



“Ample Privilege to Wit and Learning”:
The Renaissance Humanist Literary Tradition
in the Plays of Richard Brome

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ERRATA

(not already corrected in the text)

pp.11-12		endnote numbers 24 and 25 are reversed	p.131	1.19	for Macchiavellian read Machiavellian
p.20	1.25	for ourselves read our selves	p.136	1.7	for dishonour read dishonor
p.22	1.5 last 1.	for snuffs read snuffes for demands read Demands	p.140	1.5	for honour read honor for (93-4) read (v.93-4)
p.24	1.15	for whil'st read whilst	p.142	1.16	for turn'd read turnd
p.25	1.3 1.9	for King's read Kings for practise read practice	p.145	1.14	for Humor read humor
p.43	1.17 and		p.146	1.30	for lovers read Lovers
p.133	1.14	for traveller read traveler	p.150	1.25	for Monkeys read Monkeyes
p.45	1.16	for J. Wilson Knight read G. Wilson Knight	p.156	1.3 up	for servants read Servants
	1.26	for beaver / upon read beaver / Upon	p.157	1.5 1.15 1.16	for keep read keepe for master read Master for Good read good
p.59	1.4 1.13	for Utopian read Utopian for inclosed read enclosed for inclosures read enclosures	p.172	1.17	for subjects read Subjects
p.68	1.28	for the groom read her groom	p.176	1.2	for most notable read most / Notable
p.75	1.5	for very read verie	p.183	1.6 1.3 up	for Queen's read Queens for nation read Nation
p.80	1.3 1.18	for the window read at window for tragicomedy read tragi-comedy	p.184	1.4 up	for nature read Nature
p.81	1.21	for It is well read It is so well	p.187	1.7	for appetite read Appetite
p.82	1.18	for discreet, generous read discreet, grave, generous	p.192	1.13	for hair read haire
p.84	1.3 up	for freely read freelie	p.197	1.21 1.27	for valiantness read valiantnesse for self read selfe
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p.125	1.4 up and		p.275	1.16	for Macchiavelli read Machiavelli
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p.98	1.7	for most read almost	p.208	1.15	for offend read offende
p.101	1.9	for strangeliest read strangliest	p.215	1.2	for iteself read itself
p.102	last 1.	for not believe read not then believe	p.217	1.18	for madman read Madman
p.105	1.20	for acknowledgement read acknowledgement	p.221	1.13	for turn'd read turnd
p.108	1.9	for the use read the good use	p.233		endnotes 24 and 25 are reversed
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p.127	1.3 up	for travelling read traveling	p.278	1.21	for A. D. Humphreys read A. R. Humphreys
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THESIS ABSTRACT

MY THESIS IS THAT the work of the often scantily-regarded Caroline comic dramatist, Richard Brome (c. 1590-1652), may be regarded as a continuation of the Renaissance humanist literary tradition begun by Erasmus, More, Elyot and others.

It is clear that the philosophical and didactic concerns of these earlier writers, their reliance upon classical precepts, and the serio-comic methods which they employed, were carried on into the seventeenth century by scholars such as Joseph Hall and Robert Burton, and were adapted for the stage by Ben Jonson. My work shows how these concerns could be maintained on the Caroline professional stage, and the methods adapted for contemporary theatre audiences.

Richard Brome had a head-start over his fellow playwrights by having served as Jonson's "man" before beginning his own professional career. When read in conjunction with various Renaissance humanist texts, Brome's work may be seen as the result of the same process of absorption which informed Jonson's art, yet to the degree to which they address specifically Caroline problems and preoccupations, Brome's plays are by no means slavishly derivative. They show that he had served his "prenticeship" with Jonson to good effect, and in some cases that he had an even better understanding of his audiences and the demands of the professional stage than his old master.

My thesis examines about half the existing Brome canon of sixteen plays under three major modal headings. Part I Utopias deals with the plays *The Queen and Concubine*, *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew* as part of the utopian tradition stretching back to the plays of Aristophanes and the comic tracts of Lucian, which in turn inspired Thomas More's great and influential *Utopia* and the lesser known but significantly dystopian *Mundus Alter et Idem* of Bishop Joseph Hall. Brome's three plays use the "no-place" as a setting in which society may be refashioned progressively for the better, such that the resultant eutopia ('good place') may spill out from the stage and into the real world of contemporary England.

Part II Melancholy looks at the trope by which Robert Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, attempted to come to terms with the whole of human frailty, and was one of the most recent and topical contributions to the body of humanist scholarship in Brome's own time. A considerable number of Brome's plays have melancholy and its cure as the centre of their dramatic action, a fact which I believe is a measure of his recognition of the vitality and relevance of the humanist tradition. The plays *The Northern Lass*, *The Queen's Exchange*, *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, *The Antipodes*, *The Court Beggar* and *A Jovial Crew* are examined as arising out of the humanist tenet that it is the duty of art to highlight and even cure society's ills.

Part III Mirrors for Princes examines the way Brome's plays continue the tradition going back to Plato's *Republic*, where philosophers have attempted to provide a source of wise counsel and models of behaviour which would lead in turn to good government. Brome's *The Queen and Concubine*, *The Queen's Exchange*, *The Lovesick Court* and *The Court Beggar* are plays in which the concerns of Erasmus, Castiglione, Sir Thomas Elyot and even John Milton, in guiding the conduct of princes and citizens in the ways of virtue and justice, are applied to the social and political situation in the years immediately before the Civil War.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

I consent to this thesis being made available for photocopying and loan if applicable if accepted for the award of the degree.

Paul Skrebels

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Introduction

THE PROCESS OF DECANONISATION which English literature has undergone during the 1980s has resulted in attention of a more positive nature being directed towards often little-read and unperformed works. Among the beneficiaries of this trend has been the Caroline comic playwright, Richard Brome. The treatment he receives, for example, in Martin Butler's *Theatre and Crisis 1632-1642*, where Brome is one of the "several writers of distinction" on whom Butler "chiefly" concentrates,¹ helps to dispel the attitudes of earlier critics who saw in Brome's works examples of "dramatic decadence,"² or even latter-day assessments of them as "pale and ghostly" survivals of Jonsonian comedy.³ It has taken a more historicist approach to jettison what Alfred Harbage recognised as long ago as 1936 as "a kind of critical snobbery" which discussion of Brome seemed to attract.⁴ A comment such as "his talent was more derivative and limited and of a coarser texture" (with the answer to the begged question "than whose?" supposedly understood) is typical of the sorts of appraisal to be found usually in studies of the whole "Shakespearean" period of English drama—roughly 1590-1642—in which a sense of decline and decay is profoundly felt by the authors.⁵ Even Brome's major literary biographer, R. J. Kaufmann, felt compelled to intersperse his often insightful analyses of many of Brome's plays with cringing comments about his abilities as a poet, expressed—inevitably perhaps, given Brome's early associations—as comparisons with Jonson, and of the relative merits of some, particularly the earlier, plays.⁶

A far more constructive approach to his work is to be found in the way in which Butler—perhaps influenced by the enthusiasm of Christopher Hill for literature as source material for studying the complexities of the English Revolution⁷—relates the work of Stuart playwrights to the historical processes of the Caroline era. In the same year that Kaufmann's study was published, Ann Haaker, who was to become Brome's most significant modern editor, stressed in her own doctoral dissertation "the importance of reading Brome in conjunction with the intellectual, economic, and social milieu of his time in order to appreciate to the fullest the many overtones and implications, otherwise overlooked, in his plays."⁸ I could not agree more, and my concern also is to identify the historicity of Brome's plays. But merely to conclude, as Kaufmann does, that Brome was a "reduced" version of "the serious writer of critical comedy" who "must sense, project, and test the social preoccupations of his time," and whose "job it is to keep the incessant dialogue between a society's practices and its professed aims active and public" (174), is a little like saying that black is black and that's all there is to

it. Such an evaluation, for instance, raises but does not address the issue of the historical and artistic imperatives which drive the “serious” comic playwright to take on this apparently self-imposed “job.” And to whom or what could Brome or his colleagues turn for guidance and support in carrying out the often tricky task of showing contemporary society unsavoury things about itself which could be reformed, or highlighting positive aspects which should be more widespread?

In Brome’s case the beginning of the quest lies with the character of Ben Jonson, for whom he worked in some unspecified capacity in the 1610s and 20s.⁹ Brome did not end up slavishly writing Jonsonian plays; for a start, I believe his plays demonstrate more fondness for both characters and audience, as well as a more profound trust in the theatrical medium, than Jonson’s. However, the origins of his commitment to his art were recognised by others, as in the commendatory verse to *The Antipodes* by a certain C. G., who cried “Jonson’s alive!” because “He sojourns in his Brome’s Antipodes,”¹⁰ and not least by Jonson himself, who praised Brome for “*professing my old Arts.*”¹¹ Jonson himself was a link—perhaps the major one—not only for Brome, but for seventeenth-century England as a whole, between the Renaissance mode of classical learning with its attendant philosophical concerns which we call humanism, and the contemporary literary scene. Douglas Duncan calls Jonson, “Of all English dramatists . . . the most fully ‘humanist’ in being dominated by the urge to embody in his work what he had learned from the . . . classics.”¹²

I do not wish to try to prove that Brome was a classicist or even strictly a “humanist”; like Kaufmann, I feel that it is “not . . . particularly fruitful to speculate on the extent of his learning or how he came by it in the absence of any facts whatever” (18).¹³ Nevertheless, by starting with Duncan’s approach in exploring the influences which shaped Jonson’s comic dramatic method, as expressed in the title of his study, *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition*, we may help to establish the tradition out of which Brome, and perhaps many other Caroline playwrights and poets, could and did work. For better or worse, but for valid reasons, I have called this the Renaissance humanist literary tradition.

To begin with the most contentious term first: I am only too aware of how “humanist” is used pejoratively by many post-structuralist critics to describe the kind of criticism which seeks to impose a unified and universal world-view upon a corpus of literature. No doubt my approach leaves itself open to a similar accusation. Be that as it may, my use of what Duncan

calls a “fractious and overwrought” term, is employed in Duncan’s “simple, traditional senses” (1) to describe that body of scholarship which sought to apply the principles and tenets it had rediscovered in writings of the ancient world, within a Christian philosophical context, towards the betterment of individuals and, especially, commonwealths. A most fitting example of the type, because he was both humanist scholar and statesman as well as English, is Sir Thomas Elyot, who wrote in *The Boke Named the Governour* in 1531 what Douglas Bush calls the “first formal defence of poetry written in the Tudor age.”¹⁴ Elyot sets the ball rolling by seeing in classical comedy not “a doctrinall of rybaudrie,” as many pious scholars supposed, but “undoubtedly a picture or as it were a mirroure of man’s life, wherin iuell is nat taught but discouered,” and from which “good counsaile is ministred,” and “good and wise mater may be picked.”¹⁵ Thus the poet working within this philosophy is able to justify his or her place in society by adopting the role of moral teacher, who uses his or her art to “delightfully instruct.” Duncan sums up what this function entailed for Jonson, who “sought to validate the theatre by making it a proving-ground of virtue, a testing-place of judgement, worthy of the belief in the function of literature which he shared with other humanists, after him as well as before” (235). Brome’s work, I would maintain, bears out the assertion that he inherited this humanist philosophy to a very considerable degree, and I shall return to this notion of a tradition directly.

However, to clear up the other terms upon which this dissertation is based, “Renaissance” is used not just to delineate that period which is perhaps best defined as one of an explosion in education, based on the greater availability and subsequent wider interpretation and application of classical writing than had hitherto been possible (before the invention of printing, primarily). I will not attempt to argue whether the Caroline era represents the tail-end of the Renaissance or the beginning of something new. Politically and scientifically it certainly had elements verging on the latter, but—and this is where my use of “Renaissance” serves as another qualifier—the influence of past literary precedents was much stronger than the desire to produce radically new styles of writing, either for a readership or an audience. The polished novel was still a century off, journalism was in its infancy, and aristocratic patronage and court and religious censorship were still major determinants of what were acceptable literary/poetical products. Thus the circumstances in which one wrote had more to do with the sixteenth century than with anything uniquely “Caroline,” and although these would break

down to various degrees with the outbreak of civil war in 1642, neither Richard Brome nor the whole genre of popular English drama would be a party to those changes.

The literary tradition to which this study is confined is most decidedly a Renaissance one rather than a strictly classical one. Brome's plays are not read against those of Aristophanes or Plautus, for example, even though the methods and the historical context of Aristophanic playwriting are held up briefly for comparison in the early stages of my work. Nor is there any direct reference to the work of Virgil, Seneca, Cicero, Ovid, Quintilian, or any of the other classical "saints" venerated by Renaissance scholars and by Jonson himself. The significance of the Greek and Latin authors in my study is of their place as source material and inspiration for writers and scholars of the Renaissance, whose own readings of them acted as as much as sieves or blenders of classical thought as they could be revealing lights. An important example of this is the work of the satirist Lucian, because the reinterpretation put on him by Erasmus and Thomas More was, as Duncan has shown, a key example of the way that scholarship could develop into a distinct mode—that of *joco-serium*—for moral instruction based on Christian principles.¹⁶

So my work begins in similar territory to Duncan's, in which classical literature is dealt with mainly as it existed in the minds of practitioners like Erasmus and More, who quickly turned what they read and studied into literary products of their own which addressed the times and the situations in which they lived. And, like Duncan, the majority of the works against which Brome's plays are read in my study are of the more strictly "literary" variety than other stage works which scholars like Robert Burton tended to lump together with satirical pamphlets and popular romances as less serious forms of writing (even though Burton, as a case in point, owned many examples of this latter group¹⁷). The reasons for this method have nothing to do with a shared sense of scholarly elitism, however. As Duncan observes of Jonson's comic experiments, the playwright "feeling his way toward a new style of comedy . . . would not be content with the guidance of the popular tradition alone but would seek to reinforce it from the example and authority of more learned writings" (5). I believe that Brome's attempts to find the most "actable image" (Kaufmann 1), as part of his mandate of delightful instruction, reveal the same willingness to draw upon "'learned' precedent," and this meant looking "not necessarily to drama at all" (Duncan 5). In an "English" context (allowing for Erasmus as an English scholar by adoption), such source

material begins with *The Praise of Folly* and *Utopia*, continuing through to *The Boke Named the Governour*, the satires of Joseph Hall, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, and right down to the works of the young John Milton. Along the way, of course, there were many influential European humanist works to take into account as well. Therefore, my study contains relatively few readings of Brome's plays "in the light of" those of his contemporaries or immediate predecessors, unless there are strong parallels between what I perceive to be Brome's *modus operandi* and that of another playwright. The exception to this tends to be in my occasional signposting towards the plays of Shakespeare, which is not done out of any kind of bardolatry, but to provide some sense of direction for a reader venturing into what may often be unfamiliar critical territory. The reader who finds Duncan's comment that "Shakespeare is an ocean where every kind of writing can be made to find its resemblance" (94) too uncomfortably "humanistic," may at least take solace in the fact that Brome began his professional career with the King's Men, in whose repertoire were many of their former Warwickshire shareholder's plays.

Recent studies of Renaissance humanism have tended to emphasise the gap between the claims humanists made for the value of the *studia humanitatis* and what their pedagogical methods actually were, and, perhaps more tellingly, between these claims and what these studies actually did for their students. Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, for example, go to considerable lengths to demonstrate that "contemporary [that is, fifteenth-century] humanists were aware of the problem of grafting a detailed curriculum on to a set of ambitious cultural ideals,"¹⁸ and that one has considerable difficulty in reconciling the rigorous and repetitive philological drilling which went on in, say, the school of Guarino Guarini (1374-1460), "the greatest teacher in a century of great teachers" (Grafton and Jardine 1), with the ideal that "it involved the formation of character as well as the training of the mind" (1). Such learning, they claim, was more of a "commodity" sanctioned by the "establishment" for turning out "suitable potential servants of the state" (25); and the classical liberal education continues to fill that function rather than produce free-thinking citizens capable of genuine reform.

In a similarly revisionist vein, Alistair Fox questions the political value of "Erasmian humanism," especially in an English context. He claims that "Erasmus's Christian-humanist synthesis" had an "otherworldly tendency" which "worked counter to the type of experience a humanist was bound to encounter in the (often sordid) world of Tudor politics."¹⁹ It was as a

counter to this “transcendental” philosophy, says Fox, that More wrote *Utopia*, whose “dialogue form . . . makes it a much more ambiguous work than the straightforward *speculum principis* of Erasmus” (“English Humanism” 38). Fox goes on to explain what he believes is a fundamental difference between the two friends, as expressed in the use by both of the particularly apt “metaphor of life as a play” (39): “For Erasmus, human life is a play in which the characterization and make-up which hold the audience’s eye is mere folly” (39). But in *Utopia*, “Morus . . . approves of the play-acting, without irony: ‘whatever play is being performed, perform it as best you can, and do not upset it all simply because you think of another which has more interest’, he urges Hythlodæus” (40). Fox says that the “chief” Erasmian in Tudor England was Elyot, who shared the “idealistic, didactic intent in Erasmian humanism [which] rendered it ineffectual as a force in Tudor politics” (44), symptomatic of which is *The Governour*’s ending before we can “see how the precepts are to be turned into practice” (44).

I point out these current critical views of humanism not merely to cover my tracks by showing that I am aware of the pitfalls of using the term, but to highlight the breadth and depth of what by the seventeenth century had become a vast body of often apparently conflicting learning and literature covering a huge range of subjects from which the astute playwright could pick and choose according to need. Thus if Elyot could be accused of creating an “ideal state” in his *Image of Governance* (1541) which “is a humanist wish-fulfilment fantasy” (Fox, “English Humanism” 45), then few could be more guilty of the accusation in the next century than the comic playwright who turns recalcitrant kings and fathers into tractable benefactors, and wayward children into responsible (and fertile) heirs who will ensure the happy and prosperous continuation of the kingdom/household. Brome, as my studies show, was particularly adept at creating utopias in which this kind of wish-fulfilment could occur. Yet in his use of the trope of melancholy and its cure, he could adopt both the stances towards life-as-a-play outlined above, so that the disease is presented as a pretence—a “false” play—which must be interrupted or stripped away, while the cure is presented (often literally) in the form of a set of roles which expose and supplant the old play with one that promises a happier ending. And, as we shall see, Brome was capable of engaging the *speculum principis*—the “mirror for princes”—mode from a number of different and challenging angles.

Thus while there may be problems with attributing to Renaissance humanism any real value as a vehicle for political or social reform, in terms of humanism's ideals, which Arthur Ferguson sums up best as a "mode of perception"²⁰—which I would also equate with poetic vision—I have no doubt at all that there was a strong and lasting humanist tradition dating from the fifteenth century, of which Jonson was a major seventeenth-century apologist and Brome an heir. We can arrive at a better understanding of where Brome—and seventeenth-century poets and playwrights generally—stood by adopting Douglas Bush's distinction between "literary" humanists and "philosophic" humanists (*Renaissance and English Humanism* 40). Paradoxically, literary practitioners such as Jonson actually are philosophic humanists, because, rather than studying classical literature for purely philological ends, they "regarded the classics as a means rather than an end, who sought to apply classical wisdom to the uses of education and life, and who, in short, created humanism as a cultural ideal and discipline" (40).

Bush posits the notion that "All the English Humanists, like the majority of continental ones, regarded classical learning as a means, not an end, and their energies were given to education" (*Renaissance and English Humanism* 79).²¹ Ferguson expands on this by calling English humanism "essentially an applied humanism" (224), so much so that "a distinction becomes necessary . . . between card-carrying humanists and those men of letters who were simply heirs to the humanist tradition" (225). While the sweat of my labours cries out against Ferguson's off-handed dismissal of literary figures as "simply heirs" (tracing possible sources and their application in Brome's plays, for example, has been no simple matter), essentially I side with his view that despite "the obvious fact" that by late Elizabethan England "humanism was . . . the constant current in English intellectual life, we should restrict the designation of humanist to those directly engaged in the *studia humanitates*" (226). Thus while Jonson may have a strong claim to being called a humanist under such a definition, in the absence of firm evidence of Brome's scholarship we must conclude that, like Spenser and Sidney whom Ferguson cites as sharing "the learning of humanism, and were as devoted as Elyot had been to the education of the governing class for a life of active citizenship," he was "primarily" a poet (226).

Nevertheless, what a poet could and did do in reshaping the world through his or her art has, as my study of Brome shows, much in common with Ferguson's "modes of perception"

by which contemporary life was interpreted against a historical perspective (228). Time and again Brome's comedies do what Ferguson says the humanists did when they "undertook to diagnose the ills of the commonwealth and, where possible, to prescribe remedies":

This mode of perception permitted them to reconcile the old and the new. It allowed them to refurbish the typically medieval notion of a Christian commonwealth, with all that it implied of a static organism whose health depended on the moral fibre of its members, and made it fit the more dynamic and impersonal context of Renaissance life.

(Ferguson 233)

By placing Brome's plays within this tradition, it becomes easier to see how they are able to advocate the virtues of housekeeping and the semi-feudal estate in one breath and yet voice what Butler terms "repeatedly articulated attitudes which can only be labelled 'opposition' or 'puritan'" (1-2) in the next.

Although this study operates from the premise that humanism "had entered so completely into the bloodstream of English intellectual life" (Ferguson 225), I do not feel that in tracing this tradition that I can concentrate, as Duncan does, "less on uncovering particular moves than on finding out more about the rules of the game" (Duncan 4). On the contrary, because of the largely uncharted world of Brome's plays, I have the luxury of being in a position to read them against quite specific humanist literary products without much fear of duplicating the research of others. The major secondary studies upon which I have relied have tended to be those which concentrate on comparative works such as *The Anatomy of Melancholy* or *Utopia*, or literary historical examinations of court entertainment or the humanist mode of satire. That is not to say that I have not turned frequently to existing books and articles on Brome for support or contrary views, but if I arrive at conclusions similar to say, Butler's, about the political and social commitment of his plays, I trust that I have traced an appreciably novel and varied path along the way.

The following dissertation consists of three parts, beginning approximately in Duncan's territory of More and his *Utopia*, its classical antecedents and its Renaissance descendants. Thus Part I examines the Aristophanic, Lucianic and Morean elements of three of Brome's plays, *The Queen and Concubine*, *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew*, as expressions of the utopian mode of satire and wish-fulfilment. Part II moves away from the early Renaissance to a more nearly contemporary humanist concern, involving the use of melancholy and its cure as a trope for the ills of society and as an expression of the human condition generally. The

plays selected for analysis here are *The Northern Lass*, *The Queen's Exchange*, *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, *The Antipodes*, *The Court Beggar* and *A Jovial Crew*, but I could just as easily have used several others, so frequently does melancholy feature in Brome's plays. Their close use of the kind of melancholy expounded upon in Robert Burton's great and influential treatise *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, reveals, I think, a concern to relate the humanist tradition to their own time, as indeed Burton himself had done. I had originally planned to have a section devoted to Brome's use of Erasmus's concept of Folly, but that would have made this dissertation much longer than it already is. However, I also came to realise that Burtonian Melancholy is in a very real sense a seventeenth-century version of Erasman Folly, in that both stand for the condition of fallen humanity by which humanity may rise above the Fall—that is, as cause, symptom and cure. Part III tackles a more “traditional” humanist concern, the *speculum principis* or “mirror for princes,” and shows how Brome's “prince” plays, *The Queen and Concubine* primarily, but also *The Queen's Exchange* and *The Lovesick Court*, reveal how important the issues of good government and wise counsel still were in Caroline England, a fact only underlined by the alternative court posited in his highly satirical *The Court Beggar*.

Brome's strongly allusive methods in his plays, particularly with respect to the works of Renaissance humanist scholarship, when linked to his desire to instruct and his belief in the legitimacy of his art as a rhetorical device, and not as some escapist “toy” into which he believed it was being turned by amateur university and courtier playwrights, help to form a view of him, if not as a humanist or a classicist himself, then someone in whom other men of learning could recognise a kindred spirit. From my own geographical and scholarly perspective, it seems peculiarly apt to close this introduction with a quotation from a commendatory verse by Robert Chamberlain—from which I also derive my title—highlighting the erudition which he perceived in Brome's *The Antipodes*:

Thy book, being in my hand,
Hurried my soul to th'Antipodean strand,
Where I did feast my fancy and mine eyes
With such variety of rarities,
That I perceive thy muse frequents some shade
Might be a grove for a Pierian maid.
Let idiots prate; it boots not what they say.
Th'Antipodes to wit and learning may
Have ample priv'lege, for among that crew
I know there's not a man can judge of you.²²

A Note on Sources

There is still no modern edition of Brome's complete plays, and, like earlier critics, I have had to rely on the largely unsatisfactory three-volume *Dramatic Works of Richard Brome* published by John Pearson, London, 1873, for reference purposes. These are little more than reset versions of the earliest editions of Brome, are riddled with compositorial and typographical errors, and contain no lineations. Citations from this edition are therefore referred to by act and scene, followed by volume and page number, thus IV.ii; 1.242. This is clumsy, but is a sure way of directing the reader to specific quotations. Partly in reaction to this tedious necessity, but mostly because they are competently edited and fairly readily available, I have made two exceptions by using Ann Haaker's modern spelling editions of *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew* in the Regents Renaissance Drama series. References to these are by the more usual act, scene and line, thus IV.ii.24. All titles of Brome's plays, unless referring to a specific old spelling edition, are as given in G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*.²³

Any abbreviations used in citing Brome's plays and other works should be evident from the context, or are explained in the notes. The only frequently employed abbreviation which needs explanation here is *STC*, which refers to Pollard and Redgrave's invaluable *Short-Title Catalogue . . . of English Books Printed . . . 1475-1640*,²⁵ and which is followed by the number of the item referred to therein.

Initially I had intended to use old spelling editions of the humanist works against which I read Brome's plays, such as Brome and Jonson might have read in their own time. Such a policy would have meant having to bypass a number of very good modern editions of works, however, and proved impossible to maintain in practice. So, for example, while I use an edition of the Ralph Robynson translation of More's *Utopia*, I employ Lester Born's twentieth-century translation of Erasmus's *Education of a Christian Prince*. Similarly, an "early edition only" policy would have meant having to choose one particular edition of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* over all the others (there were five up until Burton's death in 1640 and a sixth published before Brome died) as *the* edition to which Brome may have referred. This is nonsensical, of course, especially when there are perfectly good editions by Shilleto and Jackson, and as my work developed it became more important to rely upon good scholarship as a criterion of choice.

One final area which may need explaining is my occasional use of the term “the action,” or even “the major action,” of a play. This derives from Stanislavski’s theories and writings on the nature of performance, and refers not only to physical action, but to the whole dramatic movement of a play as a “text” on both page and stage. Sam Smiley, in his book on playwriting, comprehensively sums up the term in the sense intended in my work:

Action in drama is change, as both process and deed. In addition to movement and activity, it implies alteration, mutation, transformation, expression, and function. It also inheres in feeling, suffering, passion, conflict, and combat. Dramatic action consists of a series of singular acts. They can be simple or complex. Whenever such human activities are given unity in a drama, the resultant action assumes a structure.²⁴



Part I

Utopias

I.1 "Excellent Neighbourhood": Constructing a Pastoral Commonwealth

IN HIS OVERVIEW of British drama, *The Golden Labyrinth*, G. Wilson Knight opens his brief consideration of Brome's work with the following remarks:

With Richard Brome the wheel of Elizabethan-Jacobean drama comes full circle. His peculiar blend of Elizabethan buoyancy and Jacobean realism develops into a mixture of satire, gravity and burlesque Utopianism reminiscent of Aristophanes.¹

Knight draws attention to two classical literary modes which, ever since they had become dear to the hearts of Renaissance humanist writers, were more often associated with non-dramatic literature than with works for the professional stage. The first of these is the satirical mode in the style of Lucian, of whose work no less an exponent than Erasmus said: "He has a way of mixing gravity with his nonsense and nonsense with his gravity, of laughing and telling the truth at one and the same time"²—the selfsame "mixture of satire" and "gravity" which Knight attributes to Brome. The second mode is the utopianism of Aristophanic Old Comedy, and it is this aspect of Brome's work with which the following discussion is concerned.

Three of Brome's plays—*The Queen and Concubine*, *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew*—make distinct use of the utopia, the "no-place,"³ either as an ideal against which to compare a real world wracked with vice and moral ills, or as a mirror to reflect and highlight those ills in sharper detail.⁴ Coburn Gum, in assessing the degree to which Jonson might be regarded as an Aristophanic playwright, says that the action of Old Comedy

took place in an ideal, topsy-turvy world, created by the poet. Thus an Aristophanic play was an inversion of the real life of Greece, not an imitation of it.⁵

This topsy-turvy world, where the "possible and impossible jostle each other,"⁶ forms a part of the curative process by which order and health are restored to an ailing society, a process which Kenneth McLeish says involves the use of "unreal means" to effect the cure, amidst a context of "real life" language and everyday detail (66). Each of the three plays listed above employs this Old Comedy technique as far as the accepted bounds of the Caroline professional stage would permit, and for the same ends.

Gum maintains that the Aristophanic mode of comedy makes the playwright "free to work at will in either a real or an imaginary environment" (30), and his description of this "fantasy-real" world as a *modus operandi* provides a clue to the way Aristophanic comedy was

appropriated by Renaissance humanist writers. Firstly, the fantasy aspect of the mode provides a built-in obliquity: censors worried about references to contemporary figures and events have to search all the harder once these have been relocated in an “unreal” context. The value of such a device to the Stuart playwright, faced with a diligent Master of the Revels, virtually goes without saying. Secondly, the world created should not be a product of pure fancy, as might be encountered in, say, Fletcherian romance or the court dramas of the 1630s,⁷ as this would constitute “a denial of the satiric basis and purpose of the comedies” (31). The comic world must have its roots in the real one, but, and this is the third facet of this approach, in order to highlight the ills of the latter it should caricature, distort and invert the values, standards and facts of the real world. As Gum says of Aristophanes’ *The Birds*, “both discretion and a spirit of eclecticism must be used in viewing the topsy-turvy world of Old Comedy” (32), and the same demands are made upon readers and audiences of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works employing the utopian mode of fiction.

Anyone attempting to chart the progress of the utopian mode into the Renaissance must look beyond Aristophanes and the drama, however. One must tread warily in trying to label More’s *Utopia* or Joseph Hall’s *Mundus Alter et Idem* as Aristophanic, if only for the simple reasons that neither is a stage-play and neither, having been written in Latin rather than the vernacular, was intended for a particularly wide audience. The process of linking classical and Renaissance utopism and then tracing the influence of both upon the Stuart playwright is one which relies upon philosophy—of shared artistic vision and intention—rather than genre.

Paul Turner says that the utopian mode of fiction rests upon two foundations. One of these is the concept of a “Golden Age” of uncorrupted reason, the Paradise or Eden which humanity lost through the perversity of its will, but which, through the re-ascendancy of reason, may be regained at least in part. Such is the driving force behind Plato’s *Republic*, that model of the rational political community to which all subsequent creations owe something of their origin. The second foundation of utopian literature is the traveller’s tale, the story of the journey to faraway places which, in various forms to suit the tastes of the times, never seems to have lost its attraction for readers and audiences.⁸ The idea of the Golden Age gives the utopist’s work its philosophical drive: there is the desire to reform through what H.W. Donner calls the “implied criticism of society” by comparing it with an

ideal commonwealth. The traveller's tale provides the form or style of the work, with its ability to entertain and amuse.⁹

Aristophanes was able to marshal these elements in comic dramatic form. He made fun of the *Republic* itself in his *Women at the Assembly*; he sent his heroes on a journey to the fantastic Cloudcuckooland in *The Birds* and to a very contemporary and recognisable version of Hades in *The Clouds*. But with the passing out of fashion of the Old Comedy style of "sharp" satire, scatological humour and upside-down worlds, comic drama became concerned with subjects of a broader nature, usually to do with domestic complications and love entanglements. The Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights were the heirs of this New Comedy, and to such an extent that Gum, for example, concludes that despite the "commonplace of Jonsonian criticism" that Ben Jonson was a "follower" of Aristophanes (9), it is only in *Bartholomew Fair* that he approaches the mode of Old Comedy, and that as a proponent of this mode, Jonson must be regarded as a failure.¹⁰ To pursue the utopian mode through the development of drama only is to travel a path which rapidly dwindles and then disappears; after Aristophanes the signposts point to the world of prose fiction.

Lucian was recognized by humanist scholars as the writer who continued the Aristophanic tradition into the Roman era. Erasmus and More, in particular, adopted him as a literary model and set a trend for "Lucianic" writing in Europe for the next two hundred years. In their zealous advocacy of Lucian as an example for Christian writers wishing to work in the satirical vein, the two scholars may have been guilty of recasting him in their own mould, but in emulating Lucian they saw in their own efforts a continuation of the Aristophanic mode of comic discourse. In the dedication to Urswick already cited (see n.2), Erasmus explains how he perceived Lucian's work: "Reviving the sharpness of Old Comedy, while stopping short of its abusiveness, he shows amazing artistry and finesse in his wide-ranging criticisms," he says, hinting at how the Lucianist may perhaps avoid the wrath of absolutist masters while carrying out the self-imposed role of social critic. He concludes with what in hindsight is an implied challenge to future playwrights to take on that very role: "for profit and pleasure combined, I know of no stage-comedy or satire which can compare with this man's dialogues."¹¹ In the century and a quarter which followed Erasmus's statement there was certainly enough satire both sharp and abusive on the English stage to keep the Lord

Chamberlains and Masters of the Revels on their toes, but his comment holds good if by it he meant that kind of comedy in which the real world is redefined in a fantasy world of inversion and limitless possibility. Few playwrights took up the challenge, but in Brome's work can be seen evidence of an effort to recreate in dramatic form the comic utopian vision begun by More, Hall and others as inspired by Lucian and Aristophanes.

Brome did not need to delve deeply into original sources for his own inspiration, of course. As Douglas Duncan has demonstrated in *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition*, Brome's erstwhile master was thoroughly familiar with the classical strain of satirical writing out of which the Renaissance utopian mode had developed. The central action of *Volpone*, for example, was based directly upon one of Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*, and his admiration for the Greek writer is consistent with the regard he had for Erasmus and More.¹² From what has been said earlier about Jonson's Aristophanic qualities, however, it is apparent that he was not prepared to venture into the potentially chaotic utopian landscape to the extent to which Brome was willing to do in his own work.

Brome's artistic vision was to a large extent determined by the social and political demands of the Caroline age. H.W. Donner has said that More's *Utopia* was a product of the "material and social change" that marked the "prolonged agony of the passing of the Middle Ages," and he calls this time "a period of confusion and turmoil where no authority remained unquestioned, whether spiritual or temporal" (10). There are very strong parallels between this description and the situation in Charles I's England. Julia Briggs tells of how the "complex and abrasive exploration" of Jacobean comedy gave way in the 1620s to "more schematic accounts in which stock types . . . figured with decreasing subtlety."¹³ She goes on to say that "the related interests of court, city and gentry" were too complex to be mirrored in "such simplistic terms" in the theatre by the 1630s, when "those interests were to polarize around the issues of religion and constitutional power into fresh patterns that no dramatist was sufficiently skilled to define" (65). It is the contention of the present discussion that in Brome's work can be found a use of the very mode of fiction to which More had turned at a time of similar social upheaval, so that rather than avoiding them, as generalisations such as Briggs' might lead us to believe, the Caroline stage was capable of facing squarely the complexities of the contemporary political and social scene.

The Queen and Concubine (1635-6) represents a gradual easing into the utopian mode because it takes the well-trodden path of the greenwood world of the pastoral which is set up in opposition to the corruption and vanity of the Court, much as is found in *As You Like It* or *The Winter's Tale*. But we may gauge the play's conscious adoption of the utopian mode by comparing it with its original source, one of the tales making up Robert Greene's prose narrative, *Penelope's Web* (1587).¹⁴ Aside from many additions to the plot, used to enhance the level of dramatic conflict in the play, Brome makes much more of the Queen's exile from the court. In Greene's story, the "Souldan" (king) banishes her to the country to make way for the concubine, Olinda. The Queen tells how she lives

in a little Cottage adioyning to the Subburbs of the Cittie, where accompanied with three friendly companyons, I passe the day in labour with quiet, and the night in securitie with sweete slumbers[.]¹⁵

It transpires that the "three companyons" are not human at all, but "Content without plentie, Quiet without enuy, and Pouertie without impatience" (186). While these are certainly utopian virtues, being antithetical to the pride and ambition which More and Erasmus saw as the root of social ills, the setting itself is idyllic rather than utopian. There is no sense of a "commonwealth" in which the Queen has found her peace of mind. Brome translates the exile into the social sphere, sending his queen, Eulalia, out into a recognisable community that he even goes so far as to call the "Paradice of Love."¹⁶ First, however, Eulalia, like Greene's outcast queen, finds individual serenity and contentment, born out of a clear conscience and a fresh perspective of what is lasting and what is transitory in life:

They do but sleep, that live in highest Pompe;
And all their happiness is but a dream,
When mine is reall[.]

(III.i; 2.44)

This sense that the "green world" is more real, while the world of the corrupt court is "but mere Pageantry" (44), has a decidedly Platonic ring to it when placed beside, say, Duke Senior's rather pragmatic comparison in *As You Like It*:

Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?

(II.i.2-4)

Brome echoes the sentiments of his source when Eulalia talks about the "Attendants" of her exile:

the chief Honour
 Of the best woman, meek obedience,
 Is my own handmaid; and my Patience
 A sweeter servant than Gentilitie,
 Continually my other: for Councel and defence,
 what have I now?
 They have the helps of worldly wise mens brains,
 And I the comforts of my fruitfull Prayers.
 They have tall big-bon'd servants for defence:
 I the strongst guard of all, mine innocence.

(44-5)

But he is actually laying the groundwork for the establishment of an alternative court, with Eulalia at its head. Just as Shakespeare presents an alternative to the vindictiveness of the “official” court of the usurper, Duke Frederick, in the form of a pastoral court in the forest of Arden, so Brome is quick to surround Eulalia with actual courtiers and attendants, rather than just the “moral” ones to which Greene limited his ousted Queen. Eulalia receives the support of a spiritual “Genius,” and of courtiers who desert the corruption of the King’s court, in order to establish her own utopian court; but it is in the unique qualities of the Paradise of Love that we gain a better sense of the debt which the play owes to humanist utopian writing.

K. W. Evans points out that while Jonson’s notion of the “Ideal Prince” saw the ruler as “the soul of the commonwealth,” with the monarchy “guided in the exercise of its responsibilities by the few wise men among its subjects,” his attitude towards the common people was one of “contempt,” and that “little more could be expected from their sort in this context than reversion to their natural affinity with animals.”¹⁷ In *The Queen and Concubine*, Brome displays no such elitist or exclusivist views. In fact, what he shows is that in order for Eulalia’s court to represent a true commonwealth, drawing its strength from the well-spring at its head, the third element, the commons, must be heard and allowed to participate. It is not even as though they are treated as an afterthought, for it is in their land, in which Eulalia and the loyal courtiers find refuge, that Brome provides us with the basis for a ready-made utopia.

That the Paradise of Love is of the stuff from which utopias are made is clear when Andrea and Lodovico, the fool and the loyal courtier who decide to follow Eulalia into exile, tell what they already know of the region:

[*Andr.*] I have heard there is
 Neither Lawyer nor Physician in all the Province.
Lod. None could e’er get a living amongst ’um
 in all their Practise.
 It seems they liv’d then civilly and temperately.
Andr. Nor Gentleman nor Beggar in their Confines.
Lod. Then sure their Wealth was all communicable.

There could not but be excellent Neighbour-hood.
Andr. And, which was worth all the rest, their Priests
 Were ever the best good-Fellows in all the Country.

(52)

Kaufmann notes that Brome “makes it clear that these people lived in a kind of small utopia of neighborliness and charity” (Kaufmann 95), but the observation is by no means specific enough. In attributing classlessness, shared wealth and a strong sense of community to the Palermians, Brome points the way clearly to no less a society than Thomas More’s *Utopia*. We need look no further than Andrea’s and Lodovico’s own examples for comparisons. The communal spirit obviates the need for lawyers, for there is no litigiousness, and so it is in *Utopia* where “the public spirit that informs her citizens” means that there need be few laws “—an ideal visualized by Plato and dreamed of also by Erasmus and Vives” (Donner 38). More does not exclude physicians from his society as Brome does—presumably to emphasise the overall well-being of the Palermians and to heighten the disastrous effects of the pestilence (which has a symbolic function similar to that of the Theban plague in *Oedipus the King*)—but there is a congruency in the exemplary priesthood (“ever the best good-Fellows in all the Country”) and Utopian priests, who are “of exceding hollines, and therefore very few.”¹⁸ By way of contrast, Eulalia talks of the priests at court who have sanctioned the false charge of adultery against her:

Priests are but Apes to Kings,
 And prostitute Religion to their ends.

(III.iv; 2.54)

Brome is even willing to follow More over the contentious ground of the issue of the separation of church and state. At a time when Archbishop Laud was attempting a re-enactment of the role made famous in More’s day by Cardinal Wolsey, Brome has one of the “Sages” of Palermo, Lollo, explain that, “we allow not our Clergie any Temporal Offices, for reasons known unto ourselves” (IV.iii; 2.81). Lollo is not permitted to go into any more detail over this issue, quite understandably given the ever-increasing equation in Caroline England of religious opinion with political stance. Nevertheless, his disestablishmentarian leanings cannot have gone unnoticed, especially amongst a private theatre audience containing some of society’s elite.

The *Paradise of Love* constitutes an essential element in Eulalia’s “counter” court; it is not just another manifestation of the literary commonplace of the idyllic pastoral setting. Brome

does not assume, in Sidney's words, that

Greater was the shepherd's treasure
Than this false, fine, courtly pleasure.¹⁹

He actually creates a utopian commonwealth using the "rude" utopia of Palermo as a foundation. Neither the hagiographical qualities of Eulalia nor the primitive egalitarianism of the Palermians is enough to triumph alone against the corruption of the court, but combined they form a new entity, the eutopia, in which utopian characteristics are overlain with the virtues of the perfect prince. This eutopia, where all levels of society interact for the general good in an atmosphere of mutual love and devotion, stands out in glaring contrast to the dystopia of the Sicilian court, where love has given way to lust and duty is performed only in the hope of personal gain. The scenes in acts III and IV shift our attention from dystopian court to eutopian counter-court and back again, emphasising the contrast which erupts into open conflict as the common people of Palermo rise up to defend their ideal queen. By act V the corrupt court has faded from view, but not before attempts have been made upon Eulalia's life by evil courtiers who try to infiltrate the Paradise of Love. However, these serpents do not bring about the fall of this second Eden, and are foiled through a combination of Eulalia's gift of insight and the plain good sense of the countryfolk.

The countryfolk themselves are portrayed in a most favourable light. They are neither bumpkins nor the butts of cheap jokes, and they are not treated condescendingly. Rather, they and their society are held up as an example of good government from which England's gentry may actually learn something.²⁰ The people of the Palermian countryside are honest, and honourable, figures, proud of the title of "Yeoman" (III.vii; 2.63) and worthy representatives of their estate. They see themselves as participants in the well-being of the commonwealth, not as mere chattels or drones, for, as Butler observes, "they are incensed by Alinda's favourite Flavello who barely escapes their violence when he calls them 'Peasants' [V.iv; 2.92]" (Butler 39). Their loyalty and devotion to Eulalia, whom they see for her true worth, puts the deviousness and expedient behaviour of the court to shame. In their willingness to act directly and decisively for what they uphold they are shown as a people aggrieved, not as an irresponsible rabble. Another infiltrating courtier, Alphonso, described as "Alinda's Sycophant," rails at the countryfolk for daring to accuse him of treason, and for rising up against the evils emanating from the court:

You hobnayl'd Rascals: can you think that you
Are fit to spie or correct faults at Court?

Lollo's reply is both unequivocal and ominous:

Your shoes at Court are all too fine and thin:
To tread out snuffs and sparks of kindling Sin,
Which let alone the Rushes may take fire.
Then flame, then burn up higher still, and higher:
You warm you at such fire, 'tis we walk through't
The hobnayl'd Common wealth must tread it out.²¹

(V.vii; 2.120)

Within a very few years, such sentiments would become, for many, more than just the idealistic mouthings of a character in some obscure Sicilian landscape.

The inhabitants even have a native form of local government which sounds very Morean in concept. When two of Eulalia's would-be assassins are captured, Lollo has a chance to explain the Palermian system of administration and justice. He tells how they rule through a council of Sages, of whom there are "Some three or four main Heads" for the "Precinct." He continues:

But we have many Powers under us:
These now are Powers that execute our Commands.
There is as much difference between a Sage and a Power,
As between a Judge and a Hangman.

(IV.iii; 2.81)

Rule by "Sages" has obvious echoes of Plato's *Republic* with its philosopher-kings, but more specifically the structure reflects More's Utopia, where each quarter of a city selects a candidate, and from these four candidates a "Prynce" is elected. The Prince and his council of "Tranibores" are the arbiters of disputes and the dispensers of justice.²² What is especially interesting in Lollo's speech is the way in which "power" is subject to "wisdom." Brome's utopian system shares the enlightened pragmatism of More's creation; in neither world is power something upon which ambition can feed, it is merely a means by which good government may be effected.

Alinda, the concubine of the title and the usurper queen, is, as Martin Butler says, "ambition incarnate. . . . Her aim is absolute rule without control" (35). When she and the King visit the Paradise of Love in act V, she believes herself to be on the threshold of absolute power, but Eulalia upstages the concubine's pretensions with her admonitory "Testimonie of Love," a virtual desideratum for all utopian rulers:

Let your demands be for the common good.

Not for your own respects: self love may hurt you:
Beware Ambition, Envie, and Revenge.

(V.iv; 2.113)

None of these passions, which Alinda has in abundance, has a place in the ideal commonwealth, but it is against ambition and its more basic manifestation, greed, that utopists seem most vocal. The basis of Hythloday's argument in favour of the Utopians' denial of private property is that it does away with these vices. According to him, laws may be passed "that nother the king should be of to greate powre, nother the people to prowde and wealthye" (*Utopia* 44), but propping up a corrupt system with laws is "like as sicke bodies that be desperat and past cure, be wonte with continual good cherissing to be kept vp" (45). While "euery man is maister of his owne to hym selfe" (45), ambition and greed can only be held in abeyance; for Hythloday and the Utopians the solution is to make all property in common and so do away with the motives for these vices.

Brome's Palermians also hold "their Wealth . . . all communicable" (III.i; 2.52), but the Paradise of Love has a vulnerability highlighted by the ease with which the pestilence has infected the land by the time of Eulalia's arrival. There is the sense that Palermo needs its Queen just as much as Sicily needs to emulate the "excellent Neighbour-hood" of the Paradise of Love. *The Queen and Concubine* is as much about the interdependence of all levels of a commonwealth in order to create a eutopia as it is about the traditional contrast between "court" and "country." For the eutopia to be achieved, all the elements of the nation that is "Sicily" must be brought together. Up until act III, The Paradise of Love is a phenomenon, an "other" world about which ordinary Sicilians speak with awe—like Hythloday recounting his travel tales—but of which no outsider has had any experience. The action of *The Queen and Concubine* involves the building of a eutopia, not the discovery of one. The Palermians' strong sense of community, their loyalty and their charity must become normative standards for the rest of Sicily, and this is achieved by a romantic formula which involves combining the attributes of an outcast ideal prince with those of a utopian region set on the fringes of society. Eulalia becomes the mediator through which a "real" world of absolutist monarchy merges with an idealised world of "greenwood" autonomy to produce a eutopian nation-state based not upon wilfulness and the wielding of naked power, but upon mutual love and respect.

The overlaying of Morean republicanism with a distinctly English type of idealised monarchy—a good queen ruling with the consensus of her loyal and loving subjects—makes

sense if the play is seen as a moral tale directed specifically at the court. *The Queen and Concubine* makes special use of the Neoplatonism so much in vogue amongst Henrietta Maria and her coterie.²³ It takes the “doctrine of love,” which Julia Briggs calls Neoplatonism’s “most familiar and vulgarized aspect” (128), and turns it into a doctrine of state policy, the foundation upon which the ideal nation should be built. Eulalia’s return to sovereignty is framed in terms strikingly reminiscent of the ideas of Ficino and other Neoplatonists, which upheld the potential of humanity to control and transform the natural world, a power “to be gained by self-discipline and the acquisition of secret knowledge” (Briggs 129). In the character of Prospero, says Briggs, “are united the age’s three most potent images of the power to transform” (129): that of mage, king and artist. These images recur in Brome’s exiled queen, Eulalia. Through the visitation of the Genius she has been granted a version of the magical “healing touch” traditionally associated with the English monarchy,²⁴ but she herself is careful not to have any personal status attached to the gift. Eulalia regards herself in a priestly role, an agent through which the curative power is administered, like grace:

Eul. Bless’d Providence assist me whil’st with Prayers I use the gift thou gav’st me
for the cure of these afflicted People.

(III.iv; 2.54)

She warns recipients of her cures to “Beware Idolatry” when they call her “Heavenly Saint or Goddess” (54), but her ability to see into the hearts of her would-be assassins and foil their plots recalls Prospero’s own “prescience” which allows him to “court” that “most auspicious star” (*Temp.* I.ii.180-3), resulting in the return of his dukedom. Despite her protestations, Eulalia has magical powers which help to transform her world and which lead to her own re-ascendance.

Eulalia has more earthly talents which balance and complement her mage-like status. While the dispensation of special favours to poor countryfolk might be viewed as a form of *noblesse oblige*, her desire to “come and live among you for my hire” (III.iv; 2.55) is self-effacing and levelling, and reveals a transforming power available even to mere mortals—that of art. When the King issues a proclamation “prohibiting upon pain of Death, any relief to be given unto the banish’d *Eulalia*” (III.vii; 2.59), the exiled queen circumvents the letter of the law by telling the Palermians that she will

teach all your children works to live on.
The which, together with my own labour,

May bring sufficient for my maintenance:
Without the idle help of Begging, Borrowing,
Or any way infringing the King's Command.

(IV.i; 2.76)

Her next resolve takes her actions beyond the realms of mere expediency:

Something I have in Book, to help their knowledge,
And by practise give them literature.
Then when these serious works and studies toil us,
For Recreation, yet with equal skil,
Wee'l practise divers Instruments, Songs and measures,
That shall invite the Powers above to smile
On the content of which we them beguile.

(76-77)

This decision is in keeping with the Genius's mandate that she provide the youth of the countryside with "Education good and pure" (III.ii; 2.47), but, more significantly, it is one which transforms the role of monarch from a wilful, power-wielding figure, to one which is concerned with the growth and well-being of her people. Brome goes a step further than More, whose Utopian councillors, "(though they be by the lawes exempte and pryuyleged from the labour) yet they exempte not themselves; to the intent they maye the rather by their example prouoke other to woorke" (*Utopia* 63), by portraying "A Royal Queen [who] once Traded for her living" (IV.i; 2.77), and one who is aware that "other Arts" may even change the hostility of the "Powers" at court into a smile.

Brome's apparently conventional pastoral landscape is turned into a model humanist state where the virtues of education, the pursuit of knowledge and training in the arts are extolled. After demonstrating some of the things her pupils (interestingly, all girls in this scene) have learnt—reading, needlework, writing and music—Eulalia exposes two more conspirators sent by the court to kill her. The people can control their fear of accusations of treachery no longer, and proclaim:

Long live our Queen. *Andr.* Your Queen? have you a mind to be hang'd? *Omn.* our School-Mistress, we should say.

(IV.iv; 2.90)

Comic bathos aside, the juxtaposition of titles in this passage stresses the scholar-queen role that Eulalia has carved out for herself. Again, this is consistent with the Morean idea of Utopia, for as Donner summarises it:

Not the least important duty of the magistrates is the education of the people, for although only a limited number are privileged to pursue learning as a career, education belongs to all and to men and women equally.

(Donner 37-8)

Through the agency of Eulalia, Brome creates a humanist utopia out of a rural one, and he leaves no doubt that her exile from the court has been a *felix culpa*, benefiting the countryfolk and, ultimately, herself:

Who says our State is low, or that I fell
When I was put from Court? I did not rise
Till then, nor was advanc'd till now.

(IV.iv; 2.90)

Critics have pointed out a darker side to Prospero's character and his use of the enchanted isle, and their accusations may even be levelled at Eulalia. Her attempt to overlay the native virtues of the Paradise of Love with arts and learning grounded in courtly definitions of culture may be viewed in terms of the problem which Stephen Orgel calls "nurture, not nature," and the "line of argument" taken up by many recent critics of *The Tempest* "modelled on the colonial experience."²⁵ Why should she not be regarded as Caliban regards Prospero: as "an invader and usurper" (Orgel 24) who has supplanted native control with her own dominance? Could the visit of the King and Alinda to Palermo in act V represent not the surrender of corrupt court to guiltless country, but the fulfilment of centralised monarchical control—of which Eulalia has been the vanguard—over a hitherto semi-autonomous region? One method of calming the storms of such a dilemma is to place Eulalia's rise to power against a background of the humanist imperative to employ the utopian mode of fiction.²⁶

Purely at the level of *The Queen and Concubine*'s dramatic action, it is hard to equate Eulalia with Prospero's darker side. At no time does she hold the inhabitants of the Paradise of Love in servitude by anything other than her goodness and force of character. Her magic is never used to enslave or manipulate, and she never uses either it or her influence with the Palermians to punish the infiltrators (whom the locals would quite cheerfully hang), or the King and Alinda, who finally fall under her sway. Her queenly function is curative—keeping at bay a "king's evil" which has both physical and moral manifestations—and educative—imparting knowledge for both learning and pleasure. She is the monarch as priest and poet, not as conqueror and judge.

There is a tendency today to see education as a manipulative tool, particularly after generations of colonialism in which many genuine "paradises of love" have had their religions and cultures subverted and supplanted by those of Europe. The Renaissance humanists, however, regarded education not as subversion but as a kind of reversion. Wayne A.

Rebhorn says that “the humanists thought of education as a kind of agriculture and longed for a world transformed at least metaphorically into a garden of innocence.”²⁷ It has already been mentioned that the utopian mode was itself a part of this attempt to regain a lost Golden Age, but in his *Utopia*, “More emphasizes the absolute importance of human art to the success of his Utopian state” (Rebhorn 142). In a work where “both human nature (anthropology) and the natural world (ecology)” are perceived “through the same set of images” (141), the cultivation of the island is symbolic of, and synonymous with, the education of its people. There is “a fear that nature—human or otherwise—will never be fruitful if left to its own devices” (144), and so More, rather than maintaining the traditional antithesis between city and forest—which might be equally a place of refuge or “a savage wilderness”—“obliterates the dichotomy between forest and civilization by incorporating the former into the latter” (143). This is precisely what happens as the Paradise of Love is brought under the sway of Eulalia. Left to themselves, the Palermians would remain on the outer edges of Sicilian society, non-participants in the commonwealth at large. Their native forms of rough justice would see a continuation of the bloody cycle of punishment and retribution which already informs a large part of the actions of the corrupt court. She leads the Paradise of Love gently into the wider world of politics, while at the same time enticing the court out into the fresher air of communal living. Court and Country are brought together through her mediation, which is to say that the political and the social worlds are joined in a harmonious union—a eutopia. She achieves this without any coercion, legal or extra-legal; her method is to educate, and she eventually breaks down the distinctions that keep one group of society separate from another. The third transforming image of Eulalia then, is as rightful and just Queen, who, as Julia Briggs says of Prospero, “is given a second chance to restore and redeem corrupt society through the benevolent use of . . . authority” (129).

In *The Queen and Concubine* Brome uses his character Eulalia to achieve two utopian goals. Michael Holquist uses the analogy of chess to show that the “game” of utopia “is a radical stylization of something which in experience is of enormous complexity.”²⁸ This stylisation involves a process in which “what was rough is made smooth, what was chaotic is made orderly” (Holquist 135), and so it is in Brome’s play where the virtues of the Palermians are enhanced by art and learning, and the chaotic self-interest and ambition of the court are

replaced by a sense of duty and obedience. However, this process is not achieved by the usual utopian method, which Holquist explains quite simply as “*laws*” (135), but by much gentler and more refined means, as we have seen. Brome further bends the “rules” of the game by presenting us with another world which is not “by definition perfect, so that any changes in it can result only in a falling away, a decline” (Holquist 139); his Paradise of Love actually benefits from change. Thus it both is and is not a Morean utopia; there are the qualities of shared wealth and strong sense of community which the Palermians have in common with the Utopians, and both are societies in which “man *is* his environment” (139). The difference is that Brome’s society is the “live organism” which, as Holquist explains, the perfect state “ceases to be” (139). Brome’s utopians are capable of almost limitless improvement, as the humanists and Neoplatonists believed humanity to be. *The Queen and Concubine* is still in many senses a pastoral play, but its pastoral mode is not merely used as a mirror of the good society; Brome shows off the artist’s transforming powers by turning that mode into a utopian one, demonstrating that it may actually inform and instruct society and change it for the better.

I.2 No-Place Like Home (1): Anti-London and its Precedents

BEN JONSON HAD inherited the earlier humanist distaste for and distrust of romance, an attitude summed up in Ascham's well known dismissal of the genre as "bold bawdrye and open mans slaughter." J.A. Bryant has noted that one aspect of the "hard common sense" that characterises Jonson's "extant criticism" is "his consistent opposition to certain romantic tendencies evidenced by the work of his fellow playwrights,"²⁹ and so, almost certainly, he would have disapproved of the methods used by his former servant in *The Queen and Concubine*. Jonson managed to resist the "folk-tale" strain of drama of the style of Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* until the very end of his career. Pastoral and arcadian settings belonged in masques, where they might be excused in the name of pageantry and emblematic representation, but they had little place on the "serious" stage.³⁰ Jonson's bitter "Ode to Himself," written in disgust at the failure of his play *The New Inn* in 1629, gives some idea of this attitude:

No doubt a mouldy tale,
Like Pericles, and stale
As the shrieve's crust, and nasty as his fish,
Scraps out of every dish,
Thrown forth and raked into the common tub,
May keep up the play club.

The irony is that Jonson singles out not only Shakespeare as the target of his barbs but also Brome, who had recently achieved his first success with *The Lovesick Maid* (1628; lost), a title suggesting a romantic comedy:

Broome's [sic] sweepings do as well
There, as his master's meal:
For who the relish of these guests will fit,
Needs set them but the alms-basket of wit.³¹

If *The Queen and Concubine* was written for private performance at court, then Brome's choice of genre would have been made to suit the tastes of Queen Henrietta's circle. The portrayal of Eulalia as a Queen of Hearts ruling over an Arcadian utopia, with powers to transform a wicked king into a Neoplatonic philosopher whose final lines are

Now with such melting silence as sweet Souls
From Bodies part to Immortalitie,
May we for better life divided be[,]

(V.ix; 2.130)

must be seen as the shrewd use of romantic drama in the vein of playwrights such as Davenant, who were assured of the court's "ear," to appeal to a ruling class with the potential for effecting positive change. As a full-time theatre professional, which Bentley has shown Jonson never properly to have been,³² Brome was quite ready to play upon his audiences' tastes, although—judging by his complaints in the prologues to *The Antipodes* and *The Court Beggar*—he may have lost touch with, or sympathy for, those tastes later in his career.

Nevertheless, the words Jonson gave to the Scrivener in the induction to *Bartholomew Fair* concerning the playwright's side of the "covenant" with the audience—first spoken while Brome as the "playwright's man" stood "behind the arras"—may have stuck in Brome's mind:

He is loth to make Nature afraid in his plays, like those that beget Tales, Tempests,
and such like drolleries, to mix his head with other men's heels[.]
(*Bart F Induct.* 113-15)

The Antipodes, written a year or two after *The Queen and Concubine*, contains a utopia that literally does mix heads with heels, yet does not "make Nature afraid." Up until this point, Brome's "other worlds" had been consistent with the Sicilies, Bohemias and Albions to be found in the romantic dramas of his predecessors: *The Queen's Exchange* (1630-2) is set in an ancient Britain, like *Cymbeline* or *King Lear*; *The Lovesick Court* (1632-4) has its action take place in Thessaly, as does Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess*. As we have seen, *The Queen and Concubine* takes the tragicomic convention a step further, combining a rural utopia with a Sicilian court like that of *The Winter's Tale*. But it is in *The Antipodes* (1637-8) that the use of the utopian mode reaches its peak as a structural and informative device in his work. Here Brome dares to leave behind all pastoral "no-places" with their classical origins in the Sicilian settings of Theocritus; he brings the utopian mode "home" by abandoning tragicomedy altogether, opting instead for a festive style of comedy with strongly Aristophanic overtones.

In making the main action of *The Antipodes* the cure of young Peregrine's melancholy fixation with travel and travellers' tales, Brome hit upon a structural device that allowed him to formulate comic dramatic parallels to the humanist utopian writer's two traditional literary strands. The return to a golden age becomes the comic drive towards the restoration of the Joyless family's health and the regenerative powers of Peregrine, and the use of the traveller's tale as both a symptom and a cure of the illness becomes a means of building a rich satire of contemporary London. The central informing conceit running through the play is that of the

antipodean utopia, in which customs and manners are turned inside out and upside down. Peregrine and both the real and representational audiences become travellers who journey to another world, and yet one which is the same as their own. This distancing process—which Bertolt Brecht would call in his own theories on the drama the *Verfremdungseffekt*³³—serves to make familiar aspects of life unfamiliar, and promotes in the audience the detached and critical frame of mind which Jonson and Sidney regarded as an essential ingredient in the didactic process of comedy.³⁴ By understanding with the head as well as enjoying with the heart, the audience is better equipped to translate reactions to the comically inverted stage-play world into action out in the real world with its vices and follies. Thus the conventional appeal for approval and applause in the Epilogue needs to be seen also as an exhortation for the audience to go out from the theatre with the reforming vigour which the play celebrates. Peregrine says finally:

And from our travels in th' Antipodes,
We are not yet arriv'd from off the seas;
But on the waves of desperate fears we roam
Until your gentler hands do waft us home.

(V.xii.40-3)³⁵

The didactic strain of humanist scholarship is never so strong in Brome's work as it is in *The Antipodes*, and the degree to which the play draws upon the humanist literary tradition bears out this assertion.

It was stated that in *The Antipodes* the audience is confronted with another world that is like their own; the allusion was deliberate. Sometime before 1605, Joseph Hall wrote his *Mundus Alter et Idem*, a title which has perhaps been most adequately translated by J.M. Wands as *Another World and Yet the Same*.³⁶ By 1609, an English translation-cum-adaptation called *The Discovery of a New World*, by John Healey, had been published. Both the Latin original and its translation were popular works, appearing in several editions.³⁷ Hall, a scholar and satirist who later became Bishop of Exeter, seemed to share something of the philosophy of Jonson and Brome:

[his] moral stance, his abhorrence of all extremities in an age when extremity seems to have become the norm, aligns Hall clearly with sixteenth-century figures like Hooker, More and Erasmus rather than with seventeenth-century figures like Laud, Milton or Prynne.

(Wands xx)

Hall's residual Elizabethanism is a trait shared by Brome, whose own work time and again

“evokes”—in the words of Martin Butler, speaking of *The Queen and Concubine*—“a nostalgic, Elizabethan idea of an organic community in which the members participate fully” (39). *Mundus Alter et Idem* also developed the idea of the dystopia, which could be used with more direct satiric effect than previous utopian fictions. Brome seized upon this device to create an Anti-London which would act as a huge, distorted and exaggerated mirror of his own city. The niceties of pastoral Arcadia were put aside for a return to the urban environment preferred by his old master. Harry Levin’s comparative assessment of Shakespeare and Jonson serves as a good summary of Brome’s shift of setting:

While Shakespearean romance could lead personages to self-realization on desert islands or in faraway retreats, Jonsonian satire cramped them within the dwarfing perspective of the city streets and brought out the monstrous propensities of human nature.³⁸

One might even say that *The Antipodes* is a utopian satire such as Jonson would have written, had he ventured so far.

Brome starts out with the same premise as Shakespeare’s Gonzalo:

I’the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things;

(*Temp* II.ii.143-4)

and presents us with a topsy-turvy world where everything is contrary to custom. Unlike Gonzalo, however, who would admit “no kind of traffic / . . . no name of magistrate” (144-5), Brome intends his Anti-London to be “Of equal composition of elements / With that of London” (*Ant* II.iv.35-6)—in other words, a “fantasy-real” world in the Aristophanic tradition. In the *Mundus Alter* Hall’s Mercurius Britannicus travels to a *Terra Australis Incognita* which has nations in the equivalent southern latitudes to those in the north:

[the region of Crapulia] is commonly divided into two provinces, Pamphagonia and Yvronia: the former with the same longitude and latitude, by and large, as our beloved Great Britain (something which should not seem a bad sign to anyone); the latter, however, with the same longitude and latitude as the two Germanies.³⁹

Brome’s Dr Hughball is less reticent about directing the audience’s gaze; he assures Peregrine that

The people through the whole world of Antipodes,
In outward feature, language, and religion,
Resemble those to whom they are supposite:
They under Spain appear like Spaniards;
Under France, Frenchmen; under England, English
To the exterior show; but in their manners,
Their carriage, and condition of life,

Extremely contrary.

(I.vi.106-113)

Obviously, then, Anti-London will not be a selective utopian commonwealth such as Gonzalo would have, but a comprehensive satiric landscape painted “warts and all.” Lingering behind Anti-London is the reality of Antonio’s jibe, that, indeed, utopians might just as easily be “all idle, whores and knaves” (*Temp* II.i.162) as model citizens. The Antipodean world must be, logically, dystopian as well as eutopian, and as such is the perfect dramatic vehicle for portraying not only “an inversion of normality,” but also “a revelation of what normality ordinarily hides” (Butler 215).

The “comedy being the world turn’d upside down” (*Ant* II.ii.12) is created using the device of the play-within-the-play, so that Anti-London is itself a fictive device within the fictional world of the play. Thus although Brome dares to mix heads and heels in Letoy’s creation in a startlingly literal fashion, he remains true to the Jonsonian precept that the playwright should be “loth to make Nature afraid.” Nevertheless, the utopia acts as the central organisational and educative image in *The Antipodes*, even more so than in *The Queen and Concubine*. The utopian conceit has not received the critical attention which the antipodean one has attracted, but it is just as important in any analysis of the structural and didactic workings of the play.⁴⁰

The Paradise of Love exists in *The Queen and Concubine* as a “natural” utopia and a nucleus around which Eulalia can exercise the transforming power of her arts. The native utopian qualities of the countryfolk are combined with those of the “ideal Prince” to create a force for reform and good government that the corrupt urban court is unable to resist. In the household of Lord Letoy, the deviser of the Anti-London scenes, we are presented with another kind of microcosmic utopia, but one which is also a model of the hierarchical society based on love and devotion to duty. The descriptions of Letoy, the “odd lord in town, that looks like no lord” (I.i.95), point the way not only to Utopia, but also to its creator, Thomas More. In the figure of the humorous—both in the modern and Jonsonian senses of the word—gentleman who looks “more like a pedlar” yet lives “more like an emperor” (I.v.28-9), we have a suggestion of the Utopian citizen who scorns the outward finery of gold, silks and jewels, yet whose time and resources are so efficiently organised that he can enjoy the resulting increase in comfort and leisure time. In the man who exclaims, “I love a play in my

plain clothes" (I.v .82), and who actually steps in to take a major part in the play-acting which cures the Joyless family, we have echoes of the Thomas More of popular legend, such as is portrayed in the play *The Book of Sir Thomas More* of the 1590s.⁴¹

More, "whose life had always been plain and simple,"⁴² became the focus for various anecdotes and attributes retold in hagiographic fashion. The oft-repeated story of More's boyhood ability to step in and extemporise during Christmas performances at Cardinal Morton's household, for example, is dramatised in *The Book of Sir Thomas More* seemingly "to emphasize his friendliness to the players and his enjoyment of their art" (Duncan 54). Even more significant was his renowned ability to combine the moral seriousness of his function as a magistrate with the exercise of his own brand of wit. His great friend and fellow humanist, Erasmus, wrote a Lucianic colloquy entitled *Exorcism*, which tells the story of Polus, "a gentleman with a house outside London who shares with his son-in-law a 'festive' wit and a bold taste for practical joking" (Duncan 61-2), who indulges this trait in exposing a bogus exorcist priest. Duncan makes a case for identifying Polus with More, a connection which comes as no great revelation under the circumstances, but one which serves to underline, firstly, a view of More as "the grand master of poker-face jesting" (59)—in other words, of the humanist technique of *joco-serium*—and secondly, a view which places the character of Polus/More "near the head of the English dramatic tradition of teasing gentlemen wits which was to run through Jonson's Truewit to the long line of his Restoration successors" (64). These characters, he stresses, "bear no relation whatever to the intriguing slaves of Roman comedy, much less to medieval Vices, but are firmly identified as intelligent and enlightened gentlemen" (64).⁴³ It is firmly within this alternative to New Comedy, in a scholarly comic tradition which owes allegiance to Lucian and Aristophanes via More and Erasmus, that the character of Letoy finds life and motivation.

To be an effective basis of reform and regeneration, as the Paradise of Love is in *The Queen and Concubine*, the miniature utopia of Letoy's household must be made to "spill out" into the wider world. Again, a precedent may be found in More's own life. Stephen Greenblatt writes of the deeply pervasive nature of role-playing in More's public as well as private life:

More did not simply judge this world, he participated in it as an actor among the rest—if the theatrical metaphor expresses his inner sense of alienation and his observation of

the great, it also expresses his own mode of engagement in society.⁴⁴

Letoy expresses his alienation from the courtly aristocracy as he compares his own lifestyle and recreational preferences to theirs (*Ant* I.v.30-64), and his nonconformist appearance emphasises his “otherness” and the way he defines himself as an aristocrat. The most striking affirmation of this notion of life as a series of roles, however, is in the way that Letoy’s function as a nobleman is actually turned into an ongoing process of theatrical production. Letoy’s whole household is an acting troupe:

my own men are
My music and my actors. I keep not
A man or boy but is of quality:
The worst can sing or play his part o’th’viols
And act his part, too, in a comedy,
For which I lay my bravery on their backs[.]

(I.v.57-62)

The image of the ideal hierarchical household, then, is that of the smoothly-run theatre company where all members use the talents they have for the good of the group, and are bonded together by a common purpose. Letoy’s role as actor/manager who keeps a watchful eye over the success of the performance further defines his role as the ideal, paternalistic householder, while at the same time emphasising his difference from the aristocracy of his time:

And where another lord undoes his followers,
I maintain mine like lords. And there’s my bravery.

(I.v.63-4)

Just as the idyllic Paradise of Love is the stage upon which the reformation of the corrupt court is played out, so the ideal household of Lord Letoy literally becomes the theatre which will see the drama of the cure of the age’s melancholy realised. “Your house in substance is an amphitheater / Of exercise and pleasure” (I.v.52-3) says Blaze, succinctly summarising two of the main driving forces behind Letoy’s domestic utopia. One of these is the reaffirmation of the traditional court versus country dichotomy, with Letoy championing the latter. The “exercise”—a word which conjures up the methods discussed by Robert Burton as a means to keep melancholy at bay⁴⁵—consists of good, healthy country games and sports which Letoy hopes to maintain:

And now I am here i’th’city, sir, I hope
I please myself with more choice home delights,
Than most men of my rank.

(I.v.49-51)

As in *The Queen and Concubine*, Brome upholds the moral superiority of yeoman, country values over those of the effete court circle. The second aspect of Blaze's comment is the assertion of what might be called an ordered pleasure principle, or, in classical terms, the Epicureanism which, in its purest form, is the underlying philosophy of More's *Utopia*. Edward Surtz maintains that "The whole ethical system of More's Utopians revolves about pleasure,"⁴⁶ but, he concludes, this is based on Epicureanism as interpreted by Erasmus, not on the popular view of a philosophy founded upon hedonism:

More is closer than Erasmus, who consistently emphasizes and extols mental and spiritual delights, to the true spirit of Epicurus, particularly in laying stress also upon bodily pleasures, including health.

(Surtz 35)

Nothing could come closer to this principle than Letoy's insistence on "exercise and pleasure" in the maintenance of his household.

The utopian qualities of Letoy's household must be brought into play, literally, to counter a wayward form of utopianism which has a hold of Peregrine. His melancholy fixation with travel is exemplified by his constant reference to the 14th century traveller's tale, *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, an edition of which he carries as he makes his initial entrance as the stock "stage melancholic."⁴⁷ C.W.R.D. Moseley tells how, despite the significance and enormous popularity of the work, the wandering knight had become, by the 17th century, identified as "the grandfather of lies that are like truth."⁴⁸ In summing up this attitude, Moseley drops two significant names:

soon after 1600 Bishop Joseph Hall can speak of "whetstone leasings of old Mandeville," Richard Brome can hang an entire satiric comedy (*The Antipodes*) on the book and its author—which suggests just how widespread was knowledge of the book—and assume (rightly) that virtually nobody then would regard the work at all seriously.

(9)

Through bowdlerisation and "the revolution in the knowledge of the world" (33), the book became an object of parody rather than an expression of a world view. Ironically, in its original form, Mandeville's book had prefigured the aims of the humanist utopists. Moseley says that in describing the customs and behaviour of heathen peoples,

Mandeville is deliberately setting up more or less differing mirror societies as a commentary on Christian practices and failings—just as, indeed, Utopian fiction was later to be employed, often using Mandeville's own travel motif (for example, *Utopia* itself, or Bishop Hall's *Mundus Alter et Idem*).

(25)

In fact, Brome's use of the book indicates that he was not wholly dismissive towards it, and that he did have some sense of its "proto-utopianism," particularly in the way it plays an integral part in the cure of Peregrine's melancholy.

At a concrete level, the *Travels* provides Brome with the raw material for Peregrine's fixations—"Dragons, and serpents, elephants white and blue, / . . . / And monsters more, as numberless as nameless" (I.vi.38,40)⁴⁹—as well as with a precedent for Anti-London itself. Mandeville says:

we and those who live at our Antipodes are foot against foot. It is like that in all parts.
Each part of the earth and the sea has its opposite, which always balances it.
(129)

This was a controversial view in the Middle Ages, and one which the Church sought to suppress until Magellan circumnavigated the globe in 1519,⁵⁰ but in *The Antipodes*, the Mandevillean world view becomes a metaphor for the sense of balance which Peregrine and his family must recover. If, as Hughball drily observes, "Mandeville went far" (I.vi.27), then the good Doctor must take both his patient and the play's audience even farther, until all have "sail'd . . . / Beyond the line of madness" (IV.x.55-6). The Mandevillean fantasy utopia forms the same kind of backdrop of popular legend as the greenwood landscape of the Paradise of Love with its holy Queen in *The Queen and Concubine*. In the hands of the committed dramatist, the semi-legendary tale is no longer an escapist device, a "drollery" that makes Nature afraid, but a framework within which he may exercise the controlling power of his art. Diana observes that the Antipodes described by Hughball must be a place where "art's above nature" (I.vi.130); if so, then it is the perfect setting for Letoy to set about his task of reformation. As Letoy says of Peregrine's treatment and cure:

Art can take hold of him to wind him up
Into his proper center, or the medium
From which he flew beyond himself.

(IV.xiii.12-14)

In *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*, Levin uses a diagram to show that the utopian vision is a projection of the preference for living "then" rather than "now": "If we reject the present," he says, "we must choose between the past and the future, between an Arcadian retrospect and a Utopian prospect" (8). In *The Queen and Concubine* our gaze is directed predominantly rearward, both in the play's use of the Arcadian setting, and in its advocacy of an obsolescent, paternalistic (or maternalistic) style of government. Yet the

action also projects us towards an ideal vision of the future when the “true” values of Eulalia’s greenwood court supersede those of the city court. The Golden Age filters through into everyday life in a way that it does not in, say, *As You Like It*, where the Forest of Arden seems a rather more exclusive medium of recuperation than the Paradise of Love.

The Antipodes gives Brome a chance to have the best of both worlds, quite literally. In the depiction of Anti-London, he does not reject his own society in favour of a primitivistic “greenworld” (although the affirmation of what L.C. Knights called the “anti-acquisitive attitude”—inherited from Jonson—is certainly still there⁵¹). Neither does Brome do, in real terms, what More and Hall do, and set his utopia in the New World of the western or southern hemispheres. For it must be remembered that Peregrine’s journey is an imaginary one—he never actually leaves London. By not sending his traveller to some *Terra Incognita*, Brome manages to bring the utopian mode back home to his own world and his own time, closing the temporal and spatial gap that separates topical social criticism from the poetic metaphors of Arcadia and Utopia.

The Anti-London scenes are the artificial product of a Lord who plays at being a theatrical producer; a young melancholic mistakes this artifice for reality, and based upon this perception, is actually cured. In one superbly contrived dramatic device, Brome vindicates the therapeutic role of both contemporary comedy and the utopian mode of fiction. In framing his *Utopia* within the tradition of the traveller’s tale, Thomas More had to contend with those *idiotai* (“the unenlightened” [Duncan 19]) who, on the one hand, like real-life Peregrines, believed that Utopia really existed, or who, on the other, accused him of lying outright. Neither of these attitudes, as he explained in a letter to Peter Giles concerning the criticisms of an unidentified reader, would lead to any benefit from his work, lacking as they do both good judgement and the humanist spirit of *lusus*:

when he wonders whether *Utopia* is true or a fiction, then I find *his* judgment, in turn, sorely at fault. It’s perfectly possible that if I’d decided to write about a republic, . . . I might have spread a little fiction, like so much honey, over the truth to make it more acceptable. But I would certainly have tempered the fiction so that, while it deceived the common folk, it also tipped the wink to the learned, who were capable of seeing through it.⁵²

By making his utopia a play-in-a-play, Brome exploits the illusory quality of the theatrical medium as well as the lusory quality of humanist satire, creating a double remove that allows a more diverse London theatre audience to enjoy and profit from his utopian scenes without the

danger of falling into either the gullibility or the scepticism of More's readership. Brome takes away the audience's need to suspend disbelief in his utopia by giving to Peregrine, Diana and old Joyless the roles of the *idiotai*, making them take on some of the functions of the traditional fool, in fact. What he does demand of his audience are its powers of judgement and its willingness to participate in the playfulness in which he, the playwright, is indulging. The audience is cast into the role of *kataskopos*, or "detached observer";⁵³ it watches Peregrine as he watches the play. But just as his responses are to a large extent controlled by Letoy's choice of scenes, so must the audience's responses be under the control of the ultimate *kataskopos*, the playwright himself. The multi-layered structure of *The Antipodes* allows Brome the luxury of entertaining his audience, while Letoy is given the task of advancing the more serious moral purpose of the action.

I.3 No-Place Like Home (2): Anti-London Comes to Life

THE ANTIPODES HAS BEEN compared to Thomas Randolph's *The Muses Looking Glass* (1630, publ. 1638).⁵⁴ Both plays are structured around scenes played before "acted" audiences and are, as Joe Lee Davis remarks, "comedies primarily about the art of comedy" (59). Randolph was a "university" playwright, although his plays received professional performances, and he wrote an adaptation of Aristophanes' *Plutus*—called *Hey for Honesty* (1627)—and another skit—*Aristippus, or The Jovial Philosopher* (1625-1626)—imitating Old Comedy.⁵⁵ While it is easy to label Randolph's scholarly, derivative methods as "Aristophanic," it is the contention of this discussion that *The Antipodes* points to a more skilful adaptation for the Caroline professional stage of the Old Comedy method of contributing to a society's self-definition and potential for reform.

After 1635 Brome wrote solely for private theatres—the Salisbury Court and the Phoenix, or Cockpit. While "private" tended to mean "enclosed" rather than "exclusive," higher admission prices limited the representative quality of the audiences,⁵⁶ so that the gap between the ideal of the inclusive commonwealth and society's actual course was manifesting itself within Brome's own beloved theatrical milieu. The play-within-the-play structure of *The Antipodes* can be seen as a response to this situation. Brome seems to have enjoyed writing for the popular theatre, for, in his reply to Heton's deposition against him for breaking contract with the Salisbury Court, he wrote of his time with the Red Bull Theatre and Prince Charles's company in 1634-5 as

where this defend^t was then very well intertayned and truly pai^d without murmuring or wrangling[.]⁵⁷

His decision to leave may be viewed as symptomatic of the scramble for increased status which characterises the social instability of the first half of the seventeenth century, yet *The Antipodes* seems a genuine attempt to draw together all the elements of his society, not only to create an "encyclopedic" satirical landscape, but, more positively, to recreate a commonwealth based on mirth and festivity. His plays for the period 1635-7 were, with the exception of *The Queen and Concubine*, "Middletonian" city comedies, but *The Antipodes* marks a return to a broader based, popular dramatic tradition.⁵⁸

Brome may have been inspired by Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, which, although reportedly a failure when first performed c.1610-11, had enjoyed a recent successful revival in 1635.⁵⁹ Beaumont's play uses the device of scenes performed to a stage-play audience, and the comments and interruptions of the citizens making up this audience serve to satirise not only the old-fashioned heroic romance which is the subject of the play-within-the-play, but also bourgeois attitudes as reflected in their theatrical tastes. Despite this, the overall atmosphere is one of festivity: "Satire in fact is incidental to the revelry that informs the play" (Hattaway xii). *The Antipodes* substitutes Beaumont's mock-heroic with the mock-utopia of Anti-London, but the festive quality of Brome's play is similar. The use of the utopian mode means that the satire, rather than being incidental, runs as a continuous thread throughout the action of the play. "Instruction and amusement are inseparably and uniquely linked in all his work," says McLeish of the plays of Aristophanes (61), and while this was an ideal that held true for Renaissance literature as a whole, it is much more evident in the unified structure of *The Antipodes* than it is in the series of cobbled-together scenes that make up the bulk of the so-called Aristophanic Randolph's *The Muses Looking Glass*.

There is an interesting parallel in the development of the Stuart theatre and that of Athens in the 4th century B.C., as Old Comedy gave way to the New. Robert Weimann says that after the discontinuation of the grant to the poorer Athenians that allowed them to afford the price of admission to the theatre, "the stage became less accessible to free working citizens, even though they were not forcibly prevented from attending performances."⁶⁰ Playwrights consequently lost a certain amount of identity with their audiences, seeing themselves more as "paid producers of entertainment," rather than as "guardians of and sharers in public interests" (Weimann 8). This gap "compromised both the function and structure of Old Comedy," says Weimann, "since Aristophanic laughter was a form of self insight and a means of self-purification" (8).

The similarity of function between Old Comedy and the Anti-London scenes in *The Antipodes* is readily apparent here, but their Aristophanic structure is thrown into bold relief by Weimann's consideration as to how "changes in actor-audience relationship" affected the staging of plays. In Old Comedy, the scene "was not an illusionary locality; essentially, *the scene was the theater itself with an audience in it*" (9, emphasis mine). This is not to suggest

that *The Antipodes* belongs totally to what McLeish calls the theatre of convention as opposed to the more “naturalistic” theatre of illusion (79-80)—Tudor and Stuart drama owed too much to New Comedy with its “beginning of a ‘fourth wall’ (which was, of course, not yet impenetrable). . . between audience and play” (Weimann 9). Yet Brome’s staging of his utopia as a play-within-a-play seems an admirable attempt to harmonise form and content in order to keep that fourth wall from closing up entirely. Just as the involvement of an Athenian audience in the action of a play was such that they “found a common voice in the chorus,” so that there was “a positive and functional relationship between those who performed and those who attended the play” (9), so Brome’s audience would have heard many of its own opinions and attitudes echoed in the comments of Peregrine, Diana and the others whom it watched watching a performance of the Anti-London scenes. Ben Jonson had used choral interludes in his own Old Comedy-inspired *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599),⁶¹ but in *The Antipodes*, Brome seems to have successfully melded his own nostalgia for the popular stage—with its connotations of a unified community—with the tastes of his private theatre audience, in such a way that the theatre could indeed be, in Blaze’s words, a house “large / Enough to hold you all” (I.i.13-14).

A measure of Brome’s self-conscious approach to this audience may be found in the scene where Letoy, Hamlet-like, gives some advice to his actors. He concludes by chiding a recently-arrived actor named Byplay for his tendency to improvise during performances:

But you, sir, are incorrigible, and
Take license to yourself to add unto
Your parts your own free fancy. . . .

. . . and when you are
To speak to your coactors in the scene,
You hold interlocutions with the audients—

BYPLAY

That is a way, my lord, has bin allow’d
On elder stages to move mirth and laughter.

LETOY

Yes, in the days of Tarlton and Kemp,
Before the stage was purg’d from barbarism,
And brought to the perfection it now shines with.

(II.ii.39-41 and 43-50)

While this backward glance at the popular theatrical tradition seems to meet with disapproval, it needs to be regarded in the light of Letoy’s remarks to Hughball in the previous scene concerning this same Byplay,

that never will be perfect in a thing
 He studies: yet he makes such shifts extempore,
 (Knowing the purpose what he is to speak to)
 That he moves mirth in me 'bove all the rest.

(II.i.16-19)

This contradictory attitude towards Byplay shows the dilemma faced by a playwright not wishing to make “Nature afraid” in presenting a topsy-turvy no-place to a sophisticated audience, yet who is aware of the need to hark back to the days of a less sophisticated stagecraft, with its interludes and direct addresses to the audience, in order to maximise the curative effect of his comedy. Therefore the skills of someone like Byplay (a name which, as Cope points out, is a plausible translation of “extempore”)⁶²—with their overtones of Thomas More’s improvisatory abilities—are essential for evoking that semi-mythological close-knit world of which the popular stage of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was probably the major expression. Says Hughball of Byplay:

He will be wondrous apt in my affair,
 For I must take occasion to interchange
 Discourse with him sometimes amidst their scenes,
 T’inform my patient, my mad young traveller,
 In diverse matters.

(II.i.27-31)

Letoy is not averse to the idea; on the contrary, he seems to share Byplay’s Morean talent: “I use’t myself sometimes,” he claims, to which the Doctor replies, “I know it is your way” (33-4). It is this attempt to keep alive the popular tradition of improvisation and comic turns, so that it coexists with the more recent but socially dominant “literary” dramatic tradition, that makes *The Antipodes* one step closer to the comic world of Aristophanes.

Old Comedy relied on the individual comic routines which in the *commedia dell’arte* became known as *lazzi*. The type of character most ready to make use of these routines is categorised as the *poneros*, the “sly person,” of which McLeish cites Odysseus in the classical world and Groucho Marx in the modern as good examples (McLeish 55). The technique of the comic turn solicits a “duality of audience response” which becomes in turn “a dynamic part of the fiction, and the fictional elements have a dynamic effect on the style of performance” (86). In other words, the theatrical illusion becomes multi-levelled, with each level capable of interacting with others. Nevertheless it cannot be said of Stuart theatre, as McLeish says of Athenian Comedy, that the playwright can “make whatever topical points or other remarks he wishes without destroying the illusion (for there is no illusion to destroy)” (87). In keeping

with the proprieties of the Stuart “private” stage, Brome does not have his characters “hold interlocutions with the audients,” or any other such “barbarisms,” in the main framing action of *The Antipodes*. The licence given to the actors in Letoy’s “Antipodes” is quite another matter. Here, the “fourth wall” is so frequently breached that Joyless, in frustration, complains to Letoy:

in midst of scenes
 You interrupt your actors, and tie them
 To lengthen time in silence, while you hold
 Discourse by th’by.

(III.i.7-10)

Letoy will have his way, though, both with Diana, it seems, and with the presentation of his play:

And for my actors, they shall speak or not speak
 As much, or more, or less, and when I please.
 It is my way of pleasure, and I’ll use it.

(14-16)

He establishes himself firmly in the role of narrator; events will unfold as and when he sees fit.

The result is that both player and performance are invested with what McLeish calls “a sort of *poneria* of style: that is, the feeling that the occasion is a game whose rules depend on the mood of the moment, and which the players are watching with as much delight as the spectators” (87). This is the dramatic equivalent of humanist literary *lusus*; its use is a conscious effort on the part of the playwright to draw the audience into the “game” whose rewards are instruction and delight. It is this *poneria*, a kind of wily strength, that is at the heart of the fantasy worlds that so often occur in Old Comedy. It gives the central characters the power to do the mighty deed that inverts reality; it is the assertion of and rejoicing in the humanity which the “real” world suppresses. Thus the decision of Letoy and his followers to set up an imaginary Anti-London which will effect the cure of the Joyless family is entirely consistent with, say, Trygaios’s decision to fly to heaven on a dung beetle and rescue the goddess Peace in Aristophanes’ play of that name, inverting “a standard literary theme, the descent of gods to earth in quest of men” (McLeish 70). Letoy, the “odd lord in town,” is just the sort of character who, alienated from “normal” society, can make the radical decision to turn reality, or at least convention, upside-down. He asserts a “protean individuality” which raises him above the level of a stereotype, a quality that “weights

audience interest in [his] favour, and hence helps to support [his] position in the overall moral argument” (128). By delegating the building of his utopia to Letoy, Brome has found a powerful ally for making his case about the state of his world, while leaving himself free to get on with the job of entertaining his audience.

Joe Lee Davis, the major proponent of the Brome/Randolph comparative view, concludes that Randolph, the Cambridge academic, provided the fullest formulation of the comic muse as “beadle” theory, by which he means that Randolph’s major concerns were moral education and “delightful teaching” (Davis 74). He achieved this through a realistic reproduction of “the specific typical forms that vice or folly assumes in the actual world of the audience” (77). His comedy, then, is “more in harmony with the commonplaces of classical and Renaissance criticism, the more consonant with the combined heritage of Roman comedy and Aristophanes” (79). Brome, he says, is, in *The Antipodes* at least, the exponent of the “hoyden” aspect of the comic muse, where the purpose is “psychological therapy” (75) through mirth, wild incongruity and the catharsis that “is not confined to the kind of verisimilitude suggested by the image of the mirror” (79). Davis’s conclusion is worth quoting for, like the comments of J. Wilson Knight which opened this discussion of the utopian mode, it acknowledges Brome’s achievement in reproducing an Aristophanic mode within the English dramatic tradition:

The hoyden theory belongs primarily to the tradition of the popular stage, is more in harmony with Renaissance notions about psychology and medicine, and yet has a striking affinity, in the freedom of its extra-realism, with Aristophanes’ Old Comedy. That Brome, a professional playwright of the popular theaters, who had learned his craft the hard way, should have come forward with the most challenging adumbration of this theory, is only appropriate.

(79-80)

The Anti-London scenes begin in the second half of act II, when Quailpipe delivers the Prologue with “capital beaver / upon his feet, and on his head shoe leather” (II.i.13-14).⁶³ The rest of the act is made up of a number of inversions of everyday London life: a gentleman entreats two sergeants to arrest him, and they will not; a servingman bullies his master; a wife lords it over her husband, then upbraids him for not taking up a mercer’s offer to get his wife with child; the husbands “bring portions [i.e. dowries], and / The wives make jointures” (II.vii.45-6); a waiting-woman governs her lady; and old men are seen going to school and behaving like schoolchildren. The scenes flow skilfully one into another; for example, the

gentleman who enters with the sergeants in II.vi remains on stage throughout act II as the protagonist of the scenes that follow. There is none of the bitsy, episodic structure of Randolph's play here.

More significant, however, is the way in which Anti-London begins to take on a life of its own. McLeish explains that the difference between the topsy-turvy worlds of Old and New Comedy is that in the latter, while the world portrayed is realistic, it is a world turned inside-out to the point where "we cease to question truth-to-life," and the audience's reality "has no place either in the circumstances surrounding the dramatic action or in the action itself" (67).

In Old Comedy, while the general process is similar, another element is introduced:

What happens is that an initially absurd deed is done (absurd meaning rather "out of keeping with its surroundings" than "ridiculous") and turns the "reality" of the "real" world inside-out. But as soon as the deed is done, the ordinary laws of causality are once again applied. Although the beginning of the progression is absurd. . . , every subsequent event follows logically from the one before. Only the strange and mighty deed inverts reality: subsequent events are absurd not in their own right, but because they arise naturally out of an absurd deed.

(McLeish 67)

Once Letoy and Hughball have set the world of Anti-London in motion, the same sense of logic begins to apply. The novelty of the upside down world is soon assimilated, and we move from reactions of mirthful surprise to a consideration of the relationships that exist in the real world. As Ann Haaker says in her introduction to the play:

The general concept behind the antipodean scenes is that no matter what world one seeks as an escape, the ratio between justice and injustice, folly and wisdom, good and evil, is, when realistically considered, the same.

(xix)

It is no wonder, then, that the laughable reversals of act II become ironic observations of the real world in act III, giving rise to specific satirical views of contemporary London life.

Thus, Anti-London assumes a place on the map with other fictive utopias. Even though it is, as has been pointed out, even more of a no-place than, say, Hall's Terra Australis, in that it is itself the imaginary creation of a character within a play, Anti-London is "fleshed out" and given added depth by various means. One of these lies in the very talent for extemporising with which Letoy and Byplay are endowed. Not only does this ability give them that extra power needed to put the curative action of the play into effect, but it serves as a bridge between the imaginary world of the utopia and the real world of contemporary London. The constant breaching of the fourth wall pulls the inhabitants of Anti-London out of the realm of

pure invention and reminds us of their grounding in “real” life. It is a bridge that crosses, as it were, from Letoy’s mind to Brome’s, and vice versa, like the imaginative one which More describes in his letter to Peter Giles, that “goeth ouer the riuier Anyder” (*Utopia* 252). The bridge to the audience’s imagination is spanned by making utopia both vital and identifiable, and Brome achieves this through two means. One of these is structural: he follows a line of “inner action” in the Antipodean scenes that has, in the Aristophanic style, a logic and sense of its own. The other method is what may be termed referential: certain aspects of Anti-London may be discovered also in the utopian worlds of More, Hall, and Burton, in a way that goes beyond mere allusion. Brome’s Antipodes may be charted, as it were, using these earlier literary creations as signposts.

To deal with this latter aspect first, it has already been pointed out how Brome uses Mandeville and Hall to lay the groundwork for the journey to Anti-London. His Antipodes are given a geographical identification with those of other utopists and, as Ian Donaldson says, with the folk tradition which had arisen out of old travellers’ tales as well.⁶⁴ By drawing upon a set of expectations about antipodean life already established, to a certain degree, in the popular consciousness, Brome is plainly not out to stun his audience with the novelty of his conception. Steven Hutchinson describes this type of utopian fiction thus:

When such worlds are regarded as given, as human inventions, they lose what transparency or reflexivity they might have as fiction without losing their immediate significance as given.

(176)

The choice of the Antipodes as a setting has more to do with marking out a particular utopia, and thereby aiding the audience’s process of analysis, than with the creation of a totally original no-place. Here is an approach different from that of Aristophanes in *The Birds*, for example. Brome has forsaken the novelty of a Cloudcuckooland, built from scratch, for a utopia that may be plotted amongst the discoveries and stories of the explorers and navigators of his own and the previous century. The Antipodes occupies, in Hutchinson’s words, “a mental space *in illo loco*, ‘ex-isting’ out there apart from the world.” It is a utopia which can be identified on maps, but they are “maps without any corresponding territory” (176).

Having established a utopia with recognisable latitudes and longitudes, Brome then gives it a third dimension by providing reference points to other literary utopias around which much of Anti-London is built. The inversions of act II are largely of Brome’s own making, but, as

Andrews points out, there are overtones of Jonson's masque *News From the New World Discovered in the Moon* (1620)—itself inspired by Lucian's *True History*—and even of scenes from *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634), which Brome wrote with Thomas Heywood, in which family relationships are reversed as the result of witchcraft.⁶⁵ It is when the comedy of *The Antipodes* moves from the broad farce of act II to the ironies of act III that the signs of earlier literary precedents become more noticeable in Anti-London.

Act III draws inspiration from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* for its utopianism as much as for its central concern with the analysis and cure of melancholy. In Book I of Burton's work, the narrator, Democritus Junior, laughing scornfully at the real world as did his predecessor, decides that he will, "to satisfy and please myself, make an Utopia of my own, a New Atlantis, a poetical Commonwealth" which could be set, he says, "in *Terra Australis Incognita*"—which not even Mercurius Britannicus had "yet discovered half"—or anywhere else in the unexplored regions of the world.⁶⁶ These rapid-fire allusions to More, Bacon and Hall provide a ready-made inroad into the major utopian fiction of the day, and one which Brome readily enters. In fact, he gives Burton's creation the "imaginative narrative framework" that J. Max Patrick says is lacking in the *Anatomy's* description, an absence which, he maintains, has caused it to be neglected as a serious utopian proposition.⁶⁷ Brome probably did not help Burton's cause much by embodying the ideas for a poetical commonwealth in a comic play, but their inclusion certainly helped to give his own Anti-London more unity, depth and vitality.

The Lawyer of act III of *The Antipodes* is a case in point. He is a personification of Burton's "charitable lawyers" who "love their neighbours as themselves," and who, along with surgeons and physicians, are "to be maintained out of the common treasure, no fees to be given or taken upon pain of losing their places; or if they do, very small fees, and when the cause is fully ended" (*AM* 1.102-3). Diana asks, "What a poor honest lawyer's this?" (*III.ii.85*) as Brome's character refuses a fee from the Poet; Letoy's reply, "They are all so in th' Antipodes" (86), makes it evident that this eutopian facet of Anti-London, at least, rests upon the foundations of Burton's imaginative commonwealth. Thus the Lawyer's advice to the Captain to settle his suit by "composition" (that is, mutual agreement), rather than in court (*III.iii.6-10*), is consistent with Burton's advocacy of more efficient use of the courts (*AM*

1.103). But then again, the two utopias have a strikingly similar dystopian aspect as well. When the Beggar says he must turn to usurers to finance his litigious habit, Diana asks whether “they have usurers in th’ Antipodes, too?” (III.v.87). Letoy answers,

Yes, usury goes round the world, and will do,
Till the general conversion of the Jews.

(88-9)

Aside from his jibe against Jewish moneylenders, Letoy is echoing something of Burton’s inability to keep “biting usurers” out of his utopia: “If we were honest . . . we should have no use of it [i.e. usury], but being as it is, we must necessarily admit it.” He goes on to tell how the practice is permitted by “some great doctors. . . , Calvin, Bucer, Zanchius, P. Martyr, . . . by so many grand lawyers, decrees of emperors, princes’ statutes, customs of commonwealths, churches’ approbations” (AM 1.106). Letoy must have read his Burton, for he makes the usurers of his imaginary world “Soldiers and courtiers chiefly, / And some that pass for grave and pious churchmen” (III.v.91-2). Brome cannot resist a parting shot: “How finely contrary th’are still to ours,” cries Diana (93), who patently has not read her Burton.

However, it was the law, its vagaries and abuses which preoccupied utopists from More onwards. The inhabitants of Utopia were said to have “verye fewe lawes; and the playnner and grosser that anye interpretation is, that they allowe as most iuste.” They also “vtterly exclude and bannyshe all proctours and sergeauntes at the lawe,” believing that “every man shuld pleade his owne matter, and tell the same tale before the iudge, that he would tel to his man of lawe” (*Utopia* 106). Burton, like Brome, does not do away with the legal profession, but he does advocate “Few laws, but those severely kept, plainly put down, . . . that every man may understand” (AM 1.102) Drawing upon More, Burton wishes “every man, if it be possible, to plead his own cause, to tell that tale to the judge” (1.102-3). Byplay, as the governor-cum-judge of Anti-London in act III, proclaims,

I can give judgment, be it right or wrong,
Without their needless proving and defending!
So bid the lawyers go and shake their ears,

Bring me the plaintiff and defendant only[.]

(III.vii.19-21;24)

“King” Peregrine is greatly impressed by this affirmation of eutopian principles:

I have not known such downright equity;
If he proceeds as he begins, I’ll grace him.

(28-9)

Once again, the spirit of *lusus* is at work here, but at issue is not how seriously we should take these lines (or the words of More and Burton, for that matter), but that Brome puts up yet another signpost in the antipodean landscape, pointing the way to adjacent utopian worlds. Even a minor detail, like the fact that Peregrine is “five and twenty” years old (I.ii.15), reflects Burton’s desire that “No man shall marry until he be 25” (*AM* 1.105),⁶⁸ which, in return, makes it all the more propitious that Peregrine at last consummate his three year-old marriage.

As the ironies become more grim in act IV, when Peregrine seeks out “What to approve, and what correct” (IV.i.5), we are directed to the dystopian scenes of Hall’s *Mundus Alter et Idem*, as well as to the less desirable aspects of life, both real and utopian, discussed by More and Burton. Scene x, in which Peregrine emerges from his “disguised prince” role as the reformer ready to take his place in the “real” world, sees Byplay “like a statesman,” listening to the ideas of a group of “Projectors.” This, as Andrews notes, was a recurring theme amongst Stuart playwrights, including Jonson, Randolph, Marmion and Brome himself two years later in *The Court Beggar* (1640).⁶⁹ The abolition of private monopolies in 1621 “had merely done away with private projectors,” but corporate monopolies lingered on as a frequent source of abuse until abolished by the Long Parliament in 1641 (Andrews 133). Brome takes up the issue in *The Antipodes* by linking the Projectors’ ideas with other dystopian fictions. In Book III of *Mundus Alter*, Mercurius Britannicus describes the land of Spesius (called Spendall-ezza by Healey):

The inhabitants are the only spenders vnder the moone: they do nothing in the wor[l]d but inuent how to spend with the best garbe: Some vpon dogges, some vpon haukes, or kites for a need: some vpon a paire of *Iuorye Cubes*, or a bunsh of speckled pastboards, and thus flie their patrimonies[.]

The narrator then goes on to say that once these inhabitants “haue cast all their whole estate ouer-board, then they doe either retire vnto other men’s tables; or else are maintained at the publike charge” (*Discovery* 181-2). This is a perfect antipodean attitude, and Brome takes it up at length. A Projector asks Byplay if he will consider

The poor men’s suits for briefs to get relief
By common charity throughout the kingdom,
Towards recovery of their lost estates?

(IV.x.24-6)

When asked for details, the Projector begins with Hall’s very example:

First, here’s a gamester, that sold house and land
To the known value of five thousand pounds,

And by misfortune of the dice lost all[.]

(28-30)

Brome takes the image of the destitute wastrel living off public funds to its logical extreme by including parasites and criminals—an old bawd, “panders, cheaters, house and highway robbers” (55)—as recipients of state welfare, while those who have been robbed, “for surer warning / And the more safe prevention” (62-3), are punished “With whips, with brands, and loss of careless ears, / Imprisonment, banishment, and sometimes death” (68-9). This in turn may have been inspired by Hall’s description of creditors who, if they invade “*The Prodigall’s Promontorie*,” where the bankrupt seek sanctuary, “are immediatelie accused as guiltie of sacrilege and so are throwne head-long from the higher tower in all the territorie” (*Discovery* 182).⁷⁰ Brome’s Man-scold scene, discussed below, may also owe something to Hall’s Viraginia, or land of women, in which Mercurius Britannicus is forced to take an oath with clauses about never injuring “this noble sexe by word or deed,” and never interrupting a woman in mid-speech (101). The scenes with the soldierly Buff Woman have their equivalent in Hall’s Amazonia, where the warlike women “weare britches, and long beards” (113).

Scenes vi to ix contain inversions of courtly and common behaviour. Three courtiers behave like crude bully-boys, cursing, knocking each other about, and proclaiming their lack of learning. Then a Carman, a Waterman, and eventually a Sedanman enter, full of flowery phrases and courtly compliment as they discuss their pursuits and pastimes. Their conversation consists of taverns, foreign affairs and gossip from the universities and the court. In *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Burton rails against those gentry who

are wholly bent for hawks and hounds, and carried away many times with intemperate lust, gaming, and drinking. If they read a book at any time . . . ’tis an English Chronicle, . . . a play-book, or some pamphlet of news, . . . their sole discourse is dogs, hawks, horses, and what news? If someone have been a traveller in Italy, . . . and can court his mistress in broken French, wear his clothes neatly in the newest fashion, . . . discourse of lords, ladies, towns, palaces, and cities, he is complete and to be admired[.]

(AM 1.320)

Brome’s rough Courtiers on the one hand—losing money at “ninepins” and “pigeon-holes” (IV.vi.6-7), making jokes about buggery, looking forward to “half a dozen / At the next ale house” (vii.16-17), and buying ballads when they have “scarce ability to read” (ix.35)—and his “elect society” (5) of the Carman and his colleagues on the other—wishing to chat about their “news-collecting” over dinner (22)—are not polar opposites, but representations of both sides of the same aristocratic coin. Brome has managed brilliantly to

dramatise Burton's complaint that there is

no difference between the master and the man, but worshipful titles: wink and choose betwixt him that sits down (clothes excepted) and him that holds the trencher behind him[.]

(AM 1.320)

The antipodean conceit reaches new satirical heights here, simply by putting ruffians in courtly dress and making tradesmen into rakes. Brome, it will be noticed, has moved away from the purely utopian tracts of Hall and Burton upon which to base his *Anti-London*, to their more direct and bitter critiques of real-life England. He is relentless and consistent in his desire to make his utopia identifiable on the map of earlier literary utopias, yet clearly recognisable as a view of contemporary society.

The borders between these fictive worlds become blurred and even threaten to dissolve when the "real" world of the *Joylesses* begins to merge with the "play-acting" world of *Anti-London* in III.vi. Peregrine makes a Don Quixote-like incursion backstage, attacking the puppets and properties, and crowning himself "King of the Antipodes" (30). Byplay re-emerges as a "governor" in III.vii, whereupon he hears the case of the Gentleman and the Citizen mercer of act II. Once again, life in *Anti-London* is given depth; earlier business is not forgotten, but carries on with due process. Some of the logic, however, remains decidedly antipodean, especially when Byplay delivers a crazily self-serving judgement on the case:

I therefore order thus:
That you bring me the wares here into court
(I have a chest shall hold'em, as mine own),
And you send me your wife; I'll satisfy her
Myself. I'll do't, and set all straight and right:
Justice is blind, but judges have their sight.

(III.ix.71-6)

This type of leering, Groucho Marxian aside, together with Diana's earlier observation of the character as "an odd, / Jeering judge" (III.viii.15-16), conjures up the "merry magistrate" persona of Thomas More we encountered earlier, the character not averse to playing roles and tricks and putting on disguises to see that justice is done. As Byplay and Letoy are forced to make use of their skills for improvising in order to maintain Peregrine's belief in the "reality" of *Anti-London*, this breakdown of the barriers between the various fictive worlds is highlighted. Letoy must prompt Byplay, who in turn steps in and out of his judge character, until Letoy himself enters the "play" as More was wont to do. By association, then, this similarity of habit by the creators of both *Utopia* and *Anti-London* gives the two worlds an

even closer link. But the allusory quality of the hilarious and potentially chaotic judgement scene does not end there. Byplay's "I know my face is terrible" (III.ix.2) to his fearful plaintiffs recalls the cry, "Stay, is not my name your terror?" (*Bart F* V.vi.10), of that other, less successful, interferer in the action and self-appointed "scourge of enormity," Justice Adam Overdo.⁷¹ We are reminded that Brome's utopia is also made up of the same "low and homebred subjects" (*Ant Prol*.25) of the London awaiting the audience outside the theatre door, and which inspired the rowdy fair scenes of Jonson's play.

Anti-London is a no-place, but it is one that is rooted in real experience; by act IV our responses to it no longer depend exclusively on the suspension of disbelief with which we receive other fantasy worlds. When, in IV.v, Peregrine reacts with horror at the delight of women who have ducked a "Man-scold" in the lake for his vicious tongue, he cries, "Sure these are dreams, / Nothing but dreams." The Doctor's reply makes it clear that this is a version, at least, of real life: "No, doubtless we are awake, sir" (29-30). The effect of such a scene is, true to the humanist spirit of *lusus*, a complex one. A distasteful reaction elicited from a seventeenth-century audience might be due to the sight of a ducking carried out on a man rather than a woman, or that it was carried out by women towards a man (a reaction of mirth might, from a patriarchist audience, be justification enough for the scene). But, coming as it does well into the antipodean scenes, when the inversions are no longer quite so novel, a negative reaction might have more to do with the nature of the punishment than with the propriety of its execution. Peregrine's complaint, "Can men and women be so contrary / In all that we hold proper to each sex?" (IV.v.31-2), begins to raise issues both on a moral level ("What is 'proper' behaviour?") and an ethical one ("How do attitudes to behaviour 'proper' to each sex shape social constructs like legal systems?"). The Man-scold attacks the custom that permits a mob to become "the law, the judge, and executioners" (11), and can turn the law into a river, both figuratively and literally,

Through which great men, and cunning, wade, or swim;
But mean and ignorant must drown in't.

(8-9)

These words, and the tears that follow, because they are not delivered by the comic stereotype of the shrewish female, are not so easy to laugh off, even for a modern audience.

In act IV the alienation devices inherent in an upside-down world really get into their

stride. Scenes such as those in which courtiers act like street bullies, street-vendors act like courtiers, a young girl propositions a gentleman, and a group of projectors posit their crazy schemes, become acute observations of contemporary real life rather than mere ludicrous inversions of it. Just as the greenwood utopia of the Paradise of Love starts to infiltrate the real world of courtly Sicily in *The Queen and Concubine*, activating the process of cure and regeneration, so the utopia of Anti-London and life in “real” London begin to spill over into each other. The pivotal action for this is Peregrine’s invasion backstage and self-crowning as King of the Antipodes. A “prince” of London, in conquering Anti-London, merges the two hemispheres into one complete, harmonious and balanced sphere, putting back together the world which Donne despaired of as “all in peeces, all cohaerence gone.”⁷²

Peregrine’s desire to move about incognito, “To make discovery of passages / Among the people,” in order to “perceive / What to approve, and what correct among’em” (IV.i.3-5), in the manner of the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, Philip the Good of Burgundy and James I himself, adds another dimension to the utopian mode’s potential as a social corrective.⁷³ Peregrine takes over from the Gentleman and the Lawyer as the focus for the remainder of the antipodean scenes as he wanders through Anti-London playing the role of the reformer. He becomes an embodiment of comedy’s classical moral purpose as he exerts his power to banish evil and celebrate the good in the human condition.

The structure of acts II, III and IV of *The Antipodes* are such that Brome’s utopia moves from being no-place, to some-place, to this-place; congruently, the comedy moves from the farcical, to the ironic, to the sharply satirical. Yet the prognosis for “this-place” is, consistent with Peregrine’s cure and regenerative zeal, a good one, so that, in its projection towards a positive future, the play directs our view once more towards a “no-place” of “what if” and “let’s hope.” The device of the imaginary utopia allows a plot concerning the cure of melancholy to be interwoven with a critical observation of society, resulting in a festive play as close to the Aristophanic tradition as anything written for the pre-Civil War stage.

I.4 Liberty versus Responsibility: Eutopia Redefined

IN *THE ANTIPODES* Brome constructed a utopia out of contemporary society—the “here and now” rather than the “there and then.” Young Peregrine need not travel over the seas to a strange land, because Letoy, as “theatre manager,” is able, using his acting troupe, to produce a utopia before Peregrine’s eyes. This utopia is not a fanciful, Mandevillean world, as Peregrine is led to expect, but a readily identifiable version—an “in-version,” in fact—of London in the 1630s. Brome does the very thing for which More praises his own character, Hythloday, “for not coming to Europe with strange tales of monsters who eat men—the monsters were already here!” (Rebhorn 146).

In *A Jovial Crew* Brome combines this form of “home-grown” utopianism with the arcadian utopianism of *The Queen and Concubine* to produce not one, but two parallel utopias. One of these is the estate of the “beloved country squire” figure of Oldrents;⁷⁴ the other is the world of the wandering beggars, the “jovial crew” of the title. The result is something very different from either city comedy or court pastoral, the kind of play in which, as Butler aptly describes it, is created “a wholly localized environment, not pastoral but manorial” (275). Such a play becomes “a nexus of social and political relationships, concrete at just those points where Massinger and Suckling [as proponents of the literary pastoral] were vague” (Butler 275). The obliquity of the antipodean conceit has been supplanted by a utopia that *is* “this England,” complete with “barns, hedges, ditches, roads and houses; . . . landlords, stewards, tenants and almsmen” (275). But this faithful reproduction of contemporary country life makes *A Jovial Crew* no less of a utopian play than *The Antipodes*. To a large extent it may be even closer to the spirit of the Morean utopia, for the earlier play pulls apart contemporary society into its component pieces for close analysis, and, having anatomised it, leaves it for the audience and “King” Peregrine to reassemble as they see fit. *A Jovial Crew* proposes a pre-existing utopian system which, if tidied up a little, has all the makings of a eutopia. By 1641 many among Brome’s urban audience would have come to regard rural England as a strange and enigmatic “no-place” full of beggars, bandits and bumpkins.⁷⁵ Brome plays upon these prejudices with the ultimate aim of refamiliarising his alienated theatre-goers with the attractions of the ideal country household.

The social forces which form the backdrop to *A Jovial Crew* are the same as those which inspired the writing of *Utopia*. Crowther points out that by the early sixteenth century the process of forcing rural workers off the land and onto the roads and highways had begun.⁷⁶

In Book I of *Utopia*, Hythloday rails against the enclosure of farm land for pastures:

there noble men and gentlemen, yea, and certeyn Abbottes . . . not contenting them selves with the yearly reuennues and profyttes that were wont to grow to theyr forefathers and predecessours of their landes . . . leave no grounde for tyllage; they enclose all in pastures; they throw downe houses; they plucke downe townes. . . ; those good holy men turne all dwellinge places and all glebelande into desolation and wildernes.

(*Utopia* 16)

The result of this enclosure of “many thousand acres of grounde to gether within one pale or hedge” is that “the husbandmen be thrust owte of their owne,” and

must nedes departe awaye, pore, sylie, wretched soules. . . . Awaye they trudge . . . out of their knownen and accustomed howses. . . . All their householde stuffe . . . they be constrayned to sell . . . for a thyng of nought. And when they have, wanderynge about, sone spent that, what can they els do but steale . . . or els go about a beggyng?

(16-17)

This is part of “Hythloday’s vitriolic attack on sheep-raising in England” which Rebhorn says has turned “England, once a green and pleasant land,” into “a parodic inversion of civilization, a dreary ‘solitudo’ unfertile because uncultivated. . . . No wonder More places Utopia at the Antipodes from his native land!” (145). No wonder, then, that Brome, in the same spirit of attack, re-placed his antipodean utopia in England, for if “the English have become a race of beast-men”—slaves to the needs of their sheep—and “the landlord class serves the serpent of hell. . . , the wild beast of pride” (Rebhorn 145-6)—devouring the land and destroying its inhabitants—then the monsters do truly live at home and not in far-off fantasy worlds.

A Jovial Crew also addresses these problems, and it does so in the same positive fashion with which More tackled them in Book II of *Utopia*, not by pulling contemporary society apart, but by proposing an alternative model for reform. The reign of Charles I was not only heir to the problems of vagabondage begun under the Tudors, it was also instigating and supporting policies which reinforced the uprooting of the peasantry and farm workers. Brian Manning describes the 1630s as a time when landlords began tightening their control of leases and rents in order to exact maximum profit from the land. The gentry, backed by the lawyers and the courts, dug up every obsolescent feudal due they could to find precedents for “rack rents” and increased fees.⁷⁷ So the name of Oldrents—whose lordship of the land is so mild

that his friend Hearty, as if in answer to Hythloday's complaints, cries, "What acre of your thousands have you rack'd?" (*JC*, Haaker edn., I.i.86)—is really intended to conjure up some sense of the "good old days" which existed, if they existed at all, sometime between the end of feudalism and the start of all the troubles in the country. He is a representative of the English popular equivalent to the classical Golden Age, a return to which we have already seen as the driving force behind all utopian writing.

The actions of the landed gentry were forcing many tenant farmers out of the estates and onto common land in order to support themselves, but this land in turn was being claimed by landlords seeking arable pastures for their flocks and new holdings to lease out. Increased population, depression as a result of a series of good harvests followed by a series of bad, and higher crown taxes all contributed to a land squeeze and a reduction in revenues and profits. Attention was turned to the so-called "waste" lands—forests, fens and marshes—but these were already supporting a large population of displaced countryfolk. As the crown took over areas like the forests of Dorset and Wiltshire or the Lincolnshire fens and sold them to the aristocracy who cleared, drained and enclosed, the denizens of these lands were presented with two options. They could submit quietly and join the ever-growing ranks of vagabonds and vagrants, eking out a living through itinerant work or, as Hythloday explained, by resorting to beggary or theft, or they could resist eviction and enclosure, as was becoming more prevalent, and turn to open rebellion. At first this resistance tended to take place on a legal and constitutional basis in the courts, with the common people expecting the crown to act as a bulwark against oppression by the aristocracy. It became clear, however, that working "within the existing institutions, which were patently biased against the peasants" (Manning 131) was ineffectual, and that Charles, in openly siding with the the gentry and playing the part of oppressive landlord himself, had forfeited his role as champion of the people. Conflict erupted in many parts of the country, no doubt contributing in large measure to the ease with which the English went to war with each other in 1642.⁷⁸

The possibility of popular revolt was not one that many in Parliament felt easy about, let alone the king and his immediate circle. Shakespeare had already haunted London playgoers with the spectre of Jack Cade and his marauding Kentish band as the archetype of mass rebellion in *2Henry VI*. It was not one that he presented with any delicacy or much sympathy

either, even though the play contains a scene in which petitioners seek suits which include one against the Duke of Suffolk “for enclosing the commons of Long Melford,” but are sent packing as “base cullions” by a wrathful Queen Margaret, their petitions torn (2*HVI* I.iii.21-2 and 40).⁷⁹ Sympathy with the plight of ordinary, honest folk did not imply a countenancing of open revolt; Cade’s proclamation that “All the realm shall be in common,” and “all shall eat and drink on my score, and I will apparel them all in one livery” (IV.ii.65 and 70-1), amounts to little more than the murder of clerks and a parody of the excesses of royal celebrations which will see “the pissing-conduit run nothing but claret wine” (IV.vi.3-4). Even popular clamour on a small scale could be viewed in the way Brome, in his play *The Lovesick Court* (1634), has the wise courtier Disanius dismiss the actions of the “unquiet Commons” as “impertinent discontents and strife” which are the “misery of kings” (I.i; Pearson edn. 2.91). The Cade revolt had been echoed in more recent times in the riot of London apprentices on Shrove Tuesday 1616/17 (o.s.), which resulted in the burning down of the first Phoenix theatre,⁸⁰ and popular clamour would lead to the execution of Strafford in 1641, an event which caused many moderates to turn back to the monarchy for moral support. As Manning says:

The genesis of the royalist party arose from dislike of popular tumults: it was less the party of episcopals and Straffordians than the party of order.
(20)

On the exact same spot as the first event, and in the very year of the second, Brome’s *A Jovial Crew*, his last play and one which Butler calls “the most committed play of the decade” (279), was produced.

A quality of humanist utopism is that it posits order and “culture” over and above unbridled freedom and “nature” left to run wild. Rebhorn, as we have seen, considers that in More’s *Utopia*, “both human nature . . . and the natural world” are treated as “*terrain* to be *cultivated or farmed*” (Rebhorn 141). For the humanist, the “process of cultivating the soil of the mind” was through education, but this process also led to “domestication, a taming of the mind” (151). Thus the means and the end of the process were seen in terms of discipline: an education in various “disciplines” would help to form a self-disciplined individual with a sense of responsibility towards other individuals and to the body politic. The utopian drive towards a new Golden Age was conceived not as a simplistic harking back to “where a benevolent

Mother Nature makes life soft and easy,” but something that works only through “its inhabitants’ persistent labor, planning, and care” (Rebhorn 142).

Robert Burton, in describing his “poetical commonwealth,” found More’s egalitarianism too unrealistic a proposition, claiming that “*Utopian* parity is a kind of government to be wished for rather than effected” (1.101). Human weakness simply did not allow for the practical application of such a concept, but human skill and artistry could aid in the implementation of the ideal utopia. That is why he runs counter to many humanitarian arguments of his time by actually advocating the enclosure of land—although he felt compelled to add a rider to the third edition of the *Anatomy* saying “yet not depopulated, and therefore take heed you mistake me not” (1.100).⁸¹ Burton justifies the enclosure of land thus:

for that which is common, and every man’s, is no man’s; the richest countries are still inclosed . . . and where inclosures are least in quantity, they are best husbanded. . . . I will not have a barren acre in all my territories, not so much as the tops of mountains: where nature fails, it shall be supplied by art[.]

(100)

So, ultimately, his attitude is consistent with More’s vision of Utopia as intensively cultivated.

As Rebhorn points out,

Since all [Utopia’s] cities are situated twenty-four miles from one another and surrounded by twelve miles of cultivated fields, almost the entire space between them must logically be occupied by cultivated fields and pastures.

(142-3)

Nature is not given a chance to run wild in such a schema, and it is not surprising, therefore, that by the seventeenth century the dichotomy between liberty and responsibility was being resolved in the humanist mind, as it had long been in the minds of those in power, to the detriment of liberty. When Mercurius Britannicus says of the Viraginians in Hall’s *Mundus Alter*,

Their political condition seemed democratic to me, insofar as everybody studies how to govern, but none studies how to be governed,

(Wands 59)

he sums up the growing distrust felt by the privileged and the educated for placing too much emphasis—at the risk of indulging in some false etymology—on the “common” half of the commonwealth. Non-ownership of the land was a radical proposal by More for making sure that everyone had a place in which to work and live, but within the context of European politics, humanists themselves were removing the burden of self-determination from the

common man and placing it squarely onto the shoulders of the monarchy and the aristocracy, provided that both were equipped with an education which ensured the discipline necessary for enlightened government. Charles I and other European monarchs would take this a step further in their reassertion the divine right of kings; democratic and popular movements, given a voice by Milton and others, would champion the cause of "Utopian parity." The Erasmian humanist would have regarded both as manifestations of perverse will given free rein at the expense of reason and responsibility.

In *A Jovial Crew* we are confronted with a dialectic between the carefree, uninhibited life of the wandering beggar and the responsibilities of life on a country estate. The catalyst for the action of the play is a fortune-teller's prophecy that Oldrents' daughters, Rachel and Meriel, "notwithstanding all / [His] great possessions . . . / Shall yet be beggars" (I.i.48-50). This doleful portent hangs over the once happy household, causing Oldrents to be "frighted / With't in a thousand dreams" (6-7) and creating an atmosphere of melancholy and gloom. The play is thus linked in tone to the "sad and tragic days" (Prol.3) of contemporary social and political turmoil, underlining the seriousness of its central concerns; for although it deals with "strange adventures through the briers / Of love and fate" (Prol.18-19), *A Jovial Crew* is no mere escapist romance in the style of the courtier playwrights by then much in vogue.⁸²

The melancholy resulting from the prophecy causes the members of the household to view responsibility as a monster, distorted to a size that hides the positive aspects of life on the estate. Hearty tries hard to point out the eutopian qualities of Oldrents' situation:

Do you not live
Free, out of law, or grieving any man?
Are you not th'only rich man lives unenvied?
(I.i.65-7)

at the same time positing a significant definition of freedom for Oldrents, and the audience, to consider. Oldrents is the archetype of the kindly landlord, whose generosity goes beyond setting moderate rents:

Whose rent did ever you exact? Whose have
You not remitted, when by casualties
Of fire, of floods, of common dearth, or sickness,
Poor men were brought behindhand? Nay, whose losses
Have you not piously repair'd?
(80-4)

And to assist him in this benevolent management, he has as his steward Springlove, whom his

master praises thus:

Thy charity there goes hand in hand with mine.
 And, Springlove, I commend it in thee, that
 So young in years art grown so ripe in goodness.
 (139-41)

The basis for eutopia exists in the Oldrents estate, could those in whom its governance is entrusted see it for what it is. Yet Oldrents lets the fortune-teller's prediction weigh down his spirits, his daughters feel stifled, "pent up and tied by the nose to the continuous stream of hot hospitality here in our father's house" (II.i.9-11)—a curiously negative and pointed use of the word "hospitality"—and Springlove longs once more to be out on the road with the beggars with whom he was brought up. He feels trapped on the estate:

You kept a swallow in a cage that while.
 I cannot, sir, endure another summer
 In that restraint, with life; 'twas then my torment,
 But now, my death.
 (I.i.180-3)

At the same time that life on the estate is felt to be "careworn," as Farley-Hills describes it, so the life of the beggars is introduced as "carefree" (Farley-Hills 149). Not only does Springlove seek the "delights,/ Such as we find by shifting place and air" (I.i.212-3) to be found in the vagrant life, but the first sense we have of the beggars themselves is a song heard from within the barn where a group of them have been accommodated on the estate:

From hunger and cold, who lives more free,
 Or who more richly clad than we?
 Our bellies are full; our flesh is warm;
 And, against pride, our rags are a charm.
 Enough is our feast, and for tomorrow
 Let rich men care; we feel no sorrow.
 (I.i.339-44)

Oldrents' daughters and their suitors, Vincent and Hilliard, also praise the wandering life:

Beggars! They are the only people can boast the benefit of a free state, in the full enjoyment of liberty, mirth and ease, having all things in common and nothing wanting of nature's whole provision within the reach of their desires.
 (II.i.2-5)

And so an argument in favour of unrestricted freedom is raised to counter Hearty's picture of life on the estate, setting the dialectic of the play in motion.

Hilliard's encomium of the beggar life conjures up a vision of a Morean utopia set amidst a pastoral arcadia. But we have seen that a true humanist eutopia depends upon the control of nature by art, which includes control of the land itself. Now while the beggars are "artful" in

some respects—in their canting language, for example, at times lovingly reproduced by Brome⁸³—they cannot be said to represent “cultivation” because of the very rootlessness which makes them vagabonds. As outcasts they no longer have a stake in the land, and it is nature which holds sway over them as we see their lives more and more as a basic struggle for survival. John Taylor, the “Water-Poet,” made a similar observation of beggar life twenty years earlier:

Thus is a Begger a strange kinde of creature,
And begg'ry is an Art that liues by nature:
For he neglect all Trades, all Occupations,
All functions, Mysteries, Artes, and Corporations.⁸⁴

Not surprisingly, then, Hilliard's view of beggardom is rapidly undermined, and this is skilfully achieved primarily through irony, but also through the ostensibly simple technique of dramatising certain aspects of the beggars' life as realistically as possible. *A Jovial Crew* asserts, as *The Antipodes* does, the value of the stage as a utopia in itself—a place where fantasies can be played out in a way that will have an effect on the real world. But the world of *A Jovial Crew* is not a fantasy; when Brome portrays the dystopianism of beggar life, he makes observations about England in a far more direct fashion than through the device of *Anti-London*. It is no longer a technique of “no-place” eventually merging with “real-place”: the one is actually an aspect of the other—beggardom was a visible and significant part of seventeenth-century society. The utopian mode of *A Jovial Crew* acts less as a distorted mirror of that society than as a microscope (a device invented only forty years earlier) directed at it. By delineating in almost documentary detail scenes from contemporary rural life, the play directs its audience towards a clear resolution of the dialectic between liberty and responsibility.

The signs as to which way this resolution will go occur early in the play. The band of beggars singing merrily of their free comforts are only on the estate because of Oldrents' generosity, and they are dependent upon the charity of Springlove and Randall who distribute Oldrents' wealth.⁸⁵ Next, his daughters and their lovers who speak rapturously of the beggar life have had no experience of its benefits or of its dangers and discomforts. More important still, Springlove, the scion of beggardom, is not unequivocal about his desire to “go walkabout”:

Oh how I am confounded!

Dear sir, retort me naked to the world
 Rather than lay those burdens on me which
 Will stifle me. I must abroad or perish.

(I.i.220-3)

This is more a cry of despair than a positive affirmation of the joys of vagrancy, and his claim,

Nor but by death can this predominant sway
 Of nature be extinguish'd in me

(242-3)

seems to support Oldrents' assertion that the young man suffers from a "disease of nature" (156).

Springlove's soul-searching struggle between liberty and responsibility is complicated by the fact that he has been imbued, as Oldrents' ward, with "the strengths of art and discipline" (245) which education endows. His mental struggle is nothing less than a dramatisation of the humanist debate over cultivation versus untamed nature, and the eloquent appeal Oldrents makes for the benefits of his estate over those of the wandering life is couched in the same sorts of agricultural images which are metonyms for the eutopia as a construct of "art and discipline":

Are not my walks and greens as delectable
 As the highways and commons? Are the shades
 Of sycamore and bowers of eglantine
 Less pleasing than of bramble or thorn hedges?
 Or of my groves and thickets, than wild woods?
 Are not my fountain waters fresher than
 The troubled streams, where every beast does drink?

(192-8)

So uncertain are the times, however, that Oldrents himself becomes unconvinced by his own arguments, and abandons his household duties for the lure of the vagabond life:

What is an estate
 Of wealth and power, balanc'd with their freedom,
 But a mere load of outward compliment,
 When they enjoy the fruits of rich content?
 Our dross but weighs us down into despair,
 While their sublimed spirits dance i'th'air.

(II.ii.185-90)

It is left to Springlove, the eventual wellspring of regeneration in this comedy, to provide the key to this dilemma: "Sir, 'tis duty" (I.i.107) are his first words on stage, and his closing couplet to act I encapsulates both the moral thrust behind the dilemma and the ironical approach, the spirit of *lusus*, employed by Brome in dramatising it:

They dream of happiness that live in state,
 But they enjoy it that obey their fate.

(494-5)

It takes just one night in the open to dissipate much of the idealism of the genteel young escapees: “Is this the life that we admir’d in others, with envy at their happiness?” (III.i.1-2) cries Vincent, and as the girls emerge “crupper-cramp’d” and “bumfiddled” from their “hard lodging” (74), act III shows what it means to be given the “fulness of liberty” (14-15), as Springlove describes it. This abundance of freedom is itself an illusion, for the escapees find that even begging entails responsibilities and hard work. They must learn to “live by nature” in order to beg enough to live on; they must curb their pride and accept the jeers and even blows of the gentry from whom they beg; and when the worst comes to the worst, they learn that the ideal of community fares no better amongst beggars than it does in the world of politics and commerce:

But if hedges or hen roosts could speak, you might be found sharers in pillage, I believe[,]

declares a gentleman traveller, feeling that the “sturdy rogue,” Springlove, will share his alms with the “counterfeit villain,” Vincent. Springlove’s reply reveals the true worth of beggarly brotherhood when faced with the demands of nature:

Never saw him before, bless you, good master, in all my life. [*To Vincent.*] Beg for yourself. Your credit’s gone else. [*To Gentlemen.*] Good hea’en to bliss and prosper ye.

(172-6)

Not only does begging come down to survival of the fittest, but beggar girls are also likely prey to any young gentleman who seeks the pleasures of “beggar-niggling” without the responsibilities of “keeping of children for them,” as Justice Clack’s rakish son, Oliver, explains (262). The very denouement of the plot depends, we discover, upon the fact that Oldrents himself has been guilty of just such a dalliance.⁸⁶

The truth of what it is to be “Current and vagrant—Stockant, whippant beggars” (II.i.168) can be arrived at only through some kind of experience—which fortunately for the audience is of the vicarious kind associated with “participating” in a stage-play. As Hilliard says:

—If I could but once ha’ dreamt in all my former nights that such an affliction could have been found among beggars, sure I should never have travel’d to the proof on’t.
(III.i.24-7)

His and his friends’ “birthnight into a new world” (34) has involved an awareness that, “beggars’ freedom is that of the politically unfree, the disenfranchised, who are subject to whatever ‘liberties’ the enfranchised . . . may freely take with them and against which they

have no redress” (Butler 274). This is the lesson that the sharply realistic depiction of the beggar utopia imparts in act III. At the same time, the quality of the “fulness of liberty” has been held up for close scrutiny, the “testing an abstraction . . . against its practical realization” which Butler says is “a fundamental dynamic in *A Jovial Crew*” (274). “Liberty” is given another context by Springlove in a statement full of bravura, but with an ominous ring, similar to the way in which “hospitality” had been made to sound so negative in act II:

We must, therefore, leap hedge and ditch now; through the briers and mires, till we
'scape out of this liberty to our next rendezvous, where we shall meet the crew, and
then, hay toss and laugh all night.

(III.i.419-22)

If this is the best that liberty on the road can offer—a thing in itself to be escaped from constantly—then perhaps we need to look elsewhere for a more satisfactory construct of the concept.

Catherine Shaw observes that the “generic expectancy” of the usual “triumphs of the green world over the waste land,” with which pastoral romance is associated, “is undercut by intruding a harsh reality into the merry beggars’ world.”⁸⁷ This is particularly evident in the representation of the beggars who shelter on the estate. Oldrents, however, is not in a receptive enough state of mind to appreciate the reality of what is about to unfold. Chiding Hearty that “Forc’d mirth . . . is not good” (II.ii.32), he nevertheless determines not to be sad at the news of his daughters’ flight. Hoping to “purge my house of stupid melancholy” (119), he whimsically resolves to cancel his tenants’ rents for a year and to double his servants’ wages, actions neither wise nor responsible if the estate is to prosper in future, and prompting Hearty to throw back at Oldrents the doubts about “forc’d mirth”: “But this is overdone. I do not like it” (115). The beggars are revealed after a “*confused noise within of laughing and singing, and one crying out*” (s.d. below line 120). Oldrents mistakes this for merriment, but it proves to be the beggars’ attempt to mask the pangs of a “doxy” in childbirth—another example of “forc’d mirth” to be wary of and one which further highlights their subservience to harsh nature. The curtain is then literally lifted on the beggar crew: “*Randall opens the scene. The Beggars discovered at their feast.*” They begin with a song, but only after “*they have scrambled awhile at their victuals*” (s.d. below line 166). Our introduction to these representatives of the beggar utopia immediately undermines Oldrents’ lyrical comparison of them as “sublimed spirits” as against the “dross” of his own condition. The hedge-priest, or

Patrico, proves in this scene to be little more than an old pander as he offers Oldrents and Hearty the services of a “doxy, or a dell” (273), while his wife, the “Autem-Mort” in canting language, is an ugly and undignified old drunkard. Oldrents’ own nature briefly rebels at these sights and sounds, but he pushes this (literal) gut reaction aside: “A sudden qualm overchills my stomach, but ’twill away” (279). His gift of money reinforces the Patrico’s praise of his generosity and happy fortune, yet he still cannot see that it is his world that holds the promise of eutopia, not that of the beggars. It is only in act IV, when the two worlds are brought head-to-head, that this realisation becomes clear to both characters and audience.

Act IV brings the dialectic between the two “no-places” to a climax through a curious but most effective means. In each of the scenes making up the act it is in the depiction of the aged and decayed characters that the quality of each utopia as a viable social institution, and the promise each holds for the future, may be gauged. This method might seem at first to run counter to the usual comic drive of regeneration, associated as it is with fruitfulness and hence youth, but it actually serves as a survey of the past: of the traditions and foundations upon which each “institution” is based; and as a projection into the future: of what lies in store for those who choose either the responsibilities of “housekeeping” or the liberty of the beggar’s life. Once again, Brome’s skill at hitting upon a vital and appropriate dramatic metaphor is evident as he engages the utopian mode, with its concerns for “there and then,” without leaving the “here and now.”

In IV.i the eutopianism of the household is eulogised in the descriptions given by the old servants of life on the estate. One by one the usher, the butler, the cook and the chaplain rattle off their praises like a litany, the potential sentimentality and mawkishness of which is comically countered by the old men’s repeated use of the “tag-line”—a technique beloved by Brome—that their master will be home soon, for “he’s no snail!” Randall tells how Oldrents is “a great housekeeper; and pray’d for by all the poor in the country” (IV.i.64-5), and that the estate has been in his “master’s and his ancestor’s . . . name above these three hundred years” (45-6). This latter assertion is thrown into some doubt later on by the revelation that a part, at least, of the land once belonged to a certain “Wrought-on, / Whom [Oldrents’] grandfather craftily wrought out / Of his estate” (V.i.411-13), but the question of the land’s pedigree seems to have little bearing on the present condition of the estate. Even More’s Utopia first

had to be conquered by “kyng Vtopus, whose name as conquerour the island beereth,” and whose dominion “brought the rude and wild people to that excellent perfection . . . wherein they now go beyond al the people of the world” (*Utopia* 49). At issue are not claims to an ancient lineage, but the use one makes of the privileges and responsibilities which fate bestows in order to foster a eutopia. Similar doubts may be cast on the origins of Lord Letoy in *The Antipodes*,⁸⁸ but that does not make him any less of a “great housekeeper” himself. Springlove’s statement that happiness is enjoyed by those “that obey their fate” begins to take on a more specific definition: that content resides in good government, and not necessarily as a result of privileges rooted in antiquated feudal dues of the kind taking their toll of tenant-farmers under the Stuarts.

Randall speaks of life on the estate in glowing terms:

we, his servants, live as merrily under him, and do all thrive. I myself was but a silly lad when I came first. . . . And I have now, without boast, forty pound in my purse, and am the youngest of half a score in the house[.]

(IV.i.96-101)

Oldrents’ servants have not only prosperity but also, more importantly at a time when others’ tenants were being turned out onto the roads, security of position in their old age. The usher talks of having held his job “these twenty years,” and of having “got well by my place for using strangers respectfully” (147-8). The butler pushes the eutopian imagery even further, calling the estate “as fortunate a house for servants as ever was built upon fairy ground,” basing his judgement on “four and forty years” of service (168-71). His comments reinforce the Edenic nature of a household that runs on mutual love and duty, and the cook’s description of it as “the ancientest house, and the best for housekeeping in this county or the next” (203-4), gives the estate a quasi-legendary status. When Oldrents returns from his jaunt he brings with him a group of “catchers” who are “all graybeards.” Their song,

A round, a round, a round, boys, a round.
Let mirth fly aloft, and sorrow be drown’d.
Old sack, and old songs, and a merry old crew,
Can charm away cares when the ground looks blue[.]⁸⁹

(224-7)

while positing a simplistic cure of melancholy based on Oldrents’ “forc’d mirth,” nevertheless sets up an alternative “jovial crew” to that of the beggars—one made up of those who have reached a contented old age through not having been cast adrift from society by the forces of unbridled profit and power. Hospitality, love, devotion to duty and a secure future are already

present in Oldrents' estate; but the younger characters, the force for regeneration, have not yet realised this.

In IV.ii Brome "antipodises" the regenerative drive of comedy even further by celebrating the wedding of an ancient beggar couple. The beggar-poet's "Epithalamium" underlines the sterility of the match:

Yet when she shall be seven years wed,
 She shall be bold to say,
 She has as much her maidenhead,
 As on her wedding day.

(IV.ii.72-5)

The decrepitude of the bride and groom is frequently alluded to: "For they were old, no earth more cold" (149); "blind and lame as they are" (158); and so on. Although the old couple speak of being "lustier than . . . thirty years ago" (164), the wedding night does not hold much promise: "Sure they will kill one another," says Hilliard; "Each with a fear the t'other will live longest," replies the Poet (167-8). Such images are not calculated to engender much faith in a future dependent upon this kind of spent regenerative force.

With this scene comes the knowledge that an escape into the beggar-world results not in the fulfilment of dreams and fantasies, but an awareness of what it is to be an outcast and to have to fend for oneself. This is borne out in the subplot of Justice Clack's niece Amie, who elopes with her uncle's clerk, Martin. Confrontation with the begging lovers in III.i reveals Martin to be an "ingrateful miser" (500), and by IV.ii, Amie openly regrets her elopement. She calls Martin "clownish" both in "mind" and "habit" (19), who "Forc'd me into a way of misery / To take relief from beggars" (21-2). Worse, she claims, is the fact that he would have married her "under a hedge as the old couple were today, without book or ring" (23-4). Amie sees a future with Martin as sterile as the old beggars' marriage, and so the conventional greenwood escapist romance, for the moment, is also made to stand on its head.

The beggar utopia comes in for more of a beating in Amie's description of the wedding feast:

the bride bridled it and the groom saddled it! There was the sport, in her mumping and his champing, the crew scrambling, and ourselves trembling; then the confusion of noises in talking, laughing, scolding, singing, howling; with their actions of snatching, scratching, tousing and lousing themselves, and one another[.]

(78-83)

The profusion of animal movements and sounds is reminiscent of the undignified encounter

between Oldrents and the beggars in II.ii, and when, immediately following this unflattering portrayal, Vincent and Hilliard laud the beggar life in the following terms:

With them there is no grievance or perplexity;
No fear of war, or state disturbances.
No alteration in a commonwealth,
Or innovation, shakes a thought of theirs[,]

(90-3)

the feeling is that while it is true that animals do not have to experience these things, it is humanity's lot to share in and triumph over the "alterations" and "state disturbances" with which it is faced at various times such as the 1640s; we cannot run away from them and hope they will disappear.⁹⁰ As this detailed dramatisation of the beggar world unfolds, there is a corresponding dissociation between it and reality. Not only are its inhabitants divorced from "civilised" society (the faithful reproduction of their canting language being one means of actually heightening their alien quality), but their world is "no-place" from which one can contribute to the regenerative process. Those who run away to beggarland can hope only to wither up and die, for beggar society itself is a sterile dead-end, lending nothing positive to the future of humanity. If everyone sought refuge there, the whole world would revert to the "rude and wild people" which King Utopus first encountered, and end up like the Yahoos described in a later, much less optimistic utopian work.

Nevertheless, there is another, more positive side to this depiction of the beggar utopia, which serves the standard dramatic function of mirroring the audience's world in the interests of instruction and reform. Butler notes that in act IV, in a process that began in act I with the introduction of various character types, "the beggars appear unrealistically, no longer speaking in cant language, and rather themselves social commentators than the object of social comment" (Butler 273). This is achieved through Brome's creation of a world which "repeats Caroline society at every point, with its own estates of lawyers, soldiers, poets, courtiers and clergy, and it has a beggar-king too, Springlove." In so doing, "Brome imitates the device used in the earlier woodland-commonwealth plays of ordering them into an alternative kingdom. . . , a little realm within the greater country".(273).

While this is certainly true of the displaced courts in *As You Like It* and *The Queen and Concubine*, it is doubtful whether in any other play (Butler does not give the titles of any of the "earlier woodland-commonwealth plays" of which he was thinking) are the characters

themselves so conscious of their own representative quality as they are in *A Jovial Crew*. Here, the beggar-poet tries to organise a masque at the wedding that will present “Utopia, / With all her branches and consistencies” (IV.ii.179-80). The poet’s description of the action, with its ominous note of prophecy for pre-Civil War England, has often been quoted and commented upon,⁹¹ but it is too significant to be omitted here:

I would have the country, the city, and the court, be at great variance for superiority. Then would I have Divinity and Law stretch their wide throats to appease and reconcile them; then would I have the soldier cudgel them all together and overtop them all. Stay, yet I want another person.

HILLIARD

What must he be?

POET

A beggar.

VINCENT

Here’s enough of us, I think. What must the beggar do?

POET

He must at last overcome the soldier, and bring them all to Beggars’ Hall.

(207-17)

Not only is this a part of what Butler calls “a direct, embedded comment on the dangers that face the nation” (Butler 277), but it is an affirmation yet again of the dystopianism of the beggar world, and from the beggars’ spokesman’s own lips. If civil strife and the breakdown of society have led to Beggars’ Hall, then Beggars’ Hall cannot by definition be an Eden, but that to which one has been cast out.⁹² The equation of the state to which the characters in *A Jovial Crew* have escaped with chaos and bloodshed is the strongest statement of all about the evil of abandoning duty and social ties for an illusory promise of freedom and absolute liberty.

As a part of the didactic function of the play, the beggar-poet’s proposed masque demonstrates the consequences of allowing social disharmony to develop into civil strife. The dystopian image of the beggar world is projected out into the nation at large. Its counterpart is the image of the nation as an extension of the well-run estate, based on love, duty and mutual responsibility. To maintain these attributes is to ensure a harmony upon which future generations may grow and prosper. To ignore them will be to turn the nation into a literal no-place—a place of nothingness with no worthwhile future. As Butler bluntly states, “it is no use fighting for England if England is destroyed in the process,” and escape is not the solution either, for “we are all responsible for the good of the country and the probity of the actions done in its name” (Butler 279). To put it another way, the potential for the ideal utopia exists within the individual; eutopia is a state, but not a place to which you can run. Brome

dramatises this with clever irony; in the process of “voic[ing] openly the possibility of a full-scale social division that was real and not merely fictional” (Butler 279), he has actually “materialised” the utopian metaphor by placing his utopias both on a map of the real world and rooted in real experience, so that they exist on the island of Great Britain and in the hearts and minds of its inhabitants. In order for this conflict of alternatives to be resolved, it remains for the beggar world to fade away, for the central characters to “obey their fate,” and for the utopia of the Oldrents estate to assert itself as at least one version of an ideal world.

There is a sense that the failure of the beggar crew to perform the poet Scribble’s masque of Utopia is an implied statement on the potency of the utopian mode as a tool for social criticism and analysis, and one best left to more solemn or reflective media than a publicly performed comic play. It is as if Brome suddenly pulls himself back into the role of comic playwright, although he did warn his audience that mirth is “a new / And forc’d thing in these sad and tragic days” (Prologue 2-3). Like Oldrents, he must force himself out of the tendency to wallow in melancholy at the state of things, or to rail against folly and injustice as his old master, Jonson, would have done thirty or forty years before, and instead to see the comic drive through to its festive and celebratory conclusion. The energy with which the play shapes the utopian mode to the conditions of the times and within a comic framework reflects a continued faith in the place of the theatre in society, and belies Kaufmann’s statement that *Jovial Crew* is the product of a “spent” and “disenchanted” playwright (Kaufmann 169).

To achieve the comic/romantic resolution, the beggars and their world must first pass from view. The play’s depiction of the harsh reality of their existence throws into serious doubt Crowther’s claim that a “genuine admiration for the free life of the beggars” informs the play (Crowther 134). Set in the balance against that of the Oldrents estate, the beggar utopia is found to be wanting, to say the least, and the mirror which it holds up to the mainstream of society is too harsh in its detail and holds too little promise for the future. So the jovial crew—the irony of that title being now glaringly obvious—must disappear, but not before Brome paints one more exquisite word-picture that turns the whole landscape into a bustling throng of vagabonds, all trying to make yet another escape. Justice Clack’s friend Sentwell returns with a description of how he and his men recovered Amie and went after the beggars:

we have taken with her such beggars, such rogues, such vagabonds, and such hedge-birds (since you call’em so) as you never knew, or heard of, though now the countries

swarm with'em under every hedge, as if an innumerable army of'em were lately disbanded without pay. Hedge-birds, said you? Hedge-ladybirds, hedge-cavaliers, hedge-soldier, hedge-lawyer, hedge-fiddlers, hedge-poet, hedge-players, and a hedge-priest among'em. Such we have taken for the principals. But to see how the multitude 'scap'd us was more sport than pity. How, upon a watchword given, they in the instant vanish'd by more several ways than there were legs among'em; how the cripples leap'd over pales and hedges; how the blind found their way through lakes and ditches; how a doxy flew with two children at her back, and two more, perhaps, in her belly[.]

(V.i.72-86)

This is nothing less than the beggar-poet's vision of the whole nation being brought "all to Beggars' Hall" come to life. The prophecy of England as a beggars' no-place has come dangerously close to fulfilment in this description of a seething, ragged mass running from one misfortune to another, and as a part of the comic resolution it will not do. It has more in common with the apocalyptic visions of Bosch and Brueghel than with the comic greenworlds of English drama; consequently, those beggars who do remain in act V must be put to more joyful purposes.

The eutopianism of Oldrents' household is further asserted before the play's end by means of contrast with characters from "respectable" society as well as with the beggars. The array of rogues, gulls, niggards and fools represented by Oliver, Martin, Tallboy, Clack, and even the young lovers themselves, only serves to highlight the Oldrents estate as the standard by which the rest of society should be judged, as well as by which it should judge itself. His is the Eden to which, by the end of act IV, the wayward young people of the play long to return. As Vincent says, "The ladies and we are agreed now to draw stakes, and play this lousy game no further" (IV.ii.253-4). Even Springlove admits that "I, myself, begin to find this no course for a gentleman" (261-2). The "school of hard knocks" has taught the others some sense, but Springlove finds his way back through the transforming power of love. Finding his Amie ('beloved') becomes a metaphor for the realisation that it is love and mutual devotion upon which eutopia is based; it is not something that is found "out there," and the successful search leads one back to the self and the potential that exists in the nobler aspects of human nature.

Brome's final touch is to tie in this idea of education with the instructional function of the drama, at the same time drawing all the "estates" of the play's characters into one unified, harmonious group. The beggars become metamorphosed into "poor strolls" (V.i.119) who perform a play not about the evils besetting the nation, but about Oldrents' own situation

regarding the original prophecy and the flight of his daughters and Springlove, called *The Merry Beggars*. This play-within-the-play acts upon Oldrents in the same manner as Letoy's does upon Peregrine in *The Antipodes*. Oldrents' eyes are opened to his foolish dereliction of duty to the household, to the realisation that the prophecy of his daughters' beggards is absolved through the power of playacting itself, and to an awareness of his own fortunate position. He then discovers, through the Patrico, that Springlove is actually his own son. This traditional comic revelation does more than just give Oldrents a male heir—with the promise of continuing the family name—because it also binds his family by blood to the beggars, for it was with a gentlewoman-turned-beggar (a granddaughter of the Wrought-on whose land Oldrents now owns) that he conceived Springlove. Springlove, the “beggarking,” is “reborn” and “redefined” as the “crown-prince” of the estate through this revelation.⁹³ His return is a newer and more immediately promising version—in what it represents for the whole of English society—of Peregrine's cure in *The Antipodes* and Prince Gonzago's revival in *The Queen and Concubine*. With the re-integration of Springlove into the household from the beggar life, Oldrents at last can state confidently:

Here are no beggars. . . , no rogues, nor players: but a select company, to fill this house with mirth.

(469-71)

His estate is now identified with all the “estates” of England, and both theatrical company and audience are united in this vision of a eutopia ready to hand. The players have won “their purgation” (253) by presenting the vision on stage; it is up to the audience, finally, to make it a reality throughout the country, the city, and the court.

Part II
Melancholy

II.1 Love and Fictions (1): The Three Faces of Constance

IN BROME'S *THE NORTHERN LASS*, the "witty Serving-man" Pate, dressed "*in a Doctor's Habit*," wryly dismisses the efforts of all writers of scholarly treatises on melancholy:

To discourse a tedious Lecture unto you, Ladie, in speaking Philosophicallie of the disease of melanchollie, were to shew more learning than discretion. There are large Volumes of it in Print, to very slender purpose.

(V.i; Pearson edn. 3.84)

The learned doctor, Robert Burton, disguised as Democritus Junior, heir to the laughing philosopher, is similarly dismissive of his life's work: "I have read many books, but to little purpose" (*The Anatomy of Melancholy* 1.17-8), he says, apologising for the *Anatomy* as "this playing labour" (1.20), "this confused lump" (31), a "cento" which he has "laboriously collected . . . out of divers writers" (25).

The *Anatomy's* serio-comic treatment of its subject matter places it firmly within the Renaissance literary tradition of *joco-serium* as promoted by Erasmus and More. In both method and content, it is a vast storehouse of ideas and inspiration for the comic dramatist. Burton builds up a world of fiction and self-conscious artifice in order to come to terms with and, perhaps along the way, to explain the causes, symptoms and cures of melancholy, which are themselves the products of fictions and artifice. The persona of Democritus Junior retells tales from literature, history and mythology, eating up time that both he and the reader might otherwise spend indulging in some form of melancholy, and providing a few stratagems for keeping the disease at bay at other times.¹ Reading the *Anatomy*, with its huge cast of characters playing out a multitude of parts and scenes and with a narrator who also takes on various guises and roles, is like going to the theatre and watching a comic play of epic proportions. This and the following chapters of Part II will show how some of Brome's plays give Burton's scenes and characters a "reality" on the Stuart stage, at a time when the melancholic was not only a well-established dramatic type, but melancholy itself was developing as a trope, that is, as a method of poetic engagement in contemporary social and political issues.

In common with Burton and the comic *poneros*, the melancholic also assumes a role, playing out a fiction which begins to supplant reality. Whether consciously adopting the part

of the Italianate malcontent, with arms folded and hat brim pulled down in contempt at the world's follies, or driven to wandering through the woods, distractedly picking flowers and singing songs of unrequited love, the melancholic fits a recognisable type which points at once to the cause of the affliction, while at the same time exhibiting a set of symptoms related to that cause. Yet disguise—the taking on of a supplanting role—is the “most potent device . . . in love comedy,”² and in Brome's plays it is one of the principal means by which his stricken characters are cured. In *The Northern Lass*, Pate, disguised as a doctor, is able to diagnose successfully the condition of Constance, the eponymous heroine, as melancholy, and its cause “to be love, which she hath so greedilie taken in, that it hath overwhelm'd her spirits, and turn'd the faculties of all her senses into a rude confusion” (V.i; 3.84). Succinctly, he prescribes thus:

'Tis done in three words. The partie that she loves, must be the Doctor, the Medicine,
and the cure.

(84)

So a servant, disguised as a doctor of physic, prescribes a cure which uses no physic. A parallel may be found in John Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy* (written at about the same time as Brome's play and for the same company, the King's Men), which draws heavily upon *The Anatomy of Melancholy* for details of the causes and symptoms of the disease.³ Corax, the physician in the play, recognises that melancholy is not “indisposition / Of body, but the mind's disease” (*LM* III.i.109-10), and presents a “Masque of Melancholy” to initiate the cure of the lovelorn Prince Palador. Later, in Brome's *The Antipodes*, Dr Hughball—described as one who “sends few recipes to th'apothecaries” (Haaker edn. I.i.23), preferring instead to use “medicine of the mind” (24)—arranges a play-within-the-play which will cure Peregrine of his travel fixation.

Neither Corax nor Hughball are the usual Jonsonian “quacksalvers”; their methods reflect an awareness that in order to treat the disease melancholy, one must deal with the mind and “spirit” of the patient rather than the body. In speaking of *The Lover's Melancholy*, Hill says that “Burton and Ford are close in the combination of divine and physician, for the therapeutic of the play operates within a clear ethical and Providential framework” (intro. 7). Another way of putting this might be to say that the doctor acts as a minister for a kind of spiritual metamorphosis within the melancholy character. It is a case of the physician playing the role

of the divine, a variation of what Burton himself set out to do. Burton drops his mask of Democritus Junior for a while in the Preface to explain, lest “any physician in the meantime shall . . . find himself grieved that I have intruded into his profession” (1.36), why a minister of the Church should spend his time writing about a disease. His conclusion is reasonable:

It is a disease of the soul on which I am to treat, and as much appertaining to a divine as to a physician, and who knows not what an agreement there is betwixt these two professions? A good divine either is or ought to be a good physician, a spiritual physician at least,

(1.37)

which brings us back to Oliver Pate, the disguised servant in *The Northern Lass*. In the final scene of the play, it is revealed that not only has he pretended to be a physician in order to facilitate the coming together of Constance and Luckless, but it was also Pate who was the “parson” who performed the marriage service for Luckless and Mistress Fitchow:

Fit. . . . But is not he a lawful Minister? I would know that.

Pa. To clear that doubt, there lies my *Order of Priesthood*.

Omnes. Who, Oliver! — *Throws off his Disguize.*

Pa. Even he, the Parson *Nochurch*[.]

(V.viii; 3.106)

With the marriage unlawful, there is no longer a barrier to the union of Constance and Luckless, and of Tridewell and Fitchow, and so the comic resolution is happily reached. In clear dramatic terms, Brome has demonstrated Burton’s own dictum:

A divine in this compound mixed malady [that is, melancholy, the “common infirmity of body and soul”] can do little alone, a physician in some kinds of melancholy much less, both make an absolute cure.⁴

(AM 1.37)

Pate has played the roles of doctor and divine as part of an elaborate masque aimed at banishing melancholy. Throwing off his disguises at the end of the play is the culmination of the “self-consuming” process which Stanley Fish explains is characteristic of “the dialectician’s art” (Fish 3-4). Drama, and especially comedy with its disguises and intrigues, seems particularly well suited to be seen in this way: disguises are assumed and plots are laid; misers and fools are gulled and lovers are united; and finally, having served their purpose, disguises are dropped and plot complications are sorted out, and the play ends. When melancholy has gone, the action of the play ceases; the playwright himself has assumed the role of the physician whose cure employs no physic, merely the time and the judgement which the audience is willing to give in watching the play. “Thou’rt th’age’s doctor now,” said Alexander Brome of his namesake at the end of the latter’s career,⁵ but this was a task which

Richard Brome had set for himself from the outset. The cure may involve some drastic measures, for which comedy is well suited: the “good physician”—who may take the form of “philosopher, minister, teacher, or even deity” (and to which we must add “playwright”)—“tells his patients what they *don't* want to hear in the hope that by forcing them to see themselves clearly, they may be moved to change the selves they see” (Fish 3). The stripping away of identity is a part of this process; the familiar and the expected are replaced by the strange and unforeseen, and reliance upon prejudices must give way to the formulation of fresh judgements. Pate is not a parson, and so Fitchow’s marriage is unlawful; Holdup is not the northern lass, and so Widgine finds himself betrothed to a prostitute. These are not shattering pieces of social criticism, however, and do not present a great challenge to the opinions held by an audience. One might almost say that in such a relatively conventional comedy of love intrigue the dialectic is “centripetal,” in that it works inwards from the bounds of the fictive world of the play to create a set of characters heading towards an idealised mode of behaviour based on sound judgement. In Brome’s more socially challenging comedies, the dialectic becomes “centrifugal,” spilling out into the audience and demanding of them more than mere “spectatorship.”⁶ Nevertheless, there are aspects of the structure of *The Northern Lass* which raise it above Kaufmann’s dismissal of it as a “slight and immature” effort of Brome’s formative playwriting years (Kaufmann 179). This early play already shares to a large extent the Burtonian preoccupation with identity and role-playing—and how these may form the basis of a dialectic for examining the causes, symptoms and cures of melancholy—that was to remain evident in Brome’s work to the end of his career.

The Northern Lass presents its audience with a multi-faceted mirror on Constance’s melancholy in a manner both sophisticated and in keeping with the complexity of Burton’s treatment of the subject. With justification, critics have pointed out that her melancholy sweetness derives somewhat from the “pathetic maidens of Dekker,” and that the manifestations of her illness have more than a little of Ophelia in them, and even more of the Jailer’s Daughter from *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.⁷ Once she becomes convinced that Sir Philip Luckless does not love her and intends to marry another, Constance exhibits all the classic symptoms of love melancholy to be found in earlier plays and love dialogues. Both she and the Jailer’s Daughter blame their unrequited loves on the lowliness of their own

station compared to that of the beloved:

Why should I love this gentleman? 'Tis odds
 He never will affect me; I am base,
 My father the mean keeper of his prison,
 And he a prince. To marry him is hopeless;
 To be his whore is witless[.]

(*TNK* II.iii.1-5)⁸

bemoans the Jailer's Daughter, while Constance sings:

Nor Love, nor Fate dare I accuse,
 For that my Love did me refuse;
 But oh mine own unworthiness,
 That durst presume so mickle bliss.
 It was too much for me to love
 A Man, so like the gods above[.]

(*NL* II.vi; 3.41)

True to the patterns of the disease which had been exploited by earlier dramatists, Constance's melancholy develops into a kind of fitful reverie in which she sings expressions of her sexual frustration. Her song,

I wo' not go to't, nor I mun not go to't,
 For love, nor yet for fee,
 For I am a Maid, and will be a Maid,
 And a good one till I dye.
 Yet mine intent, I could repent, for ane mans company[.]⁹

(*III*.ii; 3.59)

may be compared with Ophelia's ballad,

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
 All in the morning betime,
 And I a maid at your window,
 To be your Valentine.
 Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
 And dupp'd the chamber-door,
 Let in the maid, that out a maid
 Never departed more.

(*Ham* IV.v.46-53)

Constance, dealt with in isolation, represents a fairly standard portrayal of the "lovesick maid" (which was, of course, the title of Brome's first successful play). However, the appearance of the much-influenced yet very influential *Anatomy of Melancholy* in 1621, standing as it were as a preface to Brome's career, permits a substantial re-reading of conventional melancholy characters such as Constance.

Burton devotes much of the Third Partition of the *Anatomy* to love melancholy. Characteristically, he deals with the subject in the form of a *summa*, drawing upon all the literary, historical and mythological references that come to his bibliophilic's mind. By

“merely reading,” and “by . . . observation and others’ relation” (*AM* 3.184), he is able to sum up all the Ophelias and Jailer’s Daughters that have ever been, real or imaginary:

She looks out the window to see whether he come. . . . She is ill at ease, and sick till she see him again, peevish in the meantime, discontent, heavy, sad; and why comes he not? where is he? why breaks he promise? why tarries he so long? sure he is not well; sure he hath some mischance; sure he forgets himself and me; with infinite such.

(3.140)

Ruth A. Fox has shown how Burton uses poetic fiction to “liberate” his treatise: “fiction is given the shape of ‘Truth’ (and stories do tell truths), while the scientific form is allowed to reach out and envelop truths about melancholy disguised as fable. Burton thus achieves science liberated, or art.”¹⁰ His method is to apply—through anecdote—as well as to explain—by direct statement—the causal and symptomatic nature of art, or more narrowly, to demonstrate that “Love-melancholy is both the subject matter of poetry and poetry’s inspiration” (Fox 152). As a result, “as fictions make men [and women] love, so men [and women] in love make fictions” (156), and, more pertinently in this discussion of dramatic art, “lovers . . . *act* like characters out of fiction; they poeticize life” (153). The lover lives in a “self-contained world” (157), so that love-play becomes a form of stage-play; but while being in love or even just playing the lover may be pleasant, it can be foolish and destructive. Burton cites many examples, and concludes: “Such acts and scenes hath this tragicomedy of love” (3.189). No playwright working within the *Anatomy*’s milieu, and out of the same humanist literary tradition, could create a character like Constance without being aware that hers was an age-old part in this tragicomedy.

The self-consciousness with which the play uses melancholy in the Burtonian style may be gauged from its containing not one, but three Constances. The actual name, Constance, is also given to another character, a whore surnamed Holdup. This device in itself is no innovation, even in terms of the names. Brome almost certainly borrowed the idea from Fletcher’s *The Chances* (1625), a comedy of intrigue set in Spain with a heroine and a courtesan both named Constantia, which in turn derives its plot from Cervantes’ *La Señora Cornelia* in *Novelas Exemplares* (1613).¹¹ But *The Northern Lass* does not really take full advantage—as a play arising wholly out of the tradition of New Comedy might—of the confusion that this name-doubling could generate. Instead, it creates a fresh set of implications about the innocent and fallen states of humanity out of a dramatisation of

conventional, “literary” love melancholy.

Constance, the northern lass, follows in a direct line from earlier star-crossed heroines, and her responses to her situation, based for the most part on innocence and ingenuousness, are not substantially different from those of her predecessors. Her experience of Sir Philip at the start of the play has been “but a kisse,” and not “the main loss” of her “Maiden-head” (II.iii; 3.26), but she has mistaken his “common Courtship” for the “assurance of a Marriage-promise” (27). Constance is innocent, but she longs for the loss of her innocence through Sir Philip; her drive is towards the fallen state of mankind generally, and her melancholy—the “mark” of the fallen state¹²—is a symptom of that drive. As Burton says:

from these melancholy dispositions, no man living is free, no Stoic, none so wise, none so happy, none so patient, so generous, so godly, so divine, that can vindicate himself; so well composed, but more or less, some time or other, he feels the smart of it. Melancholy in this sense is the character of mortality.

(1.143-4)

Constance must go through an initiation into the adult world, a world which in Christian terms is a product of the guilt brought on by original sin. Her melancholy is both her rite of passage and the sign of her participation in that world.

Constance is a conventional melancholic heroine, but she is also very much a “child” of Burton. Ophelia falls so deeply into her melancholy state that she is unable to see out of it, and plays out her role in the tragicomedy of love to the full. She becomes another of those statistics which Burton recalls with a sigh:

It is well known in every village, how many have either died for love, or voluntarily made away themselves, that I need not much labour to prove it; . . . death is the common catastrophe to such persons.

(3.187)

Ophelia’s fate lies at the tragic end of the tragicomic continuum that is love melancholy; for the Jailer’s Daughter there is a cure, but it is one based on the very fictions we create which are both the causes and symptoms of the disease. Her physician diagnoses her melancholy as “thick and profound” (TNK IV.iii.48-9), but confesses that her “perturbed mind” is something which he “cannot minister to” (58-9). His prescription, “It is falsehood she is in, which is with falsehoods to be combated” (91-2), means that it is enough for her Wooer to pretend he is her beloved Palamon for her eventually to be cured. But after the appearance of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* the question of combating falsehood with falsehoods demanded a more complex response, and the means by which *The Northern Lass* sets about meeting this

challenge lays the groundwork for the elaborate ways in which melancholy is dealt with in Brome's later plays.

Constance is aware of her condition even before the disguised Pate makes his diagnosis, and unlike her melancholy predecessors, she is able to prescribe her own cure:

Tra.[ynwell] . . . first you shall go in the Coach with me to the Doctors.
Con. I know I am not weell too. But I'le have no Doctor but Sir *Philip*.
Tra. It shall be Sir *Philip* (poor soul) all must be Sir *Philip*.
 (III.ii; 3.60)

Her governess and friends try to use the very ploy from *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, substituting the country suitor, Master Nonsense, for Sir Philip, but Constance is not so blind in her affliction to be taken in by this. *The Northern Lass* is a distinctly "Burtonian" play which does *not* cater to old-fashioned, storybook plot denouements associated with "mouldy tales" such as the Palamon story which formed the basis of the Fletcher/Shakespeare (via Chaucer) work. Constance is not fooled by the pretence of Nonsense, for to be satisfied with a substitute for Sir Philip would be to play the wanton, and would undermine the sincerity of her love. "Immoderate, inordinate love is folly" (Fox 151), and it makes sweet, innocent girls wander about the countryside singing nursery rhymes and bawdy ballads, and unable to tell a true lover from a pretender. When folly is wisdom the passions rule, and "the very best of them, if once they be overtaken with this passion, the most staid, discreet, generous and wise, otherwise able to govern themselves, in this commit many absurdities, many indecorums, unbecomming their gravity and persons" (*AM* 3.153). To pander to artificiality is to pander to the "inverted world of wisdom that is folly" (Fox 152); if the cycle of feeding love melancholy with pleasant fictions is to be broken and the malady is to be faced squarely, Constance must be united with Sir Philip, and her fictions made into fact.

Burton suggests some methods for curing love melancholy—mostly in the form of "good counsel and persuasion" (3.204)—and rejects others—"Philters, Magical and Poetical Cures"—as "unlawful means" (3.226). But his final remedy is quite straightforward: "The last refuge and surest remedy, to be put in practice in the utmost place, when no other means will take effect, is to let them go together, and enjoy one another" (3.228). As Fox observes, however, this is not a licence for "simple satisfaction" or "promiscuous anarchy"; Burton seeks to counter the artificiality of romance with the wisdom of "honest" love and charity: "The strongest cure for man the passionate animal is legality" (Fox 160). So when at last

Constance is re-united with Sir Philip, Traynwell bids them slip away in the coach provided while warning Sir Philip to look to his "Reputation": "My life and honour be her guard, and your securitie," the nobleman assures her. A dialogue between the lovers ensues:

Luc. But do you love me, *Constance*?

Con. O right weell sir.

Luc. And will you be my woman?

Con. I is sure, I'le never be mine own else.

Luc. But will you not go away with me now, if I request you?

Con. Anie whither but to Bed before we be married.

(V.ii; 3.87)

Burton, quoting Avicenna, talks of fulfilling the couple's "desires and wishes" under "the custom and form of law." It is in this manner that "nature is to be obeyed," and not by giving the passions free reign (*AM* 3.229). Constance, likewise, affirms the curative value of the legal union, so that within a context of a "fallen" world, she maintains her integrity by the transformation of innocence into the chastity of "sanctified" marriage.¹³

There is a paradox, of course, in dealing with this question of artificiality versus truth. The playwright, in assuming that an audience will forget, during "the two hours' traffic" of the stage, that they are watching scenes "play'd in jest by counterfeiting actors,"¹⁴ depends upon artifice to carry the action of his play. Disguises, deception, twists and turns in the plot and the heightened depiction of follies and vices are all part of the stock-in-trade of the comic dramatist. A similar paradox exists in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. As has been shown, Burton uses fiction to give shape to truth, and these fictive qualities in turn are the bases of the *Anatomy's* didactic and curative imperatives. In this respect Burton's treatise employs artifice in exactly the same manner as poetry, and towards the same ends, as Sidney explains:

Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word *mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture—with this end, to teach and delight.¹⁵

Artifice, then, has a positive side as well as being a "provocation to lust," and whatever other causes and symptoms of the melancholy condition which may be attributed to it. Colie says that the *Anatomy* may be seen as a *consolatio philosophiae*, but it is one that never develops an attitude of *contemptus mundi* comparable to similar such works. Instead, Burton sees the world "as a great box of simples from which to select the remedy proper to one's own kind of melancholy" (Colie 439). Artifice involves the process of selection and shaping:

For though the poet's matter, nature be,
His art doth give the fashion,

says Jonson,¹⁶ so that to cause and symptom may be added the ability of artifice to cure melancholy.

It was noted earlier that the artificiality of having two Constances is more than a means of providing for New Comedy plot entanglements. Apart from providing one such instance early in the play, when Sir Philip rejects a letter from the northern lass because he thinks it is from Constance Holdup, the coincidence is not heavily played upon at all. This name-doubling is more than just a simple plot device; it forms part of the complex relationship—in that it is the name for both a whore and a chaste maid—between artifice and “truth” in which the artist himself must become entangled in order to reshape his world. The complexity of the comic plot is an artificial means by which the simple truth of love’s power to overcome evil and regenerate the world is at last reasserted and celebrated. Comedy itself is at once whore and maid: both employer and product of the twists and turns in plot which are analogous to the world’s “commerce” (which Gonzalo would ban from his ideal commonwealth), and existing for the enjoyment of the paying audience, in the hands of the committed dramatist it ultimately stands above all the scheming, dealing and disguise as an inspiration to virtue and worthy thoughts and action.¹⁷

In act III, scene. i, Sir Philip reads another letter from the northern Constance in which she says, “*I am not your counterfeit, or unchaste Constance: But that only Constance, that truly love you*” (III.i; 3.45). This revelation puts Sir Philip himself into a state of melancholy at his rejection of her—the disease, once provoked, spreads virulently—and sets up a contrast with Constance the whore. If the northern lass is innocence seeking a place for itself in a fallen world, then Constance Holdup is a product of that fallen world seeking some kind of legitimacy through artifice. When Holdup first appears, she is being arraigned before the lustful Justice Squelch who has taken a strong fancy to her, and who sees a way of using her to help in the cure of his niece, the northern lass. The whore is to be a substitute for the country girl, and Squelch’s advice on how to play the part reveals the fine line that exists between artificiality (and its association with the lust that engenders whoring) and the melancholy state: “if you can but a little counterfeit her melanchollie, you may freely pass for her; and my access to thee, my sweet Girle, shall crown us with fulness of delight and pleasure” (IV.i; 3.68). As we shall see, later Brome plays, notably *The Court Beggar* (1640),

blur the distinction between real and counterfeit melancholy even further, with cures to match. Commending her on her performance so far, Tridewell says: “Wanton you have begun propitiously: Proceed but confidentlie, and I’le warrant thee a wealthie Husband by it, or a composition that may prove thee better purchase” (IV.iii; 3.74). Thus both Constances must seek salvation through “the custom and form of law.”

Constance Holdup would have good reason for melancholy of her own as she contemplates the “purchase” she is more likely to gain—namely, the lash¹⁸—if her part in the Tridewell plot is discovered:

It brings likewise into my consideration, the baseness of my condition; how much unpitied the punishment of a Whore is, and how suddenlie it overtakes her! my joint Conspirators are in no danger. I only run the hazard, though they are as deep in fact as myself.

(IV.iii; 3.75)

This sensitivity to the lot of the prostitute, which is at the same time unsentimental, is a good example of Brome’s “study of class relationships” which Kathleen Lynch says is both “detailed” and “impressive.”¹⁹ But more importantly, and more impressively, it represents a splendidly ironic redeployment of the “lowliness of birth” complaints of conventional melancholy heroines. The difference is that Holdup resolves not to be melancholy; it is she, of the three “Constances,” who is able to let reason prevail over any threat of the disease. When she determines, “if I scape this pull, and draw any fortune by’r, I’le change my function sure” (75), she shows that although as a whore she has had to live by artifice, her vision is not blinkered by artificiality; she can “scape” and “change” of her own volition, given the right economic circumstances. There is no romance in Holdup which fills up her life with fictions, but neither is there any charity, and although she is to be admired for her hard-headedness, her only reward at the end of the play is a hundred pounds to break off her betrothal to the gull Widgine.

The northern lass’s innocence—her “lawfulness”—is left intact because it is through the worldly Holdup that the artificiality of the plot is allowed to develop. Widgine, Fitchow’s brother, is gulled into thinking that Holdup is the northern lass, and that, by pretending to be Sir Philip—a trick which has already failed with the real heroine—he will have “wedded her, bedded her, and put her in her wits again” (IV.iv; 3.79). The Widgine/Holdup plot turns the conventional comic intrigue of *The Two Noble Kinsman* inside out and exposes its

artificiality. Widgine believes that “The loss of her Maiden-head recover’d her wits” (V.vi; 3.94), but this is a false cure of a counterfeit maiden. Widgine has become a victim of his own fantasies, and finds himself promised to a whore.²⁰ Because she does not suffer the pangs of melancholy, Constance Holdup seems to stand apart from the rest of humanity as represented in the play, and is the one “Constance” who does not marry at the end. Indeed, her acceptance of the hundred pounds is both a denial of marriage and a recognition of her own marginality. She represents a darker side of the problem of love melancholy, the side which rejects sentiment, romance and the fictions of love, but replaces them with cynicism and commerce. “Give something to virtue, love, wisdom, favour, beauty, person; be not all for money,” says Burton (*AM* 3.236-7), decrying marriages of convenience and enforced matches. Giving in to some of those things which may give rise to love melancholy is a way of ensuring “content and quietness in a commonwealth” (239), and so the process of cause, symptom and cure is made to run its course. Holdup is more than just the fallen Constance; she stands at the pole that denies seeing any worth in the melancholy condition.

The third Constance in *The Northern Lass* is actually called Widow Fitchow, although her part in the triangular representation of love melancholy, as well as a link with the name “Constance,” are established early in the play. When Tridewell visits Fitchow in act I with a view to undermining her match with his kinsman, Sir Philip, he is overwhelmed by the calm reason of her rejoinders to his attempted slanders of Sir Philip: “On what a settled Rock of Constancy / She planteth her affection?” he cries (I.vii; 3.20), and falls in love with her himself. If the northern lass is innocence affected by melancholy and the whore is a rejection of it, then Fitchow occupies an interesting place in between. A widow, she is obviously no *ingenue*, but neither is she the harridan whom Tridewell expects: “an apt match for one that knew how to govern . . . her; some Hard-bred Citizen, Crafty Lawyer, or Countrey Justice”—unfit for Sir Philip, a “tender Nurseling of the Court” (I.i; 3.1). The admirable front she presents forces him to eat his words: “Sure I was much mistaken in this woman” (I.vii; 3.18); yet there is a side to Fitchow revealed, ironically, in the scene immediately preceding Tridewell’s favourable re-evaluation of her, that loves artifice and the fictions associated with fashionable marriage.

Fitchow reads to herself a “remembrance for after Marriage” which she has drawn up for

Sir Philip, a document whose content foreshadows the “proviso” scenes to be found in Restoration comedies such as Congreve’s *The Way of the World*, with its famous contract between Millamant and Mirabell.²¹ One part of Fitchow’s demands reads as follows:

To studie and practise the art of Jealousie; To feign anger, melancholy, or sickness, to the life. These are Arts that Women must be well practis’d in, ere they can attain to wisdom.

(I.vi; 3.14)

Although Fitchow is concerned here with feigned melancholy, her reliance upon artifice is precisely what Burton would regard as both a cause and a symptom of genuine melancholy. Fitchow’s use of the word “wisdom” to describe the follies associated with the outward show of married life amongst the “upwardly mobile” set points directly to the melancholy which permeates fashionable society. As Fox explains: “The inverted world of wisdom that is folly is a fictional one where artifice is not only the cause and effect of men’s illness, but also the method used to define it” (152).

Fitchow’s attitude to marriage, and the attitude of her class generally, is not one calculated to promote the Burtonian ideal of “content and quietness in a commonwealth.” Likewise, the conclusion to her contract is a part of the “perverse wisdom which captivates the essence of its folly” (Fox 151), because she sees in marriage a never-ending game of subtle and teasing manipulation, an attitude highlighted by the sexual innuendo in which her tenet is couched:

Then does a Husband tickle the spleen of a woman, when she can anger him, to please him; chide him, to kiss him; mad him, to humble him; make him stiffe-necked, to supple him; and hard-hearted, to break him; to set him up, and take him down, and up again, and down again, when, and as often as we list.²²

(I.vi; 3.15)

Fitchow is not a melancholy character to begin with, and her constancy and forthright nature make it appear that she will not become one. However, when she professes a faith in artifice she reveals a vulnerability which will in turn make her a ready victim of artifice. Caught up in the machinations of Tridewell and his friends as they try to break up her match to Sir Philip, she becomes the shrewish harridan and the jealous melancholic which Tridewell first imagined her to be. When Sir Philip unwisely tells how he would have married Constance if he had not already been contracted to Fitchow, the latter’s reaction prompts the two servingmen to say:

Pa.[te] By this hand my Ladie’s jealous alreadie.
Ho.[wdee] Bless us; what looks are these!

(II.vi; 3.39)

Jealous melancholy will be dealt with further in relation to *The Antipodes*, but Fitchow’s

condition is an excellent example of the Burtonian theory that jealousy is the inevitable prognosis for marriage in a world governed by the passions. Fitchow aligns herself with Holdup when she proclaims the importance of the “womanly arts,” but unlike the whore, she is unable to maintain the emotional detachment necessary for their successful application, so that she ends up like the northern lass, miserable and in need of a cure. Her marriage to Sir Philip is not only invalid legally but also symbolically, for it is merely another manifestation of unresolved love melancholy.²³

A masque is performed for Sir Philip and Fitchow in which Constance sings of her love and unworthiness; it leaves Luckless upset and Fitchow peeved at his reaction. She recognises the artificiality of the devices—“These are tricks and studied fooleries to abuse me” (II.vi; 3.42)—but they are having their effect. By III.iii, as Luckless explains, “her presence shakes the house like an earthquake; the outrage of Prentices is not so terrible to a Bawd or a Cutpurse, as her voice is to me” (III.iii: 3.61). Marital bliss has vanished: “A Wife? a Witch,” cries Luckless; “A Husband? a Hangman,” replies Fitchow (62). Her jealousy will not permit her to seek a divorce, for that would leave Luckless free to marry Constance, yet divorce is the logical solution for her unhappiness. Thus the conventional cure for love melancholy has been reversed, as marriage itself, rather than the longing for marriage, becomes a hell-on-earth: “So long as we are woers, may kiss and coll at our pleasure, nothing is so sweet, we are in heaven as we think; but when we are once tied, and have lost our liberty, marriage is an hell,” says Burton (*AM* 3.218), speaking of that very possibility. Fitchow’s perversity of will means that the cure must be forced on her from without, just as Constance must be cured through outside agencies. Consistent with Fitchow’s condition, these cures involve inversions of conventional wisdom.

Dancing is described in the *Anatomy* as an exercise useful for keeping melancholy at bay (2.84), and as an allurement to love (3.107 and 117-21). In *The Northern Lass* a dance is used for precisely the opposite effect. As Tridewell and his friends dance around Fitchow, excluding her from their circle and baiting her with a song about marrying a “scold,” she is driven to a state of “adust” melancholy—the condition where the humours are heated, supposedly, giving rise to “more violent passions and furies” (*AM* 1.399)—in which she “*Flies upon all*”:

O scorn upon scorn, torment upon torment.
 Let me rather be buried alive, than bear this.
She gets loose.
 Slaves, Rascals, get ye all out of my doors[.]

(III.iii; 3.65)

Comforted by Tridewell, she complains of having “fallen into the pit of Bondage, and will take any course for my Redemption” (65); she agrees to seek a divorce from Luckless, and promises herself to Tridewell. Her diagnosis that “all my wilfulness . . . shall die in the end of this business” (IV.ii; 3.73), displays the awareness of the disease that is characteristic of Brome’s depiction of melancholics, but who nevertheless are unable to effect a cure on their own. The dance scene actually does lead to the disease’s banishment and acts as an allurement to Tridewell’s love, but it does so under Brome’s comic terms, not Burton’s pseudo-medical ones.

The Northern Lass reveals an awareness of the dramatic potential of the paradoxes to be found in the *Anatomy*, which is itself a product—both in its content and, according to its author, in its mode of composition—of the causes and symptoms of a disease which it proposes to help cure. The sophisticated triple character structure of the “three Constances,” for example, belies the accusation that Brome’s play is an immature work, while revealing that even a popular comedy may be the product of the same enlightened critique of the trope of melancholy that informs Burton’s great treatise.

II.2 Love and Fictions (2): The Doubling of Osrick

THE QUEEN'S EXCHANGE (1630-32)²⁴ is saturated with artificiality: King Osrick of Northumbria²⁵ falls in love with the painted miniature of a West Saxon lady named Mildred, unconsciously rejecting the image of Queen Bertha to whom he is betrothed; Mildred's brother, Anthynus, happens to be Osrick's exact double; Anthynus accompanies his exiled father into Northumbria, where Osrick is able to employ him as a substitute while he goes off in search of Mildred (he does not know that Anthynus is her brother); and Anthynus is persuaded to accept the exchange through a dream and the appearance of a guiding "Genius." Even this incomplete summary of the plot makes it clear that *The Queen's Exchange* is as about as contrived a play as any written in the Caroline era, but to apologise for it as catering to the contemporary fad for tragicomedies full of romantic intrigue is to adopt the same cringe which makes Kaufmann, who is as dismissive of this play as he is of *The Northern Lass*, call it "weakly constructed" and a "pastiche of borrowings" (179). A more challenging and constructive critique of *The Queen's Exchange* may be made by regarding the play as taking the dramatisation of the relationship between artificiality and melancholy a step further by venturing into the semi-legendary world of "Britain"—as found in *Cymbeline* and *King Lear*—where much more in the way of "providentiality" as a determinant of the plot and its outcome is possible and, indeed, permissible, than in the everyday life of "city" comedy.

When Osrick falls in love with Mildred's picture, he falls into a pattern of love melancholy well established in literary convention, yet which also has that particular Bromean touch. It is worth looking once again at Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*—as a play which also makes use of a "romantic" as opposed to a contemporary setting—as a comparison. In act II Prince Palador enters in the standard stage melancholic mode "with a book in his hand," and is chided by his counsellor, Sophronos, in the following terms:

I think you too indulgent to such motions
As spring out of your own affections,
Too old to be reformed, and yet too young
To take fit counsel from yourself of what
Is most amiss.

(*LM* II.i.90-5)

Palador seems barely aware of his own affliction, let alone able to do anything about it. "Is it

a misery to be a prince?" he asks of Rhetias, who has told of the pity owed to those "who exchange their happiness for a misery" (131-2). The whole point of Corax's "Masque of Melancholy" is to "soften up" the prince's sensibilities so that the eventual reunion with his lost love, Eroclea, will have its full curative effect. In *The Queen's Exchange*, however, King Osrick is fully aware of his disease, both as to its causes and its manifest symptoms, and even—and this is where Brome's use of Burton is more radical than Ford's—what should be done to cure himself by implementing an exchange—the "exchange" of the play's title—of misery for happiness.

Osrick knows from the outset that his "contemplation / Over these Pictures" (II.i; Pearson edn. 3.475) of Mildred and the Queen is having an adverse effect:

I am not well, what kind of Changeling am I?
A wild confusion rumbles in my brain,
My thoughts are all at strife.

(477)

His melancholy stems not only from his longing for Mildred, but also from the guilt he feels at spurning the Queen's suit and at banishing his favourite, Theodrick, ambassador to the West Saxon court and Mildred's erstwhile suitor. Once again, Osrick is capable of self-analysis:

I do know
'Tis foully done to slight the Queen that loves me.
And it was an act no lesse unprincely
To cast into suspence my friendly servant
[(]For what transgression was't in him to love
One fairer then my choice?[]) before he knew
My wavering inconstancy. I know
Withal my punishment is just, how e're
My sufferings make me wish it less severe.

(III.[i];²⁶ 3.500)

Also of significance here is Osrick's view that his illness is a punishment, as though divinely meted out, because divine providence turns out to be a key agent in the cure of his disease. Osrick is also aware that his melancholy is symptomatic of the artificiality of the court, of which falling in love with a painted image is just one more manifestation. As he compares the images of Mildred and Bertha, he tries hard to disguise his reactions in front of Theodrick:

What a shame it is
That I should fall in his discovery?
Are Courts so fraught with fraud and flattery?
And can a King that governs such professors
No whit dissemble to obscure his passions?
I must, and thus begin to practice it.

(II.i; 3.475)

The effort taken to “dissemble . . . his passions” merely exacerbates his illness, however, and he swoons while Theodrick cries out for “the Kings Physitians” (477).

Fraud and flattery have been much in evidence in two earlier scenes. The play opens with a discussion at the West Saxon court concerning Queen Bertha’s proposed match with Osrick. A contrast is set up between the fawning lords who support the marriage—merely because the Queen herself is in favour of it—and the old adviser Segebert, father of Anthynus and Mildred. Segebert counsels caution, because the match could mean that all that they hold dear in the kingdom—“your wealth, / Your state, your laws, your subjects”—are in danger of being “altered, or quite subverted, / And all by a wilful gift unto a stranger” (I.i; 3.459).²⁷ His refusal to shape his advice to the Queen’s will, and his attempts to make her see “the difference / Betwixt smooth flattery, and honest judgements” (459), earn him the courtiers’ scorn and the Queen’s wrath, and he is banished from West Saxony.

In the very next scene we see how fraud and flattery have permeated through to the family, in a situation which critics rightly have said borrows much from *King Lear*.²⁸ *The Queen’s Exchange* uses the same conflict, but set at a more general domestic level (as though all the conflict now revolves around Gloucester’s household rather than Lear’s), which triggers off the tragic course of events in *Lear*. But—and this is where the romantic vision differs from the tragic²⁹—this conflict also sets in motion those providential forces—the divine artifice, as it were—which will oversee the eventual cure of melancholy. As Segebert prepares to leave his household, he makes his bequests to his children. Taken in by the declarations of love made by his younger son, the false and scheming Offa, Segebert gives to him “the sway / And government of all” (I.ii; 3.470) for the time being, while Segebert remains alive. He passes over his rightful heir, Anthynus, whose own Cordelia-like declaration, “Lesse then due / I dare not give you; and more were to abuse you” (468), is regarded by Segebert, like Lear, as love given “but coldly” (469). Segebert is a victim of the very “fraud and flattery” against which he counselled the Queen, and the old man’s folly is doubly emphasised when Anthynus gives his reasons for not being too effusive in expressing his love for his father:

I have observ’d, but specially at Court,
Where flattery is too frequent, the great scorn
You have ever cast upon it, and do fear
To come within such danger of reproof.

(469)

The irony is redoubled when Segebert commands Mildred, who says she could not express her love for her father even had she “no tears or sobs to interrupt / [Her] flattering Tongue” (467), to avoid the court:

Do as neat Surgeons do when they have touch'd
Loathsome or pestilent Sores; wash clean your hands
Of all of 'em, that are far more infectious.

(468)

Segebert sees the mote in the court's eye but not the beam in his own, but he can be forgiven for not knowing that when he further forbids her from marrying the man who “wears” her picture, on pain of being “divorced forever” from his blessing (468), he is forbidding her from carrying out the one sure cure for the ailing Osrick, and so help to purge the court and the country of the infection caused by fraud and flattery. The scene closes with Anthynus choosing, like Edgar, to follow his father into exile, but openly, not in some kind of Poor Tom disguise.

Cures for the King's illness are attempted by outside agencies and, consistent with his self-awareness, by the King himself, but both are miserable failures at first. We hear that the physicians summoned at the end of act II are having no success: “He's sick enough / To be pray'd for,” reports the courtier Theodwald, unwittingly foreshadowing the necessary intervention of providence. Theodwald continues:

I fear he's brain-crack'd, lunatick and Frantick, mad,
And all the Doctors almost as mad as he,
Because they cannot find the cause[.]

(III.[i]; 3.497)

Osrick's guilty conscience prevents him from revealing that he suffers from love melancholy, and so the doctors are not to know that their arts are wasted; we have already heard Burton's claim that, “a physician in some kinds of melancholy” can do “much less” than a divine (*AM* 1.37). Similarly, the efforts of the fool Jeffrey, recruited by the courtier Alfride, fall very flat. Alfride has shown more insight than the doctors:

The King's disease
Is melancholy, and thou mayst do him more good
Then a whole Colledge of Physitians.

(II.ii; 3.484)

Nevertheless, Jeffrey's clowning is not the answer. Jackson Cope says that this could stand as

Brome's gesture of rejection toward old symbols that have become too simple and too

magical for a world with more complex surfaces and less profound roots in the traditional past from which the Fool's traditional power was drawn,
(Cope 135)

yet this is contradicted by the fact that Brome's ultimate solution for the cure of Osrick is itself based on a somewhat "magical" set of coincidences.³⁰ Actually, Jeffrey is not even given a chance to practise his skills on the King, whose brusque "Pull the fool off me" (III.[i]; 3.501) as he exits, means that the jokes about courtiers and fools being alike are left for the ears of the courtiers alone.³¹ While Burton, in his subsection "Mirth and merry company," talks of princes and kings employing "jesters" to keep melancholy at bay (2.122), he also includes a lengthy *caveat* which begins: "But see the mischief; many men, knowing that merry company is the only medicine against melancholy, will therefore neglect their business" (124). Osrick must be left to pursue his "business"—finding Mildred and becoming a fit ruler once again—without the diversion of foolishness for its own sake. Besides, fools, as we are told elsewhere in the *Anatomy*, are exempted "from this melancholy catalogue" of love-sickness because they "are never troubled with any manner of passion" (1.172). They are not, we may conclude, a fit means of curing a disease of which they know nothing themselves, and certainly to Jeffrey, who boasts of the "half / A score of my wholesome Countrey lasses with child now" (IV.i; 3.530), the anguish of love melancholy would be quite meaningless.

Yet there are places for both fool and physician. When the King decides to go on a "pilgrimage" which, in the doctor's words, will "give / Free way unto his fancy yet a while" and thus "cool Phrenetique humours," his only companions are "a fool and a Physitian" (III.[i]; 3.499). Their inclusion in a journey which leads to the discovery of Anthynus, and to Osrick's eventual cure, is some indication of the part they *may* play in the restorative process. When, at the end of the play, Offa is reduced to a madness stemming from his own guilt and rapaciousness and is facing banishment, Segebert offers to pray for his son's recovery, while Jeffrey announces that he will accompany Offa, "for 'tis unknown to you / What good a fool may on a mad man do" (V.i; 3.549). The cycle of the curative journey begins again, and Offa, in more desperate straits than Segebert, seems to require a more drastic solution. The prognosis for Offa is not as bleak as it may appear, however, for although the precise effect of prayer and a fool is left uncertain, we have Osrick's cure as a testament to what might be achieved.

Cure from within is also ineffective at first. Osrick may be aware of his illness, but that

does not mean that he is in control of the situation. He has made things worse by casting out his closest confidant, Theodrick. Yet even the jealous Northumbrian courtiers, who “for these two years space have wish’d him / For good State-reasons, favourlesse and headlesse” (III.[i]; 3.498), realise the value of Theodrick, whose confidence and counsel represents a possible cure for the melancholic who “Might vent his troubled thoughts into his Brest, / And so find way to ease” (498). Burton explains it like this:

the best way for ease is to impart our misery to some friend, not to smother it up in our own breast; . . . grief concealed strangles the soul; but whenas we shall but import it to some discreet, trusty, loving friend, it is instantly removed, by his counsel haply, wisdom, persuasion, advice, his good means, which we could not otherwise apply unto ourselves.

(AM 2.107)

It is too late, however; the King has cut off this option for the time being, and the appeals of the court for Theodrick’s return are in vain.

Osrick’s symptoms reveal a further lack of control. Whereas Hamlet and Palador display one set of symptoms relating to melancholy, Osrick floats from one manifestation of the disease to another. His court cannot tell whether he sleeps or not; he expresses himself in sighs and groans, and “speech of od confus’d / And indigested matter” (III.[i]; 3.498). Sometimes he exhibits signs of martial prowess, calling for his horse and armour; at other times he becomes a scholarly recluse. Then he is the active sportsman, and just as suddenly the contemplative peripatetic. With the benefit of hindsight we may say that Osrick embodies all the types of melancholic with which Brome was to deal in later plays: the warrior-turned-puritan Gabriel in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*; the traveller-in-books Peregrine in *The Antipodes*; the compulsive vagrant Springlove in *A Jovial Crew*; and even that most artificial of melancholics, the cavalier-poet Sir Ferdinand in *The Court Beggar*.

Despite this lack of control, Osrick has taken measures to effect his own cure, measures which, not surprisingly, involve the use of artifice. Apparently he has made use of costumes and role-playing as a means to help himself, a “physic” which sounds very similar to the symptoms which his courtiers have already described. While this seems to be in accord with Renaissance therapeutic notions of curing like with like, it has not worked:

No outward dresse
Can change or make affection more or lesse.
I have tried all the wayes I can to conquer
Or to humiliate my raging passion,
Which still grows more predominant ore my reason.

I find it in my self, and know my error,
Though no means to correct it.

(III.[i]; 3.500)

Nevertheless, Osrick is on the right track. As Cope says:

it is precisely acting which *will* invert the dreams again and restore a reality with which reason and passion can both live at peace, but it is not the King himself who can write the plot.

(Cope 136)

Osrick is not in a fit state of mind to bring about his own cure, a point on which Burton is very clear:

Whosoever he is that shall hope to cure this malady in himself or any other, must first rectify these passions and perturbations of the mind; the chiefest cure consists in them.
(AM 2.102)

The plot is in the hands of “th’Ages Doctor,” Richard Brome, who, in the interests the health of his world, brings into play what Butler calls “the playwright’s capricious providence” (266).

The curative properties of providence are factors outside everybody’s control, not just Osrick’s. The chief catalyst in the process of cure is that Osrick has an exact double in Anthynus, whom circumstances have sent wandering into Northumbria with his exiled father. By chance, Anthynus is spotted asleep in the forest by Osrick’s courtiers, who, thinking he is the King out on his mad pilgrimage, take him back to the palace. Yet neither providence nor the characters caught up in its twists of fortune remain entirely passive. Providence takes an active part in the form of a dream in which Anthynus sees the last six West Saxon kings in a line, the last one taking him by the hand and leaving him standing. When Anthynus wakes wondering whether he is “Alive, or dead, awake, asleep, a man, / Or airy ghost?” (III.[i]; 3.505), we are presented with a contrapuntal image of Osrick’s own somnambulism. Falling asleep again, Anthynus is taken up by the deceived courtiers, whose hope that “When he has slept it out, he will perhaps / Be cur’d” (507) has that by now familiar ring of prophetic irony. This is reinforced in the following scene,³² when the King enters after at last having followed Burton’s advice and unburdened himself on his new counsellor, Ethelswick. Osrick declares in relief:

I have told thee all,
By which I find much ease, and hope to sleep:
But not to take a thought unto my fancy
By my soft dreams, but of my beauteous *Mildred*.

(III.[ii]; 3.507)

This double counterpoint of Osrick reflecting back an image of his dreaming double, Anthynus, marks a turning point in the play, ushering in the phase in which humanity becomes an active participant in its own cure from the universal malaise. Both Osrick and Anthynus are put into positions where they can seize the opportunities which destiny has provided.

Just as the physician and the fool on their own were inadequate as cures, so reliance upon prayer—that is, providence—alone is not enough. Burton says so himself when he discusses “Lawful Cures, first from God”: “we must first begin with prayer, and then use physic; not one without the other, but both together” (AM 2.9). Perhaps that is why Brome makes Jeffrey accompany Offa; the clown is the “physic” which follows Segebert’s prayers. Burton continues:

God works by means, as Christ cured the blind man with clay and spittle. . . . As we must pray for health of body and mind, so must we use our utmost endeavours to preserve and continue it.

(9)

Osrick takes advantage of the providential gift of Anthynus’s likeness, setting him up as a substitute king while Osrick goes in search of Mildred. The King’s perception of the nature of this opportunity is interesting: “Love,” he says, “. . . has sent / This blessing in my way” (III.[ii]; 3.513). His equation of “providence” with “love” is an acknowledgement that the very force which feeds his melancholy may be a part of something powerful enough to grant him a cure as well. All that is needed is the resolution to act, which Osrick has at last: “If now I serve thee [that is, “Love”] not with strength and skill, / Remove me as a Rebel to thy will” (513).

Anthynus, meanwhile, is no mere puppet, either to fate or the King. Providence again takes a hand in the guise of a “Genius” who visits Anthynus in a manner reminiscent of the “gift of prophecy” scene in *The Queen and Concubine* (III.ii; 2.45-7). Anthynus has been bound to a bed by courtiers not party to the substitute ploy; they think that his denials of kingship are signs of increased madness, “a wild Phrensie, that will seldome / Suffer the Patient think himself to be / The person that he is” (IV.i; 3.526). The courtiers are well-intentioned, and they have even recalled Theodrick in the hope that he may help the “King.” Anthynus is indignant, believing himself the victim of a prank similar to that of Philip the Good towards the country bumpkin,³³ until the Genius whispers into his ear.

I have found all the error, and am taught
By hidden inspiration to make use on't

(IV.i; 3.528)

Anthynus says, suddenly realising the significance of the dream of the West Saxon kings, and he resolves to live the part of the King and even to marry Queen Bertha.

Brome makes no attempt to explain these coincidences and divine interventions by any rational means. Cope says that an audience might justifiably expect to find, in this story of identical characters, "one of the most inevitable tragicomic tropes, that of the lost and recovered royal son" (Cope 137). But this is where the playwright is at his most unconventional:

the old mechanism is not activated; Anthynus is not Osric's son, but a stranger whose resemblance to the point of identity is not even rationalized. . . . Anthynus is simply an antipodal mirror image of Osric—identical to the eye but moving in an opposite direction.³⁴

(Cope 137)

Neither is the origin of the Genius explained. The pure providentiality of these devices is central to the pure artifice of the play's construction. Melancholy is a product of fraudulent and flattering artifice (even a painted portrait is an attempt to idealise as much as to represent), but it may be cured by a higher form of artifice. There is something almost ritualistic in the playwright's invocation of the supernatural in order to cure Osrick's disease and to re-establish harmony in the two kingdoms; but while we may share Burton's reservations about using the word "magical" in describing Osrick's cure, we may have less hesitation in saying that Brome takes upon himself the role of the divine in orchestrating the curative process.

The "multiple character" method of dramatising Burton's complex analysis of melancholy, to be found in the "three Constances" in *The Northern Lass*, is also evident in *The Queen's Exchange*. Catherine Shaw enlarges on Cope's mention of Anthynus and Osrick as examples of "raptured" reason and "ruptured" reason, completing the trilogy with Offa as a picture of "rapine" reason.³⁵ Osrick is the conventional lovelorn melancholic who represents Burton's primary concern, that of earthly humanity in its fallen state. Anthynus, guided by more mysterious powers of destiny, represents mankind at a more "angelic" level. Offa, driven by his lust for power and for his sister Mildred, is mankind at its most bestial and infernal level; he is a victim of what Burton calls "this burning lust, this brutish passion," which, if allowed to "rage," becomes "no more love, but . . . a disease, frenzy, madness, hell" (AM 3.49) This

cosmological perspective of melancholy, embracing heaven, earth and hell, has its correlative in the cures and rewards which each representative melancholic receives in Brome's play.

As Shaw points out, for Anthynus "no 'cure' has been necessary in the therapeutic sense" (98), for although he experiences melancholy of a kind at the treatment of his father and of himself, he never loses sight of his obligations as a son and brother. He suffers from neither folly nor delusion, and the earthly crown and queenly bride that are his by the end of the play are the poetically just rewards for his steadfastness and nobility. Anthynus's marriage to Bertha in turn relieves Osrick of his guilt, allowing him to pledge himself to Mildred. Osrick's cures, consisting of the lawful union with the object of his love and the removal of the burdens which have hitherto disrupted (but not deranged) his reason, are consonant with the rewards to which even fallible humanity may aspire, and which are the object of Burton's whole exercise in the *Anatomy*. Offa's problem is different, and one for which neither Burton nor Brome is willing to guarantee a cure, let alone a happy resolution.

Offa is a rare character type in the Brome canon—the absolute and unrepentant villain. Misers, gulls and mountebanks aplenty populate his plays, but the nearest equivalent to Offa which springs to mind is Cloten, from Shakespeare's own first attempt at tragicomedy, *Cymbeline* (which is itself resolved by quite startling supernatural means). Unlike Shakespeare, Brome never kills off a character in his plays; Cloten may be "a monster who must, at all costs, be exterminated,"³⁶ but the worst that Brome will inflict upon Offa is a taste of hellish torment here on earth.

Burton has nothing to offer the Clotens and Offas of the world. The sufferers of "monstrous" or "poisoned melancholy," be they atheists, hypocrites or anyone else "antipodes to Christians" (*AM* 3.379), will have to find means other than his book by which to save themselves. Fox sums it up thus:

The men whom Burton is hoping to cure of definite and indefinite melancholy are those who are trying to get merrily to heaven. But atheists and their ilk are . . . bent on getting merrily, if lethargically, to hell.

(Fox 187)

Offa's scoffing attitude towards the goodness of his brother—"religious, pious, honest, / . . . endued with all these unknown gifts / Which holy men call vertues" (IV.i; 3.515-16)—his callous remarks about sending Anthynus and his father "the nighest way" (516) to their heavenly reward, and his lust for his own sister—"that abhorred way / Which by avoyding,

man is best distinguish'd / From the most brutish beasts" (517)—places him firmly amongst the ranks of the unholy and infernally bound. Typically, Brome is more forgiving than Burton, but only marginally so.

Like Anthynus and Osrick, Offa is not out of his mind, despite the state his mind (and soul) is in. On the contrary, he is able to justify his wickedness with some very apt reasoning, as, for instance, after disposing into a hole in the ground his two accomplices in the attack on his father and brother:

Some conscience now
 Would ask me, why hast thou
 Dispatch'd thy Father and thy Brother thus?
 But mine informs me, I did very well.
 Your reason Sir, replies the scrupulous conscience?
 Mine roundly answers . . .

(IV.i; 3.515)

and he goes on to list the barriers of age, his father's capriciousness, and other reasons for sending the two to their virtuous rewards in the afterlife. "Many good reasons more I could deliver" (516), he declares, cutting himself short at the entrance of his sister. Offa's reason represents a "survival of the fittest" philosophy lacking in any moral conscience, more suited to beasts than to humans. To be given any hope of a cure, Offa first must be shaken out of his wicked wits. In one sense, the whole comic drive of *The Queen's Exchange*—which pushes it out from under the "tragicomic shadow" (Cope 138) cast by melancholy—runs counter to reason as a "way of this world," towards the fantastic possibilities which artifice opens up as a higher form of reason with which to define the "way of a possible world." Cope describes this aspect of the play well when he says:

Brome's "cure" is conceived less as a return to reason—in this generalized sense of completion of a universal harmony—than as a return to reasoning as an individual means of control over one's journey toward desired ends.
 (138-9)

But what if those "desired ends" lead straight to hell, and the reasoning behind them is evil and perverse? Obviously, then, reason must be broken down, and new "ends" substituted. Brome destroys Offa's reasoning by subjecting him to a "supernatural" experience which is the opposite (again the important antipodal image) to the benign Genius which inspires Anthynus. Offa believes that the two outlaws who have just emerged from the hole are fiends sent to haunt him:

Holla, holla, gentle earth.

Open not here, not near that part of thee
That has but now disgorg'd those famish'd ghosts,
That with the Furies would have beckned me
Along to hell with'em

(V.i; 3.540)



he pleads.³⁷ A little later he is reported to be out of his wits, but his madness reveals truths whereas, previously, his reason concealed the evil that lay in his soul behind the guise of a loving son and brother:

Osr.[ick] Is *Offa* mad?
Keep.[er] O quite besides himself, and talks the strangeliest
Of his fathers murder, your running away
And the desire he has to hang his brother here;
And then he is haunted with sprites too, they say[.]

(544)

The artifice of providential coincidence has stripped away the artifice of evil reason; and although *Offa* has only his father's prayers and the company of a fool to help him at the end of the play, the outcome, like the work of providence throughout the action, is "unknown," and may even result in a cure.

II.3 “Unbridled Affections”: Puritanism, Militarism, and Roaring

IF THE PROGNOSIS FOR Offa's species of melancholy in *The Queen's Exchange* is left in some doubt, then so too are the causes of the disease in another “son” in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, written soon afterwards.³⁸ When, in the final scene of that play, Gabriel explains away the puritanism of which he has been “cured” by his brother Mihil and friends, we are presented with a dilemma which is not explicitly resolved by the play's ending. Gabriel says: “my former formal habit w[a]s more of stubbornesse then true devotion” (V.iii; Pearson edn., 2.93). It is as though he is trying to bluff us into believing that his puritanical zeal was a conscious act of sheer wilfulness rather than a symptom of genuine illness. We wonder whether or not we have been at the butt of an elaborate piece of *lusus* which posits the possibility that the Puritan movement as a whole is a kind of corporate affectation, rather than yet another manifestation of the melancholy which is the lot of fallen (and foolish) humanity. As before, a reading of the play with Robert Burton ready to hand helps us to come to terms with this problem.

The scene in which Gabriel's sister, Katharine, tries to explain his behaviour to her friend Lucie in the light of recent family history does little to clear up the uncertainty. Katharine says that, as a boy, Gabriel “was the wildest untamed thing that the countrey could possibly hold” (III.ii; 2.51), to which Lucie replies that he still could be, for she believes “no man of his Religion in his wits.” Here, then, is one horn of the dilemma: to be a Puritan is to be of unsound mind. But Katharine presents us with another possibility. She explains that Gabriel was in love with a cousin, but that his father sent him into a bishop's service “fearing what youth in heat of blood might do” (51). This cousin, Dorcas, left to her own defences, was wooed and “clap't” by an unknown gallant, who left her. She in shame fled (we know that she is in Covent Garden disguised as the courtesan Damaris) and Gabriel “fell into discontent” (52). Katharine is of the opinion that “verily he does it but to crosse my father”—a humorous old fellow who lives up to his name of Crosswill, in that he will “be obeyed in [his] own way” (I.i; 2.2), and is described as “self-will'd, crosse, and touchie” (7)—“for sending him out of the way when the mischief was done” (III.ii; 2.52). Lucie is swayed by her friend's opinion: “I will not believe 'tis Religion in any of the gang of 'em, but mere wilful affectation”

(52). But if that is the case, and Gabriel is just being a “chip off the old block” in a display of extended wilfulness, why is it that the action of the play forces him to pass “under the Torrid Zone of Zeale” in order to “be fetch’d halfe way back again” (V.i; 2.77)?

Burton has some pertinent things to say about a condition such as Gabriel’s, which stems first of all from sorrow: over his unrequited love, his inability to defend his cousin from the advances of the unknown gallant, and her flight in shame from her family. Sorrow, says Burton quoting Hippocrates, is “the mother and daughter of melancholy, her epitome, symptom, and chief cause” (*AM* 1.259). The puritanical persona which Gabriel has assumed as a defence mechanism to cope with his sorrow and/or as a means of annoying his father becomes yet another case of artifice getting out of hand and bringing on a melancholy condition.

Burton talks of the passions of those who follow “the corporeal organs of sense,” rather than the dictates of reason, as stemming from two possible “inclinations”: the “irascible” and the “concupiscible” (1.258). Katharine elaborates on her description of Gabriel by telling how he was “the Ring-leader” of the local youth in fairs, sports, and “anything that had but noise and tumult in it.” He was the “Captain of the young train-band,” and “did love to imitate a souldier the best”; moreover, “there was not an handsom maid in an whole County could be quiet for him” (III.ii; 2.51). Clearly, we have a picture of a young hotblood of “irascible,” and perhaps even “concupiscible,” inclination. This is coupled with the fact that Gabriel’s father is one who, in Katharine’s words, “will crosse us in all we do, as if there were no other way to shew his power over our obedience”; there is “not a childe he has, though we all know what we do, that makes any conscience of crossing him, we have so much of his good nature in us” (50). Burton says of the type represented by the “irascible” Gabriel, that while a “few discreet men there are, that can govern themselves, and curb in these inordinate affections,” most

suffer themselves wholly to be led by sense, and are so far from repressing rebellious inclinations, that they give all encouragement unto them. . . : bad by nature, worse by art, discipline, custom, education, and a perverse will of their own, they follow on, wheresoever their unbridled affections will transport them, and do more out of custom, self-will, than out of reason.

(*AM* 1.258)

Burton provides the psychoanalytical basis for understanding the character of the once martial roarer, Gabriel, now “turn’d Precisian” (I.i; 2.4). Gabriel may once have been like his

siblings who “know what [they] do” in their crossing of Crosswill, but as with other Bromean melancholics he is, by the start of the play’s action, no longer in a position to govern himself.

The notion that Puritanism may be the result of rebelliousness gone out of control, and thus a symptom of melancholy, is a unique and insightful response to the political situation in England in the 1630s. Jonson’s attitude to Puritans may be summed up in the unattributable Latin passage he included in his *Discoveries*, a translation of which may be rendered:

The Puritan is an heretical hypocrite whom the belief in his own insight at spotting certain errors in Church dogma—in a manner befitting himself and a select few—has unfixed the stability of his mind; wherefrom, stirred by holy furor, he fights frantically against civil authority, so convinced is he of upholding obedience to God.³⁹

Jonson’s attitude led him to make use of what Duncan calls the “favourite humanist *topos*” of the “teasing distinction between self-respect and deluded complacency” (Duncan 208). For the classical scholar, the satire of Puritanism drew its inspiration from the tradition of satirising—as Folly does in Erasmus’s work—the “self-sufficient” Stoic whose view of life is narrow and unrealistic (209). Ironically, Jonson gained a reputation as a Puritan moraliser himself, as Helena Watts Baum points out; the difference was that “his attacks on follies and vices of all kinds was rooted in intellectual and rational rather than moral and emotional standards.”⁴⁰ Jonson could not abide the ignorance and narrow-mindedness which the extreme sectarians seemed to epitomise in their upholding of inspiration over reason. No doubt Brome shared Jonson’s views on the subject, but he no longer had the luxury of applying the term “Puritan” in quite the same way as his old master.

Valerie Pearl, in her study of London just prior to the Civil War, says that, “Contemporaries in London in the sixteen-thirties were unanimous that the great majority of the citizens were Puritan.”⁴¹ The implications of this assessment are far-reaching, for it would appear that by satirising the figure of the Puritan, Brome was in danger of alienating much of his audience.⁴² In Jonson’s heyday, the first decade of the century, “The word Puritan had no ambiguity” (160), but meant one who still maintained the struggle for Calvinist reform and therefore who flew in the face of James I’s own wish to “stabilise” the Church of England.⁴³ By the 1630s the term “was frequently being used to denote those, as John Davenport defined Puritan, ‘who secretly encourageth men in opposition to the present government’” (Pearl 161). This opposition embraced many forms of expression, from “a preference for lectures and disapproval of tithes and Laudian ceremonies” which were

“sentiments shared by the majority of the citizens” (161), to the more radical views, both religious and political, of the extremist sects. The term had acquired such a “heterogeneous character” (161) that Brome would have had to choose his words carefully. “Puritan” is used by both Lucie and Mihil in order to describe the general tenor of Gabriel’s condition,⁴⁴ but he is usually specifically referred to as “precisianical” or “zealous,” and his own talk of “brethren” and “sisters,” and his thinking that Madge the bawd is some “well-disposed Gentlewoman from *Amsterdam*,” with whom he confers “*devoutly the while*” (IV.ii; 2.67), identifies Gabriel quite firmly with the radical sects, the Anabaptists, Brownists, Familists and Separatists railed at by Burton and made fun of by Middleton and Jonson. Brome is here concerned with extremism and fanaticism of the kind dealt with by Jonson in *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew Fair*, and not with creating some kind of polarisation between Court and Parliament along party political lines. He is able to do this by making use of the Burtonian epistemological approach to melancholy and of the idea that the extremist is somehow unbalanced *de statu mentis* (to use Jonson’s own term), as a starting point. Even so, we shall see that Brome was able to integrate at least one aspect of the developing political situation of the 1630s in such a way that it becomes an inextricable part of the curative action of the play. I refer here not to the many topical allusions in the play,⁴⁵ but to the juxtaposition of religious zeal and martial valour against a backdrop of a “roaring” tavern environment. This is what makes *The Weeding of Covent Garden* a dramatic *tour de force* and a milestone in Brome’s career, a point only emphasised by the significant acknowledgement the play makes to the years of his “prenticeship” with Jonson, and in particular to the bustling world of *Bartholomew Fair* (which had only just been published in 1631), as a source of inspiration.

The Weeding of Covent Garden is more concerned with examining Puritanism as another of melancholy’s many faces than as a target for satire *per se*. Nevertheless, in the course of this examination a number of “standard” criticisms of Puritan hypocrisy are employed. Some parallels may be seen in the portrayal of Gabriel and the “much material for analysis” to be found in Jonson’s own “full and individual portraits which he draws with savage gusto” (Baum 124). When Gabriel mistakes Nicholas’s address of Dorcas, alias Damaris, as “Dammy” for swearing, his rebuke, “I dare not speak it but in thy reproof. Thou swearest Gee o Dee, Dee a m thee, as I take it” (IV.ii; 2.68), exhibits the same “precisianical” quibbling

which makes Ananias correct Subtle's use of "Christmas" with "Christ-tide, I pray you" (*Alch* III.ii.43). With a bit of a nudge from Mihil, Gabriel confuses the roaring boys in the tavern (who call themselves the Philoblathici—"Brothers of the Blade and Baton") for "brothers" of a holier sort:

Gab. Pray give me leave to ask you, do these men take part with the brethren?

Mih. Yes, and are brothers a little disguiz'd, but for some ends.

Gab. Some State-occasions.

Mih. Meer Intelligencers, to collect up such and such observations, for a great Separatist that is now writing a book[.]⁴⁶

(IV.ii; 2.69)

Kaufmann observes that this confusion becomes an "effective satire of the Puritan standard of morality made famous by Jonson's devastating satire of Ananias Wholesome's rationalization of means in *The Alchemist*" (Kaufmann 83). Gabriel's acceptance of the roistering in the tavern, once he is certain that the participants are "brethren," is a part of the same view of Puritans which has Ananias announce that Subtle's "casting of money is most lawful" because "the holy Synod" has decreed it so (*Alch* IV.vii.78 and 75). Brome is not averse to treading the familiar path of satirising Puritans, the "general pattern" of which, as Baum points out, "was formed before Jonson turned his attention to the sect" (Baum 121). Thus Gabriel decries the music of fiddles as "O prophane tinkling the cymbals of Satan" (II.ii; 2.33) in the same way that Ananias proclaims, "Bells are prophane" (*Alch* III.ii.61). Gabriel's denunciation of Dorcas's courtesan disguise as "that painted idolatrous image yonder" (I.i; 2.8) calls to mind Zeal-of-the-Land Busy's attack on the puppet show in *Bartholomew Fair*: "I will remove Dagon there, I say, that idol, that heathenish idol" (V.v.4-5). But *The Weeding of Covent Garden* deals primarily with melancholy and its cure, and instances such as the above, while providing excellent material for satire, also have an important place in the dramatisation of the disease.

In her study of Renaissance English treatments of melancholy, Bridget Gellert Lyons says,

The melancholy man was always thought to project his feelings on to the world more radically than did other humoral types. The metaphors of some of the expository writers [like Burton] had already gone a long way, therefore, towards expressing connections between the melancholic's physical state, his state of mind and the world he saw.⁴⁷

So the Puritan zealot could be regarded as a melancholic whose preoccupation with sin and the

temptations of world, flesh and devil resulted in an imbalance of mind which led him or her to see everything—to use Gabriel’s own terms of reference—as “idolatrous” and “prophane,” as “lewdness” and “noisomnesse,” or as either “zeal” or “heresy.”

Burton deals at length with such matters in his descriptions of religious melancholy. For example, on the toleration of anything from one’s own “brethren,” he says that “general to all [religious sects] are an extraordinary love and affection they bear and show to such as are of their own sect” (*AM* 3.347). While this in itself is no evil thing, being another manifestation of love, Burton reveals the other side to this religious fervour. Common to all sects is

hate to such as are opposite in religion, as they call it, or disagree from them in their superstitious rites, blind zeal (which is as much a symptom as a cause), vain fears, blind obedience . . . etc.

(348)

Such zeal leads to “love and hate. . . : no greater concord, no greater discord than that which proceeds from religion” (348). Burton mixes discretion and wisdom in not using the word “Puritan” in this context, and besides, he is addressing his criticisms to all forms of over-zealous sectarianism:

’Tis so with all other superstitious sects, Mahometans, Gentiles in China and Tartary, our ignorant Papists, Anabaptists, Separatists, and peculiar churches of Amsterdam; they alone, and none but they, can be saved.

(350)

Burton’s summary of the sufferers of religious melancholy as “‘Zealous’ (as Paul saith, Rom.x,2) ‘without knowledge’” (350), reflects the humanist’s concern over any blinkered world-view, but it is clear that the most blatant manifestation of such a malaise in contemporary England was to be found in the militant Protestant sects with which Puritanism, rightly or wrongly, came to be identified. He acknowledges this fact in a passage which echoes Jonson and adumbrates Brome:

we have a mad giddy company of precisians,⁴⁸ schismatics, and some heretics, even in our own bosoms in another extreme. . . ; that out of too much zeal in opposition to Antichrist, human traditions, those Romish rites and superstitions, will quite demolish all, they will admit of no ceremonies at all . . . no holidays, or honest recreations, as of hawking, hunting, etc., no churches, no bells some of them, because papists use them; no discipline, no ceremonies but what they invent themselves[.]

(370)

He specifies Anabaptists, Brownists and so forth, who “are led all by so many private spirits” (371). However, when these “private spirits” represent a perception which is tainted by melancholy, their guidance becomes highly suspect. When Gabriel piously intones, “Truly

such exercises are prophane exercises,” in response to his brother’s feigned denunciation of “sports and play-games” such as “playing at Barlibreak, moulding of Cocklebread, and such like prophane exercises” (IV.ii; 2.69), he is entering into a dispute not only with the Crown, which eventually—after a long-running series of debates and disputes—legitimised such activities by a decree of 10 October 1633,⁴⁹ but he is falling into a pattern of melancholy which makes him blind to the very things capable of keeping the disease at bay. Says Burton:

I know these sports have many oppugners, whole volumes writ against them. . . . Some out of preposterous zeal object many times trivial arguments, and because of some abuse will quite take away the use. . . ; for my part, I will subscribe to the king’s declaration, and was ever of that mind, those May-games, wakes, and Whitsun ales, etc., if they be not at unseasonable hours, may justly be permitted. Let them freely feast, sing and dance, have their poppet-plays, hobby-horses, tabors, crowds, bagpipes, etc., play at ball, and barley-breaks, and what sports and recreations they like best.

(2.84)

Thus Burton proposes to “rectify” the melancholy brought on by the follies of religious fanatics with some follies of a more healthy nature. As we shall see in *The Antipodes*, Lord Letoy presents himself in almost exactly these terms as the credentials necessary for the cure of Peregrine.

Gabriel represents a more complex variation of the much-maligned Puritan character precisely because his affectation is dramatised in the context of disease. Burton talks of those whose “*summum bonum* is commodity,” and how such people accommodate themselves in all manner of ways for their own ends. He gives a very apt example of this:

One takes upon him temperance, holiness, another austerity, a third an affected kind of simplicity, whenas indeed he, and he, and he, and the rest are hypocrites, ambidexters, outsides, so many turning pictures, a lion on the one side, a lamb on the other.

(1.65)

The conventional elements of the dramatised Puritan are obvious in this litany of pious hypocrisy, but more telling is the fact that we know from Katharine’s description that Gabriel is exactly a case of the lion turned to a lamb.

The important difference is that Gabriel is not being consciously hypocritical, he is just sick. True, he affected the role of the precisian at first, but this role in turn has supplanted his former self so that he is, in reality, a Puritan extremist. He is not motivated by the “self-love” and “vainglory” which Burton says (1.292) leads one to “inexorable and supercilious, eminent and arrogant worship” (293). If anything, he may be said to have cast aside these two

qualities in abandoning his former martial pursuits. Rather, the implication is that hypocrisy is part of the very nature of religious zealotry, whether one is conscious of it or not. This is borne out, for example, in the tavern scene when the wine starts to “maudlenize” Gabriel. He dwells upon the fate of Dorcas, but his sadness quickly turns to indignation as he describes what he would do to her wrongdoer if he had the opportunity, in terms worthy of any fire-breathing Separatist preacher:

It had been good to have humbled him, though into the knowledge of his Transgression. And of himself for his soules good, either by course of Law, or else in case of necessity, where the Law promiseth no releese, by your own right hand you might have smote him, smote him with great force, yea smote him unto the earth, until he had prayed that the evil might be taken from him.

(IV.ii; 2.62)

Mihil’s dry aside, “This is their way of loving enemies, to beat ’em into goodnesse” (62), underscores the notion that Gabriel is subscribing to a collective philosophy—it is “their way.” Later in the same scene, Gabriel almost picks a fight with Nicholas, crying, “I am moved for to smite him; yea, with often stripes to smite him; my zealous wrath is kindled, and he shall flie before me” (68). Two things emerge from these fiery tirades. One is the readiness of the “zealous” to cloak their anger in the language of Old Testament vengeance without being aware, perhaps, of its inconsistency with a life based upon New Testament teachings. The other is an even more interesting matter, for it raises the question as to what difference there may be between the Puritan who believes himself to be an instrument of divine retribution, and the “roaring boy” who brags of martial valour and is ready to draw his sword at the slightest provocation. There is, as will be shown, a strong concurrence between the way this question is resolved in *The Weeding of Covent Garden* and the circumstances of history.

Returning to the earlier point, it must be conceded that not only is Gabriel not a hypocrite, but he seems an earnest and sincere young man. There is no instance in the play when, left to himself, he removes a mask of pious cant to reveal a vicious or contradictory “inner self,” as does Ananias with his avarice or Zeal-of-the-Land his gluttony. Early in the play, Crosswill takes exception to his son’s inaction at a supposed insult from the builder, Rooksbill:

Cros. Dost thou stand like a son now that hears his father abus’d, ha?

Gab. I am praying for the conversion of the young man he speaks of.

(I.i; 2.6)

And there is no reason to suspect that Gabriel is doing other than just that. In fact, Nicholas

Rooksbill, the “young man,” is an unrepentant roarer very much in need of reform, and Gabriel is, unwittingly, providing exactly the kind of cure which Segebert offered his wayward son in *The Queen's Exchange*. Gabriel's sobriety and sincerity earn him old Rooksbill's admiration at least—“What comfort should I have, were my son such” (5), he says—such that he cannot be regarded as the kind of vicious hypocrite whom Burton has little to offer in the way of help. Gabriel is no Offa, playing the loyal son while plotting his father's downfall. Rather, he is a disloyal son who can no longer control his rebelliousness. His filial disloyalty has taken the form of an ecclesiastical heresy which is, by extension, a disloyalty to the state; thus melancholy at the private or domestic level is demonstrated to have public or social consequences, a situation inversely correlative to the effect of “state” melancholy on individual lives as dramatised in *The Queen's Exchange*. Gabriel is a Jonsonian Puritan who fights against civil authority, but there is some hope, according to Burton, even for extreme cases of the disease:

Atheism, idolatry, heresy, hypocrisy, though they have one common root, that is indulgence to corrupt affection, yet their growth is different, they have divers symptoms, occasions, and must have several cures and remedies.
(AM 3.391)

Gabriel's cure turns out to be surprisingly simple.

At one stage in his treatise, Burton seems to sweep aside all his erudition for this very straightforward remedy:

Many and sundry are the means which philosophers and physicians have prescribed to exhilarate a sorrowful heart, to divert those fixed and intent cares and meditations, which in this malady so much offend; but in my judgment none so present, none so powerful, none so apposite as a cup of strong drink, mirth, music, and merry company.⁵⁰

(2.115)

Mihil seems to have this advice firmly in mind as he attempts to ease his brother's own “sorrowful heart.” But dragging him along to taverns is not intended to squash the piety out of Gabriel entirely. When Gabriel complains, “What a strange dream has wine wrought in my head,” Mihil explains in an aside, “I hope it will work out his superfluous zeale. And render him civil Christian again” (IV.ii; 2.65). The Burtonian therapy is applied to exorcise the extremism in Gabriel and to restore the *status mentis*, which also means that neither should he return to “the martial humour he was wont so to affect” (66). Banishing melancholy ultimately involves avoiding all affectation, but, as Mihil is aware, this does not preclude the

use of one affectation to purge another.

The wine begins to break down Gabriel's pious reserve, and love for his "brethren" merges with Dionysiac revelry: "I'll drink, I'll dance, I'll kisse, or do any thing, any living thing with any of you, that is Brother or Sister" (71). Once "he's in," the distinction between religious zeal and the old martial humour also begins to blur: "I thirst to do some honour to our cause. To lead forth legions to fight a battel 'gainst our malignant adversaries," he declaims (71-2). Nicholas is astounded at these "hidden things" in Gabriel, and prescribes "a good orderly diet of nothing but sack for a week together" to fully restore the "warlike humour" in him (72). Mihil, the good disciple of Burton, knows that, "Wine in it self is good . . . though the excesse be nought; and Tavernes are not contemptible, so the company be good" (61), but he is also aware (through considerable personal experience) that, in Burton's words:

Flourishing wits, and men of good parts, good fashion, and good worth, basely prostitute themselves to every rogue's company, to take tobacco and drink, to roar and sing scurrile songs in base places.

(AM 2.125)

So he gives his brother just enough wine to make his "Brain pan" go "whirley, whirley, whirley" (IV.ii; 2.72), and to make him sleep.

The hilarious scene in which Gabriel awakes believing he is a military commander surrounded by his soldiers—in reality the whores and roarers from the tavern—and under attack from an invisible enemy, turns him into a kind of Don Quixote who extols the soldierly virtues and scorns the "upstart Militaster" who knows nothing of the "Art of warre" (V.iii; 2.88). His spirited action against the imaginary foe foreshadows another Quixote-like gesture in Peregrine's attack on the backstage properties and costumes in *The Antipodes*, an action at once ridiculous, yet at the same time marking a transformation from the inactive (and impotent) scholarly melancholic to the husband capable of consummating his marriage and taking control of his life. We are not given as detailed a prognosis for Gabriel, but within the pseudo-naturalistic confines of city comedy the careful playwright dares less to "make Nature afraid" by transplanting the metamorphic potential of the cure of melancholy—an aspect readily suited to the quasi-magical world of romance—into everyday life. It is in *The Antipodes*, which shows how the dramatisation of both "real" and "imaginary" worlds are products of the same artistic process, that the gap between the romance of *The Queen's*

Exchange and the naturalism of *The Weeding of Covent Garden* is bridged.

As he directs the “battle,” Gabriel delivers a monologue on the hardware and tactics of seventeenth-century warfare which make him appear well-versed in the multitude of military treatises spawned by the literary Renaissance and the wars in Europe.⁵¹ Like Osrick and Anthynus in *The Queen’s Exchange* and Peregrine in *The Antipodes*, Gabriel ends his reverie uncertain whether or not he has been dreaming: “What’s this, a vision, sure I do aile something” (89). His father worries that he has “run mad as far as hell tother way now” (89), but Gabriel realises that he has at last come to his senses once the “wilde fury” of the wine has “abated” (93). In a lyrical description of his condition, he compares his recent state of mind to a room full of dust and detritus:

What *Babel* was a building in my braines?
 But now it turnes, and I can recollect
 The knowledge of a father, brother, Sister.
 And that a thousand vain imaginations,
 Like scatterings of light things upon the earth,
 Rushes, loose leaves, sprigs, straws, and dust
 Contracted by a whirlwinde, were blowen up,
 And lodg’d in the rich Seat of Contemplation,
 Usurping there the room of vertuous thoughts.
 Honour awake me from this Lethargie.

(90)

Gabriel has been wrenched away from his lethargic Puritan procession to Hell by an upsurge of martial fury; an icon of conventional honour has been pitted against one of conventional hypocrisy and they have annihilated each other. Affectation, a form of artifice, has cured its like: cause and symptom have become means of cure.

The question was raised earlier as to what the difference was between zealous Puritans and the swashbuckling roaring boys who have drawn Mihil and Nicholas into their midst. The answer is, in terms of the literary treatment each receives from Brome and Burton and, perhaps more surprisingly, in the light of the historical circumstances of the 1630s, very little. Burton addresses martial glory in the most ironical of terms, as did Thomas More and other humanists. His description of the “honour” of the soldier’s life follows hard on the heels of his damnation of wars and battles as “such streams of blood able to turn mills” (1.55), and as “so abominable a thing. . . , the scourge of God, cause, effect, fruit and punishment of sin” (1.58). War is a part of the condition of fallen man, and thus an aspect of melancholy. Those who glory in it he sums up thus, quoting Heuter:

They commonly call the most hair-brain bloodsuckers, strongest thieves, the most desperate villains, treacherous rogues, inhuman murderers, rash, cruel and dissolute caitiffs, courageous and generous spirits, heroic and worthy captains, brave men-at-arms, valiant and renowned soldiers, possessed with a brute persuasion of false honour.

(59-60)

He goes on to describe the activities of those who “prostitute their lives and limbs” as soldiers (and it is worth remembering that Gabriel’s “soldiers” are actual prostitutes and rogues) in a manner very similar to the militaristic ravings of Gabriel’s drunken fit.

Burton’s description of the soldier’s “desire to enter upon breaches, . . . stand in the forefront of battle, marching bravely on, with a cheerful noise of drums and trumpets, such vigor and alacrity, so many banners streaming in the air, glittering armours, motions of plumes, woods of pikes and swords, variety of colours” (60), is matched by Gabriel’s running commentary:

the able Captain leads up his men in the Head of a Troop bravely, charges with his shot, makes a stand with his Pikes, does execution with his Sword, the Cannon playing, the Drum beating, the Shot thumping, the Ensignes waving, the Armes clashing, the Aire rending, Dust and Smoke clouding, Blood running.
(V.iii; 2.89)

But compare both of the above passages to this verse from the contemporary popular song “When Cannons are Roaring,” which the Scottish soldier Robert Monro noted in his memoirs, published in 1637 after ten years’ service in Germany:

Captains in open fields,
On their foes rushing.
Gentlemen second them,
With their pikes pushing.
Engineers in the trench,
Earth, earth uprearing.
Gunpowder in the mines,
Pagans upblowing.⁵²

Soldiers like Monro, who fought with the Scots Brigade under the Danish crown and Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, represented the cause of militant “British” Protestantism in Europe at a time when it seemed that the Stuarts had abandoned the task of defending the faith against the Emperor. Beneath the swashbuckling spirit of Monro’s song lies a commitment to action contiguous with the political and social unrest generated by those groups labelled Puritan at home, which itself gave birth to a militarist stand against the crown in 1642. This in turn evolved into the highly trained and motivated New Model Army and subsequent Parliamentary victory only a few years later. Somewhat unexpectedly, then, Gabriel’s

martial litany, rather than representing apparently irreconcilable differences between the old Gabriel as roaring man-at-arms and the new precisianical Gabriel, can be seen to actually underscore the historical link between radical Protestantism and militarism that was becoming ever more apparent in the years leading up to the Civil War.⁵³

Burton, like the humanist scholars who preceded him, has nothing but scorn for war; it is a false glory “which lasts not neither, for it is but a mere flash this fame, and like a rose . . . ’tis gone in an instant” (1.60). Soldiering is only a “supposed honour” based on “pride and vainglory [which] spurs them on many times rashly and unadvisedly, to make away themselves and multitudes of others” (60). As Gabriel is cheered on by the tavern layabouts who make up his soldiery as “Right noble Colonel,” slashing the empty air to their cries of “Braver and braver still” (V.iii; 2.88), it becomes apparent that Gabriel as martial roarer is more representative of that self-love and vainglory—“valorous and fair, puffed up with this tympany of self-conceit” (*AM* 1.293)—with which Burton brands religious sectarians, than he was in his puritanical guise. But this “playacting as real-life” therapy (a cure for melancholy employed in more elaborate forms in later plays) does not see Gabriel “run mad as far as hell tother way” by substituting his puritanism for more warlike pursuits. The ease with which Burton’s condemnations of religious zealotry and martial prowess may to a certain extent be interchanged underlines the fact that both are manifestations of the same disease as well as of the same historical processes; both need curing, and Brome has his melancholic swing one way and then the other, before arriving at a position midway between the “wilde fury” of either persuasion.

The Weeding of Covent Garden establishes another link between roarers and “precisians.” It has already been noted how, since at least the time of Middleton’s *The Family of Love* (c.1604-7), sectarians were noted for their tolerance of anything from other “brethren”: “This done in civil sort among our selves, I hope, will prove no scandal to a brother,” says Gabriel (IV.ii; 2.71), as he explains away his drinking and flirting in the tavern. Brome takes this equivocation a step further by having Gabriel actually identify with the rascally Philoblathici. Nick Rooksbill explains that his “brothers” and Gabriel’s “brethren” have things in common:

we are brethren, sir, and as factious as you, though we differ in the Grounds; for you, sir, defie Orders, and so do we; you of the Church, we of the Civil Magistrate; many of us speak i’th’nose, as you do; you out of humility of spirit, we by the wantonnesse of the flesh; now in devotion we go beyond you, for you will not kneel to a ghostly

father, and we do to a carnal Mystresse.

(IV.ii; 2.71)

When we remember that part of Jonson's definition of a Puritan was one who fought "*contra magistratum*," the similarity between roarers and zealots is even more apparent. Kaufmann (who also uses the quotations cited above to support his views) argues that "such a facetious juxtaposition" has marked political overtones:

In a strongly paternalistic state with an Erastian state control of ecclesiastical issues, religious enthusiasm and roistering disorder are equally disruptive to the equilibrium of society and equally an offence against the established norms of the community.

(Kaufmann 83)

Brome does not champion the part of central authority, however, for Crosswill, the embodiment of paternalism, must become aware of his own folly as the cause of his sons' extremism. Advising them to be "neither too hot nor too cold," he admits, "I have found a fault in myself, I confesse. I will reform it, and be an indifferent father" (V.iii; 2.94). The implication, says Kaufmann, is that the paternalism of Charles I's "personal rule" must reform if it is not to encounter the reactions of the aggrieved people of England (Kaufmann 86).⁵⁴

Butler qualifies Kaufmann's view of the play "as a Jonsonian attack on extremism of behaviour" (Butler 155) by insisting that it is about "wilfulness" in many forms:

Gabriel's idea of law is balanced against that of the anarchic Philoblathici who swear obedience to their own roistering set of rules, laws which command them deliberately to defy legal authorities and commit them to lawlessness. Their motivation too is wilful opposition to other people, and, like the vapourers of *Bartholomew Fair*, they purposely quarrel among themselves.

(154)

Butler points out that by act V Gabriel has become a roarer and Mihil (who pretends to cut his hair and puts on sober clothes in order to trick his father) has taken on the puritan role, dramatising the fact that "while each 'law' excludes the claims of the others, each is really alike" (154), with "each trying to impose their will on the world around them" (155).

History, of course, comes to the aid of both arguments. On the one hand, Charles was, through his own near-sightedness, the victim of extremist reaction, while on the other, both "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads" were willing to shed each other's blood with identically raised and trained armies, in the name of their own causes. History, however, also shows that the actual difference between roarers and zealots was not as great as it may seem, and that the dramatisation of the martial lad who turns Puritan and swings back the other way again may be seen to have its basis in the socio-political situation in England in the 1630s.

Valerie Pearl makes some very pertinent observations based on the writings of the pseudonymous pamphleteer “Mercurius Civicus,” who,

looking back “on those times when this rebellion was but an embryo,” describes the Artillery Garden as a prominent centre of the secular activities of the Puritans. At first, they considered such activities profane, he says, but when they saw that “the blessed reformation intended could not be affected but by the sword . . . they began to affect, yea, and compass the chief offices of command, so that when any prime commanders died new men were elected wholly dedicated to the faction.”

(Pearl 170)

When, in 1614, the strength of the organisation which we now know as the Honourable Artillery Company—“a kind of military academy for training officers of the Trained Bands” (162)—was doubled in size to 500, the ranks were swelled by “many leading parliamentary puritans” (171). In 1630 a dispute arose over the election of officers, and when, characteristically, the crown intervened to take control, the number of puritan enrolments decreased. Nevertheless,

Military drill and sport were becoming popular recreations among the citizens, not only at the Artillery Garden but in other places about the City and suburbs. To the simple pleasure of bodily exercise was added the sterner satisfaction of performing a patriotic duty.

(172)

From 1639 the number of parliamentary puritan recruits entering the Company and the Trained Bands was again on the increase, so that when war broke out in 1642 both organisations were firmly in the hands of Parliament, and represented the militant wing, as it were, of the revolution. Suddenly, the gap between Gabriel’s affected puritan zeal and his drunken outburst of martial valour seems very small indeed, as does the difference between what he once was and what he is at the play’s opening. Valerie Pearl’s conclusion makes it clear that these extremes of behaviour are not poles apart, but at the same end of the melancholy continuum:

The Artillery Garden with its “manly” and martial exercises, and, perhaps, not far off in kind, the crowded Tavern Clubs, loud with the din of drinking and debate, were favourite haunts of the more proselytizing of the parliamentary puritans. Ardent propagandist and pleasure-seeking citizen alike—few had the kill-joy qualities given to all Puritans by later legend.

(279)

Gabriel may be presented as one of those few “kill-joys,” but in his relationship to the Brothers of the Blade and Baton in the tavern, and in his outpourings of militarism which lurk only a few cups of sack away, we see a blending of those elements of dissension on the increase amongst Brome’s own audiences.

The Burtonian concept of the universal malady of melancholy serves to unite all of these elements in a manner which is not at all removed from the historical context of the play itself. In curing Gabriel of his religious extremism, Brome also reveals those aspects which contribute to disorder, unlawfulness, dissent and dissolution in his society, whether from radical extremism or from uncontrolled wilfulness. The end product is violence, as Gabriel's outburst shows, but by confining it to a make-believe conflict within an already stage-play world, Brome demonstrates the cathartic and therapeutic qualities of the theatre in a manner which foreshadows his most complex depiction of the melancholic condition, *The Antipodes*.

II.4 Imaginary Peregrinations and Guided Tours

BROME HAD A READY-MADE concrete metaphor for the “worlds generall sicknesse,” as Donne (“An Anatomie of the World” line 240) called melancholy, in that *The Antipodes* was written during a virulent outbreak of the plague in 1636-7, the seriousness of which has largely been ignored despite over thirteen thousand deaths in London alone for those two years. As one historian bemoaned the efforts of his colleagues in treating the decade preceding the Civil War: “Pages for ship money, not a word for pestilence!”⁵⁵ Added to the sights, sounds and smells of misery and suffering was the curtailment and cancellation of public events by the Privy Council to prevent the spread of contagion. Naturally, this included the closure of the theatres, but the duration of the ban was a particularly long one—from 12 May 1636 to 2 October 1637—and became a source of considerable personal discomfiture to professional playwright, Richard Brome.⁵⁶ Even those not usually predisposed to melancholy now had good reason to feel so, but in Brome’s case yet another excuse was provided through the failure of the Salisbury Court Theatre company (Queen Henrietta’s Men), to which he had been contracted since July 1635, to maintain the payment of fifteen shillings weekly to which his contract entitled him. For his part, Brome was expected to supply the company with three plays a year for the three years’ duration of the contract, but he had managed to deliver only two plays—one a success, one apparently not—before the theatres were closed. Now, with its source of revenue dried up, the Salisbury Court company ceased payment of Brome’s salary.⁵⁷

One other event which must have affected Brome personally was the death on 6 August 1637 of his former master, Ben Jonson. To the playwrights and poets who had looked to him for so much inspiration, the old man’s passing, after years of confinement due to a stroke, his last efforts for the stage poorly received, and he himself largely forgotten, must have seemed a particularly unjust end.⁵⁸ Although long since out of Jonson’s service, Brome had basked in the glory of being publicly addressed as “my loving Friend” by the great man, who acknowledged Brome’s service as a time of “Prentice-ship” in the dramatic arts. As Jonson himself wrote of Brome’s efforts in his dedication to *The Northern Lasse*:

And you doe them well, with good applause,

Which you have justly gained from the Stage,
By observation of those Comick Lawes
Which I, your *Master*, first did teach the age.⁵⁹

Brome, more than anyone, would have forgiven the way the praise was mingled with an old man's folly.

Jonson's death may have been the last straw, for we find that it was in "aboute the Moneth of August [1637]" that Brome

by necessitie constrained and being left in such distres and want [afo]resaid by [the Salisbury Court Theatre company's] sole defaults did repaire vnto the said William Beeston . . . and acquainted him with his then *present* case and Condicon whoe then lent this defend^t Six pounds at his need vpon this defend^{ts} Agreement to compose and write a play for the Cockpitt Company[.]⁶⁰

William Beeston, a personal friend of Brome's, was, with his father, Christopher, manager of the King and Queen's Young Company at the Cockpit, or Phoenix, Theatre. Although it meant breaching his contract with the Salisbury Court—and legal action did result—Brome repaid Beeston's kindness with one, and perhaps two, plays. The one we know of for certain is *The Antipodes*.⁶¹

The circumstances surrounding the composition of the play suggest that Brome had the opportunity to reflect upon his world in a way that he had not been able to before, caught up as he ordinarily would have been in the hurly-burly of professional theatre life. It is a tribute to his comic vision of the world that he saw in the plague, his own wretched situation, and the death of Jonson the opportunity to write not a gloomy tragi-comedy or a wistful romance, but a play whose central dramatic device is a celebration of the therapeutic and festive functions of the theatre, reaffirming its place in society in the face of enforced closures.

The major action of *The Antipodes* is "to cure," and the objects of the curative process are made clear from the outset. Blaze's welcome to Joyless establishes a bond linking all the elements present in the theatre, and their need to be restored to health:

To me, and to the city, sir, you are welcome,
And so are all about you: we have long
Suffer'd in want of such fair company.
But now that time's calamity has given way
(Thanks to high Providence) to your kinder visits,
We are (like half pin'd wretches that have lain
Long on the planks of sorrow, strictly tied
To a forc'd abstinence from the sight of friends)
The sweetlier fill'd with joy.

(I.i.1-9)

The speech immediately evokes the melancholy atmosphere brought on by the plague and the

closure of the theatres, tying together the plight of the acting company with that of the audience. Joyless, whose very name undermines Blaze's warm greeting (and is a pun on "jealous," indicating the particular form of melancholy from which he suffers) talks of "the sad number of my family" (11), linking the characters of the play with the general atmosphere of gloom brought on by the recent plague. Blaze's assurance that all will be well serves both as a forecast of the play's comic resolution and as a "policy statement" about the function of the theatre in society:

Be comforted, good sir; my house, which now
You may be pleas'd to call your own, is large
Enough to hold you all; and for your sorrows,
You came to lose 'em[.]

(12-15)

Brome quite literally makes the theatre ("my house") large enough to contain the whole of London, or at least its antipodean equivalent, but there is another aspect to this blurring of the distinctions between audience and actors, between role-playing and real life, which is consistent with the aims of humanist writers.

Sometime before 1608 Joseph Hall, a latter-day Erasmian and the author of *Mundus Alter et Idem*, wrote, in a letter concerning the correction of vice:

I am deceived, if in this cause God allow any man for private. *Here must be all actors, no witnesses.* His discreet admonitions, seasonable reproofs, and prayers never unseasonable, beside the power of honest example, are expected as his due tribute to the common health. What if we cannot turn the stream; yet we must swim against it. Even without conquest, it is glorious to have resisted. In this alone, *they are enemies that do nothing.*⁶²

This passage, aside from expressing what may be termed the public role of the humanist scholar and poet, also reveals the demands that their art makes upon readers and audiences. The audience member who sees in a work such as *The Antipodes* "much mirth, but little else," as Pepys did in 1661,⁶³ is, to the humanist writer, merely another kind of *idiotes*—in this case a fool who laughs at the grotesquerie and inversion, but does not think why he or she laughs. Such a person does not contribute to the "common health," being a mere witness to the scene and not a participant in the action. Those who do not bring their wit and judgement into play during the performance really may prove inimical to the playwright's purposes, as Jonson felt when he railed against unthinking audiences as "the beast, the multitude" (*Discoveries* 3281). In a similar vein, Brome must have felt that he was flying in the face of "the dear daintiness" of "opinion" (*Ant Prol.* 1-2) in presenting a play which attempted to bring theatregoers face to

face with a side of themselves which they might not have wanted to consider too deeply. Nevertheless, he had the comfort of knowing that his play was part of a learned tradition that placed it above the prating of Robert Chamberlain's "idiots."⁶⁴

The specific object of the cure is Joyless's son, Peregrine, who suffers from yet another manifestation of melancholy. Once again, Brome draws upon Burtonian theories of the disease, while at the same time exploiting some of the contradictions present in the *Anatomy* in order to increase the range and depth of the *joco-serium* in which the play indulges. Peregrine makes his "studious stage melancholic" entrance carrying an edition of the travels of Sir John Mandeville, the popular and influential 14th century traveller's tale which, for many of its readers, served a function similar to that of science fiction today. However, like the stalwart UFO-watcher eagerly awaiting his own close encounter, Peregrine takes Mandeville at face value, longing for the day when he will travel abroad and see at first hand the monsters and marvels of which he has read.⁶⁵ Whether or not Peregrine's travel fixation as a comic *primum mobile* deserves to be called "quite original" (Kaufmann 64), it does allow *The Antipodes* to make use of the utopian mode—itsself a parody of the traveller's tale—in order to radiate the play's curative action out into its audience, while at the same time raising questions about the kinds of scholarly self-absorption which may be at one and the same time a cause, an object, and a product of works such as *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Burton makes much of the plight of the scholar, who, locked away with his books and notes, may feel at odds with the world, or lose sight of that "*summum bonum*, of Epicurus, . . . not to grieve, but to want cares and have a quiet soul" (*AM* 2.102). It was as a remedy for his own scholarly melancholy that Burton took up writing the *Anatomy* in the first place, "to ease my mind by writing; for I had . . . a kind of imposthume in my head, which I was very desirous to be unladen of" (1.21) But *The Antipodes* makes such close use of Burton's intention to "make an antidote out of that which was the prime cause of my disease" (21), in its portrayal and cure of the scholarly melancholic who is both untravelled and inexperienced—at first hand—in the ways of the world, that it serves as a plausible early form of examination of the motivational psychology behind the writer of the *Anatomy* as it does for the hero of the play. Thus the influence of Burton's work on Brome's is reflected back onto the earlier work with considerable consequences for a reading of both.

One of the means of “recreation” which might ease the melancholy condition Burton describes thus:

Methinks it would please any man to look upon a geographical map, . . . to behold, as it were, all the remote provinces, towns, cities of the world, and never to go forth of the limits of his study. . . . What greater pleasure can there now be, than to view those elaborate maps of Ortelius. . . . To peruse those books of cities. . . ? To read those exquisite descriptions of Maginus, Munster . . . etc.? Those famous expeditions of Christoph. Columbus, Americus Vespuccius, Marcus Polus . . . etc.? Those accurate diaries of Portugals, Hollanders, . . . Hakluyt’s Voyages. . . ?
(2.89)

Brome turns Burton’s rapture into Peregrine’s ravings, making this form of recreation the source of all his character’s troubles, as his father describes:

In tender years he always lov’d to read
Reports of travels and of voyages;
And when young boys like him would tire themselves
With sports and pastimes, and restore their spirits
Again by meat and sleep, he would whole days
And nights (sometimes by stealth) be on such books
As might convey his fancy round the world.

(*Ant* I.ii.34-40)

The travels of Mandeville are conspicuously absent from Burton’s litany of recreative works, but the use by Brome of the “popular old collection of cock-and-bull stories about far countries” (Andrews 117) highlights the fuzziness of the borderline between that which might cure, and that which might turn a harmless folly into a disease.

Burton’s own attitude to travel is similarly ambiguous. In a long chapter entitled “Air rectified. With a digression of the Air” (2.34-69), he takes an imaginary trip across the world, flying over it like Lucian’s Menippus and proposing to solve many of the earth’s mysteries from his airy vantage point. He says that there is “no better physic for a melancholy man than change of air and variety of places, to travel abroad and see fashions” (2.67). This is also Dr Hughball’s prescription for Peregrine, who will undertake his own imaginary journey in order to discover some things about himself. Peregrine is not, however, to become the so-called “Italianate” traveller much satirised from Shakespeare’s Jaques to E. M. Forster’s Cecil Vyse, and the model for the malcontent who brings back idle foreign fashions and is cynical, restless, and discontented: “[happy] neither at home nor abroad, . . . he wanders and lives besides himself” (I.245). This would be substituting one kind of melancholy for another, in the way that Nick Rooksbill wants to feed Gabriel’s martial tendencies on a diet of sack. Burton recognised that love and religion have their dark sides (he devotes much of his Third

Partition to this dialectic), but so too does the longing to travel, as other humanist writers such as Joseph Hall had pointed out.⁶⁶ They, and Burton, warn against “foolish curiosity” which leads to “tedious journeys”; in the forefront of our minds must be the question “*cui bono?* to what end?” (I.368).⁶⁷ Peregrine’s initial travel fixation causes him to abrogate his family responsibilities, and his restlessness aligns him, in spirit, with the malcontent. Like Gabriel, he is not consciously affected or hypocritical, but one of the symptoms of his illness is a *contemptus* of everyday matters worthy of the most jaded of characters from Marston or Chapman. His unsatisfied curiosity links him, whether Burton would acknowledge the comparison or not, with the narrator of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Democritus Junior himself, and so Peregrine must follow Democritus Junior in his “Digression of Air”—and his classical antecedent Menippus in Lucian’s *Icaromenippus*—and travel for his health’s sake and that of the society to which he must return.

Joyless worries over his son not because he has turned into a bookish swot instead of a roaring boy, but because of the young man’s withdrawal from the affairs of the real world. Although married off to a girl named Martha three years ago, “hoping that would call / In his extravagant thoughts” (I.ii.49-50), he has so far not consummated the marriage. That this in turn has generated a melancholy sickness in Martha seems of no concern to Peregrine, whose *wanderlust* has supplanted desires of a more basic kind. The medievalist would claim that Peregrine was suffering from *acedia* or “accidie,” a sin committed by “contemplatives,” and thus scholars, characterised by a “weariness of spirit, indifference to salvation, despair, and a tendency to be busy about everything except their proper task” (Lyons 6). For Peregrine, the “everything” is thoughts of travel, which have usurped his proper tasks as a member of the Joyless family and of the world at large. Renaissance humanism had absorbed the concept of *acedia*, linking it to classical ideas of melancholy, and Giovanni Bellini had painted Acedia as “a brooding figure in a drifting boat” (Lyons 6). It does not take much of an imaginative leap to replace Acedia with Peregrine, drifting along on his imaginary voyages while his responsibilities as son, husband and London citizen float past.

Peregrine’s obsession with the more fanciful aspects of travel is somewhat like the court’s preoccupation with outlandish and romantic fashions and fads adopted by Queen Henrietta Maria and her circle—tastes which by the time he wrote *The Antipodes* Brome puns that he

“cannot court” (Prol.1). Peregrine’s fascination for Mandeville, a work so bowdlerised in the three hundred-odd years since its first appearance that it had become a byword in the seventeenth century for all that was unbelievable in stories of travel and exploration, is an aspect of his contempt for “homebred subjects.”⁶⁸ When Dr Hughball asks Peregrine what he thinks of Drake, “our famous countryman,” Peregrine is very dismissive:

Drake was a didapper to Mandeville.
Candish, and Hawkyns, Furbisher, all our voyagers
Went short of Mandeville.⁶⁹

(I.vi.30-2)

Peregrine aligns himself with those whom Brome condemns in the Prologue to *The Antipodes*:

That count all slight that’s under us, or nigh,
And only those for worthy subjects deem,
Fetch’d, or reach’d at (at least) from far or high,
When low or homebred subjects have their use
As well as those fetch’d from on high or far[.]

(Prol.22-6)

Peregrine’s dismissal of the exploits of English explorers for the unfounded claims of Mandeville, who “reach’d / To this place here—yes, here—this wilderness, / And seen the trees of the sun and moon” (I.vi.32-34) is a symptom of his *acedia*-like state, where his imaginative sights are set so high that he no longer sees the relevance of the achievements of his own society to his life. Peregrine’s affliction has become a metaphor for the malaise present amongst the leadership of Brome’s England. The nation’s continued health depends upon finding a means to channel the energy being poured into the fanciful pursuits and extravagant tastes of the court circle—exemplified in the “glorious” plays of Davenant, Suckling and others from which Brome disassociates himself (Prol.29)—into activities more beneficial to the commonwealth at large. Peregrine’s perception, at least, will be redirected to a more realistic level as Dr Hughball takes him literally to a world “that’s under us,” to circumnavigate his own imagination, and to end up “As far short of a competent reason as / He was of late beyond it” (IV.xiii.6-7). Hughball, in keeping with Burtonian therapeutic and diagnostic theory, is able to make use of the very object of Peregrine’s fixation, Mandeville, to achieve this goal.

Douglas Duncan discusses the kataskopic nature of Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*—of the way Lucifer and his attendant devils look down on Faustus as he makes the compact with

Mephostophilis, and how the latter leads the jaded scholar to where he in turn can look down upon the activities of mankind. The image of the scholar being conducted about by a kind of “controlling deity” serves, says Duncan, “to illustrate the distinction between uncommitted knowledge and the power which can be achieved by turning knowledge into action” (Duncan 112). Viewed in this light, there is a distinctly Faustian quality to *The Antipodes*. Peregrine, having filled himself with knowledge of a particular kind, is given the opportunity to apply that knowledge by means of a guide with special “inside information.” Brome could have given to any one of the three characters—Letoy, Hughball or Peregrine—Faustus’s own lines:

Then read no more: thou hast attained that end.
 A greater subject fitteth Faustus’ wit.
 Bid *on cai me on* farewell. And Galen, come.
 Seeing, *ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus*.

(*Faustus* I.i.10-13)⁷⁰

Indeed, for Peregrine, it literally is a case of “where the philosopher leaves off, the doctor begins.” Like Marlowe’s Lucifer, Letoy sits above the action of Peregrine’s cure while his attendant “spirits”—Blaze, Barbara and the actors of his troupe—hurry about doing his bidding (so that there is also a structural affinity between the two plays, in the way each one sets up concentric circles of participation and spectatorship).⁷¹ And like Mephostophilis, Hughball seems to turn up from a strange and forbidding nether world—“th’ Antipodes, / That which is farthest distant, foot to foot / Against our region” (I.vi.86-8)—to act as Letoy’s chief agent in the imaginary journey that will bring about Peregrine’s restoration to health.

This connection between Hell and the Antipodes is not so far-fetched as it may at first sound. Both Marlowe and Brome are quick to point out that a world in which human folly turns “right behaviour” on its head is no place of joy, and that, in fact, one need travel no further than a few paces to find such a world. Thus Faustus asks, “How comes it then that thou art out of hell?”; Mephostophilis answers, “Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it” (I.iii.75-6). And again, a little later:

[FAUSTUS]: Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?
 MEPHOSTOPHILIS: Under the heavens.
 FAUSTUS: Ay, so are all things else; but whereabouts?
 MEPHOSTOPHILIS: Within the bowels of these elements,
 Where we are tortured and remain forever.
 Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
 In one self place. But where we are is hell,
 And where hell is there must we ever be.

(I.v.119-26)

beyond. As Hughball assures Letoy, all those coming to watch the play-within-the-play will be “not alone / Spectators, but (as we will carry it) actors” (II.i.42-3). The performance organised ostensibly for Peregrine’s benefit will actually have many levels of observer, many types of participant, and, hopefully, many cures.

Hughball’s claim to Joyless that he will effect Peregrine’s “speedy cure without the help of Galen,/ Hippocrates, Avicen, or Dioscorides” (I.vi.12-3) seems a deliberate attempt to ally himself with the controversial physician, Paracelsus. Sir Epicure Mammon had made similar claims for Subtle in Jonson’s *The Alchemist*: “An excellent Paracelsian! . . . / . . . He will not hear a word / Of Galen, or his tedious recipes” (II.iii.230; 232-3). Burton uses the “name of Paracelsus more than fifty times in the *Anatomy*,” but “does not altogether approve of him.”⁷³ Nevertheless, there are very close parallels between Hughball’s boast and Burton’s description of Paracelsus as “deriding in the meantime Hippocrates, Galen, and all their followers” (*AM* 2.15), and claiming that “he did more famous cures by this means than all the Galenists in Europe” (2.240). The “means” to which Burton refers were the efforts of Paracelsus to seek “a specific remedy for a specific disease,” usually by the use of chemicals from which he tried to extract the “healing virtue” (Babb, *Sanity* 67). Now while we are told that Hughball “sends few recipes to th’apothecaries,” relying more on “medicine of the mind” (I.i.23-4), he does seem to be an advocate of the Paracelsian principle of applying “like to like” (*Sanity* 67) in his treatment of Peregrine.

Burton is wary of the Paracelsian belief that the successful physician should be “a magician, a chemist, a philosopher, an astrologer” (*AM* 2.15), censuring magic and other such “unlawful” cures (2.5-8), and maintaining that some “iatromathematical professors”—that is, those, like Paracelsus, who advocate astrological methods in their cures—“are too superstitious in my judgment” (16). There is, however, both literary precedent and considerable dramatic potential in having a doctor with something of each of these Paracelsian attributes. The problem with Joyless’s attempt to cure his son’s melancholy is that the remedy is not specific enough to the disease:

we had hope a wife
Might have restrain’d his travelling thoughts, and so
Have been a means to cure him, but it fail’d us[,]

(I.ii.26-8)

he explains; but Hughball takes the more radical step of restoring Peregrine to health by

indulging him further in the very thing that caused his condition in the first place. In one bold stroke, the doctor demonstrates his awareness of the Paracelsian principle of curing like with like; of the astrological implications of dealing with a true “child of Saturn” (of which more later); of the Neoplatonist philosophical view that melancholy may be raised to a higher, more “heroic” plane; and of the need for a little magic—albeit of the sleight of hand variety rather than any use of the black arts—to effect a cure. Lucian’s Menippus seeks out Mithrobarzanes, “an expert in Zoroastrian magic,” who utters spells and designs a ritualistic regimen by which the philosopher gains his desired entry into Hades (*Satirical Sketches* 100-2). Faustus summons forth Mephostophilis, who with his hellish powers, and Lucifer’s say-so, allows the scholar to “see what magic can perform” (*Faustus* I.v.84). Peregrine is provided by Letoy with Dr Hughball, whose skills and guidance are to be at the young man’s service:

Say, Master Peregrine, will you travel now
With me to the Antipodes, or has not
The journey wearied you in the description?

(I.vi.206-8)

asks Hughball. Peregrine, like Menippus and Faustus, has the opportunity to turn his learning into experience, and he seizes it: “No, I could hear you a whole fortnight, but / Let’s lose no time”(209-10). Although Peregrine embarks upon his descent into the “underworld” somewhat less aware of what is ultimately in store for him than are Menippus and Faustus, he will be rewarded much more positively than his literary antecedents.

Hughball indulges in a little bogus magic by giving Peregrine a sleeping potion from which he will awake thinking he has been on an eight-month voyage. Peregrine will in fact wake after twelve hours’ sleep, believing he has arrived in the Antipodes. The illusion is to be maintained through a series of scenes which Letoy’s own troupe of actors will play out, representing life in “Anti-London.” The historical origins of the trick seem to lie in a tale often repeated by humanist authors concerning Philip the Good of Burgundy. When he was wandering about incognito through the streets of Bruges one night, Philip came across a “country fellow” lying in a deep drunken sleep. Getting some of his men to bring the sleeper back to the palace, the Duke had his victim attired in courtly fashion and, once awake, “served in state all the day long.” The next evening the unwary bumpkin, once more in a drunken stupor, was divested of his rich garments and put back exactly where he had been found. Upon waking, the poor man swore he “had seen a vision, constantly believed it, would not

otherwise be persuaded" (*AM* 2.85-6).

The story is recounted by Burton, but he in turn drew from accounts by Heuter and Vives. It is very likely that Philip the Good's story inspired the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, and certainly Joseph Hall found a use for it in his own imaginary traveller's tale, *Mundus Alter et Idem*.⁷⁴ Hall turns the story into a vehicle for satirising certain types of religious devotion, in that the trick is used on pilgrims to the shrine of the goddess Fortune in the land of Moronia. The victim drinks from the cup of sleeping potion and is feted like royalty after waking; the sleeping draught is readministered and the "poore twelve-houres King"—the very time-span echoed by Brome—is summarily dumped outside in his former rags, "somewhat more sluttish than before" (*Discovery* 205). Hall's account, like much of his *Mundus Alter et Idem*, leaves rather a sour taste in the reader's mouth. The narrator of the journey (who signs himself in the original Latin as "Peregrinus quondam Academicus") tells us that the trick is performed with "arts Quintessence," but it is an art which is kept so secret,

that though no man passe this triall, that is not made an Asse, yet every one had rather blame his owne slothfulnesse or incredulity, then once glance at any imperfection in the power of the Goddesse.

(201)

The result is self-doubt and continued reliance upon superstitious beliefs; but in Peregrine's case, the mystery is not to be perpetuated. Letoy bids their mutual friend Truelock to

Go, then, and possess him
(Now he is sensible) how things have gone,
What art, what means, what friends have been employ'd
In his rare cure; and win him, by degrees,
To sense of where he is.

(*Ant* V.viii.41-5)

This openness about the means of Peregrine's cure exemplifies Brome's attempts to achieve fresh results from familiar or well-established—and sometimes even clichéd—comic tropes. Peregrine does not return to his old life deluded and disappointed, and neither, given his "heroic" outburst against what he perceives to be the injustices of Anti-London, will he continue to be the scholarly recluse of the play's early scenes. Rather, he has undergone a re-birth, and it is the folly of his old life which is made to seem unreal and inappropriate to his new status:

I am what you are pleas'd to make me; but withal so ignorant of mine own condition: whether I sleep, or wake, or talk, or dream; whether I be, or be not; or if I am, whether I do, or do not anything; for I have had (if I now wake) such dreams, and been so far transported in a long and tedious voyage of sleep, that I may fear my

manners can acquire no welcome where men understand themselves.
(V.x.2-8)

Peregrine's very uncertainty is a sign of growing self-knowledge. As the old Peregrine, deluded by travel stories, he had a pat answer to everything, usually drawn from his volume of Mandeville. Now, if he really is to join a world where people do "understand themselves," he must come to terms with all the doubts which reason throws in the path of the thinking person. Philip the Good's poor bumpkin swears he saw a vision; the newly aware Peregrine cannot say for sure.

The symbolic and emblematic aspects of Peregrine's affliction are given further weight when looked at in terms of traditional astrological and cosmographical theories. Saturn had long been established as the planet presiding over the melancholy state, but largely through the writings of Arab scholars who put their own interpretations on classical literature, medieval Europe had come to accept a number of other "saturnine" associations.⁷⁵ Some of these may be seen in the frontispiece added to the third edition of the *Anatomy* (1628), with an explication in the form of verses called "The Argument of the Frontispiece." (1.7-10). The sign of Saturn hovers above the figure of "old" Democritus, the so-called "laughing philosopher," in one picture, and in another, the figure of Hypochondriacus appears, bent in pain and surrounded by an assortment of "pots and glasses" from the apothecary, beneath "Saturn's aspects." Thus Saturn, Lord of Melancholy, may be regarded as the guiding force behind the two dominant motives that drive *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, *The Antipodes*, and all other so-called "Menippean" satire,⁷⁶ motives which are at the same time both conflicting and complementary. One of these is the compulsion to stand back and laugh at the folly of the world, while the other is the desperate need to seek a cure for the ills that bring about this folly, the pain of which is felt by none more acutely than the writer himself. Burton frequently invokes the name of Heraclitus, the "weeping philosopher," as a counterpoint to the Democritus persona, when a folly or a vice under discussion is clearly becoming more than even the supposedly detached narrator can bear.⁷⁷

Another area over which Saturn was said to preside was travel, especially journeys by sea. In a passage where Democritus Junior acknowledges his origins, we can see just how closely Peregrine may be identified with Burtonian characteristics:

I never travelled but in map or card, in which my unconfined thoughts have freely expatiated, as having ever been especially delighted with the study of cosmography.

Saturn was the Lord of my geniture[.]

(1.18)

It also comes as no surprise, given Peregrine's treatment of Martha, to find that the influence of Saturn was also regarded as "generally inimical to love" (Lyons 4), and that its sign does not appear above the figure in the frontispiece labelled "Inamorato." Obviously the saturnine character had more important things to consider than lutes and books of poetry.

A major area of Saturn's influence was said to lie in political authority, both in its benign and tyrannical manifestations. In *The Antipodes* Peregrine, unable to sit idly by any longer while the antipodean reversals are played out before him, invades the backstage area and begins, as we hear from the actor, Byplay, by surveying the stage properties in the "tiring-house." Significantly, the inventory begins with "Our statues and our images of gods, our planets and our constellations" (III.vi.5). Byplay then describes in mock-heroic terms the amazing scene of Peregrine hacking away at masks of devils, capturing puppets, and knocking down the "jigambobs and trinkets," to eventually crown himself with a property "diadem" as king of the Antipodes. The speech has strong echoes of tyrannous and bloody deeds depicted in earlier chronicle plays. For example, when Byplay denies knowledge of Peregrine's motives for the attack with the words, "I dive not to his thoughts" (14), we are reminded of the point at which Richard of Gloucester ceases his evil musing and sets about achieving the crown: "Dive, thoughts, down to my soul" (*R3* I.i.41), suggesting something of the darker side of the Saturnine influence over authority, with Macchiavellian overtones of the expediency which must govern a prince's actions. However, the words used to describe Peregrine's martial prowess:

When on the sudden, with thrice knightly force,
And thrice, thrice puissant arm he snatcheth down
The sword and shield that I play'd Bevis with,

(*Ant* III.vi.16-18)

are drawn from the language with which the young Henry V is exhorted to make his rightful claim upon the former English possessions in France:

Awake remembrance of these valiant dead,
And with your puissant arm renew their feats.
You are their heir, you sit upon their throne,
The blood and courage that renowned them
Runs in your veins; and my thrice puissant liege
Is in the very May-morn of his youth,
Ripe for exploits and mighty enterprises.

(*H5* I.ii.115-21)

Peregrine's intervention is given a historical validation which is clearly linked to notions of strong leadership and the nation's pride and well-being. His almost ritualistic enactment of knightly *furor*—comical as it may be on one level—marks a pivotal stage in the process of his cure. Pacified at last by Dr Hughball, Peregrine resolves to use his newly-won power “to reduce the manners / Of this country to his own” (III.vi.35-6), in other words, to turn disagreeable antipodean habits the right way up, setting in motion the more benign aspects of Saturn's influence on politics. That the cure is reaching some kind of a turning point is further emphasised in the way Peregrine's actions mark a substitution of part of the Saturnine condition with other planetary attributes: that of Jupiter—kingly ambition and the desire for honour—and of Mars—boldness, resolution and bravery.⁷⁸ Peregrine is achieving, gradually, what the Neoplatonists called “heroic” melancholy, a state in which “the black bile's heat is relaxed towards a mean,” making the melancholic “in many respects superior to others in culture or in the arts or in statesmanship” (Lyons 3-4).

The duality of the Renaissance approach to melancholy is evident in the *Anatomy's* prescription of study as a means of overcoming idle melancholy. Burton pays homage to Neoplatonic ideas of “higher contemplation” while at the same time advancing the case for his own lifelong immersion in the world of books. Not surprisingly, his own preferences and prejudices emerge, particularly, it would seem, in his warnings against an over-indulgence in “play-books, idle poems, jests . . . etc. Such [who do] many times prove in the end as mad as Don Quixote” (2.93). *The Antipodes* both re-reads and, to a certain extent, subverts the *Anatomy* by inverting Burton's own advice and admonitions. Not only does the play dramatise Burton's warning by including an incident immediately reminiscent of the scene in which Quixote attacks the puppets, but it also calls that warning into question by the ironical nature of the whole dramatic curative action. Brome has made Burton's own beloved travel literature the cause of an advanced melancholic state in his hero, while the cure for that state is to be found in the very “play-books” which the scholar so waspishly dismisses as unworthy of serious consideration.⁷⁹ Brome has come, very adeptly, to the defence of his own livelihood, while making a positive statement about the place of the theatre and dramatic literature in society. Rosalie Colie has drawn attention to the picaresque nature of the *Anatomy*; Burton's own fixation with travel, in the form of imaginary journeys around the real

world, is a reflection of the voyage he really undertakes, which goes “about the imaginary world, or the world of the imagination” (Colie 452). In the process, she says that Burton is like Quixote in that he assimilates landscape “to mood, to inward need” (453). How fitting it is, then, that Peregrine, the melancholic who by the nature of his illness projects his own imagination into the landscape, “fleshing out,” as it were, the Anti-London scenes of Letoy’s actors, should re-enact a scene from Cervantes’ picaresque novel. If, in its construction which is like the randomness of real experience, the *Anatomy* fits the *Bildungsroman* tradition, as Colie maintains (452), then so does *The Antipodes*, in its collection of “experiences” in Anti-London which lead to the growth of Peregrine as responsible husband and heir.

Hall’s pilgrim, Mercurius Britannicus, sets sail for *Terra Australis* aboard a ship called “The Fancie,”⁸⁰ Peregrine’s voyage is even more metaphorical; he is carried “down to the Antipodes / . . . but in a dream” (I.vii.15-16). Nevertheless, when Hughball bids him to “Speak like a traveller” (II.iv.25), Peregrine has no hesitation in giving a seven-line description of the descent into the heat of the southern hemisphere (26-32), to which even the doctor shows his astonishment in an aside: “Well-wrought potion!— / Very well observ’d, sir” (II.iv.32-3). There are two modes of discourse engaged here, illustrating the major strands of the literary heritage from which the Caroline poet could confidently draw. The humanist strain is evident in the *joco-serium* of making use of the traveller’s tale for serious purposes while at the same time calling the validity of the genre into question. Peregrine’s description implies that a good sailor’s yarn can be made up virtually in one’s sleep, so that, as Lucian says of his own *True History*, the things described are “entirely outside my own experience or anyone else’s, things that have no reality whatever and never could have” (*Satirical Sketches* 250). The second strain stems from the process, already well-developed by Brome’s time, of incorporating fantasy and romance into the native dramatic tradition. Brome himself had drawn upon this tradition in *The Queen’s Exchange* and *The Queen and Concubine*, but its acme had already been reached in the late plays of Shakespeare. Indeed, the quintessential expression of the experience of Peregrine (and of other characters cured of their melancholy in Brome’s plays), as he awakes to a new world and a new self, may be found in Prospero’s prescription:

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

(*Temp* IV.i.156-8)

Peregrine's description of his journey may well be set upon what Prospero calls "the baseless fabric of this vision" (151), but the outcome is intended to have a real effect upon the framing "life" of Brome's characters, and upon his audiences, who awake from the "little life" experienced in the theatre to resume their roles in the wider sphere which Raleigh called "this stage-play world."⁸¹ Peregrine's cure involves a descent into a dream world, but though at last the dream dissolves, the effect of the cure remains. Barbara describes the happy couple, Peregrine and Martha, when at last their marriage has been consummated:

His kingship and her queenship are forgotten,
And all their melancholy and his travels pass'd,
And but suppos'd their dreams.

(V.viii.31-3)

There is a marked parallel between this description of Peregrine's reunification with his wife and his "post-operative" ignorance of his "own condition," and Erasmus's description of the transcendent state caused by love—a kind of mix of the Platonic notions of erotic and religious *furor*:

when they have come to they say they don't know where they have been, in the body or outside it, awake or asleep. They cannot remember what they have heard or seen or said or done, except in a mist, like a dream.⁸²

The difference is that while Folly says that those who experience this state lament "their return to reason" (*Praise of Folly* 208), Peregrine's return to reason is not a denial of the imaginative experience; the experience itself has resulted in a transformation. Peregrine has undergone a metamorphosis from a debilitating melancholy state to one more akin to the "heroic melancholy" of the Neoplatonists. The young heir is now fit to claim his inheritance, and to stand as an exemplar and champion of his family, the audience, and society.

The Antipodes exposes and cures another manifestation of melancholy in a comprehensive manner. Peregrine's father, Joyless, has married the much younger Diana, and Brome takes advantage of this "May-December" relationship to explore jealousy. Burton warns that jealousy

for the latitude it hath, and that prerogative above other ordinary symptoms, it ought to be treated of as a species apart, being of so great and eminent note, so furious a passion, and almost of as great extent as love itself,

(*AM* 3.257)

dealing with it at length in his Third Partition as a very destructive force needing “good counsel and persuasion” (289) if it is to be kept in check. In similar tones, Dr Hughball advises Joyless:

Be govern'd sir; your jealousy will grow
A worse disease than your son's madness else.

(I.vi.202-3)

Letoy feels that he must “step into the action” if Joyless and Diana are to be helped (although one of the underlying reasons for this drastic step is withheld from the audience until almost the end). His decision to do so aligns well with Babb's summary of Burton's approach to dealing with the melancholic:

The physician or the patient's friends must take all possible steps to set the patient's mind at rest. Indeed he who wishes to aid a melancholy man cannot confine himself to pharmaceutical and dietary measures; he may have to intervene in the most intimate affairs of the patient's life.⁸³

In fact, in keeping with Hall's exhortation that “Here must be all actors, no witnesses,” Letoy is quite willing to mingle his own most intimate affairs with those of Joyless in order to effect a cure.

Hughball and Letoy induce a state akin to adust melancholy in Joyless. This is achieved with the collusion of Diana:

[DOCTOR.]

I have instructed her
To spur his jealousy off o'the legs.

LETOY.

And I will help her in't.

(II.i.37-9)

By the end of act IV, Joyless is beside himself with jealousy as his wife leaves with Letoy: “I both wait, and watch; / Never was man so master'd by his match” (IV.xiii.53-4). It has already been noted that Jonson died at a time when *The Antipodes* was probably nearing completion.⁸⁴ It seems that Brome was moved to deriving inspiration from one of his old master's most successful plays, for he dramatises jealousy in a manner suggesting Corvino's reactions to his young wife, Celia, in Jonson's *Volpone*, and he employs to most teasing effect a scene borrowed from her attempted seduction by Volpone.

At the beginning of act V Joyless is seen stalking about Letoy's house with “a light in his hand.” His opening speech makes it clear that he himself is embarking on a kind of fantastic journey of descent as he seeks out the guilty pair. Unlike Peregrine, however, Joyless as yet

has no guide to make his journey profitable, and he blunders his way about:

Diana! Ho! Where are you? She is lost.
Here is no further passage. All's made fast.

(V.i.1-2)

As he speaks on, the voyage image becomes more pronounced:

Why then seek I?

Why, rather, if he did intend my shame
And her dishonour, did he not betray me
From her out of this house, to travel in
The bare suspicion of their filthiness[.]

(6 and 10-13)

His desperate cry at the end of the speech conjures up Iago's "beast with two backs" (*Oth* I.i.117):

May my hot curses on their melting pleasures
Cement them so together in their lust
That they may never part, but grow one monster[.]

(*Ant* V.i.17-19)

and one which would do justice to Mandeville or any other old traveller's tale; but Joyless is descending into a mad world of his own making. As Ruth Fox points out, Burton regards jealousy as the "equivocation of love"; it is the picture of "love as hate" (Fox 166). Jealousy turns legitimised love—which is a formative element of civilisation—into a "tyranny over one's fellow men" (167), producing "bastardized images of nations and families" (168). The continuation of passionate melancholy into the married state causes, according to Burton, "an unspeakable torment, a hellish torture, an infernal plague" (3.264), reinforcing the "hell on earth" image expressed by Diana about living with a jealous husband. In painting his monster-picture, Joyless himself is projecting Ariosto's description of Jealousy as a "mirth-marring monster" (quoted in *AM* 3.264) onto the objects of his passion. His meeting with Barbara is a farcical case of mistaken apprehension, for as she describes the consummation of Peregrine's and Martha's marriage, he believes she talks of Letoy's and Diana's illicit liaison. Barbara's retort, "Sure his joy / Has madded him" (V.ii.19-20), is all the more ironic, for it is, of course, his joylessness which is making him mad. Byplay, the skilled improviser, appears and offers to play Mephostophilis to Joyless's Faustus. Byplay's invitation, "But come with me. I'll counsel, or at least / Govern you better" (V.iii.14-15), admirably sums up the self-appointed role of the humanist scholar, and he leads Joyless away along the path, we trust, to self-understanding.

Joyless's disgust at being cast into the role of the ridiculous old cuckold—"I am most insufferably abus'd" (V.iii.18)—calls to mind Corvino's recognition of his own behaviour as he publicly tears away Celia from the attentions of the disguised Volpone:

Signior Flaminio, will you down, sir? Down?
 What, is my wife your Franciscina? Sir?
 No windows on the whole Piazza here
 To make your properties, but mine? But mine?
 Heart! Ere tomorrow I shall be new-christened,
 And called the *Pantalone di bisogniosi*
 About the town.

(*Volp* II.iii.3-9)

Corvino's definition of himself and his situation in *commedia dell'arte* terms becomes a perversion of the "all actors, no more spectators" ideal. Corvino sees his world as a stage where he is forever cast as the victim, never the hero. "The tragicomic world of love melancholy allows man to see himself in a storybook existence," as Fox observes (155), but when that love melancholy carries over into marriage, the "pleasant fiction" becomes a nasty plot in which the jealous partner feels ensnared and constantly deceived. Corvino's feeling that he has been forced into an undesirable role in some scenario from the *commedia* is in marked contrast to the attitude of the now-cured jealous melancholic, Blaze, who is about to take part in another of Letoy's entertainments. He says he is happy to play the "mute," describing the role thus: "A mute is one that acteth speakingly, / And yet says nothing" (V.iv.32-3). Blaze finds himself comfortable in his role, as Joyless and Corvino do not. These two rail at finding themselves in the role of Pantaloon, but seem unable to do anything about it. Although they describe their natures in terms of art, what they really need to do is to be like Blaze, and let art give shape to nature.

Blaze merely plays another part in a long series of flexible responses to the absurdities of life. Joyless and Corvino cling obsessively to their roles even though their wives are chaste and loyal. The two old men suffer from our usual human fault: "we are mere actors, but we pride ourselves in our roles and forget that they are only brief fantasies" (Greenblatt, "More, Role-Playing and Utopia" 522). Blaze's readiness to adopt the many, sometimes lowly, parts in Letoy's fanciful dramas is a sign of his cured condition; he is adaptable and easy-going, even if he may at one time have been a genuine cuckold. Joyless, on the other hand, is in desperate need of re-evaluating his self-inflicted role of old Pantaloon, and it is through Letoy's use of art that this will come about.

Letoy must cast Diana into a new role as well. Hitherto she has played the flirtatious and teasing young wife—an actual “Franciscina” figure—exploiting her old husband’s jealous condition. The time has come for her to play a part more befitting her name—Diana, symbol of chastity. Letoy’s scheme involves a re-enactment of Volpone’s attempted seduction of Celia, with Joyless strategically placed to view the proceedings. The difference between Jonson’s scene and Brome’s is that while Volpone is in deadly earnest, Letoy is engaged in a piece of therapeutic artifice. Or is he? Letoy begins by alluding directly to Volpone’s use of wealth as a lure:

[LETOY.]

See, here’s wealthy treasure,
 [Reveals] a table set forth, covered with treasure.
 Jewels that Cleopatra would have left
 Her Marcus for.

(V.v.5-7)

[Volp.]

See, here, a rope of pearl; and each, more orient
 Than the brave Egyptian queen caroused[.]

(Volp III.vii.190-1)

The riches rejected, Letoy goes on to offer, as Volpone does, first the promise of sensual pleasure, and then honour and status as baits, but Diana spurns these just as Celia does. In desperation, Volpone resorts to the threat of rape: “Yield, or I’ll force thee” (265), which prompts the hidden witness, Bonario, to act. He snatches Celia away, and the seduction scene is over. Letoy has another card up his sleeve, however, and it is at this point that we begin to doubt his own underlying motives.

Against Letoy’s argument that honour will be hers if she turns from her husband to him, Diana replies that it is in the word “husband” that her honour and standing lie. Letoy counters skilfully. Here she is, “so young, so vigorous” (V.v.77), shackled to “a jealous old man” (81). Should she not exact revenge on him for all his suspicions and “unnatural spite” (85)? Should she not follow through with the defiance which she has shown him so far, particularly in her coming to Letoy’s chamber? Diana is horrified, and casts aspersions on Letoy’s nobility and the reasons behind a plan that would cause her to act

Only in show of disobedience, which
 You won me to upon your protestation
 To render me unstain’d to his opinion,
 And quit me of his jealousy forever.

(100-3)

By now, the audience, too, might be taken aback by the ferocity of Letoy's argument and feeling. His relentlessness does not let up. The cure, he says, will come about like this:

Let me but lie with you, and let him know it,
His jealousy is gone, all doubts are clear'd,
And for his love and good opinion,
He shall not dare deny't.

(106-9)

This appears to be taking what Babb has said about the need to "intervene in the most intimate affairs of the patient's life" to extremes, yet it is advice which is also perfectly in keeping with Burton's idea that acceptance can be a cure:

[that] which causeth this jealous passion, be it just or unjust, . . . ought not so heinously to be taken. . . . If she be not dishonest, he troubles and macerates himself without a cause; or put case . . . he be a cuckold, it cannot be helped, the more he stirs in it, the more he aggravates his own misery. How much better were in it such a case to dissemble or contemn it! why should that be feared which cannot be redressed?

(3.289-90)

By giving in to Letoy, Diana will allay her husband's suspicions and put him on the path towards a stoical acceptance of his lot, like Blaze. But Letoy's exhortation, "Come, be wise, / And this is all" (109-10), has all the hiss of the serpent in Eden about it, and when he closes on a note that is in many ways more threatening than Volpone's, namely, to leave Diana to the mercy of her jealous husband (and Burton explains what may then happen in graphic detail in his discussion, "Prognostics of Jealousy," 3.286-8) we are at a loss to know how seriously to take Letoy. His aside at her dismissal of this threat, "She is invincible!" (V.vi.1), could be the result of frustration, admiration, or relief, so uncertain have we been left concerning Letoy's intentions.⁸⁵

This seduction scene is a virtuoso piece of *lusus* on Brome's part. In act I we are introduced to Letoy in such a way as to doubt his claims to nobility. As he questions Blaze, his "herald-painter," about tracing the Letoys "*Ex origine, ab antiquo*" (I.v.6), he sounds like one of those criticised by Erasmus for taking "extraordinary pride in an empty title of nobility" (*Praise of Folly* 131). Blaze's reply, that the Letoys go back

Full four descents beyond
The conquest, my good lord, and finds that one
Of your French ancestry came in with the Conqueror[,]
(7-9)

echoes Joseph Hall's attack on the lineage-chaser:

He finds records of his great pedigree,
And tels how first his famous Ancestor

Did come in long since with the Conquerour.⁸⁶

Whether or not Letoy is really one of the “new men” trying to legitimise his origins, we quickly discover that in his maintenance of his household he is truer to the ideal of nobility and gentility than many of his less responsible peers. If we are taken in by his behaviour in act V, and ask with Diana, “Are you a lord? / Dare you boast honour, and be so ignoble?” (93-4), then it is we who are the *idiotai* in having forgotten our earlier lesson; we have been drawn in by the very power of theatricality (which Letoy has in abundance), and our emotions have clouded our judgement.

Nevertheless, Joyless raises one area of doubt which we may be forgiven for sharing. It may be that this whole scene had been planned by both Letoy and Diana, as Joyless suspects:

Why may not this be then a counterfeit action,
Or a false mist to blind me with more error?

(V.vi.19-20)

In seeking to validate his role as the jealous old husband, Joyless finds it impossible to draw the line between playacting and reality; and indeed, Letoy has not made the distinction very clear in any of his dealings with the Joyless family. All doubts are finally dispelled, however, by the revelation that Diana is actually Letoy’s daughter, a fact unknown by all except Letoy and his old friend, Truelock. The supposed seduction scene was thus a kind of acid test of Diana’s virtue, as well as a curative device for Joyless. We, the audience, are forced to re-evaluate our reactions, and the prejudices upon which they have been based, just as Joyless is forced to redetermine his role in the world. Once again, Letoy is affirmed as “Lord of fancy,” and his final theatrical piece, a masque in which “Discord and her disorders” are chased away by Harmony and her followers, celebrates the replacement of melancholy in the whole Joyless family by “Health, Love, Wine and Wit” (V.xii.20), the very means which Burton advocates to banish the universal malaise. The final seal is put on the cure by the audience itself, which must spread the theatre’s “magical” curative properties out into the larger “theatre” of the world outside:

Your approbation may more raise the man,
Than all the College of Physicians can;
And more health from your fair hands may be won,
Than by the strokings of the seventh son.

(Epilogue 36-9)

II.5 The Triumph of Playacting Over Shows of Madness

IN *THE ANTIPODES*, Dr Hughball “shifted” Peregrine’s “known disease / Of madness into folly” (IV.xiii.4-5) through the artifice of Letoy’s play. Letoy tells Joyless that just as physic may reduce the diseased victim to “an anatomy” so that “flesh fit for health can grow to rear him” (9-10), so Peregrine’s melancholy has been anatomised not merely to clear away the many “impostures” which cloud his thoughts, but to prepare him to resume his place in the world with renewed vigour and hopes for the future. This optimistic prognosis makes *The Antipodes* a more positive and assertive statement about the therapeutic potential of the artifice of the theatre than *The Weeding of Covent Garden*. In the latter, Gabriel’s puritan affectation is broken down by wine and mock bravado until he sees reason at last. In *The Antipodes*, Peregrine’s travel fantasies are peeled away, layer by layer, with each encounter with the upside-down world of Anti-London, yet the cure is not complete until he creates an even more absurd fantasy in crowning himself king of the Antipodes and receiving his neglected wife as his Queen. “So is a madman made a fool,” says Letoy (11), affirming that the process is more complicated than merely changing artificiality into cold reality. Peregrine is permitted to indulge in a folly of self-assertion in a playacting world which is gradually shifted to an assertion of his roles as husband and heir in a “real” world. *The Antipodes* becomes less of a simple triumph of reason and more—to purloin a Romanticist critical doctrine—of a celebration of the creative power of the imagination.

The Anti-London scenes have the same effect on Peregrine, who loses his old self through watching the play, as *The Anatomy of Melancholy* has upon its readers, who lose themselves, as it were, in Burton’s maze of anecdotes and personages. Significantly, Letoy describes this process as one in which Peregrine is “by degrees / Settled and rectified” (IV.xiii.19-20); the word “rectified” appears in the title of virtually every subsection of Section II of the *Anatomy*’s Second Partition, in which Burton discusses various methods of keeping melancholy at bay. However, what happens if the cure involves not only making a madman into a fool, but also in discovering that a fool is pretending to be a madman? The action of Brome’s most blatantly satirical play, *The Court Beggar* (1640), is constructed around this variation of the melancholy trope.⁸⁷

This play works as one long conceit of artifice, posturing, and role-playing, crossing and re-crossing the fine line that separates constructions of reality from the fictions we create for ourselves. Attention is focused on this artificiality by having as the central melancholy character Sir Ferdinand, a courtier, and therefore a type immediately associated with fashionable affectation and the arts of “praise and flattery,” cultivated in order to win favour from a prince.⁸⁸ Courtiers are thus prime candidates for melancholy madness, as Gabriel, the servant who brings the news of Ferdinand’s condition, is aware, describing him as

Starke staring mad; as mad
As you can thinke a Courtier must be
That is more mad than all the rest.

(I.i; Pearson edn. 1.189)

Gabriel lists the various diagnoses given by doctors as to the cause of Ferdinand’s disease: one says that he was “cross’d in some great suite” while “ambitious of Court favour”; a second that he is a decayed soldier; a third that he “was a Poet that drunk too deepe of *Helicon*”; a fourth says “he was a Gamster” whose luck changed suddenly for the worse (189). But a “fift and youngest” doctor guesses that Ferdinand is an “extreame Amorist” who “the disdain / Of one or all” of the ladies in his life “has turn’d his braine” (190). Charissa, daughter of Sir Andrew Mendicant (who is obsessed with devising a project which will win him a monopoly from the court) and recipient of Gabriel’s news, supports this last opinion by identifying the object of Ferdinand’s thwarted desires as the “humorous” Lady Strangelove.

The lack of agreement among the doctors calls to mind the impotence of Osrick’s court physicians in *The Queen’s Exchange*, and contrasts strongly with the diagnostic skill of Dr Hughball in *The Antipodes*. Osrick’s physicians, of course, knew nothing of the root cause of his illness—his longing for Mildred and his guilt at rejecting Bertha’s suit—and so are powerless to help. At first glance it appears that *The Court Beggar* will be yet another assertion of the melancholic’s need to seek the help of friends who, privy to his innermost thoughts, are able to provide the means of cure. While this aspect is present in the play, as we shall see, there is a strain of the decidedly inverted and unexpected running through the action which makes it a splendid example of the teasing possibilities of *lusus* available to the playwright working in the Lucianic tradition.

When we at last meet Ferdinand in act III, “brought in a chaire bound and hooded” (III.i; 1.218)—“like a hawk,” says Butler, to be “put through his mad tricks” (Butler 224)—we

discover that each doctor's diagnosis has some validity. Kaufmann describes in detail how the tags of court sycophant, beaten soldier, bombastic poet, unlucky gambler and ostentatious lover all fit the historical personage of Suckling (Kaufmann 155-60), but even without this background knowledge we are able to find out from Ferdinand's own lips the aptness of each diagnosis. In his mad ravings, he imagines himself "taken prisoner in the North / Wounded, disarm'd and bound" and held for ransom in a castle "rebelliously usurp'd" by a "sir *Presbiter*" (III.i; 1.218).⁸⁹ He scoffs at his captors for having no money to bet on cards, cribbage and "Gleeke," having spent all on "Ammunition and charge Military," and then calls for dice. He is willing to "set all at hazard," because even if he "lose all," he has "yet a project / That at the end o'th' war . . . / Shall fetch all in agen" (219). His thoughts shift quickly to his "Muse," and he calls for pen and paper to "emulate / *Ovids* smoth vaine, or *Petraks* buskind stile" in verses to his beloved. But, he tells us, "shee is disdainfull; and her scorne / Hath blotted all the glory of her praise" (220).

All the doctors appear to have guessed right, but Ferdinand will not have it so. He calls them

a brace of Quacks,
That tie your knowledge unto dayes and houres
Mark'd out for good or ill i' th' *Alamanack*.
(220)

He lumps them in with Burton's "mountebanks" and "quacksalvers" who give "approved, learned, skilful, honest" physicians a bad name (*AM* 2.15). But as to reliance upon the "Almanack," whereas Burton does attack magic and "diabolical means" as "Unlawful Cures" (2.5), he is not so dogmatic about astrology. He admits that astrology "is required by many famous physicians," but is "doubted of, and exploded by others" (15). He seems sceptical, but refuses to enter the lists on the issue: "I will not take upon me to decide the controversy myself" (15), he sighs, but admits that Hippocrates, Galen and Avicen regard physicians who do not employ astrology as "butchers," and that Paracelsus wished all the factors involved in healing to be "astrologically observed" (16).

We are left in a similarly unresolved state regarding Ferdinand's condition. All the doctors seem to have hit on the causes of his melancholy, and do not deserve to be called quacks. Even the use of almanacs, if indeed Ferdinand's accusation is true, is not sufficient to damn them, as Burton's own reticence proves. In fact, the doctors would have to be clairvoyant

indeed to divine Ferdinand's condition, and he knows it:

Could you give life as *Aesculapius*
Did to unjustly slaine *Hippolitus*,
You could prescribe no remedy for me.

(III.i; 1.220)

The doctors are powerless because of a plot device which remains unknown to the audience until Lady Strangelove and her friends discover the truth: that Ferdinand's madness and all its symptoms are a hoax by which the courtier hopes to have his way with the Lady. Conventional medicine is helpless in the face of such skilful artifice as this, although Ferdinand is aided in his schemes by at least one doctor, as we shall see.

Lady Strangelove plays into Ferdinand's hands by resolving that, since she is "the ground-work of his frensy," he may "sojourne in my house for his recovery" in "expiation of the crime / They charge me with" (II.i; 1.214). She attempts to dabble in his cure, finding, like Burton, that "*Dioscorides*, *Avicen*, *Galen*, and *Hypocrates* are much discrepant in their opinions concerning the remedies for his disease" (III.i; 1.227). The Doctor (Ferdinand's accomplice) proposes a simple cure, based on quite sound Burtonian theory. Lady Strangelove must visit Ferdinand, for the sight of her "shall more / Allure his reason to him, th[a]n all medicine / Can be prescrib'd" (229). Trusting in the Doctor's knowledge, she does as he suggests, and the result, although "*Unseen above*," is clearly heard as she cries, "Help, help, a rape, a rape, murder, help!" (233).

The uniting of the love-melancholic with the object of his or her desires is an effective cure in *The Northern Lass* and *The Queen's Exchange*, but it should have no therapeutic value in the case of Ferdinand's feigned melancholy. Yet in this play of artifice and counter-artifice, even this bogus cure is not wasted. Earlier in the same scene Swaynwit, a "blunt Countrey Gentleman," and Courtwit, the refined "Complementer," needle Citwit, the "Citizens Son" and representative of the upwardly-aspiring merchant class, into declaring a cause worth drawing his sword for. Ignoring Swaynwit's personal taunts, Citwit says he will fight for a cause, but scorns the causes of "Religion, King, or Countrey" (230).⁹⁰ The only issue that gets Citwit's dander up is the suggestion that Dainty, the "supposed Picturedrawer, but a Pickpocket," might steal away Philomel, whom Citwit regards as "his wench." It is precisely at this moment that Lady Strangelove cries out at Ferdinand's attack, and Citwit is able to lend weight to his expression of knightly gallantry by drawing his sword and rushing with his

friends to her aid. Thus the bogus cure actually has some value, for it sets Citwit on the path to becoming a man of action, rather as the play-within-the-play of false Anti-London does for Peregrine in *The Antipodes*. When Citwit returns from this escapade he “*snatcheth Phil. from Dainty, who took her by the arm*”, and exits with the brave cry, “I have sworne” (234).

Another effect of the false cure is that it makes Lady Strangelove determined to get to the source of Ferdinand’s condition with some artifice of her own. Up until this point it is she who has had to bear the brunt of the blame for his illness. Sir Raphael, a character described as “an old Knight that talks much and would be thought wise” (“*Drammatis Personae*”; 1.[183]), and whom Lady Strangelove ironically calls the “Court Philosopher” (II.i; 1.208), is a humour type who voices fashionable opinion and coterie gossip. He sums up the general attitude to Lady Strangelove by accusing her of compromising her vow to remain single after her “late husbands death” by

robbing men so of their wits and reason,
And all by willful Humor: as this late
Unhappy accident of madnesse in
The hopefull Knight Sir *Ferdinando* cryes
Lowdly to your disgrace, and the worlds sorrow.

(206-7)

This description casts her, quite literally, into the role of Eve, for in bringing on a man’s melancholy, which is (in Burton’s words) “the character of mortality” (*AM* 1.144), she has contributed to “the worlds sorrow”—the consequence of the First Fall. Lady Strangelove finds herself the victim of the same sexual frustration and transference of guilt which seem to lie at the root of the Eve myth and which leads to those women most desired by men being branded as coquettes and prickteasers. Lady Strangelove’s “owne freeness” is interpreted as “willfull humor,” but she resolves to rid herself of this “disastrous blot lately cast upon [her] fame” (II.i; 1.210) by asserting that same freeness in order to prove that she does not act as Ferdinand does, either “meerly for ostentation” (211) or out of lust.

Yet Ferdinand plays his distracted role so well that even we, the audience, cannot tell whether he is genuine or not until Lady Strangelove produces her own wickedly amusing scene—with her three friends as co-actors—in which the Doctor is threatened with castration by a “Sow Guelder” unless he reveals the truth of Ferdinand’s condition. The discovery that it is a “counterfet plot” (IV.ii; 1.245) is no real surprise under the circumstances, but there is no denying that Ferdinand “acts,” in the words of E. A. Peers in describing Hamlet’s feigned

condition, “with what might be called the craft of true madness.”⁹¹ Like Hamlet, Ferdinand is in a situation where “real madness also plays a part” (Peers 173), for as a courtier whose world is governed by affected manners and false flattery, and as a man driven by his lust for Lady Strangelove, he is already “in a condition verging on madness” (173).

We have seen how in act III Ferdinand acts out all of the diagnoses made by the various doctors as to the cause of his melancholy. But he also manages to trot out what had become a standard analogy for melancholy madness: that the sufferer endures—and even creates for others—a kind of hell-on-earth. Diana affirms this, while at the same time maintaining the upside-down conceit, when she says in *The Antipodes* that “hell’s above ground, then, in jealous husbands” (*Ant* I.vi.97). Burton sums up the situation of the love melancholic as “a plague, a torture, an hell” (*AM* 3.141). But Ophelia had already recognised this quality in the guise assumed by Hamlet, who looks

so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors[.]

(*Ham* II.i.82-4)

Ferdinand has studied his part well, and plays it to perfection. When Sir Raphael tries to greet him on behalf of his “Friends at Court,” Ferdinand cries,

What hither, unto hell? Extend their loves
So far, to finde me out? Pray let’em know
That here’s a trobled world in want of Statesmen.

He goes on to “speak of horrors” in terms which a courtly gallant would truly find hellish:

For pride is at a stand;
Fashions are all worne out, and no invention
For new here to be found: all beauty’s lost;
Nor have the greatest Ladies here the act
To make so much as their poore Chambermayds[.]

(III.i; 1.221)

The worst torture he can imagine is a hell where artifice is defunct, and “great Ladies” no longer affect the modes which distinguish them from other women. He bids Sir Raphael tell Lady Strangelove that

The many lovers shee has sent before her
Into these shades (where we can find no torments
Like those that shee inflicted) have prevail’d
With the great Queen *Proserpina*, that shee
Shall be in place next to her royall person.

(222)

Ferdinand reinforces Sir Raphael’s imputation of Lady Strangelove’s guilt with an even

harsher analogy, it seems. She is no longer Eve but the co-Queen of Hell, the antipodes of the Madonna whom Catholic hagiography portrays as the Queen of Heaven, the “second Eve” whose prayers and intercession help to expiate the sin of the first. Ferdinand attempts to foist the guilt of his lust onto the object of his desires, and, characteristically in this process of objectifying women, she who spurns his suit changes in his eyes from Madonna to Magdalen.

Juliet Dusinberre writes eloquently of this polarised view of women as stemming from medieval notions of courtly love and its opposite—a kind of psychological safety valve—satire. “Goddesses to the troubadours,” she says that women “were devils to the satirists.”⁹² This “psychology of extremes, where the strains and excesses of worship find relief in the sibilants of satire,” is part of “an autonomous world of poetry, generating its own life independent of the social context which produces the poet” (Dusinberre 138). In other words, the poetic world in which Ferdinand operates is symptomatic of the fictions which the melancholic builds up around himself and uses to define the world and his situation. In tearing down Ferdinand’s façade of melancholy, Lady Strangelove is doing what the humanists before her had striven to do by attacking medieval courtly attitudes to woman as a “fictitious creature,” a symbol either of good or evil. “The goddess had to be thrown out with the devil, because both denied women reason and individuality” (Dusinberre 140). Lady Strangelove works towards a rejection of each of these polarised views of her status to which her widowhood makes her particularly vulnerable. She is in mourning, but she is once more available; will she remain celibate, or become someone’s mistress? There are the added attractions (or complications) of her having charge of her own property, unlike the majority of women, and having had experience in relationships between the sexes in the widest sense (as distinct from just sexual relationships). It is in terms of these two characteristics that she seeks to redefine her place as properly beside Ferdinand, and neither above him on a pedestal—which “gives a man a Muse without allowing her any right of reply” (Dusinberre 141)—nor at his feet in shame.⁹³

Lady Strangelove has three gallants in her entourage: Swaynwit, Courtwit and Citwit. Kaufmann is undoubtedly correct in emphasising the satirical nature of these three “types,” and particularly of Courtwit as a caricature of Brome’s artistic rival, William Davenant. But their emblematic quality should not be overlooked either, for the three gallants represent Lady

Strangelove's desire to interact on a more even footing with all the estates of "manhood"—rural, courtly and urban—in a relationship more nearly akin to the modern understanding of the term "platonic." How ironic it is, then, that Davenant should have written *The Platonic Lovers* (first performed 1635) in which "fashionable Platonic love" is portrayed as "a shallow conceit employed to justify immorality" (Sharpe 66). Brome, no champion of any "court party," cleverly uses the *ideal* of Platonic love to create a circle of friends where the sexes can mix without any covert sexual motives. The three young men are concerned with helping Lady Strangelove *qua* friend, and put up no objection when at the end of the play she is united with Ferdinand in a marriage of equals.

The Court Beggar plays a splendid trick on Davenant as the representative of the courtly mode (in his capacity as a writer of masques and as a close friend of the historical Ferdinand, Sir John Suckling) by exposing that mode as both a product and a source of—in Vives's words—"beastly and filthy desyre"⁹⁴ which preclude equal friendships between men and women. Davenant becomes just another rake who variously exalts or scorns the objects of his love or lust, while Brome is able to make use of the higher ideals of Neoplatonism for more humanistic ends. For if the humanists saw poetry as the "nurse" (Dusinberre 143) of follies such as the romanticising of "open mans slaughter, and bold bawdrye" and the creation of courtly fictions which legitimise the behaviour of Ferdinand towards Lady Strangelove and Charissa, they were also anxious to promote its didactic and educative function as well. *The Court Beggar* highlights this duality through its satire on the one hand, and on the other through its ability to see even in an elitist philosophy such as Neoplatonism the potential for instruction and a program of reform. This latter aspect is emphasised by having Davenant himself in the play as Courtwit, one of the platonic friends, who contributes to the curative action of the play by devising a masque, and by the fact that Ferdinand is not finally banished or gulled, but is successfully integrated into the whole scheme of comic regeneration. This is not a sycophantic attempt by Brome to remain "on-side" with some mythical aristocratic audience, as Dusinberre would have us believe.⁹⁵ Rather, it is a mark of the influence and inspiration of the Lucianic and Erasmian modes of satire that he can turn a target of attack into a vehicle of reform without losing his sense of fun or his sharpness of wit.

Ferdinand is carried out in act III raving about his "horse and armes" to the cries of "A

Ferdinand, a Ferdinand" (III.i; 1.223), calling to mind Gabriel's similar reception in the tavern in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, but here the melancholy is as feigned as are the soldiers. Lady Strangelove accuses Mendicant of making her "house a hell" (reinforcing the connection between hell and melancholy) with the racket of Ferdinand's disease. She asks rhetorically, "is my house here / Confiscated or usurp'd, and I become your slave?" (224), introducing the notion of personal property as a basis upon which to define freedom. She continues:

Could your Projectorship find no house else
To make a mad man madder in but mine?
And me as mad as he too with the trouble.

(224)

But she proves to be no Widow Fitchow of *The Northern Lass*, to be made melancholy through the machinations of others. She is quite capable of employing art and artifice in her own defence. She turns on Sir Raphael, calling him "Sir *Philosophaster*," and accuses him of pursuing her under the pretext of "reading Philosophy" to Ferdinand as a cure. Robert Burton's one foray into drama was a Latin play he wrote in 1606 called *Philosophaster*, which was eventually performed at Christ Church College in 1618.⁹⁶ It concerns the exploits of a "quack physician . . . identified unequivocally as a Paracelsian."⁹⁷ Lady Strangelove's use of "Philosophaster" is a very ironic foreshadowing of the fact that Ferdinand's "cure" comes about through another quack doctor, Sir Raphael's own nephew Frederick in disguise.⁹⁸ She scares off Sir Raphael by playing the suitor herself: "it is my love to you that tortures mee into this wild distraction. O sir *Raphael*" (224). The old knight takes the reversal of roles seriously, and reveals the shallow one-sidedness of courtly "love" by running away in terror! Lady Strangelove resolves to assert herself in terms which men understand:

I shall in time be rid of all such Guests,
And have the liberty of mine own house
With mine own company, and to mine own ends[.]

(224)

Her liberty is defined in terms of the right to use and dispose of her own property, the freedom to associate with whom she chooses, and to decide her own fate. Her dealings with men in future are to be under those conditions.⁹⁹

Her relationship with the three gallants forms a part of her quest for freedom. The therapeutic value of unburdening one's problems onto friends has already been seen with respect to *The Queen's Exchange*, but a 1625 essay by Francis Bacon more clearly explains

the wider social benefits of friendship, especially when compared with solitary introspection or worse, the influence of flattery:

there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and the counsel of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend.¹⁰⁰

Lady Strangelove has established an alternative "court circle" (reminiscent of the "country court" which Eulalia gathers about her in *The Queen and Concubine* as an alternative to the corrupt court of her husband) made up of friends, not flatterers such as Ferdinand, Raphael and Mendicant, and in that atmosphere of counsel, free discourse and mutual trust lies the basis of her liberty.¹⁰¹

Ferdinand is shaken out of his "shew of madness" by the fairly simple expedient of Frederick, disguised as a doctor, first threatening to bleed him, and when Ferdinand persists in his sham, by throwing off his disguise and challenging the courtier to a duel for his attempt to dishonour Charissa, Frederick's beloved. Faced with having to "fight or die a Madman," Ferdinand begs off, crying, "Hold *Frederick* hold. Thou hast indeed awak'd / Me to see thee and my selfe" (IV.iii; 1.248).¹⁰² Ferdinand, unlike Citwit, will not "dare fight in this cause"—a statement perhaps of the rising militancy of the citizens as compared with the court—but confesses and repents his "designe against *Charissa's* honour" and admits that his disease was but a "shew of madnesse . . . put on / For my revenge on this impetuous Lady [that is, Strangelove]" (249). He had grossly misjudged the target of his assault, however:

I rather thought, she like a cunning Lady
Would have consented to a Madman, who
She might presume would not impeach her honor
By least detection. Monkeys, Fooles, and Madmen,
That cannot blab, or must not be believ'd
Receave strange favours.

(250)

But like those two earlier feigned madmen Antonio and Franciscus in Middleton's and Rowley's *The Changeling*, Ferdinand has encountered in Lady Strangelove an Isabella, not a Beatrice-Joanna. She is not one of the courtly ladies with whom Ferdinand is accustomed to dally, and, overhearing his confession to Frederick, she threatens to use his secret to make him "the perpetuall shame of Court" (250) unless he helps her in some schemes of her own to win Charissa for Frederick, and to cure Mendicant, the other "court beggar," of his mad desire for a monopoly and court patronage. As in *The Antipodes*, melancholy has

permeated the action of the play at many levels, and, as with *Joyless*, the curative action must be redirected towards the older generation. And once more, theatricality—the power of playacting—will effect that cure.

Ferdinand is forced to give an encore of his convincing imitation of madness, while Lady Strangelove takes on the role of doctor. In telling Mendicant that he must “supply” Ferdinand with Charissa, she re-stages the same “remedy” which was used against herself:

The Doctors in their judgements . . .

Foresee, that in removing him, where she
Might be his immediat object, when he wakes,
That fresher flames to instant marriage
Would then arise.

(V.ii; 1.257)

The plan makes use of Mendicant’s own objectification of his daughter in order to achieve his ambitions. His is the lust of mercantilism and economics, but he is no less willing than Ferdinand was to “whore” Charissa to sate it, and Sir Raphael is right to see Mendicant’s desires in terms of the “condition verging on madness” from which Ferdinand suffered: “Hee’s mad too; / Struck lunatique with his o’er-weening hopes” (IV.i; 1.237). Mendicant’s condition is highlighted a little later, when Dainty admits to having picked Mendicant’s pocket. The latter is worried that this is an omen presaging “some greater losse at hand” (V.ii; 1.259), and broods for some time over this prospect. Lady Strangelove’s diagnosis, “Sir *Andrew!* melancholly?” (260), ties in with Burton’s own treatment of superstition as both a cause and a symptom of the disease, for although Mendicant’s sudden premonition of loss is justified by the play’s end, at this stage it looks more like he is suffering from the “many such illusions and voices, which proceed most part from a corrupt imagination” (*AM* 1.428). Burton cites a number of authorities who hold “that such persons are possessed with the devil,” and are “fit only to be cured by a priest” (428). But *The Court Beggar* carries the “hell-on-earth” conceit to a comic extreme in its cure of Mendicant, and substitutes actor and playtext for priest and prayerbook as means of cure. Mendicant has sold his inheritance for a chance at court favour, and he must play out an appropriate version of the claiming of Faustus by Hell as part of the bargain. But the bloodcurdling Marlovian scenes of damnation are replaced with Aristophanic comic buffoonery, as the melancholic is forced to recognise the farcical side of his condition as a prerequisite for his return to health and reintegration into the world.

The “Revells” which Lady Strangelove’s friends arrange to celebrate Mendicant’s “fortunes” are, therefore, not the actual agent of cure. Rather, they form a comic context of “real world turned into mad playworld” within which the process of cure may smoothly function. A deliberately “stagy” environment is created in the depiction of a masque “in workshop,” as we would say, with Courtwit “*pumping his Muse*” (V.ii; 1.261) as he tries to come up with suitable lines, and the rest “*Fidling, Footing, Singing, Acting*” (263) as they enthusiastically rehearse. When two Projectors enter gleefully promising each other to “fill [Mendicant’s] head with millions” (260), they seem less human than impish equivalents of medieval vices or, more tellingly, to the little devil Pug in Jonson’s *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) who, with his companion Iniquity, promises that “the Court of Hell will hear / Something may gain a longer grant” (I.i.6-7). Amidst the artificiality of the scene, however, the Projectors’ inhuman quality is not at all out of place, and neither is the emblematic treatment they receive in Mendicant’s masque which concludes the play’s action.

Sir Raphael enters the scene with a scheme of his own to “nettle” Mendicant, but the strange goings-on prompt him to exclaim, “among what Nation am I arriv’d?”(261) and “Never was I in such a Wildernesse” (263), expressions of astonishment similar to Peregrine’s reactions to Anti-London. Lady Strangelove’s house takes on the same form and function as Lord Letoy’s, becoming a comic no-place in which the real world is temporarily suspended and where melancholy characters are dislocated and released from the prison cells of their condition. This dislocation even involves, predictably, a trip to hell, when Philomel (actually reciting some of Courtwit’s hastily written lines) seems to invite Sir Raphael to the underworld:

Let me alone
To be your Convoy to *Elizium*.
.....
I’le pass that snarling triple-headed Cur
Which keeps the pallace-gate of *Pluto’s* Court,
And guide you safe through pitchy *Acheron*.

(262)

References to Hades, which for Ferdinand were a means of defining his melancholy condition and unloading his guilt onto Lady Strangelove, become in this mad masque a means of seeing that condition for the folly it really is, and for getting rid of it once and for all. But the conceit reaches its zenith in the way Mendicant uses it to signify his own cure.

Courtwit's masque begins to break down soon after it commences, as Philomel and the Boy struggle in their roles of Venus and Cupid. The Dancers continue on bravely, but the result is more akin to the plodding amateurism of the mechanicals' efforts in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* than the loftiness of Suckling's *Aglaura* (1637) or Davenant's *Britannia Triumphans* (1638).¹⁰³ Brome mercifully interrupts the masque with the sudden entry of a Projector with an announcement. Earlier, Sir Raphael had carried out his nettling of Mendicant by pretending that the latter had accidentally killed Gabriel in an argument, and this, together with the news that Ferdinand is "cured" (Mendicant had hoped to "beg" Ferdinand's estate on the grounds of the courtier's insanity) and that Charissa is to marry Frederick instead, ruins all his plans: "What hopes am I fallen from? and what misery fallen into; when the little I have is beg'd for Manslaughter!" Mendicant flees the present company in apparent despair, crying, "Dreames, dreames, All these are waking Dreames" (265). However, it may be that things are not as bad as they might seem for Sir Andrew, given similar allusions to dreams and the uncertainty of perception expressed by other Bromean melancholics as they pass through their particular processes of cure and renewal.

The guests' reaction to the appearance of the Projector plays once more upon the "hellish" analogy of melancholy:

Fer.[dinand] What black Tragedian's this?
Ra.[phael] Some *Nuntius* sent from Hell.

(266)

When the Projector announces that in his "wild distraction and phantastick fury" Mendicant "has hang'd himself—", the company gasps in horror, only to be told that he has actually hanged himself

All over sir, with draughts of Projects, Suits,
 Petitions, Grants, and Pattents, such as were
 The Studies and the Labours of his Life,
 And so attir'd he thinks himselfe well arm'd
 T'incounter all your scornes.

(267)

And so arrayed he enters, "A *Windmill on his head*," with the other Projector. They perform an antimasque of the granting of patents and projects, and in the dance that follows, Mendicant is stripped of his patents and the Projectors of their cloaks, and the Projectors are "*thrust forth*," all ragged, "out o'dores" (268).

Butler discusses the nature of the "news newly arriving from hell" motif as beng drawn

“from the common stock of satirical literature” (Butler 225). He says that “Mendicant’s arrival from hell comes as the animating of one of these established satiric types,” in this case, “the generic type” of the Monopolist (226). In the masque of the Projectors, “Brome provides a dance of emblems, an animated picture of wholly symbolic characters in fantastic but significant costume, accompanied by a moralising commentary” (226). Equally important, however, is Mendicant’s own recognition and dramatisation of his fixation with mercantile matters in order to be purged of them. His masque does for him what writing the *Anatomy* did for Burton, who was able to claim, “I have anatomised mine own folly” (*AM* 1.122). Mendicant’s self-anatomy through a mode of “playing” adds him to the long list of Brome’s characters who advocate the power of the theatre to reconcile disparate elements within society, to reveal and banish false values and artificial codes of conduct which threaten that society with moribundity, and to promise continued health and renewal in the future.

Lady Strangelove’s acceptance of Ferdinand’s marriage proposal at the end of the play is not so surprising if it is viewed as a part of this conciliatory and regenerative process. John Donne said of the treatment of women:

To make them Gods is ungodly, and to make them Devils is divillish; To make them mistresses is unmanly, and to make them servants is unnoble; To make them as God made them, wives, is godly and manly too.¹⁰⁴

Ferdinand’s marriage to Lady Strangelove completes the process of breaking down the fictions which separate women from men and by drawing them together “not through passion but through reason and nature” (Dusinberre 142). The degradation which the humanists found implicit in courtly love, which “tamed nature” and was a part of “corrupt aristocratic culture” (142), is finally countered by Lady Strangelove’s exercise of free choice which at the same time acknowledges a by no means abstemious nature. Swaynwit, the “natural” sage of the play, celebrates with suitable comic bawdry her decision to reconcile her natural drives with the processes of reasoned argument:

Shee’s a wise widdow by’t: for sure enough, she saw something in his mad naked fit,
when hee put her to’t, to choose a husband by, wo’not out of her thought yet.
(V.ii; 1.269)

In making Lady Strangelove “as God made [her]”—a wife, and not an idol or a whore—Ferdinand also resumes his place amongst those fit to rule. He becomes truly noble, a worthy agent of divine power on earth, and no longer in need of romantic fictions and artificial courtly

modes of discourse to define his status. Lady Strangelove does not compromise her freedom by marrying Ferdinand; rather, she endows future generations of the nation's governors with her strength of character grounded in liberty and self respect. Amidst such hopeful promise for the future, melancholy's chances of resuming its grip on society look slim indeed.

II.6 The Triumph of Playacting Over Sad and Tragic Days

IT WAS POINTED OUT earlier that there is a tendency in Brome's plays dealing with melancholy for the direction of the curative action to shift from the younger characters—the “heirs,” so to speak—to their fathers and other members of the older generation. These latter form a readily identifiable group. Crosswill in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, Joyless in *The Antipodes* and Mendicant in *The Court Beggar* are all members of the landed gentry who have left their estates to visit London. Joyless's motives are altruistic in that he seeks a cure for his son's obsession with travel, but those of the other two are self-seeking to the point where they abandon their responsibilities as “housekeepers” and forsake the power base upon which their privileged status rests.

Crosswill sums up his own situation when he thanks his servant Belt for successfully tracking down Mihil at a tavern:

And I had not sold all my land to live upon my money in Town here, out of danger of the Statute [forbidding the country gentry to live in London], I would give thee a Copihold for this discovery.

(WCG IV.i; 2.73)

Crosswill is not even in a position to reward a faithful retainer with a small grant of land (a “Copihold” or tenure), let alone pass on his estate to his rightful heirs. He has sacrificed his inheritance and that of his children for the sake of following the “genteel” fashion of moving to the city. Mendicant has done likewise, although he follows the more insidious fashion of begging for court favour. His daughter Charissa chides him eloquently for his decision:

Your ayme has bin to raise
Your state by Court-suits, begging as some call it,
And for that end you left your Countrey life,
 . . . selling faire
Possessions to enable you with money
To purchase *wit* at Court.

(CB I.i; 1.187)

She eulogises over the “faire Mansion-house,” with its “Large fruitfull Fields, rich Meadowes and sweet pastures,” which he has exchanged for “a lodging in the Strand” (187). Where he once had “a numerous Family / Of servants and Attendants,” now “a Varlet Coachman, and Footboy / Are all [his] Retinue” (187-8). Instead of hounds, he now keeps “project Beagles, that smell out / Where such a forfeiture is to be begg'd” (188). He has abandoned everything

to set up a “trade of Begging,” but it is a profitless one for, as she tells him,

You beg by Mediators tongues, which you
 Call Favorites, who reape the crop of all,
 And leave you but the Gleanings; some small pittance
 To keep alive the itch of begging in you[.]

(188)

Mendicant is locked into a cycle of begging court favour while being taken advantage of himself, and it is only through the medium of playacting and masque that the cycle is eventually broken. Crosswill and Joyless are cured by similar means, and so it seems that Brome had well and truly hit upon “the actable image, the theatrical gesture” (Kaufmann 1) with which to counter the melancholy condition.

If these three gentleman are responsible in varying degrees for their own conditions, the same surely cannot be said of Oldrents in *A Jovial Crew*. He has steadfastly maintained the traditions of hospitality and *noblesse oblige*, and his estate is a model household based on mutual respect and responsibility. His friend Hearty repeats the acclamation on the lips of every tenant, servant and guest: “Heaven bless our Landlord Oldrents, / Our master Oldrents, our Good Patron Oldrents” (*JC*, Haaker edn. I.i.89-90), yet it is a curse, not a blessing, which hangs over his head as the play begins. The spectre of beggary, which Mendicant’s own folly has brought upon himself but which Oldrents does not deserve, threatens the household in the form of a fortune-teller’s prophecy that Oldrents’ daughters will—as Hearty punningly explains—“Wear old rents in their garments” (93-4).¹⁰⁵ *A Jovial Crew* makes use of a device drawn from the stock of romance and tragicomedy—with all the attendant promise “Of fortune-tellers, damsels and their squires, / Expos’d to strange adventures” (Prol. 17-8)—to create an expressionistic feel of melancholy as a “sign of the times,” rather than as the result of any individual character’s folly or wickedness. The challenge which such a premise throws out is whether or not the principle means of cure employed in earlier plays has a place in the action of *A Jovial Crew*.

As in Brome’s earlier plays, there is a process of trying out simple cures which provide no long term solution. Hearty tells Oldrents to “ride forth for air then, and be merry” (97), a prescription suggestive of Burton’s “Air rectified. With a digression of the air,” an important chapter of the *Anatomy* which advocates a “change of climate,” through travel and fresh perspectives, as a means of avoiding melancholy. Hearty’s “Sack must be had in sundry

places" (99) and "For songs I am provided" (100), sound like the old standbys of strong drink, music and merry company which contribute to Gabriel's cure in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*. Oldrents eventually goes off with his friend, but we are not given much hope for such simple cures when in act II his daughters tell of the extent to which melancholy has taken a hold of their father and of the household. Rachel's description of how they can no longer amuse their father has a decidedly Burtonian ring:

our father is so pensive (what muddy spirit soe'er possesses him, would I could conjure 't out) that he makes us even sick of his sadness, that were wont to see my gossip's cock today, mold cocklebread, dance clutterdepouch, and hannykin booby, bind barrels, or do anything before him and he would laugh at us.

(II.i.23-9)

The "May-games" and "playgames" which Burton promotes as mirthful and therapeutic and which the Crown licensed much to the disgust of Gabriel and his brethren, are not enough to banish the disease, and something stronger than Hearty's simple remedies are needed as well. Rachel has inadvertently hit upon something in her allusion to spirits and conjuring, for our experience of Burton and Brome has demonstrated that like must cure like. Clearly, the quasi-magical device of the prophecy can only be exorcised through the artifice of theatricality, with its ability to conjure up a world of wish fulfilment and comic resolution.

For the time being, however, melancholy has clouded the girls' reason and vision. They see their father's liberality and generosity as a "continual steam of hot hospitality" to which they are "pent up and tied by the nose" (II.i.9-10), and they seek escape from his "rule and government" to the "absolute freedom" (17-8) of the lives of beggars and vagabonds. The illusory nature of the beggar utopia has already been noted, and, as we have seen, running away is itself a cause rather than a cure of melancholy, judging by the consequences of Crosswill's and Mendicant's abrogation of their responsibilities and inherited duties.¹⁰⁶

Oldrents follows Hearty's advice by leaving his estate to go on long rides and indulge in drinking bouts. Ironically, it is while he is off on one of these jaunts that the old servant Randall rapturously describes to some visitors the joys of service on the estate and Oldrents' kindness and hospitality. Butler sums up Oldrents' efforts to cure his melancholy in terms which could easily be applied to the follies of Crosswill and Mendicant:

his escapism is in part a repudiation of this profoundly fulfilling relationship with his country, a flight into a deliberate neglect of his obligations which is increasingly mad and monstrous.

(Butler 276)

Oldrents' reaction to the visiting Tallboy, the most comically melancholy character in the play, who weeps over the loss of the runaway Amie, represents an attempt to abandon melancholy at the expense of his obligations as a host: "Ods my life! He sighs again, and means to blow me out of my house. To horse again. Here's no dwelling for me" (IV.i.242-3)—although he does propose to cure Tallboy with sack, as Nicholas proposed to do for Gabriel in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, to "drown his suspirations" (244-5).

Yet even Oldrents has doubts about the efficacy of such attempted cures. To Hearty's prescription that "puling stomachs are made strong / By eating against appetite," Oldrents counters, "Forc'd mirth though is not good" (II.ii.30-2). This constant riding off to fill up with song and sack, we realise, can at best be only a temporary means of holding back melancholy. When Oldrents points to the unusually downcast Randall and asks, "Can he force mirth out of himself, now, think you?" (39), Hearty displays an oddly hierarchical or exclusivist attitude to his therapy:

What speak you of a clod of earth, a hind
But one degree above a beast, compar'd
To th'aery spirit of a gentleman?¹⁰⁷

(40-2)

However, the "gentleman"—Oldrents—turns out to be singularly incapable of doing anything lasting in the cure of melancholy. It is a mark of the play's inclusiveness, as well as its deliberate theatricality, that the power to exorcise the fortune-teller's curse lies in the hands of Oldrents' steward, Springlove, who despite his lowly station turns out to be both prince of beggars and lord of mirth.

Springlove is able to instigate the actual cure because he is the embodiment of inclusiveness, representing all the levels of his society rolled into one. Born a beggar, Springlove was taken into service by Oldrents and eventually entrusted with the position of steward of the household, mainly to keep him from running off to join the wandering vagabonds every summer, but also because Oldrents recognises in the young man one whose charity "goes hand in hand" with his own (I.i.139). Brome includes one last detail, teasingly withheld from his audience until the last moments of the play, which completes Springlove's credentials as a fitting representative of the whole of society, and which stems from the humanist belief that nobility is both an innate and a nurtured quality. We discover, along with Oldrents and Springlove themselves, that the young man is actually Oldrents' natural son, the

product of some youthful “beggar-niggling” with a girl of a decayed noble family. Not only can Springlove, at any one time in the play, play the role of a member of the gentry, of the “respectable” middle order (in his capacity as the “yeoman” steward), of the servant class and of the outcasts, but essentially—to use a term with Platonic associations—he is made up simultaneously of all of these levels of society. He is the Everyman of *A Jovial Crew* as morality play, but an everyman who has been refashioned by Renaissance humanist thought into an active and potent citizen of a world of which he himself is a microcosm. The passive victim that was medieval common man, taunted by demons and guided by angels, has given way to the “piece of work” that is man who, as his own angel or devil, is ultimately answerable to himself for the consequences of his actions. Allowing for the comic context, Springlove is no less powerful than Hamlet, Bussy D’Ambois or Tamburlaine in the effect he has on his world and those within it, and, in his ability to avoid melancholy himself and to cure it in others, he exhibits a strength unavailable even to those giants of tragedy.

Springlove’s cure for the household’s melancholy is another of those strokes of comic genius which, like that employed by Hughball in *The Antipodes*, manages to unify the form and content of the play through yet another assertion of the therapeutic function of theatricality and role-playing. Adopting sound Burtonian guidelines, Springlove proposes to displace the current ills of the estate with a folly to which he himself is prone. Every summer, much to Oldrents’ dismay, he goes off to join the bands of wandering vagabonds, reliving his childhood on the highways and among the hedges. He overhears Oldrents’ daughters and their lovers in their desire to escape the confines of the estate and “turn beggars / . . . / But for a time” (II.i.140/2), and takes upon himself the Mephostophilean role of guide and mentor, as Hughball does for Peregrine:

I will be your guide,
Your guard, your convoy, your authority.
You do not know my power, my command
I’th’beggar’s commonwealth.¹⁰⁸

(276-9)

Like Lucian’s magus and Marlowe’s demon, Springlove has secret knowledge and hidden powers which will gain his wards ingress to the mysteries of their chosen journey. He reveals to them the fortune-teller’s prophecy, but tells how it may be played out without suffering:

The sentence of your fortune does not say that you shall beg for need, hunger or cold necessity. If, therefore, you expose yourselves on pleasure into it, you shall absolve

your destiny nevertheless, and cure your father's grief.
(266-70)

He urges them to approach the cure with joy and in a spirit of celebration, in the knowledge that their actions will be beneficial to the health of the estate:

Pursue the course you are on then, as cheerfully
As the inviting season smiles upon you.
Think how you are necessitated to it,
To quit your father's sadness and his fears
Touching your fortune. Till you have been begging,
The sword hangs over him.

(320-5)

The sojourn into beggary becomes a theatrical experience both figuratively and literally. Springlove "directs" the young people in their roles as beggars, feeding them lines and setting up "scenes" in which they try their new skills on passing travellers, often with hilarious results. But whereas Lord Letoy makes use of his well cared-for acting troupe and the artificial setting of Anti-London, the supporting cast of Springlove's "play" consists of real outcasts and the setting is an actual world of hardship and want. Contact with the beggar world sees the fulfilment of the classical purposes of drama (and all poetry) to delight and instruct. The initial delight at escaping to "absolute freedom," abetted by Springlove's own enthusiasm for the life, soon gives way to instructive lessons in the dystopian qualities of beggar existence. The young people, and the audience, learn that the price of comfort and security is responsibility and duty, and this awareness leads in turn to the re-establishment of the Oldrents estate (and thus the society for which it stands) as the young refugees give up "this lousy game" of begging (IV.ii.254), Springlove realises that it is "no course for a gentleman" (262) as he seeks to retain Amie's love by returning to his duties on the estate, and Oldrents realises from his own encounters with the beggars just how fortunate he is.¹⁰⁹

A Jovial Crew does not leave the assertion of the value of the drama at a purely figurative level, however. When Springlove and the young refugees get together with the beggars to put on "a masque or a comedy" presented "extempore" (IV.ii.172/5) at the wedding feast of an old beggar couple, the theatre's potential for contributing to society's well-being is explicitly affirmed.¹¹⁰ The subject matter which the beggar poet chooses is significant because, in its depiction of a beggar utopia, it is "a neat epitome of the historical situation in England in 1641" (Kaufmann 172), where the "great variance for superiority" between "the country, the city, and the court" (IV.ii.207-8) reflects the factionalism which resulted in the failure of the

recalled Parliament to settle problems arising out of the “personal reign.” One effect of this proposed masque is to show how the theatre can encapsulate in metaphor the spirit of the age, to show, as Hamlet says, “the very age and body of the time his form and pressure” (*Ham* III.ii.22-3). But there is another significance in the beggar poet’s wish to “present a commonwealth: Utopia, / With all her branches and consistencies” (IV.ii.179-80). When Robert Burton wilfully demands, “I will yet, to satisfy and please myself, make an Utopia of mine own” (*AM* 1.97), he creates a world in which the possibility of melancholy taking a hold of its citizens is minimalised precisely because its creator says so. This is a utopia which is ruled no more nor less autocratically than Thomas More’s centralised and melancholy-free original, but it is the product of the same artistic decision by which the playwright builds a fictional backdrop against which the fantasy of wish-fulfilment may be played out. Melancholy can at least be banished in a stage-play world, where dreams and desires become enacted reality.

However, as Kaufmann tersely observes regarding the beggar-poet’s efforts, “This isn’t the play they do put on” (172). The beggars and their guests are interrupted in their attempt to produce the ideal play for the times by the intrusion of law and authority in the form of Justice Clack and his men. Clack’s friend Sentwell expresses the standard “magisterial” view of players as worthless and unproductive members of society: “A many counterfeit rogues! So frolic and so lamentable all in a breath? You were acting a play but now. We’ll act with you. Incurable vagabonds” (IV.ii.238-40). In the year following the production of *A Jovial Crew* the Justice Clacks of the real world would see to the closing of the theatres and the resultant loss of livelihood which would lead to Brome’s death in penury during the Protectorate. But even without indulging in such an *ex post facto* view, the sentiments expressed by Sentwell reveal the kind of pressure from the forces of order and respectability with which theatres and acting companies were constantly contending. It was as hard to convince magistrates and city councillors of the value of playacting as it is for some critics of Brome’s plays to treat them as the product of a commitment to the therapeutic quality of the dramatic art.

The play which the vagabonds eventually produce is one which, as Kaufmann says, “fits in with the superficial action” (172). In fact, they are only allowed to perform because

Sentwell convinces Clack, who fears the satirical power of the players—"They can act justices, can they? I'll act a justice among'em" (V.i.108-9)—of their entertainment value in a feast for Oldrents and his friends. The implication is that the beggar-poet's original play is too "hot" to be presented before the cautious eye of the magistracy; the performance must be altered if it is to be "licensed."¹¹¹ Even so, the eventual production, watered down as it may be, does have its didactic purpose. Warned that they must please the guests at the risk of having Withers' *Abuses Stripp'd and Whipp'd* "acted . . . among'em" (255-6)—Clack is not without his own sardonic strain of wit—the beggars offer a list of titles such as *The Old Squire and the Fortune-Teller* (290), all of which Oldrents rejects as too near his own situation. At last they settle on the innocuous *The Merry Beggars*, the very subtitle of *A Jovial Crew* itself, but proceed to tell Oldrents' story anyway (and perhaps giving the nod to a common method for a playwright to avoid Sir Henry Herbert's scrutiny).

His daughters, their lovers and Springlove all appear in the playlet as themselves, and under this triple remove of playing themselves playing at beggars who play actors—a device which interweaves real (or enacted real) and imaginary worlds to an almost inextricable degree—they tell how the fortune-teller's prophecy has "played out" in their decision to run away. Oldrents feels his troubles vanish as he watches the playlet:

I see
The scope of their design, and the whole drift
Of all their action now with joy and comfort.

(382-4)

He acknowledges the success of their efforts, which have been "but to work my friendship, or their peace with me; and they have it" (390-1). He is reunited with his daughters and reconciled to Springlove, whom the Patrico reveals to be Oldrents' own natural son and thus worthy of the estate in name as well as merit, and he is aware once more of his responsibilities to the household. Oldrents makes Justice Clack's legal pedantry redundant by summing up the social contract as a harmonious unit and a continuous process, arising primarily out of love and the recognition of duty and responsibility, rather than from coercion by the law:

Hear me for all then. Here are no beggars . . . , no rogues, nor players: but a select company, to fill this house with mirth. These are my daughters; these their husbands; and this that shall marry your niece, a gentleman, my son. I will instantly estate him in a thousand pound a year to entertain his wife, and to their heirs forever.

(469-75)

Stage world merges with real world in this annihilation of social barriers and conflicts which

suggests both Prospero's actors melting, at the end of their revels, "into thin air," along with "the great globe itself" (*Temp* IV.i.150/3), and Blaze's claim that his house is "large / Enough to hold . . . all" along with the "sorrows" which they "came to lose" (*Ant* I.i.13-16). Comfort, harmony and hope for the future are attainable in the Nirvana-like Utopia that is the Oldrents estate; no dramatised cure for melancholy is more successful than that which works upon this deserving household. The tragedy for England was that the Realpolitik of the Justice Clacks and Cockbrains would gain ascendancy over the wish-fulfilment of comic visions such as *A Jovial Crew*.

Part III

Mirrors
for Princes

III.1 Portraits of Good Princes

RENAISSANCE HUMANIST concepts of the perfect commonwealth were largely a fusion of the principles espoused in the Platonic ideal state—the Republic—ruled by scholar-kings, and Aristotelian notions of the state as a “community of families” which functioned “for the sake of a perfect and self-supporting life.”¹ Plato’s spokesman, Socrates, comes to the crux of the matter when he says:

Unless either philosophers become kings in their countries or those who are now called kings and rulers come to be sufficiently inspired with a genuine desire for wisdom; unless, that is to say, political power and philosophy meet together . . . there can be no rest from troubles . . . for states, nor yet . . . for all mankind; nor can this commonwealth which we have imagined ever till then see the light of day and grow to its full stature.

(*Republic* 174-5)

Plato’s ideas found their literary apotheosis in the Renaissance in More’s *Utopia*, which in turn inspired other works on idealised social and political systems for centuries to come.

By the sixteenth century the growing pressure exerted on political thought by the emergent nation states with their hereditary monarchies meant that humanist political concerns had to undergo a shift in emphasis from the achievement of the perfect state by any kind of revolutionary exchange of systems—as the utopianism espoused by Plato and daringly taken up by More demands—to a more Christian “transcendentalist” striving for perfection within the system already to hand. Utopian dreams, like the few republics who struggled to maintain their identity, did not die out entirely in this period, but Renaissance discourse on the ideal state tended to revolve around one basic principle: that “the prince was made for the good of the commonwealth, not the commonwealth for the good of the prince” (Born 11-12). This is the premise behind all of the humanist writings in what is known as the *speculum principis*—the “mirror for princes”—mode, and the common object of this advisory treatise was that, since under a system of hereditary monarchy, “it is not possible to choose the prince, it is of prime importance to perfect the person already set over the country” (12). Humanist involvement in Renaissance politics was thus primarily in the form of education and counsel, for it was felt that “the peoples of Europe could fare well and be rightly governed if their princes received the best advice of the best councilors [sic], and having received it, accepted it.”²

So, in dedicating *The Education of a Christian Prince* to the future Emperor Charles V in 1516, Erasmus, the “teacher of teachers,” wrote: “according to Aristotle, no form of wisdom is greater than that which teaches a prince how to rule beneficently” (*Christian Prince* 133). It followed that “no one serves the state better than he who imbues the mind of the prince . . . with the best of ideas and those most becoming a prince” (134). Over one hundred and thirty years later, even after the almost continuous series of imperial, religious and civil wars which made the efforts of humanists to guide their masters on the paths of right reason seem sadly wasted, the author of the pamphlet *Tyranipocrit Discovered* could still espouse this doctrine of commitment:

our doctors [defined earlier as “both writers and preachers”] . . . should venter their lives, to draw tyrants from their tyrannies, counselling and persuading them, will they, nill they, to leave their tyrannies, and to become honest men, nor fearing nor caring for their frownes nor favours; for through the converting of tyrants, the whole Commonwealth should bee bettered[.]³

If the pamphlet’s stance appears more desperate and less charitable (in substituting “tyrants” for “princes,” for example) than Erasmus’s urbane explication of the humanist’s role in politics,⁴ the circumstances of its publication—during exile in the Netherlands, in the year of Charles I’s execution and the setting up of the Protectorate—go a long way towards explaining this. Nevertheless, *Tyranipocrit Discovered* reaffirms what was seen to be the duty, not merely the right, of every learned person to work actively for the well-being of society. Its author even goes so far as to say:

I would desire all men seriously to consider, if a man may bee silent at such sinnes of other men, as are committed to the dishonour of God, and the prejudice of the Commonwealth. I know what I should say concerning this matter, and all reasonable men know, that to be silent, is a consenting thing.

(*Tyranipocrit* 95)

The political situation in mid-seventeenth-century England is such that an even more concerted effort is required of men of learning to provide good counsel, says the pamphleteer. To the usual humanist complaint of the sin most often committed by counsellors, which Erasmus summed up as “no one brings so serious a blight upon the affairs of men as he who has corrupted the heart of the prince with depraved ideas and desires” (*Christian Prince* 134), he adds the “sin of omission” of silent consent, so that uncommitted knowledge is equated with false counsel.⁵ The “mirror for princes” mode still had a vital part to play in humanist literature well into the century following the first attempts by Erasmus and More to counsel

their rulers by the written word, and as this period saw the ascendancy of the drama as a major—indeed, arguably the predominant—poetic medium, it is hardly surprising that the issues of good governance and wise counsel were of major concern on the stage, even when romantic and comic forms superseded the more “kingly” tragedies and chronicles by the second quarter of the seventeenth century.

Ben Jonson, the self-conscious humanist scholar and committed playwright of the public stage, echoed, in the privacy of his *Discoveries*, the sentiments of Erasmus, More, Elyot, Vives and others regarding the importance of wisdom and learning to society. From the general, “The learned man profits others rather than himself” (*Discoveries* 1239-40),⁶ to the more particular “good councillors to princes are the best instruments of a good age” (1539-40) and: “I have ever observed it, to have been the office of a wise patriot, among the greatest affairs of state, to take care of the commonwealth of learning” (1141-4), the emphasis is on the involvement of the learned in the process of good government, both as advisors and as educators, with literature their most important tool:

A prince without letters, is a pilot without eyes. All his government is groping. In sovereignty it is a most happy thing, not to be compelled; but so it is the most miserable not to be counselled. And how can he be counselled that cannot see to read the best councillors (which are books) for they neither flatter us, nor hide from us?
(1525-32)

Yet, mingled with this high-minded view of the value of literature—or poetry, in Renaissance terms—was a distrust of the very form of poetry for which he is best remembered, and in which Brome saw his own calling: the dramatic. Jonson was wary of pandering to the groundlings in the theatre precisely because he upheld the primacy of poetry’s role to instruct over its ability to delight. Douglas Duncan explains Jonson’s attitude to his art splendidly, making clear the philosophic milieu out of which Brome’s own playwriting career began. Jonson, Duncan says,

was constantly on guard against self-prostitution to the strumpet stage, and was perpetually vexed by the problem of coming to terms with his audiences. *Sejanus* and *Catiline* make clear that his concept of “high” tragedy meant a stern exposition of his views on political morality through exemplary warnings from Roman history. Standing on the height of his argument, he challenged his public to rise to his level and see the truth as he saw it himself; hence the didacticism, the refusal to probe into the mysteries of human behaviour or destiny, which disqualify these plays by usual tragic criteria. For comedy he drew his materials from lower strata of the world around him, but his didactic approach was normally similar, demonstrating truth through the twin pointers of satirized characters and moral spokesmen, only in a few plays denying his audience the helping hand of the latter. And in the masque, at least for a while, the poet found his highest earthly fulfilment in sitting metaphorically at the king’s right

hand, guiding the court and with it the kingdom in the way it should go.
(120-1)

If Brome followed the Caroline trend of avoiding pure tragedy, if he did not have Jonson's opportunities to write court masques, if he displayed more faith than his old master in the value of poetry as entertainment, he certainly did not have any less of a commitment to the didactic function of his art, as the discussions of his use of the tropes of melancholy and the utopia have attempted to demonstrate. What follows is an examination of Brome's use of the "mirror for princes" mode, and the interesting and often original permutations it underwent at the hands of a professional comic craftsman working within the specific social and political demands of England under Charles I. Even though Brome turned these ideas to comic purposes, his plays reveal a concern with what constitutes good government, including the value of wise counsel and education, entirely consistent with humanist thought in Europe during the two centuries leading up to his death in 1652.

The most direct and obvious form of the "mirror for princes" mode is in the depiction of an "ideal prince," a kind of template upon which the ruler or heir-apparent might compare or shape his or her own policies and actions to the best advantage of the commonwealth. Erasmus recommends this use of exemplary literature because it gives the prince the opportunity to "choose the best from the best" (*Christian Prince* 202), but history shows that too often such models were either ignored or taken in the wrong spirit. Indeed, as John M. Major points out in speaking of the futility of Sir Thomas Elyot's task in trying to advise Henry VIII, the "mirror for princes" could have an effect reminiscent of Swift's summary of satire, where any corrective value is lost because the beholders "generally discover everybody's face but their own."⁷ In this case the prince was liable either to see too much of his own face in the ideal prince depicted, or, if the mode of instruction was by negative example (usually by depicting the fall of an evil prince), to identify to an uncomfortable degree with the victim of the *de casibus* tragedy. The propensity of the "mirror" as a medium for adverse political comment was such that its users often felt obliged to make the sorts of disclaimers more in keeping with the paranoia felt by writers for the public stage. Thus Elyot's statement in his *Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man*, that "in no boke of mi making I have intended to touche more one manne than an other" (quoted in Major 11), sounds much like Brome's "none are vs'd / as persons heare, by whome it Cann bee said /

this part by him, or her, was meant, or made,” in the prologue to the manuscript version of *The English Moore* (lines 11-3, Steen edn. 34). This was written as a presentation copy for the Earl of Hertford, probably during the court’s exile in Oxford in 1643, and shows signs of Brome treading warily when compared to the later printed edition.

The “ideal prince” model has a directness of address which implies that the writer has the ear of his own prince. While it does the case of the present discussion no harm to argue, as Butler does, that Brome’s *The Queen and Concubine* was presented at court “under the queen’s sponsorship” (Butler 42), the performance before royalty of one’s work was by no means a necessary prerequisite for adapting the “mirror for princes” for the stage.⁸ Brome, after all, never entered the circle of courtier playwrights about whom he complained so often, and existing records show no royal performances for any play other than *The Northern Lass*.⁹ From the end of the sixteenth century, there had been something of a “functional shift”—to borrow a linguistical term—in that the “mirror for princes” mode was no longer seen as the prerogative of courtly writers for aristocratic audiences. This was due in no small part to the particular bourgeois slant the mode had been given by English authors, beginning with Elyot and his *Governour*, and the emphasis placed upon the issue of education in its broadest sense in these works. This emphasis in turn expanded the range of the mode itself, allowing it to reach out beyond the overworked and claustrophobic world of kings, queens and princes, and into that of the theatre audience itself.

Shakespeare’s *Henry V* had set the tone for presenting the ideal prince of humanist literature within a popular dramatic context. J. H. Walter says that in its attempt “to give the illusion of an epic whole . . . *Henry V* is daringly novel.”¹⁰ Here is a play which illustrates “the obedient kingdom . . . achieved, and the ideal order of Church and State affirmed,”¹¹ all under the hand of a king who exemplifies the ideal characteristics of Erasmus’s Christian Prince.¹² Erasmus advocates “the legends of the poets” (*Christian Prince* 200) as a guide “for conducting oneself well” (202), and Elyot is even more enthusiastic about the efficacy of the classical authors for their good examples, praising in particular Virgil’s portrayal of Aeneas.¹³ *Henry V* endeavours to “cram / Within this wooden O” (Prol.12-13) all of the princely virtues for public scrutiny, holding them up not just for the prince and his (or her, in 1599) advisers, but for all the kingdom to see and compare with the true state of things. “We princes are set

on stages in the sight and view of all the world," Elizabeth I had said in 1586,¹⁴ acknowledging not only the increasing influence of dramatic poetry as the expression of the age, but also the very theatricality—the “privileged visibility” (Greenblatt, “Invisible Bullets” 44)—which helped to maintain the authority of the crown. The translation of the “mirror for princes” mode to the theatre is readily understood given the monarchy’s active pursuit of a high, celebratory profile, and the ordinary subject-turned-audience member becomes an essential element in the definitive process. “The ideal king must be in large part the invention of the audience,” says Greenblatt, and “*Henry V* is remarkably self-conscious about this dependence upon the audience’s powers of invention” (43). It is not unreasonable to say, therefore, that with *Henry V* (which, significantly, was the last of Shakespeare’s older style of heroic chronicle plays), the “mirror for princes” mode, even in its most exclusive form, had passed into the public domain. Brome made three forays, as far as we know, into the Fletcherian style of adventure romance which had superseded the chronicle play of the previous generation—a trend which in itself signals a shift in the perception of the monarchy by both subjects and rulers¹⁵—all of which deal with courts and princes and the concerns of the Renaissance “mirror for princes” mode: *The Queen’s Exchange*, *The Lovesick Court*, and *The Queen and Concubine*.

The action of *The Queen and Concubine* is triggered by the lust of Gonzago, King of Sicily, for Alinda, daughter of the renowned general Sforza. The King fabricates charges against his virtuous Queen, Eulalia, of adultery with Sforza and an attempt on the life of Alinda. Supported by all his ministers and advisers except Lodovico, who calls the proceedings “Royal Hypocrisie” (II.i; Pearson edn. 2.23), the King strips Eulalia of her titles and banishes her to the countryside with only her “naked hands, to help at a living shift” (23). The ambitious Alinda is more than receptive to the King’s schemes and attentions, even though her father has warned her that these are merely “base Favours which the King / Maintains his Lust by” (I.vi; 2.14). Erasmus, following St Augustine, also warns against “slavery to vice and degrading passions,” and asks: “What more abject and disgraceful condition can there be in which the prince, who holds imperial authority over free men, is himself a slave to lust. . . ?” (*Christian Prince* 160).

It was a Renaissance commonplace to call the prince the wellspring from which sprang the

fortunes of his subjects. More has himself tell Hythloday: “For from the prynce, as from a perpetuall well sprynge, cummythe amonge the people the floode of all that is good or euell” (*Utopia* 9), and Jonson dedicated *Cynthia’s Revels* (1600) “To the Special Fountain of Manners / The Court.” Anyone who contributes to the waywardness of the prince, says Erasmus, “is no different from one who has poisoned the public fountain from which all men drink” (*Christian Prince* 134). Gonzago is urged on by such poisonous advice and flattery, and Brome dramatises Erasmus’s pessimistic prognosis of such behaviour—“If [the prince] . . . is overcome by foolish ideas and base desires, what ray of hope is there for the state?” (159)—with appropriately Erasman imagery. An evil prince is “like a plague to his country,” claims Erasmus (157), and the “corruption” of such a prince “spreads more swiftly and widely than the scourge of any pestilence” (156).¹⁶ In *The Queen and Concubine* we find that an actual “foul Contagion” (III.iv; 2.52) inflicts “Infection, Pain and Sorrow” (51) upon the region of the kingdom “customarily laid out / For their Queens Dowry,” and called “*The Paradise of Love*” (52). And like the Queen, the province is totally undeserving of “the Judgement faln upon [it].” One of its elders laments:

We have been held obedient to the Church,
True subjects to the King, and friendliest Neighbours
Among our selves, all Sicily could boast of[.]¹⁷

(51)

At first the inhabitants believe that the plague is the result of “the Sin / Of the Adulterous Queen,” and that “nothing save her polluted blood must quench this flame” (53). But both Eulalia’s innocence and her “princely” status have already received supernatural recognition in the visit of a “Genius” in her sleep. This creature gives her an insight into the true course of events at court—presented as one of several “dumb shews” in the play, calling to mind Webster’s use of the device in his own depiction of wronged womanhood, *The Duchess of Malfi*¹⁸—as well as the gifts of prophecy, “to Fore-doom / The ends of many things to come,” the “Skill of Med’cine,” both by a knowledge of “Simples” and by spiritual means, and lastly, the ability to employ “Handy-Works and Literature” for the “Education good and pure” of the countryfolk (III.ii; 2.47). Eulalia’s “Sainted Innocence” (45) grants her the power to oppose and eventually overcome the “plague” that is Gonzago, who, like the Devil himself, has “great power joined with his wickedness” (*Christian Prince* 157). She is Erasmus’s “beneficent prince” who is “a living likeness to God” (157), and the Genius’s gifts highlight her

representation of the “three prime qualities” attributed to God: “the highest power, the greatest wisdom, the greatest goodness” (158). Kaufmann observes that the play “moves nearly into the realm of hagiography,” and that it could almost be an account of “the life of St Eulalia, Queen of mythical Sicily, a realm where divine Providence becomes observably functional” (92). She has at her disposal much more than “naked hands” for the “course that must [her] living get” (III.ii; 2.46), as she sets about the tasks which will see her restored to her rightful place on the throne.

We see a similar device employed in *The Queen's Exchange*. Segebert, an adviser to Queen Bertha of the West Saxons, is unfairly banished for speaking out against her marriage alliance to King Osrick of Northumbria. His son Anthynus accompanies him into the forest where he has a dream-vision in which the last six West Saxon kings appear before him. Later, when he is mistaken by the Northumbrian courtiers for his exact double Osrick, his natural tendency to correct the error and refuse Bertha's hand is overcome by the entry of an “invisible” Genius who whispers inspirational advice in his ear. Anthynus sees his destiny clearly at last: “Now I call / To mind the vision that I had of being / Call'd to the Throne of the west Saxons Kings” (IV.i; 3.529). He submits to the “exchange,” pretends to be Osrick, and marries Bertha. Osrick, meanwhile, has won time in which to “find himself” again by seeking out Mildred, the object of the love melancholy which has prevented him from effective rule. He returns with Mildred to take back his throne, while Anthynus, who has pleased Bertha despite the “counterfeit,” becomes king of the West Saxons.

There is much in the action of *The Queen's Exchange* which is consistent with the humanist literary method of promoting good government. Segebert's advice regarding Bertha's proposed marriage with Osrick, for example, reflects Erasmus's feelings about such alliances. Segebert speaks for the “dear Kingdoms good” when he questions that while the match with Osrick may bring a show of dignity to the Crown, “Must all . . .”

Be now subjected to a strangers foot;
 And trod into disorder? All your wealth,
 Your state, your laws, your subjects, and the hope
 Of flourishing future fortunes, which your Father
 By his continual care, and tedious study
 Gave as a Legacy unto this Kingdom.
 Must all be altered, or quite subverted,
 And all by a wilful gift unto a stranger?

(I.i; 3.458-9)

Erasmus voices similar doubts: “it would be by far most beneficial to the state if the marriage alliances of princes were confined within the limits of their own kingdoms” (*Christian Prince* 241). He says that history does not support the notion that alliances based on marriages between ruling houses provide lasting peace; rather, they seem to provide excuses for princes to meddle in the affairs of each others’ states, usually followed “by a tremendous shedding of Christian blood” (243). Segebert is banished from the court for his orthodox humanist stance, the Queen preferring the “sulphurous malice” (V.i; 3.545) of false and flattering advisers. She is smitten with the idea of marrying a prince, but Erasmus, in the *Christian Prince*, asks what harm there is in one of royal blood marrying a person “less powerful” than a prince “if it is more felicitous to everyone?” (241). Anthynus is sanctioned, through the intercession of the Genius—the “good Angel” (IV.i; 3.528) who is the perfect counsellor—as a fitting candidate for the West Saxon throne even though he is “less powerful,” initially, than a prince of the blood, in the same way that Eulalia’s position as queen is ratified by the gifts of her Genius, despite the fact that she is no longer on the throne. And similarly, Segebert, although banished from court, is vindicated as a good adviser by the twists in plot that see his own son placed on the throne instead of the “stranger” Osrick.

Any temptation to speak of the implicit support given by such supernatural intervention to theories of the divine right of kings must be balanced against the emphasis in these plays on fitness to rule, rather than on birthright or the unimpeachability of the prince’s position. Osrick is fit to return to the throne of Northumbria because he has voluntarily handed it over to Anthynus during his melancholia, only resuming his kingship once he is cured. He is willing to surrender permanently to Anthynus the prestigious marriage to Bertha, knowing that without Mildred he would be of no benefit to his people as king. Anthynus freely admits the counterfeit and risks the danger of losing all, including his life, but is received by Bertha as “my head, and I your handmaid” (V.i; 3.545). This self-realisation of one’s fitness to rule is given a further dimension at the conclusion of *The Queen and Concubine*, when the evil characters repentantly yield up both the power of the throne and their status within the hierarchy. King Gonzago gives up “Crown and Kingdom” to his son, comforted in the knowledge that “Your v̄rtuous mother (whom may you forever / Honour for her pietie) with these true / Statesmen, will enable you to govern well” (V.ix; 2.129), and then consigns

himself to a monastery. The once ambitious Alinda announces her intention to join “the Magdelene Nunnerie at Lucera, / To spend this life in Tears for my amiss” (129). Thus in their downfall these unworthies have at last displayed a true princely characteristic, for “those princes are most secure who are willing to abdicate if the people demand it.”¹⁹

Fitness to rule is also linked with freedom from ambition or the lust for power. Erasmus draws on Plato’s *Republic* when he says:

no one is fit to rule who has not assumed the rule unwillingly and only after persuasion. For whoever strives after the princely place must of necessity either be a fool or else not realize how fraught with care and trial the kingly office really is, or he may be so wicked a man that he plans to use the royal power for his own benefit, not for that of the state, or so negligent that he does not carry out the task he assumed.

(*Christian Prince* 160)

Anthynus needs the persuasion of the Genius before he takes on the princely role; conversely, Alinda cannot wait to be the new queen: “Let the base / And abject mindes be pleas’d with servile Bondage; / My Breast breeds not a thought that shall not flie / the lofty height of tousing Majesty” (I.ix; 2.19) where, Tamburlaine-like, she will “stand / And dare the World to dis-commend my Act” (20). Alinda has a male counterpart in the character of Stratocles, the “Ambitious Politique” of *The Lovesick Court*’s subtitle. He has a completely perverted interpretation of the godliness to which the ideal prince must aspire:

Why is man
Prescrib’d on earth to imitate the Gods,
But to come nearest them in power and action?
That is to be a King! That onely thought
Fills this capacious breast. A King or nothing!

(*LSC* I.i; 2.92)

Later in the play Stratocles repeats these thoughts about being “next unto the Gods” (III.ii; 2.126), and plays his own version of Marlowe’s over-reacher as he threatens the wise courtier Disanius and all who stand in his way:

I’le travail through your bloods: Thy self has gi’n me
The quicker motion by thy timely envy.
Thou hast set spurs to the pale horse of death,
That into dust shall trample all those lets
Which stand twixt me and the *Thessalian* Crown,
Upon whose back I’le set this Rider.

(127)

Stratocles rejects the humanist philosophy that as God is love, so should the prince be an instrument of that love on earth, for an apocalyptic vision of an avenging god making his way to the throne over the wreckage of the state.

Disanius had earlier warned Stratocles: "Be not ambitious, / Affect not popularity. 'Tis the most notable break-neck in a kingdom" (I.i; 2.92), for the latter is an interesting variation on the power-hungry statesman in that he is an unscrupulous demagogue. He has disturbed the peace of the kingdom by stirring up the common people over the issue of succession to the throne, but Disanius can tell that in Stratocles' "Ambitious pate lies the combustible stuff / Of all this late commotion" (92). Disanius' warning about affecting popularity is double-barrelled, because if the leader of a popular rising does not end up on the block, as Essex did, he may still find himself turned on by the very forces he hoped to control. While the ultimate aim of good government is the well-being of the commonwealth, writers of "mirrors for princes" pointed out the pitfalls of basing one's rule on public opinion. According to Erasmus:

The great mass of people are swayed by false opinions and are no different from those in Plato's cave, who took the empty shadows as the real things. It is the part of a good prince to admire none of the things that the common people consider of great consequence, but to judge all things on their own merits as "good" or "bad."²⁰
(*Christian Prince* 148)

If this attitude seems cold and elitist, particularly to our modern democratic sensibilities, it is nevertheless a part of the godliness to which the prince should aspire:

God is swayed by no emotions, yet he rules the universe with supreme judgment. The prince should follow His example in all his actions, cast aside all personal motives, and use only reason and judgment.

(159)

Disanius reflects Erasmus's view of mass opinion, and Stratocles, like us, mistakes his humanism for cynicism:

[Dis.] . . . with a little borrow'd light, one moment,
Thou shin'st the mark and wonder of all eyes;
But soon consum'd and darted to the Center,
Becom'st the scorn of men and sport of Children.

Str. You are oth sect of Cinicks, and have learn'd
To bark Philosophy.

Dis. Then shall you hear
Your now adorning multitude upbraid
Your insolence and pride, and gain the name
Of Prophets by your downfall, while one swears
He had foretold it long; Another dreamt it;
All joyntly cry we never could indure him;
See what a look he has; what brawny lips;
What poysonous eyes; and what an impudent front!

(III.ii; 2.126)

This prompts Stratocles' "Death on a pale horse" speech, displaying the rabble-rouser's real

lack of regard for the people and the fate of the nation.

Stratocles is an acutely delineated rendering of the type of politician described by French statesman Claude de Seyssel, who, “unable to get the management of great affairs . . . by merit, beneficence, and authority of the senate found chances to win the favour of the people by persuading them to self-indulgent courses on the pretext of the common weal.”²¹ When at last Stratocles is thwarted by the intervention of the commons, he himself unwittingly reveals the truth of Disanius’s prediction as well as his own true feelings: “Am I become the shame and scorn of pesants[?]” (IV.ii; 2.146). Yet to Stratocles’ credit, by the end of the play he has recognised his unfitness to rule, so that when circumstances lead the King to offer him the hand of the princess and the succession to the throne he once craved, he declines; the granting of his life is enough, he says, to warrant the forfeit of any higher claims. Like the fall of King Gonzago and Alinda, his has been a *felix culpa*, but by having to learn through experience rather than through the wisdom of others, all three have demonstrated their unsuitability as princes.

In *The Queen and Concubine*, Eulalia is in a better position to take advantage of popular support, and with considerable justification. She does not resort to demagoguery, however, and patiently accepts her diminished status in the kingdom. Her situation recalls that of Dionysius of Syracuse, which Elyot recounts as an example of the educative role of the prince, but which also shows the true prince’s lack of vindictiveness and ambition. Exiled from the throne, Dionysius “in a commune schole taught grammer,” which “caused hym to sustayne adversitie paciently. . . : which courage and wysedome consydered of his people, they eftsones restored him unto his realme and astate roiall” (*Governour* 22). If he had tried to regain the crown by force, says Elyot, he would have been resisted instead. This is startlingly close to the way Eulalia wins back her place in the hearts of the people and to the throne (even down to the Sicilian setting which Brome changed from Egypt in the original source).²²

Eulalia uses the Genius’s gifts to rid the Paradise of Love of the plague, to educate the children in handicrafts, music, dancing and literature, and to foresee danger to the people and to herself in the form of infiltrators from the court. She remains a loyal subject throughout, warning the countryfolk not to call her Queen, in defiance of the King’s edict, when they find out her true identity. When the people feel resentment at the plots on her life and rebellion

brews, she preaches moderation of action and mercy to those who wished her harm:

I condemn their faults, and blame their lives;
But have nor Power nor will to judge the men:
You have the will: but to assume the Power,
You take the Kings Right from him[.]

(IV.iii; 2.80)

Eulalia is restored as queen through the clamour of the populace and the King's realisation of her virtue, not through any political or military action instigated by her. The people act because of their love for her; to them she is "this holy woman, this she-Saint," and "from Heaven she came" (III.v; 2.57). She is no demagogue, stirring up the people for her own ends, rather, she is the perfect prince whose "best defense against his enemies is the loyalty and love of his people" (Born 13). Even when she has the power once more, she takes no revenge on Alinda or the King, exercising mercy and forgiveness instead.

If the character of Eulalia is too good to be true, it is because *The Queen and Concubine* takes Erasmus's admonition to portray the "Picture of the Good Prince" seriously. It is worth quoting this at length to see just how faithful (allowing, of course, for the change in gender) Brome's representation is:

Let the teacher paint a sort of celestial creature, more like to a divine being than a mortal: complete in all the virtues; born for the common good; yea, sent by the God above to help the affairs of mortals by looking out and caring for everyone and everything; to whom no concern is of longer standing or more dear than the state; who has more than a paternal spirit toward everyone; who holds the life of each individual dearer than his own; who works and strives day and night for just one end—to be the best he can for everyone; with whom rewards are ready for all good men and pardon for the wicked, if only they will reform—for so much does he want to be of real help to his people, without thoughts of recompense, that if necessary he would not hesitate to look out for their welfare at great risk to himself; who considers his wealth to lie in the advantages of his country[.]

(*Christian Prince* 162)

Neither the high-minded scholar nor the worldly-wise playwright could be so naive as to believe such a creature could exist, yet this is the model which each sets up before both rulers and ruled. The foundation of good government is the ideal of the "unity of Christian ethics and ruling authority" (Born 32)—which is simply Plato's desire that philosophers should become kings. As Erasmus says in completing his "Picture": "Upon the moral qualities of this one man alone depends the felicity of the state" (*Christian Prince* 163), and he exhorts men of learning who would be involved in good government thus: "Let the tutor point this out as the picture of the true prince!" (163). In *The Queen and Concubine*'s portrayal of Eulalia we see the work of a playwright who, as the dutiful tutor, does precisely that.

III.2 Domestic Catechising and the Common Weal

BROME'S "PRINCE" PLAYS employ courtly settings in order to capitalise on the fashion for romance in the professional and private theatres of his day. At the same time they act as a medium for conveying the moral and ethical concerns of the "mirror for princes" mode which motivated earlier humanist treatises on good government, as well as the chronicle history play genre which had largely died out with the turn of the century and the appearance of *Henry V*. Brome's plays continue the process of "citizenising" works such as Erasmus's *Education of a Christian Prince* which English writers in particular—from Elyot through to Shakespeare—had begun. Nevertheless, in *The Queen and Concubine* there is evidence to suggest that Brome actually reversed this process by taking a "low and homebred" subject—as he maintained he had done in *The Antipodes* (Prol.25)—and transforming it from the level of domestic advice to one more in tune with the original humanist preoccupation with tutoring princes in the ways of wise rule.

Brome's falsely accused Queen Eulalia shares her name with the character of the "good wife" in Erasmus's colloquy *Marriage*.²³ In this dialogue Eulalia—which Thompson translates as "sweetly speaking" (*Colloquies* 114)—instructs Xantippe (named after Socrates' shrewish wife) in the ways of dealing with a recalcitrant husband and of making a marriage pleasant and harmonious. Eulalia's advice and exemplary tales, as well as the marital situation described by Xantippe, have a homely ring of middle class domesticity about them, but, it will be argued, Brome's play takes the commonplace wisdom of Erasmus's character and transports it to the wider realm of courtly politics, so that the formula for a happy home life becomes the basis for the well-being of the kingdom at large.

The idea that Brome may have been inspired, at least in part, by an Erasman colloquy is not outlandish. The colloquies were "informal conversations" in semi-dramatic form which, as Duncan explains, were "widely prescribed either along with, or in place of, Lucian's dialogues in the second form of grammar school" (Duncan 44). We also know that Jonson owned a copy of the 1527 edition of Erasmus's *Familiarum colloquiorum*.²⁴ Erasmus intended his colloquies "to be broadly educative for the general reader and especially for the young" (Duncan 44), and he claimed that where Socrates had "brought philosophy from

heaven to earth," he had "brought it even into games, informal conversations, and drinking parties."²⁵ It is no great step, therefore, to find in these dialogues, which were based on the principle that "the very amusements of a Christian ought to have a philosophical flavour" (45), a source for the comic drama of a playwright firmly committed to the classical dictum of delightful instruction.

Earlier in the century the puritan divine, William Burton, had found a similar use for the *Colloquies*. He translated seven of "the best," and had them published under the title *Utile Dulce or, Trueth's Libertie*, with the hope that "Both pleasure and profite will entertaine" their readers.²⁶ In dedicating his work to "the Maior, the Shiriffes and Aldermen" of the city of Norwich in gratitude for the unity of law and religion by which they governed the city (*Utile* A2r-v), he was effectively defining the work as a "mirror for magistrates" in the humanist tradition of advice to those in power. By calling his readers' attention to "how little the Papists haue to boast to boast of *Erasmus*, as a man of their side" (A6r), he was re-enlisting the century-old *Colloquies* onto the field of religious conflict, in the name of the continuing Protestant reform which Puritanism represented.²⁷ When the work was re-issued in 1607, the title-page was re-worked in "an attempt to stress anti-Catholic aspects of the text more strongly,"²⁸ and this trend was maintained when it was seen fit to publish another edition in 1624.²⁹

That Burton's purpose in translating Erasmus was more didactic than scholarly can be readily seen, to take the most relevant example, in the the colloquy *Marriage* (which he called "A Dialogue betweene a good Woman and a Shrew"). Here he adds some two and a half pages which he freely admits in a marginal note "is not in Erasmus" (H3r), and more discretely, excises two sections on divorce and Xantippe's pre-marital pregnancy.³⁰ Burton's additional material lays heavier stress on the subservience of the wife to the husband, and introduces an element of puritan "catechising" in the way that Eulalia looks forward to the day when "God shall (by his grace) regenerate our hearts and giue us humbler spirits," to which Xantippe replies, "I hope I am regenerate, and haue the grace of God, though I suffer not my husband to be my maister" (*Utile* H3v). Both of Burton's additions are founded upon the puritan concept that, as Christopher Hill explains, "the lowest unity in the hierarchy of discipline was not the parish but the household."³¹ Hill discusses the educative process of

catechising in the household (*Society and Puritanism* 440-3), and talks of the “Erasmian Richard Whytford,” who in 1531 published *A Work for Householders*, “directed principally unto householders or unto them that have guiding and governance of any company” (quoted in *Society and Puritanism* 432). Thus the process by which humanist concerns with education, counsel and good government were adapted for the middle orders of society can be seen not only to have begun quite early, but also to have an affinity with the emergence of Puritanism in England. Such a crossflow of philosophical and ethical concerns from one social group to another makes it easier to comprehend the translation of Erasmus’s commonplace views on happy marriage to the wider political and social concerns of *The Queen and Concubine*.

This process is actually set in motion by Burton’s Eulalia, who, in discussing the issue of wifely “subiection,” makes the point that we are all subjects:

For though a man bee a noble man, and a Lord, and hath tenants vnder him, yet is he also a subiect, and must obey his Prince, as one that liueth vnder a law.
(*Utile* [H4r])

The honour due to the head of the household is here, like the fifth commandment in biblical exegesis, written large to include that which is due to the political head of the land. Kings and princes, in turn, could make much of this “patriarchal theory of monarchy” to make their rule seem “an element in the natural order of things” (Hill, *Society and Puritanism* 446). Even those not committed to the principle of monarchy could claim for their own particular systems, as Calvin did, that magistrates and governors “are named gods . . . whoes stede they do after a certeine maner supplie.”³² To disobey a legitimate ruler was to disobey God, according to the theory, but upholders of divine right too often forgot to take the theory to the logical conclusion of which Burton’s Eulalia’s comparison between householder and prince is only a part. Lily B. Campbell notes in her introduction to the collection of cautionary chronicle tales that make up *The Mirror for Magistrates*, that its authors—themselves no literary hacks, but learned men, humanists and statesmen like Sir Thomas Chaloner, “who were accepted as important figures in their own time” (Campbell 20)³³—realised “that the doctrine was a two-edged sword,” and so,

Their tragedies taught, not only the duties of subjects to their king, but also the accountability of kings to the King of Kings—a part of the theory of divine right less popular with the reigning monarchs.

(53)

Their tales are calculated, in Sidney’s words, to “make kings fear to be tyrants” (quoted in

mouth" (102), and the King, seeing this for the threat that it represents, embarks on the road to reform and the eventual reinstatement of Queen Eulalia.³⁴

While rebellion proves the King's nemesis in *The Queen and Concubine* as it does for Henry VI and many another "parcyall prince," Eulalia, as we have seen, neither instigates nor exploits these disturbances. When the "pettie Parliament" made up of Palermian sages decides "for a Reformation, to pull down / The Queen's mercy, and set up our Justice" (V.vi; 2.116) by hanging the "Traytors" who have made attempts on her life, she intervenes, warning:

Will ye, 'gainst all my Counsels and requests
Persist to pull destruction by taking others lives upon your own?
And seem to carry it as in care for me?
(V.vii; 2. 120)

Her refusal to take part in any vengeful act against the King and her continued loyalty to him are at one with the tenets of Erasmus's Eulalia, who preaches that "The chiefest ornament of a wife, is to be duetifull to her husband, and studious to please him" (*Utile* K[1r]). Brome's Queen maintains that "the Chief Honour / Of the best women, meek obedience, / Is my own handmaid" (III.i; 2.44), and in being perceived by the "good" characters in the play as "The perfect Pattern of Meekness, Patience, Obedience" (II.iii; 2.29), she is the embodiment the "good wife's" belief that "The grace and decking of matrons is not in apparell, . . . but in chaste and modest behaviour, and in the ornaments of the minde" (*Utile* H2v). Even when Burton takes this obedience out into the wider realm of the relationship between ruler and ruled, so that a wife "is to serue her husband, as his subiect" ([H4r]), so Brome's Eulalia sees no difference between her roles as wife and as subject:

I'll still retain the duty of a wife,
Which though it be rejected, shall not throw
Me from the path a Subject ought to go.
(I.vii; 2.17)

In Queen Eulalia is the conjunction between the domestic harmony of the good marriage as advocated in the Erasmian colloquy, and the harmony at large that results from the union between wise ruler and loyal subject which William Burton's catechising implies. The courtier Lodovico recognises the connection when, after Eulalia's "duty of a wife" speech just cited, he mutters, "Two such wives more might save a nation" (17). His equation raises both loyal queen and obedient wife to the same emblematic status which the masques presented at the court of Charles and Henrietta Maria accorded to the royal marriage, and nowhere more

tellingly than in James Shirley's *The Triumph of Peace*, performed only about two years before *The Queen and Concubine*. Shirley's encomium of the current reign was produced as "a declaration of continuing loyalty" by the Inns of Court,³⁵ as if in atonement for the waywardness of one of their number, William Prynne, in writing the scathing *Histriomastix*.

After the great and costly procession and the large number of anti-masques which open *The Triumph of Peace*, Shirley directs attention at the royal couple themselves, to whom "the following ode is sung":

To you great King and Queen, whose smile
 Doth scatter blessings through this isle,
 To make it best
 And wonder of the rest,
 We pay the duty of our birth,
 Proud to wait upon that earth
 Whereon you move,
 Which shall be nam'd,
 And by your chaste embraces fram'd
 The paradise of love.

(*Triumph* 184-93)

After the initial shock of recognition and realisation as to the possible source of Brome's own "Paradice of Love,"³⁶ the next most significant aspect of the ode is the way it finds an image for the nation's greatness in the quality of the royal marriage. *The Queen and Concubine* takes this a step further by showing the breakdown of a royal marriage as both a cause and a symptom of the collapse of order and social coherence. Lodovico describes the consequences of the dissolution of the King's marriage to Eulalia and re-marriage to "that lewd Woman" (II.iii; 2.28), Alinda—"Who treads and tramples down the Government" (29)—as "The mischiefes that of necessary course must follow, even to the ruine of the State" (28).

Eulalia's function in the running of the kingdom is not solely emblematic or representational, however. She is given an intermediary role between the King and the people which is in keeping with the hagiographic strain of the play. For like the Catholic church's Mary, Queen of Heaven, she is an intercessor as well as a focus for devotion who has actively helped "to preserve the State," as Lodovico explains:

 you know too well the King,
 How apt his nature is to fell oppression.
 The burden of whose crueltie long since,
 If by the vertuous Clemencie of his Wife
 It had not been alay'd and mitigated,
 Had been a general subversion.

(30)

Where *The Triumph of Peace* beatifies the royal couple but leaves them at the level of detached observers—

When your sands are spent
With Heaven's, and your consent,
Though late, from your high bowers,
Look down on what was yours

(656)

—*The Queen and Concubine* appeals directly to one member of the royal couple, at least, in that tone of “zealous frankness” with which Martin Butler claims the play “functions more specifically to expose the nature of arbitrary, tyrannical government” (Butler 42).

Yet even here, Brome's Eulalia is wholly in step with Erasmus's good woman as she advises Xantippe in the things “that wiues may do to make their husbands such as they should be” (*Utile* [H4v]). Thus the role of wife includes controlling a husband's passions and ameliorating his actions, a task which ideally is achieved “by observing each others conditions, and fitting manners accordingly” (I[1r]), but which more often involves tactics akin to those “that would tame Elephants, or Lions, or the like beasts, which cannot be wonne by force” (I[1r]-[I1v]). This is not a very flattering comparison, but neither are the portraits of Xantippe's husband or King Gonzago, and the image presented of wives is one of endurance to the point of martyrdom in their efforts to bring some semblance of civilisation into a brutish world of male wilfulness and caprice. Such a definition of the good wife also makes Queen Eulalia's education of the children of Palermo in literature, arts and crafts easier to understand, and adds weight to the view that the action of *The Queen and Concubine* has its basis in a philosophy which sees the moral and ethical concerns of domestic and political life as congruent and interdependent.

While both Eulalias display the ability to turn subservience and even being oppressed into positive forces for reform and the spread of “civilisation” (both of which being the major goals motivating all humanist literature), Xantippe and Alinda represent a confrontationalist approach to marriage which is shown to have destructive consequences. When the court fool, Andrea, quips about Eulalia's ill-treatment by the King by saying, “Any woman but she, now in her Case, would eat such an Husbands Brains without Butter” (III.iii; 2.50), he expresses perfectly the attitude of Xantippe as she counters her husband's threats:

Afraid, faith sir no: but whatsoere I was, I set a good face on the matter, I got a three footed stoole into my hands: if he had but touched me with his finger, he shoulde well

have knowne that I had not bin lame in my hands.

(*Utile* H3r)

While there is a degree of wryly humorous admiration in the above passage for Xantippe's doughtiness in facing up to her husband, the point is made that such a stance more befits a "virago" than a wife. Nothing could be more opposed to Queen Eulalia's view of herself, even in her moment of triumph, as "Still the most humble Handmaid / To your high Majestie" (V.ix; 2.124), than Alinda's splenetic outburst when she thinks that her wishes are not being met: "Sure you have but mock'd me all this while: / I am no wife, no Queen, but silly Subject" (IV.viii; 2.98). Subjection clearly has no place in Alinda's concept of wife or queen, and she would agree with Xantippe's reply to Erasmus's Eulalia about the marriage vow to obey her husband: "must he haue me at commandement? his seruant can be no more" (*Utile* H3r).³⁷

Despite her princely ambitions, Alinda is reduced to the level of the shrewish housewife, Xantippe, as she attempts to undermine the King's authority over her by attacking his very honour as a husband:

sit down content
On your Majestick Throne the President
Of Capital contented Cuckolds, do,
Till all your Subjects dance the Hornpipe too[.]

(III.xi; 2.74)

At the same time she inadvertently reinforces the very equation that Lodovico had made regarding the welfare of the kingdom: that discord in the royal marriage licenses social disorder at large. Her striving for sway over the King and the kingdom eventually unbalances her precisely because she threatens to unbalance the whole nature of accepted marital relationships. Her frustration develops into "a Moonflaw in her brains" which Petruccio diagnoses as the "Fearful effect of Pride" (IV.viii; 2.95), and this causes her to make even more shrill assaults on the King's manhood:

it now appears
My Father [Sforza] . . . was all your valour.
Y'have never a *Mars* or a Cuckold-making General
Now left: and for your self, you'r past it[.]

(96)

This causes the usually cautious Horatio to remark, "His t'other wife would not have us'd him thus. / Quiet Cuckoldrie is better than scolding chastitie all the world over" (96), an observation which has much in common with the advice tendered by Erasmus's Eulalia to ensure marital harmony: "There bee many faults also that you must winke at; and aboue all,

beware that you mooue no brawles in chamber or in bedde” (*Utile* [I4r]).

Alinda ignores this advice, but in her scolding she singles out a number of “Erasmian” truths. When she accuses him thus:

let me think your lustful purpose
Was but to rob me of my Virgin-Honour.
And that you put her by but for a time,
Until my youth had quench’d your appetite;
Then to recal her home to your embraces[,]

(III.xi; 2.74-5)

she hits upon the very nature of relationships born out of passion only, as Erasmus’s Eulalia explains:

As for that loue that is grounded onely vpon beauty and riches, &c. it is meere temporary, and wil faile when beauty and riches do faile, or when it seeth another fairer or richer, and is like a fire that is kindled of straw, which wil make a blaze for a time, but is soone out.

(*Utile* I[1r])

Such was the nature of the King’s passion for Alinda, and so it is that he is won over by the morally fairer and richer Eulalia. She in turn regains the King’s love and her status as wife/queen not by resorting to the vengeance and spite of Xantippe or Alinda, but by acting in the manner prescribed by Erasmus’s good woman: “It is therefore better to beare [a husband] being like himself, or made better by our curteous behaiour, than by our furious and extreame dealing, to make him daily worse and worse” ([I2v]).

In fact, Queen Eulalia, like the folktale character of Robert Greene’s *Penelope’s Web* from which she derives, behaves very much like the women in the exemplary tales which her namesake relates to Xantippe in the hope of convincing the shrew to reform her ways. Erasmus’s Eulalia tells of the woman “of good yeares” whose husband fell in love with another, and spent much time away from home. The wife “inuitd that woman (which her husband loued) home to her house, and vsed her in all kindnesse, and so without any sorceries drew her husband home also” (*Utile* I3v). Brome’s Eulalia had Alinda “bred . . . at home” and “call’d her Daughter” (I.iii; 2.8) in a similar display of kindness, although in inviting the girl to the court “to be some comfort in [the King’s] absence” (8), she had not intended to pander to her husband’s lust. Nevertheless, Eulalia’s reaction to her own displacement is not that of Lodovico, who calls Alinda “that Start-up, / That Snake this good Queen cocker’d in her Bosom” (II.i; 2.24), but is more akin to Erasmus’s example in her acceptance of Alinda because love and obedience to her husband the King dictates as much.

Without malice or irony she re-affirms her loyalty: “O let me lead your voyces. Long live *Gonzago* and *Alinda*, King and Queen of Sicily” (II.ii; 2.25-6), and she counsels the Prince,

That since *Alinda* bless'd by providence
Must be invested with the Regal Crown,
You shew her that obedience befits a Queen,
And your dread Fathers Wife.³⁸

(26)

To *Alinda* herself, *Eulalia* says, “whilst you love the King, and he is pleas'd, / I shall no less obey you, then I lov'd you / When I sent for you to the Court” (27), choosing a course which, although difficult, is “lesse euil” than the “furious rigour” which both *Xantippe* and *Alinda* advocate, but which *Erasmus's* good wife knows would have “wholly estraunged her husbands minde from her” (*Utile* [I3v]).

Eulalia's meekness and humility are not only the means by which she will inherit the Paradise of Love and be raised back up again, they also prove the best way to overcome *Alinda*, who cries out against being “taunted and upbraided” and “plainly jeer'd” (27) by *Eulalia's* declarations of loyalty. *Alinda*, as we have seen, is driven into a frenzy of frustrated ambition when faced with the “Sainted Innocence” (III.i; 2.45) of *Eulalia*, for whom, in *Erasmus's* words, “some kinde of inconuenience was to be preferred before a mischiefe” (*Utile* I3v), and particularly one directed against the King. For while *Alinda* rails at her imagined mistreatment by the King even when he is at his most dotting, showering her with honours and wealth, *Eulalia* never once bemoans her own outcast condition. She goes one better than the woman in *Erasmus's* tale who, when abused by her husband, tells him she would rather “deplore and bewaile [her] hard estate heere in secret, than to runne forth and cry out in the open streetes” ([I4r]), by preferring to see in her exile that “Heaven is still where it was, and cannot lose / The Providence it ever had,” and to realise, as she reels off the benefits of her situation, that she “was not great / Till now” (III.i; 2.44-5).

Brome's *Eulalia* regains her queenship through the very qualities advocated by the good wife for re-establishing marital harmony:

you must swallow vp all the iniuries that your husband offers you, and his affection must be by little and little wonne, by duties, and kindenesse, and meekenesse, and mildenesse, and so you shal at last, either overcome him, or vse him more commodiously than now you can.

(*Utile* [I4r])

By the end of the play, the King himself is aware of the power of her stance: “Come here

Eulalia, take now thy wonted Seat and keep it ever. / Thy povertie and patience have restor'd thee / By the just Providence" (V.iv; 2.114). He realises that those qualities of perfect wife and perfect subject make her fit to rule and to transform the kingdom for the better. From intercessor for her people she has become the medium through which the loyalty and charity of the Paradise of Love, full of "True Subjects to the King" (III.iv; 2.51), are radiated out into the rest of the land:

Here plentie grows, and above it content,
Ore spreads the Face of all the Continent.
Eulalia, thou art happy, and didst rise,
Not fall from Court into this Paradise,
Nor can it move my admiration much,
Thy vertue wrought the change, and made it such.

(V.viii; 2.123)

The wider application of the attributes of the "good wife" can be seen in the way that Queen *Eulalia* adopts the code of charity and forgiveness expounded in *Marriage* as a *modus* for the ministration of justice and mercy in the public sphere. Erasmus's *Eulalia* says that in the event of "any thing that cannot be indured, nor yet by the wiues admonition be amended," the wife should "temper her complaint, that shee may not seeme to hate her husbands person, but his sinne" (*Utile* I2v). When the would-be assassins Fabio and Strozza are brought before Queen *Eulalia*, she echoes these words: "I condemn their faults, and blame their lives; / But have nor Power nor will to judge the men" (IV.ii; 2.80). Xantippe says that whoever can maintain such an approach in marriage "must be a very wise woman"; she is told that "by such deedes we shal draw our husbands to the like ciuilitie" (*Utile* I2v). How much wiser then is Brome's queen, who is able both to draw her husband back to "civility" and to set in motion a program by which a whole kingdom may reach a "reformation" without vengeance or bloodshed. We do not know if *The Queen and Concubine*'s intended audience was Henrietta Maria and her court circle, or whether it was written for broader consumption.³⁹ Certainly the play demonstrates in a much more direct manner than the masque's emblematic form the equation between domestic and political harmony. By taking the Erasmian precepts of the good wife and the happy marriage as a practical model for Shirley's "paradise of love," Brome's play attempts to establish a genuine triumph of peace in the midst of the political and social squabbling which were already dividing the kingdom.

III.3 Towards a Redefinition of the Courtier

WHETHER OR NOT *The Queen and Concubine* was written for performance at court, Brome does not seem to have had the opportunity, before the closure of the theatres in 1642, of sitting “metaphorically at the king’s right hand” (Duncan 121) as Jonson had done in writing court masques.⁴⁰ Of course, Brome almost always managed to include some form of masque within the comic action of his plays, usually as a part of the process by which ills are cured and evils corrected. *The Queen and Concubine*, I have suggested, goes a step further by developing an idealised concept from a court masque—that of the “paradise of love” in Shirley’s *The Triumph of Peace*—into an actual physical setting for the kind of comic action more closely associated with the popular, professional stage. This and other Brome plays maintain the tension between Renaissance humanist ideals, which Daniel Javitch claims “valued social and political uses of literature more than esthetic ones,”⁴¹ and the need to submit to “the exigencies of Tudor [and subsequently Stuart] despotism” (Javitch 11), a tension which Javitch postulates gave rise to the “great age” of English literature in the first place.

Brome’s plays often make use of current Stuart courtly modes, without necessarily serving the same “courtly” ends. While treading the biographical path can lead to many critical pitfalls, what we do know of Brome’s career suggests a movement away from court circles, at least before 1642, in an attempt to maintain a certain degree of professional “distance” by relying upon the theatre companies rather than patronage for a living. His move from the King’s Men at Blackfriars to Prince Charles’s Company at the Red Bull in about 1634 is not indicative of an artist whose interests lie in close contact with courtly audiences. And although, as has been noted, all the companies to which he belonged had access to the court at various times (see n.9 above), those dedications published with his works do not suggest a seeker of court favour. Both *The Weeding of Covent Garden* and *The Sparagus Garden* were dedicated to William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, while *A Jovial Crew* and the manuscript version of *The English Moor* were dedicated to William Seymour, Earl of Hertford. Neither of these men was renowned for his modishness either in manners or politics at court; Newcastle was “out of his depth in Charles’s progressive court” (Butler 195), while Hertford

was a moderate who, before 1642, had associated with the Earl of Essex and other “puritan” nobles.⁴² Brome’s leanings towards these two somewhat non-conformist lords (in the general, not the religious, sense) would have been based on the sympathy of each for poets and the arts rather than as a means of currying favour in court circles.

The career of James Shirley, Brome’s contemporary and an admirer, reveals the opportunities available to the playwright who wished to make his way through court connections. Superficially, he travelled the same professional path as Brome, writing for the Cockpit and the Salisbury Court Theatres between 1624 and 1636, but during that time he also “became attached to the household of Charles’s Catholic queen” as “Valet of the Chamber” (Bentley, *JCS* V.1068-9). In 1634 he was admitted to Gray’s Inn and wrote *The Triumph of Peace*, and after four years in Ireland he returned to London in 1640 to become Massinger’s successor as dramatist for the King’s Men at Blackfriars. Brome, meanwhile, had more or less made Shirley’s professional journey in reverse, ending up contracted to the Cockpit company after starting at Blackfriars, but with no known attempts to find a place at court along the way. In fact, Brome suffered his worst professional treatment at the hands of the Salisbury Court Theatre company which, since the re-opening of the theatres in 1637, Ellen Dutton Kiehl points out was “generally identified with court interest, while such powerful figures as the Master of the Revels and the Queen’s Lord Chamberlain both had a direct financial involvement in the reorganized group” (98, n.32). Shirley himself recognised Brome’s skill and devotion to the art of playwriting, as opposed to the opportunists entering the field, when he wrote in his commendatory verse to *A Jovial Crew* that, unlike the “new men”—whom Haaker points out as “courtier and academic playwrights such as William Strode, William Cartwright and Sir John Suckling” (*JC*, Haaker edn. 8, n.3)—Brome knows “Beyond his books, men and their actions, too,” and that whereas these dabblers are but “Small bavin wits,” Brome’s “fancy’s metal,” and “much higher / Proof ’gainst their wit.”⁴³

Brome’s growing antipathy towards courtiers and court fashions, particularly that of meddling in the theatre and so threatening his own livelihood, may be gauged from the prologues of his later plays. In the early 1630s he had scoffed at attempts by university men to write plays as “Those Poet-Bownces that write English Greeke” (*The Novella* [1632] Prol.; Pearson edn. 1.[104]). Even so, he proved he could refashion this trend to suit his own

purposes and his own strain of learned wit. He has the pedant, Sarpego, deliver the prologue to *The City Wit* (1629-31, revised 1637-9), so that, like Erasmus's Folly, Sarpego at first dismisses himself (and the acting company) out of his own mouth with a suitably Erasmian adage, as "*Asinus inter simias*"⁴⁴—"the ass among the apes"—but then, turning the logic around in a true Folly-style of narration, advances himself as a fitting "suitor" to beg the audience to "exercise your Judgement with your wit" (*The City Wit* Prol.; Pearson edn. 1.[275-6]).

By the later 1630s he was directing his barbs at courtier playwrights as well. When Suckling had his "archetypal courtier play" (Butler 55) *Aglaura* published in folio format in 1637, Brome wrote a verse satire which, Butler maintains, "was widely circulated" (189). The main butt of the poem was the ludicrous appearance of the narrow columns of print in the middle of large sheets of paper, so that each page looked like "A Room with one side furnish'd" or "like one that hath more hair than head."⁴⁵ But it is the prologues to the plays of this period which spell out Brome's attitude to the method and content of courtly efforts like *Aglaura*. The prologue to *A Mad Couple Well Matched* (1639) is delivered by the "young wilde Heire" Carelesse—so that, as in his use of Sarpego in *The City Wit*, Brome turns an object of scorn into an ally—who, though dressed in fashionable courtly attire, must acquiesce to the poet's unwillingness to indulge in any equally fashionable mode of courtly address:

Here you're all met, and looke for a set speech,
Put into Rhyme, to court you, and beseech
Your Worships, but to heare and like the Play,
But I, I vow, have no such part to say.
I'm sent a woing to you, but how to do't,
I han't the skill; tis true I've a new Suite,
And Ribbons fashionable, yclipt Fancies,
But for the Compliments, the Trips, and Dances,
Our Poet can't abide um, and he swears,
They're all but cheats; and sugred words but jeeres.

(*Mad Couple* Prol.; Pearson edn. 1.[x])

The prologue to *A Jovial Crew* complains that "jovial mirth is now grown out of fashion" (Prol.6; Haaker edn.), and that "romances" (8) where "some impossibility / Concludes all strife and makes a comedy" (13-14) are the sorts of plays which "bear the sway" (15) in the theatres. The prologue to *The Court Beggar* condemns the "new strayne of wit" with which audiences are "Deeply in love," and protests that the present play will have "no gaudy Sceane" or "handsome Love-toy" to "beguile" its audiences (Prol.; 1.[184]).⁴⁶ But the most outspoken attitude towards the "courtly strain" of plays is to be found in the prologue to *The*

Antipodes. Here are combined the playwright's disgust at the emptiness of their content, as epitomised in the folio printing of *Aglaura*, the tawdriness of their outward show, and the willingness of audiences to accept them on the professional stage:

Opinion, which our dear author cannot court
 (For the dear daintiness of it), has of late
 From the old way of plays possess'd a sort
 Only to run to those that carry state
 In scene magnificent and language high,
 And clothes worth all the rest, except the action.
 And such are only good, those leaders cry;
 And into that belief draw on a faction
 That must despise all sportive, merry wit,
 Because some such great play had none in it.

(Prol.1-10)

The depiction of courtiers in Brome's plays falls into two broad categories. The first is where they are an obviously integral part of the play's setting and action—*The Queen's Exchange*, *The Lovesick Court* and *The Queen and Concubine* being the major instances of courtiers in their own environment.⁴⁷ Here we have an "inside" view of them as counsellors, attendants and governors within the confines of the court and usually under the eye of their king or prince. Each play has the appropriate mixture of courtiers who are true-speakers or flatterers, fools or sages, to suit the demands of the plot and its didactic purposes. The other depiction of courtiers is what may be termed the "view from the outside." In a number of Brome's plays we see actual court figures (as opposed to the usual gallants and gentlewomen who inhabit almost all of his and the plays of his contemporaries, and who broadly reflect courtly taste and fashion in their speech, mannerisms, dress and opinions) venturing forth into the wider world of "city" and "country." These characters are contrasted with and commented on by representatives of other elements of society, and so form part of the broader satirical landscape firmly established on the professional stage with Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*.

There are, of course, some of Brome's plays which present both "inside" and "outside" views of the court and courtiers. There is a subplot in *The Lovesick Court*, for example, in which the activities of the servants and menials perfectly ape those of the noble characters, for the satirical purpose, Kaufmann convincingly argues, of "debasing the stature and ridiculing the motives of the principals of the main plot" (117). And there is the tricky ground of role-playing versus "reality" that is traversed in *The Antipodes*, as the deluded Peregrine,

believing he is a king, wanders about the “city” of Anti-London while attended by Letoy’s servants who play at being his followers. Nevertheless, this simple division into inside and outside views of courtiers is useful because it points to the dilemma faced by the committed playwright who has something to say about the nature and form of wise counsel and good government, yet whose livelihood is threatened by the very persons capable of effecting these goals. This tension in turn helps to highlight the wider issue in the Stuart era of how traditional Renaissance definitions of the perfect courtier (and, by extension, the perfect prince) both contributed to and conflicted with the demands of an absolutist monarchy.

The one inside view of courts and courtiers which stands apart in Brome’s plays—and from other Caroline courtly romances and tragicomedies—does so because, in its action involving a removal from an actual princely court and out into a wider setting, it establishes a definition of good government which is freed of the “foolish Pomp, and Pride” (*QC* III.iii; 2.48) too often associated with courtly life. In *The Queen and Concubine*, honest courtiers flee the “Ambition, Envie, and Revenge” (V.iv; 2.113) permeating the legitimate Sicilian court and flock to Eulalia’s side in the Paradise of Love in an effort to redefine the perfect courtier and the ideal court. The King’s representatives lose their roles as models of manners and virtue in the eyes of those enlightened by their stay with Eulalia:

Tell us you are a Courtier? we find here
Faults to correct, which you perceive not there

(V.vii; 2.120)

says the former court fool Andrea to the would-be assassin Alphonso, now on trial for his life. In recognising Eulalia as “our Queen” (118), and that in her reunion with her son the prince that once more there is “a Court again” (V.i; 2.107), the exiled courtiers pay homage to Eulalia as the focus for the redefining process so desperately needed by the decayed kingdom.

While the immediate inspiration for the redefining action in *The Queen and Concubine* may have been provided by Queen Henrietta Maria and her court circle, Brome’s play also points to the Renaissance humanist roots upon which that circle was founded. Javitch calls Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* (1518; first trans. 1561) “one of the most influential conduct books in England” (4), and maintains that the work was regarded as so definitive that “Elizabethan writers . . . instead of formulating anew the requisites of the English courtier, simply deferred to Castiglione’s prescriptions” (5).⁴⁸ The power of *The Courtier* as a source

for courtly conduct in England really made itself felt from the 1570s, but, as Javitch cogently argues, by the 1590s court conduct is “more often seen to be the corruption rather than the cultivation of beautiful manners,” while at the same time it is the poet who “emerges as the one who can impart lessons of conduct to the courtier” (16). This helps to explain how the dramatist, for example, came to assume the humanist role of providing good counsel and educating the prince, but it implies that books of princely conduct had had their day by the turn of the century.

A key to the continuation of the spirit of Castiglione’s work lies in the nature of the court circle of Queen Henrietta Maria, and the values and standards which she imported from France and the Italian tradition via her mother, Maria de Medici. Erica Veevers sums up this seventeenth-century French version of earlier Renaissance Neoplatonism in the term *honnêteté*, which embraces “Neoplatonic qualities—Beauty, Virtue and Love—but instead of the extreme ‘woman-virtue’ of *L’Astrée* it recommended a conservative feminism, in which women exercised their beauty and virtue in such a way as to make for cordial relations between the sexes and for a general harmony governed by religion.”⁴⁹ *Honnêteté*, Veevers explains, “was modelled on, and addressed to, an ideal of behaviour at court” (3), so that both the concept and the work from which it is itself a modification, Honoré d’Urfé’s *L’Astrée* (1607-27), owe their origins to *The Courtier*, reviving Castiglione’s ideals at a time when, especially after the reign of James I, the court and courtiers became associated with favouritism, monopoly granting, and a decline in the codes of chivalry and housekeeping upon which the hierarchical structure of the nation had depended for so long.

L’Astrée, “a sentimental romance in a pastoral setting,”⁵⁰ was important, claims Veevers, because it “managed to bring Renaissance idealism down to a human scale, and to place it in a setting where it could exercise an influence on the everyday life of society” (16). *The Courtier* followed the Neoplatonic tenet that appreciation of particular forms of beauty and love would lead to “the universal forms” of these virtues, and thence to God (Veevers 16). But whereas *The Courtier* “more or less ends with this vision” of the higher unity of the body and soul through “perfecting . . . intellectual and moral faculties,” in *L’Astrée*, “d’Urfé uses it as a background, and turns it in practice into much more courtly and human terms” (17). When d’Urfé’s “Platonist,” Sylvandre, “explains that women are a link between the angelic

intelligences and man" (17), we would be hard put to find a better dramatic example of this than Brome's Eulalia. When she is visited by the Genius in act III of *The Queen and Concubine*, his greeting, "Sleep in thy Sainted Innocence, / Whilst Angels watch in thy defence" (III.ii; 2.45), together with the gifts he bestows of prophecy, healing and the arts, confirm her special status as a mediator between divine and human affairs. Her ability to attract and win over the king's courtiers to establish an idealised court in the Paradise of Love illustrates *L'Astrée's* assertion about beautiful women that "God has placed them on earth to draw us by them" (quoted in Veevers 17). Although this is an example of the "extreme 'woman-virtue'" which characterises *L'Astrée* (Veevers 3), it is also the central organising force shared by *The Courtier*, Henrietta Maria's coterie, and *The Queen and Concubine*. Veevers explains the Platonic basis for this convention thus:

Since beauty in a woman was a sign of her moral virtue as well as of her connection with Heaven, a beautiful woman might have any number of "servants" whose allegiances to her could result only in the acquisition by them of self-discipline, self-knowledge, and social grace.

(17)

Court culture of the 1620s and 30s was injecting into the values espoused in *The Courtier* not only new life, but a redefinition, and this is strongly reflected in Brome's play. Whereas in *The Courtier* "the participants are quite committed to the idea that the refined civilization they pursue is prompted and enhanced by the presence of women" (Javitch 27), in *The Queen and Concubine* the whole refining drive is decidedly "feminine."

In *The Courtier* the "play space"⁵¹ created by the absence of Duke Guidobaldo da Montefeltro is filled by a cast of distinguished persons presided over by Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga.⁵² This absence provides an opportunity for a shift in emphasis in the ongoing Renaissance debate over good government away from the qualities of the prince and onto those of his advisers and their advice. There has been a trend in which some scholars and critics have accused the more famous "literary" humanist tracts on counsel of being out of touch with the needs and realities of political life. Alistair Fox, for instance, claims that "the bias of Erasmus's Christian-humanist synthesis was Platonic and transcendental,"⁵³ and therefore at odds with the worldly realities of government, and that Elyot's "combination of Platonic idealism and Stoic moral absolutism contained no theory of legitimate political action that could allow the Erasmian humanist to act effectively in a corrupt world."⁵⁴ Hexter bluntly

accuses humanist “prince books” of “bland banality” (Hexter 110).⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Erasmus himself was well aware of the need to offer “advice and counsel to princes in the form of praise which doesn’t give offence” (*Praise of Folly* 134), and *The Courtier*, in attempting a definition of the perfect courtier in the language and philosophy of Neoplatonism, does so with the view that “the Courtier . . . may indeede bee a goode thing and worthy praise, but for all that not simply, nor of himself but for respect of that whereto he may be applied.”⁵⁶ In the famous words of Lord Octavian Fregoso, in summing up the attributes discussed by the assembled group:

The ende therefore of a perfect Courtier . . . is to purchase him, by the meane of the qualities which these Lordes have given him, in such wise the good will and favour of the Prince he is in service withall, that he may breake his minde to him, and alwaies enforme him franckly of the truth of every matter meete for him to understand, without fear or perill to displease him.

(*Courtier* 261)

As Fregoso knows, and Falstaff finds out to his dismay, the bluff, bluntly spoken courtier walks a finer line between his prince’s pleasure and wrath than he who adopts the *grazia* advocated by Castiglione as the means “to dissuade [the prince] from every ill purpose, and to set him in the way of vertue” (261).

In a very real sense, the political purpose of the perfect courtier prefigures the moral and religious value of d’Urfé’s beautiful woman, in that his accomplishments provide a model of virtue for the prince, and draw him towards an understanding of “what honour and profit shall ensue to him and to his by justice, liberallitie, valiantness of courage, meekenesse, and by the other vertues that belong to a good prince, and contrariwise what slander, and damage commeth of the vices contrarie to them” (261). In a similar manner, the “drama of the game” of defining courtly virtue is kept within the bounds of decorum by the devotion of those assembled in the palace at Urbino to the Duchess. For even though the Duke’s absence and the joy of the game creates an atmosphere of “wondrous great libertie” among the players, such is “the respect” in which the Duchess is held, “that the self same libertie was a very great bridle. Neither was there any that thought it not the greatest pleasure he could have in the world, to please her, and the greatest grieffe to offend her” (*Courtier* 20). The “high contentation” (20) which the court feels “at the presence of so great and so vertuous a Ladie” (21) reveals the Neoplatonism of Castiglione’s “idiom.” As Hanning says:

The courtiers are, in effect, copies of the duchess’s goodness, which she creates by

the force of that goodness and binds together with a chain of love, like the divine demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus*.

(“Verbal Portrait” 36)

This “chaine that kept all linked together in love” (*Courtier* 20) is the same image used by Jonson in his panegyric on James I's first session of Parliament in 1603. The poem celebrates enlightened rule by showing Themis (Justice) helping the king to disperse the the foul vapours of evil rule and expose the hidden crimes which such rule promotes and feeds upon. Themis descends from heaven

in that rich chain,
That fasteneth heavenly power to earthly reign:
Beside her, stooped on either hand, a maid,
Fair Dice, and Eunomia, who were said
To be her daughters: and but faintly known
On earth, till now they came to grace his throne.
Her third, Irene, helped to bear his train[.]⁵⁷

The classical personifications of the qualities of justice (Dice),⁵⁸ law and order (Eunomia) and Peace (Irene) are not only divine but female, and they are the same figures who sing of Charles and Henrietta Maria's “paradise of love” on earth in Shirley's *Triumph of Peace*. Stephen Kogan says of the poem, in his discussion of the shift in the symbolism of the masque between the Jacobean and Caroline courts, that “the image of the ‘rich chain’ symbolizes the unity of religion and law, which is intrinsic to [Jonson's] celebration of divine right.”⁵⁹ For Jonson, as for the earlier humanists such as Elyot, although kings “by Heaven, are placed upon the throne, / To rule like Heaven,” ultimately they “have no more, their own, / As they are men, than men” (*Panegyre* 79-81).⁶⁰ The prince must look to heaven for his model, and the masque provided “a mirror of heavenly wisdom” (Kogan 118).

During the reign of Charles I the imagery had become corrupted to the extent that masques were used to display “the idea that the king and queen were inherently divine and that the court was a perfect world all its own” (Kogan 127). This “artificially induced legend,” as C. V. Wedgwood called it (quoted in Kogan 128), is, I would suggest, seriously questioned in *The Queen and Concubine*, which, philosophically, recalls the ideas of Jonson, Castiglione and the earlier humanists, where the emphasis lay on the struggle to achieve perfection, rather than on its innateness. True, Eulalia is almost perfect in her virtue, but the visit from the Genius with his heavenly gifts has more in common with the descent of the goddesses to help James rule well than with Charles and his queen looking down upon their already paradisaical kingdom. Eulalia becomes a link in the “rich chain” between men and angels, along which

mortals may be drawn upwards by her virtuous example. As Jonson says in his *Panegyre*:

Kings, by their example, more do sway
Than by their power; and men do more obey
When they are led than when they are compelled.

(125-7)

The irony is, of course, that neither Eulalia nor her virtuous and inspirational predecessor, Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga is the actual “prince.” The Duchess is not a dowager (Duke Guidobaldo is an invalid, but very much alive), while Eulalia, once divorced, finds that by royal decree it is “Treason too, to call her Queen” (III.iii; 2.50). Their lack of real temporal power, which is to a large extent sexually determined, differentiates the “courts” over which each presides from the “masculine world of moral and political counsel” (Javitch 41). In Brome’s play this latter world has become polarised into the “Court-putrefaction, Flatterie” (II.viii; 2.42) of false counsellors on one side, and the bluntly confrontationalist stance of Sforza, the honest and outspoken scion of that most male of roles, the soldier, on the other. Alinda, Eulalia’s rival, has, like Lady Macbeth, subverted the tenderness of her sex in her bid to be “king,” as she aspires to be more than Gonzago’s co-equal consort. Although she calls upon her “womans wit” (I.ix; 2.19) to prop up her ambition, she has surrendered completely to the male political power game as she declares: “They that will rise unto a supream Head / Should not regard upon whose Necks they tread” (22). Meanwhile, the King’s lust for her degrades him further down the “rich chain” of divinely sanctioned rule, the flattering counsellors plot to save their own skins, and Sforza languishes in prison. The court of Sicily is locked into a cycle of “ambition and envy,” with no apparent ameliorating force to help it break out.

Thomas M. Greene says of *The Courtier* that the choice of the Urbinese courtiers “to define the ideal that underlies their own approved conduct . . . commits them to examining their own values and norms, with the opportunity to criticise those norms and so to acquire a self-consciousness as a community.”⁶¹ But whether out of devotion to the Duchess, the courtiers’ own sense of *grazia* (or, one might add, even just the fear that what they say during the day could become the subject of pillow-talk at night), the tension between “whether the game will actually lead to more self-understanding” or “whether it will lead to so much that it will destroy the delicate fabric of their social equilibrium” (Greene 5), does not result in the “game” exceeding the limits of its “ludic circumscription” (7).⁶² The other side to this

“containment” is that the vacuum left by the death of Federigo da Montefeltro, founding father of the Urbinese court, and by the non-appearance of his invalid son Guidobaldo, means that there is no one “to play the centrifugal, out-thrusting role . . . that would open up the rigid enclosure of the court’s withdrawal” (11). Consequently, the drama of containment that is *The Courtier* remains locked away in the confines of the drawing room with no hope of generating “the creative interplay of free and equal men [and women] in shaping the policy of the city” (13). Caught as they are in the never fully-defined space between courtiers as self-justifying prince-pleasers and as counsellors contributing to the well-being of the state, Castiglione’s characters have little hope of attaining “the civic virtue of the polis and the commune” (13).

The Queen and Concubine has a generic advantage over *The Courtier* in terms of being able to break out of its courtly setting and posit a program of wider “civic virtue.” Although a romance which clearly employs elements of the kind of Neoplatonism enjoying favour at court, it is written in the popular tradition from which the greenwood worlds of *As You Like It* and *The Winter’s Tale* were derived by way of Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene, rather than in the rarified style of modish court pastoral. And even though the stage history of *The Queen and Concubine* is unknown, as a play written during Brome’s period of employment with the King’s Revels company at the Salisbury Court Theatre,⁶³ it had the potential, at least, to be received by a wider cross-section of the populace than any conduct book, even one as renowned as *The Courtier*. However, it is the dramatic device of the Paradise of Love, and the alternative that this setting provides for redefining courtly conduct, which gives Brome’s play the opening into the wider world of policy and reform missing from Castiglione’s work.

Eulalia’s presence provides a similar restraining influence on her followers as does the Duchess Elisabetta, and for the same reasons. But whereas the Duchess is willing to sit back and play a passive focal role, delegating the adjudication of the game to Lady Emilia Pia, Eulalia works actively, using the Genius’s gifts, towards turning the Paradise of Love into a training ground for perfect courtiers, citizens and subjects. Her restraining influence also operates to this end, for not only does she advocate and practise mercy towards her potential malefactors, she preaches loyalty to the King and condemns the rebellious and vindictive expressions of dissatisfaction among the countryfolk at the way she is treated by the court.

Thus the Paradise of Love is a place where the “game” of setting up a better alternate court is not allowed to threaten the basic hierarchical fabric of society; it is no breeding ground for ideological revolution—rather, as in *The Courtier*, the values upon which the social structure is founded are reinforced by being stripped of their corrupt impedimenta and held up as the basis for reform.

Yet there is an element of social revolution in *The Queen and Concubine*, even if only by implication, for the process of reassessing and reasserting courtly *virtù* in Brome’s play involves broadening its base in society at large, giving it the centrifugal quality lacking in *The Courtier*. Eulalia uses the gift of education to instruct the local people, mainly the children and in particular the girls, in the arts of music and dance, in letters, and in handicrafts like needlework. While Castiglione’s Urbinese may have balked at the idea of a courtier becoming too involved in such things, nevertheless they were seen as necessary adjuncts to the more chivalrous pursuits of horsemanship and feats of arms, and they served to open out the definition of courtier to include women as well as men. Scenes in *The Queen and Concubine* which show Eulalia instructing girls (for example, IV.iii; 2.88-9), or the one in which, perhaps startlingly, Prince Gonzago is led out “*dress’ d and Crown’ d as Queen of the Girles*” (V.ix; 2.124) to be reunited with his father, help to build upon the dialectic set in motion by Castiglione which confronts the medieval man of strength and valour with the “all-round” Renaissance courtier. Brome’s contribution to the argument in the palace drawing room at Urbino is to dramatise the ideal prince and courtier not as a complete gentleman—to borrow the title of a conduct book from his own era⁶⁴—but as a whole person.

This feminine “balance” in *The Queen and Concubine* has another aspect as well. Veevers talks about seventeenth-century court feminism as a tempering influence to the “political comment” which critics such as Martin Butler have seen as implicit in the portrayal of Platonic love. She is right, I believe, in asserting that “to impute complex political interests to the Queen . . . [makes] the plight of queens in the plays too directly representative of the political plight of the kingdom, and Charles, moreover, too directly a profligate or a tyrant” (Veevers 4). In the case under discussion for example, it would be hard to imagine Brome writing a play couched in recognisably fashionable court Platonism, and possibly for presentation at court, from which his audience could make some kind of straightforward equation between

the moral turpitude of King Gonzago and the political policies of Charles I. Veevers provides a more realistic assessment of the place of Neoplatonism as a dramatic trope. She says that plays which show the influence of “the Queen’s fashions” where “the rights and dignity of women, as well as their virtue, are continually defended against the power and abuses of men,” may have provided dramatists with, “at one remove, an apposite framework in which other repressed rights (for example, of subjects against kings) might be looked at” (4). Such an analysis points to the way in which a play in the romance mode may be regarded as having a “social commitment,” and to the way in which the drama generally, more than any other medium, could force the narrow preoccupations of Castiglione’s courtiers and Henrietta Maria’s coterie out into a wider context of re-evaluation and reform.

As the social function of the drama lies in its didactic quality, so the social role for which Eulalia is most noted is as a teacher. The Palermians call her “our School-Mistress” (IV.v; 2.90 *inter alia*) as a means of circumventing the King’s punishment and her own displeasure at being called queen, to the point where the title becomes synonymous with her princely status. The Curate, whose role in the action is more one of the region’s counsellor and JP than of priest, best expresses the complimentary functions of prince and educator in calling himself Palermo’s “Paedagogue or pettie King,” while Eulalia is its “Queen or . . . Royal School Mistress” (V.ix; 2.124-5). It is Eulalia’s educative gift which provides the final centrifugal force by which the ideals of the Paradise of Love at last inform and change the corrupt world outside. By force of her virtue she is able to draw followers to her side, as d’Urfé’s beauteous woman can, but it is through education that she turns those followers into disciples who, morally and intellectually equipped, may spread the spirit of regeneration and reform still further into the world. In *The Courtier* the ideal at least had been acknowledged, if not fully endorsed, when Octavian Fregoso says, in order that “in the minde of the subjects there spring not a longing after new matters and alteration of . . . state” (*Courtier* 286), he would

counsel the Prince to doe his best to preserve his subjects in quiet estate, and to give them the goods of the mind, and of the bodie, and of fortune: but them of the bodie and of fortune, that they exercise them of the minde: which the greater and plentier they be, so much the more profitable be they[.]

(287)

Cesar Gonzaga replies: “your lessons be good and profitable: yet should I believe, that if yee instructed your Prince with them, yee deserve rather the name of a good scholemaister than of

a good Courtier: and hee of a good governour rather than of a good Prince” (287-8). He prefers the more medieval attribute of “greatnesse” in both prince and courtier, and so the argument continues, never fully resolved and never escaping the confines of the palace at Urbino precisely because the courtiers are unable to reconcile, as Eulalia does, the roles of courtier and prince with the more socially committed humanist ideals of educator and governor.

Implicit in *The Courtier’s* dialectic—at least in so far as it seeks to define the role of the courtier as adviser to the prince—is the notion that the ideal government is not absolutist but consultative. J. H. Whitfield points out that there is a similarity between this view and that of Macchiavelli’s ideal of the *governo misto*, the ‘mixed government’ derived from the Florentine version of the ancient Roman republic.⁶⁵ Octavian Fregoso, following on from his belief that the courtier should be like a teacher of his prince, spells out his model of good government:

I woulde teach him . . . that hee shoulde picke out a certaine number of gentlemen among his subjects, of the noblest and wisest, with whom he shoulde debate all matters, and give them authoritie and free leave to utter their minde franckly unto him[.]

(284)

Cesar Gonzaga’s seemingly—to our ears—tautological objection to these ideas, that they make the prince sound more like a good governor than a good prince, very likely rests upon the feeling that Fregoso is painting too republican a picture of the prince’s place in government.⁶⁶ To a large extent this is actually the case, not only because *The Courtier*, like *The Prince*, extols the virtues of Italian Renaissance civic life while insisting that it be strong enough to resist outside incursions, but also because Fregoso’s definition of good government involves giving all citizens a voice:

And beside this Counsell of the nobilitie, I would perswade him to choose out others among the people of a baser degree, of whom hee should make an honest substantial Council, that should debate with the Council of the nobilitie the affaires of the Citie, belonging to the common and private estate. And in this wise should bee made, of the Prince, as of the heade, of the nobilitie and commons, as of the members, one bodie alone knitte together, the governance whereof should chiefly depend upon the Prince. yet should the rest beare a stroke also in it: and so should this state have the forme and manner of the three good governments, which is, a kingdom, men of the best sorte, and the people.

(284)

By this definition, the courtier, and indeed the prince himself, are only part of a system of government which embraces the best aspects of “monarchy, aristocracy and democracy” (Whitfield xxiii); the links of the “rich chain” are made up of the common people as well.

Translated into seventeenth-century English terms, these ideals of *The Courtier* find their expression in Jonson's *Panegyre*, where Themis reminds James I, as he travels to the opening of his first Parliament, what it is to rule with such a form of government, and the responsibilities and traditions that go with it:

She then remembered to his thought the place
Where he was going; and the upward race
Of kings, preceding him in that high court;
Their laws, their ends; the men she did report:
And all so justly, as his ear was joyed
To hear the truth, from spite, or flattery void.

(lines 89-94)

Government through Parliament is synonymous here with wise and just rule, but Charles I had considerably shortened the rich chain by dissolving Parliament in 1629, ushering in the period of "personal rule" during which most of Brome's playwriting career took place. Attempting to rule with the help of only a few close advisers and court favourites, and supported by the widely loathed arms of the civil law such as the ecclesiastical courts,⁶⁷ Charles had cut himself off from the "thousand radiant lights" of Parliamentary government, which, Jonson maintained, "stream / To every nook and angle of the realm," and "pry / Into those dark and deep concealéd vaults, / Where men commit black incest with their faults" (*Panegyre* 5-6 and 8-10).

This political exclusiveness found its artistic equivalent in the coterie in which the courtier's training in the liberal arts allowed him to become "a dilettante who uses his versatile gifts to entertain an exclusive and often largely feminine audience" (Javitch 29). The image of the Urbinese court locked away in a drawing room, paradoxically trying to define the perfect courtier while unable, and perhaps even unwilling, to apply that definition in any real "public" sense, had been reborn in Brome's own time in the Neoplatonic circle of Queen Henrietta Maria and her favourites. The "covert methods employed in verbal wit" (Javitch 38) in coterie poetics and philosophy helped to emphasise the courtier's "social apartness" from other nobles who, like Brome's one-time dedicatee Newcastle, were made to feel increasingly gauche and unfashionable the closer they got to Whitehall; thus Fregoso's ideal of "one bodie . . . knitte together" (*Courtier* 284) became an impossible goal even among the ruling elements of society, let alone the whole commonwealth. For Brome the professional playwright the problem manifested itself in the amateur dabbings of courtier dramatists or their paid

university hacks, which, as they gained in fashion among the wealthier and upwardly-aspiring private theatre audiences, threatened his own livelihood as a writer in a more popular tradition.

Javitch talks of the conflict—implicit in the dialectic about the courtier’s function—between the orator, who uses his skills in the liberal arts to persuade, instruct and delight as wide an audience as possible, and the courtier, who uses those same skills merely to please a small clique of admirers.⁶⁸ The point of Fregoso’s argument in book IV of *The Courtier* is that there comes a time when the courtier must become, for the public good, an orator capable of moving his prince to virtuous thought and action. But the courtier has an advantage over the blunt counsellor in that the qualities advocated by Castiglione’s characters—*grazia*, *sprezzatura*⁶⁹ and the like—allow him to present his prince with the “horrible face of virtue” (Javitch 44) in a palatable and comely fashion. At a time when the influx of courtier playwrights and their escapist fantasies such as *Aglaura* were undermining the oratorical function of the theatrical medium, *The Queen and Concubine* upstages the efforts of the narrow and inward-looking court regime of the 1630s by employing the voice of Neoplatonic court rhetoric to promote an inclusivist attitude towards counsel and government. Without falling into the trap of sycophantic prince-pleasing, yet indulging in a near-idolisation of Queen Eulalia with which a courtly audience is not discouraged from identifying as closely as it may have wished, Brome’s play is able to brave Charles’s anti-parliamentarian stance by dramatising the ideal of mixed government mooted by Fregoso and celebrated by Jonson in his *Panegyre*. If, as Javitch maintains, Castiglione’s ideal of *sprezzatura* involves the art of “reconciling opposites” (Javitch 31), then Brome proves himself a skilful exponent of that quality in the way in which he ties together the interests of court and commonwealth into an overall picture of civic policy which, as we saw, *The Courtier* at least, and perhaps the whole genre of the conduct book, is ultimately incapable of achieving.

When Eulalia arrives in the region of Palermo called the Paradise of Love, she finds that the people there already have a system of “Civil Government” (IV.iii; 2.78). An inhabitant’s description of it as one in which “we allow not our Clergie any Temporal Offices” (81) is not only an entry into the debate over the separation of church and state, but, in terms of its particular historicity, may be taken as a rejection of the part played by the ecclesiastical courts in contributing to the “personal rule” and to the crown’s attitude that it could govern effectively

without the interference of Parliament. The structure of the Palermian system harks back to the very philosophical origins of the ideal of mixed government, which is that other aspect of Platonism apparently ignored by the court circle in its concentration on the transcendent qualities of love. Palermo is governed by “three or four main Heads” called “Sages,” who have under them “Powers that execute [their] Commands” (81), evoking Plato’s Republic whose “Guardians” who “have the right sort of intelligence and ability” to look after the “commonwealth” (*Republic* 101), and who are aided by “Auxiliaries, who will enforce the decisions of the Rulers” (103).⁷⁰

Even the terms employed in the play, that the ruling body is a “pettie Parliament”—and the Sage Lollo’s self-conscious qualification “if I may so call it” (V.vi; 2.116) underscores it as a ticklish one to use—which plans to help Eulalia in “such a Reformation, that Treason shall not dare to peep over the Hedge of her Dominion” (116), carry a sense of the ongoing religious and political processes associated with radical Protestantism and the fight for constitutionalism in government with which the concept of the “commonwealth” came to be identified. Such terms sit uneasily on a form of rule whose major cultural expression lay in the exclusivist and inwardly focused coterie engaged in the static pursuits of perpetual self-definition and endless self-delectation. Thus, despite its courtly subject matter and its adulation of the perfect “prince,” Eulalia, Butler’s claim that *The Queen and Concubine* is “a thoroughly popular play” advocating “more popular forms of government” (Butler 40) is, on one level, quite justified.

Nevertheless, the play exhibits a form of courtly *grazia* by reconciling its inclusivist philosophy with the Neoplatonic mode of its address.⁷¹ Eulalia is not returned to power through the actions of the “pettie Parliament” alone. In fact, the “Reformation” which the “hobnayl’d Common wealth” (V.vii; 2.120) actually advocates is “to pull down / The Queens mercy, and set up our Justice” (V.vi; 2.116). In *The Courtier* Fregoso maintains that “of cares belonging to a Prince, the chiefest is of justice” (284), and Themis, or Justice, is the first to descend Jonson’s “rich chain” linking heaven with earthly rule in his *Panegyre*. But the action of *The Queen and Concubine* overrides the Palermians’ formula for jumping “into the Sadle of Justice,” which is to “run mad upon crueltie” as a means of balancing what they regard as Eulalia’s doting “upon / Clemencie” (V.vi; 2.116). The chief agents for the reform

of the corrupt court and her own restoration to favour are the mercy and love which she and her alternate court extend to the King, Alinda and their followers. The necessary ingredient for good government, Brome's play demonstrates, is not justice formed from a mixture of clemency and cruelty, dispensed at will by a capricious monarch, a scornful courtly clique, or a parliament jealous of its rights. *The Queen and Concubine* promotes the justice that comes from the participation of Fregoso's "three good governments" in guiding the commonwealth, tempered by goodness in both prince and counsellors, without which, says Fregoso, governance is "but craft," leading to "the utter decay and destruction of the lawes and judgements" (*Courtier* 284). To adopt a doctrine of exclusiveness, either morally or as a political policy, is to do so at one's own peril and that of the whole nation.

III.4 The Revitalisation and Death of the Masque

THE QUEEN AND CONCUBINE presents us with a brief, and fairly conventional, “outside” view of courtiers in the attitudes of the Palermians to those who infiltrate the Paradise of Love to do the King’s bidding. This is summed up in Lollo’s rejoinder to the courtier Alphonso’s jibe that the rural “pettie Parliament” is made up of “hobnayl’d Rascals”:

Your shoes at Court are all too fine and thin:
To tread out snuffes and sparks of kindling Sin,

says Lollo, echoing prevailing sentiments about the effeteness and corruption of exclusive and inward-looking court circles; and he warns:

You warm you at such fire, ’tis we walk through’t
The hobnayl’d Common wealth must tread it out.

(V.vii; 2.120)

But Lollo’s attempt to fight fire with fire—attacking the spreading flames of court corruption with inflammatory words threatening popular rebellion—is never allowed to eventuate because the devotion of the Palermians for Eulalia, who steadfastly maintains a position of loyalty to the crown, means that, like the relationship of Castiglione’s courtiers towards the Duchess, they regard it “the greatest grieffe to offend her” (*Courtier* 20). Circumscribed by a dramatic action which ultimately returns Eulalia to the royal court, so that its place as political and cultural centre is reaffirmed after the temporary moral ascendancy of the Paradise of Love, the Palermians must remain forever on the margins of power and influence. Thus, in spite of its vilification of courtiers and courtliness, *The Queen and Concubine* retains a predominantly “inside” perspective from the point of view of a court situated in the middle of a romantic universe, around which the other estates orbit.

The Court Beggar sets up a comic universe in which the royal court is unfixed from its pivotal position and forced to trace a path around an alternate court whose centrality and permanance is more forcefully asserted than Eulalia’s exemplary Paradise of Love. This is achieved first of all by portraying all those whose allegiances are with the court—the garrulous old knight Sir Raphael, the favour-seeking Sir Andrew Mendicant, and the cavalier Sir Ferdinand, who is “more mad then all the rest” (*CB* I.i; 1.189)—in full-blown Jonsonian “comicall satyre” style, and as the victims of the comic machinations of other more witty and

capable characters in the play. Douglas Duncan maintains that this particular mode not only allows the satirist to focus “on shortcomings in order to point to ideals” (Duncan 123), but that it has “links of a broader kind with the tradition of humanist satire” in its “preoccupation with games . . . played by the characters themselves, . . . on the principle that men are to be judged by the quality of their amusements” (132). His example of *Cynthia’s Revels* is an apt one for our purposes, for in that play’s method of “contrasting the supposedly enlightened pranks of Mercury and the profitable entertainment of the masque with the idiotic word-games played by the satirized courtiers” (132), we find a stimulus for much of the action of *The Court Beggar*, including its own, quite idiosyncratic, use of the masque. Brome’s “true wits” owe their loyalty to Lady Strangelove, who, as the “humorous widow, that loved to be courted” (“Drammatis Personae”; 1.[184]), serves the same focal purpose as Castiglione’s Duchess Elisabetta and Eulalia in *The Queen and Concubine*. She uses her ability to draw “wits” about her, over and above her attraction for the usual bevy of suitors as a wealthy young widow, to set up a her own household court from whose perspective the members of the royal court are decidedly eccentric, foolish and irrelevant.

The play’s setting in Lady Strangelove’s household is the other device by which the court is marginalised. At the same time, the household is not in turn marginalised by the court, judging by the frequency with which its members visit it, and nor is Lady Strangelove ostracised by them. Her resolve to

be rid of all such Guests,
And have the liberty of mine owne house
With mine own company, and to mine own ends

(III.i; 1.224)

is the result of weariness at being pestered by the likes of Sir Ferdinand and Sir Raphael and then being accused by court tattlers of “ostentation,” or of “drawing them into Love-knots” in order “to slight or scorn them” (II.i; 1.211). But whereas the exiled Eulalia and her loyal courtiers are forced out into the wider world to find a more liberating alternative to court “putrefaction,” Lady Strangelove’s plan “to exclude those great resorts” and “be merry within our selves” (211) is a conscious bid to be free of the court’s overbearing influence and interference, and a refusal to be drawn into the petty and secretive world of coterie scandal, rather than a knee-jerk reaction to being rejected by the court circle.

Her “court” is made up of men representing all the estates of the realm, regardless of birth.

When the forthright country yeoman, Swaynwit, is accepted into her circle, he asks “why me of any man?” (203), aware that there are “greater men, and Lords enough for her to foole away the time with” (204). His kinsman Courtwit’s answer is couched in terms which suggest the same sense of the witty game with which Castiglione’s courtiers pass the time and which motivates the courtly entertainments at Whitehall, but which reveal the inclusive nature of Strangelove’s court:

this humerous wity Lady is a wit-sponge, that suckes up wit from some, and holds as her own, untill shee squeeze it out on others. Shee will make use of ours, or any courser wits; and search ’em out to sift ’em. Shee will collect from market-folkes; and hold conferences with poore Trades-people that cry their wares about the streets, Shee will rake wit out of a dung-hill Ragwoman.

(204)

Courtwit’s description of the Lady lacks the devotional tone of Castiglione towards the Duchess, or of Lollo towards Eulalia; nevertheless he is her “speciall favorite” (III.i; 1.226), and his words express his admiration for a fellow wit who is not afraid to push her search for self-definition beyond the narrow perspective of court life, as he himself—the courtier whose exercise of wit is not confined to the king’s ear—has chosen to do. She is a Neoplatonic attracter to virtue who is no closeted damsel, but a woman of the world who sees in all levels of society the same “box of simples” from which Robert Burton sought to define the world’s general malaise. At the same time, she is akin to the playwright himself whom James Shirley recognised in his dedication to *A Jovial Crew* as one who “must know / Beyond his books, men and their actions, too” (Haaker edn. 8). Courtwit points out this very quality in Swaynwit as he introduces him to Lady Strangelove as one “who though not throughly vers’d, or conversant i’t’h’Court or City garbe, he understands both Men and Manners” (II.i; 1.210). She recognises Swaynwit’s gifts straight away, and her paradoxical estimation, “You are a compleat Gentleman sir (if I mistake not)” (210), borrows the title of Peacham’s conduct book to underscore the fact that even though *The Court Beggar* is a comic version of Neoplatonic idealism, it is also a serious attempt to describe the nature of governance and of its participants, in the same terms which inform the conduct books of Castiglione, Elyot, Peacham and all the rest, with the ultimate aim of defining the ideal commonwealth.

The Court Beggar, like Brome’s more strictly “prince” plays, is therefore not a parody of courtly values; rather, it “citizenises”—or perhaps more accurately, “popularises”—them and reaffirms them by taking them out of the context of a court which, because of its insularity,

has become devalued and unrepresentative for all those marginalised by its inward focus. The timing of the play's appearance is also of considerable significance in this regard. *The Court Beggar* was first performed in about the middle of 1640, either just before or soon after the dissolution of the so-called Short Parliament, for which "from the four points of the compass, several hundred gentlemen" had travelled to London.⁷² Conceivably, some of these could have made up a part of Brome's audience at the Cockpit Theatre in Drury Lane, and were able to see something of themselves or their fellow MPs in the gathering of Lady Strangelove's "wits." And indeed, there is a process in *The Court Beggar* by which the household of Lady Strangelove is increasingly centralised not only as a more representative collection of the kingdom's various component social groups, but also as the new well-spring of manners, as attributes usually associated with the court—now no longer the centre of attention—are transplanted to it.

This transplantation manifests itself most tellingly in the defensively snide courtly opinions of Lady Strangelove's behaviour. The criticism by Sir Raphael, the "Court Philosopher" (II.i; 1.208), of her habit of drawing to herself "many suitors," only to "delude 'em" with "assured hopes / Of love and favour till you have wound their follies / Into the reach of your disdain" (206), sounds like the sort of attack levelled at court Neoplatonism by "outsiders" such as Puritans and even certain poets and playwrights. The court gossip about the sincerity of Lady Strangelove's motives in attracting suitors is itself an extension of the cynical attitude expressed by some courtiers, such as Sir John Suckling, that the Neoplatonic fashion fostered by Queen Henrietta Maria was merely a device "to enhance the price of kisses" (quoted in Kaufmann 124).⁷³ Thus *The Court Beggar* shifts the court circle to a position of outside-looking-in as it skirts ineffectually around Lady Strangelove's household, the geographical and cultural centre of the play's action.

The Lady asserts her place as mistress of the household and "queen" of the action in exposing the deficiencies of the now marginalised court and banishing its unwelcome representatives from her own "court." When she plays up to Sir Raphael's criticisms by throwing herself at him in feigned love and "wild distraction," causing the foolish old knight to "shun" her house as he "would the Spanish Inquisition" (III.i; 1.224), she provides evidence to support the rumour that Sir Raphael, out of spite for the way he was treated by a lady, "guelt himself ... and now preaches chastity to Ladies" (II.i; 1.202), which in turn lends

weight to the more general criticism, broached in *The Courtier*, that courtiers “have only accomplishments, to the exclusion of manly action” (Whitfield xxii). Nowhere is this dearth of “manly action” more obvious than in the behaviour of that other courtier who is bested by the Lady’s comic manipulative skills, Sir Ferdinand. In any attempt to define the perfect courtier, it is inevitable that there would be some harking back to the chivalrous and martial qualities of the medieval knight. Lewis of Canossa declares that “the principall and true profession of a Courtier ought to bee in feates of armes” (*Courtier* 35), so that he may become “knowne among other of his hardines, for his atchieving of enterprises, and for his fidelitie towarde him whom he serveth” (36). If we accept Kaufmann’s identification of Sir Ferdinand with Sir John Suckling—and the evidence for it seems overwhelming—then all of Ferdinand’s false raving about becoming a “prisoner in the North” (III.i; 1.218) and losing his “horse and armor” (219) allude to a very ignoble page in English military history, when Suckling and his gorgeously equipped troop of horse performed so abysmally at Berwick in the First Bishops’ War of 1639.⁷⁴ Sir Ferdinand’s absolute lack of valour, “feates of armes” and knightly honour are made glaringly obvious in his unwillingness to face Frederick sword-to-sword when the latter challenges him for his attempts “against *Charissa’s* honour” (IV.iii; 1.249). He is anything but “The noble *Cavalier* and hopefull *Courtier* / The most accomplish’d Knight sir *Ferdinando*” (III.i; 1.222) painted by Sir Raphael; rather, both courtiers are revealed by Lady Strangelove to be full of “vanitie or childish follie” (*Courtier* 57) and “bragging and unshamefull praysing himselfe” (37), resulting from the same “ignorance and selfe liking” which are the “greatest” of the “many vices that we see now a dayes in many of our Princes” (262).

While *The Court Beggar’s* courtiers lack even the chivalrous historical prerequisites upon which Castiglione bases his idealised definition, the members of Lady Strangelove’s household either already have them in abundance, or acquire them through their contact with her. The landless Frederick—“Deficient in that onely absolute point / That must maintaine a Lady, an estate” (I.i; 1.186)—regains Charissa from Ferdinand with his sword, meeting *The Courtier’s* requirement that skill at arms may often help to settle “variances betweene one gentleman and an other” (40). But his prudence and foresight allow him not to “runne rashly to these combats” (40), and he has the necessary *sprezzatura* to slip into the role of a doctor with artful ease to help his “prince,” Lady Strangelove, in her quest to expose Sir Ferdinand’s

fraudulent melancholia. Frederick wins fame and fair lady in her service as the good knight-courtier should, and he also has the advantage of noble birth which some of Castiglione's Urbinese maintain is essential for the perfect courtier:

For noblenesse of birth, is as it were a cleare lamp that sheweth forth and bringeth into light, workes both good and bad, and inflameth and provoketh unto vertue, as well with the feare of slaunder, as also with the hope of praise.

(*Courtier* 32)

But whereas Frederick's character reveals the potential for good works and virtue in one of gentle birth, the other members of Lady Strangelove's court make do very well without this attribute.

The Duchess Elisabetta's influence in the court at Urbino is such that it can, in true Neoplatonic terms, "draw from the earth up into heaven the simplest wits in the world" (*Courtier* 29). While Lady Strangelove's "wits"—Courtwit, Swaynwit and Citwit—are far from what we would term "simple," at least two of them would have been regarded by courtly circles as somewhat beyond the pale as far as their origins are concerned, and thus seriously disadvantaged in the quest to become ideal courtiers. Yet, as we have seen, the Lady recognises in Swaynwit a "compleat Gentleman," and her eye for talent irrespective of origins, leads her to take into service a wise, faithful and valuable counsellor. Citwit may be singularly lacking in gallant qualities at first, but he learns to stand up for his own honour and that of his lady. Courtwit is an example of the courtier as artist—"in letters . . . more than indifferently well seene" (*Courtier* 71)—who serves by using his skills to refashion his world and those in it. Even Dainty the limner, once he has reformed his pickpocketing ways, contributes his art to the glory of the Lady and her court. Their circumstances of birth notwithstanding, these "wits" manage to achieve the "meane" which Canossa says exists "betwene this excellent grace"—of which Frederick is the prime example—"and that fond foolishnes"—epitomised by Sir Ferdinand—in which "they that are not by nature so perfectly furnished, with studie and diligence may polish and correct a great part of the defaults of nature" (33). The catalyst for this process of refinement has been their time with Lady Strangelove who, no less than Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga or Queen Eulalia, is a medium by which ordinary mortals may be drawn, through both inspiration and education, further along the rich chain of virtue.

The Court Beggar's complex critique of the court and the wider issues of counsel and

governance may be gauged further by reading the play against any trends in Caroline masques and court entertainments which put the genre at odds with the seemingly endless round of “prince pleasing” with which it is generally associated. It has already been pointed out (in chap. II.5) that the masque staged by the wits for Lady Strangelove is, both artistically and as a curative for melancholy, a dismal failure which is not even permitted to continue past the opening address between Venus and Cupid as abominably acted by Philomel and her bastard son. Courtwit, responsible for “the poetical part” (II.i; 1.212), has “pumped his Muse” to poor effect, and, as the members of the household vainly attempt to portray the emblematic figures of “Courage” or “Activity,” such as might be found in any number of court masques, it takes little imagination to see in the breakdown of this scene’s mock pomposity an opinion as to the current state of the genre. Ironically, the masque which really works is Mendicant’s antimasque of the Projectors. This incident outwardly fits the simple notion of the antimasque as “something that would throw into effective relief the dignity and refinement of the Main Masque and the noble masquers.”⁷⁵ However “conspicuously undignified and unrefined” (Herford and Simpson 2.278) Mendicant’s entrance covered in patents and wearing a windmill, followed by the stripping of the Projectors, may be regarded, his rejection of these associations with court-begging symbolises the ousting of melancholy from the action of the play. True to the original spirit of the masque as envisaged by Jonson and other Jacobean practitioners, Mendicant’s masque points to “the moral life” by holding up a “mirror of heavenly wisdom” (Kogan 118). Brome emulates his old master by incorporating the “spirit of burlesque” into “the unity of a work of art” (Herford and Simpson 2.278-9), so that spectators and participants are ultimately united in a triumph of reason and virtue.⁷⁶

Butler says that, “It would have taken little effort to have connected Brome’s concluding masque with the hopes vested in the new parliament, sitting at that moment for the first time in eleven years” (Butler 227). I wish to suggest, however, that *The Court Beggar* is more fully a critique of courtly entertainments, and by implication of the place of the court and the populace in the commonwealth at large, than the mere use of masque forms in act V would indicate. The *dramatis personae*, for a start, have a stereotypical quality which suggests that the whole play owes as much to the emblematic representation of the masque as it does to the humour types of Jonsonian comedy. By comparing Brome’s play with one particular masque not actually composed for court, but which adheres to the “stiff doctrinal lessons of the Jacobean

poets" (Kogan 133) at a time when other writers of masques were confusing the court of Charles I with paradise itself,⁷⁷ *The Court Beggar* takes on a masque-like dimension which translates it quite readily from a popular comedy to something like the occasional celebration which is the *raison d'être* of the masque. The particular masque is, of course, what came to be known as *Comus*, written in 1634 by the young John Milton, "the last great exponent of Christian humanism in its historical continuity" (Bush, *English Literature* 378). Milton had spent seven years at Christ's College, Cambridge, and wrote *Comus* in the country during what Bush calls "a voluntary postgraduate course of hard reading and thinking which gave historical background and critical direction to Milton's maturing views on all manner of civil and religious problems" (379). The masque's publication—as an anonymous and untitled piece—in 1637 was only after it had already become popular, as its publisher's "remarks about frequent copying show."⁷⁸ While Brome's familiarity or otherwise with *Comus* is unverifiable, what is clear is that *The Court Beggar* shares many of the characteristics of *Comus*'s "spirit of criticism and rejection" (Kogan 229) of the masque genre's current decadence, as well as of the values which were contributing to that decay.

Rejection is a key element in both *Comus* and *The Court Beggar*, and in both works it is the stance taken by the central figure of the Lady. As Kogan (inspired by Christopher Hill's analysis) points out, Milton's Lady "retained her freedom and virtue by saying No" (229). As we have seen, Brome's Lady rejects her associations with the court and vehemently spurns Ferdinand's advances. Just as Milton's Lady tells Comus, "Thou canst not touch the freedom of my minde / With all thy charms,"⁷⁹ so Lady Strangelove denies the "disastrous blot lately cast upon my name, out of my owne freeness" (II.i; 1.210) by asserting even further "the liberty of mine owne house" (III.i; 1.224), refusing to be swayed by the power of court gossip or drawn by "the greatnesse" of her "former visitants" (II.i; 1.211). Kogan makes the observation that *Comus* derives from the same "literary tradition of pastoral entertainment" (232) which informs Sidney's *Lady of May* (1578), in which two suitors to the May Lady are held up for judgement in the manner of a debate which "assumes . . . that its audience is capable of making the right choice between the contestants" (232).⁸⁰ The same comparison holds true for *The Court Beggar* where, although the action of paying suit is divided between two women—the experienced widow Lady Strangelove and the maidenly Charissa—the relative merits of their respective suitors, Ferdinand and Frederick, are held up for no lesser

comparison to an audience only too aware that in the propensity for good judgement of the visiting MPs—some of whom may have been seated there in the Phoenix—the common weal now depended.

Despite her own rejection of the court, Lady Strangelove as a character does not represent a rejection of court manners. She is much in keeping with the tastes of Henrietta Maria's circle, fitting the picture of the fashionable heroines who "are neither remote Platonic goddesses nor witty mistresses of the *salon*, but are more like *honnête femmes*" (Veevers 66). As Veevers points out, under this philosophy of "a moderate kind of feminism," women were "allowed a freedom of action similar to the freedom enjoyed by men, without having their actions misinterpreted, or being suspected of sexual intentions" (66). In siding with her and her followers against those of the court, Brome's audience is not forced into quite the polarity of choice with which Milton—for whom "criticism and iconoclasm were central to his politics, religion, and literature" (Kogan 229)—confronts his audience in *Comus*. In Milton's masque, Comus and "his rout . . . are all driven in" (*Mask*, s.d. below line 813), once the spell of Comus's enchantment is broken with the glass, and are never heard from again. Brome's criticism is firmly linked to the ideal of comic regeneration, so that rejection of one aspect of "courtly" behaviour does not rule out the possibility that its adherents may awake to their folly and play a part in the eventual resolution. The audience's powers of judgement are teased in *The Court Beggar* in a manner in which *Comus*, with its straightforward dichotomy between honour and feigning, does not even attempt to engage.⁸¹

If the portrayal of Lady Strangelove is an ambivalent one compared with the Lady in *Comus* (whose virginity makes her more akin to Brome's Charissa), the same cannot be said of Sir Ferdinand, whose similarity to the character of Comus is very striking. Kogan's description of Comus as "a great artist of deception, whose ultimate purpose is to degrade everything that is high and noble" (240), also fits Sir Ferdinand as he feigns madness in order to add Lady Strangelove to his conquests, while trying to "whore" Charissa with a false promise to her father of marriage (IV.iii; 1.248). Unable to comprehend Lady Strangelove's desire for the freedom to conduct herself as an *honnête femme*, Ferdinand uses his arts to exercise an extreme form of courtly "romance," by manoeuvring her into a situation where he can force himself upon her. In prostituting his rhetorical skills to such an end, Ferdinand is at one with Comus whom Kogan (citing Sensabaugh) says in his use of the rhetoric of "coterie

love,” represents the “Cavalier poet, since he gives the impression that everything is easy for those who ‘know’—that is, for those who can slip by conventional morality and idealize pleasure” (242). Comus and Ferdinand are the courtiers described by Javitch who employ oratory for purely selfish and inclusivist purposes,⁸² and are the precursors of the greatest of all perverse courtier-rhetoricians, Satan in *Paradise Lost*.⁸³

Ferdinand and Comus are indeed both lords of misrule. Comus leads a group whose “revelry” and “tipsiness” result from a “self-image” formed as if “the rhetoric of divinity had gone to their heads” (Kogan 243), so that it feels above conventional definitions of vice and morality. Ferdinand, in the “Madmans Revels” (IV.ii; 1.241) by which he also tries to circumvent the strictures of morality as well as chivalrous conduct, summons up invisible attendant spirits—“Lasses” and “Swaines”—to accompany him in a “Countray Dance” (241). But Ferdinand is neither a new Eulalia nor another Anthynus, whose virtue led powerful invisible genii to their assistance in Brome’s earlier romances. Comus’s justification for giving reign to his passions is “’Tis onely day-light that makes Sin” (*Maske* line 126), while Ferdinand seems to believe that this philosophy of convenience applies to everyone, as he tries to excuse his attempted rape of Lady Strangelove:

a cunning Lady
Would have consented to madman, who
She might presume could not impeach her honor
By least detection.

(IV.iii; 1.250)

Comus and Ferdinand believe that their standards of “sin” and “honour” are universal, and they are willing to employ the transcendent terms of Neoplatonism in order to justify them, even though their own guiding genii are the relativity of sensual experience and immediate physical satisfaction. When Ferdinand cries, in a feigned ecstasy of dance, “I am all ayre” (241), he unintentionally reveals the truth about his *furor* which, far from being “the sort of madness described by Plato which is ecstatic in that it takes people out of themselves,”⁸⁴ is indeed insubstantial and “naught”—all bluster and nothing, if not actually downright evil. Ferdinand goes through the motions of aping Ficino’s four Platonic *furores*—“poetic, Bacchic, prophetic and erotic” (Radice 120, n.69)—but, because they are feigned, he does not rise above the “common” love of a man “for a woman’s body” to the “divine” love that “seeks satisfaction only in the union of the souls” (120, n.69). Ferdinand’s mythological allusions at this point, “I thanke thee *Mercury* that hast lent thy wings / Unto my feete” (IV.iii; 1.241), and

“the lesser lights / Become obscur’d when *Cynthia* appears” (241), recall Jonson’s *Cynthia’s Revels* which, as was noted earlier, directly confronts the foolish games of courtiers with the clever games of the protagonists to the detriment of the former, portending Ferdinand’s own defeat in the game of disguise and deception by Lady Strangelove and her followers. The irony is that in being bested, Ferdinand actually moves towards a higher plane of love than the physical through union with the Lady.

Ferdinand is the Cavalier poet who has “drunk too deepe of *Helicon*” (I.i; 1.189), creating a false aura around himself of sublime inspiration and divine rapture by calling upon the “blest Intelligences” to hear him “sing,” and bidding the “soule-ravishing spheres / Send forth your sweetest harmony” (III.i; 1.220). He adopts the idolatrous hyperbole to which courtly Neoplatonism could lend itself so easily, and which Comus expresses in his “ecstasy of admiration” (Kogan 250) for the Lady, with “Let me with Adoration fall before / Thy Deity great Goddess” (IV.ii; 1.241). Ferdinand’s feigned melancholy madness both encapsulates and condemns far more eloquently than any moralistic diatribe the excesses and fundamental insincerity of coterie devotion, “in which the Caroline poet swoons and adores” (Kogan 249) as part of the game by which he exercises his virtuosity against some lady’s virtue. For whereas Milton looked back to Dante and Petrarch, who, in glorifying Beatrice and Laura, displayed “sublime and pure thoughts” which led to their own “self-development” (Kogan 247), Ferdinand rejects the Renaissance poetical heritage and its classical antecedents in his efforts to conquer Lady Strangelove: “Nor will I write, nor will I emulate / *Ovids* smoth vaine, or *Petraks* buskind stile” (III.i; 1.220).⁸⁵ Similarly, the courtier Sir Raphael’s panegyric of Sir Ferdinand reveals the pervasiveness of this mode of address:

The Wisdome, Justice, Magnanimity,
And temperance of court you are exactly
Fram’d and compos’d of, and indued with all
The excelencies that may adorne a man
By Nature, Fortune, Art and Industry!

(III.i; 1.222)

Even the court beggar Mendicant recognises that this attempt by Sir Raphael to “flatter [Ferdinand] into’s wits” is more generally “the way to foole men out of ’em” (222); and it is this overblown flattery which has contributed to the decline of the masque’s admonitory function—at least as Jonson perceived it—in favour of an almost entirely adorational one in the Caroline court.

Both he and Comus, who is initially disguised as a shepherd when he appears before the Lady, use the conventions of court pastoral for their own selfish purposes, yet in both works the “Country” is also a source of right-mindedness and good counsel. In *Comus*, an “attendant Spirit,” also “habited like a Shepherd” (*Maske* s.d. below line 489) guides the captive Lady’s brothers—who address him as “good Swain” (497)—to her whereabouts. In *The Court Beggar*, Lady Strangelove’s most stalwart attendant and forthright counsellor is the “blunt Countrey Gentleman,” Swaynit, who now embodies “the Renaissance ideal of the perfect courtier or ‘complete gentleman’” which Kogan says Comus and the Lady recall in their use of the term “courtesie” (246). The country swain, striding forth with drawn sword to defend Lady Strangelove, has supplanted the courtier without replacing the terms defining what a courtier should be, so that *The Court Beggar* endorses “Milton’s sense of testing, of honor, fidelity and upward striving” which was not only a product of his “puritan habit of mind,” but also of “his education in Renaissance poetry and chivalrous literature” (Kogan 247). *Comus*, the product of Milton’s upbringing, in turn becomes a means for counselling the children of the Egerton household in the “authentic tone of moral doctrine” with which Kogan (254) attributes the Elder Brother’s speech on chastity (*Maske* lines 452-75). The model for behaviour, however, is clearly not the “cavalier” mode of the likes of Ferdinand, which for both Milton and Brome is deceitful, hedonistic and amoral.

This emphasis on moral guidance—which Jonson had upheld in his own masques—is one means by which Milton’s *Maske* revitalises the genre’s original aim of bringing together masquers and spectators in a commonality of celebration and identification, an aim which was being lost sight of by the writers of entertainments at Whitehall. This was possible mainly because the *Maske* was written not for the court, but for a situation in which courtly ideals are “related . . . to the country and the audience at hand” (Kogan 259), or, in Milton’s words, “among mine own Citizens” (quoted in Kogan 249). Prince and royal court are absent from *Comus*, as characters, actors and audience; nevertheless, despite the regional intimacy of its presentation—“At Ludlow Castle, 1634: On Michaelmasse night”⁸⁶—Milton’s masque eulogises an aspect of princely governance in celebrating the “public entrance into the Principality” of Wales by the Earl of Bridgewater, who had been appointed lord-lieutenant a few years previously.⁸⁷ The action of Milton’s masque reunites the Lady with her brothers and the children with their father through the power of Sabrina, goddess of the River Severn,

such that the influences and dictates of Whitehall seem as distant politically and socially as they are geographically. It asserts not only the unity of the Egerton family and household as an example to the kingdom at large, but also the role of the Earl as a governor—a prince in miniature—in his own right. *Comus* re-centralises the country estate, the “holier ground” (*Maske* line 943) where “are met in state / Many a friend” (948-9) and where “Swains”—real ones, not airy phantoms conjured up by deceptive cavaliers—“With Jiggs, and rural dance resort” (951-2), in the same way that *The Court Beggar*’s focus on Lady Strangelove and her followers relegates the court as the source of manners and fashions to the periphery of the action.

The turn against the tide of the current style of courtly entertainments came at a price, however. Milton’s efforts to restore the didactic aspects of the masque were achieved, in the opinion of Herford and Simpson, with “but slight and perfunctory concessions to the traditional technique” (2.307), and they cite as an example the “burst of light and colour” accompanying the change of scene from the forest to Comus’s palace as marking not “the final triumph of good, . . . but the threatening predominance of evil” (308). This reversal of an expected technique, together with the fact that structurally, “Drama has . . . encroached notably upon the proper domains of song and dance” (308), reveals a process bound up with the historicity of both this work and that of *The Court Beggar*. For if *Comus* is a masque threatening to turn into a play, *The Court Beggar*’s ostensibly “city comedy” form disguises what in many ways is a masque-like play, with reversals of expectations similar to those produced by Milton.

The collapse of Courtwit’s “courtly” masque in the last act discredits the contemporary state of the genre and turns masque into antimasque by making it literally one of the “disintegrating attractions” which Jonson had developed by drawing on “comedy, personal satire, and topical allusion” to elaborate the form.⁸⁸ Well before Brome and Milton, therefore, antimasque was being made from the stuff of plays; from here it is only a short step to giving the antimasque a dramatic function approaching the “argument” of a play proper. While Milton’s portrayal of Comus and his “rout” becomes a major part of “the pervading flavour of debate” (Herford and Simpson 2.309) in his *Maske*, the antimasque of Mendicant (who, perhaps like Brome himself, has no place at court⁸⁹) serves as the climax of the play’s comic regenerative action by becoming a true masque celebrating the “ideal abstractions” (Orgel 73)

of a world free of melancholy, and one in which all of society's elements as represented by the play's cast of pseudo-emblematic characters are integrated and reconciled in the miniature world of Lady Strangelove's household. And surely one of the most surprising reversals of expectation is that unlike Comus, Sir Ferdinand is not banished from the action of *The Court Beggar*. On the contrary, once his own feigning melancholia is revealed, he becomes a part of the second stage of the curative action and a suitable match for Lady Strangelove; but in the uncertainty as to whether this union bridges the gap between court and household, or whether it represents the winning over of one of the court's adherents to the Lady's faction, lies the real paradox of this play which, if not in "scheme and composition," as Herford and Simpson said of *Comus*, "[i]n conception . . . is a genuine and unmistakable Masque" (2.309).

For embedded in Milton's "*triumph in victorious dance / O're sensual Folly, and Intemperance*" (*Maske* 974-5) and in Brome's dance ending in the "excellent Morall" in which "The Projects are all cancel'd, and the Projectors turn'd out o' dores" (*CB* V.ii; 1.268), are the seeds of decay and disunity. The fragility of the masque as a genre is highlighted in the pre-eminence of Milton's poetry and moral purpose over spectacle, and in Brome's satire of the genre's current state, leading to a "transvaluation" by both poets of the generic expectations of masque and antimasque elements. A major element of the traditional masque was that the masquers "*took part with the courtly spectators in the dance*" (Herford and Simpson 2.252). While Milton's adherence to the basic performance structure of the masque ensures that this happens in *Comus*, the question of audience participation was a more problematical one in the theatre proper. Brome tries to achieve this within the strictures of the professional stage by having his characters deliver a curious extended epilogue which, with its lengthy "apology" for the playwright delivered directly to the assembled spectators by the actor playing Swaynwit, teeters on the verge of turning the Cockpit into a forum for debate more akin to the House of Commons than a private theatre.

The Epilogue begins conventionally enough with Lady Strangelove addressing the "*Ladyes*" in a manner reminiscent of Rosalind at the end of *As You Like It*, but Ferdinand takes over by reminding the "*Cavaliers*" to "*Do, like the Sun-beames,*" and "*vertuously dispense / Upon the lowest growths their influence, / As well as on the lofty*" (Epilogue; 1.[270]). Disguised among the usual appeals for audience approval is an equally emphatic piece of rhetoric which underscores the play's drive towards inclusion and its condemnation

of inward-looking courtly elitism. Different elements of the audience are addressed in turn so that none is left out: "Ladies, . . . the Cavaliers and Gentry; . . . the City friends. . . my Countrey folkes too," as Swaynwit sums them up ([271]). His denunciation of elitist artistic practices, of "these Playes as the Prologue said," through which "you sit nere the merrier, nor rise the wiser, they are so above common understanding" ([271]), stands as a policy statement against all forms of exclusion, as well as a reaffirmation of the classical tenet about art's duty to delightfully instruct. Swaynwit points out that there are "right worshipfull Poets" enough who wish "to be cry'd up wits o' Court" with "enterludes" which, "for ought you know," were bought "of Universitie Scholars" ([271]). Both Milton's "non-courtly" masque and Brome's adaptation of the masque for the comic professional stage reveal the bankruptcy of the contemporary courtly "interlude" form as a medium for wise counsel. The original purpose of the masque was identical with that of Castiglione's perfect courtier, for both were intended to

leade [the Prince] through the rough way of vertue (as it were) decking it aboute with boughes to shadow it, and strowing it over with sightlye flowers, . . . and with all those waies . . . continually keepe that minde of his occupied in honest pleasure[.]
(*Courtier* 265)

By the end of the 1630s there was still just as much cause to identify court masques with courtiers themselves, but by now "the rough way of vertue" had become so strewn with flowers and overshadowed with boughs that many thought the court had lost sight of the pathway completely.⁹⁰ Swainwit's speech is therefore about excluding such escapist "delights" from the playhouse—in the same way that Lady Strangelove closes her door to meddling courtiers—and reaffirming the theatre's didactic function.

The Epilogue has the effect of turning the Cockpit into a household of its own in which its members—the audience, the acting company, and the poet himself—may aspire to the very liberty which Lady Strangelove craved which, in the sense that it seeks to be kept apart from the interference of the court, has an affinity with the freedom of expression and debate that constitutes Parliamentary privilege. In paying homage to the importance of the microcosmic commonwealths of the households of the Earl of Bridgewater and Lady Strangelove, as well as that of the theatre itself, *Comus* and *The Court Beggar* help to promote the process of decentralisation which contributes as much to the breakdown of the "kingdom" as a unifying concept as it does to asserting the validity and value of its constituent parts. *The Court*

Beggar's appeal to a form of self-determination for an audience drawn from all over the land leaves it wide open to being identified with the seditious play which resulted in Beeston being thrown in prison, and with "those people," cited by Clarendon, "who have been the severest assertors of the public liberties" (quoted in Butler 17). These were recommended by Clarendon to Charles as the ones to trust for "the preservation of your rights" (17), but it is ironic that in offering the same counsel to those entrusted with upholding the common weal, *The Court Beggar* should take the part of individuals and households which, when pressed, would contribute to the division of the kingdom by making their stands—some for Parliament, some for the King, and some, like Milton, ultimately for their own private beliefs—in the years of civil strife to come.

Conclusion

IN MY THESIS I HAVE attempted to show how a reading of Brome's plays may be enhanced through the works of the humanist literary tradition, and also that the plays themselves reveal a conscious effort by the playwright to employ major literary and scholarly modes of the Renaissance for the same ends as humanists such as Erasmus and More, and later, Burton and Milton. My methodology has involved separate discussions of three of those modes, but in fact there is a considerable amount of interdependence between them, and in some cases it has not been an easy task maintaining their separate identities.

Thus an examination of the building of a eutopian world implies that it should be ruled by an ideal prince (or at least an ideal form of government) guided by the best counsel available, and that it will be free of the more destructive and negative manifestations of the melancholy condition. The cure of this kind of melancholy, which is the product of the "fallen" world, leads in turn to a better society where tyrants and lovelorn princes become capable rulers, and self-absorbed citizens turn into advocates of the common weal and active members of the commonwealth. Bad counsel in the form of fraud and flattery is both a cause and a symptom of melancholy, and leads to the corruption of princes and the decay of nations; a good prince, guided by the wisdom of the court, will invariably promote and maintain the well-being of kingdom and subjects. Even this marginal glance at the potential for the complex interaction of these modes will, I trust, go some way to explaining any overlap which may have occurred in the foregoing work.

It has been the contention of my thesis that the way the modes of the utopia, melancholy and the mirror for princes are employed in Brome's plays is entirely in keeping with the tradition of humanist scholarship and writing in England which Ferguson describes as more of a "mode of perception" (Ferguson 221) than as any kind of desk-bound "core curriculum of humane studies" (223). Brome's plays use the works of earlier writers such as More and Erasmus, who were themselves attempting a "reinterpretation" of their own studies of classical literature "in the light of contemporary life" (242), as a means of defining the society in which he and his audiences lived. The influence and stimulus provided by the humanist tradition was such that it could provide even the writer of comedies for the professional stage with a moral philosophical basis for his art.

Emrys Jones, in tracing Shakespeare's "cultural hinterland, that mental world which was his natural inheritance,"¹ says that

The entire temper of northern humanism was one of sober practicality, usefulness, and serviceableness. . . . The humanist impulse quickly merged with religious, political and educational activity; it was never concerned to keep itself separate from everyday affairs. Its whole purpose was to improve the quality of lay life[.]
(Jones 10)

But whereas Jones has to argue that even though “less given to enunciating programmes . . . [Shakespeare] must be seen as a writer who unavoidably breathed the neo-classical atmosphere” (10), in the case of Brome we have the advantage of knowing that whatever the standard of his formal education, here was a playwright who had been for some considerable time under the direct influence of that most “theoretical and doctrinaire” (10) of writers, Ben Jonson. Through his influence alone, if through nothing else, Brome would have upheld Douglas Bush’s assertion that “*The Praise of Folly and Utopia, The Governour and The Scholemaster* remain living books” (*Renaissance and English Humanism* 78-9), that is, as viable and relevant programs of action for contemporary society. That the humanist tradition for Brome was vital and on-going, rather than something which had been “etched in marble” in the first half of the sixteenth century, is evident in the way his plays make use of works closer to his own time, in particular in their comprehensive—almost exegetical—treatment of the Burtonian concept of melancholy. It should come as no surprise, then, to see even traces of *Comus* in one of Brome’s plays, so that his engagement with the humanist tradition embraces the whole period summarised by Bush as “From More to Milton” (79).

There can be little doubt, either, that Brome’s work shares the “deep tincture of Platonism” which Ferguson notes as characteristic of English humanism (222). Satire for its own sake seems never to have been an over-riding goal in his work, at least certainly not in the plays which I have singled out for study. Whereas the harsh caricatures, vitriolic railings and frequent teasingly uncertain endings which mark Jonson’s major comedies can make it difficult to reconcile them with the humanist desiderata of personal reform and social improvement, Brome’s best plays always involve a clear action of cure, restoration or reintegration, the achievement of which tended to become even more crucial to the successful resolution of his later plays. Brome’s approach to his art demonstrates a commitment to ideals of reform and regeneration which, in the persistence with which he dramatised them, might be regarded as zealotry worthy of Erasmus or Milton.

English Neoplatonism found a place in the court circles at Whitehall, but for Brome, who had little access to coteries of the elite, the place where the real could become ideal was the

world of the stage. The one biographical characteristic which can be singled out as having a direct bearing on his work—even more, I believe, than his “prenticeship” with Jonson—is his love of the drama and his faith in it as a proving ground for virtue and good sense. He worked at no other art or profession, as far as we know; his prologues defend it against amateurs and “dabblers” from the universities and the court; and he died in poverty because the wartime closure of the theatres denied him further practice in it. The professional stage was his Utopia, where he could try out all sorts of cures, impose political systems and mix social classes into many permutations. The acting companies provided him with its citizens, its officials and its princes, whose many forms of melancholy could be played out until they had found a settled mean or were banished completely. His plays provided the good counsel desperately needed during the difficult time of Charles’s “personal rule”; and the playwright himself, playing the role of both Menippus and Mithrobarzanes, was the ultimate observer who, rather than sitting back and laughing or weeping at what he saw, was also the director and guide who sought to lead his characters, and hence his audience, along the path to a revitalised, if not entirely refashioned, world.

Of course, the stage-play world is a fictive one, and fictions when taken too far give rise to melancholy. But the degree to which real life was defined in the Renaissance in terms of role-playing—most tellingly expressed in the drama itself with its many images of the world as a stage/theatre—added to a body of medical thought which might regard any one phenomenon simultaneously as the cause, symptom and cure of a disease, legitimised attempts at reform based on fictional representations of contemporary life, and a belief that these may have positive effects extending beyond the fictional world in which they are played out. Brome’s frequent use of the play-in-the-play device bears out this belief, for if characters in a play can be helped by watching a fiction of their own stage-play world, then an audience should also be affected by their view of fictionalised versions of the real world on the stage.

This therapeutic view of drama depends, however, on a sense of community existing *in the theatre itself*. Critics have tended to attribute to Brome a nostalgic longing for the (usually Elizabethan) “good old days” of national unity, which, like all Golden Ages, never really existed. The form of nostalgia exhibited by Brome, however, is defined in terms of the theatre; what he seems to long for is an ideally representative audience, of a type which *may* have existed from about 1590 to 1610 (when Brome himself was born and grew to

manhood). This longing becomes even more intense in later years, as tastes even in the professional theatres seem to lean either towards courtly escapist romances in the enclosed playhouses, or revivals of older plays in the open theatres. Of course, neither trend was, for someone in Brome's position, conducive to making a decent living, but the repeated calls for what I have termed "inclusiveness" in *The Antipodes*, *The Court Beggar*, *A Jovial Crew* and elsewhere have as much to do with objections on philosophical grounds as they do with the box office. A therapeutic method such as Brome's depends upon the theatre's being like Blaze's house in *The Antipodes*, which he promises the Joyless family is "large / Enough to hold you all" (*Ant* 1.i.13-14). A commonwealth by definition cannot consist solely of one element of society to the exclusion of all others, and that applies even to those microcosmic commonwealths of only two or three hours' duration with which Brome hoped to share visions of ideal worlds and healthy princes and citizens.

The irony is that this form of nostalgia would often lead to Brome's plays positing "opposition" views. The very advocacy of inclusiveness, for instance, ran counter to the way the king and his immediate circle of counsellors thought the kingdom should be governed. In its own small way, Brome's artistic philosophy was leading him into the kinds of confrontation with authority which humanists since at least the time of Erasmus and More (who paid for his beliefs in the most extreme manner) had faced in having to operate within the framework of Renaissance despotism. This assertion is supported in the kind of attacks on royal policy and courtly attitudes made in *The Court Beggar*, which, even if it was not the unlicensed play for which William Beeston was imprisoned, is not a play calculated to endear itself to royal favourites who were still capable of exerting power and influence over policy. Some pointer to the artistic direction Brome was taking may be found in the way that the playwright Thomas Shadwell—a self-proclaimed Jonsonian whose lineage, I would suggest, may be traced through Brome—came to be identified with the Whigs, the political heirs of the Puritan revolution.

The humanist literary modes which I have analysed were more than a set of codes for disguising potentially subversive issues or out-of-favour political theories such as parliamentary government. They continued to provide a direct mode of poetic engagement with contemporary problems and preoccupations, in the same way that early Renaissance scholars and poets saw in the writings of classical authors the key to dealing with their own

world. Thus similarities between a utopia created in the 1630s and the author's own society might be disclaimed as coincidence, or as the product of over-sensitive powers of observation in one's audience or critics. However, the utopian mode carried with it a long tradition of social criticism stretching back through the work of Renaissance and classical writers: to employ the mode was a *de facto* statement that circumstances dictated its employment. That is why the historicity of Brome's plays is such an important factor in considering their use of the humanist tradition; the appearance of *A Jovial Crew* with its beggar utopia is in itself a signal of the troubled times, as was More's *Utopia* which dealt with similar issues of social displacement. The vitality of these humanist literary modes, when coupled with a belief such as Brome's in the stage as a place of comic regeneration, provided the playwright with a powerful means not only of delightfully instructing his audiences, but of inspiring them to maintain that active engagement in society which is such an important aspect of Renaissance humanist intellectual life.

Notes

Introduction

¹ Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis 1632-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984) 2.

² This attitude is epitomised in the title of Herbert F. Allen's *A Study of the Comedies of Richard Brome, Especially as Representative of Dramatic Decadence* (N.p.: Stanford UP, 1912). His attempt to establish the "coarseness" and "emptiness" of Brome's comedies (Outline 8) is a perfect example of what Butler calls "late Victorian attempts to make literary criticism scientific by appropriating Darwinian evolutionary language to describe English Renaissance drama as a *species* which 'died' in 1642" (Butler 7).

³ Gamini Salgado, *English Drama: A Critical Introduction* (London: Edward Arnold, 1980) 83.

⁴ Alfred Harbage, *Cavalier Drama* (1936; New York: Russell, 1964) 158. Compare the c.1910 assessment of Ronald Bayne who, while warning against "assuming that Brome was of very lowly rank and uneducated till Jonson took him in hand," says that, compared to Nathaniel Field, who "has more than a touch of Jonson's arrogance, and inherits some of his strength of style[,] Brome's meekness verges on servility"; "Lesser Jacobean and Caroline Dramatists," *Cambridge History of English Literature*, 15 vols. (1910; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1932) 6.224-5.

⁵ The comment is made in Frederick S. Boas, *An Introduction to Stuart Drama* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1946) 378. Similar views abound in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century critical studies of the period, as in C.M. Gayley's "Brome is an admirable specimen of decadent art and morals, or of morals in art"; "*The Antipodes* by Richard Brome: Critical Essay," *Representative English Comedies*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1903-36) 3.425. One notable exception is Swinburne's essay on Brome which indulges in some refreshingly positive hyperbole; he calls *The Antipodes* "one of the most fanciful and delightful farces in the world," comparing the verse favourably to Dryden's and ranking the comedy among Jonson's own plays. He concludes (with jingoistic gusto) that "In the dramatic literature of any country but ours the name of Richard Brome would be eminent and famous"; Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Richard Brome," *Contemporaries of Shakespeare*, ed. Edmond Gosse and T.J. Wise (London: Heinemann, 1919) 269 and 274.

⁶ R.J. Kaufmann, *Richard Brome: Caroline Playwright* (New York and London: Columbia UP, 1961); see, for example, his assessment, "Jonson was a genius; Brome was not. Jonson was a great poet; Brome was, at best, a competent versifier" (35), which reveals no new insight over Bayne's criticism of fifty years before, that Brome "uses Jonson's manner without Jonson's full-blooded, massive humanity, without his satiric intensity, without his intellectual power; so that the Jonsonian scenes in Brome . . . repel or tire the reader" (226). This kind of qualitative judgement of Brome's abilities as a "versifier" or whatever has no place in my

work. See also Kaufmann 16 for his dismissal of several of Brome's plays as unworthy of consideration.

⁷ I fondly remember the warmth with which Dr Hill received my (very embryonic) proposal to write on Brome, in a brief conversation during his visit to Adelaide in 1987. Only the year before he had published an article firmly advocating the value of literature "to understand the mid-seventeenth-century crisis in England," and endorsing the work of Martin Butler, Jonathon Dollimore, David Norbrook and others. See Christopher Hill, "Literature and the English Revolution," *The Seventeenth Century* 1.1 (1986): 15-30.

⁸ Annabelle M. Haaker, "An Edition of *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew* by Richard Brome," Ph.D. diss., U of Birmingham, 1961, i.

⁹ Kaufmann 18-25 speculates on Brome's role as Jonson's "man," and discusses the Jonsonian influence on his work in chap. III, "Under the Seal of Ben" (35-46).

¹⁰ C.G., "To Censuring Critics On The Approved Comedy, *The Antipodes*" lines 1 and 22, reprinted in Richard Brome, *The Antipodes*, ed. Ann Haaker (London: Edward Arnold, 1967) 4.

¹¹ Ben Jonson, commendatory verse to *The Northern Lass*, "To my old Faithful Servant, and (by his continu'd Vertue) my loving Friend, the Author of this Work, Mr. *Richard Brome*," reprinted in *The Dramatic Works of Richard Brome*, 3 vols. (London: John Pearson, 1873) 3.ix.

¹² Douglas Duncan, *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979) 1.

¹³ Bayne 224-5, however, takes a great deal for granted in trying to portray Brome's background and education.

¹⁴ Douglas Bush, *The Renaissance and English Humanism* (N.p.: U of Toronto, 1939) 76.

¹⁵ Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour* (London: Dent, 1907) 58-9. All future references are to this edn. unless otherwise specified.

¹⁶ See especially Duncan chap. 4, "Images of Lucian" (77-96), where he traces the influence of the way Lucian was "Enlisted . . . by Erasmus and More as a 'festive' example of the liberated intellect which could be turned to the service of God" (77)—and the controversy this method attracted—through to Shakespeare and Jonson.

¹⁷ See Nicholas K. Kiessling, *The Library of Robert Burton* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1988) for an annotated list of all known works owned by Burton. See also Appendix I below, concerning Burton's copy of Brome's *The Northern Lasse*.

¹⁸ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Duckworth, 1986) 26. A large part of the rationale of this study is to call into question the assumption which links "higher learning" with "civilisation" and liberal

“universal values”; see the introduction xi-xvi. Not surprisingly, the views of T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, L. C. Knights and other “humanist” critics are implicated in these assumptions (xv, 25 and elsewhere).

¹⁹ Alistair Fox, “English Humanism and the Body Politic,” in Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500-1550* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986) 36. Grafton and Jardine maintain that Erasmus’s considerable effort to connect “his publishing activities in the secular sphere and his scriptural and doctrinal studies suggests that the welding of profane learning to lay piety requires a certain amount of intellectual sleight-of-hand” (144), implying that Erasmus consciously worked at making his form of humanism “useful” to the social and political world (as well as justifying his own continued delving into classical literature). This assessment seems to me to provide more depth to a definition of “Erasmian humanism” than Fox’s sense that it was served up to Renaissance princes on a “take it or leave it” basis.

²⁰ Arthur B. Ferguson, “Humanism as a Mode of Perception: The Case of England,” *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 9, ed. Frank Tirro (Durham NC: Duke UP, 1982) 221.

²¹ Bush also says that by the seventeenth century “Christian humanism is no longer so universal or so definitely recognizable,” and that “both the outer and the inner world have become oppressively vast and dark, and the great question is ‘What do I know?’” (80-1). One symptom of this, he maintains, could be seen in the “Multiplying sects and parties, with their intolerance and frequent violence” (83), but “Fortunately the seventeenth century contained a number of men who kept open the *via media* between angry extremists, and whose moderate principles owed not a little to the humane and stabilizing power of the classical tradition” (84). While one may have difficulty in maintaining that Jonson was not in his own way an “extremist,” the principles upheld in Brome’s plays display a great deal of just this kind of moderation.

²² Robert Chamberlain, “To The Author On His Comedy, The Antipodes” lines 5-14, reprinted in *The Antipodes*, Haaker edn. 5. Haaker notes that Chamberlain (fl. 1640-60) was “popular among university wits when at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1637” and wrote a number of works based on classical sources (5, n.15).

²³ G. E. Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1941-68); hereafter referred to as Bentley, *JCS*, citing volume and page number(s).

²⁴ Sam Smiley, *Playwriting: The Structure of Action* (Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971) 43.

²⁵ A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, rev. and enl. 2nd edn., 2 vols. (London: Bibliographical Society, 1976-86).

Part I Utopias

¹ G. Wilson Knight, *The Golden Labyrinth* (New York: Norton, 1962) 121.

² From Erasmus's dedication of his translation of Lucian's *The Dream, or The Cock* to Christopher Urswick, quoted in Douglas Duncan, *Ben Jonson and the Lucianic Tradition* 29.

³ I have used the term "utopia" throughout in its general meaning of "no-place," rather than the more usual modern sense of "ideal place." By definition, then, the term "anti-utopia," employed by some critics (for example, Michael Holquist—see n.27, below), has no meaning in the present discussion. When a distinction between "good-place" and "bad-place" is required, I have used "eutopia" and "dystopia." I find I am supported in this by Stephen Hutchinson, "Mapping Utopias," *Modern Philology* 85.2 (1987): 170-85.

⁴ Knight singles out these three plays as well as *The City Wit* (c.1630, revised c.1637) for his own discussion. This last does not fit within the parameters of the utopian mode as defined in the present discussion, however, being more of a "city comedy" in the style of Middleton. See Ellen Dutton Kiehl, "The Comedy of Richard Brome: A Study of Comic Form and Function," Ph.D. diss., SUNY, Albany, 1977, 125-76, for a comprehensive treatment of *The City Wit* and Brome's use of the "city comedy" mode.

⁵ Coburn Gum, *The Aristophanic Comedies of Ben Jonson* (The Hague: Mouton, 1969) 17.

⁶ Kenneth McLeish, *The Theatre of Aristophanes* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980) 67.

⁷ Recent historicist criticism has attempted to rescue some of this drama from the purely escapist category, however. See, for example, Kevin Sharpe's exhaustive study of Caroline court drama, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), and Martin Butler's reassessment of some of the works of Fletcher, Davenant and Shirley in *Theatre and Crisis*.

⁸ See Paul Turner, introduction, Thomas More, *Utopia*, trans. Paul Turner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961) 16-17.

⁹ H.W. Donner, *Introduction to Utopia* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1945) 5.

¹⁰ See Gum 187-91 for his explanation as to why Jonson failed as an Aristophanic playwright.

¹¹ Quoted in Duncan, 28-9. Duncan chaps. 1-4 explains in detail Renaissance attitudes to Lucian and the debt owed to him by Erasmus and More.

¹² See Duncan 144-7 for the sources of *Volpone*, and that Jonson had copies of Lucian and Erasmus "on his desk as he wrote the first pages of his play" (145).

¹³ Julia Briggs, *This Stage-Play World* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1983) 64.

¹⁴ That *Penelope's Web* is a "primary source" for *The Queen and Concubine* was established by E. Koepfel in 1897 (see Kaufmann 89, n.5). Kaufmann states that for "no other Brome play" (89) do we know the primary source; it is the intention of the present study, of course, to point out many such possible sources.

¹⁵ Robert Greene, *Penelope's Web*, in *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, ed. A.B. Grosart, 15 vols. (The Huth Library, 1881-6) 5.185.

¹⁶ *The Queen and Concubine* III.iv; Pearson edn. 2.52 (the plays in this volume are individually paginated).

¹⁷ K.W. Evans, "Sejanus and the Ideal Prince Tradition," *Studies in English Literature* 11.2 (1971): 250-1.

¹⁸ Thomas More, *Utopia*, trans. Ralph Robynson, ed. J. Churton Collins (Oxford: Clarendon, 1904) 131. All citations are from this edn. unless otherwise specified.

¹⁹ Quoted in Briggs 142.

²⁰ A point made all the more significant if, as Butler maintains, *The Queen and Concubine* was written for performance at court; see Butler 42, where he posits this possibility, and 268, where he seems to take it as read. See also chap. III.1 below for more on this question, and esp. Part III, n.8.

²¹ It is worth comparing the Palermians with the countryfolk in another of Brome's "romance" comedies, *The Lovesick Court*. Here the commons of Thessaly also intervene on the side of justice—for instance in *LSC* IV.ii; Pearson edn. 2.144-7—but not before they have been gulled by the demagogue Stratocles; see chap. III.1 below for more on this aspect of the play. It is also significant, I feel, that the Thessalians are called "Rusticks," while the Palermians are usually "Countrey-men" or "Inhabitants."

²² See *Utopia* 57.

²³ See chaps. III.1 and III.3 below for a more detailed discussion of the relationship between Caroline court Platonism and *The Queen and Concubine*.

²⁴ The "healing touch" is supposedly capable of curing scrofula, the "king's evil." The *OED* (2nd edn.) adds, under this meaning of "healing," that "An *Office for the Healing* was formerly often printed with the Prayer-book," a fact which may lend more significance to Eulalia's prayer as she cures.

²⁵ Stephen Orgel, introduction, *The Tempest*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) 24. Orgel lists some of the critical works which have used this approach in 24, n.1 and 49, n.1.

²⁶ The pursuit of a postcolonialist line of discourse is beyond the scope of the present work, although I believe that it would yield much of interest if applied to *The Queen and Concubine*.

²⁷ Wayne A. Rebhorn, "Thomas More's Enclosed Garden: *Utopia* and Renaissance Humanism," *English Literary Renaissance* 6.2 (1976): 141.

²⁸ Michael Holquist, "How to Play Utopia: Some Brief Notes on the Distinctiveness of Utopian Fiction," Mark Rose (ed.), *Science Fiction: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Eaglewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976) 135.

²⁹ Joseph Allen Bryant, "The Significance of Ben Jonson's First Requirement for Tragedy: 'Truth of Argument'," *Studies in Philology* 49 (1952) 195. See also Joanna Martindale, *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley* (London: Croom Helm, 1985) 24, for Jonson's and Erasmus's shared "dislike of romance."

³⁰ David Cook, in his introduction to *Volpone*, says that Jonson's classicism carried with it a "refusal to intermingle in the same work different kinds of experience. Comedy is comedy: to introduce sentiment, pathos, romance is to diffuse the effect, is to pander to dilettantism and philistinism"; Ben Jonson, *Volpone, or the Fox* (London: Methuen, 1962) 15. I do not believe that the argument for Jonson's dismissal of romance is contradicted by his having written *Cynthia's Revels*, either. Despite the presence of gods and muses in the play, so many of the scenes take place inside palace apartments that the setting—the mythical kingdom of Gargaphie—is virtually irrelevant, and the attitude of the Third Child in the Induction very likely mirrors Jonson's own: "the scene, Gargaphie: which I do vehemently suspect for some fustian country, but let that vanish" (*Cynthia's Revels* Induct.36-8. This and all future references to Jonson's plays are from *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, ed. G.A. Wilkes, 4 vols. [Oxford: Clarendon, 1981-2], a modern spelling edn. based on that of Herford and Simpson.) The "no-place" here is actually a "non-place." The real exception to Jonson's general rule is his last play, *The Sad Shepherd* (which Bentley, *JCS* III.625-8, dates c.1635-7), an unfinished arcadian romance which seems an attempt to emulate the vogue set by Shakespeare and carried on in the professional theatre by Fletcher, Massinger, Shirley and Brome.

³¹ Ben Jonson, "Ode to Himself," lines 21-30. This and all future references to Jonson's non-dramatic works (unless otherwise specified) are from *The Complete Poems*, ed. George Parfitt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975). Interestingly, Parfitt does not standardise "Broome" to "Brome" in his otherwise modern spelling edn., presumably to maintain the pun. George E. Rowe, *Distinguishing Johnson* (Lincoln, Nebraska, and London: U of Nebraska, 1988), says that in this ode Jonson attempts "to dismiss or dominate Brome" (183, n.18), reflecting "Jonson's complex and sometimes antagonistic attitude towards one son" who managed to rival his "putative father" (32). Rowe does not expand on this interesting notion.

³² G.E. Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time 1590-1642* (Princeton: Princeton

UP, 1971) 26-37; Bentley narrows down the twenty-two English playwrights who wrote for the commercial theatre between 1590 and 1642 to a list of eight “attached or regular professionals.” On the strength of dramatic output, Heywood ranks first, Shakespeare fifth, and Brome eighth (37). The first playwright Bentley eliminates as a contender for his list is Jonson, who may have been attached to a theatre company early in his career, but who after 1602 relied almost exclusively on patronage, and whose “own repeated statements” (32) make it clear that he did not regard himself as a professional dramatist.

³³ Usually translated into English—perhaps unfortunately—as “alienation device.” See John Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*, 3rd edn. (London: Methuen, 1967) 177-9.

³⁴ See also Cook: “Jonson’s comedy is essentially didactic. What we are to laugh at is carefully selected with a satirical eye” (15). This “eye” is primarily the playwright’s, of course, which is directed towards the precept of “delightful teaching,” but Jonson does distinguish between the audience which can discern “jests that are true and natural,” and “the beast, the multitude” which prefers “scurrility . . . in the place of wit” (*Discoveries* 3289-90 and 3281-2, *Complete Poems*).

³⁵ Richard Brome, *The Antipodes*, ed. Ann Haaker. All references to *The Antipodes* are from this edn., citing act, scene and line(s).

³⁶ John Millar Wands (trans. and ed.), *Another World and Yet the Same: Bishop Joseph Hall’s Mundus Alter et Idem* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1981).

³⁷ See Wands, Introduction xiii-lviii, for a history and critique of *Mundus Alter* and a life of Hall.

³⁸ Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (London: Faber, 1970) 129.

³⁹ Wands’ trans. 19.15-20. Future quotations from Hall will be usually from [Joseph Hall], *The Discovery of a New World*, [trans. John Healey] (London, 1609), *The English Experience* no.119 (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York: Da Capo, 1969). In this case, however, Wands’ rendition points more directly to the satire of Hall’s aside than Healey’s rather apologetic “(God save the sample)” (*Discovery* 2).

⁴⁰ See Butler 214-20, esp. his conclusions, 219-20. Ian Donaldson, “‘Living Backward’: *The Antipodes*” in his *The World Upside Down* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1970), makes some good observations about the multi-layered structure of the play, but I disagree with his conclusion that the antipodean devices are “simply mirror-reversals of the accepted ways in which social relationships ought to work” (97). Such a statement ignores the complexity of the ludic possibilities available to the satirist working from the precedents set by Erasmus and More.

⁴¹ See Duncan 54.

⁴² Collins, introduction, *Utopia* xi.

⁴³ In Old Comedy terms the Polus character, of which Letoy is a natural successor, falls somewhere between McLeish's definition of the *spoudaios* or "sober person," of whom *Lysistrata* is an example (McLeish 54-5), and the Aristotelian *iron* who "dissembles his real qualities and abilities" (53). See McLeish 53-6 for more on Aristophanic character types and their function.

⁴⁴ Stephen J. Greenblatt, "More, Role-Playing and *Utopia*," *Yale Review* 67.4 (1978): 525.

⁴⁵ See Robert Burton's lengthy subsection "Exercise rectified of Body and Mind," in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson, 3 vols. (London: Dent, 1932) 2.69-99. Part II of the present work deals extensively with the relationship between Brome's and Burton's treatment of the trope of melancholy.

⁴⁶ Edward Surtz, *The Praise of Pleasure* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1957) 23; see his chap. IV for an explanation of the "revitalisation" of Epicureanism by humanists such as Erasmus and More, as well as for a good general sense of the humanist "network" as it existed in the Renaissance.

⁴⁷ The 1625 edn. of Mandeville, according to Haaker, *Antipodes* 24, n.26. However, there had been an edn. published as recently as 1632 (see *STC* 17253.5).

⁴⁸ C.W.R.D. Moseley, introduction to his trans. of *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983) 33.

⁴⁹ See Haaker edn. 27, n.34-6, for the source of this passage from the 1625 edn. of Mandeville.

⁵⁰ See C.E. Andrews, *Richard Brome: a Study of His Life and Works* (1913; Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1972) 114-5.

⁵¹ See L.C. Knights, "Jonson and the Anti-Acquisitive Attitude," *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (1937; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962) 168-91.

⁵² "Thomas More to Peter Giles," reprinted in *Sir Thomas More, Utopia*, trans. and ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: Norton, 1975) 126.

⁵³ See Duncan 15 and 236, n.7, and elsewhere.

⁵⁴ The comparison was made early this century by Andrews (122-3) and taken up by Joe Lee Davis, *The Sons of Ben: Jonsonian Comedy in Caroline England* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1967) chap. 2, and more recently by Peter Davison, *Popular Appeal in English Drama to 1850* (London: Macmillan, 1982) 117-24. Jackson I. Cope, *Theater and the Dream* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1973), rejects as "scholarly myth" the "convergence" of the two plays. In Randolph's play, says Cope, the theatre is treated as "purgation"; in *The Antipodes*, "theater can convert the imagination to a truce with reality because its pretence is more potent than

'life'" (302, n.32).

⁵⁵ See Davison 120-2 and 194, n.28 for details of Randolph's career. Randolph also may have written *The Drinking Academy*, but its authorship, and that of *Hey for Honesty* itself, are open to question; see Davis 105-6.

⁵⁶ See Butler chap.6 on the Caroline private theatre audience, esp. 108-13. He states that "the theatres could unify a large collection of people of disparate backgrounds into a more homogeneous social group" (113), but that this group tended, in the private theatres, to be representative of the "fashionable society" of the "Town" (108-9).

⁵⁷ Ann Haaker, "The Plague, the Theater, and the Poet," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 1 (1968): 301. This article quotes both Heton's deposition and Brome's reply in full.

⁵⁸ The plays attributable to 1635-7 are: *The Sparagus Garden* (the first play for the Salisbury Court); probably *The New Academy*; *The Queen and Concubine* (for court performance?); *The English Moor*; and *The Damoiselle*. See Bentley, *JCS* III.65-89.

⁵⁹ See Michael Hattaway, introduction to Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (London: Benn, 1969) ix-xix, for a history of the play.

⁶⁰ Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978) 8.

⁶¹ Duncan says that such "devices . . . were meant to train the audience's critical sense as well as to tell it what to think," and that in *Every Man Out*—"one of the most astonishing experiments in all renaissance drama"—Jonson employs "'alienation' more insistently than Brecht does" (134). But, he insists, Jonson "stopped a long way short of letting his public form its own conclusions," and that he constantly weights his work "for its rhetorical impact more than for its place in a fictional design" (134). *The Antipodes*, I would maintain, demonstrates Brome's ability to blend the fictional design of the utopia with his didactic and rhetorical purposes.

⁶² Cope 152; Byplay is called an "allegory" as well as an "actor" in Cope's interesting proposition that *The Antipodes* shows life to be a series of plots played "extempore."

⁶³ It is tempting to see the young Richard Brome in the figure of Quailpipe, "my lord's reader" (II.v.25). Brome's function as Jonson's "man" is still unresolved, but some have claimed for him the role of "my man" who "Shall read a piece of Virgil, Tacitus, / Livy, or of some better book to us" in Jonson's "Inviting a Friend to Supper" (*Complete Poems* 70-1). See Andrews 2, for example, where the contention that Brome "was either

a man of some education or of such intelligence that Jonson might educate him" is of no small consequence to the whole of the present work.

⁶⁴ See Donaldson 80-6 for the antipodean concepts as a "cluster of popular beliefs and superstitions" (80). However, I strongly disagree with his view that such a choice of images makes for "undemanding" comedy (86).

⁶⁵ See Andrews 51 and 117 for a summary of the reversals in *The Late Lancashire Witches* and their relevance to those in *The Antipodes*. Andrews assigns the Seeley family reversal scenes to Heywood, a view not supported by Otelia Cromwell, *Thomas Heywood*, Yale Studies in English (1928; n.p.: Archon, 1969) 177-84, who concludes that "the Seeley story, essentially a burlesque, suggests the same hand that wrote *The* [sic] *Jovial Crew* and *The Antipodes*" (184).

⁶⁶ Holbrook Jackson edn. 1.97-8. All quotations are from this edn., citing volume and page number(s), unless otherwise specified.

⁶³ J. Max Patrick, "Robert Burton's Utopianism," *Philological Quarterly* 17.4 (1948): 346.

⁶⁸ Burton probably drew on Plato's *Republic* V.460 for this ruling, not Aristotle as he claims in his notes; see A. R. Shilleto's comment in his edn. of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 3 vols. (1893; London: Bell, 1920) 1.119, n.11. F.McD. Cornford, *The Republic of Plato* (1941; Oxford: Clarendon, 1961) 156, n.1, explains Plato's ideas on this aspect in more detail.

⁶⁹ Andrews 134 lists other contemporary portrayals of projectors in plays and dialogues.

⁷⁰ The *locus classicus* of Hall's prodigal's promontory is the promontory of "(M)alea," which Erasmus's Folly points out as the place where gamblers "wreck their lives." See Walter Kaiser, *Praisers of Folly* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1963) 73, n.31, where he explains Folly's untranslatable pun on "*formidabiliorem Malea*": by eliding the *m*'s, she makes it "sound as though she had said *alea* (dice)."

⁷¹ Cope 157 attributes to Peregrine, as he wanders about in disguise, the maintenance of the Adam Overdo tradition. The point is taken, but it overlooks the "heroic" stature which begins to hedge Peregrine by this stage of the play. Brome has created other "Overdo" characters, for example Justice Cockbrain in *The Weeding of Covent Garden* and Justice Clack in *A Jovial Crew*. Both are foiled in their plans to rectify "enormities," and are made to look foolish. The real burlesquing of the Overdo role is, appropriately, left to Byplay, while Peregrine's "interference" serves a genuine moral and curative purpose.

⁷² John Donne, "An Anatomie of the World. The first Anniversary" line 212, *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. H.J.C. Grierson, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980). Peregrine's and Joyless's cures might also be seen as

the return of “just supply, and all Relation” between “Prince, Subject, Father, Sonne” (lines 214-15) which Donne sees as symptomatic of the world’s ills. The poem’s astronomical and geographical metaphors make a very apt background to the utopianism of *The Antipodes*.

⁷³ See chap. II.4 for the way in which one of Philip the Good’s “pranks” further ties in the action of *The Antipodes* with the writings of Hall and Burton.

⁷⁴ John W. Crowther equates Oldrents with Fielding’s Squire Allworthy and says that, in this respect, “Brome may be considered a literary link with the eighteenth century”; “The Literary History of Richard Brome’s *A Joviall Crew*,” *Studies in English Renaissance Literature*, ed. Waldo F. McNair (Baton Rouge: Louisiana SU, 1962) 135.

⁷⁵ I base this statement upon the representation of city and country types which appeared in the drama itself. An excellent, and contemporaneous, example is Brome’s own *The Court Beggar* (1640), with its “estates” characters of Swaynwit, Citwit and Courtwit. Each has his own readily identifiable traits and attitudes towards the other estates which reveal as much about the factionalism in English society as any statistical study could hope to show.

⁷⁶ See Crowther 137-8, where he also quotes Hythloday’s description of enclosure in *Utopia*.

⁷⁷ See Brian Manning, *The English People and the English Revolution 1640-1649* (London: Heinemann, 1976) 117-37, for details of aristocratic encroachment and popular reaction in the countryside in the 1630s.

⁷⁸ These conflicts, such as the fifteen year-long struggle in the Lincolnshire fens, 1626-41, and the widespread breaking down of enclosures in forests in the southwest in 1628-31, are described in Manning 119-22.

⁷⁹ This ambivalent attitude towards the commons and their grievances and the stance of the aristocracy is also strongly evident in *Coriolanus* (1607-8), written at a time of strife over enclosures in Shakespeare’s own Warwickshire.

⁸⁰ See Bentley *JCS* VI.54-7 for a description of the riot he calls “one of the more sensational events in the history of the Jacobean theatre” (54).

⁸¹ See Patrick 355 for more on this.

⁸² Few critics these days would call the play “escapist,” as Kaufmann does in claiming that Brome, “after a life of criticizing ‘escape,’ finally came to advocate a very basic variant of it” (169). Cope thoroughly rejects Kaufmann’s stance, perceptively calling *A Jovial Crew* a play of “rebirth” (160 and 305, n.49; see also n.89 below). The approaches taken to its use of the romance genre are varied; see, for example, David Farley-Hills,

“Rejoicing in Epidemicall Times: Brome’s *A Joviall Crew*,” in his *The Comic in Renaissance Comedy* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes, 1981) 148-9; Butler 270-3; and Haaker edn. intro. xv-xvii.

⁸³ Burton also shared a fascination for this “underground” language; see Michael O’Connell, *Robert Burton* (Boston: Twayne, 1986) 18-19. Both Burton and Brome derived their knowledge of beggar cant from Thomas Dekker; Burton’s heavily annotated copy of Dekker’s *The belman of London* (publ. 1608; *STC* 6480) may still be seen at the Bodleian Library, while Haaker cites correspondences between the language of Brome’s beggars and that found in “pt. 2” of the *Belman, Lanthorne and candle-light* (1608; *STC* 6485). See Kiessling, *The Library of Robert Burton* 85, item 441, for a summary of Burton’s annotations, and 85-7 for a list of Dekker’s works owned by him. Brome almost certainly knew Dekker at least as a professional acquaintance, judging by the latter’s dedicatory poem to *The Northern Lass*. All three authors owe much to Thomas Harman’s *A caueat for commen cursetors vulgarely called vagabones* [sic] (1567; *STC* 12787); for the influence of this work see Haaker edn. intro. xii-xiii, Kiessling 85, item 441, and James A. S. McPeck, *The Black Book of Knaves and Unthrifis* (N.p.: U of Connecticut, 1969) 165-70.

⁸⁴ John Taylor, *The Praise, Antiquity, and Commoditie, of Beggerie, Beggers, and Begging* (first publ. 1621), in *All the Workes of John Taylor, the Water Poet* (London, 1630; reprinted Menston, Yorks.: Scolar Press, 1973) 98. Taylor was a friend of Jonson’s, and Burton owned fourteen of his tracts; see Douglas Bush, *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962) 45-7—hereafter referred to as Bush, *English Literature*—for these and other details of Taylor’s career.

⁸⁵ William R. Mueller, in discussing the enclosure of lands and its effects in both More’s and Burton’s eras, also quotes from Taylor’s *Praise . . . of Beggerie* concerning both sides of the relationship between landlords and beggars:

This Noble Lord, Ignobly did oppresse
His Tenants, raising Rents to such excesse:
That they their states not able to maintaine,
They turn’d starke beggers in a yeare or twaine.
Yet though this Lord were too too miserable,
He in his House kept a well furnish’d Table:
Great store of Beggers daily at his Gate,
Which he did feed, and much Compassionate.
(For ’tis within the power of mighty men
To make fiue hundred Beggers, and feed Ten.)

Quoted in William R. Mueller, *The Anatomy of Robert Burton’s England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California, 1952) 56. See also Taylor, *All the Works* 98. While we know that Oldrents is not the “hard miserable Lord” of Taylor’s poem, we do find out, from the procession of servants who address Oliver and Tallboy in IV.i, that he keeps a well-provisioned house. By comparison, Randall bluntly tells Justice Clack

“your entertainment stinks” (V.i.137), and Oldrents and Hearty laugh about Clack’s “miser’s feast” where “how thin and scattering the dishes stood” (270-1). Oldrents himself may not be the cause of “stark” beggary (Brome uses the same adjective in II.i.165)—although, as we shall see, an ancestor of his was guilty of turning people out onto the highways—but he has the luxury of charity to ease his conscience. Such a teasingly unresolved issue as the implied complicity of every landowner in the plight of the landless helps to make *A Jovial Crew* a more complex examination of its time than it may at first appear.

86 See V.i.417-30, and note the earlier irony of Oldrents’ disgusted “Pray forbear that language,” when Hearty uses the term “beggar-nigglers” (II.ii.300-3).

87 Catherine M. Shaw, *Richard Brome* (Boston: Twayne, 1980) 132-3.

88 See *The Antipodes* I.v.1-18 for Letoy’s “lineage,” and chap. II.4 below for a discussion of the significance of this.

89 The last two lines are almost the same as those in the song Justice Cockbrain sings to the roarer gang, the Philoblasthici, in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*. It is printed in the play’s preliminary material in *Five New Playes* (London 1658/9) [A2v] and so may have been added when *WCG* was revived c.1641-2 (see Bentley, *JCS* III.91-2), presumably after the first staging of *A Jovial Crew*. William R. Bowden notes that Cockbrain’s song “in praise of sack . . . seems to be a fuller version of Hearty’s [sic] song in *A Jovial Crew*”; W. R. Bowden, *The English Dramatic Lyric, 1603-42* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1951) 153. It is impossible to say in which play the verses originated, however.

90 The young men at this point are still trying to win the love of Rachel and Meriel, and so their praise of the beggars may not be too sincere. At the same time they are longing for a return to civilisation:

VINCENT [aside]

They will never be weary.

HILLIARD [aside]

Whether we seem to like or dislike, all’s one to them.

VINCENT [aside]

We must do something to be taken by and discovered; we shall never be ourselves and get home again else.

(IV.ii.111-14)

91 See for example Kaufmann 172 and Butler 278. There is a problem in that the play was not printed until 1652, just before Brome’s death and ten years into the Civil War. What is important to this discussion, however, is not Brome’s prophetic ability, but the passage’s implied attitude towards the beggar utopia.

92 If Beggar Hall is the place to which those already cast out of Eden—that is, the whole human race—are in turn cast out, then it can even be equated with Hell itself. The utopian attempt to return to a Golden Age must logically start as close to the gates of Eden as possible, not two removes away.

⁹³ Cope says that there is “great Providence” in the way Springlove is “redefined” as Oldrents’ son (Cope 168) and “reborn” a gentleman , but that this represents a triumph of Nature “through Art—the art of the drama” (169).

Part II Melancholy

¹ For the *Anatomy* as a *consolatio philosophiae*, see this chapter below. Burton ends his work with the advice, "Be not solitary, be not idle," and with a quotation from Augustine that ends, "you are safe, because you have devoted that time to penitence in which you might have been guilty of sin" (3.432). If for "penitence" we substitute "reading," and for "sin," "melancholy," the quotation becomes an analogue for the process of the *Anatomy*'s mode. For a discussion of the *Anatomy* as a dialectical challenge to the reader which "becomes the vehicle of its own abandonment," see Stanley E. Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California Press, 1972) 1-4 and 303-52.

² M.C. Bradbrook, *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (1955; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963) 95.

³ See R.F. Hill, introduction to the Revels edn. of John Ford, *The Lover's Melancholy* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985) 5-8, for a discussion of Ford's debt to Burton. All references to *The Lover's Melancholy* are from Hill's edn.

⁴ One is reminded here of the Doctor in *Macbeth*, who, as he watches the guilt-wracked Lady Macbeth, comments, "More needs she the divine than the physician" (*Mac* V.i.72; all quotations from and references to Shakespeare's plays are from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Alexander, 4 vols. [London: Collins, 1958]). Lady Macbeth's disease is sinfulness, not melancholy, although sin is at one extreme of the same continuum.

⁵ Alexander Brome, "To Master Richard Brome upon his Comedy Called *A Jovial Crew: or, The Merry Beggars*," included in the first edn. (1652); Haaker edn. 13. Alexander Brome, who edited the two collections of Richard Brome's works—each called *Five New Playes*—for publication in 1653 and 1659, was no relation.

⁶ For more on the question of "audience" versus "spectators," see Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984) 85-97.

⁷ See Harvey Fried, *A Critical Edition of Brome's The Northern Lass* (New York and London: Garland, 1980) xxx, for a summary of these observations about Constance, but without any mention of Burton and *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. Although *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was not printed until 1634 (two years after the first printing of *The Northern Lass*), it had been in the repertoire of the King's Company, for whom Brome wrote his play, since at least 1619-20; see Bentley, *JCS* I.114.

⁸ William Shakespeare and John Fletcher, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, ed. N.W. Bawcutt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).

⁹ Constance is from Durham (see *NL* II.i; 3.25); when “she speaks so pretty Northernly” (24), Brome gives her a reasonable reproduction of a “Geordie” accent. Fried calls one of her idiomatic expressions “authentic Yorkshire dialect” (168, n.29), but Constance is even more “northern” than that, as in her use of the term “Marrow” (III.ii; 3.52) for friend or mate, which is still used in the Tyne and Tees area.

¹⁰ Ruth A. Fox, *The Tangled Chain* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U of California Press, 1976) 152. I am indebted to Fox’s analysis of the Third Partition of the *Anatomy* as the basis for much of what follows; its application to Brome is my own, however.

¹¹ R.W. Ingram, “The Musical Art of Richard Brome’s Comedies,” *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 7 (1976): 228, points out the use of the two Constantias in *The Chances*, while Charles L. Squier, *John Fletcher* (Boston: Twayne, 1986) 131, outlines the Spanish origins of the play.

¹² See Rosalie L. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1966) 434, for more on melancholy as a result of “the first Fall”; Colie also quotes the “character of mortality” passage (*AM* 1.143-4) to support her argument.

¹³ Kevin Sharpe, I have since discovered, makes the same claims for the married state in relation to the poetry of Carew: “marriage unites lovers in a physical union now that they are joined by holy sacrament to each other. . . . [W]ithin marriage it [i.e. physical love] is the fruit of the garden of innocence to which, by partaking of it, the couple return”—“Cavalier Critic? The Ethics and Politics of Thomas Carew’s Poetry,” K. Sharpe and S.N. Zwicker (eds.), *Politics of Discourse* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1987) 123.)

¹⁴ *Romeo and Juliet* Prol.12; *3 Henry VI* II.iii.28. Gurr, citing the *Romeo and Juliet* reference, points out that the duration of a performance “was nearer three hours” (33).

¹⁵ Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1973) 101.

¹⁶ Ben Jonson, “To the Memory of My Beloved, the Author Mr William Shakespeare” lines 57-8, *Complete Poems*.

¹⁷ In this respect, and to extend the analogy, comedy moves from the role of harlot to that of the beautiful woman whom the Neoplatonists believed could draw a man “upwards” to virtue; see chap. III.3 for more on this latter aspect. Widow Fitchow’s wish to kiss a man “to set him up” (I.vi; 3.15) also lends itself to comparison here; see this chapter below for more on this.

¹⁸ Compare the reaction of the whores Betty and Francesca to the news that the law has arrived at the tavern in Brome’s *The Weeding of Covent Garden*:

Bett. O me! the blew Gown Colledge.

Fran. Wheels and whips. I feel what we must go to. Did I not say our stay was dangerous?
(WCG V.iii; Pearson edn. 2.91)

¹⁹ K.M. Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy* (1926; New York: Biblio, 1965) 29; Lynch is actually comparing Brome's "social mode" to Middleton's in this passage.

²⁰ Widgine thus joins the company of those other fools, such as Lucio in *Measure for Measure* and Tim in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, who think themselves wise yet end up married to whores.

²¹ William Congreve, *The Way of the World* IV.v; oddly enough, Lynch ignores Fitchow's "proviso" in her discussion of I.vi of *The Northern Lass*, concentrating instead on the scene as an example of Caroline social climbing (Lynch 30); neither does she propose the possibility of Brome's scene as another source or inspiration for the proviso scene in *The Way of the World* (see Lynch 189-90).

²² It is thus with considerable irony that we hear Sir Paul Squelch later in the play say to Constance Holdup as he dotes over her, "Ha my bird, my Chick! Kiss me. Kiss me up. So. Kiss me up I say. So again. Thou hast don't directlie" (IV.v; 3.81). See also n.17 above.

²³ See Fox 165-71 for a more detailed discussion of the idea that marriage and the restraint of the passions by "custom and form of law" may be one answer for love melancholy, but it is not *the* answer. For Burton, jealousy is a way of looking at "heroical passion" (Fox 165) from the point of view of the married state.

²⁴ It is very difficult to date this play with precision. Bentley, *JCS* II.86-7, gives 1631-2, but is sceptical of the attribution on the title page of the 1657 edn. which reads, "Acted with generall applause at the *Black-Friers* by His Majesties Servants." This would fix a *terminus ad quem* of 1635. Kaufmann makes a case for 1629-30; I have settled on 1630-32 in the shared belief that it is an early work.

²⁵ Spelt "Osrick" throughout the 1657 and Pearson edns. Jackson Cope silently changes it to "Osric" in his discussion of the play in *Theater and the Dream*, and, while acknowledging the possibility that Brome or his editor attempt to capture some kind of early flavour in rendering the name with two "i"s, I also have felt compelled to "normalise" the original.

²⁶ See n.32 below on scene divisions in act III.

²⁷ See Butler 64 and 265-7 for a brief but incisive socio-political reading of the play based largely upon this proposed "exchange" of power from the Queen to Osrick, and the measures taken by their respective subjects to avert tyranny.

²⁸ For example, Kaufmann 179, who is disparaging, and Butler 266-7, who sees the use of "Shakespearean motifs as a means of overcoming (and criticizing) the limitations of romantic drama" (267). Ann Haaker also recognises the similarity between "the Lear ingratitude theme" and Segebert and his children in "An Edition of *The Antipodes* and *A Jovial Crew* by Richard Brome" xxxix.

²⁹ For an interesting discussion of tragic versus romantic visions in terms of their treatment of time, see David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Shapes of Time* (Hanover, New Hampshire: UP of New England, 1982). Kastan maintains that “The tragic structure ‘closes’, halting the action and attention of the audience before it can be extended to a time that might offer consolation or compensation” (84), while “The key to romance vision is the perspective that refuses to see tragic action as a fully realized whole” (131).

³⁰ Cope’s other suggestion, that Jeffrey fails because Brome was using “a pastiche of old pieces of business without matching the joints” (135), smacks of Kaufmann’s dismissiveness. However, Cope’s discussion of *The Queen’s Exchange*, using the idea that theatre and dreams can give shape to destiny and so define reality, remains the most comprehensive and interesting one published to date; see Cope 134-40.

³¹ Given the number and influence of Renaissance advice books for courtiers, of which Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* (1518) is the most important, Jeffrey’s comments in front of the courtiers need not be regarded as wasted entirely. See Part III below for a detailed look at this aspect of counsel in the humanist literary tradition.

³² In neither the original edn. of 1657 nor the Pearson edn. is there a scene change indicated between the exit of the courtiers with the sleeping Anthynus and the entrance of Osrick and Ethelswick (3.507); clearly, there should be. This may have been a compositor’s oversight in the original, because the entrance of Osrick and Ethelswick occurs at the head of a new page (E1r). As act III is not prefaced with any scene number at all (acts IV and V, each made up of a single scene, also have the indication “Scen.I”), I have differentiated between these two parts of act III as scenes [i] and [ii].

³³ The story is retold by Burton in the *Anatomy* 2.85-6; see chap. II.4 for the relationship of this tale to Peregrine’s treatment in *The Antipodes*.

³⁴ In *The Antipodes*, Brome turns this “antipodal mirror image” into a conceit which pervades the entire play, in order to cure melancholy that has spread far more widely than the court of Northumbria; see chap. II.4.

³⁵ See Shaw 97 and Cope 140.

³⁶ J.M. Nosworthy, introduction, *Cymbeline* (1955; London and New York: Methuen, 1984) lviii.

³⁷ Offa’s belief that his nemesis has come in the form of the gaping jaws of hell has obvious parallels with the fates of those other two “over-reachers,” Marlowe’s Faustus and Tirso de Molina’s Don Juan, both of whom stretch earthly reason and wisdom to its limits in putting off thoughts of the divine reckoning to come.

³⁸ The play is also known by its “running title” of *Covent Garden Weeded*, with the subtitle, *The Middlesex Justice of the Peace*. Bentley, *JCS* II.89-91, following Fleay and others, is quite definite in dating the play to 1632. Kaufmann 68-74, in his discussion of the topicality of the play’s allusions, suggests late

1632 to early 1633, and Butler 324, n.10 is receptive to this idea. I tend towards 1633 myself, but I concede that Paul W. Miller's summary of the arguments for 1632 in "The Historical Moment in Caroline Topographical Comedy," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 32.3 (1990): 362-3, is very convincing. Miller arrives at the earlier date by drawing on the "several clear references" to *The Weeding of Covent Garden* pointed out by Bentley and McClure in Nabbes's "exceedingly feeble imitation," *Covent Garden*, which is known to have been first produced "in or about February [1632/3]."

³⁹ The Latin original may be found in *Explorata: or Discoveries* 74-80, in *The Complete Poems* 376. The translation is my own, the syntax being closer to the original than that provided in Parfitt's notes (585, n.74-80).

⁴⁰ Helena Watts Baum, *The Satiric and the Didactic in Ben Jonson's Comedy* (1947; New York: Russell, 1971) 135.

⁴¹ Valerie Pearl, *London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1961) 160.

⁴² In the light of such works as Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, Butler, *Theatre and Crisis*, and Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980)—see esp. chap. 12, "Drama and Opposition 1619-1640"—it should no longer be necessary to stress that writing for the private, indoor theatres did not mean one's audience was made up primarily of the Court faction and its hangers-on. A discussion of audience composition is outside the scope of this chapter, but suffice it to say that a broad spectrum of the "respectable" citizenry was represented right up to 1642.

⁴³ See, for example, Christopher Hill, "The Definition of a Puritan," in his *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1964; Manchester: Panther, 1969) 15-30, for James's attitude, and the general feeling by those so called that "Puritan" was a term of abuse employed by "papists, hierarchists, ambidexters and neuters in religion" (17).

⁴⁴ In III.ii; 2.51 and IV.ii; 2.61. Lucie and Mihil are the "romantic lead" characters in the play, and the two most likely to be associated with notions of status, inheritance and the healthy continuation of existing society—"ruling class" figures, in other words.

⁴⁵ Allusions with which Kaufmann deals comprehensively in his chapter, "Paternalism, Puritanism, and Sociological Comedy," *Richard Brome* 67-87. Miller also deals with topical and topographical allusions in *WCG*, his thesis being that "Caroline topographical comedy initially reflected a social and political optimism associated with the early years of Charles's reign, . . . with hopes for compromise between antagonistic classes," hopes which Brome's *The Sparagus Garden* reveals were based on "false assumptions" (370).

⁴⁶ As Kaufmann has noted, the reference could be to William Prynne's *Histriomastix*, which appeared 10

January 1632/3 (o.s.) (Kaufmann 82, n.26). The possibility that *WCG* is partly a response to the Puritan pamphleteer's attack on Brome's livelihood lends weight to the argument for dating the play later than 1632.

⁴⁷ Bridget Gellert Lyons, *Voices of Melancholy* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971) 44. She gives an example in Bright where a melancholic whose mind was "imprisoned by gross humours" saw the world as a prison and all his friends as "messengers of execution" (44).

⁴⁸ Compare Mihil's description of "these giddy-brain'd Puritaines, their heads are so full of whimseys" (*WCG* IV.ii; 2.61). The first edn. of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) has "we have a mad giddy company of Priests," followed by the same diatribe cited above, which is certainly more applicable to "precisians" than "priests." From at least the third edn. (1628) onwards this was changed to "precisians," perhaps due to an increased sense of the presence and influence of the Puritan sects.

⁴⁹ "Lord Chief Justice Sir Thomas Richardson issued an order on 19 March 1633 suppressing traditional Sunday revel [sic], wakes, church-ales and games. The order touched off a flurry of orders and counterorders in Somerset among Richardson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Puritan gentry, and ultimately (in October) the King"—Donald S. McClure, *A Critical Edition of Richard Brome's The Weeding of Covent Garden and The Sparagus Garden* (New York and London: Garland, 1980) 387, n.109.

⁵⁰ Justice Cockbrain pays lip service to this philosophy in the song in praise of sack forced out of him by the Philoblasthici (III.i; 2.43). Its refrain, "Old Sack, and old Songs, and a merry old crew / Will fright away Sprights, when the ground looks blew," is exactly that sung by Oldrents' "graybeards" to banish melancholy in *A Jovial Crew* (IV.i.226-7, Haaker edn). See also Part I, n.89.

⁵¹ The flood of treatises on the art of war was one of the more immediately applicable, if less savoury, products of the revival of classical literature in the Renaissance. Translations of ancient military works, such as *The tacticks of Aelian, or the art of embattailing an army* (1616, with a second volume in 1629; *STC* 161 and 162), were matched by the appearance of more contemporary European versions, such as the very influential *The arte of warre* by Macchiavelli (trans. P.Whitehorne, 1560-2; *STC* 17164). Aelian was translated (significantly, as we shall see) by John Bingham, Captain of the "Martiall Company exercising Arms in the Artillery Ground [or Garden]"; later called the Honourable Artillery Company, this organisation became the backbone of London's defence against Royalist incursion in 1642; see G. Goold Walker, *The Honourable Artillery Company 1537-1947* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1954) chaps. III and IV. Interest in military science was widespread then as now; Ben Jonson, for example, owned and annotated a copy of the 1613 Greco-Latin edn. of Aelian—see David McPherson, "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia: An Annotated Catalogue," *Studies in Philology* 71.5 (1974): 23, no.1, and 13, fig.1. The first English book on the subject

is Thomas Procter, *Of the knowledge and conducte of warres* (1578; *STC* 20403), a not particularly “technical” work. Far more comprehensive is Robert Barret, *The theorike and practike of modern warres* (1598; *STC* 1500), written in the form of a dialogue between a “Captain” and a “Gentleman” and including many diagrams and a glossary of “forraine words” used in the text. A playwright would have found Barret’s work most useful in putting military terms in a character’s mouth. More contemporary works are Sir Thomas Kellie, *Pallas Armata* (1627; *STC* 14906), John Cruso, *Militarie instructions for the cavallrie* (1632; *STC* 6099), and William Barriffe (also a member of the “Artillery Garden Company”), *Militarie Discipline* (1635; *STC* 1506), all of which go into much detail on tactics, manoeuvres and the duties of officers. Doubtless these works and others which appeared throughout the 1630s proved of value to the largely amateur armies of the English Civil War.

⁵² Reprinted in Lewis Winstock, *Songs and Marches of the Roundheads and Cavaliers* (London: Leo Cooper, 1971) 43. Winstock 42-3 gives a brief history of the song together with the music and four of the seven verses.

⁵³ While the *Anatomy* and *The Weeding of Covent Garden* obviously predate *Monro his expedition with the worthy Scots regiment* (1637; *STC* 18022), the point is that the popular Anglo-Scottish perception of soldiering as a profession in the 1620s and 30s was of service in Europe in what we know as the Thirty Years War. There were many sons of the Catholic gentry serving individually as officers in the Imperialist forces, but whole regiments of Scots and English (and, incongruously, Irish) were privately raised—by the Stuart royal family in at least one case—for the Protestant armies. These latter, I believe, are what would have come to mind when images of soldiering were conjured up in songs, treatises and plays of the period. See Richard Brzezinski, *The Army of Gustavus Adolphus: 1 Infantry* (London: Osprey, 1991) 14-16 and 39-40 for details of British mercenaries in the Thirty Years War.

⁵⁴ See also Miller, who maintains that “whereas Shirley’s criticism of the aristocracy and the court is merely implicit, Brome’s constant harping on the king’s paternalism borders on political confrontation” (369-70)

⁵⁵ Charles F. Mullett, *The Bubonic Plague and England* (Lexington, Kentucky: U of Kentucky, 1956) 176. Chapter 8 contains statistics relating to the plague of 1636-7.

⁵⁶ See Bentley, *JCS* II.661-5 for a description of the closure of the theatres in 1636-7.

⁵⁷ See Haaker, “The Plague, the Theater, and the Poet” 283-306, for the plague’s affect on Brome’s career and the trouble in which he found himself over the Salisbury Court contract. Richard Heton, manager of Queen Henrietta’s Company, maintained in his deposition against Brome that the salary had been paid

throughout the closure “saue onely ffiue pounds”; Brome denied this in his answer (see “The Plague, the Theater, and the Poet” 286, 289-90 and 293).

⁵⁸ See Bentley, *JCS* IV.611-2 for a summary of Jonson’s last years.

⁵⁹ Ben Jonson, “To my old Faithful Servant, and (by his continu’d Vertue) my loving Friend, the Author of this Work, Mr. *Richard Brome*,” Pearson edn. 3.ix.

⁶⁰ Brome’s answer to Heton’s Bill of Complaint in Haaker, “The Plague, the Theater, and the Poet” 303.

⁶¹ Although the exact outcome of the 1640 action is not known, Brome seems to have been compelled at some earlier stage to turn over *The Antipodes* to the Salisbury Court company, which it performed in a somewhat excised form. See Brome’s note to the “Courteous Reader” included at the end of the 1640 edn. (reprinted in the Haaker edn. 127).

⁶² Quoted in Wands xlii; emphases mine.

⁶³ Quoted in Bentley, *JCS* III.56.

⁶⁴ See my Introduction above, for an outline of what this learned tradition constituted for the seventeenth-century writer, and for a fuller quotation from Chamberlain’s commendatory verse, “To the Author On His Comedy, *The Antipodes*.”

⁶⁵ See Michael Tolley’s review of the Haaker edn. of Brome’s *The Antipodes*, *Australian Science Fiction Review* 2.6 (1987): 41-3, for an interesting “science fiction” perspective of both Mandeville and *The Antipodes*.

⁶⁶ In 1617, for instance, Joseph Hall had published *Quo Vadis? A just censure of travell as it is commonly undertaken by the gentlemen of our nation* (STC 12705).

⁶⁷ See Lyons 126-30 for a discussion of Burtonian attitudes to travel. She points out that while this distrust of “idle travel” seems to run counter to the curiosity of the Neoplatonists—whose own attitude towards melancholy was that it could be a “heroic” condition—Burton himself was “unceasingly curious” (128).

⁶⁸ See chap. I.2 for the general attitude towards Mandeville in the seventeenth century.

⁶⁹ Compare Kevin Sharpe’s comment in *Criticism and Compliment*: “Those who invoked the names of Drake and Hawkins did so in order to discredit what they regarded as the pusillanimous pacifism of Jacobean foreign policy” (17). While Charles’s reign tended to be acclaimed as a “triumph of peace,” there were those who saw in his marriage alliance with his French Catholic queen a continued abrogation of the responsibility of the English monarchy to uphold the Protestant cause in Europe. The obviously deluded Peregrine’s rejection of the canon of popular English seafaring heroes becomes a taunt which may have elicited a defensive response from the audience, at the same time evoking images of past (and, under the present reign, unattainable) glory.

⁷⁰ Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, The Complete Plays*, ed. J. B. Steane (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969). All quotations from *Doctor Faustus* are from this edn.

⁷¹ See Donaldson 80-97, esp. 90-2, where he discusses the “inner play” of *The Antipodes* and its five rings of spectators. I might add that I find Donaldson’s conclusions about the play as “a product of a secure, pre-Civil War society” (97) to be historically untenable and much too simplistic, rather as though he has fallen victim to Brome’s own brand of *lusus*.

⁷² Lucian, *Satirical Sketches*, trans. and ed. Paul Turner (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961) 101.

⁷³ Lawrence Babb, *Sanity in Bedlam* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State UP, 1959) 68. I am indebted to this work for pointing out the references to Paracelsus in the *Anatomy*.

⁷⁴ A.R. Shilleto makes the observation about *The Taming of the Shrew* in his edn. of the *Anatomy* 2.99, n.5; Vives’ retelling of the story is cited in Wands 181, n.100/7, where the inspiration for Joseph Hall’s version of the story is also acknowledged.

⁷⁵ See Lyons 4 for a fuller list of the saturnine qualities discussed below, and for a summary of the way in which classical, medieval and Arab beliefs about the influence of Saturn were melded into the Renaissance consciousness.

⁷⁶ I use the term here in the way that Northrop Frye discusses it in his own Burtonian opus, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957) 308-12. In discussing “the literary ancestry of *Gulliver’s Travels* and *Candide* . . . through Rabelais and Erasmus to Lucian” (308), he defines the Menippean satirist as one who sees evil and folly “as diseases of the intellect, as a kind of maddened pedantry” (309). We should have no trouble, therefore, including the crazed student of travel literature, Peregrine, within the concerns of the Menippean satirist, nor in seeing in the structure and style of *The Antipodes* the “loose-jointed narrative form often confused with romance. . . . the free play of intellectual fancy and kind of humorous observation that produces caricature,” as well as the “violent dislocations in the customary logic of narrative” (309-10), which Frye lists as characteristics of Menippean satire. Frye concludes his discussion of the form with a look at *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, which he calls “the greatest Menippean satire in English before Swift,” and “the most comprehensive survey of human life in one book that English literature had seen since Chaucer” (311).

⁷⁷ For example, see *AM* 1.19.

⁷⁸ Much more on the influence of Saturn and the other planets may be found in R. Klibansky, E. Panofsky and F. Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (London: Nelson, 1964), where, for example, they quote Ficino from his *De vita triplici*: “Jupiter arms us against Saturn’s influence, which is generally foreign to, and somehow unsuitable for, mankind. . . . But those who escape the baneful influence of Saturn, and enjoy his

benevolent influence, are not only those who flee to Jupiter but also those who give themselves over with heart and soul to divine contemplation, which gains distinction from the example of Saturn himself" (272). There are very adequate summaries of key arguments of *Saturn and Melancholy* in Lyons, esp. chaps. 1 and 4.

⁷⁹ This duality of attitude is epitomised in the number of play-texts which Burton actually owned, which was considerable given his dismissal of them; see Appendix I below, as well as the entries in Kiessling under the names of major dramatists of the period—including Brome—and Lyons 113-21, where it is maintained that the contents of Burton's library reveal that his "knowledge of English literature, and especially of English drama and satire, was far greater than his direct allusions and notes in the *Anatomy* suggest" (115).

⁸⁰ *Discovery* introductory chap. "The occasion of this travell," unpaginated; Wands calls the ship "The Phantasia" (17).

⁸¹ From the preface to Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, quoted in Briggs 195 (and used as the title of her work). Thus the concentric circles of players and spectators which Ian Donaldson noted as characteristic of *The Antipodes* (see n.71 above) are more than just a structural device; they map out theatre's curative role in society, and serve as a literal plan of the theatrical experience, similar to the diagrams of Dante's concentric levels of Hell or Paradise.

⁸² Erasmus, *Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) 207-8. All quotations are from this edn.

⁸³ Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State UP, 1951) 41.

⁸⁴ Haaker proposes a *terminus ad quem* of December 1637 for the play; introduction, *The Antipodes*, xii.

⁸⁵ Further doubts are cast on Letoy's real intentions by Barbara's various inferences about Letoy and herself in V.viii, which Letoy hastily tries to interrupt.

⁸⁶ Joseph Hall, *Virgidemiarum* (publ. 1597-8), quoted in Wands lxii.

⁸⁷ Kaufmann discusses the topically satirical references of *The Court Beggar* at length in his chapter, "Suckling's Wit" (Kaufmann 151-68), where he is able to equate the characters of Ferdinand, Courtwit and Dainty with Sir John Suckling, William Davenant and Inigo Jones respectively.

⁸⁸ The phrase is from Lorenzo Ducci's *Ars Aulica* (1601; English trans. 1607), and quoted in Briggs 158, but it could have come from any one of the "courtly handbooks" of the period.

⁸⁹ This, and references to "Oat-bread, Ale, and Bagpipes" (219) allude, of course to Charles I's disastrous First Scots (or First Bishops') War of 1639, for which Suckling raised a magnificently equipped troop of horse. His performance during the war was rather less than glorious, however; see Kaufmann 159-60.

⁹⁰ Kaufmann 163-4 relates Citwit's scorn to the difficulties Charles was having in enlisting support from

the citizens of London for his Scottish war; Citwit's declaration for his "wench" is, Kaufmann notes, in strong contrast to the behaviour of the "glorious Courtier," Ferdinand (164).

⁹¹ E.A. Peers, *Elizabethan Drama and its Mad Folk* (Cambridge: Heffer and Sons, 1914) 175.

⁹² Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (London: Macmillan, 1975) 138.

⁹³ Dusinberre provides a valuable and interesting feminist reading of Renaissance drama. Unfortunately, she dismisses the work of Brome and Shirley as somehow stuck between the tastes of court and citizenry, having to make courtiers "virtuous" (16) and "mouthing city morality without the city setting" (29). Such an evaluation depends upon a belief in "the removal of the Puritan element from the audience" (15) during the 1620s and 30s—a view not supported by recent evaluations of Caroline audiences—and in an unbridgeable gap between the political and moral views of court and "country" which had not existed in the Jacobean era (14), an attitude which Kevin Sharpe, for example, convincingly rebuffs in his analysis of courtly literature, *Criticism and Compliment*. A more than cursory reading of a play such as *The Court Beggar* rapidly undermines Dusinberre's harsh generalisations about how issues of controversy in Elizabethan and Jacobean times—"what freedoms should women have from their husbands, from their fathers, and the tricky area of the double standard"—were by Charles I's time "hardened into convention" and not a "living debate" (14). The present discussion of *The Court Beggar* demonstrates how lively a forum a popular Caroline play could be, and how it advocates the virtue of "inclusiveness"—the integration of the all elements of a society towards regeneration and reform—which is a quality of Brome's best plays.

⁹⁴ Quoted in Dusinberre 144; Vives was referring specifically to courtly romances of the likes of the *Morte Darthur*.

⁹⁵ See esp. Dusinberre 16-8, and n.93 above.

⁹⁶ See Bentley *JCS* III.99-100.

⁹⁷ Michael O'Connell, *Robert Burton* (Boston: Twayne, 1986) 12.

⁹⁸ Also, we should remember Dr Hughball's "Paracelsian" cure of Peregrine in *The Antipodes* (see chap. II.4 above).

⁹⁹ As with Fitchow's "remembrance for marriage" in *The Northern Lass*, Lady Strangelove's terms prefigure Millamant's "contract" in act IV of Congreve's *The Way of the World*.

¹⁰⁰ Francis Bacon, "Of Friendship," *Essays* (London: Dent, 1962) 84.

¹⁰¹ Lady Strangelove's demands for liberty cannot, of course, be equated with eighteenth century notions of the universal "Rights of Man" which gave rise to the American and French Revolutions. However, even if the term is used in a more limited seventeenth-century sense, liberty was an issue in England in the ferment

surrounding the recall of Parliament and Charles I's "personal rule." It must be remembered that 1640, the year *The Court Beggar* was produced, was also the year of the Short Parliament (13 April-5 May), and Lady Strangelove's definition of her rights may be viewed as part of what Peter Laslett calls "the politics of intellectual difference" which marked "the beginnings of constitutionalism"—*The World We Have Lost*, 2nd edn. (London: Methuen, 1971) 175. Laslett's comments on the assertion of differences leading up the Civil War are, for the purposes of the current discussion, enlightening. He talks of the difficulty of "each country community, and their ruling segment as a whole . . . to contain their frictions":

As disaster and ineptitude succeeded each other in Charles I's conduct of affairs, the royal task of maintaining assent to policy became hazardous. In the crisis of the 1640's, after long years of difficulty over the national finances, this task became at last impossible. What wonder that the Stuarts wished to dispense with Parliament, and so added to the turbulence by giving the gentry reason to believe that their liberties were indeed in jeopardy.

(176)

Lady Strangelove's talk of liberty fits easily into the wider world of debate over royal prerogative versus traditional rights, and contributes to the atmosphere of "the resolution of differences of opinion, which must sometimes be called intellectual" (Laslett 176) which made up the political climate of 1640.

¹⁰² Kaufmann 162-3 points out the historical link between this refusal to fight and incidents of Suckling's own apparent cowardliness. Also, as Ferdinand desperately attempts to hold up his mask of madness in order to avoid a showdown with Frederick, he babbles, "The Battaile of *Musleborough* Field was a brave one" (IV.iii; 1.246). The allusion raises a problem. There was a fight at Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, on 30 July 1650, during Cromwell's invasion of Scotland, in which the English rearguard was surprised by the Scottish horse and nearly defeated; see C.H. Firth, *The Regimental History of Cromwell's Army*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940) 1.67. I can find no reference to an action at Musselburgh in either of Charles's two Scottish wars. Is this evidence, then, that Brome or his editor, Alexander Brome, updated topical references in the play before it was published in 1653 (by which time Richard Brome was already dead)? Sara Jayne Steen raises the same issue in her edition of the manuscript version of Brome's *The English Moor*, which differs considerably from the text first printed in 1659. Her comments about that play may be also readily applied to *The Court Beggar*: "Had the play been in repertory for some time . . . the revisions might have been extensive. Therefore, even if the text used in the octavo was at one time in Richard's possession, we cannot be sure of its course after leaving his hands . . . so we cannot ascertain which of the possible alterations, deletions or additions were written or approved by Brome"—introduction, *The English Moore; or The Mock-Mariage* by Richard Brome (Columbia: U of Missouri, 1983) 23. The Musselburgh reference certainly ties together nicely the blundering assertions of sovereignty by Charles I in 1639-40, when the play was written, and the heavy-

handed policies of Cromwell and Parliament during the Protectorate, when it was first printed.

103 The clumsy attempts of Strangelove's friends add to Brome's attack on "entertainments" such as these; his attitude is already clearly stated in the Prologues to *The Antipodes* and *The Court Beggar*. See chap. III.4 for more on masquing in *The Court Beggar*.

104 John Donne, *Sermons*, quoted in Dusinberre 137.

105 It could be argued, however, that Oldrents reaps the consequences of his youthful "beggar-niggling" and of his ancestor's appropriation of Wrought-on's lands, in the way that the curse of beggary comes to haunt his family.

106 Butler says that *A Jovial Crew* is "implicitly a morality of social and political responsibility" (273).

107 Haaker points out that Hearty's reference alludes to the "theory of the four humors . . . , comparing the melancholy humor with the lowest element, earth or 'clod' (line 40), and the 'aery spirit' (42) of man with the elements of air and fire" (Haaker edn. 52, n.41).

108 One is reminded of Knowledge's words to Everyman: "*Everyman*, I will go with thee, and be thy guide, / In thy most need to go by thy side"—"*Everyman*" *With Other Interludes* (London and Toronto: Dent, 1909) 15. Springlove, the "new breed" of Everyman, is able to play the role of Knowledge also.

109 For more on the shift in view of the beggar world from eutopia to dystopia in *A Jovial Crew*, see chap. I.4. Farley-Hills says that Springlove's declaration that the young people's decision to join the beggars marks their "Birthright [sic. Pearson 3.394; Haaker edn. reads "birthnight"] into a new world," and that "the Whole World of Pleasures is before us" (III.i.34 and 36), "makes explicit the basically celebratory nature of the play, which assumes that living is a pleasurable and meaningful experience" (Farley-Hills 150-1). His assessment weighs heavily in favour of the eutopian side of the beggar life, so that for him, "the central theme of the play" is "the clash between urbane and primitive cultures" (155). He sees the reintegration of Springlove and the restoration of the Patrico as ignoring this theme. It is the contention of the present discussion that reintegration and restoration are absolutely central to the curative action of the Brome's plays generally, and is by no means inconsistent with that of *A Jovial Crew*. Farley-Hills would not be faced with the problem that the play "is no more typical of Brome than it is of Caroline theatre" (148) if he were to place it in a context of the use of melancholy as a metaphor for troubled times, rather than as a mere assertion that "human nature can survive . . . by learning to make of its uncertainties a source of pleasure and enjoyment" (159). This mediocre attempt to reconcile the pleasurable with the didactic makes no allowance for the process of metamorphosis by which the play-world and its characters emerge altered and renewed through the action of curing melancholy.

110 Butler points out that the link made between the beggars and strolling players "makes the play read as

if casting back to the very earliest days of the English stage (with its specially close relationship with the country) and taking stock of the whole great achievement of the English theatre too" (275). *A Jovial Crew* pays homage to the popular roots of the theatre and its original extemporaneous quality, reminding its audience of the continuity of the theatrical tradition and its place in the development of English culture and society.

¹¹¹ The issue of licensing and official censorship must still have been fresh in Brome's mind after the fracas which resulted in William Beeston, his employer, being thrown in prison the year before; see Part III, n.72 for more on this.

Part III Mirrors for Princes

¹ Quoted in Lester K. Born, introduction, Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born (1936; New York: Octagon, 1965) 58. All references to the *Christian Prince* are from this edn. Born's introductory chapters provide a good summary of classical and medieval influences on Renaissance humanist political thought.

² J. H. Hexter, *More's Utopia: The Biography of an Idea* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1952), 110. Hexter discusses the inclusion in the first book of *Utopia* of "The Dialogue of Counsel," which probes "with great depth of feeling" into the issue of the learned man's involvement in affairs of state, and which "the original Discourse by implication raised but did not deal with at all" (99). Thus even More felt compelled (by events in his own life, according to Hexter 99-155) to redirect some of his ideas on statecraft from Utopia to Europe.

³ *Tyrannipocrit Discovered* (Rotterdam, 1649), *British Pamphleteers I*, ed. George Orwell and Reginald Reynolds (London: Allan and Wingate, 1948) 95. The editors justifiably call this a "remarkable pamphlet, perhaps the best written of all the revolutionary works during the Commonwealth and Protectorate" (81). My attention was drawn to it through Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (1972; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975) 116 and elsewhere.

⁴ Compare Erasmus's analogy: "There is the same difference between a prince and a tyrant as there is between a conscientious father and a cruel master" (*Christian Prince* 161). The family/father as an analogue to the commonwealth/prince is frequently employed in Brome's plays; see, for example, the discussion of the Oldrents estate in *A Jovial Crew*, chap. I.4 above.

⁵ Thomas Elyot had already maintained in *Pasquil the Playne: a dialogue on talkativeness and silence* (1532), that "for a man to remain silent when he knows his master to be infected with 'capytall synnes' is like failing to warn someone who has a naked sword drawn at his back" (quoted in Alistair Fox, "Sir Thomas Elyot and the Humanist Dilemma," Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age* 67). This attitude contrasts markedly with that of John Selden, scholar and friend of Ben Jonson, who, at about the time that *Tyrannipocrit Discovered* was written, felt that "The wisest way for men in these times is to say nothing" (quoted in Bush, *English Literature* 250).

⁶ All lineations are as they appear in *The Complete Poems*, ed. G. Parfitt.

⁷ John M. Major, *Sir Thomas Elyot and Renaissance Humanism* (Lincoln, Nebraska: U of Nebraska, 1964) 11

⁸ Butler's claim is based on the fact that Brome wrote *The Queen and Concubine* for the King's Revels

Company at the Salisbury Court Theatre sometime in 1635-6, and that this company presented three plays at court between October 1635 and February 1636; see Butler 35-42 and 311, n.34, and Bentley, *JCS* I.299-300, and also Part I, n.20 above.

⁹ *The Northern Lass* was performed at the Cockpit “before the king & queene” on 29 Nov. 1638 (Bentley, *JCS* III.82). However, Brome was never a purely “popular” playwright. Even his service with the Red Bull playhouse was at a time (c.1634-5) when its company “was at the pinnacle of its reputation and was even chosen to accompany His Majesty on his summer progress” (Haaker, “The Plague, the Theater, and the Poet” 285). None of his plays from this period survive and there are no records of performances, but all of the companies to which he was attached throughout his career had access to courtly audiences; see Bentley, *JCS* I, chaps. I, V, VI, IX, X and XI.

¹⁰ J. H. Walter, introduction, *King Henry V* (1954; London: Methuen, 1983) xv.

¹¹ A. D. Humphreys, introduction, *Henry V* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968) 11.

¹² Walter actually lists the parallels between Shakespeare’s character and the ideals of Erasmus and Chelidonius, whose treatise was translated into English in 1571 (via French) as *Of the Institution and firste beginning of Christian Princes* (Walter xvi-xvii). He says that “Shakespeare knew Elyot’s *Governor*,” but “he seems closer in his general views” to Erasmus and Chelidonius (xvi).

¹³ See also Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour* 37-9, part of his defense of poetry where he also writes about the educative and didactic value of classical comedy and Lucianic satire, among other forms of literature.

¹⁴ Quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, “Invisible Bullets: Renaissance authority and its subversion, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*,” Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (eds.), *Political Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985) 44.

¹⁵ According to Leonard Tennenhouse, there was an “abrupt shift in the strategies necessary for maintaining monarchical power” such that “a whole set of literary genres fell out of favour with the accession of James I”; “Strategies of State and political plays: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Henry VIII*,” Dollimore and Sinfield 110. Tennenhouse also notes that “chronicle history plays with few exceptions simply ceased to be written after 1599, the year *Henry V* was produced” (110).

¹⁶ See also John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi* I.i for the image of the court as a fountain, from which “*Death and diseases through the whole land spread*” (line 15, ed. Elizabeth M. Brennan [London: Benn, 1967]) if it is corrupted. Brome may have found some inspiration for *The Queen and Concubine* from Webster; see n.18 below.

¹⁷ The (e)utopian qualities of the *Paradise of Love* are discussed in detail in chap. I.1 above.

¹⁸ John Webster's death in about 1634 (Bentley, *JCS* V.1244) may have prompted some small literary memorial from fellow-playwright Brome, who was with the King's Company when it presented *The Duchess of Malfi* at court in 1630; see Bentley, *JCS* I.132.

¹⁹ Born 13, n.61, paraphrasing Erasmus in *The Complaint of Peace*.

²⁰ In a similar vein, Elyot takes considerable pains to explain why he chooses to translate *res publica* as "publike weale" and not "commune weale." One of his reasons is that he is writing about the *populus*, that is, "all the inhabitantes of a realme or citie" regardless of degree, and not the *plebs*, or commoners, only, who will not achieve public office (*Governour* 2). It must be stressed, however, that Elyot, in writing an English "prince book," has in mind "the exclusively English concept of Sovereignty, the King in Council in Parliament" (Major 58). His target readership and the aims of his treatise are rather broader than that of Erasmus and the traditional "mirror for princes."

²¹ Trans. D. R. Kelley, quoted in John Guy, "The King's Council and Political Participation," Fox and Guy 125.

²² See chap. I.1 concerning Brome's use of Robert Greene's *Penelope's Web* as the source of *The Queen and Concubine*.

²³ First printed 1523; see Craig R. Thompson's introduction to *Marriage* for some background information, including the literary precedents for the ideas found in the colloquy, in *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago and London: U of Chicago, 1965) 114-15.

²⁴ See McPherson, "Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia" 43, item 58.

²⁵ Erasmus, "The Usefulness of the *Colloquies*," in *Colloquies*, trans. Thompson, cited in Duncan 45.

²⁶ [Erasmus], *Utile Dulce or, Trueth's Libertie: Seu en wittie-wise Dialogues . . .*, [trans. William Burton] (London, 1606), *The English Experience* no. 591 (Amsterdam and New York: Da Capo Press, 1973) A5r.

²⁷ The *Colloquies'* original critics had branded both them and their author as lending de facto support for the Reformation movement of the sixteenth century; see Thompson, introduction, *Colloquies* xix-xx and xxix-xxx. Thompson also states that William Burton's work constituted "the largest number of printed English versions by a single translator" (xxx) until the appearance of Roger L'Estrange's translation of twenty of the colloquies in 1679-80.

²⁸ E.J. Devereux, *Renaissance English Translations of Erasmus: A Bibliography to 1700* (Toronto: U of Toronto, 1983) 57. The title *Utile Dulce* was dropped, and brief descriptions of each colloquy were added, where possible emphasising its "papist" elements, for example in the ironic description of how the colloquy *Shipwreck* "Sheweth what comfort Poperie affordeth in time of daunger" (57).

²⁹ See Devereux 56-8, items 4.4.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 for detailed bibliographical descriptions of each edn.

³⁰ Burton's addition is in *Utile Dulce* H3r-[H4v], and his excisions are of those parts which appear in the Thompson trans. of *Marriage, Colloquies* 118 and 125. Burton seems to have been unwilling, unlike Milton later on, to burn his fingers on the contentious issue of the origins and legality of divorce as a church and state problem, while his leaving out of how Xantippe became pregnant hints at the difference in sensibilities between a sixteenth Catholic divine and a seventeenth-century Puritan one!

³¹ Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1964; Manchester: Panther, 1969) 429. Chap. 13, "The Spiritualization of the Household," is excellent background reading for the significance of Puritan domestic life as both the formative basis and the outward expression of the catechetical, hierarchical and political outlook of radical protestantism in seventeenth-century England.

³² John Calvin, *The Institution of Christian Religion*, trans. T. Norton, (1560-1; STC 4415), quoted in Lily B. Campbell, *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1938; New York: Barnes, 1960) 52.

³³ Chaloner is best known for his *Praise of Folie*, a translation of Erasmus published in 1549, ten years before the first appearance of *The Mirror for Magistrates*. Campbell says of him and the other authors of the *Mirror* that they were men well experienced in court affairs who had "kept their heads on their shoulders" during four reigns (21). There is thus a certain affinity between them and the "courtier as survivor" figure which Brome portrays in *The Queen and Concubine* in the characters of Horatio and Petruccio; see also n.34 below.

³⁴ The irony is that Petruccio has secretly released Sforza and only pretends to have killed Prince Gonzago. Eulalia calls him "Brave, wise, and valiant *Petruccio*" (V.i; 2.108) for the way he has carried out his schemes. Both Petruccio and the courtier Horatio are fascinating characters; presented early in the play as likely dramatic counterpoints to the forthright General Sforza and the high-principled courtier, Lodovico, respectively, they turn out to be allies of Eulalia while pretending loyalty to the King. Their middle path between outright defiance of authority and the unscrupulous sycophancy of Alinda's attendants—each of which brings down upon itself either wrath or punishment—suggests the survivability of *The Mirror for Magistrates'* authors and of Erasmus himself, as compared to the committed stance which doomed Thomas More.

³⁵ Clifford Leech, introduction to his edn. of James Shirley, *The Triumph of Peace* (1634), in *A Book of Masques* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966) 277. All quotations and lineations are from this edn.

³⁶ The circumstantial relationship between *The Triumph of Peace* and *The Queen and Concubine* is strengthened in the appearance in both of a character called a "Genius." Brome had, of course, used such a figure in his earlier *The Queen's Exchange*, so caution is advisable in attributing too much to Shirley's masque as an inspiration for Brome's play. Nevertheless, these similarities lend weight, it seems to me, to the

argument that *The Queen and Concubine* was written for court performance.

³⁷ This is a part of Burton's addition, and not in the original colloquy. Erasmus is more circumspect in dealing with the issue of subjection, as when, for example, he has both women quote St Paul at each other: Eulalia on wifely submission, Xantippe on the duty of husbands to love their wives (see *Utile* H3r). Brome's Eulalia reflects a more outrightly "Burtonian" view than the ludic dialectic which Erasmus proposes, but the two-way nature of duty and obedience is clearly dramatised by Brome in the differing relationships between the King and his queen and concubine.

³⁸ Admittedly, Eulalia's advice here has more the ring of helping her son survive his "Fathers frownes" which "are Comets threatning ruine" (II.ii; 2.26), than any high-minded lesson in duty. The use of the epithet "dread" to describe the King, which Prince Gonzago repeats to his father's face in their next greeting (27), has strong overtones of the comparison of husbands to "beasts" in Erasmus, and the need for wives to "mittigate their furie" (*Utile* [I1v]).

³⁹ Butler says that *The Queen and Concubine*'s "depiction of a good queen, capable of reforming bad courtiers," as well as other aspects, "would all have been highly complimentary to Henrietta Maria at this date [1635-6]," and that it "could well have been performed at court under the queen's sponsorship" (Butler 42). Butler's discussion of the play forms part of his chapter entitled "Court drama: the queen's circle 1632-37," in which his thesis is that in the earlier 1630s the queen and her courtiers represented an intermediary force between the autocratic tendencies of Charles I and those "'country' peers" who "held mildly 'opposition' views" (26), and so helped to promote unity in the kingdom. Certainly Brome's play fits the bill, whether or not the queen and her entourage were actually so disposed historically.

⁴⁰ There are three pieces of evidence suggesting that Brome's links with the court and the nobility were strengthened after 1642. The first of these is that Brome was almost certainly the editor of (as well as a contributor to) the 1649 collection of elegies on the death of Henry, Lord Hastings, called *Lachrymae Musarum* (see Kaufmann 34 and 183). The second, and most substantial, is the existence of a manuscript version of Brome's play *The English Moore*, held in the Lichfield Cathedral Library. This was dedicated and presented to William Seymour, Earl of Hertford, and its editor, Sara Jayne Steen, posits the theory that the MS was written while Brome was at Oxford in 1643, when he could have been "one of the men of letters who fled London and sought refuge with the court" (20). The argument of John Cutts, that Brome was the author of an entertainment called, among other things, "Time's Triumph" and "Juno in Arcadia," and dated 5 August 1643, supports Steen's assertion and is the third—and most speculative—piece of evidence. Cutts suggests that the entertainment was composed for the arrival of Queen Henrietta Maria in Oxford in July 1643, adding to the

notion that perhaps Brome did manage to achieve in miniature something of his old master's status as a writer of court masques. See John Cutts, "The Anonymous Masque-Like Entertainment in Egerton MS. 1994, and Richard Brome," *Comparative Drama* 1.4 (1967-8): 277-87.

⁴¹ Daniel Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978) 9.

⁴² See Butler 194. Hertford replaced Newcastle as governor of the Prince of Wales in 1641 because Newcastle's "name had been mentioned among those thought to be sympathetic" with the Army Plot (C. V. Wedgwood, *The King's Peace 1637-1641* [London: Collins, 1955] 444) in which, significantly, Brome's artistic "enemies" Davenant and Suckling were implicated (see Wedgwood 438-42). It also may be significant that about this time Brome directed his dedications at Hertford rather than Newcastle.

⁴³ James Shirley, "To His Worthy Friend, Master Richard Brome, Upon his Comedy Called *A Jovial Crew: or, The Merry Beggars*" lines 12, 15 and 19-20, *JC*, Haaker edn. 8-9. I wish to stress here that Shirley does not rule out "books," that is, learning, altogether as a basis for Brome's art.

⁴⁴ Erasmus, *Adagia* I.v.23, quoted in *The Macmillan Book of Proverbs, Maxims, and Famous Sayings*, ed. Burton Stevenson (New York: Macmillan, 1948) 105. Stevenson notes that the original source of the adage is Menander's *The Necklace* (c. 300BC).

⁴⁵ Richard Brome, "Upon *AGLAURA* printed in Folio," included in the prefatory material to *The Weeding of Covent Garden* in *Five New Plays* (London, 1659), Pearson edn. 2.[A2r-v].

⁴⁶ The prologue to *The Court Beggar* also revives the attack on amateur university playwrights, who now, it seems, "give money with their Play" so that it may be well received in courtly circles. Their attempts to bribe their way into favour aligns them with the "Project Beagles" (*CB* I.i; 1.188) who are satirised in the play.

⁴⁷ Butler maintains that these "prince plays" constitute a recognisable middle 1630s "period" in Brome's career (267-8).

⁴⁸ See also Briggs 124-30 for more on *The Book of the Courtier's* influence in sixteenth-century England.

⁴⁹ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion: Queen Henrietta Maria and court entertainments* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989) 3.

⁵⁰ *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, ed. Margaret Drabble, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985) 301. The entry adds: "Regarded as the first French novel, it enjoyed great popularity, influencing English playwrights under Charles I."

⁵¹ The term is that used by Robert W. Hanning, "Castiglione's Verbal Portrait: Structures and Strategies," Robert W. Hanning and David Rosand (eds.), *Castiglione: The Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1983) 137.

⁵² Brome's choice of the name Gonzago for his king provides for some interesting speculation, for Eulalia then becomes, by applying the feminine inflexion, a "Gonzaga" like the Duchess Elisabetta. The choice may also have something to do with the play-in-the-play in *Hamlet*, which is "The Murder of Gonzago" (II.ii.531-2) as well as "The Mouse-trap." Malcolm Evans notes that the "poisoned ear . . . is an image central to a pervasive corruption of the channels of communication in Denmark" (*Signifying Nothing: Truth's True Contents in Shakespeare's Text* [Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986] 125), and certainly the flattery and evil advice to which Brome's king pays heed justifies the image's application to Sicily as well. As an aside, the memory of the Urbinese court had been revived in that of Charles I as recently as 1628, when Charles's agents "bought up the superb collection of the Gonzagas at Mantua [Duchess Elisabetta's family], outbidding Richelieu for paintings by Titian, Raphael and Tintoretto"—John Bowle, *Charles I* (Boston and Toronto: Little, 1975) 123).

⁵³ Alistair Fox, "English Humanism and the Body Politic," Fox and Guy 36.

⁵⁴ Alistair Fox, "Sir Thomas Elyot and the Humanist Dilemma," Fox and Guy 53.

⁵⁵ Hexter, Fox and Guy promote the efforts of "statesmen writers" such as Claude Seyssel and Thomas Starkey as being more in tune with political life than the "Erasmians," but the actual influence of these "statesmen" as opposed to the widely published "literary" humanists is, I feel, open to question. As a case in point, the argument in John Guy, "The King's Council and Political Participation" (Fox and Guy 121-47)—that Starkey's *Dialogue Between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset* presents a more realistic and influential program of political counsel than, say, More's *Utopia*, which "was not of this world, which denied it any value as a constitutional manual" (133)—glosses over the fact that Henry VIII almost certainly never saw Starkey's document, which remained a manuscript among the papers of Thomas Cromwell until published in 1871. A more balanced approach to the influence of Starkey's work may be found in G. R. Elton, "Reform by Statute: Thomas Starkey's *Dialogue* and Thomas Cromwell's Policy," *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1974) 2: 236-58. Elton gives a brief history of the *Dialogue*'s composition and subsequent fate (237-43), acknowledging that Starkey "did everything he could to earn government employ by advertising his ideas" (242), and that "Publication was certainly not, at the time, necessary to get a book a hearing" (243). But, he concludes, "It can never be said outright that Cromwell adopted a proposal of Thomas Starkey's for legislative enactment" (256), or "whether the government needed the stimulus of reading the *Dialogue*—or having its author among the group of advisers—before deciding what needed doing" (257). By contrast, of course, More and Elyot *were* royal counsellors, while even Erasmus wrote specifically for the future emperor, Charles V. The *Dialogue*'s most recent editor revises some of Elton's

conjecture about its date of composition while not making any further claims for its influence; see T.F. Mayer, introduction, Thomas Starkey, *A Dialogue between Pole and Lupset* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1989) vii-xvii.

⁵⁶ Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (1561; London and Toronto: Dent, n.d.) 260. All subsequent references to *The Courtier* are from this edition.

⁵⁷ Ben Jonson, *A Panegyre, on the Happy Entrance of James, Our Sovereign, to His First High Session of Parliament in This Kingdom, the 19 of March, 1603* lines 21-7, *Complete Poems*.

⁵⁸ According to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, 2nd edn., (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), Dice (or Dike) is the “personification, mostly literary, of Justice” (344), while Themis came to represent “firmly established custom or law, justice,” or “Righteousness” (1052). Since *dike* was also the Athenian term for a law case (344), Dice can be said to represent justice as a legal concept, while Themis represents “natural” justice.

⁵⁹ Stephen Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King: Wisdom and Idolatry in the Seventeenth Century Masque* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986) 44. It is Kogan’s work which first pointed out to me the “rich chain” image in Jonson’s *Panegyre*.

⁶⁰ Compare Elyot’s advice to the prince in the *Governour*: “know thy selfe . . . that thou art merely a man . . . and . . . all other men be equall unto thee” (quoted in Kogan 43).

⁶¹ Thomas M. Greene, “*Il Cortegiano* and the Choice of a Game,” Hanning and Rosand 4-5.

⁶² Greene notes the “extraordinary” number of speeches in *The Courtier* which “are introduced with the participle *ridendo* [laughing]” (9), so that the potentially touchy issues raised in “the courtiers’ game of reproducing themselves” (Hanning, “Verbal Portrait” 137) are dissipated in a spirit of *lusus* similar in method to Erasmus’s Folly or Robert Burton’s laughing philosopher Democritus.

⁶³ The title page of *The Queen and Concubine* (Pearson edn. 2.[111]) lacks any mention of performance, but the same is true of all but one (*The English Moor*) of the 1659 collection of *Five New Playes*, including *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, which we know from its second prologue was even revived in 1641 or 1642 (see Bentley, *JCS* III.91). Bentley points to Andrea’s comment, “No longer Brothers of the Bench wee’l be, / But of the Revels for his Majesty” (*Q&C* V.vii; Pearson edn. 2.122), as evidence that the play was performed by the King’s Revels company, adding, “Though the remark fits the situation well enough, the suggestion of the King’s Revels company seems too pat to be accidental” (*JCS* I.300)

⁶⁴ Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622; *STC* 19502). This was just one amidst a seventeenth-century resurgence in conduct books aimed at the sons of the gentry and upper bourgeoisie.

⁶⁵ See J. H. Whitfield, introduction, *The Book of the Courtier* (London: Dent, 1974) xxii-xxiii, and also George Bull's introduction to his edn. of Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981) 20-2.

⁶⁶ Javitch says that Fregoso promotes "a constitutional form of monarchy in which the final authority lies not in the king but in the laws" (45). Brome has Eulalia override "law" with a less canonical form of justice and mercy, particularly in her treatment of those who try to harm her; her fairly rigid adherence to the King's proclamations concerning herself, on the other hand, are a means of preserving public safety.

⁶⁷ See, for example, G. E. Aylmer, *The Struggle for the Constitution*, 3rd edn. (London: Blandford, 1968), where he talks of the eventual abolition by the Long Parliament in 1641 of the Court of High Commission and other "institutions of Tudor conciliar government" by which Charles was able to effect his "personal rule" (108).

⁶⁸ The traditional functions of the orator are summarised thus in Javitch 39. See Javitch 32-49 for a discussion of the orator versus the courtier, particularly in relation to the way in which the skills of the latter are more befitting an absolutist monarchy.

⁶⁹ Javitch defines *sprezzatura* as "the ability to disguise artful effort so that it seems natural or to make the difficult appear easy" (31). Hoby translated the term as "that not regarded agility" (*Courtier* 46), which the Dent editor compares to L. E. Opdycke's 1902 translation as "that nonchalant ease" (46, n.4). *Sprezzatura* is one of the practical applications of the gift of *grazia*.

⁷⁰ See chap. I.1 for the utopian qualities of this form of government.

⁷¹ Cesar Gonzaga says that the courtier should "decline not at any time from commendable deedes, but governeth him selfe with that good judgement that will not suffer him to enter into any such folly: . . . and every thing that hee doth or speaketh, let him doe it with a grace" (*Courtier* 42). Brome's *grazia* is such that he carries out the didactic (or oratorical) function of his art without alienating his audience or compromising the mode employed in the play.

⁷² Wedgwood, *The King's Peace* 322. The Short Parliament lasted from 13 April to 5 May 1640. Butler says that *The Court Beggar* was "performed at the Phoenix [also called the Cockpit] in May 1640 while the new but ill-fated Short Parliament was sitting" (Butler 220). This is perhaps a little rash on his part, but is based presumably on the fact that William Beeston was imprisoned on 4 May 1640 for the performance of an unnamed play "without license" which—because of its references noted by Sir Henry Herbert to "the passages of the K[ing]'s journey into the Northe, and was complaynd of by his M.^{tye} to mee, with commande to punishe the offenders" (*The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert*, ed. John Quincy Adams [New Haven: Yale

UP, 1917] 66)—*may* have been *The Court Beggar*. Bentley draws attention to what could be an allusion in the play to “Davenant’s patent of 27 June 1640 to be governor of the King and Queen’s Young Company at the Cockpit” (*JCS* III.64), so a performance date of May is by no means certain. Kaufmann suggests that it was “played between Beeston’s imprisonment on May 4, 1640, and the issuing of Davenant’s warrant in June” (168, n.34). Kiehl (113) does not equate *The Court Beggar* with the mysterious unlicensed play, either, although as John Freehafer suggests, the circumstances of its contents are such that “it can be identified with the banned play” (“Brome, Suckling, and Davenant’s Theater Project of 1639,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 10.3 [1968]: 367).

⁷³ See also chap. II.5 for more on this attitude to courtly Platonism, and how *The Court Beggar* turns this attitude back onto the courtiers who express it.

⁷⁴ See Kaufmann 158-60 for the historical background of Suckling’s martial adventures, and particularly 159, where the satirical poem by Sir John Mennis commemorating his behaviour at Berwick is reprinted in full.

⁷⁵ C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, *Ben Jonson*, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925-52) 2.278.

⁷⁶ There is a strong concurrence between Mendicant’s masque and the stance taken by Jonson in his poem “An Expostulation with Inigo Jones.” Kogan says that in the poem Jones “represents the corruption of the times” (123), a trend which Jonson rejects as he cries, “Pack with your peddling poetry to the stage, / This is the money-get, mechanic age!” (“An Expostulation” lines 51-2, *Complete Poems*). Mendicant’s triumph over his fixation with court-begging as he throws out the money-grubbing Projectors is, I would maintain, a dramatisation of Jonson’s stance, as well as an example of the way the masque may be used more effectively than Courtwit’s effort which, in its platitudinous pseudo-mythology, reflects Jonson’s feeling that, in this form, “Painting and carpentry are the soul of masque” (line 50) rather than the poetry.

⁷⁷ See the comprehensive discussion of how masques were promoting “the idea that the king and queen were inherently divine and that the court was a perfect world all its own” (Kogan 127) in Kogan chap. 5, esp. 127-36. I am particularly indebted in the discussion which follows to Kogan’s analysis of Milton’s *Comus* in chap. 9, “John Milton and the Caroline Masque” (229-65).

⁷⁸ David Daiches, *Milton* (1957; New York: Norton, 1966) 64.

⁷⁹ John Milton, *A Maske presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634* (1637) lines 663-4, *The Poetical Works of John Milton*, ed. Helen Darbishire (London: Oxford UP, 1958) 475. All quotations are from this edn.

⁸⁰ Herford and Simpson claim that Sidney’s *The Lady of May*, “with one possible exception, may be placed at the head of all the English Masques of the sixteenth century” (2.256), because it brought to the fore

the elements of “the explanatory speech and the debate” which paved the way for “the articulate dramatic expression achieved in the later Masque” (256).

⁸¹ That is, of course, unless one subscribes to the notion that the Lady’s chastity is rather too stoical and unworldly, and needs to be tempered by Comus’s “epicurean” appeal to nature. Daiches says that “to argue that Comus is the real hero of Milton’s masque” merely because his rhetoric is seductive and persuasive, is “as absurd” as maintaining that Satan is the “real” hero of *Paradise Lost* (71); see also n.83 below. The perfunctory banishment of Comus and his followers certainly does not lend weight in their favour, especially when compared to the way in which Sir Ferdinand is integrated into the curative and regenerative action of *The Court Beggar*.

⁸² See chapter III.3 and n.69 above.

⁸³ Daiches makes the comparison between Comus’s and Satan’s “misuse of rhetoric” (70), adding that “Milton’s study of rhetoric . . . enabled him to voice persuasively views that he detested” (71).

⁸⁴ Betty Radice in her notes to Erasmus, *Praise of Folly* (234, n.15). I have used Radice’s descriptions of the Platonic *furors* both here and elsewhere in her edn. as convenient summaries of the complex readings of Plato by Plotinus and Marsilio Ficino.

⁸⁵ Kaufmann points out that “Suckling (though not uniquely) rejected the methods of Ovid and Petrarch in amatory verse, and . . . succeeded in finding a personal idiom after some attempts at imitation of Donne” (160). Thus Ferdinand’s abuse of rhetoric is linked historically with Suckling’s own brand of poetry; by extension, then, Brome’s portrayal of Ferdinand’s insincerity may be seen as widening his attack on courtly intrusions into his own area of dramatic poetry by questioning the motives behind such ventures.

⁸⁶ From the original 1637 title page, reproduced in *Poetical Works* [453].

⁸⁷ *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, 22 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, 1908-9) 6.574.

⁸⁸ Stephen Orgel (quoting Herford and Simpson), *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1965) 72-3.

⁸⁹ Lady Strangelove says of the poet in her part of the Epilogue, “*Hee’s no dandling on a Courtly lap*” (Epilogue; 1.[270]).

⁹⁰ Martin Butler has maintained elsewhere that “the court masque, a seemingly ‘decadent’ form, can be understood to be participating in, rather than retreating from, the political and ideological shifts obtaining at its specific historical moment”—“Politics and the Masque: *The Triumph of Peace*,” *The Seventeenth Century* 2.2 (1987): 138. He is, as the title of his article shows, talking specifically about a masque which he admits “is

anomalous" in being "presented to the court and not by it" (139). James Shirley, its author, was a professional playwright like Brome, although with more courtly connections; see the discussion of Shirley's career in comparison with Brome's in chap. III.3 above. Also, *The Triumph of Peace* was, in Butler's own words, "that unique object, a Caroline masque that reached both a courtly and a plebeian audience" (127). It was therefore not unlike *Comus* (presented in the same year, 1634) in its intention of making its audience an analogue of the kingdom at large, which the usually "exclusive affairs . . . watched by only a narrow social and political élite" (127) could not do.

Conclusion

¹ Emrys Jones, *The Origins of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977) 5.

Appendix I

Robert Burton's Copy of *The Northern Lasse*

LISTED IN NICHOLAS KIESSLING'S *The Library of Robert Burton* is a copy of the first edition (1632) of Brome's *The Northern Lasse*, which is held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It is bound together with ten other printed quartos of plays into one volume, shelfmark T 38 (Arts). The other plays are by Barry (one play), Field (one), Beaumont and Fletcher (one), Fletcher (two, one apparently not from Burton's library) and Shirley (five, one not from Burton's library). The quartos once owned by Burton have little more than the initials "R. B." written on the title-page, but *The Northern Lasse* is noted by Kiessling as containing:

Annotation, sigs. B2^r, C1^r, C3^v, C4^r-D1^r [sic], D4^r, E1^r, stage direction (may not be in Burton's hand), corrections, or underscoring.

(45, item 229)

In mid-1990 I had the opportunity to examine this copy and copies of many other early editions of Brome's plays at the Bodleian and elsewhere. The annotations in *The Northern Lasse* in T 38 (Arts) actually occur on B2^r, C1^r, C3^v, C4^r, C4^v, D1^r, D4^v (not D4^r), E1^r, and I2^r (not noted by Kiessling). Most of these pages contain more than one annotation, with D1^r having six. The annotations themselves consist almost entirely of inserted stage directions, usually the word "aside" next to a line or passage of speech which is sometimes indicated by a bracket. The hand in all cases but a few appears to be the same. Possible exceptions are the annotation on C1^r, which reads "Re-enter Be.", and that on E1^r, "Enter Tran & Con."; both of these appear to be written by the one hand. The word "aloud" on C4^v may be in a different hand again. The "aside" insertions appear to be in an eighteenth-century hand rather than one from the seventeenth, while the three exceptions noted above seem more contemporaneous with Burton. At the time I was visiting, the Bodleian had a display commemorating the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Burton's death. Some of his most heavily annotated books were on display, and I had a chance to compare (mentally) the many examples of his handwriting. Based on this I feel that it is quite possible that the annotations on C1^r and E1^r are Burton's.

These annotations reveal little other than attempts by a reader or readers to make sense of the text by making up for inadequate and occasionally erroneous stage directions, speech prefixes and so forth, of which early quartos are often full. This practice is evident in other

copies of Brome early editions which fell into the hands of later scholars and “antiquarians.” A copy of *Five New Playes* (1653; Brit. Lib. 18535) apparently owned by the bibliophile Thomas Rawlinson (1681-1725), to take an extreme example, contains a great many emendations and annotations, particularly in the texts of *A Mad Couple Well Matched* and *The Novella*, as well as a biographical note about Brome on the fly-leaf. Other copies of early Brome editions which I examined in the Bodleian, the British Library, the Boston Public Library and the Houghton Library, Harvard University, show signs of readers trying, in varying degrees, to “re-produce” the plays at least imaginatively if not in actual theatres.

The only hard evidence I can offer which suggests that the additions of the stage direction “aside” in the Burton *NL* date from the eighteenth century is that the 1726 edition titled *The Northern Lass or, A Nest of Fools*, a copy of which I examined in the Boston Public Library (shelfmark K.37.13 [no.2]), has most of these “asides” already printed in the text.¹ It is therefore possible that a reader actually copied these into the Burton 1632 edition straight from the 1726 edition or a similar edition. Harvey Fried notes that the 1663 quarto of *NL* was “a straight resetting of the 1632 quarto,” with the only major change being the emendation of a misnumbered scene.² The third quarto of 1684 (a copy of which I examined at the Houghton Library) used the 1632 as a copy-text, duplicating the first quarto’s errors (Fried, “Early Quartos” 181); it contains no additional stage directions. Thus the extra stage directions only appeared from the eighteenth century. There is even the possibility that the annotated Burton *NL* served as a copy-text for an eighteenth-century edition,³ although the similarity between the annotations and the printed directions may be just a matter of coincidence, as any number of careful readers/editors could have come to much the same conclusions about where to put appropriate extra stage directions.

The general absence of annotations by Burton in his play-texts is probably an indication of the scant regard he and other scholars had for them as “serious” writing, an attitude summed up by Thomas Bodley himself in his guidelines for setting up his great library, in which he seems barely able to bring himself to acknowledge that “some little profit might be reaped (which God knows is very little) out of some of our play-books” (quoted in Kiessling ix). Yet in drawing up an inventory of the 872 books which Burton bequeathed to the Bodleian, librarian John Rous noted that sixty-one were “Comedies & Tragedies” (Kiessling viii), or seven per cent of the total.⁴ This is a significant proportion, and shows that however much

Burton may have subscribed publicly to scholarly snobbery about the worth of popular plays, he seems to have thought them a valid part of the world's "box of simples" out of which he formulated his great treatise. Whether the annotations in his copy of *The Northern Lasse* are his or not, it is interesting to speculate on how much "profit" Burton thought might be gained from the play, and that perhaps he recognised some of his own ideas on melancholy being reflected back at him in dramatic form.

¹ There had been two earlier eighteenth-century edns., one in 1706 called *The Northern Lass, or, The Nest of Fools*, and another in 1717 (see Bentley, *JCS* III.83). Either of these may already have included the extra stage directions, but I have not had the opportunity to examine copies of them.

² Harvey Fried, "The Early Quartos of Brome's *Northern Lasse*," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 54 (1960): 180.

³ It is unlikely to have served as such for the 1726 edn., however, as this was printed in Dublin "by S. Powell, for George Risk" (title-page, 1726 edn.).

⁴ Kiessling lists 1740 titles from the Bodleian, the library of Christ Church, and other repositories, including books now missing, but he does not indicate what proportion of the whole are "play-books."

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