, or come, / Or fetch the riches of the *Ocean* home, / So to secure him both in peace, and warres' (VII, 698, ll. 510-12). Despite the fleeting allusion to peace, the idea of the fleet bringing treasure to England clearly conforms to the idea of a sea war, a policy advocated by the Commons in the hope that it would be self-funding, easing the burden of taxation that accompanied war. Similarly, the invocation of '*the golden gifts of peace*' in the closing line of the masque is undercut by the previously expressed hope that '*both at sea, and land, our powers increase*' (VII, 700, l. 554; l. 553).

Neptune's Triumph is a masque produced for an ideologically divided court, where the policies of the King and his heir were rapidly diverging, and its celebratory rhetoric is constantly disrupted by the gaps between the masque narrative and the reality. The smooth surface of praise is fractured by the intransigence of the political situation, and by divisions amongst the ruling junta of James, Charles and Buckingham, which made the position of the masque-writer virtually untenable. Moreover, the self-referentiality of the antimasque, which explicitly addresses the process of producing a masque, has the effect of drawing attention to the fictionality of the performance as a whole, and in so doing prevents the audience from accepting the ideals of the masque as reality.

The divisions between the ideal world of the masque and the political reality it sought to transform were even wider in Jonson's next masque, *The Fortunate Isles*

and their Union. In the intervening year, James had finally broken with Spain, preparations for war were well under way, and the support of France in an anti-Hapsburg league had been accomplished, along with the agreement of articles for the marriage of Charles and Henrietta Maria, which were signed in December 1624. However, after the cancellation of *Neptune's Triumph*, Jonson seems deliberately to avoid any comment on the political situation, aside from a fleeting allusion to the union of the English rose with the French lily. The masque does its best to ignore the preparations for war, despite the fact that Mansfeld and his troops were gathered in the south of England ready to leave for Germany at the end of January. Instead, the masque invokes the trope of the fortunate isles to characterise Jacobean Britain as a specially favoured realm, blessed with peace, and complacently looking down on a war-torn Europe.

James had been plagued by illness, and was less and less able to resist the combined pressure of Charles and Buckingham. The last masque of his reign is obviously removed from reality, but James may have taken refuge in its attempt to preserve his persona of peacemaker King, and in the fantasy of a realm free from sickness, old age, and ambition.¹⁸⁰

King James died on March 27 1625, and while my story must end here, the Stuart masques continued, entering a new phase under the patronage of Charles and his Queen. It has become a commonplace to observe that the Caroline masques were

¹⁸⁰ Josephine Waters Bennett, 'Britain Among the Fortunate Isles', *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956), 114-40. Bennett elucidates the tradition of Britain as a

characterised by the suppression of the antimasque, and by the withdrawal from an unpalatable reality to an idealised and platonised realm, which fostered the complacency of Charles and his court. They were also ruled by a new familial politics which played out the complementarity and union of husband and wife rather than the familial division of the masque under James.

Conclusion: Masque criticism and *The Tempest*: Other voices and freedom from the monarch

This thesis began its journey by following James's progress from Scotland to England, from his northern, if not marginal kingdom, to a more central position as the King of Great Britain. The story of James installing himself in his new realm, and occupying the central position in the Banqueting House for the annual Twelfth Night masques is one that has been told many times before. James's rhetorical construction of himself as a King by divine right, the head of the state and of the family, was an attempt to make himself the focus of the kingdom and its gaze, and the physical arrangement of the masque theatre functioned in theory to confirm James's centrality.

However, other members of the royal family soon stepped from the margins and onto the masque stage, and my narrative intentionally shifts the focus away from the static figure of the kingly spectator to the activities of the royal family on the masque stage. From the moment that Queen Anne used her appearance in the masques to engage disruptively with the King's familial rhetoric, the centrality of the King and his agenda was called into question. The masque became a site of competition where oppositional agendas could be advanced, and where the dramas of factional as well as familial division were played out. If we are prepared to hear voices (and see bodies) other than the King's it quickly becomes apparent that the monolithic and hegemonic model of the masque is inadequate. The foregoing discussion of the familial politics of the court masque constitutes the beginnings of

an attempt to complicate the overly simplistic and monarch-centred view of much masque criticism.

My project of reading the Stuart court masque through the filter of familial politics has its counterpart in the development of new scholarly approaches to *The Tempest*. Not surprisingly, the play has been a favourite text of the New Historicists, seeming to afford ample evidence for the collusion between art and sovereign power, between stagecraft and statecraft. Prospero's power operates through a series of masque-like episodes which elide the figure of the ruler with that of the creative artist. Amongst the strategies that Prospero uses to mystify himself and his power are several which have been discussed in relation to the court masques. For instance, Prospero aestheticizes his power as a beneficent and creative act, which brings order out of chaos, in much the same way as *The Irish Masque* describes James's putative 'liberation' of Ireland. Similarly, he narrates the story of his usurpation in such a way as to demonise his brother and deny his own culpability, just as *The Golden Age Restored* rewrote James's relationship with Somerset.

The Tempest offers an array of examples of the strategies by which power is mystified and imposed on others. However, critics of the play have come to realise that Prospero's is not the only story it tells, and have begun to listen to the other narratives in the play, notably that of Caliban. The presence of other voices complicates the relationship between art and the dominant order, and suggests that the workings of monarchical power are not simply endorsed in the play, but are interrogated and exposed.

Beyond its demonstration of the need to listen to other voices and other stories, *The Tempest* offers a number of valuable insights for the critic of the masque. The fact that Prospero's carefully engineered banquet of harpies (in Act III scene iii) fails to achieve the desired response of remorse in two of the three 'men of sin' demonstrates that spectacles, even those produced by the state, could be interpreted in any of a number of ways. Even when stagecraft and statecraft are in collusion, the creator, be it King or masque-writer, cannot control the response of the audience.

Most importantly of all is Prospero's last speech which demystifies the earlier narratives and provides the audience and critic with a potent weapon with which to resist the dominant order. Prospero's speech enacts a transfer of power from the sovereign to the audience, and can be read as a democratisation of the masque form. Whereas the masque was centred around a transformation scene in which the masquers were liberated through the power of the watching King, *The Tempest* concludes with the disempowered sovereign-magician-playwright asking the audience to accomplish the transformation scene that has hitherto been the prerogative of the ruler.

It is time that scholars of the masque listened to the closing words of *The Tempest* in order to free themselves from an exclusive focus on the figure of the monarch. Only then will we realise that the genre could function to disempower the monarch and empower those around him, as well as the other way around.

As you from crimes would pardoned be
Let your indulgence set me free

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