Urban(e) visualization and Early Modern drama: Ben Jonson's 'Spectral Cities'

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for Jason Finch

Abstract

This paper explores urbanization, and the impact of new technologies on early modern dramatic visualization. It demonstrates how the frontispiece to Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio summons up spectres of antiquity, high renaissance culture, and the *renovatio urbis*: reconfiguring them as models for new negotiations of the urban and urbane. It reveals how the Folio's opening play, *Every Man in his Humour*, powerfully maps Florentine urban geography and practice onto its revised London setting. And, equally, how its closing masque, *The Golden Age Restor'd*, formally complements the programme of Jonson's collaborator, Inigo Jones, for the new Whitehall Banqueting House (1622).

Key words: visualization, urban/e, diagrammatization, mapping, golden section, Ben Jonson, "Every Man in His Humour" (1598/1616), "Golden Age Restor'd" (1616)

1 – Spectral Cities

Literary cities are seldom straightforward affairs. Not least because, as Bertrand Westphal stressed in his landmark study *Geocriticism* ([2007] 2011), the transpositions, superimpositions, projections and recollections which go into the construction of a fictional metropolis are multilayered. Unless they are held in check by a tightly formulated overarching plan, these elements tend to overlap in odd or unexpected ways, and the result is almost invariably contingent, hybridized and inconsistent with respect to the representation of any given city.[1] Approaching the literary city from the point of view of visuality does not make things any simpler, either. For as W.J.T. Mitchell demonstrated so decisively in his 1984 essay 'What is an Image?', the idea of visualization is itself multimodal: applying not only to the ocular sense but also to the oral/aural, the haptic,

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the gustatory, the olfactory (along with all of their synaesthetic combinations); and operating at graphic, optical, mental, or verbal—as well as perceptual—levels (see esp. Mitchell 1986: 10).

Equally challenging (because it partakes of both types of complexity) is the multivalent idea of the 'spectral city': that half-remembered ghost—sometimes of a real city, sometimes not—lurking behind literary representation.[2] Often enough this is presented as the simulacrum of a known (or what we might think of as a 'first') city: usually a capital or a site of common reference for a particular audience or readership. In addition, and strikingly in the case of drama, the literary fiction may sometimes be consumed somewhere within the 'first city' itself: a condition which tends to figure it in a fractal or metonymic relation to the whole. Occasionally, too, the spectres of other cities might 'soak through' into the mapping of a literary work. These 'second cities' (as we might also, on occasion, think of them) are by definition tethered in a binary relation to the notional 'first' cities against which they are set: necessarily existing in some sort of commensal or symbiotic relation to their counter-image and imaginatively partaking of its presences or absences.[3] Genre has a place in the equation as well. Where (in terms of dominant forms) the novel frequently offers a purely imaginative space for the realization of its second cities, one of the affordances of drama is that it must ground its action within an actual 'theatrical' space; a space which may in turn serve to ironize, undermine, or confirm the imaginative locale that is being represented.

For this reason, theatre is almost by definition a natural abode of the spectral city. After all, another of the affordances of drama is that, through their actions in the 'here and now' of audience perception, plays can recreate events which purport to come from different times and different places. Hence, early modern Londoners going to see Shakespeare's comedies were just as likely to be treated to Athens,

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[2] For earlier explorations of the idea of the spectral city see, for instance, Anthony Vidler's essay on the literal case of Pompeii ['Buried Alive'], and Arjun Appadurai's discussion of Mumbai ['Spectral Housing and Urban Cleansing: Notes on Millennial Mumbai'], in *The Spectralities Reader* (eds del Pilar Blanco and Pereen 2013: chapters 24 and 10).

[3] For a thoughtful analysis of the problems inherent in demarcating these terms, see Marc Brousseau's 'Afterword' to *Literary Second Cities* (Finch *et al.* 2017: 241-50).

Ephesus, Messina, Padua, 'Rossillion', Troy, Venice, Verona, Vienna, or somewhere in Illyria as London (which, in general, was reserved for his History plays). For the tragedies, Italy was often a favoured venue, with Rome as a prominent choice for narratives of the ancient world, along with Mantua, Verona or Venice for more contemporary situations. Unlike his elder contemporary, Ben Jonson was born and bred in Westminster. But audiences attending his early comedies and tragedies were equally likely to find themselves encountering Rome, Florence or Venice as a simulacrum of their own city. Growing up and training in the building trade at a time when London was rapidly expanding and consolidating its position as a major early modern city, the urban (not to mention the ongoing struggle to achieve a more 'classical' urbanity of outlook and tone) became key factors in Jonson's creative endeavour. Along this line Martin Butler, who masterminded the recent Cambridge edition of the dramatist's complete *oeuvre*, has gone so far as to argue that 'Jonson's plays, preoccupied as they are with pleasures and follies in a city setting, may be read as foundational texts in the emergence of a modern urban consciousness' (Butler 2000: 20).[4] Further, the sources of Jonson's urban imaginary are as often as not rooted in local experience as in a more general pursuit of the urbane, with the result that London frequently looms behind his 'second' cities. As an example, the Milan figured in Jonson's earliest surviving comedy, *The Case is Altered*, sometimes displays hints of the 'soak through' effect described above: in the form of a number of scenes which offer transparent depictions of London, rather than of Milanese, life (see esp. *Jonson* vol. 1: I. i.; or IV. vi.); while at other moments it takes on an ironically Milanese perspective, metaphorizing the London in which the audience are watching the play as a 'Utopia' which they really should visit some time (see *Jonson* vol. 1: II. vii. 12-40; Johnson 2009: 39-43).[5] In more detail, we will also shortly consider a number of ways in which, despite a more concerted attempt to represent Florence and environs as the setting in his first major theatrical success, *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), Jonson

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[4] References to works or commentary from the 2011 Cambridge edition in the body text will be abbreviated as '*Jonson*' and accompanied by the relevant volume, act, scene, line, or page numbers.

[5] As Anne Barton pointed out, character names like 'Onion' and 'Juniper' in the play are 'distinctively English' (1984: 176).

later revised its locale, recasting it in London for its reappearance as the opening play of his ground-breaking Folio *Workes* in 1616.

Against such a background, the present chapter will explore Jonson's projection of spectral cities in a little more detail. Concentrating for the most part on the plays and masques of the 1616 Folio—and focusing in particular on the opening and closing entertainments in that volume: *Every Man in His Humour* and *The Golden Age Restor'd*—it will, that is to say, attempt to block out a number of Jonson's changing visualizations concerning the *urban* and the *urbane*, as those terms find new collocations and new currency in the Jacobean world. At its simplest level, it will reappraise the earliest version of *Every Man in His Humour* to demonstrate that rather than being merely 'anatopic as well as anachronistic', as Jonathan Haynes once suggested in his fine book on Jonson (1992: 35), the Florence of the play has far more historical and topographical integrity than has previously been realized. Developing the idea further, the chapter will examine ways in which the mapping of that lived environment onto the London of the revised play carried with it spectres of an Italian urban life world which then took root in English city comedy and elsewhere.

More ambitiously, perhaps, the chapter will also engage with ways in which Jonson's spectral projections of the urban emerged from (and fed into) the new attitudes towards spatial representation which were in formation at the time. In a sense the newness of what was beginning to overtake the culture system, as Elizabeth Eisenstein appreciated long ago (1979), was facilitated by the technology of printing, which could replicate and disseminate the *diagrammatic* in an unexpected series of directions: from mnemonic systems to anatomical drawings, scientific and mathematical *schemata*, maps, reconstructions of classical civic space, architectural plans or elevations, and so on. This meant, as Henry S. Turner has subsequently argued (2006), that ideas of structure in arts such as drama also deferred increasingly to the diagrammatic, as this became a developing habit in early modern thought. So that—naturally enough, barring the different physical constraints imposed by their application in different media—the implementation of particular models, patterns, or diagrams of urban space stemming from architecture and city planning could equally be applied within media such as poetry, drama, or dance. This style of visualization may be clearly seen in Jonson's theoretical musings (*Discoveries*), where he argues that a poem should

be like a house—its 'action' or fable, answering 'place in a building' with a distinctive 'largeness, compass, and proportion'. Since 'what is place in the one, is action in the other', he concludes, 'the difference is in space' (see *Jonson* vol. 7: 592, ll. 1906-12). In other words, for Jonson, the textuality of the printed page becomes the temporality of performance while he, by inference, becomes an architect of time. With this in mind the close of the present article will attempt to trace at least some of the ways in which these momentous changes began to coalesce to create a new sense of the urban(e) in Jonson's work and elsewhere.

2 – Urbs

Etymologically, the Latin word *urbs*, denoting a city, seems to derive from a range of proto-Indo-European verbal and nominal forms centring around notions of 'enclosure' (see de Vaan 2008: 643). An enclosed area, then. (Possibly 'for taking auspices': as in the Umbrian, *uerfale.*) Something contained. (Latin *orbis* — 'circle'.) A fortress. A walled city. Or even—as a metonym for that great circumscribed space of late antiquity—Rome itself. Perpetuated by Papal endeavour through the Middle Ages and, via Sixtus IV (1471-84), perhaps reaching its climax in Bramante's vast project of civic renewal under the Pontificate of Julius II (1503-13), the *renovatio urbis* constituted an ambitious attempt to reconstitute for modern times the glory that had been classical Rome (see esp. Schraven 2012: 129-51; Temple, 2011). Where Rome led, others followed suit. Sometimes ahead of the wave, as in Mantua under Marquis Ludovico II Gonzaga from 1459 onwards (Girondi 2015/16: 163-86). Or later, as in the case of Venice over the period from 1523 to 1538, when Andrea Gritti was Doge (Tafuri 1984). Nor was there any need for these types of identification to stop in Italy. Under the right conditions, the idea of *renovatio urbis* could be effectively extended to almost any city; though few with more justification (in some people's minds) than London. The reason for this, the historian Geoffrey of Monmouth had argued in the 1130s, was because *Londinium*—tracing back its foundation to Aeneas' grandson, Brutus—could legitimately lay claim to the title of 'Troynovant' (see esp. Tambling 2015: 115). As a theme it is therefore understandable that the spectre of Geoffrey's imperial vision should have echoed behind the poetry of Elizabethans

like Spenser or tragic drama like the anonymous *Locrine* in the late 1580s and early 1590s.

All the same, it was under the Stuarts that the fantasy of their metropolis as heir to Rome and Troy really began to blossom in the popular imagination. Suetonius' observation that Caesar Augustus had found Rome brick and left it marble ('*lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*'), has frequently been re-purposed by commentators and applied to Jacobean London (see esp. Donaldson 2011: 380). Subject, unsurprisingly, to the adjustment for local materials supplied in James I's proclamation for Buildings of June 16th 1615 that he had 'found our Cities and suburbs of London of sticks, and left them of brick, being a material farre more durable, safe from fire and beautiful and magnificent' (*Stuart Royal Proclamations*: 346; *cit*. Greenberg 2015: 99). Outdoing this in Suetonian aspiration, however, is a marble inscription in Latin, which has been tracked down by David Howarth and appears in the material record some six years after the proclamation. Tentatively dating the inscription to 1621, Howarth has suggested that it may have been engraved as a plaque on the walls of Inigo Jones's Whitehall Banqueting House, which was nearing completion that year (its old brick predecessor having been destroyed by fire in 1619). Englished, the inscription lauds the new structure as 'the equal of any marble buildings throughout Europe': celebrating how 'JAMES, first monarch of Great Britain', had comissioned it for 'festive occasions […] formal spectacles […] and […] the ceremonials of the British court', thereafter leaving it to posterity (tr. in Howarth 1997: 34).

Since the early years of James's reign the vast majority of texts for these festive occasions in his various banqueting houses had been provided by Jonson himself. Framed, as often as not, by a consciously Neoclassical imagery which worked *in tandem* with Jones's masque designs, the texts for Jonson's entertainments and masques summoned the spectral presence of the same tradition through the creation of an aesthetic which in many respects anticipated the literary developments of the succeeding century (Johnson 1994: 218-30). Well might Ian Donaldson conclude, looking back on the later careers of poet and architect in the third decade of the seventeenth century, that '[t]ogether they were laying the foundations of a new Augustan world' (2011: 381). For in their collaborative re-thinking of literary, dramatic, and festive space both, in their different ways, were contributing to a revolution in

the spatial imagination; a revolution which was eventually to have an impact not only on theatrical representation but also, as illustrated by Jones's banqueting house, on the physical appearance of parts of London itself.

3 – Openings

With such a developing agenda in mind (however subconscious it may have been for the poet in its original inception), it is not difficult to ascertain why the Folio *Workes of Beniamin Jonson*, finally launched by his booksellers in November 1616, should have been so frequently described as 'monumental'.[6] Weighing in at over 1,000 pages—in the large scale format formerly reserved for the work of classical authors rather than for contemporary public playwrights—the book did manifest (rather like its bulky creator) a substantial physical presence. Beyond the easy jibe of some of Jonson's contemporaries—that where they created plays, he claimed to write '*Workes*'—lay the obvious rejoinder that, over and above drama for the popular stage, the volume contained poetry and masques; even though to say so much would not be to dismiss the highfalutin collocation of 'works' with saints or ancient philosophers, historians and poets that was so often present in the popular imagination (OED *s.v.* 'work, *n.*', 16a).[7] Or to disregard Jonson's obvious self-confidence in seeking to perpetuate his name and writings in this way.

Opening the volume, readers of most copies would have found themselves faced by a comely frontispiece which metonymized the qualities of much that Jonson presumably wished to capture in the book as a whole. Engraved by the homonymous William Hole—who had also

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[6] As a couple of examples standing for many, it may be helpful to recall the contention voiced in *The Comely Frontispiece* that the obelisks in Jonson's frontispiece to the volume ('which are monuments'), along with the laurels ('the traditional crown of the poet') surely 'signify the author's desire that the folio may bring him a poet's immortality' (Corbett and Lightbown 1979: 150). Or, for that matter, of Harold Love's comment that the 1616 Folio constituted 'one of the great typographical monuments' of the age (Love 1993: 146). Both of these passages are also cited (the latter via Brooks 2000: 134), in Meskill (2008 and 2009).

[7] References to plays, poems, or masques from the 1616 *Workes* in the body text will be abbreviated as '*Workes*' and accompanied by the relevant page numbers.

been responsible for the 1607 and 1610 frontispieces to the celebrated *Britannia* of Jonson's teacher, the historian and chorographer William Camden—the 1616 image has much in common with that earlier project (see Figure 1).
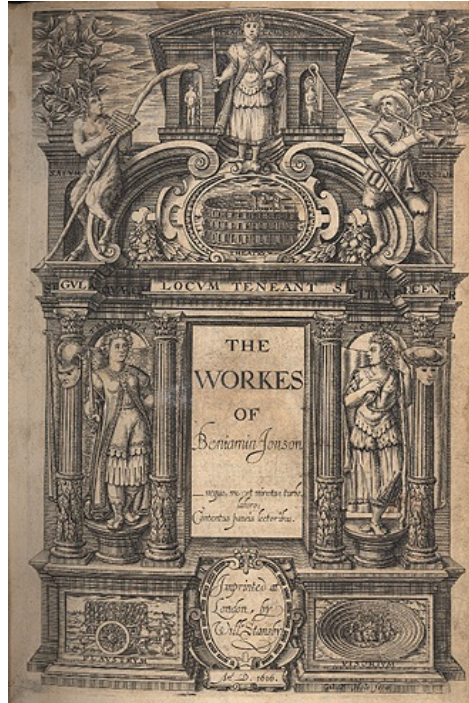

Figure 1 Frontispiece to Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio *Workes* [Public Domain]

For on one hand, as the *Britannia* had aspired to present an up-to-date survey of the geo-history of the nation, ongoingly revised in the 1607 and 1610 editions to accommodate the implications of the new Britain being forged by James I, so Jonson's frontispiece palpably speaks to a present (and future) audience: its centred title and *imprimatur* focalizing in English not only on the author and his works but also on the publisher (William Stansby) and the place (LONDON). Further, as Camden had sought to restore both 'antiquity to Britaine' and 'Britaine to his antiquity' (Camden 1610: 4)—London being rendered via its Latin title, '*Londinivm*', in his 1610 frontispiece to the English edition—so, around the centred English labelling in Jonson's volume, the frontispiece also indexes the ancient world in both visual and verbal terms. Spectrality in

such a sense involves the imposition of image sets from one city to another: sometimes accompanied by the transposition of material features (including those found in classical architecture), or cultural styles and practices.

What is going on here, as a number of commentators have pointed out (though few, perhaps, more lucidly than Donaldson), is the creation of a composite and encyclopaedic image, expressed in powerfully classical terms, which represents the diversity of genres courted (though not necessarily implemented) in the volume. Flanking the central panel to the left and right are intercolumniated images of Tragedy and Comedy. Below the first is the old theatrical wagon (*plaustrum*): associated with the earliest performances of Greek tragedy (as well as, in his own time, popular anecdotes concerning Jonson's own theatrical apprenticeship).[8] To some extent the evocation of the early history of the drama may also be replicated on the bottom right through an image of a choric ritual in what Donaldson—following nomenclature presumably dictated to Hole by Jonson—terms 'an ancient amphitheatre (VISIORIUM)'. Above Tragedy and Comedy are 'Satire and Pastoral', cast respectively as a satyr and a shepherd. Between them, he suggests, is 'a Roman theatre (THEATRVM) resembling the Colosseum'. And precariously balanced above the cartouche in which that is placed is the figure of Tragicomedy (a genre which Jonson hints at but does not take

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[8] The most famous of these is Dekker's satirical portrait of Jonson as a self-appointed Horace who has forgotten his origins as a 'poor Iorneyman Player', ambling along the highway in the provinces beside the players' wagon (something that Jonson need not have necessarily regretted). If we remember that earlier in the same conversation, Jonson/Horace is critiqued for his part as Zulziman in the amphitheatre at 'Parris garden' (a performance Jonson may also have recalled with pride rather than shame), there is no reason why the two images at the base of the columns shouldn't have simultaneously blended past and present: suggesting as they did so that Jonson's theatrical origins partook of ancient, and honourable, traditions. See *Satiromastix* [1602] in Dekker 1953: I. i.120-31. Dekker's skit draws much of its force from Jonson's auto-identification with Horace in *Poetaster* the previous year [1600]. Likewise, as Jonson had translated the Roman poet's *De Arte Poetica* into English—with its description of Thespis' use of the *plaustrum* in his development of Tragic drama (*Jonson* vol. 7: 36, l. 311)—so the cart imaged on Jonson's frontispiece may also have served to associate him with Horace.

up in the volume), wearing a comic sock on one foot and a tragic on the other (Donaldson 2011: 327-29).

More recently, Alastair Fowler's remarkably focused revaluation of the same set of images has pushed scholarly understanding of subtleties figured in the frontispiece to a new level. Among much else, his numerologically-based argument that the ritual portrayed in the amphitheatre is Dionysian is particularly convincing given that, as he puts it, 'Drama's origin in a chorus of [eight] satyrs was vital for Jonson, since it sanctioned direct social satire, banned from Old Comedy' (Fowler 2017: 120). In such a context, it is apparent that the image once again speaks to the Jonsonian present as much as it does to the classical past. From a similar perspective there is mileage in Fowler's observation that, having three rather than four tiers, the amphitheatre resembles the Augustan Theatre of Marcellus (13 BC) rather than the four-storeyed Colosseum, and that this lines it up with more contemporary Renaissance structures, including the Palladio/Scamozzi 'Teatro Olympico at Vicenza' and Scamozzi's 'Teatro Ducale at Sabbionetta' (Fowler 2017: 118). Fowler may not be mistaken, either, when he invokes the idea of the *pegma* (or temporary theatrical façade) here to imply that the frontispiece figures something more like a 'pageant frame using architectural elements decoratively' than a load-bearing structure such as a triumphal arch (Fowler 2017: 116). For *pace* the same author (2017: 17-18), Jonson remains the earliest recorded user of that rare term in an English form (see Johnson 1994: 47, 49, 65): the word having been recorded for the first time in his description of James I's royal entry into London in 1604.[9] Because that account is included as an introduction to the masques and entertainments in the closing section of the Folio itself (*Workes*: 841-62), it looks as if, once again, the iconography is Janus-like: pushing the viewer towards a forward-looking accommodation of the ancient into present practices rather than a cloying embrace of the past.

There is little point in dwelling on Jonson's 1604 entertainment here as much ink has been expended on it already (see esp. Parry 1981: 1-20). Except to say that on entering London for his Coronation the first thing

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[9] It is notable that Jonson's description of this event references Claudian's poem in praise of the deeply learned Flavius Manlius Theodorus (*Workes*: 854), because Jonson's heavily annotated copy of the poem survives (p. 212 ff.), complete with an evocation of a *pegma* in action (ll. 325-330).

that the King would have encountered was Jonson's scheme for the ephemeral arch at Fenchurch—reified by the joiner and architect Stephen Harrison according to Jonson's symbolic conceits—and addressed by the Genius of the City (*Genius Vrbis*) in concert with a personified Thames (*Tamesis*): Genius relating the foundation myth of Troynovant (*Workes*: 849). Or to recall that the final arch which James would have met in his triumphal march—also fashioned by Harrison in line with Jonson's symbolic programme—would have been at Temple Bar where, presided over by the image of Janus '*Quadrifrons*' (god of gates), the heavens (perhaps drawing on the Umbrian etymologies of *urbs*) were seen to 'auspicate' the coming of a Jacobean Golden age paralleling the 'lasting glory' of 'AVGUSTUS state' (*Workes*: 852, 862).[10] From this moment onwards, as if moving westwards past Temple Bar to approach Whitehall, the Folio's final section progresses through a series of entertainments and masques to the climactic descent of Astraea's Golden age onto the floor of the Old Banqueting House itself (*Workes*: 1013). Here Jonson's meaning is plain. When *The Golden Age Restor'd* (*Workes*: 1010-15) was enacted before James and his court on January 1st 1616 it formed the apogee of Jonson's imaginative *renovatio urbis*. Because it was staged so early in the year, there was just time to include the text as the crown at the close of the Folio: its iconography helpfully smoothing over what we will later discover to have been rather a fraught political moment at Court by announcing a reinstatement of harmony and the establishment of a new order. As an image of justice, Astraea's return to earth with a personified Golden age offers a fitting completion to the augury delivered in the Temple Bar entertainment for James's Coronation (*Workes*: 1013; 855). Indeed, to frame the idea, Jonson climactically adorns his monarch in both works with imagery gleaned from Virgil's vision of the return of the Golden age (*Eclogues* IV, ll. 6; 24-5, 30). So what is the difference? At Temple Bar the imperial vision was *in spe*; in the Old Banqueting House the eagle has landed (or is, at least, in the process of landing). Because Virgil was Augustus' laureate

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[10] Intriguingly, this iconography appears to replicate many of the interconnections associated by Nicholas Temple with the working out of the *renovatio urbis* in St Peter's Basilica and the Stanza della Segnatura (Temple 2011: chapters 5 and 6): most especially, his discussions of *Janus Quadrifons* (p. 201 ff.), 'Justice and Poetry' (p. 251ff.) and 'Mapping the Golden Age' (p. 263ff.). See section 5 below.

poet, this casts Jonson in an equivalent position for James. In such a light, it is probably no coincidence that, at the beginning of the next month the King awarded Jonson a pension of 100 marks a year, effectively elevating his status (as the latter proudly boasted), to that of the 'King's Poet' (Donaldson 2011: 322). By 1616, then, Jonson's London had started to metamorphose into the new *Urbs* and a new, more classicized, conception of the urbane was being developed in the Jacobean metropolis.

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Sandwiched between the prefatory pages of the Folio and the closing entertainments and masques are the bulk of the volume: comprising, all in all, nine plays and two contrasting gatherings of poems (the *Epigrammes* and *The Forrest*). Among the 133 *Epigrammes* collected here (*Workes*: 765-818) are many satirical vignettes of city life and practices. From 'Bucklers-bury'—the apothecaries' and grocers' street where Jonson imagines his bookseller repurposing poems from his unsold volumes as wrapping paper (III, 12)[11]—to '*Pict-hatch*, *Mersh-Lambeth*, and *Whitefryers*', those places of ill-repute where the odious Lieutenant Shift hangs out (XII, 2). And so on, until the sated reader reaches the final epigram, 'On the famous Voyage' (CXXXIII) which traces the scatological topography of London's sewer, the Fleet Ditch, in its course from Highgate to the Blackfriars, where it runs into the Thames. Moving beyond the underside of early seventeenth-century urban life pictured here, Jonsonian urbanity in its more affirmative senses resides not so much in fleeting allusions. Rather, within the collection as a whole it is achieved through the genre and tone, borrowed largely from Martial, with which Jonson articulates his praise or blame for the gallery of figures—drawn from all levels of society—portrayed within (see Rimell 2008: 2-3). Along the same lines, it is an urbanity of tone (although of a very different kind) which holds together the fifteen poems in praise of different exemplars of virtuous life constituting *The*

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[11] In fact, it is not unlikely that Jonson had produced an early edition of the *Epigrammes* in 1612 in a venture which was scuppered by the death of his publisher and bookseller, John Stepneth, in the same year. For as Donaldson reminds us, the poet William Drummond included "'BEN JOHNSON his Epigrams" among the "bookes red be me anno 1612'" while 'Arthur Throckmorton speaks of ordering a copy for sixpence' (*Jonson* 5: 103; Kay 1995: 125).

Forrest (*Workes*: 819-40): a collection more generically Virgilian and Horatian than the *Epigrammes*, emphasizing the countryside, and wholesome pastoral settings rather than the hubbub of the city. Hence, these two gatherings of poems partake between them of that complex of 'qualities typical of a city dweller' (especially in ancient Rome) which is compassed by the Latin notion of *urbānitās*: connoting sophistication, polish, refined politeness, suavity, stylistic refinement, elegance, wit, or smartness of humour, and (in a suitably elevated way) an appreciation of the virtues of the natural world (OED *s.v.* 'urbanity, *n.*').

It is within the plays, however, that the subtleties and contradictions of the newly emergent urban existence are worked through most insistently. In terms of location, a brief glance at the opening pages of each of the nine is illuminating. Three of them—*Every Man in His Humour*, *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman*, and *The Alchemist*— unambiguously announce their 'scene' as 'LONDON' (*Workes*: 4, 528, 604). For another three—*Poetaster*, *Sejanus: His Fall*, and *Catiline*—the setting is ancient 'ROME' (*Workes*: 180, 359, 682). *Volpone* places itself in more-or-less contemporary 'VENICE' (*Workes*: 448). Less clear is *Cynthias Revels*, which is located in 'GARGAPHIE'—the setting in which Actaeon was torn to pieces by his hounds—thereby displacing its satire to a relatively safe mythological distance from the actualities of Elizabeth's Court (*Workes*: 180). Finally, there is the most frankly experimental of Jonson's plays. *Every Man Out of His Humour*, which sounds like a simple partner to *Every Man In* (but is not), refuses to disclose any location in the normal place below the listing of the *dramatis personae*, choosing only to voice a grudging acknowledgement some minutes into the drama that it is set in the '*Insula fortunata*' (*Workes*: 87).

How do these plays present the idea of a city? Without any substantial scenery on the modern public stage in England, most deictic clues had to be textually encoded, and in this sense the Elizabethan stage was very much an inheritor of the emblematic scenery of the mystery and morality traditions that were still flourishing in Jonson's childhood. But even so—focusing for the moment on the London-based plays (all of which are *exempla* of the recent genre of 'city comedy' in which Jonson exercised such a formative influence)—it is plain that his overall strategies are flexible and diverse. With respect to *Every Man Out of His Humour*, it turns out that Jonson's vagueness about the locations stems

from the fact that much of the play is about play-making itself so that, for strategic reasons, its setting in a semi-mythological 'fortunate Iland' both represents and obscures the contemporary London in which the audience are watching the drama. Yet at the same time, as Helen Ostovitch (1999) has brilliantly shown, some sections of the play—most specifically the St Paul's Walk scene in Act III—choreograph the imagined transition of a real contemporary space with an accuracy and grittiness which had not been achieved before. A large part of the urban experience depicted in the play is therefore evoked through the simple device of ambulation.

In *Epicoene*, by contrast, much of the comedy is predicated on the city as a sonic environment. And well it might be, since the main plot concerns a morose old man who cannot stand noise and ends up by marrying what seems to be a dream partner—a perfect 'silent' woman— who turns out to be a distinctly voluble boy. Summarizing Leo Salingar's take on the play, Martin Butler reminds us that, as the earlier critic had demonstrated, 'it is London itself that persecutes Morose. The traffic, the chatter, the eddying crowds of tourists, women, braveries and wits combine to make his a quintessentially urban torment' (Butler 2000: 23; Salingar 1986: 175-88). Where in this comedy Morose has attempted to seal himself off in his home, in other works of the period—such as *Volpone* and *Sejanus*, or most emphatically, *The Alchemist*—the social permeability of the house (or, conversely, its power to seal off the outside world) take on an unprecedented power. Indeed, in his examination of Jonson's achievement within these plays, Donaldson went so far as to assert that '[n]o dramatist before him (and none after, until recent times) so fully explores the psychology of urban indoor living, so instinctively perceives the correspondence between the fixed space of a house and the fixed space of the stage on which the actors must work' (1997: 71). The wider picture, then, is that on a variety of different levels Jonson's plays and poems are playing out the invention of urbanity on the English stage. To understand how this happens we could do worse than to turn in a little more detail to the first play in the Folio, *Every Man in His Humour*.[12]

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[12] For an examination of this theme in other plays within the Folio, see Zucker 2010.

4 – Every Man in His Humour and Urban Citizenship
a) The Folio
It is a commonplace to note that *Every Man in His Humour* (1598, printed 1601) constituted one of a small cache of plays which initiated the formation of city comedy as a fashionable sub-genre on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. By 1616, however, that fashion had had its moment and although the form continued to jostle along beside sub-genres, like tragicomedy, which were gaining salience in the period, the revised Folio play was more of a retrospective than a promise of things to come.[13] Unlike its earlier namesake, the 1616 version is unequivocally, as we have observed, a London play. Because, too, over the intervening period after its earliest performance Jonson has learned how to exploit incremental detail to maximize theatrical effect, the gains in his dramaturgy as well as in his social assurance really show. Jonson's confidence is even evidenced in the framing of the play. Prefaced by a dedication to William Camden in his capacity as Jonson's former teacher at Westminster School, this—rather like the frontispiece to the Folio—aligns Camden's project with the dramatist's own at the same time as it levels their relationship from master/pupil in the form of an epistle from a friend to the 'Honor'd Friend'. (A friend whose memory—not without a certain degree of propriety—was eventually to become enshrined in the toponym 'Camden Town'.) One of the ways in which the dedication achieves its ends is to shadow Camden's chorographical interests by grounding a firm sense of locality in the text as a whole. Partly, Jonson's engagement with chorography is attained through what poetic practitioners since the eighteenth century have called the 'loco-descriptive'; that is to say, a textual (or, on the stage, gestural) description of place which brings it into the mind's eye of the reader or audience. And partly his realization of setting is accomplished through what Jason Finch and Roger Sell have called the 'loco-allusive': that is, through references which bring a particular place to mind for those who are already familiar with (at least) its name (Finch 2011: 387-8; Sell 1998).

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[13] For ease of reference, this discussion uses J.W. Lever's parallel-text edition of the 1601 Quarto and the 1616 Folio of *Every Man in His Humour* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), cited in text as *EMI* [Q] or [F] respectively, followed by the relevant act, scene and line reference.

Self-evidently, as Jonson's London audience in the public theatres could be presumed to have had some knowledge of the local environment, the loco-allusive was a powerful strategy for drawing his hearers into a closer proximity with his subject matter.[14] From the outset, the 1616 *Every Man in His Humour* coaxes its audience into complicity with its setting. First, in the opening scene (which coincides with the sunrise of the day which is to circumscribe all the events of the comedy), they are introduced to the domestic familiarities as an older citizen (Kno'well), orders his servant (Brainworm) to awaken his scholarly son, Edward. While Brainworm is on his errand, Kno'well receives two visitors: the first being his rustic nephew, Stephen, and the second an unnamed servant sent that morning by 'a gentleman i'the city' (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 130) to carry a letter to Edward Kno'well. For an audience which knows its London, the inference that the meeting is taking place in a location proximal but peripheral to the city is fair enough. But that said, the information is already redundant as, some lines earlier, Stephen has given away an abundance of loco-allusive material in his surly interrogation of the servant. He has proudly (if somewhat naively) revealed that he himself is from nearby 'Hogsden' (Hoxton being at that time a one-street neighbourhood in North London). He has boasted that uncle Kno'well is not only a man of 'a thousand a year', but also that that the property is 'Middlesex land' (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 92). And he has unnecessarily reminded the servant that, even as they speak, they are standing on it (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 110).

It is not known when Jonson revised Florence out of his play in favour of London. Yet all the same, it may not have been irrelevant for the re-writing process that the earliest recorded performance of the play was at the Curtain theatre in Shoreditch, Middlesex (less than a mile to the southeast of Hoxton), in September 1598. The Curtain remained in use until at least 1624, but—whether or not the revised *Every Man in His Humour* was ever staged there—it does begin to look as if, notionally at least, Jonson is mapping the play's fictional space onto the reality of its original theatrical setting. Ironically, too, at the time when the play was enjoying its first success in the Curtain, Jonson himself had fought a duel with the actor Gabriel Spencer in Hoxton fields, killing his opponent, and

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[14] In fact, more generally, one of the advantages of city comedy—rather than, say romantic comedy—as a genre was that, in this way, it closed the gap between the world of the audience and the world of the play.

finding himself incarcerated for murder and in danger for his life. (It was only because he could claim Benefit of Clergy by reading his 'neck verse' in Latin that he himself was not hanged (Chute [1953] 1978: 76-77).) So, whatever the reason for selecting the location, by 1616 it was deeply resonant for Jonson himself.

Jonson and Stephen aside, the Kno'wells also indulge in levels of micro-loco-allusion (not present in the Quarto) which would have caught the attention of an audience with local knowledge. Kno'well Senior, for example, intercepting the letter intended for his son and shocked by the profanity of its contents, complains that it might just as well have emerged from a 'Bordello […]/ The Spital or Pict-Hall',[15] as to have come from the higher class Windmill tavern in which the author had penned it (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 172-3). Historically, the Windmill tavern was a former Synagogue in Old Jewry, the other geographical axis of the play: the London street name commemorating the Jewish quarter present there before the expulsion of 1290. That the author of the letter, Wellbred (or 'Prospero' in the Quarto), is based in Old Jewry is no coincidence either as he is living at the house of his newly-wedded sister, Dame Kitely, alongside his brusque brother Downright, and in the company of their jealous new brother-in-law, Kitely the financier ('Thorello' in the Quarto). It is from this financial quarter that Wellbred explicitly uses the cachet of place as a bait to draw Kno'well Junior into London proper, asking (in the rather uncongenial terminology common in the period) that his friend should not 'conceive that antipathy between us and Hogsden as was between Jews and hog's flesh. Leave thy vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots evening and morning, o'the northwest wall' (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 155-58). By bringing his clownish cousin Stephen into the City of London—and thereby setting in motion the ambulatory narrative which is going to shape the basic form of the play—Edward Kno'well accordingly seeks to respond to Wellbred's invitation by supplying what he terms a 'suburb-humour' to 'have a match with the city' (*EMI* [F]: I. ii. 115-16) in their wager as to the most ludicrous character they can expose from their different environments.

In his juxtaposition of the city and the suburbs (a passage which is not present in the Quarto), Kno'well is also (perhaps unwittingly) tracing

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[15] In other words, the red-light district of Clerkenwell a couple of miles away, and the Hogsden Hospital for venereal diseases.

out the only meaning of 'urbane' available in English before 1601. Specifically: that which relates to, or is characteristic of, 'a town or city, esp. as opposed to the countryside' (OED *s.v.* 'urbane, *adj.*' 1a.). From such a perspective, Stephen is dramatizing his own aspiration to metamorphose into a city gentleman by extending his social range beyond the circle of archers and duck hunters he encounters locally around Finsbury Fields and Islington Ponds (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 47-52). As he explains to his despairing uncle, he has bought a hawk even before acquiring the book that tells him how to keep and train it (*EMI* [F]: I. i. 38). Added to which, his civic ambitions know no bounds. As a matter of fact, it is precisely because he wishes so earnestly to socialize with city gentry of a higher order that Stephen is, by his own account, prepared to accompany his cousin beyond the Moorgate postern (thereby moving from the 'other' London of the North through the city walls and into London proper itself).[16] One knock-on effect of this, as Stephen negotiates the city's space in his quest for the urbane, is that the visualization of urban topography becomes increasingly important for the audience as well as for the characters. Underlying Jonson's strategy here is perhaps the fact that, having conceived of the play as an Aristophanic drama—based on loosely intertwined sketches rather than a tight overall structural logic—the opportunities created by social interaction in different locations largely replace plot. Put another way, we could say that Jonson's mapping of the characters' ambulatory or peripatetic progress through the metropolis translates on stage into the choreography of the drama. (Or even what we might call 'scenic choreography': the juxtaposition of settings in their articulation of a dramatic narrative.) These finessings of his craft, in turn, endow city practices with a greater functionality in the play: Cob the water carrier, for one, tracing out the social web of the play for the audience as he goes about his daily business.

As *Every Man in His Humour* progresses, Wellbred produces two inner-city buffoons—the *braggadocio*, Captain Bobadill, and the poetaster Matthew—to match Edward's contribution. And if Stephen

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[16] Later in the play (*EMI* [F]: II. ii.), it is through the Moorfields on the way to the postern gate that Stephen and Edward Kno'well are accosted by their master's servant, Brainworm, in disguise as a soldier, with the warning that Kno'well Senior is following close behind with an eye to seeing what his son is up to.

lives up to expectations so, in their way, do Bobadill and Matthew. What Stephen is aspiring towards, and finds in them, is something so new in England that it did not even have a recorded descriptor until 1601: more precisely, the sense of urbanity residing in what Philemon Holland termed the 'Vrbane Tribes': consisting of 'Artisanes & such like as were not landed persons'. Or what Edward Topsell, in *The History of Four-footed Beasts* (1607: 504), may have had in mind when he differentiated between the 'rustik, or country mouse, vrbane, or citty mouse' (*cit.* OED *s.v.* 'urbane, *adj.*' 1b). Bobadill and Matthew, in this sense, are two 'urbane' mice. Cowards both, but imbued with a desire to perform what they are not, they are creatures formed by the city who have learned to eke out their parasitic existences by clinging to its underbelly. The echoic Matthew, by plagiarizing poetry; the bluff military impostor Bobadill, through his charismatic mastery of the art of bluster. Vying for position, or more charitably—as Marc Brousseau might interpret it—for a level of respect that confers on them the status of 'urban citizenship', the two are mightily admired by Stephen.[17] Partly through their command of rhetoric: parodied here by Stephen's admiration for Bobadill's swearing (*EMI* [F]: III. i. 115), an effect which is very much heightened by his attempts to follow suit (*EMI* [F]: III. i. 160-65). Partly through their show of literary sophistication, burlesqued in their over-effusive praise of old dramatic warhorses like Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (*EMI* [F]: I. iii. 130ff.). Partly through their adoption of newfangled 'fashionable' practices, such as the quaffing of tobacco (*EMI* [F]: III. ii. 262 ff). Partly through their dress codes. Aping them, for instance, Stephen unwisely dresses himself up in a cloak he has found (which actually belongs to Downright): a sumptuary error for which he has to answer before the city magistrate in the final act of the play (*EMI* [F]: V. i. 77).[18] With such an

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[17] Marc Brosseau, 'Cities in Fiction: Perspectives from Literary Geography'. Keynote Address (delivered Thursday 20th August) at 'Literary Second Cities. The Second International Conference of the Helsinki Literature and the City Network', Åbo Akademi University, 20th-21st August 2015.

[18] On Jonson's lashing of the 'contemporary love of fashion and sartorial affectation' Robert S. Miola comments in his introduction to the 1601 version of the play that 'Jonson mocks the gulls who ape fancy dress: Stephano desires silk hose (1.2.47-49) and a velvet scabbard (2.1.75), steals Giuliano's silk russet cloak, lace-fringed (4.2.135); Matheo praises Bobadilla's boot and a fashionable hanger (1.3.152 ff.). Musco assumes various costumes including the garb of a

eye for the foibles and humorous dispositions of the characters, coupled with the spatial detail of its London settings, it is little wonder that Charles Dickens was so positively attracted to the play, acting Bobadill in an 1845 charity performance with what has been described as 'an air of supreme conceit and frothy pomp' (*cit*. Schlicke 2011: 310).

b) The 1601 Quarto

Since Jonson is not known to have visited Florence, it is perhaps understandable that while much of the Folio is contingent and loco-allusive in nature**,** the deictic range of, say, Act I in the 1601 Quarto necessarily tends more towards the generic and loco-descriptive. In his study of Jonson's revisions to the play, Ralph Alan Cohen suggested long ago that—where the Folio contains fifty-two allusions to London—with respect to location in the Quarto, 'Jonson names twenty places, but none except the name of the city itself is a genuine reference to Florence, and eight near the end of the play are merely sly allusions to London' (Alan Cohen 1978: 183). Although (for reasons we will examine in due course) his assessment of these numbers and their dramatic effect may perhaps be questioned, the basic point still stands. If the Elizabethan version of Jonson's text is less detailed about places how does it sustain its Florentine allusion? One significant means is through the Italianicity of the naming. In the opening of the play—following the informal comic decorum of the period that a high figure in the dramatic hierarchy is presented first—a senior citizen enters with his servant. Naturally enough, the audience do not yet know his name, though his status is no doubt established through a propriety of bearing and of clothing. Although, too, we cannot establish whether on this occasion the question of ethnicity is somehow referenced in his dress code, Italianicity is certainly suggested in the senior citizen's opening command: that 'Musco', his servant, should wake his son 'Lorenzo' (*EMI* [Q]: I. i. 2-3). In the ensuing soliloquy little visual evidence as to the setting is adduced. But all the same, Lorenzo Senior's reference to learned 'academies' (for which Florence was famous) and his own youthful passion for poetry—which aligns him with his namesake Lorenzo dei Medici (also a

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soldier, a clerk, and a city official, and sells Stephano a common rapier, advertising it as a Toledo' (*EMI 1601*: 18).

prominent Academician)—may have set the wheels of suggestion whirring in some minds.

It is not until a hundred lines later, when the servant comes with a letter, that the audience is able to identify the location in front of which the drama has been unfolding as the 'Pazzi house' (*EMI* [Q]: I. i. 110). Conveniently, the senior citizen—like his son—is called Lorenzo de Pazzi (*EMI* [Q]: I. i. 113), so that the contingencies of naming give him the excuse to kick off the plot by receiving and opening Lorenzo Junior's letter as if it were his own. Further, because the bearer of the message has been casually asked by 'a gentleman of Florence' to bring the letter on the grounds that he had, apparently, had 'occasion to ride this way' (*EMI* [Q]: I. i. 115-16), it is established that the house in question is close to, though a little way outside, Florence itself. (That the Folio lists Shakespeare as one of the performers of the play, while the identity of the Florentine gentleman is Prospero may also give pause for thought, along with the fact that the play will shortly introduce a jealous husband called Thorello, who is married to Prospero's sister. But that, for the moment, is another matter.)[19] As Shakespeare later invoked metonymy to

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[19] By tradition, he played Lorenzo/Kno'well Senior. But whatever the role, he was evidently listening carefully to the implications of Jonson's work. 'Will. Shakespeare', named first in the Folio's list of 'principal Comedians' for the play (*EMI*, p. 285) must have known some version of the script off by heart, and clearly realized that Jonson's tale of comic excess hinted at tragic dimensions. Certainly, it appears that shortly after *Every Man in His Humour*, something of Jonson's jealous husband Thorello morphed into Shakespeare's tragically jealous Othello, while Thorello's chaste wife Biancha lent her name to the Venetian whore in Shakespeare's play. (Possibly, too, elements of Jonson's trickster, Musco, are absorbed into Iago.) Intriguingly, other Italianate names from the Quarto version of the play seem to have lodged themselves in Shakespeare's head for later use: Prospero, whose name has come to represent a displaced Milanese King for so many theatregoers over the last four centuries and, from *The Tempest* as well, the clown Stephano (also hailing in that play from Milan). In light of the fact that Jonson's Prospero (along with Lorenzo Junior) were products of the Florentine Academies (the intellectual milieu in which, according to Frances Yates, Ficinian magic reached its high point), it may be no coincidence either that Shakespeare gave his Prospero the character of a mage. (In 'real' life, we may add, Lorenzo dei Medici's secretary happened to be called Stefano.) From a spatial point of view, what is important here is that Italian naming connotes a different imaginative place—Othello and Biancha

connect people with places—most famously through Antony's habit of alluding to Cleopatra as 'Egypt'—so a comparable mechanism is at work in Jonson's naming. Despite his foibles, Lorenzo Junior (the equivalent in the earlier play to Edward Kno'well) is a good scholar who is metonymically praised for 'the general good all Florence delivers of him' (*EMI* [Q]: I. i. 159). And throughout the play there is an almost dreamlike aptness about the Florentine nomenclature employed.

In cahoots with the proper names, more generalized nouns also help sustain a feeling of Italianicity throughout the play, even when they do not reference Florence. Hence the three fall guys set up by Prospero and Lorenzo Junior—Bobadilla, Matheo and Stefano—are here cast as zanies from the *commedia dell'arte* (a tradition which was perfectly familiar in the city even though it has been more commonly associated with Venice). A parallel exoticizing effect is produced by Bobadilla's Italian versions of Lebanese seaports ('Ghibelleto' for Jebeil), 'Tortosa', or the 'Genoways' and other localizing names which spice his fantastical rhetoric (*EMI* [Q]: II. iii. 97-102). Occasionally, commentators have wondered whether Jonson has got his geography garbled, as when Brainworm's equivalent, Musco, agrees to meet with Bobadilla and Matheo on the 'Rialto' (IV. ii. 61), or when Bobadilla refers to 'the Exchange' (*EMI* [Q]: IV. ii. 37): in a passage which Alan Cohen suggests alludes in reality to the London exchange (Alan Cohen 1978: 183, n. 2; see also *Jonson*, p. 207). Yet even here, the *OED* does attest a more generalized meaning of *rialto* in early modern Italy for 'exchange' or 'market', and the exchange was central to Florentine business long before it became so in London. By the same criterion it is also highly questionable that Alan Cohen should attribute references to Cob's house 'by the wall' or Lorenzo Junior's meeting with Hesperida 'at the Friery' (*EMI* [Q]: IV. i. 42; and IV. iii. 61) as pertaining to London rather than to Florence (Alan Cohen 1978: 183, n. 2). Florence, after all, had two sets of walls as well as a well-known Friary at San Marco. Likewise, the editors of the new *Cambridge Ben Jonson* are right to point out that Saint Anthony's (the area where Lorenzo Senior is staying while he is in

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being appropriate to a tale of Venetian expansion and Prospero and Stephano fitting the bill to evoke the struggles of Milan against Naples. Putting it another way, proper names tend to bring the edges of places with them: hinting at histories which can, if needed, be activated as triggers to shade events within the contexts of new plays.

Florence) is 'a plausibly Italian name' which would 'nevertheless remind London audiences of their own Saint Anthony's Hospital (with its chapel and grammar school) on Threadneedle Street' (*Jonson* vol. 2: II. iii. 182, p. 166). (In the Folio the location is changed to 'Coleman Street'.) But Jonson is perhaps being even more subtle than that, as Florence boasted its own Saint Antoninus, and as his collocation of the Saint with Saint Mark's implies, he may well have known that St Anthony (who was at one time Archbishop of Florence) had his own celebrated cloister in St Mark's Convent.

What's in a name? By casting the opening family in the play as the 'Pazzi', Jonson was giving voice to the greatest rivals to the Medici within the city: a dynasty which was literally expunged by law from the city records and disinvested of all civic titles it had previously held. The reason for this was that members of the family had conspired to murder Lorenzo and his younger brother Giuliano Medici during Mass in the *Duomo* on April 26th 1476 (actually succeeding in the case of the latter): an act so nefarious that to utter Medici and Pazzi in the same breath became an evocation of a very specific moment in the history of Florence itself. When Bobadilla reflects that 'a most honourable piece of service was perform'd tomorrow, being St Mark's day: shall be some ten years' (*EMI* [Q]: II. iii. 93-95), we are reminded that the action of *Every Man in His Humour* takes place on April 24th (St. Mark's Eve). That is to say, the anniversary of the day opening the festival weekend in 1478 which had culminated (on the fifth Sunday after Easter) in the Pazzi assassination attempt.

Provocatively, Jonson's onomastic strategy in the 1601 Quarto summons the spectre of the event at the same time as it complicates the drawing of easy parallels. 'Lorenzo' (a name stereotypically associated with the Medici *magnifico*) is here bifurcated into an elder and a younger Pazzi (perhaps reflecting the more authoritarian and the more ludic/poetic sides of the Medici ruler at different stages of his life).[20] If one wanted a model for the non-aristocratic urbane, Lorenzo dei Medici would surely fill the bill, coming as he did from a mercantile and

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[20] See, too, Miola's commentary (*EMI 1601*: 10): '[...] the Italian names speak also here. Lorenzo may recall Lorenzo il Magnifico, the famous Florentine potentate and patron of the arts. The two principal family names in the play—the Pazzi and Strozzi—evoke well-known powerful Florentine families involved in civic discord, the Pazzi having conspired against Lorenzo and his family.'

banking family, but balancing these practical skills with his fine sensibilities in poetry, philosophy, and the arts. The Pazzi, too, had been bankers, stealing away the Pope's clientage from the Medici shortly before the assassination. But there were other—more tangible—shared links, as Lorenzo's and Giuliano's sister, Biancha, had married into the Pazzi in order to promote a feeling of unity between the two families (Strathern 2007: 161). In Jonson's play, Biancha and Giuliano (along with their brother Prospero) are actually members of the Strozzi family, while Biancha is married to the jealous financier Thorello (whose sister, Hesperida, is going to end up marrying Lorenzo Pazzi Junior in the final act). Supplementing the name game, it may be worth remembering that, although he died unmarried, Giuliano dei Medici left behind an illegitimate son (Giulio) who, brought up by Lorenzo, later became an extremely popular governor of Florence (1519-22), prior to his election as Pope Clement VII in 1523. Because Jonson's Florence is also under the aegis of Doctor Clement, 'the *gonfaloniere* of the state here, an excellent rare civilian, and a great scholar' (*EMI* [Q]: III. ii. 44-45)— who imposes unity by resolving the conflicts generated by the play in firm, but basically benevolent, ways—one may wonder whether Camdenesque associations of onomastic and dynastic knowledge are not in play here, too. Especially so, since Sally Cornelison (2012) has shown that the canonization process of Antoninus (who had been very much a friend in his time of Cosimo dei Medici's earlier regime) was actually sponsored by Giulio dei Medici. Taking place over the period 1516-23, the promotion of Antoninus therefore coincided with Giulio's metamorphosis from governor of Florence into Clement VII. In Jonson's play, 'Saint Anthony's' is the area in which Clement resides: along (as we have seen) with his guest Lorenzo Senior (*EMI* [Q]: II. iii. 199; III. ii. 85).

In relation to topographical precision it begins to appear, in fact, that Jonson's Florence may be more tightly conceived than has hitherto been suspected. Rightly, Alan Cohen demonstrated that in the Jacobean revision, the play's six basic London locales formed 'an extremely narrow band from north to south', running from Hoxton and Moorfields past the wall to Coleman Street, the Windmill Tavern, and Old Jewry around the city proper on the north side of the Thames (Alan Cohen 1978: 191). But equally, if we plot what can be inferred about the Pazzi dwellings in and around Florence, a parallel topography begins to

emerge. For a start, the Pazzi did own a renovated farmhouse beyond the walls some three miles to the north-east of the city centre. Named the Villa Montughi, and situated close to Lorenzo dei Medici's *villa suburbana* in the diocese of Fiesole (Martines 2003: 114), it had, as Machiavelli attested in his *History of Florence*, played its part in the 1476 conspiracy.[21] Extending the inquiry, one need only consult the renowned 1493 Nuremburg map of Florence to find that there are fields as well as small 'suburbs' between that area and the city walls. Moving south past these—and following a trajectory notionally corresponding with that traced in the 1616 Folio—one comes again into Pazzi territory as, in the period of the conspiracy, the family centred itself around their new palace on the corner of the Via del Proconsolo and the Borgo degli Abizzi some 500m to the east of the Palazzo Strozzi (Andres, Hunisak and Turner 1988 [vol. 2]: 722 ff.). Slightly to the north-east of the Palazzo Vecchio and the Uffizi complex, the Pazzi palace (unmistakably built to rival that of the Medici) signalled a wider area of Pazzi interest north of the Arno—stretching over 600 metres along the east of the river from (approximately) the Ponte Vecchio past the Ponte alle Grazie to the Pazzi Chapel at Santa Croce: extending from there some 800m northwards as far as Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi. Finally, if we bear in mind the fact that these are all banking families, and that (like The Windmill in Old Jewry), Medici Florence hosted a Jewish community in a leisure area (around what is now the Piazza della Repubblica) some three minutes' walk to the East of the Strozzi Palace and five minutes to the West of the Pazzi Palace, then it looks as if the palimpsest of Jonson's Florence in the Quarto ghosts the London mappings of the Folio with a remarkable accuracy (see Figure 2).

What begins to become apparent within the spectral presence of Florence in Jonson's London is that Jonson does not merely project outward from a known environment in his simulation of the unknown. Rather, it is a two-way process: his knowledge of Florence (rather like

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[21] See Miola (*EMI 1601*: 68, n. 29), for the independent suggestion that Jonson's sources may have been 'Machiavelli, *The Florentine History* (London, 1549), sigs 2, 3, 8; or in William Thomas, *The History of Italy* (London, 1549), sigs 138, 154v', while 'Castiglione mentions the Strozzi in *The Courtier* (1561, rpt. London: D. Nutt, 1900), 175, which Jonson used for his next play, *EMO*'. It was, in fact, Giulio dei Medici who had commissioned Machiavelli's *Florentine History* (see Andres, Hunisak and Turner 1988 [vol. 2]: 909).

his knowledge of classical culture) also influencing the way in which he chooses to construct and dramatize London.

		NORTH			
	Florence		*London*		
	1601 Setting	**Focal Character**	**1616 Setting**	**Focal Character**	
	Villa Montughi	(Pazzi)	Hoxton	(Knowell)	
	Fields	(Musco)	Morefields	(Brainworm)	
	The Wall	(Cob)	The Wall	(Cob)	
WEST	St Anthony's	(Clement)	Coleman Street	(Clement)	*EAST*
	[unspecified inn]	(Prospero)	The Windmill	(Wellbred)	
	[unspecified inn]	(Thorello)	The Old Jewry	(Kitely)	
	River Arno		*River Thames*		
		SOUTH			

Figure 2 *Every Man in His Humour*: The Topography of Quarto and Folio locales

Because, moreover, urban topography and social practice are reciprocally related, other aspects of the Florentine urbane were also transferred into an English dramatic setting. With regard to the *renovatio urbis* theme it could be remembered that Florence traditionally billed itself as the daughter of Rome: a city ripe for a renovation of its own, and that this was what the Laurentine Renaissance came to represent.[22] Although in *Every Man in His Humour*, Jonson famously chose to 'sport with human follies, not with crimes' (*EMI* [F]: Prologue, 24), it may well be that, for good or bad, the lives of merchant princes offered generative models from which to work. In his edition of the Quarto, Robert Miola pointed out that the word 'Gentleman' and its variants occurred sixty-seven times (2000: 22); while Ayres, writing on *Epicoene*, noticed in passing that Prospero and Lorenzo Junior are 'the first true gallants on the English stage'. Paving the way, he adds, 'for all who follow':

> They live in a self-contained and relatively coherent culture of their own; their manners and morals are in a sense self-created, and owe little to traditional social patterns or sources of value. They are defined by their polished good-breeding and easy good manners, and represent qualities quite different from those displayed by the usual swaggerers, wits, intriguers, and ruined prodigals who inhabit the London of Jacobean city comedy more generally. Unlike their cousins, they live in the city

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[22] In fact, Niall Atkinson has asserted that '[a]n early Florentine tradition linked the city's Christian topography in a [...] weak but significant way to Rome.' (Atkinson 2016 [ebook version]: Chapter 8).

> not because they need to restore their fortunes or seek a place at court, but because it is the only place a man of fashion can live. Urbanity is their distinctive excellence.
>
> (Ayers 2004: 75)

Although we might remember that Queen Elizabeth's sumptuary laws of 6 July 1597 show how topical these details were for Jonson's London contemporaries, it should not, perhaps, be forgotten that similar legislation was periodically enforced in Florence from the Middle Ages onwards. Or that such laws were frequently enacted at the edges of Medici regimes: under Savonarola shortly after the death of Lorenzo; following the Sack of Rome in 1527 (when, the Medici having been forced out, Florence once again became a Republic); and as part of the counter-reformatory measures necessarily implemented by Cosimo I dei Medici in 1562 (Andres, Hunisak and Turner 1988 [vol. 2]: 905, 910, 1114).

5 – Bookends: The Golden Age Restor'd (1616)

There is, of course, a sense (in terms of its partial derivation from Middle French) in which *urbanité* is, in any case, a sort of courtliness: manifested in distinctive gestures, manners, behavioural patterns and dress codes. Yet even behind such a collocation lurks the idea of 'social relations between inhabitants of a town', recorded in the French from c. 1370 (OED *s.v.* 'urbanity, *n.*'). This is a set of meanings which Jonson captures in the court masques, most explicitly in *Love Restored* (1612), where the ejection of false love (Plutus) from the court and his replacement by the true forces of Cupid is celebrated by a personified dance of 'the ten ornaments/ That do each courtly presence grace'. Who

> As music them in form shall put,
> So will they keep their measures true,
>   And make still their proportions new,
>   Till all become one harmony
>   Of Honour and of Courtesy,
>   True Valour and *Urbanity*,
>   Of Confidence, Alacrity,
>   Of Promptness and of Industry,
>   Ability, Reality.
> (*Jonson* vol. 4: p. 210, ll. 207-19 [italics, mine])

Where much of the staging in early modern England had been founded on European (and predominantly Italian) preconceptions concerning dramatic representations in the ancient world and how they may be revived in the present, the development of the court masque over the first decades of the seventeenth century—and signally as a result of the agency of Jonson himself in collaboration with Inigo Jones—saw an exponential rise in the use of scenery and theatrical technology. The sorts of aesthetic, that is to say, which had manifested themselves in the Neoclassical frontispiece of Jonson's Folio or the transient architecture accompanying James's coronation procession became the stock-in-trade of masquing scenography. And in the same way as the music and the dance borrowed aspects from common Neoplatonic and Vitruvian traditions to create what amounted to a 'total theatre' of 'true measures' and proportioned dance figures blended in 'one harmony', so these were increasingly complemented by Jones's scenographic designs working together with the linear organization of a number of Jonson's masquing texts. With reference to visualization, a key point here is that there was a large degree of overlap in the period between the vocabularies of music, dance, architecture and poetry: for the simple reason that their construction tended to be theorized according to common geometrical and mathematical notions handed down from the ancient world. One significant result was that practitioners of the period tended to call their poetry *numbers*, *proportioned* it into verse, or understood, say, *logos* as a proportioning of things as well as a word. Similarly, the irrational $\sqrt{2}$, for instance, could take the Greek affix *a-* [= 'not'] to become the number of silence—*alogos*—*not* a proportion, *not* a word, and hence, not to be spoken: in the process, opening up possibilities of signification which are not easily apprehensible in present-day culture, where the vocabulary which formerly bound the arts has, to a large extent, separated out.[23] In terms of early modern scenography—as Henry Turner remarked in the final chapter of his book on *The English Renaissance Stage*—one of the theatrical consequences of these newly developing habits (especially in the Court masque) was, as we have mentioned earlier, a constitutive move towards the *diagrammatic*, which arose from the practices of the

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[23] For discussions of these matters see, for instance, Fowler 1970: esp. pp. 15-20; Johnson 1990; and Heninger 1994.

time in geometry, cartography, chorography and architecture (Turner 2006: 244-78).

The reason such a shared aesthetic could work was because, in their separate ways, each of these disciplines was able to metonymically partake of the numbers which were thought to comprise the ancient universe of the Pythagoreans and Neoplatonists (a system which, in part, had been reconstructed through the endeavours of members of the Florentine Academy, including Marsilio Ficino). Behind this lay the idea that, because the universe described in works like Plato's *Timaeus* was based on the mathematics of musical harmony, so the sounding of those harmonies did not symbolize universal concord so much as *enact* it. *Vis-à-vis* musical practitioners, the basis of their insight lay in the Pythagorean idea of the *tetraktys*:

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\bullet \\
\bullet \ \ \bullet \\
\bullet \ \ \bullet \ \ \bullet \\
\bullet \ \ \bullet \ \ \bullet \ \ \bullet
\end{array}
$$

As a visual (or diagrammatic) expression, the power of the *tetraktys* lay in its demonstration that, by placing points (or pebbles) in the sand in the form of $1 + 2 + 3 + 4$, one could express the basic harmonies of music, since to touch a string in the middle (dividing its ratio of the touch-point to the length into 2:1) will produce an interval of an octave; 3:2 will produce a fifth; and 4:3 will sound a fourth. (No wonder the true measures, proportions and harmony in *Love Restored* were produced by ten dancers, of whom Urbanity was just one.) Jonson was a fully-trained member of the Tylers and Bricklayers Company (Kay 1995: 15), and his knowledge of this tradition is witnessed plainly enough (to take just one example) by his ownership and annotation of two copies of the *De architectura libri decem* of the Roman architect, Vitruvius. The first is Daniele Barbaro's Latin commentary (1567b), which develops the Platonic and Pythagorean implications of the Vitruvian text into a full-blown theory of architectural proportion. The second is the equally influential Philander edition (1586), in which Jonson glosses the central Vitruvian concepts for an integrated modular system of proportions, paying particular attention to *Eurythmia*, which Vitruvius acknowledges is only achievable when all the details of a work are 'answering in proportion' (1586: 12). In the same volume Jonson quite correctly translates 'diatessaro*n*', 'diapente' and 'diapason'—the Pythagorean

terms for the basic proportions relating mathematics to music — as 'A Fourth/ A Fifth/ An Eight'; and underlines Vitruvius' discourse on the common understanding between musicians and astronomers (1586: 3-6): a passage that was important because it opened up the subject of the relation of the arts through mathematics. From the architectural side, Jones opined in the margin of his Italian translation of the Barbaro Vitruvius that 'in musicke the[re] must be a proporsionatt distance between the low and heaygh / the same simpathy is in the stares'. And he noted, too, 'the ruels of arethematicke that unite musicke with astrologiy' (Vitruvius 1567a: 24). Additionally, in Plutarch's commentary on the *Timaeus*, the architect glossed the discussion of the Platonic *lambda*—a double number system of squares and cubes deriving from 1 (2, 2^2, 2^3, 3, 3^2, 3^3), which determined the harmonic form of the universe—jotting down that the soul of the world was 'created by god in number and proportion', while 'discord and disproportion' are 'all on[e]' (see Johnson 2009b: esp. 182-87). Jonson and Jones, then, belonged to an interpretative community in which the numerology and geometry of forms—the correspondence of patterning between their collaborative creations and the perceived 'reality' of the world—would have taken on an important cultural (as well as, perhaps, religious) function.[24]

In practice, there is a certain amount of evidence to suggest that a number of Jonson's masques attempted to achieve these architectonic aims. In 1978, John Orrell discovered that the line numbers for the songs and speeches in *Hymenaei* fell into the simple harmonic proportions of a Palladian palace; and my own work has gone on to suggest that Jonson made use of comparable modular proportions in all his early court masques, each based on a different number line: thirteen for *The Masque of Blackness*, eight for *The Masque of Beauty*, sixteen for *Hymenaei*, eleven for *The Haddington Masque*, and twelve for *The Masque of Queens*.[25] Thus, in *The Masque of Blackness*, the metaphorics of the sun King James and his courtiers (based on the solar number 12) is complemented by the metaphorics of the moon Queen Anne (the major participant in the masque) and her circle of aristocratic women (based on the lunar number 13); which meld together after 12 x 13 lines when the ladies of the masque join in a dance with the nobles of the court. (The

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[24] The information in the present paragraph is derived from Johnson 1994: 9-35.
[25] See esp. Johnson 1994: 198.

idea of a year as the correspondence of the solar twelve against the lunar thirteen is one that is explicitly articulated by Vitruvius, and consultation with his Barbaro edition, which survives in Boston Public Library, reveals that Jonson had read and annotated the relevant chapter.)[26]

For readers who are beginning to wonder what these reflections have to do with the theme of urban(e) visualization, the answer is simple (although perhaps, rather surprising). Namely that, as Nicholas Temple has demonstrated in his compelling study, *Renovatio Urbis: Architecture, Urbanism, and Ceremony in the Rome of Julius II*, architects, practitioners and theorists such as Bramante, Raphael, and Giles of Viterbo drew heavily on the same philosophical, geometric and numerological traditions in their endeavours 'to remap—and at the same time transform—the topography of the ancient and medieval city'. They did this by promoting its image as an *altera Ierusalem* and 'renewed imperial' metropolis: 'underpinned by a shared belief in the imminence of a Golden age under Julius II, when the iniquities and sins of past ages would be swept aside by the creation of a new papal empire of faith' (Temple 2011: 1). Hence, in much the same way as we have seen the final section of Jonson's Folio notionally tracing out the route of James Coronation march past, say, the Janus '*Quadrifrons*' pegma towards Whitehall and its various Banqueting houses where most of the masques were to be performed (culminating in *The Golden Age Restor'd* in 1616 itself), so Temple suggests that the Julian productions and schemes of Bramante, Raphael (freshly summoned from Florence), Giles, and others mapped out the routes of analogous papal triumphs and processions: moving from the Vatican past the Janus '*Quadrifrons*' temple to the Capitol, for example, and taking its point of origin as well as its manifesto from the Golden age imagery emblazoned in Raphael's four frescos on the walls of the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican Palace.

For Temple, these frescos represent a carefully topographically sensitive summation of Julius II's secular and religious ideology. *The School of Athens* illustrates (among much else), Plato holding the *Timaeus*, Aristotle with the *Ethics*, Pythagoras contemplating the *tetraktys* and the proportions of music, and Euclid engaged on a parallel

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[26] See the Boston copy of Vitruvius (1567b), Book IX, chapter iv, pp. 284-85. The finding seems to corroborate my earlier speculation on the importance of this passage for the schematics of *The Masque of Blackness* (Johnson 1994: 258).

geometrical project: all set against a monumental arch which alludes to Janus '*Quadrifons*'.[27] In sum, Temple surmises, these may be taken to show that 'the philosophical deliberations represented in the *School of Athens* were intentionally conceived as a form of victory procession of human knowledge, whose ultimate destination is the new St Peter's Basilica (which at the time was in its early stages of construction)' (Temple 2011: 242).[28] Echoing this eastern facing fresco on the other side of the room is an image of Theology, the *Disputa*, centred round a golden chain of images figuring the Eucharist as its blessing descends from Heaven to Earth. Looking to the north (and framing a view of the Cortile del Belvedere, with its powerful figuration of the virtues of the contemplative life) is the fresco of Poetry/*Parnassus*. As far as Temple is concerned, the work enunciates 'a mytho-poetic evocation of the Julian Golden age' in which 'Apollo/Julius and his entourage of poets and muses'—including Homer, Hesiod, Virgil, and Ovid—'constitute a redeemed and purified counterpart to the realm of *imperium*' (Temple 2011: 267). Opposite—looking south across the projected area where Bramante had hoped the Palazzo de Tribunali to be built—one ultimately gazes towards Egypt, from whence Moses had brought the Law (which is why the fresco representing *Jurisprudence*/*Iustitia* is set in that wall). Collectively, Temple argues, all of these elements were subsumed into a Christian, providentialist, vision of Julian Rome as a Golden age restored. If London, as the Coronation entertainment explicitly suggests, was James I's *Camera Regia*,[29] then the Banqueting Hall in which the *The Golden Age Restor'd* was staged had the potential to become, however transiently, a Stanza della Segnatura for that city. In actuality, as will emerge in the following analysis, the imagery of the masque overlapped Raphael's Julian vision in exciting and suggestive ways: as well as being evidenced in the work of other painters, such as that of

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[27] As Temple explains: 'the sequence 1+2+3+4 of the *quaternari*, represented on the Pythagorean tablet, symbolizes the higher domain of Beatific beauty transmitted through musical harmony' (2011: 226).

[28] The importance of Etruscan God, Janus, is predicated here on Giles of Viterbo's contention that the former 'was the inventor' of philosophy (Temple 2011: 240).

[29] This was inscribed on *The Temple of Janus* in Jonson's 1604 entertainment (see Fowler 2017: 17; *Workes*: 843).

Jacopo Zucchi, whose life was also spent largely between Florence and Rome.

*   *   *

'Look', sings Pallas Athene in the opening line of *The Golden Age Restor'd*, 'look! Rejoice and wonder!'.[30] Unfortunately, no drawings, music, and only a limited description of the masque survive. But to get some idea of the image world in which the masque may have been produced, it is not unhelpful to read it alongside Jacopo Zucchi's paintings on the subject, now hanging in the Uffizi (Figure 3 a-c). These had been produced for the alchemically-minded Cardinal Ferdinando dei Medici (1549-1609), and may well have been encountered by Jones in 1614, when the Earl of Arundel (lodging in the Palazzo Vecchio), visited the Florentine Collections at the behest of Cosimo II dei Medici, bringing Inigo along as his artistic advisor.[31]

a.   b.   c.
Figure 3. Jacopo Zucchi's *Three Ages*. a. 'L'Età del ferro'. b. 'L'Età dell'argento'. c.'L'Età dell'oro' [Public Domain].

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[30] As the entire text of *The Golden Age Restor'd* is found in *Workes* 1616: 1010-15, subsequent references to the masque in the body text will be accompanied solely by line numbers counted from this edition.

[31] For Arundel and Jones in Florence, see particularly D. Howarth 1985: 50 and 230, n. 51. For Zucchi see E. Pillsbury's University of London Dissertation (1973). The political setting of the Zucchi paintings is discussed in T. Puttfarken 1980: 16-17 and 130-49, which, despite the intrinsic merits of its political observations, remains unconvincing on the need to rename the paintings.

Read from right to left the series tells the traditional story of the loss of the Golden age, the passing of the Silver (figured here by the departure of Astraea, goddess of Justice), and the coming of the Iron. But in its present order it narrates a movement towards the restoration of a Golden age: a theme of crucial importance to the Medici since the time of Lorenzo the Magnificent, which gained a special significance in Ferdinando's iconography when it was developed for the theatrical festivities accompanying his marriage to Christina of Lorraine in 1589. In terms of musical history, this was also the occasion for the celebrated *intermedi* (again on the theme of the Golden age), with music by Marenzio, words by Rinuccini, and designs by Buontalenti), which framed Bargagli's comedy, *La pellegrina*, in the same festivities (see Ketterer 1999; Nagler 1964; Newman 1986; and Saslow 1996). These *intermedi* were, furthermore, of seminal importance for the development of Peri's and Rinuccini's *Dafne*—the first full-length opera, which was performed some nine years later—and in which Buontalenti's stage sets from the 1589 event appear to have been reused (see Petersen 2002; Saslow 1996: 182). There is pause here for thought in the fact that Inigo Jones was very probably the scenographer for Jonson's masque, having recently returned from Florence (his head full of Buontalenti) to replace the Florentine scenographer, Constantino dei Servi, who had been in London, working in his stead. There is pause for thought in the speculation that *The Golden Age Restor'd* was proleptically ushering in a new urban noise. (As its verse structure shows that it could have been sung throughout, the masque may—in effect—have doubled as one of the first British operas.) And there is pause for thought in the reflection that the converging tastes of the Jacobean and Medici courts may not have been entirely coincidental. Especially when it is remembered that Ferdinando's niece and protégé, Marie de Médicis, eventually became the mother of the future Queen Consort of England, Scotland, and Ireland, Henrietta Maria, after the latter's wedding to Charles I in 1625.[32] With its descending gods and goddesses, its aerial clouds and spheres, martial tumults, rapid scene-changes, choirs, dancing, and sudden lighting of the darkened January space in which it took place, *The Golden Age Restor'd* was—like the Medici wedding entertainments—a

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[32] In fact, Ferdinando had been instrumental in the marriage of Marie dei Medici (subsequently 'de Médicis') to Henri IV of France, sponsoring the performance of Peri's opera *Euridice* for the occasion.

highly sophisticated event, using the cutting-edge technologies of the day. And although almost all that is left of the masque is in the substance of the text and the diagrammatic trace that is left by its lineation on the page, even this offers clues as to its performative energy as a celebration and benchmark of the Jacobean *renovatio urbis*.

The basic plot is very simple. In a nutshell, that Jove (i.e. James), fed up with the abuses of offending 'mortals' (above all, in the Court) has decided to bring back justice in the form of Astraea, and with it, the Golden age. Pallas, descending to assist in the endeavour, covertly witnesses a planned insurrection against Jove by Iron Age and her cronies. With a flash of her shield, she transforms them into statues in the course of their riotous battle dance. The scene changes, and helped by the British poets of the (not so) ancient times (Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate and Spenser complementing the Graeco-Roman poetic Pantheon in Raphael's narrative), she welcomes Astraea and the Golden age to earth while the Court masquers dance and make merry. In fact, there was a real need for a visible reform of justice in the Christmas season of 1615-16, as the British Court was in the throes of one of the worst scandals of James's lifetime: a murder case in which James's former confidantes, the Earl of Somerset and his wife, were deeply (and culpably) implicated (see esp. Lindley 1993; Butler 1994: 91-116; Butler and Lindley 1994). All of which meant that the occasion of the masque marked a moment of political triumph for the Earl of Pembroke and his circle (the main rival faction to the now imprisoned Somersets), who were able to make hay by celebrating 'the passing of a corrupt regime at court' (Donaldson 2011: 321).

As befits a complex symbolic statement, the action of *The Golden Age Restor'd*—like that of Zucchi's three ages—is also very simple, its 205 lines falling into a binary form, occupied in this case by an antimasque of seventy-two lines and a masque proper of one hundred and thirty-three (see Figure 4).

```
      Antimasque                    Masque Proper

--------------|--------------   --------------------|------------------
        72                                133
   The Iron Age       The Silver Age   pause   The Golden Age
                      -------|------           -------|--------
                         52                        81
                      ------------------------------|---------------------------
                      7  +   18   +   18   +   18   +   18   +  2
                      [Dance 1]  [Dance 2]   [Dance 3]   [Dance 4]
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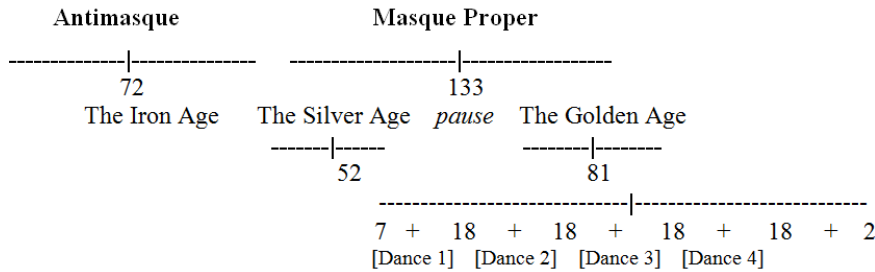
Figure 4 *The Golden Age Restor'd* (1616): Overall Form

The seventy-two lines of the opening antimasque are dominated by two figures. The first is Pallas Athena in martial attire, who initiates the masque's reverie of transformation by descending from the heavens with the news that Jove is going to purge the corruptions of the court by reinstalling Astraea: letting down 'in his golden chain/ The age of better mettle' (ll. 1-28). The second is Iron Age, who attempts to transform herself into steel by summoning up twelve Evils to counter Jove's plan by way of a 'pyrrhic' dance accompanied by 'a confusion of martial music' on drums and trumpets (ll. 29-64). Like the chaotic egocentrism of Zucchi's Iron Age figures—with their peacock's feathers, duplicitous masks, and weapons of destruction: all subsumed under the motto 'CVIQ SVVM' ('to each his own')—Jonson's Evils are too disunited to pose any threat to the will of the gods. Indeed, Pallas has only to deliver an eight-line speech (ll. 65-72) and flash the chthonic shield of the Medusa for all opposition to be metamorphosed into stone and whisked away by the scene-change which denotes the onset of the masque proper.

Such a simplicity of form is not, however, without its numerological subtleties. As an illustration, the balance between good and evil in the antimasque looks as if it is reflected in the fact that Pallas and Iron Age speak a total of 36 lines each, while the proportional disposition of those lines makes for a more nuanced argument. Elsewhere, I have argued that Jonson tended to use the irrational root two (the *enfant terrible* of the Pythagorean number system), as a fracture or break point in his masques (Johnson 1994: 204-5, 217). Here, likewise, the tumult of Iron Age's approach interrupts Pallas on the $\sqrt{2}$ of her speech, while Iron Age's attempt to turn everything to steel falls just before the root 2 node of the whole antimasque. In a like manner, the closing eight lines of the antimasque resolve the whole (12 x 6) into the proportion of 9 (x 8) : 8 (x

8)—or a tone—which Jonson seems to use elsewhere in his work as an emblem of dissonance contained by harmony (see Figure 5).

Pallas   [20] (4 x 5)

(*tumult heard*)

[8]

Iron Age   [36] (6 x 6)

Antimasque Dance

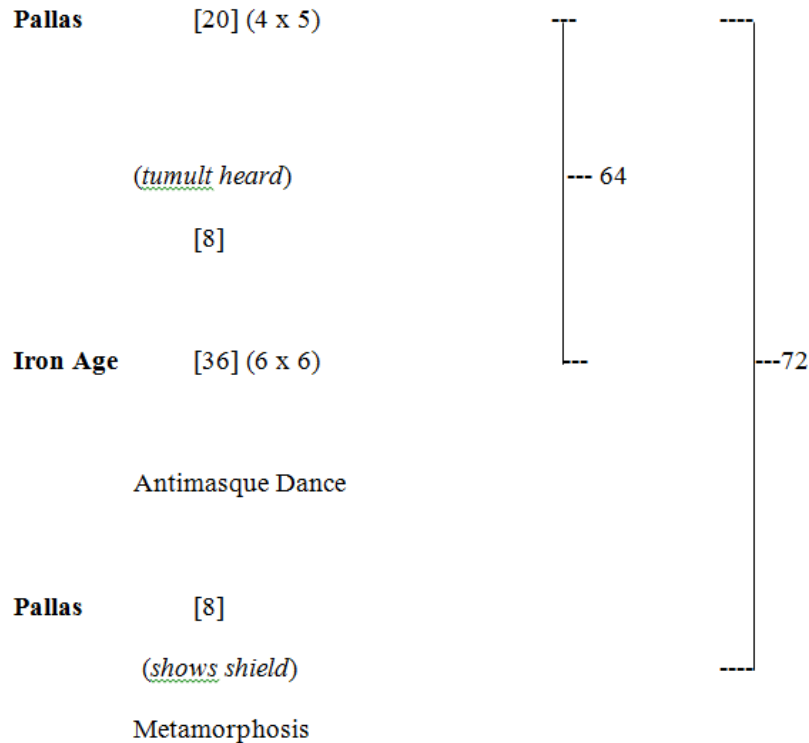**Pallas**   [8]

(*shows shield*)

Metamorphosis

Figure 5 *The Golden Age Restor'd* (1616): Antimasque Divisions

Likewise, the hundred and thirty-three lines of the masque proper have a certain simplicity. At its outset, Pallas calls silver-footed Astraea and Golden Age (ll. 73-79), who dutifully descend to the earth (ll. 80-100), reaching the ground on the twenty-eighth line of the masque proper, and thirty-six lines after the anti-masque dance. On arrival, they are found to be lacking an entourage to 'nourish' their reputations and 'sustain' their state. And so Pallas and her Choir now initiate a second movement by summoning four Poets (who also drift down from the heavens). Further, they wake a school of 'souls' (the aristocratic participants in the masque, who have been slumbering in a suspended sphere)—to fulfil these duties (ll. 101-122). As the scenic shift from the

antimasque had been initiated by the movement of the Palladian shield; so the change of level here is signalled by the 'scene of Light' which Pallas throws like lightning from her targe in order to rouse the sleepers from their sphere and bring them to earth (ll. 123-131). It is only now, after the benedictions of the masque's main protagonists and a carefully marked 'pause' in the text (between lines 124 and 125) that the main business of the evening begins. Within the frame of a harmonic eighty-one lines (9 x 9), the dances and revels are interspersed with eighteen-line songs by the protagonists until, at the end of the night, the masquers are called back into their sphere and re-ascend to the heavens (ll. 132-205).

With such a harmonic resolution to the beginning and ending of the masque, it may come across as odd that the overall proportions of the work—72 : 133 (or 72 : 52 : 81)—are not so simple (particularly as the addition of two lines to the central section would have resolved into elegantly proportioned modules along the number line of nine). However, the subject-matter of the masque (as well as Jonson's structural use of Pythagorean irrationals in the antimasque) may furnish the clue that something is going on here that is beyond harmonic proportion. For the story of the Golden age is the tale of primal oneness and its loss. This may be why Zucchi's painting of a generative *Golden Age* filled with fecundity and dance (Figure 3c), lays an alphabetical tablet on the grass: while a similar tablet is only represented in the skies of the *Iron Age* (beside the perfect number six arranged in a triangle of 1 + 2 + 3), as if to indicate that the primal unity of *logos* as both word and numerical relation had been shattered by the loss of the Golden age (Figure 3a). It may also explain why—as Zucchi's Astraea (a goddess who in Spenser is associated with Una, *the One*) ascends from the *Silver Age*—the months appear as a chaotic riot of numbers in the sky, while a golden triumphal car courses across between them (Figure 3b). Throughout Zucchi's triptych the basic allegory is comprehensible enough. If, for the Pythagoreans (as Simone Weil phrased it in her exposition of their doctrine), 'Friendship is an equality made of harmony', and 'justice is a supernatural friendship which results from harmony'; if (as Inigo Jones noted in an equivalent formulation from his Barbaro Vitruvius), 'Eurithmi is the temperinge of the proportion applied to ye matter, as Equaliti is to Justice', then the departure of Justice/Una from the world causes a fission of the primal oneness; and the world

becomes subject to time and the procession of the sun through the seasons.[33]

Where in the *logos* is the primal state of unity: what is the continuous proportion for which *a* is to *b* as *b* is to *(a + b)*, or in which *a* is to *b* as *b* is to 1? The answer is, transparently: the golden section. And because of this, it feels like more than a coincidence that, structurally speaking, the proportion appears in *The Golden Age Restor'd* at the very instant in which the Chorus affirm the moment of return: '[…] as of old, all now be gold' (l. 127). If a second golden section is then taken by measuring the same proportion from the end of the play to the beginning, it is remarkable to find that this initiates the moment of descent of Astraea and Golden Age, after Pallas has announced that 'the Iron Age is fled,/ And, with her power on earth, her name is dead' (ll. 78-9). Taking the golden section for the forty-seven lines between these two nodes it seems equally striking that the point also initiates the moment of descent: this time for the poets who are to usher in the new age of peace (ll. 129-30; see Figure 6).

```
                             47
        |----------------------------|---------------------------|
        |--------------------------| Ø |------------------------|
                          Poets Descend
```
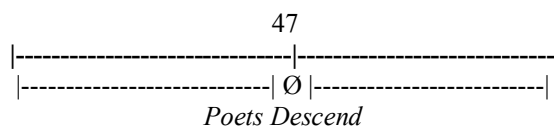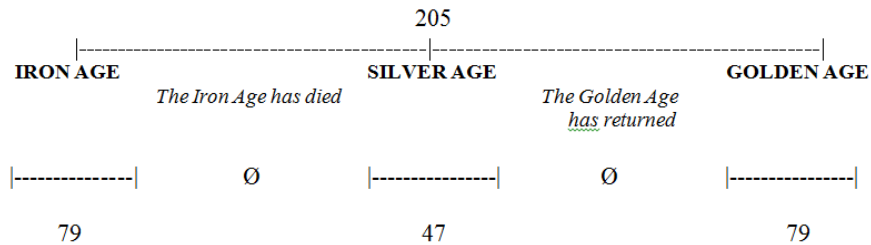
Figure 6 *The Golden Age Restor'd* (1616): Golden Section Division of the Silver Age

One could extend the insight by pointing out, for example, that the golden section of the masque proper falls in the scene of light, or that the mid-point between that moment and the golden section for the whole masque was the pause which marked the transition into the third part of the work. Amid all of these subtleties, Jonson's architectonic practice comes across clearly. Instead of presenting us merely with a theory or a fable of a Golden age, he has created a metonymic structure which enables the audience to *experience* the golden section, and perhaps catch the frisson of a more removed mystery. What more appropriate form could he have chosen for James in the year of his fiftieth birthday, or to close his own *magnum opus* in complement to the simultaneous publication of the King's own Folio *Workes* of 1616?

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[33] See Weil 1987: 174-75; and Jones's Italian copy of Vitruvius 1567: 162.

```
                                    205
      |----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
      IRON AGE                    SILVER AGE                     GOLDEN AGE
              The Iron Age has died            The Golden Age
                                                has returned

      |--------------|      Ø       |--------------|      Ø       |--------------|

           79                           47                           79
```

Figure 7 Golden Section Division of *The Golden Age Restor'd* (1616)

6 – Conclusion: The Golden Age deferred

The Golden Age Restor'd, then, was probably about as close as one could get to the realms of high culture in Rome and the Italian city states in 1616: its nexus of images seeming to import a specific Italianicity into British culture. Certainly, Orazio Busino, the almoner of the Venetian embassy, expressed his pleasure in 'the beauty' of the Old (wooden) Banqueting House, with its 'upper gallery supported by Doric columns, and above these the Ionic, which hold up the roof of the hall' (*cit*. Orrell 1988: 160). The scenography and stage technology of Jones and Buontalenti breathed the air of the same tradition, while Jonson's and Rinuccini's deep lyricism gave both their Golden age a richly Ovidian and Virgilian twist. The apotheosis of the Medici prince, and (at the end of Jonson's Folio) of the British monarch—not to mention Raphael's figuration of the Julian Pontiff—are markedly similar, too, in that they all invoke the Astraea of the new Golden age in the imagery of the Augustus Caesar who is celebrated at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. One reason for this, no doubt, was that for providentially-minded Romanists, Anglicans or Calvinists alike, the historical coming of the Augustan Golden age was, in Giles of Viterbo's words, 'initiated by Christ', who was, at the time, present in the world in bodily form (*cit*. Temple 2011: 190). Seen in these terms, it looks as if the power of the masque's multimedial density—in common, no doubt, with that experienced by those attending *La pellegrina* or viewing the Stanza della Segnatura—lay in the fact that it exceeded the needs of local politics and present occasion. Its power to ennoble lay precisely in its resistance to (or transcendence of) easy closures. It elevated its subjects through a metonymy which lined them up with inscrutable forces—like the Golden

Section itself. It sought, in an increasingly secular and cosmopolitan age, to affirm new links between *urbs* and *ecclesia*.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

A couple of years after *The Golden Age Restor'd*, two cleaners tidying up after a Twelfth-Night masque accidently set fire to the materials, razing the whole building to the ground. (It is not unthinkable that Jones lost his drawings for the *Golden Age Restor'd* in the conflagration.) However, necessity being the mother of invention, this disaster gave the architect the excuse to realize a new hall which would be the 'equal of any marble buildings throughout Europe'—much in the way that the tragedy of London's 1666 Fire was later to give Wren the remit to give a Neoclassical face to a much more extensive urban environment. Perhaps surprisingly, it was not until 1619, the time when Jones was designing his new Banqueting House, that the adjective 'urban'—in its modern sense of [r]elating to, situated or occurring in, or characteristic of, a town or city' (OED A.1.a)—was first recorded in English. And, likewise, it was not until 1623 that 'urbane' in the sense of 'elegant and refined in manners; courteous, civil; suave, sophisticated' (OED *s.v.* 'urbane', 2.*a*.) fixed itself in the language. But, in fact, both fed neatly into the new aesthetic which Jones was bringing into being at that cultural moment (this time as permanent rather than transient architecture) in London. By the time the Banqueting House was completed in 1621-22, it is evident that Rubens (who had just completed the so-called 'Medici Cycle' of paintings for Marie de Médicis in the Palais du Luxembourg), had already been approached about the nine ceiling paintings which he eventually produced for the present building (see Durante, Veglin van Claerbergen, *et al*., 2003: 86-101, esp. 94). Nor is it unlikely that, as the architect of the new building, Jones was in contact with Rubens while the programme for the ceiling was being developed: shaping ideas from his collaborations with Jonson for inclusion in the building itself. Whatever the case, as Roy Strong confesses in his important analysis of Rubens's panel *The Benefits of the Government of James I* on the Whitehall ceiling: 'if I had to choose a single text by which to explain this scene of drama and judgement in allegorical terms it would be Ben Jonson's masque *The Golden Age Restor'd*' (Strong 1980: 36). Looking at the details of Rubens's programme, it is hard not to understand why. For it powerfully renders Minerva/Pallas with her shield. It thematises the

return of abundance in the form of a Protestant and reformist Golden age driven by a Solomonic James as *Rex Pacificus*. It conflates James and Astraea (in a painting the triangulated design of which strikingly resembles that of Zucchi's *Silver Age*). And it vividly represents the striking down of Discord. All round, then, there is evidently a mutual complementarity between Rubens's canvases and Jonson's masque (Strong 1980: 36-42). Bearing in mind that Julius II was also imaged by Giles of Viterbo as the 'new Solomon' (Temple 2011: 250)—and remembering that, as a keen student of Raphael, Rubens was also what Strong terms 'the artist *par excellence* of the Catholic Counter-Reformation' (Strong 1980: 42)—then the imaginative kinship of Whitehall Banqueting House to the Stanza della Segnatura as a creation of religious *renovatio* becomes all the more apparent. And in line with Raphael, Rubens, Zucchi, Buontalenti or Bramante (those master planners of the social and cultural space of the Renaissance)—it may equally be said of Jones that '[t]he recovery of classical architecture with its mirror image of a harmonic universe was for him also the recovery of a Christian architecture, the classical orders sanctified by their use in the temple of Solomon and by Vitruvius who wrote in the reign of Augustus, when Christ was born' (Strong 1980: 64). The only real difference being that, '[i]n Jones's mind ancient Britain revived was also a revival of the ancient British and hence Protestant religion' (*loc. cit.*).

In 1640, when she visited her daughter in England, Marie de Médicis was entertained (with appropriate allusions to her 'Tuscan wisdom') by a performance of Jones's and Davenant's masque *Salmacida Spolia*. By then, Jonson had been dead for three years. Yet despite having been more or less housebound since the early 1630s, his influence was still being felt by a new generation. Versions of his new 1640/41 Folio were already being edited by Sir Kenelm Digby (one of Marie's old flames in their younger days), and included a range of masques which built upon the urban settings he and Jones had already established. Along with a collection of poems (*The Underwood*), to which 'Jonson or Digby had begun to give an architectural shape' (Donaldson 2011: 433). There were also some plays: the settings of which had progressively moved, as Jonson aged, increasingly far from the London which had been his comfort zone. Now that his dramatic *oeuvre* had become more fully classicized and reformed, explicit visualizations of Florence, Rome, or Venice were no longer necessary within it. For by that time, Jonson's

literary Londons had assimilated the virtues of his imagined spectral cities and he had truly made them his own.

St. Mark's Day, 2018

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