CRITICAL INTERPRETATION OF BEN JONSON

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CHAPTER 1

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON JONSON'S CLASSICAL INFLUENCES

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ABSTRACT:

The English Renaissance author Ben Jonson was greatly inspired by Greek and Roman play, philosophy, and literature. His works clearly reflect this influence in both form and topic. Jonson's study of Latin and Greek literature as well as his appreciation for old Roman playwrights and thinkers are the sources of his classical inspirations. Jonson followed the traditional rules of structure and style in his use of form. In his plays, he valued using classical forms such the time, place, and action unities, as evident in works like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist." These rules, which were based on Aristotle's Poetics, attempted to give theatrical works a feeling of coherence and order. Furthermore, Jonson's stress on decorum and verisimilitude shows his adherence to classical aesthetics. He draws influence from the prehistoric idea of humoral theory for his figures, who often symbolize various humors or personality kinds. This method is consistent with Aristotle's theory on the formation of moral character through play. Jonson's choice of topics and subjects also exhibits classical influences. As seen by his masques and poems, he regularly drew inspiration from classical mythology, history, and literature. In particular, his masques had intricate allegory and mythical aspects that were evocative of traditional theatrical customs. Furthermore, Jonson's literary output reflects his intellectual interest in ancient philosophy, notably Stoicism. His characters experience moral conflicts and ethical quandaries that are reminiscent of the stoic ideals of restraint, virtue, and the logical quest of knowledge.

KEYWORDS:

Aristotle's Theory, Classical Influences, Classical Mythology, Stoicism, The Alchemist.

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson, sometimes known by his given name Benjamin Jonson, was an English Stuart playwright, lyric poet, and literary critic who was born in London, England, on June 11, 1572 ?, and died there on August 6. His major works include the comedies Every Man in His Humour (1598), Volpone (1605), Epicoene; or, The Silent Woman (1609), The Alchemist (1610), and Bartholomew Fair (1614). He is generally regarded as the second most significant English dramatist, after William Shakespeare, during the reign of James I.

Theater Profession

Two months after his father's passing, Jonson was born. Despite the fact that his stepfather was a bricklayer, the youngster had the good fortune to be accepted into Westminster School. His official schooling, however, came to an early stop, and he began by learning his stepfather's craft before fighting in the Netherlands with considerable success for the English troops. When he eventually

made it back to England, he started writing plays and acting in them, living the life of a wandering actor. He reportedly portrayed Hieronimo, the main character, in Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy. He began producing plays for Philip Henslowe, the top director of the public theater, in 1597. Except for The Case Is Altered, these early plays are only known by their names, if at all. Jonson reportedly composed both comedies and tragedies during this time, but only two of his tragedies are still in existence: Sejanus (1603) and Catiline (1611) [1].

Every Man in His Humour's successful presentation by the Lord Chamberlain's theatrical company in 1598—rumor has it that Shakespeare himself suggested it to them marked an abrupt shift in Jonson's standing and the beginning of his notoriety. By telling the tale of a young man with a crush on a girl who struggles with his phlegmatic father, relies on a cunning servant, and succeeds in the end, Jonson attempted to bring the spirit and manner of Latin comedy to the English popular stage. This is, in fact, the typical plot of the Latin dramatist Plautus. The four "humours" of medieval and Renaissance medicine choler, melancholy, phlegm, and blood which were believed to define human physical and mental makeup were simultaneously embodied by four of the primary characters in Jonson's work.

Jonson murdered a fellow actor in a duel that same year, and although though he avoided death by claiming "benefit of clergy" (the capacity to read from the Latin Bible), he was still subject to branding. During his short detention due to the affair, he converted to Roman Catholicism. The same theatrical company performed Ben Jonson's considerably more ambitious Every Man Out of His Humor (1599) after the triumph of Every Man in His Humor. It was the longest play ever written for an Elizabethan public theater and attempted to emulate the Greek comedy of Aristophanes [2]. The play's "induction," "prelude," and frequent in-act commentary explained the author's philosophy of what a play should be.

The production, however, was a failure, forcing Jonson to hunt for another theater to stage his piece. The "private" theaters, where only young boys performed (see children's company), were the natural choice. Since they demanded a hefty admittance fee, their audience was discerning and open to strong satire and formal experimentation; for them, Jonson composed Cynthia's Revels (about 1600) and Poetaster (1601). But even here, there is the paradoxical combination of disdain for human conduct and a need for social order. He often provided masques for the courts of James I and Charles I from 1605 to 1634 while working with the builder and designer Inigo Jones. Because of this, he gained the court's favor and was appointed poet laureate.

His Court Masques

The Entertainment at Althorpe, performed in front of James I's queen as she traveled from Scotland in 1603, and the presentation of The Masque of Blackness at court in 1605 seem to have garnered Jonson royal notice. The "masque" was a kind of semi-dramatic entertainment that mainly served as a cover for a group of strangers to perform dancing and singing in front of visitors and staff members at a royal court or nobleman's home. During the reign of James I, Jones created more exquisite costumes and scenic effects for masques at court, and this simple design was further expanded. The few spoken words that the masque had required in the time of Shakespeare's Elizabethan plays became a "text" of a few hundred lines and a few prepared tunes. As a result,

both the designer and the author were crucial since they had to give not just the words but also the particular "allegorical" meaning that underlay the whole amusement [3]. Jones and Jonson worked together to give the Jacobean masque its distinctive form and aesthetic. He largely accomplished this by suggesting a "dramatic" action. Thus, the poet was the one who gave the enlightening concept and set the tone for the whole night's gathering. Jonson's early masques were obviously a success since he was often asked to serve as the court poet in the years that followed. Hymenaei (1606), Hue and Cry After Cupid (1608), The Masque of Beauty (1608), and The Masque of Queens (1609) are a few of his masques. Jonson was prolific in coming up with fresh explanations for the entrance of the visitors in his masques. He also created the "antimasque," which came before the masque officially and included grotesques or comics who were essentially actors rather than dancers or musicians. But this was not enough. Even if Jonson was significant at the court in Whitehall, Jones's efforts probably generated the greatest commotion. It was inevitable that friction would develop between the two men, and finally this friction resulted in a total break: Jonson created the Twelfth Night masque for the court in 1625, but it took another five years for the court to request his services once again [4].

Both His Youth and Old Age

In order to justify their absence from the Anglican church, Jonson and his wife whom he had married in 1594) were taken before the London consistory court in 1606. He insisted that his wife was innocent but conceded that his own religious beliefs prevented him from attending. His commitment to consult with intelligent individuals, who may convince him if they could, helped to resolve the situation. It seems that it took him six years to decide to fit in. Before this, he and his wife had been living apart for a while, with Jonson seeking sanctuary alternately with his benefactors Esmé Stuart, Lord Aubigny, and Sir Robert Townshend[5].

But throughout this time, he had an impact on the public theater that was second only to Shakespeare's. The Alchemist (1610) and Volpone; or, the Foxe (1606), two of his comedies, were among the most well-known and admired works at the period. Each one demonstrated the foolishness of man's quest for riches. They exhibit Jonson's love for both the conventional Renaissance setting and for his own town on the outskirts of Europe, which are respectively located in Italy and London. Both plays are concise, witty, controlled, and expressive. Additionally popular plays were Bartholomew Fair (1614) and Epicoene (1609). In 1618–1619, Jonson set out on a walking journey that led him to Scotland. The city of Edinburgh appointed him an honorary burgess and guild brother during his visit. He obtained an honorary Master of Arts degree from Oxford University upon his return to England, which was a very significant accolade at the time. Jonson's life consisted of both writing and talking. He competed with Shakespeare in "wit-combats" and won. The highest honor for a young man was to be called "son of Ben."

His personal library was burned to the ground in 1623. By this point, Charles I's court seldom requested his talents for amusement, and his last productions were unappealing. He seems to have had a stroke in 1628, which left him confined to his apartment, chair, and eventually bed. He was appointed city chronologer in the same year, making him technically in charge of the city's pageants, however in 1634 his remuneration for the position was converted to a pension. Jonson was buried at Westminster Abbey after passing away in 1637.

After his death in 1640, a second Jonson folio published Timber: or, Discoveries, a collection of observations on life and literature, which had been published posthumously in the first folio edition of his writings in 1616. While acknowledging that he thought Shakespeare was occasionally "full of wind" (sufflaminandus erat), Jonson spoke here about the nature of poetry and drama and paid his final homage to the great playwright. He said, "I loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any."

DISCUSSION

His Performances and Successes

Ben Jonson, a man of contradictions, is generally regarded as the second-best English playwright of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. In addition to being "twelve years a papist," he was also the first poet laureate of Protestant England, but not in official capacity. His most famous plays demonstrate a profound dislike for the society he lived in and a relish in exposing its vices and follies. He was a talented lyric poet who wrote two of his most popular plays completely in prose, which was unique at the time. No one had more followers than him, despite his frequent rage and stubbornness. He was undoubtedly the best educated playwright of his day and a master of theatrical portrayal, vocabulary, and narrative. The fact that his dramatic works were the first to be published in folio a phrase that effectively means "collected works" and that his plays continued to be performed on stages until the Restoration are measures of his renown [6]. Later, they went out of favor, but The Alchemist was resurrected in the 18th century, and in the middle of the 20th century, some of them gained popularity again, including Volpone, The Alchemist, and Bartholomew Fair, all of which have been successfully performed.

The main plays of Jonson remain excellent pieces of theater. His emphasis on applying classical philosophy to them has strengthened rather than diminished the impact of his talent for engaging dialogue, strong characterization, and sophisticated, well-executed plots. He controls a big cast of important characters in each of them, all of whom are constantly distinguished from one another. The plots in Jonson's works are expertly constructed; each incident follows another in a clear chain of cause and effect, taking into account the personalities of the characters and moving confidently through a twisting, turning action that is full of surprises without depending on coincidence or chance. The conversation may sometimes be the source of Jonson's humor, particularly when that humor is based on his observations of modern speech patterns. But there are other instances that are really absurd, sometimes not much different from a comedy.

Jonson is recognized for his technique of emphasizing a certain feature of a character and demonstrating how that side dominates the personality. This is partially the result of his traditional understanding of art, but it also results from his astute, lucid observation of people. In Jonson's plays, both eccentricity and conventional behavior are drawn from a predominating trait, creating a real-life, authentically imagined persona in which the dominant passion is clearly traceable. For instance, in the later plays, certain psychological quirks govern the behavior of the characters. However, Jonson did not just deal with "humours"; in several of his plays, most notably Every Man in His Humour, the typical forms of Latin comedy made an equal contribution to the humours theory. The idea offered him and his colleagues a practical method of identifying different types of people. The differences created in this way might be based on the "humours," on Latin comedic

characters, or, as in Volpone, on how humans have assimilated to various animals. Volpone, Mosca, Sir Epicure Mammon, Face, Subtle, Dol Common, Overdo, and Ursula are not just "humours"; they are magnificent type figures, so vividly portrayed as to take on a being that transcends the type. This approach included typification, simplicity, and vitalization.

By giving their characters type names like Cockwood, Witwoud, Petulant, and Pinchwife, Restoration dramatists paid homage to Jonson. The 18th century did the same with characters like Peachum, Lumpkin, Candour, and Languish. The Jonsonian "type" or "humour" was always at the core of comedic dramatists' imaginations, even if they began to employ names more haphazardly as the 18th century went on. Thus, Jonson had a significant impact on the playwrights who came after him. He, Shakespeare, Francis Beaumont, and John Fletcher served as all of the models throughout the late Jacobean and Caroline eras. However, he alone was responsible for providing the vital impetus for dramatic characterisation in Restoration-era comedies as well as those from the 18th and 19th centuries [7].

Second only to Shakespeare in terms of popularity, Ben Jonson is one of the most well-known authors and literary thinkers of the English Renaissance. He substantially affected the Augustan era by his focus on the ideas of Horace, Aristotle, and other ancient Greek and Latin intellectuals. He was a prolific playwright and a man of letters well-versed in the classics. He made a name for himself as a poet, master of masques, eloquent defender of his works, and the founder of English literary criticism, yet he is today largely recognized for his caustic plays. The outspoken, assertive, and combative character of Jonson as a person frequently overshadows his image as a professional. He created an image of himself as the single judge of taste, defending erudition and the superiority of classical models against what he believed to be the uneducated inclination for the spectacular among the common public. While his direct impact can be traced in every genre he worked in, his greatest literary accomplishments, his command of aesthetic form and direction, and his part in making "critical learning into vogue," as Alexander Pope put it, are regarded to be his lasting legacies.

Soon after his father, a preacher who claimed Scottish aristocratic ancestry, passed away, Jonson was born in London. Despite coming from a low-income family, he attended Westminster School and studied under famed antiquarian William Camden. He reportedly quit school against his choice to become a bricklayer alongside his stepfather. The story claims that he later fought as a volunteer in the Low Countries during the Dutch war against Spain and overcame a challenger in a single battle between the opposing forces, stripping the victor of his weapons in the traditional manner. Jonson married Anne Lewis in 1594 after returning to England around 1592. Despite the terrible marriage, it gave birth to numerous kids, all of whom Jonson outlived. In the years that followed his marriage, he started acting and created a lot of "get-penny" plays—entertainments that were primarily driven by money. The Spanish Tragedy by Thomas Kyd (1592) received appreciated emendations and additions thanks to him. He began producing plays for Philip Henslowe's theater troupe in 1597 [8]. Henslowe hired Jonson to complete Thomas Nashe's now-lost satire The Isle of Dogs that year, but the play was banned due to its seditious elements, and Jonson spent a brief period in prison. The Lord Chamberlain's Men staged the first of his surviving works, Every Man in His Humour, in 1598, including William Shakespeare who would later become close friends

with Jonson in the cast. After murdering actor Gabriel Spencer in a duel the same year, Jonson got into more difficulty. He barely avoided the hangman's noose by claiming benefit of clergy, which meant that he was granted leniency in exchange for demonstrating his literacy and education. Jonson converted to Catholicism as a prisoner at Newgate.

Shortly later, while writing a play for the Children of the Queen's Chapel, playwrights John Marston and Thomas Dekker publicly feuded with Jonson. Jonson painted himself as the objective, knowledgeable judge of art and society in Cynthia's Revells and Poetaster (both 1601) and painted scathing portrayals of the two playwrights. In their counterattack, Marston and Dekker's play Satiromastix; or, The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet (1602), they gave Jonson a satirical representation. It's interesting to note that some academics believe the argument, which came to be known as the "War of the Theatres," was manufactured by both parties to further their respective careers. In any case, Jonson and Marston subsequently made up, and they worked together to write Eastward Ho! with George Chapman. (1605). In this play, a King-related joke put the playwright and his collaborators in jail once again. However, after being set free, Jonson had success and increased output [9]. He had a large social network at court, and James I greatly respected his education. As a result, his talents were acknowledged, and he was regularly commissioned to produce his well-known and exquisite masques, including The Masque of Blacknesse (1605). Jonson also wrote his most popular comedies at this time, starting with Volpone in 1606 and continuing with The Silent Woman (1609), The Alchemist (1610), and Bartholomew Fayre (1614). Despite being testaments of Jonson's education, Sejanus His Fall (1603) and Catiline His Conspiracy (1611) were not well appreciated because of their strict adherence to traditional tragic forms and their pedantic tone.

Jonson released his Works in 1616, becoming the first author in England to refer to his plays as "works," and for this erroneous assumption, he received a good deal of mockery. Though not formally appointed, Jonson took up the duties and rights of the Poet Laureate in that year. He mostly produced masques for royal presentations between 1616 and 1625. He and poet, architect, and stage designer Inigo Jones had already worked together on a number of court masques, and they continued to do so, establishing the reign of James I as the peak of the masque. In recognition of his accomplishments, the University of Oxford awarded him a master of arts degree in 1619.

Jonson's final years, however, were marred by misfortune. Despite being designated City Chronologer in 1628, Jonson lost most of his power at court when his library was destroyed by fire in 1623 and James I's death in 1625. He had the first of numerous strokes later that year, which rendered him bedridden. During the reign of Charles I, Jonson wrote four plays. In 1634, he was finally given a fresh pension. These subsequent plays all failed. He spent the remainder of his life studying and writing, and among his many papers and manuscripts, which were found after he passed away on August 6, 1637, were two incomplete plays. Jonson's estate was completely drained, yet he was nonetheless buried at Westminster Abbey with respect.

The early comedies of Jonson, including Every Man in His Humour, are notable as examples of the comedy of "humours," in which each character reflects a type dominated by a specific passion. These plays borrow form and structure from Roman comedy. Despite not being the first to utilize the comedy of humours, Jonson's use of the genre in Every Man in His Humor and Every Man out

of His Humor is seen as exemplifying, and this kind of characterisation remained a part of his work. The four humorous satires Volpone, The Silent Woman, The Alchemist, and Bartholomew Fayre, written between 1606 and 1614, have special relevance in evaluations of Jonson. Each demonstrates Jonson's fascination in the diversity of life and in the villain as a crafty, clever artist while exposing some aberration of human desire via comedic exaggeration and sporadic moralisms. His most well-known and regularly performed piece, Volpone, is also his sharpest critique of human depravity, focusing on avarice. It combines didactic meaning with well-crafted humorous counterpoint in sequences, much like The Silent Woman and The Alchemist. The expansive Bartholomew Fayre is the last of Jonson's epic tragedies. Jonson conveyed the ancient moralist's notions of wisdom and foolishness via a multitude of layered, interconnected stories in a colorfully rendered and freely organized fashion, softening the didacticism that distinguished his previous work. Each of the four comedies demonstrates meticulous preparation carried out with classical accuracy, grasp of low speech and colloquial language, and a shift toward more realistic, three-dimensional character representation.

Jonson's latter plays, starting with The Divell is an Asse in 1616, are noted by critics as showing the dramatist's declining talent. While generously comparing him to Virgil and calling him "the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had," John Dryden, who undertook the first extensive analysis of Jonson, dismissed these later dramas as mere "dotages." However, Dryden's observations also signaled the beginning of a decline in Jonson's reputation because they included a comparison between Jonson and Shakespeare, one which nodded admiringly toward Jonson but bowed adoringly before with the help of 19th-century Romantic critics like Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1818) and William Hazlitt (1819), who believed Jonson lacked imagination, delicacy, and soul, this revealing contrast colored Jonson's reputation for more than 200 years. Most 19th-century critics agreed with John Addington Symonds' assessment that Ben Jonson lacks almost entirely the "higher gifts of poetry, with which Shakespeare 'nature's child' was so richly endowed." George Saintsbury called this his "greatest defect," though he acknowledged that "his merits are extraordi-nary."

Jonson's reputation as "the deadliest kind that can be compelled upon the memory of a great poet" was highlighted by T.S. Eliot in a 1919 essay. This sparked a reevaluation of Jonson, whose reputation benefited from modernist reaction against Romanticist sensibility, and who started to be appreciated on his own terms. "To be universally accepted; to be damned by the praise that quenches all desire to read the book; to be afflicted by the imputation of the virtues which excite the least pleasure; and to be read only by historians and anti-quaries this is the most perfect conspiracy of approval." Language critic L.C. Knights called Jonson "a very great poet" in 1937; Edmund Wilson regarded Jonson "a great man of letters" and acknowledged his effect on authors as various as Milton, Congreve, Swift, and Huxley in 1948, while not finding any of Shakespeare's "immense range" in him. Recent research has focused on how Jonson interacted with his audience and the monarchy while situating him in London's theatrical and political landscape. The emphasis placed on the former bricklayer's "self-fashioning" into a playwright, critic, and ultimately the first poet laureate has resulted from this attention on historical context. His plays are frequently admired for their accurate portrayals of the men and women of his day, their mastery of form, and their

successful blending of the serious and the comic, the topical, and the timeless. Many critics now view him as a forerunner in the 17th-century movement toward classicism [10].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ben Jonson's literary legacy is distinguished by the impact of ancient literature and theatre on his works. English Renaissance drama's distinctive aesthetic, guiding ideas, and forms were significantly shaped by Jonson's steadfast adherence to classical aesthetics. Jonson raised the standards of English theater to a level that resonated with the intellectual and cultural currents of his period via his strict devotion to the classical unities, his use of Roman comic models, and his infusion of neoclassical themes. Jonson's masterpieces, including "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," which deftly incorporated complex storylines, lovable characters, and sharp social satire, are representative of his classical inspirations. He took from Aristotle's Poetics in order to focus on the unity of time, location, and action, which helped him create a more organized and methodical type of theatre. Additionally, Jonson's commitment to the classics was evident in his poetry as well as his critical writings, in addition to his plays. His lyrical creations, such as the elegies and epigrams, demonstrated his command of classical forms and topics, placing him in line with the Roman school of poetry. The persistent effect Ben Jonson had on succeeding generations of playwrights and poets is evidence of the classical influences' enduring legacy. His devotion to classical ideals helped create the groundwork for the emergence of English neoclassicism, and his scrupulous attention to language, wordplay, and characterization made a lasting impression on English literature.

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CHAPTER 2

A STUDY ON SOCIAL SATIRE IN JONSON'S COMEDIES

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ABSTRACT:

The English Renaissance dramatist Ben Jonson is renowned for his deft use of social satire in his plays. Jonson's comedies function as satirical mirrors reflecting the vices, follies, and social conventions of his day via sharp wit, stinging humor, and astute observation. This study investigates the function of social satire in Jonson's plays and its pervasive importance in comprehending social conduct. The vivid depictions of avarice, greed, hypocrisy, and moral depravity in the society of his period in plays by Jonson, including "Volpone," "The Alchemist," and "The Silent Woman," are what make them so distinctive. His comedic protagonists often exhibit exaggerated personality features and function as parodies of human vices and weaknesses. The fixation with gaining money of the title character in "Volpone," for instance, highlights the foolishness of unrestrained ambition. In Jonson's comedies, social satire touches on larger society structures and ideals in addition to specific people. He exposes the flaws and absurdities in the judicial system, the practice of medicine, and the pursuit of knowledge. Jonson invites listeners to consider the prevalent standards and practices of his day via his satirical perspective. Additionally, the linguistic mastery of Jonson's humorous satire is evident in the way he uses wordplay, puns, and sophisticated humor to mock society follies. His comedies are known for their sharp language and witty repartee, which hold the audience's attention intellectually while delivering biting social critique. The ability of Jonson's social satire to stand the test of time and appeal to audiences of all ages is what gives it such lasting relevance. The universal themes of human foolishness, moral duplicity, and societal excess are still relevant to modern culture even if his writings were steeped in the social milieu of early 17th-century England. The everlasting flaws and paradoxes of our nature and the civilizations in which we live are reflected in Jonson's plays.

KEYWORDS:

Ben Jonson, Humorous Satire, Social Critique, Social Satire, Silent Woman.

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson was a creative who was socially aware. He was fully aware that in order to continue being a great writer, he had to create plays that appealed to modern culture. He also had a responsibility to draw attention to the social ills that pervaded society. His declaration to the audience in the "Prologue" that his objective is to "mix profit with your pleasure" shows that he is aware of this dual responsibility. Yes, Jonson's goals included the "amusement and instruction" of society as well as its transformation [1].

The unpleasant aspects of the Renaissance are shown in the play Volpone. Jonson believed that the newly emerging ideas of the Renaissance were producing a decline in modern society. He realized

that avarice, sometimes known as greed, is a primary evil that breeds other vices. Jonson describes this vice, how it thrives, and how it meets its demise by internal flight among the forces of evil in Volpone. He picked Venice as the location for such a tale since it was well-known in Jonson's day for its obscene and immoral lifestyle. But the atrocities he depicted in the play were things that existed in modern-day England. In Jonson's England, the tale of a specific captain named Thomas Stutton, who took advantage of numerous individuals by promising them the chance to be his successor, was well-known [2]. A wave of Italianization in England was brought on by a number of people, including the explorer Sir Anthony Shirly and the English envoy Sir Henry Wotton, both of whom Jonson was familiar with. Jonson could have been inspired to compose a play like Volpone by many more similar modern events and characters. The satire of the play is targeted at the English society he lived in, as can be seen by closely examining it.

In the piece, Jonson makes fun of the trends. The purpose of Lady Would-be is to make fun of the conceited and fashion-obsessed English women of the day. Volpone's remark: "Of the bold English, that they dare let lose/ Their wives to all encounters" is a clear indictment of those English women's assertiveness. Mosca observes that the woman "affect(s) strange airs" as well. The fashion-obsessed woman's outrage at the maids because "one hair a little here sticks out" is very ludicrous. Volpone, who is trying to pack her off, becomes irritated by her monotonous yet self-satisfied comments [3]. Later, she insults Peregrine by ludicrously supposing him to be a disguised courtesan. She invites him to her place after realizing her error and instructs him to "use her" before she apologizes. Then we discover that she had given the most horrible false testimony against Celia. Mosca humiliates her again, and she returns home deciding to leave Venice. All of them make pointed criticisms of the egotistical and vain women of modern-day England.

The comedy and satire in "Volpone" are skillfully combined. It adheres to the conventions of classical comedy, whereby themes, scenarios, and characters all add to the play's amusement. The play's circumstances sometimes become too intense to be considered comedies. They do, however, lend themselves more to dramatic irony than to satire, giving the humorous impact even under ominous and dark circumstances. They relieve the intense tension by making the onlookers laugh. The onlookers join Volpone and Mosca in their laughter at the fortune seekers' foolishness. But we also laugh at them because the same foolishness that they are laughing at also has them in its grasp. The satire is mild, but it is made more enjoyable by the humor that results from dramatic irony. It seems that Jonson was successful in his goal of creating a play where satire and humor work together to inform and entertain [4].

The Lord Chamberlain's Men produced Ben Jonson's comedic play in five acts, Every Man out of His Humor, in London in 1599. It was later published in 1600. Despite being based on its popular predecessor, Every Man in His Humour, the play was a critical flop, forcing Jonson to turn to private theater instead of the public stage. As part of the so-called "war of the theaters," Jonson satirized the playwrights Thomas Dekker and John Marston in Every Man out of His Humor. The complicated yet confident drama upholds Jonson's idea of humor as a mirror of nature and a representation of reality. Jonson resumed his examination of personalities and idiosyncrasies in light of medieval physiology in Every Man out of His Humor. Every character who struggles with a specific kind of humor ultimately gets over his condition. see comedy of humors as well.

Comedy Of Wits

Ben Jonson, an English playwright from the late 16th century, is most closely connected with the theatrical form known as comedy of humors. The word humor is derived from the Latin word umor, which means "liquid" and was used in the medical theories of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. These theories maintained that the human body included four liquids, or humours: blood, phlegm, yellow bile (choler), and black bile (melancholy). These humours were believed to provide the person a healthy mind in a healthy body when they were correctly balanced.

The system of humours ruling the body may be metaphorically transferred to the general disposition, according to Jonson, who describes this in his play Every Man Out of His Humour (1599), such that a specific quality may so dominate a person as to cause them to behave in a certain manner. Typically, one humour is represented by Jonson's characters, making them imbalanced and resembling caricatures. Jonson distinguished between two types of humor: true humor, in which a man's body and soul actually possessed a peculiar quality, and adopted humor, also known as mannerisms, in which a man made an effort to stand out by adopting particular linguistic, etiquette, and social trends [5]. The texts of plays that can be read, as opposed to seeing and hearing them performed, is referred to as dramatic literature.

Since drama originally meant something performed and literature originally meant something written, the term dramatic literature indicates a contradiction. This paradox is the main source of the majority of issues and a large portion of interest in studying theatrical literature. Even while a play may be enjoyed merely for its literary merits, individuals who stay aware of the play's overall instability are likely to benefit more. However, in order to properly understand how each of its components acting, directing, staging, etc. relates to the others, each aspect of drama needs be examined. This article's goal is to examine drama with a focus on the rules that the writer establishes. The article Western theater discusses the history of dramatic literature in Western culture. Other articles on different languages, countries, or regions' literatures, such as English literature, French literature, German literature, and so on, also mention dramatic literature in passing. See African literature, African theatre, East Asian arts, Islamic arts, South Asian arts, and Southeast Asian arts for a discussion of other cultures' dramatic literatures.

Distinctive Traits

Many hands and many physical components work together to bring a play to life, from its conception in the thoughts of its creator to the memory that an audience takes it home with them after seeing it on stage. So, the question of what is and is not necessary to it is raised. Is a play what its creator intended to write, or are those words a play? Is a play how those words are meant to be embodied or is it how a director and the players on a certain stage really understand them? Which comes first, the audience's expectations before entering the theater, or the audience's actual reaction to what they see and hear? Dramatic communication is so intricate that studying and evaluating it is as uncertain as.

All plays rely on a universal understanding among all parties author, performers, and audience to accept how theater functions and the related conventions, just as participants and spectators do when they agree to the rules of a game. Drama is a clearly unreal pastime that can only be participated in if all parties involved are willing to accept as much. Some of the study's curiosity may be found here. Because one measure of great drama is how far it can transport the audience beyond their own immediate reality and how they might employ this creative freedom. But before he can make this type of assessment, the theatre student must be aware of the game's original rules. These guidelines might be expectations of the audience or writing or performing traditions. Great drama can only be appreciated for what it is the result of a good playwright, good actors, and a good audience who have come together in the best possible physical circumstances—when all conventions are working together smoothly in synthesis and the make-believe of the experience is enjoyed passionately with mind and emotion [6].

Almost all societies, both uncivilized and advanced, have drama in some form, and it has served a variety of purposes in the community. For instance, 2,000 years before the Common Era, a religious theater was recorded in Egypt, and Thespis, an ancient Greek playwright, is credited with creating the first play. Long before the use of words and the literary sophistication generally associated with plays, dramatic elements like mime and dance, clothing, and décor were used. Furthermore, words did not replace these fundamental components; rather, they improved them. However, the drama student only acquires quantifiable proof of what the play was supposed to be when the script of the play establishes a disciplinary control over the dramatic experience. Dramatic literature may therefore be addressed in that context.

The many purposes that plays fulfilled at various eras are noted in the texts. Some plays included practically the whole community in a distinctly religious event, such as when the male residents of a Greek city-state gathered to honor their gods or when the vast medieval Christian mystery cycles were used to commemorate the yearly Feast of Corpus Christi. On the other hand, the feudal nobility was the only audience members for the ceremonial temple ritual of the early Noh play of Japan, which was only performed during religious festivals. However, much with certain 19th-century melodramas, morality plays from the later Middle Ages, and George Bernard Shaw and Bertolt Brecht's discussion pieces from the 20th century, theatre may sometimes have a more overtly didactic intent. Plays may mock society or subtly highlight human frailty. Tragedies can reveal the grandeur and potential of people, while current realistic playwriting explores the human psyche. Drama is the most diverse kind of art since it not only depicts life but also offers a unique perspective on it. And it consistently supports Samuel Johnson's claim that there is no set restriction on the types of composition available to playwrights [7].

Common Dramatic Elements

Despite the enormous ethnic variation of theatre, all plays have certain characteristics. For starters, drama cannot stop being significant theater and turn into a "private" message, as a book or a poetry may. The figures don't have to be hideous and absurd, or even puppets, to be understood by the audience. They may be superhuman and godlike in look, speech, and action, or they can be monstrous and godlike. They only stop communicating as theater if they become too abstract. Thus, a deity in Greek tragedy or Shakespeare speaks like any other mortal, and the character of

Death in medieval theatre justifies like a human creature. Therefore, a play communicates its story by mimicking human behavior. The audience's reaction may be significantly influenced by how far or close such behavior is to their everyday lives: they may be in awe of what they witness, they may laugh with detached superiority at clownish antics, or they may feel pity. These distinctions between alienation and empathy are significant because a dramatist may direct the audience's perception of the play and give it meaning by widening or narrowing this aesthetic chasm between the stage and the audience.

The first essential includes the second implicitly. Although static figures may be just as symbolically symbolic on stage as they are in a painting, a dynamic portrayal of the figures in motion is necessary to reveal a character's deeper traits and to effectively direct the audience's reactions. A scenario that is somewhat recognisable and plausible must be shown on stage in order for the characters to move and react as they would in real life. Some claim that action is the main component of drama and that character development is impossible without it. It seems hard to separate the notion of a character from the circumstance in which he is situated since no play would exist without a scenario, even though it could seem plausible after seeing the whole play. The order in which the writer develops characters and situations is random. The breadth and scale of the character-in-situation, such as a man addressing God or a guy confronting his wife, are more pertinent because they are more in line with the sort of experience the drama is trying to give its audience. Even in this case, it is important to avoid making hasty decisions since even the most ambitious heroic tragedy may not have the same impact as a funny farce's mocking depiction of human insanity.

The final element is fashion. Every play has its own style, albeit it will be affected by the theater's traditions and the venue's technical requirements. Style is neither something performers put on a text after it has been written nor is it only incidental to the play's plot. Instead, it goes without saying that a play cannot communicate without it. In fact, elegance is sometimes the only thing a good play possesses. The play's overall mood and spirit, as well as the degree of fantasy or realism, the level of ritualism or illusion, and the way these characteristics are indicated by the directives, either explicit or implicit, in the play's text, are all suggested by style. A play's style, in its finer details, governs the actor's kind of gesture and movement, as well as his speech's tone, tempo, and intonation. In this approach, the audience's mindset is also set up beforehand. Although some great plays purposefully include aspects of both humor and tragedy, nothing is more unsettling than being tricked into anticipating one and finding the other. By using stylistic cues, the audience may be made to believe that the play will follow well-trodden routes and that its structure will often mirror the rhythm of audience reaction. Drama is a traditional game, and if the rules are consistently disregarded, viewers cannot take part.

A playwright will try to convey concepts and emotions by putting animated characters in situations in a particular way and following a certain pattern. They want the audience to think about these things or feel the same way that motivated them to write the play. However, audiences continue to be active, autonomous participants in theatrical communication. An actor has the responsibility of representing the author to the audience during a performance and will look for "feedback" in return. The author has to take this situation into consideration. Ideas may not be accepted if they are

presented openly, so great playwrights with a political or social agenda, like Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw, and Bertolt Brecht, quickly mastered techniques to get the audience to reason the ideas as part of their reaction to the play. Shakespeare and Anton Chekhov are two outstanding examples in Western drama of writers who achieved an exquisite balance of pathos with comedy in order to ensure the affective function of their plays. Neither will overstatement of feeling ("sentimentality") be used without a due balance of thinking and even the detachment of laughter necessarily arouse passions.

Dramatic language

Dramatic language may go to extremes: on the one hand, it can be very theatrical and ceremonial; on the other, it can be a near-exact replication of actual life, which is often associated with drama in movies and on television. It may be inferred that the performers in ancient Greek ceremonial theater performed the authors' verse-based scripts incantations as part of a speech-song hybrid. The coterie and popular play of China and Japan were both fundamentally operatic, with poetic speech repeated rhythmically and accompanied by music. The impact of the sentences being said in such a rhythmic manner was to elevate the atmosphere of the whole theater to one of holy adoration. Other traditionally elevated drama uses verse, such as the Christian drama of the Middle Ages, the tragedy of the English Renaissance, the heroic Neoclassical tragedies of 17th-century France by Pierre Corneille and Jean Racine, the Romantic lyricism of Goethe and Friedrich von Schiller, and contemporary attempts at a revival of a religious theatre like those of T.S. Eliot. In fact, plays featuring prose dialogue used to be very uncommon and mostly performed on comedic stages. Dramatic characters were only expected to talk and act like actual people until the end of the 19th century, when naturalistic realism came into fashion [8].

The use of poetry in theatre is not just for the purpose of elevating the audience. Some critics contend that by using the more nuanced tones and rhythms of excellent poetry, a writer may have stronger control over both the speech and movement of the performers as well as the reactions of the audience. It has been suggested that the flexible, colloquial rhythms of everyday dialogue provide the performer and the audience too much latitude in their interpretation and reaction. Verse definitely has more clear auditory, kinetic, and emotional commands than prose, however prose may still have these traits when written by a prose conversation master like Shaw or Chekhov. It is even more likely that the inclusion of verse-like aspects in the play such as rhythm and rhyme helps to significantly increase the "aesthetic distance" of the stage, or the level of unreality and make-believe needed to free the imagination. Verse theatre may thus use a broad range of non-realistic auditory and visual techniques. For example, Greek tragic choric discourse offered a philosophical analysis of the event while also poetically captivating the audience. A poetry accompaniment in Indian play gave the performers' highly stylized system of symbolic head, eye, arm, and finger movements a sense of harmony. Shakespeare's tragic soliloquy gave the protagonist the opportunity to speak his thoughts out loud to the audience while he was by himself on stage. As a result, the soliloquy wasn't a point in the action where the action came to an end but rather a gripping scene where the audience's imagination could advance.

DISCUSSION

Dramatic framework

The structure of a play, which is a key component in the overall effect of the experience, makes the pieces of a play work together rather than allowing them to spontaneously combine to provide a dramatic experience. A writer will choose a play's format in part based on the circumstances in which it will be performed: how long should it last to capture and hold an audience's attention? How long can a crowd stay seated before getting up? Is the audience moving from one pageant stage to the next, as in certain medieval festivals, or is it seated for the length of the performance? A religious cycle, which may depict the whole of human history from the Creation to the Last Judgment, will vary in structure from a revue skit that revolves on a single joke. Structure is also determined by the specific needs of the subject to be portrayed. While the writer may choose to recount the whole plot in episodic fashion from the beginning to the finish of a chronicle play, a realistic drama may demand for significant exposition of the characters' pasts and recollections. As Aristotle first indicated in his Poetics, there is one basic rule: a play must be lengthy enough to provide the details an audience needs to be engaged and to produce the sensation of tragedy, or comedy, on the senses and imagination.

A traditional code of location and time must be established in the majority of plays. The location of the action will be accurately identifiable in a play where the stage must closely resemble reality, and the scenic depiction on stage must support the illusion. Stage time will almost perfectly match chronological time in such a play, and if the drama is divided into three, four, or five acts, the audience will anticipate that each change of scene will cause the clock or calendar to be adjusted. But audiences seldom anticipate realism in theater, and as a result, the writer has enormous latitude in expressing time and place. As Samuel Johnson noted in his analysis of Shakespeare, audiences constantly enable the play to influence their imaginations. When Lady Macbeth is later seen alone reading a letter, it is without a doubt assumed that she is in surroundings appropriate for the wife of a Scottish nobleman. It suffices for the witches in Macbeth to refer to their "heath" with its "fog and filthy air" for their location to be accepted on a stage without scenery. Simple stage symbolism may help the audience's imagination, whether it is the Greek orchstra's central altar of the gods, a medieval miracle play's use of a scarlet cloth to symbolize the scarlet Sea, or the Tibetan performer's use of a chair to represent a mountain [9]. With this level of fancifulness, it should come as no surprise that theater may freely alter time, moving from the present to the future, from one universe to another, and from reality to a dream.

Therefore, it is unclear if the term "action" in a play refers to what takes place on stage or what the spectator imagines. There is little doubt that it goes beyond the participants' simple physical exercise. Instead, everything that advances the audience's perception of the play and fosters the expansion of its imagination is a legitimate component of the play's action. Thus, the two speaking male performers who wore varied masks, categorized for sex, age, class, and face expression, were plenty for the ancient Greek writer Aeschylus. In the Italian commedia dell'arte of the 16th and 17th centuries, Pantalone and Arlecchino were recurring characters who always wore their respective costumes and masks. This allowed audiences to predict the actions of the greedy old merchant and his rascally servant. On a less evident level, a speech that on paper appears to have

no bearing on the play's movement might, when performed, be a startling stimulation for the audience to understand the play's action, its meaning, and its direction. Thus, although the Greek chorus and the Elizabethan actor in soliloquy may seem to "do" nothing, their personal monologues of appraisal and reassessment instruct the audience in how to perceive the action on the main stage and give the play's events significant weight. Drama is a responsive art form that moves continually through time, therefore any convention that fosters an intense reaction while saving valuable time is of incalculable importance [10].

Drama as a Cultural Manifestation

All forms of dramatic literature share some characteristics despite the vast differences in themes and conventions among plays as diverse as the well-known Kabuki of Japan, the coterie comedies of the Restoration in England, a Javanese puppet play, and a contemporary social drama by the American dramatist Arthur Miller. The distinctions between plays result from variations in the performing environment, regional customs, the social function of theater, and cultural history. The cultural backdrop is the most significant, if obscure, of them. The drama of the East may be easily distinguished from that of the West due to cultural differences.

Contrasting East and West

The traditional theater of Hindu India and its offshoots in Peninsular Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, China, Japan, Java, and Bali make up the majority of Asian play. The Western world's Middle Ages and Renaissance are when it was at its height. Asian culture, which is stable and traditional and preserves its traditions with respect, does not put the same emphasis on writers and their particular accomplishments as Western society does on history and progress. Asian drama's beginnings are therefore lost to time, even if its themes and distinctive aesthetics are likely quite similar to those from before records were maintained. The West has only recently become aware of the East's theatrical wealth and what it could do to influence modern theater, as seen in the 20th-century experimental drama written by William Butler Yeats and Thornton Wilder in English, Paul Claudel and Antonin Artaud in French, and Bertolt Brecht in German. Similarly, the East has only recently been influenced by Western theater [11].

The most traditional and unrepresentative forms of drama in the world are classical Chinese and Japanese drama. Conventions of performance were highly stylized, and traditions of characterisation and play structure got institutionalized to a degree of outstanding elegance, subtlety, and complexity throughout the years by performers who selflessly dedicated themselves to the profession of a traditional craft. All of the performing arts are used to their fullest effect in these and other forms of Asian play, including speech and song, dance and mime, and story and poetry. Western eyes are led to believe that this play is an exquisite fusion of ballet and opera, in which the written text plays a supporting role. This idea is supported by the actors' display and studied gestures, their refined dance patterns, and the all-pervasive instrumental accompaniment to the players' voices and the play's action. In this play, the setting might be changed with a freedom that would have astounded even the most romantic of Elizabethan playwrights, the action could go back in time like a current movie flashback, and the events could be telescoped with Expressionism-style recklessness. This excessive theatricality gave performers and viewers a creative freedom that allowed for the creation of great theater.

Notably, most Asian civilizations also supported puppet theater, where marionette-specific character, action, and stage stylizations were especially appropriate. Except in the works of the 17th-century master Chikamatsu Monzaemon, who enjoyed a creative freedom in writing for puppets instead of for the actors of Kabuki, the emphasis on the script was diminished in Bunraku, the classical puppet theatre of Japan, by the elocutionary art of a chanted narration and the manipulative skill with the dolls. The realism of Western theatre during and after the Renaissance, however, has increased, not just in terms of setting and attire but also in the way that characters and situations are handled.

The widespread consensus is that religious festivals were the origin of both Western and Asian theater. Dramatists used well-known legends to give their plays a romantic and sometimes spectacular character while maintaining the moral tone of religious theatre. This was never the sensationalism of novelty that Western dramatists sometimes exploited; rather, Eastern originality is just a variant on the well-known, so even the smallest shifts in focus might amuse the knowledgeable. Similar nuance may be seen in the often-portrayed Greek tragedy stories. The hunger for change seen in contemporary Western play is consistently absent in Asian drama. In the West, changes happened rather quickly as a result of a combination of economic pressures, spiritual division, and a conviction in one's own vision. The classical play of the East will never achieve the moral complexity of Greek tragedy, the character psychology of Shakespeare and Racine, the social and spiritual critique of Ibsen and August Strindberg, or the modern theatre of shock and debate [12].

CONCLUSION

Social satire is a captivating and persistent feature of Ben Jonson's comedies. Jonson skillfully exposes the shortcomings and foibles of his society via his razor-sharp humor and acute observations of early 17th-century England. His creations act as a mirror, illuminating the absurdity of social stratification, the cynicism of human nature, and the moral ramifications of vice. Jonson's satirical commentary is both hilarious and thought-provoking because to the characters, who are sometimes presented as stock types yet who engage in Machiavellian scheming and deft wordplay. A moral criticism of unethical activity, however, lurks behind the comedy, guaranteeing that justice is served and wrongdoers are made to pay for their actions. The comedies of Jonson continue to be both a tribute to his literary skill and a timeless commentary on society and human nature that elicits both thought and amusement.

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CHAPTER 3

CHARACTERIZATION IN JONSON'S COMEDIES

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ABSTRACT:

Ben Jonson's comedies heavily rely on character development, which adds to the complexity, levity, and social critique that characterize his serious works. This study examines Jonson's distinctive method of character development, emphasizing how he uses several strategies to develop lovable, complex characters in his plays. The eclectic ensemble of characters in Jonson's comedies, including "Volpone," "The Alchemist," and "Bartholomew Fair," each have their own idiosyncrasies, weaknesses, and goals. These people often have exaggerated characteristics and actions that serve humorous and satirical objectives. They are frequently bigger than life. Use of comedy via vices and character faults is one of Jonson's distinctive methods for characterization. Many of his characters are motivated by one main preoccupation or vice, such lust, greed, or vanity. In "Volpone," for instance, the action is driven by the title character's fixation with collecting fortune, which highlights the insanity of unchecked ambition. In order to characterize his characters, Jonson also used a method known as "humoral theory" that draws on antiquated notions of the four humors (blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile). Characters are categorized using this method based on their prevailing sense of humor, which affects how they behave and behave in the play. A "melancholy"-dominated persona, for instance, can be depicted as being extremely solemn, reserved, or prone to depressive episodes. The way that language is used in Jonson's portrayal is another distinguishing feature. He creates clever and elegant speech that captures the social standing, educational background, and personalities of the characters. His characters' verbal mastery gives their portrayals more depth and subtlety, which makes their interactions both interesting and illuminating.

KEYWORDS:

Alchemist, Humoral Theory, Jonson's Comedies, Melancholy, Volpone.

INTRODUCTION

Comedy of Humors is the complete antithesis of romantic comedy, which portrays man as being controlled by one distinct whim. It was initially grown in Gammer Gurton's Needle, and Ben Johnson and Ralph Roister Doister made it well-known in England. Characters in a comedy of humour are types and eccentrics, but in a comedy of Shakespeare "there is rather an attempt to conceal the presence of the types under a semblance of personality."

According to A. F. Scott, the phrase "comedy of humors" is specifically used to describe the kind of comedic play created by Ben Jonson and John Fletcher, in which humor is personified as a "individual passion or tendency [1]." It is a common style of humor that Ben Jonson popularized. The word comedy is used to describe works in which characters experience little humiliation due

to misfortune and in which the characters successfully resolve the action. One such kind of humor is comedy of humours. "Humour" was a medical word used in the Renaissance to describe the four main bodily fluids: blood (sanguinary), phlegm, choler, and melancholy. It was thought that a man's bodily health and temperament were both determined by his temperament or by the combination of these humours. There are four different kinds of disposition that are considered to result from the predominance of one or more of the humours in a temperament: sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, and melancholic [2]. Each character in Ben Jonson's comedies is said to be driven by an overriding sense of humor, a particular prejudice, or an eccentricity of character.

When Jonson wrote his plays, the word "humor" had a much broader definition than it does today. The four humours of the body described by the old physicians were thought to have an impact on the mind, and over time, both the body and the mind were thought to have their own distinct humours. At the time, it stood for dominating mental traits. Harvey explains that "the comedy of humours is a term applied especially to the type of comic drama written by Ben Jonson, where a "humour" is a personification of some individual passion or propensity." His play Every Man in his Humour is an example of a comedy of humours, and it introduces us to a group of eccentrics. Each person has their own unique sense of humor, mood, or strangeness. Jonson wants to make humor the essential trait that underpins everything else. His fads had rigid, constricting boundaries that were uncommon among playwrights of the time. Only minor characters, if any, get the 'humours' that the Elizabethan writers intended. All of Jonson's characters, but notably the main ones, have these traits [3].

Features that Make a Comedy of Humor

1. **Strong Realism**

The key element of comedy of humours is intense reality. The protagonists in this story instead step into modern life with all of its manners, kinds, flaws, and affectations rather than escaping into the romantic fantasy world. Ben Johnson is indelible because he liberated English comedy from the constraints of Beaumont and Fletcher's romantic extravagances. He also painted a realistic portrait of modern-day England. We may evaluate the modern Elizabethan civilization by using the narrative of his plays.

2. **Satiric and Didactic**

To make the audience laugh themselves into good behavior, didactic and satiric comedies accentuate the characters' idiosyncrasies. In order to liberate people from their follies, this kind of comedy satirizes the follies and foibles of both men and women. Ben Jonson has made fun of personalities by using their foibles to make others laugh. A. Nicoll claims:

The theatrical world was introduced to realism for the first time by Jonson, who also contributed enhanced "humors" portrayed in a satiric attitude.

3. **Satire and Wit**

Shakespeare's plays are full with humor, which is unimportant to the comedy of humor. As a natural outcome of the kinds' exaggeration, it features wit and sarcasm. A. Nicoll claims:

4. The Three Units

Here, all three of the unities of time, location, and action are clearly evident. The activity only takes place in one location and does not last for more than 24 hours. In Jonson's The Alchemist, every occurrence occurs within or just outside Lovewit's door, and it only lasts for twenty-four hours. The comedy of homour adheres to the traditional canon of having a single storyline without any subplots. Nothing catastrophic is driving it [4].

Examples of Comedy of Humor in Literature

Ben Jonson's poem Volpone

a. Ben Jonson's Everyman in His Humour
b. Ben Jonson's The Alchemist
c. •All Fools, a Chapman book
d. Middleton's A Trick to Catch the Old One
e. Massinger's A New Way to Pay Off Old Debts
f. Shadwell's The Squire of Alsatia
g. Shadwell's Bury Fair

A Comedy of Humors called Everyman in His Humor

Take this as an example. A worried elderly father is shown in Ben Jonson's poem Every father in His Humour while his son, a young poet, is spreading his wild oats. There is a merchant whose sense of humor is to be a jealous spouse; as a result, young, self-assured country gulls exist, but they must be jumped. This is the father's way of torturing himself. An upright, upbeat magistrate has unwavering conviction in the merits of a cup of sack, and Babadil, a new kind of blusterer, charms everyone with his polite demeanor and the calm voice with which he declares his implausible objectives. In Every Man in His Humour, Jonson aptly called the dramatis personae Kitely, Dame Kitely, Knowell, Brainworm, and Justice Clement; in Every Man Out of His Humor, Fastidious Brisk, Fungoso, Sordido, and Puntarvolo the vain knight, among others. With the exception of the fact that all funny circumstances originate from the particular characters' sense of humor, typical scenarios are also handled exactly as in any other comedy.

There are several contradicting components in this common form of humor. For instance, the extremely exaggerated and hence unrealistic characters walk about in a very realistic setting and according to social custom; the speech patterns and social quirks are realistically highlighted in a comedy of manners. With the exception of the exaggerated qualities or humors of its characters, a comedy of humors has all the elements of a standard comedy [5].

The poetic and ethical ideas of Ben Jonson

Poetry, according to Jonson's definition and analysis, is an imitation of life. This has a number of elements. Like Sidney, Jonson saw poetry as the beginning of a greater level of realism, but unlike Sidney, he believed that this had to be portrayed in the manner of and with the look of actual life. Unlike Sidney, who had emphasized the poet's creative freedom, Jonson called for a more accurate and objective copy. Jonson underlined the value of education among his demands for the poet. He did, however, acknowledge that in order to see and convey the Truth, one must have the capacity,

the training, and the inspiration. He borrowed some of his concept of study from Horace, but mostly from Cicero and Quintilian. In contrast to Quintilian and Cicero, who both demanded that the orator be knowledgeable in all significant topics and arts, Jonson's demand for the poet combines all of these. Even though poetry has a long history of being associated with learning, the poet's goal is to transmit a real grasp of life; all of his research is focused on identifying and advocating the greatest ways to live. The poet must be a nice guy because he must preach living a good life. He must in reality be knowledgeable, talented, and competent at his craft. And his art was the finest way to make use of his talent, knowledge, and abilities [6].

When the Classics were thought of as the pinnacle of literary accomplishment, Jonson looked to the past for his standards. Although his perspective was characteristic of the Renaissance, the certainty and purposefulness with which he took inspiration from the past was a sign of neo-classicism's potential. He looked for Truth and Wisdom there, and from the Stoics in particular, he borrowed his conception of the perfect man. He likewise looked for expressional models, but he changed what he found, turning the classical into an English epigram, for instance. The past was appropriated and applied to the present. In order to express his literary and moral aspirations and to ensure the success of the present, Jonson often exploited historical and mythological characters. However, he did not suggest that the past could not be improved upon since, as a result of Vives and Bacon, he obviously thought that advancement was possible.

The poems that Jonson wrote to his friends and companions offer a "picture," or a representation of his moral and literary goals. The epigram gave Jonson the opportunity to articulate this with succinctness, clarity, and precision. They often describe an ideal of character and its connection to literature and society. Reflections on humanistic principles on the worth of character in the pursuit of Truth, the need of achieving a real knowledge of life and the past, and the relevance of friendship in the social order are prompted by poems to great poets and thinkers like Donne and Selden. Additionally, Jonson's customers get verses that celebrate his principles. In a poem to Lady Bedford, he expresses his idealized view of life; in a poem to Pembroke, he demonstrates his perception of a particular connection between the picture and the epigram. The Sidneys were the most accomplished and intelligent patrons of the day, and Jonson's friendship with them inspired him to extol individual family members while constantly referring to their shared humanistic principles [7].

In line with Jonson's ideals, the great public personalities of the time are also imagined, albeit always in light of their actual achievements. They stand for a military and political ideal, respectively. The poems written for his contemporaries correctly portray the lives of their subjects and also make passing references to modern concerns; they demonstrate that Jonson used judgment in selecting the individuals to honor and the virtues to commend in them. He acknowledged, however, that he had lauded unfit persons. However, those who could have been seen to be worthless are complimented for their true traits and accomplishments; Jonson presents an assessment of them that was accurate during the time the poem was written. Jonson used a variety of components in his poetry, including praise and teaching, the individual and the "pictura," moral and objective truth, the general rule and the specific illustration [8].

Poetry written after 1616 differs from previous poetry in that Jonson stopped defining a "pictura" and began writing about more specific issues. The evolution of his style of bemoaning death and lauding other poets demonstrates this progression. He also abandoned the epigram in favor of genres that permit lengthier and broader treatment. His praise blended traditional morals and judgment with the modern virtuoso ideal, but with waning faith in the worth of creative work and poetry. In an effort to understand life, Jonson used both social and intellectual currents of the day to represent his view that poetry should "express" a person's existence. Jonson also imitated modern customs.

DISCUSSION

As a Comedy of Humors, Volpone

A play with a strong emphasis on characters, with each one expressing a distinct personality, is referred to as a comedy of humors. Volpone's characters are archetypes. Rather than being actual people, they symbolize a sort of character. Although several of the characters in this play, including Nano, Castrone, and Androgyny, have physical anomalies, their mental imbalances are not as severe as those of Volpone, Mosca, Voltore, Corvino, Corbaccio, etc [9]. A character with imbalance is Volpone. He worships riches as his god right at the start of the play, indicating that Volpone is completely obsessed by avarice. Along with being avaricious, he then accuses his gold of being a saint. He also makes money by deceiving the inheritance seekers and desires a relationship with the attractive Celia. Additionally, he enjoys torturing the legacy hunters. All of them point to his mental instability. Mosca, Volpone's parasite, shares his master's avarice. He comes out as a more cunning criminal than Volpone in the play. In an effort to win over his lord, he torments the legacy hunters. He shows his real colors near the conclusion of the play when he makes every effort to defraud his master. He is thus also psychologically unbalanced.

Avarice, which affects all three heritage hunters Voltore, Corbaccio, and Corvino is the main source of comedy in Volpone. To make Volpone happy, Voltore presents him with a pricey antique plate. He is so preoccupied with money that if he were paid an additional six sols, he might argue against his Creator. The eldest legacy hunter, Corbaccio, consents to disinherit his own son, Bonario, in order to get access to Volpone's fortune. Even he denies having a son named Bonario. Corvine coerces his wife into having an affair with Volpone. Additionally, he calls his wife a whore and claims to have personally seen her engaging in sexual activity with Bonario [10].

Sir Politic Would-be and his wife both gained their sense of humor. Sir Politic's comedy aims to inspire excellent political acumen and statesmanship. Along with his political comedy, he also exhibits the humor of the archetypal traveler, who meticulously recorded every little detail of his trip. Lady Politic Would-be is an amalgam of many academic fields. Her notion of compulsion and possession is an amateurish parody of Platonic philosophy. She has a huge appetite. She is willing to give her body in exchange for Volpone's money. Volpone's characters are archetypes. The 'humors' of all the characters are out of balance as a result of their own imbalances, which causes them to behave in hilarious ways. Volpone is a comedy of humours as a result.

Dated Humor

Old Comedy, or early Greek comedy (about 5th century BC), is well-known because to Aristophanes' writings. Old Comedy plays are known for their vivacious and upbeat mockery of public figures and situations. The plays include forthright political criticism as well as commentary on literary and philosophical subjects. They are made up of song, dance, personal insults, and buffoonery [11]. The loosely connected tales of the plays were originally presented in Athens during the Dionysus festival. They eventually developed a six-part structure, consisting of an introduction, which presents and develops the basic fantasy; the parodos, which marks the entrance of the chorus; the contest or agon, which is a ritualized debate between opposing principals, typically stock characters; the parabasis, in which the chorus addresses the audience on current events and hurls scathing criticism at prominent citizens; a series of farcical scenes; and a final banquet or wedding. The protagonists donned street clothes and masks with strange faces, while the chorus often appeared in animal costumes.

The Clouds (423 BC), a satire on the abuse of philosophical argument targeted primarily at Socrates, and The Frogs (405 BC), a satire on Greek drama targeted primarily at Euripides are two examples of the 11 surviving plays by its most famous exponent, sometimes referred to as Aristophanic comedy. Cratinus, Crates, Pherecrates, and Eupolis are a few more authors of Old Comedy. Old Comedy came to an end after Athens lost the Peloponnesian War because there was a distinct feeling of disappointment with the heroes and gods who had played a significant part in Old Comedy [12].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ben Jonson's mastery of the dramatic art throughout the English Renaissance is shown by the adept and unique characterisation in his comedies. As a writer of great skill and intelligence, Jonson stood out for his distinctive combination of humour, satire, and social critique in his approach to character development. Jonson used a variety of dramatic devices in his comedies, including "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," to make his characters come to life. He created vivid and unforgettable characters who personified the vices and follies of his society using comedy, exaggeration, and irony. His figures often acted as prototypes, illuminating different aspects of social strata and human nature. The people created by Jonson served as both comedic and social commentary vehicles. He satirized the moral and ethical failings of his day via his incisive insights and quick humor. He held up a mirror to society by exaggerated its faults and follies, which in turn sparked both introspection and amusement. Furthermore, Jonson's talent for creating multifaceted, complicated characters gave his comedy a deeper, more nuanced quality. His characters have layers of depth and humanity rather than being one-dimensional caricatures. They battled with ego, passion, ambition, and the desire for social prestige, which made them approachable and fascinating personalities for viewers both then and today.

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CHAPTER 4

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON JONSON'S POETIC STYLE

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ABSTRACT:

The famed English Renaissance author Ben Jonson is known for his unique poetry style, which is distinguished by its accuracy, humor, and classical inspirations. This study explores the fundamental components of Jonson's poetic method, highlighting its ongoing relevance in the field of English literature. Jonson's poetry is distinguished by its accuracy and clarity. He is renowned for paying close attention to every little detail and using orderly, ordered language. His appreciation for old Roman poets like Horace and Martial may be seen in the well-formed lines, deliberate word choice, and rigorous devotion to classical forms and meters that define his writings. The humor and sardonic edge of Jonson's poetry is one of its distinguishing qualities. In his poetry, he often uses sarcasm, comedy, and cutting social satire. Jonson's humor is a defining characteristic of his lyrical style, whether he is making fun of modern characters, criticizing society standards, or delving into human vices. In his satirical poems like "On My First Son" and "To Celia," he demonstrates his skill at fusing deep sentiment with comedy. In his poems, Jonson demonstrates his interest in ancient literature and philosophy. He gets his ideas from classical literature and includes allusions to classical mythology, history, and philosophy in his rhymes. His writing has a timeless, universal nature as a result of the classical influence, which makes it appealing to readers of all ages. Furthermore, morality, honor, and the human condition are topics that Jonson often addresses in his poetry. He debates issues of morality and vice, reflecting the philosophical trends of his day. His writings, such "To Penshurst" and "To Heaven," provide insightful analyses of the interplay between people, the natural environment, and the supernatural.

KEYWORDS:

Ben Jonson, On My First Son, Poetry, To Celia, To Penshurst.

INTRODUCTION

In the Renaissance, Benjamin Jonson was a notable playwright, poet, and literary critic whose fame rivaled that of Shakespeare and Marlowe. He contributed significantly to the development of theatrical comedy and was recognized as the father of humor comedy. Shakespeare was born nine years before the maestro of poetry and satire, and he passed away twenty years after Shakespeare. He encouraged the waning popularity of play during the last twenty years, which peaked during the Elizabethan period. Johnson was a scholarly and commanding character in both real life and his writing career. He was schooled in ancient studies. In terms of his personal, political, and creative lives, he was a figure of extreme controversy [1]. He also spent a portion of his life in jail. He also had an impact on the Queen of England via his poetry, and it was an honor to serve as the country's first unofficial poet laureate. Through his creative brilliance, he also had an impact on

poets of the Caroline and Jacobean eras (1625–1642). Ben Jonson is well known for his satirical comedies "The Alchemist," "Every Man in His Humor," "Volpone," and "Bartholomew Fair."

A Summary of Ben Jonson's Bio

Ben Jonson was born on June 11, 1572, into a modest household in London, England. After being released from jail, his father, who had lost his estates as a result of Queen Mary's fury, was appointed a priest. He passed away, nevertheless, two months before Jonson was born. His mother wed a master bricklayer two years later. Ben Jonson received acceptance into a St. Martin's Lane school. Fortunately, he eventually enrolled at Westminster School with the help of a family friend. William Camden, a renowned historian, topographer, and scholar, served as his instructor there. Camden had a significant intellectual impact on Jonson's literary career up to his death in 1623.

Jonson was scheduled to enroll in Cambridge University after leaving Westminster. He was unable to finish his education, however, and finally, unwillingly, entered his stepfather's line of work as a bricklayer. Camden, to whom Jonson owes his writing career, was the only person who could bring out the best of his creative talent. During this period, he also became interested in classical writers like Horace. Jonson traveled to the Netherlands after completing his apprenticeship and enlisted in the English troops in Flanders. He afterwards went back to England to resume his playwriting and acting careers. He played "Hieronimo," the main character, in "The Spanish Tragedy," the first English tragedy, which was produced in 1586. He most likely wed Ann Lewis around 1594, although his wife was never well-known in history.

The Literary Career of Ben Jonson

Playwright And Actor

On his return to England, Ben Jonson started writing plays professionally. He accepted the position of playwright for Philip Henslowe in 1587. He also performed in The Admiral's Men as an actor. He played there under Philip Henslowe's direction.

Imprisonment

The undated comedy "The Case is Altered" is his first work still in existence. Together with Thomas Nashe, he penned "The Isle of Dogs" in 1597. However, because of its objectionable plot, the Queen forbade it, and the authors were put in jail. He was later sent behind bars once again for the 1598 fight-related death of Gabriel Spencer, a coworker of his. He almost evaded death from this charge. It was at this period that he wrote "Every Man in His Humor," a classic of English play, in 1598. This made Jonson a significant playwright in his day. Additionally, he imitated Aristophanes in his 1599 play "Every Man out of His Humor." However, despite the story's widespread popularity during his time, it did not turn out to be a success. The majority of Jonson's writings during the latter years of Elizabeth I's tenure are based on disputes and fights [2].

The Theatres in War

Children of the Chapel presented "Cynthia's Revels" by Ben Jonson, which was written in 1600, at Blackfriars Theatre. A scathing parody of Thomas Dekker and John Marston was included.

Additionally, the criticism that these two authors leveled at Jonson backfired. However, the playwrights' reunion resulted in the conclusion of the War of the Theatres within the next years.

For The Monarch: Masques

When James VI became king in 1603, Jonson joined others in congratulating him. For the king, he produced a number of masques. "The Masque of Blackness" (1605) and "The Satyr" (1603) were two of these compositions. He gained more status but less money from his literary career. Despite keeping him away from writing for the public theater for over ten years, Jonson's new literary post reportedly only paid him less than 200 pounds. Some authors referred to Jonson as the first Poet Laureate of England when he was awarded an annual pension in 1616. He became well-known as a result of this recognition and released the first folio of his works. Other folios eventually came in 1640, 1641, and 1692. The majority of Jonson's works, for which he is remembered as a notable author, were produced between 1606 and 1620. Among them were "Volpone" (1605), "Catiline" (1611), a tragedy, "The Alchemist" (1610), and "The Bartholomew Fair" (1614).

Reading Decline

Although Jonson's fame suffered after 1620, he was still a renowned poet and author. Additionally, other poets began to appear who emulated Ben Jonson's style and were referred to as the "Tribe of Ben." Richard Lovelace, Robert Herrick, and Sir John Suckling were these poets. Despite his previous renown, his new plays at this time were not well received. The majority of them were based on Charles I's life. For instance, he created the journalism-focused "The Staple of News" and "The New Inn". Johnson also penned the poem "An Ode to Himself" on his praise of himself since the public did not seem to appreciate his efforts. Perhaps the ignorance he encountered from the new Charles-I court also displeased him. Despite the repeated blows he took and the ignorance that shattered him, he persisted in writing.

Death

He purportedly passed away on August 16, 1637. Additionally, he left "The Sad Shepherd," a piece of pastoral literature, unfinished. Although incomplete, it added a new depth to Jonson's work.

The Penmanship of Ben Jonson

Radiant Influence

A prolific writer of the Elizabethan Age, Ben Jonson lays greater attention on classical works of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers e.g. both Aristotle and Horace. His writings' heavy reliance on classical tropes and allusions had a significant influence on the literature of the Augustan Age. During the period of his friendship with the academic William Camden at Westminster School, his works acquired a classical aesthetic. For instance, as a devotee of the classics, he placed more emphasis on the form and its simplicity of organization than on the expression of feelings. Similar to how crisp imagery, there is a depiction of wit, cunning, and conciseness. It is partly because Jonson was forced to rehearse poetry in school using a technical format rather than concentrating on its emotional meaning. For instance, the plot is separated into five stages in "The Alchemist" and other plays: exposition, complexity, peak, dropping action, and

denouement. Ancient Greek and Roman dramas like "Odyssey" and "Julius Caesar" often included these five sections [3].

Defense

Jonson reflected the importance of position in his writings and was a fearless defender of his literary works. For instance, Jonson assumed the role of a humorous character and impartial judge in "Cynthia's Revels" and "Poetaster" (1601), which both examined the place of art in society. Due of a personal dispute with them, he also satirized Thomas Dekker and John Marston. Additionally, he discovered English literary criticism via critique of William Shakespeare, the most important playwright and poet of his day, in his prose collection Discoveries Made concerning Men and Matter [4].

Satire

Satire was a skill that Ben Jonson mastered. By satirizing his plays and poetry, he added a fresh perspective to literature. As a result, satire developed into a significant aspect of his creative career. Most of his plays were presented in a sarcastic light and challenged prevailing customs. For instance, the comedies "The Case is Altered," "Volpone," and "Poetaster" have the ideal balance of humor and sarcasm. A satirical farce about the follies and disadvantages of social beings, "The Alchemist" was first presented in 1610 and is another example. Additionally, "Every Man in His Humour" and "Every Man out of His Humor" are among his earliest and most well-known satires. In a similar vein, "The Devil is an Ass" parodies city life with themes of deceit and money.

Innovations

Ben Jonson wrote with the intention of improving the piece via fresh adjustments. He wrote in ways that were unconventional and had a contentious reputation for doing things differently. It's because he was fiercely aggressive and set himself against the current of the day. He was also a major contributor to the development of several literary traditions. For instance, Jonson produced the majority of his works as a satirical comedy. He also established literary criticism as a genre in English history. Later, he provided same rights to the court while acting as an unofficial Poet Laureate.

Simple Style

The poet Jonson played a crucial part in the development of English literature. He is a key character in English poetry because of his 'simple manner' of writing. He writes with self-awareness and sophistication. This eliminates artificiality from his writing and brings it closer to genuine writing. This frank and energetic portrayal demonstrates his keen interest in reality. The "plain style" of Jonson is neither offensive nor too exquisite. For example, it is more powerful, forceful, direct, clear, practical, serious, and serious. His directness and mastery as an artist are shown by pieces like "To Penshurst," "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare," and "Come, My Celia."

DISCUSSION

Themes Contained in Ben Jonson's Work

Harmony In Social Conversation

The literary genius Ben Jonson brought his body of work together by harmonizing his ideas to build an interconnected link between the opposing societal discourses [5]. He helped to reconcile the conflicts in court life and understood the value of achieving harmony in the social and political debates of the day.

For instance, Jonson attempted to harmonize the erroneous political ideas in "Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists at Court" with the poetry "The Masque of the Queen." This subject partly contradicts Jonson's nature since he had far more divergent ideas than his peers and engaged in a lot of literary conflicts.

Thinking Of Death

In the time of Ben Jonson, the concept of death, and particularly of premature death, was widespread. For instance, it was difficult for people to accept death as an unavoidable aspect of life. A poet is most keenly aware of the otherworld because death has always been a sensitive and emotional subject. As a result, Jonson delicately and acutely holds death in his paintings. His tumultuous past and miserable marriage may possibly be contributing factors in his emotional connection to death. He had written the poems "On My First Sonne" (1603) and "On My First Daughter" (1616) in memory of his infant son and daughter who had died. Similar to this, many of Jonson's well-known historical writings may be read as eulogies for notable or late historical figures. For instance, he also penned "An Epitaph on S.P" on the passing of a young actor who had a natural flair for imitating the acting technique of more seasoned actors [6].

Holiness To Himself

Ben Jonson was consistently faithful to himself in the majority of the things he produced. His portrayal of himself was unusual, and he distinguished himself as a literary personality from other authors of the age. Shakespeare famously declared, "To thine own self be true," via the words of Polonius in "Hamlet," which perfectly fits Jonson. For instance, Jonson's "An Ode to Himself" is a work of self-evaluation. Through the course of his career, he continued to be a literary master because he avoided thinking highly of himself in his work. Despite Jonson's ambiguity and controversy, he never concealed his genuine identity in his writing. Even yet, he rejected harmony when he found it stinging when writing masques about seeking harmony in social life.

The Monarch's Divine Rights

Ben Jonson had contentious ties to the government throughout his writing career. He served King James, much like in the early days of literature, and enjoyed benefits from him. Additionally, he once said that it was the duty of poets of the day to serve the King. King James I and the administration, according to Jonson, are intertwined and he even acknowledged the divine prerogative of the monarch. Such poetry as "The Coronation Triumph" (1604) and "The Masque of Blackness" (1605), among others, were written by him [7].

In exchange, King James gave the poet the unofficial title of Poet Laureate and established a state pension in his honor. But following James' death, he continued to work for Charles I and produced a number of masques for the king. "Love's Triumph Through Callipolis" (1631) and "The King's Entertainment at Welbeck in Nottinghamshire" (1633) are a few of examples.

Plays by Jonson

Jonson began his career as an actor in the theater before switching to playwriting. His first play, The Case is Altered, which is still in existence, was staged in 1597. His first big success, the sophisticated city comedy Every Man in his Humor, was performed in 1598. In only nine concentrated years, Jonson wrote the three comedies for which he is today best known: Volpone (1606), The Alchemist (1610), and Bartholomew Fair (1614). Beginning with James I's coronation in 1603, Jonson began a long-lasting literary alliance with the Stuarts. He composed several entertainments for the royal family over the course of the next four decades, sometimes in association with the theatrical designer Inigo Jones [8].

Relationships And Competition

Jonson may have had many close relationships, but it seems that he was also argumentative, easily offended, and, in the words of his close friend William Drummond, "a great lover and praiser of himself." He lost a duel in 1598 and murdered his opponent, barely escaping death for manslaughter. In his brutally satirical play Poetaster (about 1601), Jonson took aim at his fellow playwrights who made fun of his bricklaying background and attitude of superiority. Rivalry at the Stuart court was what eventually ended his friendship with Inigo Jones.

Success And Death

In 1616, Jonson oversaw the publishing of his Workes, a collection of his plays, some of his poetry, and other amusements. The stage was set for William Shakespeare's posthumous First Folio in 1623 by this groundbreaking book. Following the passing of Shakespeare, Jonson was generally recognized as England's greatest living author and received a royal stipend. In order to "collect and set down all memorable acts of this City and occurrences thereof," he was appointed City Chronologer to the City of London in 1628 after making a foot tour to Scotland in 1618. He could have had a paralytic stroke in the same year. He was buried at Westminster Abbey after passing away on August 6, 1637 [9].

CONCLUSION

Ben Jonson's lyrical style is evidence of his prodigious skill and impact on English literature. Jonson distinguished himself from his contemporaries by displaying a dedication to classical ideals and a methodical approach to writing poetry throughout his career. His lyrical approach may be summed up in a few important ways. First, Jonson's adherence to classicism is clear from the rigid forms and meters he uses. He was a follower of the classical traditions of ancient Greece and Rome, favoring rhyme, regular stanzas, and clear frameworks in his poetry. His poems "Epigrams" and "The Forest" follow conventional poetic forms, which is where this classical influence is most noticeable. Second, Jonson's poetry is distinguished by its sophistication and depth of thought. He was a classical scholar who significantly incorporated mythology, history, and philosophy into his writing. His poetry often include allusions and connections that, in order to fully grasp, one must

be versed with ancient literature. Works like "To Penshurst," in which he praises the beauty of a rural estate while demonstrating his in-depth familiarity with ancient pastoral poetry, are evidence of this cerebral richness. Thirdly, wit and humor are distinctive features of Jonson's poetry. His rhymes were made funnier and more lively by his ability for wordplay, puns, and creative changes of phrase. His "Epigrams" are a perfect illustration of his clever, sometimes sardonic style of poetry, where he provides succinct, amusing comments on numerous facets of life and society.

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CHAPTER 5

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON COURT MASQUES AND PATRONAGE

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ABSTRACT:

The Renaissance era's unique theatrical amusement, known as court masques, was closely linked to the patronage system of the time. This study examines the connection between patronage and court masques, demonstrating how these lavish plays were not just artistic extravaganzas but also manifestations of alliances between the king and aristocracy on the political, social, and cultural fronts. Court masques were lavish spectacles that included play, music, dance, and visual arts. They were sumptuous and spectacular. They often included the work of playwrights, composers, costume designers, and set designers, and were generally commissioned by members of the royal court, including the queen. These performances functioned as a way to commemorate significant occasions like royal weddings, diplomatic gatherings, and official rituals. A key component of royal masques was the Renaissance period patronage system. These shows would get financial assistance and commissions from noble sponsors, sometimes from members of the court. They gained social approval, the monarch's favor, and chances to flaunt their riches and taste in exchange. The finance and execution of court masques were made possible by this patronage system, which also contributed to their grandeur and complexity.

KEYWORDS:

Aristocracy, Court Masques, Diplomatic Gatherings, Official Rituals, Patronage.

INTRODUCTION

Benjamin Jonson was an English Renaissance poet, actor, and playwright who lived from around June 11, 1572, to August 6, 1637. During William Shakespeare's lifetime, Ben Jonson emerged as the biggest literary foe. Jonson was adamantly classical in his approach to writing, differing from Shakespeare and a number of other poets and playwrights of the time in seeing his characters as abstract types inherited from Greek and Roman models rather than as complex, living individuals. Because of this, Jonson is no longer well-liked by the majority of modern literature students. On the other hand, Jonson was a forerunner in his decision to compose plays about common people as opposed to reinventing myths from the past. Some see him as a forerunner of the bourgeois sensibility that would rule literature for the next three centuries in this respect [1].

Without a doubt, Jonson was among the most well-read people in his era's England. He was known for accusing Shakespeare of knowing "Little Latin and less Greek," yet his knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics was great, as seen by the many references and citations that can be found throughout all of his writings. With the potential exception of John Milton, he is one of the very last poets to seriously consider the Greek and Latin classics as examples of great art. After Jonson's

death, generations of writers would still study the classics, but the vast majority would regard them as noble dinosaurs who had done the best, they could in their own times but were still unsuited to the artistic concerns of the rapidly modernizing world. Informally regarded as the first Poet Laureate of England, Jonson was the most well-known and revered poet of his day. Jonson used his position of power to advance a number of poets who were less well-liked but who have now emerged as some of the most intelligent writers in all of English literature. John Donne, Christopher Marlowe, John Lyly, and of course William Shakespeare all flourished in the same age as Jonson. Even while he may not have agreed with some of these greats on stylistic issues, he was familiar with their works [2].

The Entertainment at Althorpe, performed in front of James I's queen as she traveled from Scotland in 1603, and the presentation of The Masque of Blackness at court in 1605 seem to have garnered Jonson royal notice. The "masque" was a kind of semi-dramatic entertainment that mainly served as a cover for a group of strangers to perform dancing and singing in front of visitors and staff members at a royal court or nobleman's home. During the reign of James I, Jones created more exquisite costumes and scenic effects for masques at court, and this simple design was further expanded. The few spoken words that the masque had required in the time of Shakespeare's Elizabethan plays became a "text" of a few hundred lines and a few prepared tunes. As a result, both the designer and the author were crucial since they had to give not just the words but also the particular "allegorical" meaning that underlay the whole amusement. Jones and Jonson worked together to give the Jacobean masque its distinctive form and aesthetic. He largely accomplished this by suggesting a "dramatic" action [3].

Thus, the poet was the one who gave the enlightening concept and set the tone for the whole night's gathering. Jonson's early masques were obviously a success since he was often asked to serve as the court poet in the years that followed. Hymenaei (1606), Hue and Cry After Cupid (1608), The Masque of Beauty (1608), and The Masque of Queens (1609) are a few of his masques. Jonson was prolific in coming up with fresh explanations for the entrance of the visitors in his masques. He also created the "antimasque," which came before the masque officially and included grotesques or comics who were essentially actors rather than dancers or musicians. But this was not enough. Even if Jonson was significant at the court in Whitehall, Jones's efforts probably generated the greatest commotion. It was inevitable that friction would develop between the two men, and finally this friction resulted in a total break: Jonson created the Twelfth Night masque for the court in 1625, but it took another five years for the court to request his services once again.

Both His Youth and Old Age

In order to justify their absence from the Anglican church, Jonson and his wife whom he had married in 1594) were taken before the London consistory court in 1606. He insisted that his wife was innocent but conceded that his own religious beliefs prevented him from attending. His commitment to consult with intelligent individuals, who may convince him if they could, helped to resolve the situation. It seems that it took him six years to decide to fit in. Before this, he and his wife had been living apart for a while, with Jonson seeking sanctuary alternately with his benefactors Esmé Stuart, Lord Aubigny, and Sir Robert Townshend.

But throughout this time, he had an impact on the public theater that was second only to Shakespeare's. The Alchemist (1610) and Volpone; or, the Foxe (1606), two of his comedies, were among the most well-known and admired works at the period. Each one demonstrated the foolishness of man's quest for riches. They exhibit Jonson's love for both the conventional Renaissance setting and for his own town on the outskirts of Europe, which are respectively located in Italy and London. Both plays are concise, witty, controlled, and expressive. Additionally popular plays were Bartholomew Fair (1614) and Epicoene (1609) [4].

In 1618–1619, Jonson set out on a walking journey that led him to Scotland. The city of Edinburgh appointed him an honorary burgess and guild brother during his visit. He obtained an honorary Master of Arts degree from Oxford University upon his return to England, which was a very significant accolade at the time. Jonson's life consisted of both writing and talking. He competed with Shakespeare in "wit-combats" and won. The highest honor for a young man was to be called "son of Ben." His personal library was burned to the ground in 1623. By this point, Charles I's court seldom requested his talents for amusement, and his last productions were unappealing. He seems to have had a stroke in 1628, which left him confined to his apartment, chair, and eventually bed. He was appointed city chronologer in the same year, making him technically in charge of the city's pageants, however in 1634 his remuneration for the position was converted to a pension. Jonson was buried at Westminster Abbey after passing away in 1637.

After his death in 1640, a second Jonson folio published Timber: or, Discoveries, a collection of observations on life and literature, which had been published posthumously in the first folio edition of his writings in 1616. While acknowledging that he thought Shakespeare was occasionally "full of wind" (sufflaminandus erat), Jonson spoke here about the nature of poetry and drama and paid his final homage to the great playwright. He said, "I loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any."

The Court of Masque

In the 16th century, courtiers and even royals would disguise themselves for play acting, entertainment, and dancing. This was the origin of the masque. For the Stuarts, masques with singing, acting, music, dialogue, stunning costumes, "special effects," and dynamic scenery were produced at Whitehall and Hampton Court Palaces. Under the masque-loving kings James I and his Danish queen Anne in the early 1600s, it truly developed into something magnificent. Originally constructed in 1608 at Whitehall Palace as a Banqueting House, it burned down in 1619 and was rebuilt by the current structure, which Inigo Jones designed and finished in 1622.

The creative collaboration between playwright Ben Jonson and set and costume designer Inigo Jones was largely responsible for the creation of the Stuart Masques. These conflict-prone artists argued about whose contribution was more significant, and after 1632, Jones collaborated with poets who were less combative (and less skilled).

What Happened in A Masque?

The masques combined opera, theater, ballet, and balls in a dizzying way. They included gods and goddesses from mythology and British history, and they were usually metaphorical. They served

as evidence of the Stuart kings' intelligence and their divinely granted right to reign. There was usually a "anti-masque" that included bizarre dancers to represent the anarchy of a pre-Stuart realm. The masque itself, which portrayed an idealized universe of harmony and tranquility ruled by the divine, came next. The King and courtiers would dance at the conclusion of the masque. Although the queen and her ladies sometimes danced, masques were performed for the court rather than for the court. A masque was a venue for both seeing and being seen. They were exceedingly costly to create, and some of the more extravagant ones were put on by wealthy attorneys. Even yet, neither the performers nor the viewers always found them to be the most comfortable performances. The heated, packed space must have been oppressive with the smoke from the many candles. Sometimes a significant amount of time passed before the performance started. After attending a masque in 1618, the chaplain of the Venetian Ambassador described the event in his journal: "So crowded and unpleasant that had it not been for our curiosity we would have given up or perished... Every box was particularly packed with the most noble and beautifully dressed women... We had time to leisurely study them repeatedly throughout the two hours of waiting [5].

All of Us are Here for the Dance.

In the smoke-filled, chaotic atmosphere, masques must have been hard to follow, particularly without a schedule. This probably didn't matter since the performance's tremendous spectacle was its main draw. The lyrics and music were presumably drowned out by the court's chatter and laughter throughout the performances. Everyone saved their best moves for the event's centerpiece the dancing. For weeks previously, they practiced to perfect the procedures.

Assault At the Masque

At the masque, it seemed like there was constantly someone doing inappropriately. Due to the fact that "wine did so occupy their inner chambers," the performers regularly drank. Actors have been known to pass out or get ill while performing! Even the first masque held in the magnificent new Banqueting House built by Inigo Jones (to which many foreign embassies were invited) was ruined by arguments. Foreign dignitaries often argued about who should be placed closest to the King during a masque, adding to the drama. Additionally, it developed into a strange custom for the crowd to upend the refreshments table after each show by breaking glass dishes with tremendous joy.

DISCUSSION

Abhorrent or Offensive

The 'Masque of Blacknesse', written by Inigo Jones and Ben Jonson, was the first masque performed for James I and Anne of Denmark in 1605. The Queen ordered it, and she and her ladies performed and danced while having their faces completely covered in black. Even while this today looks objectionable, the masque was all about excess and deception. The Queen was acting even more shamelessly than usual for a 17th-century audience by dancing in front of them while wearing a flimsy costume. The 'Masque of Blacknesse' also stunned the crowd with its amazing effects. Mermaids in shells, tritons, seahorses, and "six huge sea monsters" were among the aquatic creatures that designer Inigo Jones included in his "artificial sea with waves which seemed to move [6]." These extraordinary effects were Jones and Jonson's specialties, and they became more and

more extravagant. Their 1609 performance of "The Masque of Queens" began with a hellish scene filled with fire and smoke. This disappeared to be replaced with the "beautiful and spectacular building of the House of Fame filled with many colored lights like emeralds, rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, etc.

Masques For a New Monarch

Charles I, the son of James I (1625–49), and Henrietta Maria, his French queen, both loved masques. Using the newly finished 1622 Banqueting House of Inigo Jones, they carried on the custom of lavish shows. Prince Charles and his lords gave a performance of the 'Masque of Augers' in the new structure that year. After they performed two more masques, the Banqueting House was abandoned until 1631, when Charles the King and his lords staged the masque "Love's Triumph." This was due to war and the spread of the plague. However, until 1631, when the masque "Love's Triumph through Callipolis" was presented, the Banqueting House remained empty due to war and the spread of the disease. In succeeding masques, Henrietta Maria and her women enjoyed dancing very much. The visual effects and setting become more complicated as the dancing got more difficult. For the next five years, a brand-new masque was presented twice a year despite being incredibly costly [7] [8].

A Man in A Masque

It's likely that the Duke of Buckingham hired Gerrit van Honthorst to create a mythical portrait depicting himself as Mercury presenting Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria with the Liberal Arts while they are costumed as they would in a masque, as Apollo and Diana. The original location of the 1628 signature and date on 'Mercury giving the Liberal Arts to Apollo and Diana' is unknown. It was reportedly kept in Whitehall Palace, close to the Banqueting House.

A Royal Dream

This enormous picture conveys the'miraculous' special effects of an earlier masque. On what seems to be a moving cloud, Charles (Apollo) and Henrietta Maria (Diana) are seated. Here, there is also unspoken drama. The Duke of Buckingham, who had a strong influence on the King, is the sitter portraying Mercury. The wife of Buckingham may be seen standing close to him (bare breasts were typical in Stuart court masques). Instead of focusing on their spouses, the two guys exchange intense looks.

The Masque's Finale

The building's use as a location for masques, with its demand for dazzling, very harmful light, came to an end with the installation of Peter Paul Rubens' ceiling paintings in 1636. For only one performance of "The Triumph of Peace" in February 1634, "seventy dozen torches and sixty flambeaux" were ordered. But more crucially, the Civil War was approaching and the world was changing. The country was in a condition of instability, and the royal coffers were almost empty. The masque, with its grandeur, imagination, and illusion, was coming to an end. It was extinct by 1640. Charles I, his wife, and their three oldest children left Whitehall for Hampton Court on January 10, 1642. He exiled his family and traveled to England's north and midlands in search of

assistance. For the next seven years, he would not see Banqueting House. On the day of his death, he would cross the building's hall and go to the executioner's block.

Controversies

In 1603, Jonson joined other poets and playwrights in congratulating James I of England on the start of his reign. The additional demand for masques plays with classical themes that included dance, music, and traditional playacting and that were presented before the king with members of the royal court frequently playing roles in the cast and other royal entertainments introduced with the new reign and promoted by both the king and his consort, Anne of Denmark, forced Jonson to adapt himself quickly. His issues with the English government persisted. The Privy Council questioned him in 1603 on Sejanus, a play with a political subject about corruption in the Roman Empire. He was incarcerated at Eastward Ho in 1605 together with John Marston and George Chapman for making fun of the King's Scottish subjects.

With the popularity of his plays and masques like The Satyr (1603) and The Masque of Blackness (1605), Jonson began to focus more on writing for the court and less on the public theaters. He and Inigo Jones were given formal responsibility for "painting and carpentry" for the King's court beginning in 1606.

The ascension of Ben Jonson

In the first half of James I's reign, when his dramatic abilities were at their peak, he had written practically all of the plays for which he is best known. By 1616. These include the comedies of Volpone (1605), Epicoene, or the Silent Woman (1609), The Alchemist (1610), Bartholomew Fair (1614), and The Devil is an Ass (1616), as well as the tragedy of Catiline (1611), which had only dubious success. Although it has gained some notoriety in more recent years, this final piece was a flop at the time it was written, and Jonson stopped writing plays for public theaters for ten years. He composed a number of masques during this time, often in relation to Inigo Jones. He received a stipend of 100 marks per year in 1616, which led to his being referred to as the first Poet Laureate. He may have been inspired by this token of royal favor to release the first book of the folio collected edition of his writings in 1616 [9].

Ben Jonson traveled on foot to his ancestral Scotland in 1618. He stayed there for more than a year, and the Scottish poet Drummond of Hawthornden's generosity stands out as the greatest. Drummond committed to writing down as much of their talk as he could in his journal, preserving facets of Jonson's character that could have otherwise been lost. Despite their brevity, Jonson's thoughts are delivered in a broad tone of either praise or criticism. Drummond's postscript describes him as "a great lover and praiser of himself, a contemner and scorner of others." When he returned to England, Oxford University gave him an honorary Master of Arts degree. While in Scotland, he was appointed an honorary citizen of Edinburgh [10].

CONCLUSION

Finally, Ben Jonson's participation in court masques and his association with royal sponsorship constituted a pivotal point in both his professional life and the development of English entertainment throughout the Jacobean period. Under Jonson's inventiveness and the Stuart

monarchy's support, the court masque a distinct form fusing poetry, music, dance, and intricate theatrical design flourished. The masques that Jonson created, including "The Masque of Blackness" and "The Masque of Queens," showed his talent for creating complicated, allegorical spectacles that praised the monarchy and propagated political ideas. He reaffirmed the divine authority of monarchs by aligning the Stuart emperors with classical ideals via the use of symbolic and mythical motifs. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of royal support in Jonson's masque performances. Jonson's masques were not just entertainment but also tools of political and social influence, helping to mold the cultural and political environment of the period. It not only offered financial assistance but also access to the court and the favor of the kings, notably James I and Charles I. The famous architect and designer Inigo Jones and Jonson worked together to create masques of unrivaled aesthetic and creative grandeur. These performances establish new benchmarks for theatrical extravagance by showcasing the deft blending of poetry, music, dance, and stagecraft. Jonson's masques represented his personal creative goals while also serving the needs of the king and the court. He furthered his reputation as a literary giant of his day by using the masque as a stage to demonstrate his lyrical skill and originality.

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CHAPTER 6

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON JONSON'S CONTEMPORARIES

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ABSTRACT:

A significant character in the English Renaissance, Ben Jonson interacted with other playwrights, poets, and intellectuals in a deep and complicated way. In order to give insight on the literary and intellectual climate of the time, this study investigates Jonson's relationships and ties with some of his noteworthy contemporaries. Famous playwrights like Thomas Dekker, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare were among Jonson's contemporaries. While performing onstage alongside these writers, Jonson also participated in passionate literary competitions and alliances. He and Shakespeare engaged in a historic conflict that is sometimes referred to as the "War of the Theatres," which perfectly captured the atmosphere of rivalry at the period by having both authors trade humorous jabs in their works. Along with playwrights, Jonson's contemporaries included a wide range of poets and academics. In addition to literary greats like John Donne, George Chapman, and John Marston, he was a prominent character. These meetings had an impact on Jonson's poetry and intellectual endeavors, adding to his image as a well-read and educated author. Beyond only writing, Jonson had ties with his contemporaries. He was surrounded by powerful benefactors who encouraged his creative ambitions, including the Earls of Pembroke and Southampton. These supporters were essential to Jonson's career since they gave him possibilities for creative expression and financial security.

KEYWORDS:

Clergy, Cynthia's Revels, Jonson's Contemporaries, Tribe Ben, War Theatres.

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson was born in London, England, on June 11, 1572. He is a poet, essayist, and dramatist. His mother remarried a bricklayer after his clergyman father passed away just before his birth. Jonson was reared in Westminster and went to Westminster School and St. Martin's Parish School, where he was influenced by William Camden, a classical scholar. After leaving Westminster School in 1589, he temporarily worked as a bricklayer for his stepfather's business, went on to fight in the army in Flanders, and then became an actor and writer for Philip Henslowe's stage company. After being married to Anne Lewis in 1594, Jonson started writing plays and acting in them [1]. Though Jonson and Lewis had at least two children, little much is known about their union.

Every Man in His Humor, which is regarded as Jonson's first outstanding play, was written in 1598. William Shakespeare played one of the main parts in a 1616 staging. Jonson murdered Gabriel Spencer in a duel shortly after the play began, and he was prosecuted for murder. His freedom

came as a result of his "benefit of clergy" plea, which permitted him to go before a more forgiving court by demonstrating his command of Latin. He was only imprisoned for a few weeks, but soon after his release he was detained once again for failing to pay an actor. Jonson had sponsorship and favor from King James I. His most well-known satirical comedies, such as Volpone (1606) and The Alchemist (1610), were produced for the London theater during the course of the next fifteen years. He received a sizable stipend of 100 marks per year in 1616 and is sometimes referred to as England's first poet laureate.

The "Tribe of Ben," Jonson's group of admirers and friends, often gathered at the Mermaid Tavern and subsequently at the Devil's Head. Nobles like the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle and authors like Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, James Howell, and Thomas Carew were among his adherents. Shakespeare, John Donne, and Francis Bacon are among the people whose works he honored in the majority of his well-known poetry. Ben Jonson passed away on August 8th, 1637, in Westminster. His funeral at Westminster Abbey was attended by a sizable number of people. He is considered to be one of the most influential poets and dramatists of the seventeenth century [2].

A Legacy of work

All Men in Their Humor

Every Man in His Humor, maybe Jonson's most significant play, is unquestionably the one that catapulted the young poet to long-lasting stardom. Shakespeare's great tragedies and histories appear more timeless than this comedy written in the classical manner. In addition, Jonson's mastery of pentameter pales in contrast to that of his formidable adversary. However, the play is significant because it helped reintroduce a number of ancient concepts to the English literary community, most notably Theophrastus' notion of humors. The play is a masterwork of classical form and a witness to Jonson's deep grasp of the old heritage, while being less dramatic than a modern reader could expect for.

Style and Story

This drama closely adheres to Latin structural patterns overall. A guy called Kno'well makes an effort to spy on his kid in the primary narrative because he is worried about his moral growth. However, the assistant he uses for this, Brainworm, consistently thwarts his spying. These characters are obviously Anglicized versions of the Senex, Son, and Slave from the new comedy. In the background story, a businessman called Kitely experiences acute jealousy because he thinks his wife is having an affair with a squire named Wellbred when he is a guest at their house. The "humorous" characters in these two tales are surrounded by a variety of well-known English stereotypes, such as the irascible soldier, country gull, pompous pot-poets, grumpy water-bearer, and affable judge. The play progresses through a number of issues that come to a head when Justice Clement hears and resolves all of the individuals' varied complaints, revealing each of them as being motivated by comedy, misconception, or dishonesty [3].

However, the play's style is more crucial than the specifics of the story. The prologue Jonson prepared for the folio edition outlines his goals. These phrases, which have rightfully been

interpreted to relate to Jonson's comedy philosophy as a whole, are particularly pertinent to this play. The play continues this implied rejection of the romantic comedy of his colleagues by promising to depict "deeds, and language, such as men do use and persons, such as comedy would choose, When she would show an Image of the times, and sport with human follies, not with crimes." It adheres very closely to Aristotelian unity; the story is a complex web of action and response; and the scenes are a delightful assortment of representations of daily life in a sizable Renaissance metropolis [4].

Drama in everyday life

Jonson, in contrast to many other playwrights and poets of the time, opted to compose a play about common people as opposed to inventing new versions of old myths. When one remembers that, according to Aristotle, ancient play was deliberately designed to center on the lives of just a few individuals, in a single place, in a single day, this may appear counter-intuitive given Jonson's adherence to classical tradition. The play's ordinariness might be seen as Jonson's dedication to the classical ideal.

The Elizabethan Age's sensibility was also influencing English culture to become more bourgeois and prioritize the lives of common people. In terms of religion, the English Reformation's success resulted in a Protestant awareness of a person's sovereignty; this was the end of the medieval mindset that subordinated the individual beneath monarchs and powers. This fit in well with the philosophy of ancient Hellenism, which gave rise to the first democracy. In the end, Jonson's homage to classical heritage was not reactionary; rather, it was consistent with the modernization of bourgeois consciousness.

Reception

Jonson is often credited with bringing "humour" humor to English literature by nineteenth-century critics. Since only Kitely is dominated by a "humor" as Jonson defined it in Every Man Out of His Humour, it seems more likely that Jonson was using a contemporary taste aroused by Chapman to draw interest to his play, which became his first undeniable hit. The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed the play in 1598. According to a 1709 theatrical legend, Shakespeare pushed for the play's staging just as the company was going to reject it. Although this rumor cannot be verified, Shakespeare very certainly performed the role of Kno'well based on the playlist recorded in the folio.

For the 1616 folio, when it was the first play presented, Jonson reworked the play. The location saw the biggest modification. The setting for the 1598 version was an unnamed Florence. The background information was English even in the original edition; the change formalizes this fact by giving the characters English names and swapping the ambiguously English elements with precise references to locations in London [5].

Works by Jonson

Plays

a. The Case is Altered (date unknown)
b. Every Man in His Humour (1598)

c. Every Man out of His Humour (1598)
d. Cynthia's Revels (1600)
e. Poetaster (1601)
f. Sejanus (1603)
g. Volpone (1606)
h. Epicoene, or the Silent Woman (1609)
i. The Alchemist (1610)
j. Catiline his Conspiracy (1611)
k. Bartholomew Fair (1614)
l. The Devil is an Ass (1616)
m. News from the New World Discovered in the Moon (1620)
n. The Staple of News (1626)
o. The New Inn (1629)
p. The Magnetic Lady (1632)
q. A Tale of a Tub (1633)

Masques

a. The Entertainment of the Queen and Prince at Althorp (1603)
b. The Coronation Triumph (1604)
c. The Masque of Blackness (1605)
d. Hymenaei (1606)
e. Hue and Cry after Cupid (1608)
f. The Masque of Beauty (1608)
g. The Masque of Queens (1609)

'O Rare Ben Jonson!'

Ben Jonson was a classically trained student who later worked as an apprentice bricklayer and soldier before emerging as one of the most celebrated playwrights and poets of the 17th century. In his account of Jonson's turbulent life, Andrew Dickson shows how his achievement was sometimes overshadowed by his contentious relationships with drink, other authors and performers, and the theater itself.

Ben Jonson is a sequence of fascinating inconsistencies that may be seen. Jonson, an aspiring literary socialite and the adopted son of a bricklayer, became one of the most significant cultural leaders in early 17th-century Britain [6]. He was the first unofficial poet laureate of England and did more than any of his contemporaries to create the modern concept of the creator-author. He may be compared to his somewhat older contemporary William Shakespeare in terms of playwriting, but as a poet, he almost stands alone. But Jonson also has a sinister side. He had a contentious disposition and feuded with many of his coworkers. He also once murdered an actor in a duel. This talented playwright also struggled with what he once referred to as the "loathed stage" and wrote cutting moral satires while leading what he openly acknowledged to be an excessively lavish personal life. Jonson was one of the biggest figures among the many oversized egos that dominated Stuart culture in every measurable way.

Bricks and Books

The peculiar circumstances of Jonson's childhood must have something to do with some of these difficulties. A month after the passing of his father, in 1572, his mother remarried Robert Brett, a bricklayer, and he was born in the heart of London. Although Jonson subsequently claimed to have been "brought up poorly," this claim may be exaggerated given that he had the tremendous good fortune to attend Westminster School, maybe because to a rich acquaintance. In addition to obtaining a top-notch humanistic education and thorough instruction in Latin and Greek at Westminster, the premier English grammar school of the day, Jonson socialized with lads who would go on to become the great intellectual and political lights of his century.

According to a legend, Jonson attended St. John's College in Cambridge for a short time before leaving to work for his stepfather in the construction industry. In any event, he seems to have worked as a laborer on and off starting in the late 1580s, reading and broadening his horizons in his spare time. The work was eventually the subject of jokes about Jonson, who said that he "could not endure" it (the historian John Aubrey notes that he was once caught reciting Homer while working on a construction site). Even yet, he maintained his membership in the bricklayers' guild until 1611, when his renown as a playwright was at its height. This may be because artisans, as opposed to authors, were revered in Elizabethan society.

By 1592, Jonson was in the Netherlands fighting for the English army (and, if his stories about the incident are to be believed, had successfully killed a man in single combat). Jonson seems to have quit his normal laboring job in the early 1590s. He immediately returned to London and wed Anne Lewis in 1594. Little is known about her, in part because Jonson, who was so outspoken in other areas, kept quiet about her, only referring to her as "a shrew yet honest." The fact that the couple spent significant amounts of time apart suggests that their marriage may have been unsatisfactory. Even though Jonson and Anne had a second son, it's probable that he or she too passed away at an early age. Furthermore, despite the fact that Jonson had additional children, it seems that they were not born to his marriage.

DISCUSSION

To the theater and the jail

Although it's unknown how Jonson entered the theater, there is evidence that he started out as an actor, maybe with a group that was traveling the English countryside. According to one legend, he portrayed the tragically insane hero Hieronymo in Thomas Kyd's famous and deadly vengeance drama The Spanish Tragedy (about 1583–92). By 1597, he was a member of the group of freelance authors Philip Henslowe hired. Nearly all of Jonson's work from this time period has been lost, perhaps because Jonson himself did not really care to preserve it. It is possible that Jonson would have been hired to "mend" or adapt previous plays in addition to writing new ones. After contributing to the satire The Isle of Dogs (1597), which was banned by the government as a "lewd play," containing very seditious and defamatory material," the dramatist was imprisoned for a short while [7].

With his play Every Man in His Humor, which was published in 1598, Jonson made his mark. A clever, witty city comedy, it was successfully premiered by the Lord Chamberlain's Men with

William Shakespeare and Richard Burbage in the company, and it became one of the biggest hits of its era. The plot involves a young man about town trying to outsmart his overprotective father and another father who is envious of his young wife. But Jonson's year was also difficult; in September, he got into a contentious argument with actor Gabriel Spencer that resulted in a duel. Spencer was dead, and Jonson's sole chance to avoid the hangman's noose commonly referred to as "neck verse" was to recite Psalm 51. His earliest surviving poetry seem to be from this time period, and it appears that he converted to Catholicism during this period of incarceration.

Then, for many years, Jonson was involved in the "war of the theaters," a rivalry between him with playwrights John Marston and Thomas Dekker that resulted in the satires Every Man out of His Humor (about 1599) and Poetaster (1601). A less-than-subtle effort by Jonson to win Elizabeth I over, Cynthia's Revels (c. 1600), failed. He made a contribution to the comedic Eastward Ho! in 1605., which imprudently mocked the newly crowned King James I, Jonson once again found himself behind bars and, if his account of his mother making poison for him to ease his death is to be accepted, in real danger of being put to death. Along with being heavily suspected, he was also a target of the Catholic Gunpowder Plot that November, in part because to his religious convictions but also because he knew several of the conspirators [8].

Royal Benedictions

However, James's presence signaled a change for Jonson in other ways. Together with the artist Inigo Jones, he created a spectacular court entertainment called The Masque of Blackness that same year, in 1605. It was a huge hit that gave the writer both rich commissions and some much-desired social prominence. Until the 1630s, Jonson and Jones collaborated on creating masques, resulting in some of the most extravagant and dazzlingly costly theatrical productions England had ever seen. Jonson kept on producing works for the general audience. Many people consider his finest plays to have been created during a ten-year creative boom that started early in the Jacobean period. His coolly composed Roman tragedy Sejanus made its debut in 1603 (again with Shakespeare in the cast), and was followed by the slick Venetian comedy Volpone, Or the Fox (1606), the London 'city' comedies The Alchemist (1610), Bartholomew Fair (1614), and The Devil is an Ass (1616). The comedies in especially, which are not produced as often as they should be, are dazzling, colorful works of art that are busy planned, sharply humorous, and filled with a rogue's gallery of con artists and their victims.

Stories about the so-called "Mermaid Club," which met at the Mermaid Tavern on Cheapside and included many prominent theater people and writers, including John Donne and the playwrights Beaumont and Fletcher, attest to Jonson's sociability during this time. If the legends are true, these gatherings were not just drinking sessions but contests of intellectual wits. In 1610, Jonson too seems to have reverted to Protestantism; Donne, who would subsequently become Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, is thought to have been involved. Despite this conversion, Jonson seems to have had a merry life, frequenting the Apollo chamber at the Devil Tavern near Temple Bar in later years. The 'Apollo Club' was frequented by a number of young authors, including Robert Herrick and Thomas Carew, who helped launch the loosely organized organization known as the 'Tribe of Ben' by expressing appreciation for Jonson's poetry and theater (as well as his dedication to heavy drinking).

But Jonson's personal relationship with the "loathed stage" as he described it in his "Ode to himself" was always stormy, and he desired to be treated more seriously as an artist. He published his collected Works in a finely crafted folio edition in 1616, and even more audaciously, he included his plays in it. This contributed significantly to the rise of drama as a legitimate art form, despite the criticism that followed playwriting was typically seen as popular hackwork especially when Jonson was given a royal pension later that year, thereby making him England's first poet laureate. Shakespeare's contemporaries John Heminges and Henry Condell very certainly would not have published a folio edition of his own collected plays in 1623 if Jonson hadn't done so. Jonson added two sincere but non-sentimental poetic odes to the book [9].

Jonson was now acknowledged as England's greatest writer after Shakespeare's death in 1616, yet he continued to be restless. In 1618, he set out from London on a yearlong walking tour of England and Scotland[10]. Along the way, he met the writer William Drummond, who took copious notes on their talks and served as the inspiration for many of Jonson's greatest tales. It's conceivable that he remarried at this time, although he seems to have focused mostly on writing, especially poetry, and research. Jonson's latter years were difficult. His much-coveted collection and many unpublished works were destroyed in a home fire in 1623, a loss that he bitterly lamented in his poem "An Execration Upon Vulcan." when Charles I's ascension in 1625, his luster started to fade, especially when he had a falling-out with Inigo Jones. The author, who was horribly obese and becoming worse, may have had a stroke around 1628. His agony was made worse by a severe shortage of money, which was probably related to his opulent wine and food preferences. He was cared after by a servant lady, according to the historian Izaak Walton, who also noted that "neither he nor she tooke much Care for next weike: and wood be sure not to want Wine: of which he usually tooke too much before he went to bed, if not oftner and soner." Several more plays were written during a last creative outburst, but none of them were successful, and Jonson passed away in 1637 [11].

CONCLUSION

Contemporaries of Ben Jonson, such as other playwrights and literary personalities of the early 17th century, had a considerable impact on the development of literature at that time. They belonged to an active literary community that gave rise to some of the most lasting pieces of English literature. The blossoming of English literature during the Jacobean century was largely due to the work of Jonson's varied and accomplished literary peers. William Shakespeare stands out among his contemporaries as a towering figure, renowned for his immeasurable contributions to the fields of play and poetry. Shakespeare's works are still revered and studied across the globe for their deep analysis of human nature and themes that apply to all cultures. Another significant contemporary, Christopher Marlowe, made an imprint with his potent and avant-garde tragedies like "Doctor Faustus" and "Tamburlaine," among others. Marlowe made significant contributions to the growth of English tragedy, and many of his successors were inspired by his use of blank verse. A well-known preacher and poet named John Donne developed a new kind of metaphysical poetry that used elaborate plot devices and paradoxes to explore difficult concepts. His philosophical and intellectual approach to poetry questioned established poetic tropes and broadened the possibilities of English verse.

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CHAPTER 7

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON JONSON'S VIEWS ON THEATER

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ABSTRACT:

Ben Jonson, a well-known English Renaissance playwright and poet, had strong opinions on theater that he expressed in his works, prefaces, and critical essays. This study explores Jonson's views on the nature and goals of theater, highlighting his dedication to traditional values, moral guidance, and aesthetic purity. Jonson's opinions on theater were firmly based in dramatic theory and classical aesthetics. He was influenced by Aristotle's Poetics as well as the plays of classical Roman playwrights like Seneca and Plautus. He pushed for the use of the traditional unities of time, location, and action in play, which he thought improved the coherence and potency of a theatrical production. His own plays, such as "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," which follow these rules, show Jonson's dedication to classical form. Dramatic didacticism and moral education were important components of Jonson's theatrical philosophy. He thought that theater could instruct and uplift its viewers. In order to emphasize the vices and follies of modern life, Jonson often used satire and comedy in his plays in order to impart moral lessons and make social criticisms. His characters, like the dishonest Volpone or the immoral characters in "Every Man in His Humour," functioned as cautionary tales and prompted viewers to consider their own conduct. Jonson valued workmanship and artistic integrity above everything else. He highlighted the significance of compelling stories, endearing characters, and deft language usage. He promoted orderly and accurate writing and set high standards for both himself and his contemporaries. His well crafted plays and the clever language that distinguishes them show this dedication to aesthetic quality.

KEYWORDS:

Ben Jonson, Dramatic Didacticism, Humour, The Alchemist, Theatrical Philosophy, Volpone.

INTRODUCTION

Up until recently, attention to Ben Jonson's (1572-1637) poetry was mostly drawn to the well-known melodies and the poignant epitaphs on children. These decisions weren't bad, but they're not typical. The pieces in these genres are undoubtedly among Jonson's best, yet their tones are different from his usual compositions. Songs like "Kiss me, sweet: the wary lover" and "Drink to me only with thine eyes" invoke feelings that transcend the realm of reason or reality, in part because they make reference to extravagant actions and unbelievable experiences: countless kisses, a wreath that will not perish even after the beloved has breathed on it. The songs engage the ability to react sensually and impulsively to words via rhythms that are stronger and less interrupted than those Jonson often concocted. The "silent summer nights/ When youths ply their stol'n delights" in "Kiss me, sweet: the wary lover" are only one example of how some of them

construct enchanted hidden worlds where sensation and feeling are to be enjoyed regardless of disturbing or qualifying circumstances. In Volpone and The Alchemist, these kinds of universes are built and then critiqued [1].

The epitaphs, especially those on Jonson's own children ("On My First Son," "On My First Daughter"), are so potent because they show the struggle between subjective feelings and intellectual conviction. The assertion of faith made by Jonson in each of these poems is theological and example, including submission to God's will, but Jonson also includes an undercurrent of pain that faith has overcome, which contributes to the affirmation's potency. While regret and hopelessness cannot be logically explained away, they may be managed; finding solace is difficult.

A holdover from the Romantic or Victorian taste for rhapsodic expressions of feeling and imaginative vision in poetry may explain why such richly concentrated poems should have received exposure to the virtual exclusion of Jonson's less lyrical or emotive verse. In actuality, T.'s reestablishment of communication with the metaphysical perception. S. Eliot and other critics did not directly or quickly replace Victorian views in the instance of Jonson as a nondramatic poet in the 1920s and 1930s, as they did for a number of poets from the seventeenth century. Although some of Jonson's works are unmistakably similar to the secular writing of John Donne, Jonson seldom employs the speaker's psychological self-discovery via metaphor, which is so often the purpose of a Donne poem [2].

The contrast between Jonson's poetic breadth and the genre of the contemplative, passionate, sometimes all but secret Metaphysical religious song is particularly striking. The ode "To Heaven" is possibly the only notable poem by Jonson that could be classified as simply religious. Jonson produced relatively few genuinely devotional poems. The relationship between mankind as a whole and god is not the major center of attention in poems like the odes to Sir Lucius Cary and Sir Henry Morison, as well as the burial elegies, where the afterlife is referenced. The poems mostly deal with conflicts between various human levels, between everyday experience on the one hand and perfection or supremacy of nature attained by Cary, Morison, Lady Jane Pawlet, and other role models on the other.

Only on the edges of Jonson's nondramatic poetry, or when it is framed in metaphysical terms, can it be perceived to resemble genuine emotional lyricism. Only in the latter half of the 20th century did criticism succeed in a contemporary redefinition of Jonson's accomplishment, one that included a very favorable assessment of his primary, archetypal poetic work. In light of this critique, Jonson appears as a resolutely neoclassical poet with Renaissance humanism as his philosophical foundation.

In Timber, Jonson is portrayed as a humanistic thinker, and his professional goals and objectives were also humanistic. Fundamentally, Jonson saw thinking, language, and learning as stages of a person's active existence. Humanists saw education as the beginning of a student's lifelong habits of sensible and productive action. Because oratory (or, in the case of the Renaissance, the advice of the prince and nobility) constituted a crucial component of the repertoire of practical, political abilities, humanistic education was essentially linguistic. For most humanists, and most definitely for Jonson, this did not mean that modern men were supposed to become mere apes of their

predecessors, but rather that, through first following models, men should exercise and organize their own capacities to the point where they could emulate and rival the ancients, becoming emulations of the ancients [3].

Jonson generally followed a pattern established since the times of Thomas More and Thomas Elyot early in the prior century when he affiliated himself with noble houses and the court as a nonaristocratic humanist in a stratified society. Due to birth restrictions, he was unable to directly exercise the greatest amount of power in his culture. Instead, he used indirect action by speaking to the influential, providing advice, and expressing praise in order to inspire the ruling class to exercise authority and live wisely. In this context, Jonson saw his masques as both celebrations and reminders of ideas, such as fairness, that ought to guide the work of the court. Many of Jonson's moralizing poems that were written for noblemen and other audiences also plainly demonstrated hortatory aim [4].

As one would anticipate, Jonson's thinking has unique elements that distinguish it in some ways from humanism as it is presented in other situations. For starters, even if Jonson was not atheist, it is undeniably true that his humanism does not clearly and consistently converge with moralistic, pastoral Christianity, as had done Desiderius Erasmus's a century before. Timber's moral cosmos is based on Roman qualities rather than overtly Christian ones; if anything, Jonson anticipates later secular rationalism. The presence of Seneca and Roman Stoicism in Jonson's literature, as well as other early seventeenth-century English language, is a further indication of his humanism. Senecan influence on Jonson appears to have had a major impact on fostering a concern for and care for what is best described as integrity, or the relationship between a person's actions and their inner character as opposed to their environment. Such an understanding of style as emanating from and projecting a picture of the "inmost" self easily fit with the Senecan idea of precisely linguistic action that Timber represents. Neoclassical poetry of Jonson is the poetic equivalent of his mostly secular, resembling Senecan humanism. For the sake of analysis, it is possible to state that Jonson's poems are primarily linguistic actions that represent the conversation of a persona to an inferred (often, a specific) human audience. The poems' substance may be categorized as degrees or types of human conduct [5].

DISCUSSION

Epistles

The title of Jonson's "An Epistle answering to One that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of Ben" gives away what kind of communication act it is imitating: a letter. Few of Jonson's titles actually include the term "epistle," but many of them do "To Katherine Lady Aubigny," "To Sir Robert Wroth," and so forth involve or even simply consist of the naming of an addressee. The reader is thus invited to see many of Jonson's poems as language action, or the verbal behavior of a human speaker toward a human audience, rather than mainly in terms of whatever stories they may tell or pictures they may recall.

The speaker and audience's narrative affects other components of the poem; it is not a purely passive component. The personality of the addressee and his relationship to the speaker influence several stylistic aspects. In the "Epistle to Master John Selden," the speaker claims that he is able

to write in a direct, "obscure," and sometimes nearly telegraphic manner because "I know to whom I write": He is certain that Selden is both bright and familiar with the speaker's philosophical viewpoints. In general, an epistle or other poetry written to another person will seldom be fit for the grandiloquence, expansiveness, and intricate structure of public oratory [6].

The style of "An Epistle answering to One that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of Ben" by Jonson is pretty representative of that in many of his works. His language is typically informal; Edmund Bolton's definition of Jonson's writing as having "vital, judicious and practicable language" (in Edmund Bolton's Hypercritica, c. 1618) is a great generalization of the genre. The majority of Jonson's poems' syntactic units are short and abruptly ended, making it difficult to move smoothly from one sentence to the next. In most cases, units are neither paired or otherwise symmetrically placed in respect to one another. "An Epistle answering to One that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of Ben" has a fairly rambling, impromptu, and emotional pressure-driven speech impact. The poem's structure also appears haphazard. It starts out with appropriate remarks to the would-be disciple to whom Ben is writing, then veers off into a mocking rant about fake members of Jonson's society, loops back around to what appears to be underlying anxiety about Jonson's personal situation, and finally ends with an almost heroic assertion of what it means to be Ben or a member of his tribe [7].

Other poems differ in style from the typically casual to more formal. When the grammar is exceedingly sloppy or a lot of content is packed into one sentence, Jonson's meaning might actually become muddled. This impression is often that of an impatient intellect that uses no more words than are necessary to convey its message to its direct audience. In extreme situations, the reader could feel as if he is reading a letter intended for someone else (for instance, have a look at the "Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville"). Jonson differs slightly from Augustan neoclassical authors like Alexander Pope, who often engage in smoother and more public communication, with this seclusion immured by style [8].

In addition to highlighting the poem's nature as a linguistic effort, calling it an epistle naturally links it to a general tradition. Seneca and Horace were the most important ancient writers who used the moral epistle as a prose genre. Many of Jonson's other poems, including his epistles, have clear allusions to the writings of these writers in both substance and form. "An Epistle answering to One that asked to be Sealed of the Tribe of Ben" is a successful example of humanistic imitation because it is obviously related to classical tradition while being utterly topical and personal (with its references to the politics of "Spain or France" and to Jonson's employment as a writer of masques). The moral message of Jonson's poetry is revealed in connection to the whole corpus of ancient moral learning via overt references to tradition, which suggests that Jonson is not scared of the juxtaposition [9].

The description of the course of conduct Jonson has "decreed" for himself, which follows the middle of the poem's descriptions of a social environment of indulgence of appetite, empty talk, and illusory "Motions," is where the poem's particular wisdom is most clearly conveyed. ..It is a picture of a life standing in relation to some firm, definite principle, as opposed to the poem's earlier images of unfounded judgments and pointless chatter, and it is one of withdrawal from concern for meaningless external situations.

Seneca and Horace are explicitly cited in connection with the concepts of seclusion and a "Center" in the psyche. The definitions in the poem's meaning are most notable for describing conduct that is or is not directed toward the ideal principle rather than the ideal principle itself. The description of the Center beyond its role as a focal point for the surrounding area is all that Jonson really cares to do. In order to return from geometry to humanity, he is concerned with describing centeredness and differentiating it from shapeless and unfocused conditions. Or, to return from humanity to geometry, he is concerned with describing what it is like to operate on a firm moral basis and differentiating this from the "wild Anarchy" that those who do not belong to the Tribe of Ben live in [10].

The special secular emphasis of Jonson's humanism is shown in the attention on whether or not action is directed rather than on the transcendent principle that may serve as a source of guidance. Jonson's practically interchangeable allusions to the "point," the "Center," "heaven," and "reason" as the source of his knowledge and power have an almost (but definitely not quite) agnostic character. He is clearly interested in the manifestation of such traits in life. In contrast to the clearly delineated ideal world of Edmund Spenser, for instance, Jonson stands out as starkly contemporary. This interest also ties Jonson to the core of English neoclassicism, as shown in works like Pope's morally focused satires and moral essays.

It should be highlighted that moving toward the Center requires decision and effort: Jonson must tell himself to do it, and even those who have already been sealed to the tribe of Ben still worry about embarrassing themselves by maybe faltering in front of reason. No fate confines the people in Jonson's works, for good or for ill. The ideal principle is relatively loosely defined; it is only an element that is accessible, not one that determines.

Epigrams

Jonson's epigrams are, in terms of form, largely linguistic activities, much like the epistles and other lengthier poems that are more or less epistolary. Comments made "on" or "to" someone. They are purposefully succinct observations meant to encapsulate a character's essence and, perhaps indirectly, to shrink an item to its real size many of Jonson's epigrams are sarcastic. According to Jonson's use and the literary tradition from which he draws his inspiration, the epigrammatic and epistolary modes are intimately connected. Jonson often mimicked the Roman epigrammatist Martial, who saw his compositions as concise epistles. The elements of Jonson's style are the same. As in epigram 21 ("On Reformed Gamester"), the fragmented syntax sometimes appears to be part of the epigrammatic compression; other times, it encourages a casualness that is part of Jonson's reduction and dismissing of a satirized figure.

The majority of Jonson's neoclassical verse, as well as the epigrams, are written in pentameter couplets, which Jonson partially adapted from Geoffrey Chaucer and other early examples of English non-lyric poetry. However, they are also inspired by the elegiac distich, a prosodic style popularized by Martial and other ancient writers. The form is generally symmetrical, easily recognized, and tends to act as a powerful balancing, directing, and organizing presence in the poetry in which it occurs. Its potential as a framework for focused, gnomic, almost proverbial

utterance that is simple for the reader to internalize is also one of its strengths. This strength is best realized when the couplet is a tightly closed unit, as it is in Pope's work most of the time.

All Men in Their Humor

The most significant of his early comedies is Every Man in His Humour. It finest exemplifies the traits that made some of Jonson's subsequent plays outstanding masterpieces of literature and was his first large public hit. Every Man in His Humour contains a convoluted interweaving of narratives that evokes a comic frenzy typical of a Jonsonian comedy. A servant plays pranks on everyone, fools are tricked, husbands worry about being cuckolded, women think their husbands have mistresses, dads spy on their kids, and a variety of disguises and social games confound the characters. The audience is thoroughly informed of the subtleties of the numerous narratives so that they are not left in the dark.

The protagonist of the story is Edward Knowell, who travels to London to see Wellbred, a wit whose reckless conduct can land Edward in hot water. Edward's father, Old Knowell, accompanies his son to London in order to spy on him, while Brainworm, his servant, concocts and pulls pranks more for his own amusement than for anything else. A braggart soldier named Captain Bobadill, the landowners of Bobadill, Cob and Tib, a trader named Kitely, and Wellbred's blunt-spoken brother Downright are all involved in subplots. The nearly overwhelming number of characters is a recurring theme in several of Jonson's plays. He appropriates the unfounded suspicions storyline from ancient dramatists. In classic comedies, Captain Bobadill often appears as the miles gloriosus, the cocky soldier (who is typically a coward). The cunning servant, or "Brainworm," is another cliché from old-fashioned comedy.

Other characters also have distinct roles to play, such as Downright, who exposes others' falsehoods and dispels illusions. The romantic protagonist is Edward Knowell, a hero who maintains his innocence despite the chaos of the narrative. The majority of the crude humor is provided by Kitely, Dame Kitely, Cob, and Tib, who also serve to highlight how ludicrous the main characters' actions are. Every Man in His Humour demonstrates that Jonson was still developing his mature style even though it has many of the traits that characterize his later comedies. He is still working to make his classical models work with both the conventions of English play and his audience's preferences. Compared to The Alchemist and Volpone, the storyline is less strictly regulated and more loosely organized.

Volpone

Volpone exclaims, "What a rare punishment/ Is avarice to itself." The simple moral principle that an immoral deed will result in an appropriate punishment is at the core of the intricate drama Volpone. Jonson mocks human nature and the lower human instincts in Volpone. The protagonists in the play seek vilely materialistic aspirations, and by succeeding in their endeavors, they guarantee their own failure. The play's opening monologue by Volpone is a timeless piece of literature: "Good morning to the day; and next, my gold. Open the shrine that I may see my saint." His criminal accomplice Mosca pulls back a curtain to show mountains of riches. Volpone referred to the repository as a "shrine" and the gold as a "saint." Volpone views riches with a religious zeal,

as the remainder of the monologue demonstrates. He claims that gold is the "son of Sol," that it "gives all men tongues," and that it "makes men do all things."

Both Volpone and his subordinate Mosca are more than just deceptive con artists. He is a follower of an ideology, which makes him both more likeable and dangerous than a regular thief. He uses the same defense that confident men have always used: that his victims' avarice led to their downfall; if they were decent people, he would be unable to defraud them. He is wildly successful as long as he continues to prey on selfish people; his victims willingly give him wealth and diamonds in the hopes of inheriting his riches after his death. His kingdom of riches and deception, however, starts to fall apart when he tries to "bed" the innocent Celia, into its component pieces of venality, lust, and spiritual illness.

His strength is his understanding of the extent to which he can persuade others to do what he wants them to do; his weakness is his excessive arrogance he takes too much pleasure in deceiving his victims. He is capable of magnificent verbal flourishes and cunning intrigue, and he is a brilliant actor. He aids in persuading his victims of his impending death and the likelihood that one of them would receive his money by posing as an elderly, dying man. To gain his favor, they ingratiate themselves by giving him expensive presents. His sidekick Mosca is a brilliant actor who can switch from being obedient and gallant in a split second, making him a one-size-fits-all character. Mosca persuades each victim that he is Volpone's chosen heir above all others. The plan is quite funny since it involves the businessman and Celia's husband Corvino (the raven), the elderly Corbaccio (the crow), and the lawyer Voltore (the vulture).

As Voltore is avaricious and dangerous, Corbaccio is lean and lanky, and Corvino is quick-witted and combative, the performers should look like them. Volpone's transformation from a loud, active guy to a bedridden, disabled man, Mosca's cheery scheming, and the deception of three unpleasant, socially important men all exhibit exuberance. The humor is enhanced by the subplot of Lord and Lady Politic Would-be as Volpone, posing as a cripple, puts up with Lady Would-be's constant babbling and readiness to give up her virtue in exchange for his favor. If Volpone were wrong about the power gold has over people, his gold-centric civilization would not be very happy. Innocent people like Bonario, who was disinherited by his father Corbaccio so that Corbaccio could leave his money to Volpone in the belief that Volpone would reciprocate, are among his victims. Corvino will give everything to the high priest Volpone in return for the promise of gaining more riches; he is a proper worshiper at the altar of gold and puts wealth above all else: Even worse, Corvino offers Volpone his naive and fiercely guarded wife, Celia, with the expectation that they would have sex [11].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ben Jonson's theories on theater had a significant impact on the English Renaissance and are still important to modern drama studies. Jonson was a playwright, poet, and critic who had strong opinions on the nature and function of theater. His work helped to shape English theatre at the period. The significance of adhering to the traditional unities of time, location, and action was underlined by Jonson in his essays and prefaces, which advocated for the use of classical ideas in theater. Aristotle's writings and the plays of Seneca and Plautus, two classical Roman playwrights, served as the foundation for his case for a more organized and disciplined approach to theatre. He

was a social comedy and satire pioneer thanks to his dedication to realism, moral education, and satire. According to Jonson, theater ought to be a sharp, witty mirror of society, reflecting both its virtues and vices. This idea was shown in his comedies like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," which used satire and comedy to question the moral and social norms of the day. Jonson's influence on English play went beyond theory and into actual performance. He fought for more funding and exposure for writers and performers in an effort to advance their position. His commitment to professional theater and the development of an individual English dramatic heritage paved the way for the thriving Jacobean theatrical industry. Jonson's opinions on theater also included his admiration for the art of acting and his stress on the significance of skilled performers who could accurately perform difficult parts. He appreciated the efforts of both authors and actors because he understood the collaborative nature of theater.

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CHAPTER 8

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN JONSON'S WORKS

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ABSTRACT:

Ben Jonson, a well-known dramatist and poet of the English Renaissance, tackled challenging sexuality and gender issues in his writing. This study explores the complexity of Jonson's portrayal of these issues, focusing on his consideration of sexual identity, gender roles, and societal standards in a world of inflexible hierarchies and expectations. Characters who question or disrupt conventional gender norms and expectations often appear in Jonson's writings. In works like "Epicene, or The Silent Woman," he shows powerful, independent female characters who reject conventional expectations of subservience and passivity. Through these characters, Jonson challenges the status quo and attacks the restrictions imposed on women in his period. Jonson's study of gender also includes the idea of "humors," a significant hypothesis of his day that connected certain personality qualities with bodily attributes. Humoral theory has influenced Jonson's characters, who embody these qualities and challenge gender norms. For instance, a male character who is dominated by "melancholy" may display traits that are more often associated with women, such as introspection and sensitivity. Another aspect of Jonson's works that bears investigation is sexuality. The characters in Jonson's plays, such "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," often indulge in sexual indiscretions or make sexual allusions despite the fact that he lived in a society with stringent sexual mores. These representations provide sarcastic criticism on the paradoxes and hypocrisies of his modern world. The poems Jonson wrote, such as the well-known "To Celia" and "On My First Son," in which he expressed complicated feelings and wants, also reflect his ideas on sexuality. Themes of love, desire, and loss are explored in his poems, opening a glimpse into the complexity of human sexuality and emotional connection.

KEYWORDS:

Dramatist, Melancholy, On My First Son, To Celia, Volpone.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the characters in the play are males who work in the typically masculine field of business. Men were solely responsible for finances and were expected to dominate women in relationships throughout the play's historical period, positions that the majority of the play's male characters firmly fulfill. However, the play also examines two types of marriages, one an exaggerated portrayal of an Italian marriage and the other a humorous English partnership, in order to compare male control, love, sex, and wooing to the societal expectations of women.

Celia and Corvino are getting married in Italy. Even though Celia is morally upright, Corvino maintains a tight grip on her. He keeps her inside nearly always and prevents her at one point from

being too close to windows. Although Corvino's control over Celia was excessive, it was usual of Italian men to be possessive and jealous of their spouses. The conventional Renaissance image of a woman is also embodied by Celia, who is submissive, chaste, and quiet. This is proved to be both to her benefit and detriment. Her impeccable reputation first lends her authority in court, but because she is a woman, her trustworthiness is swiftly called into question. Even if the men who argue against her are known to be dishonest, the strength of Celia's reputation cannot overcome the notion that women are too frantic and emotional to be trustworthy and logical. No matter how pure, women were seen to be unreliable and inferior beings in the seventeenth century, as shown by the severity of the untenable situation in which Celia finds herself in court.

Examining Corvino and Volpone, who both want to assert their masculine power over Celia via sexuality, helps to somewhat clarify Jonson's views on gender roles. Volpone seems to be getting away with this attempted rape for a time since numerous males in the play collude to claim that Celia is fabricating her allegation. Volpone is punished at the play's conclusion, although it seems that this punishment is more due to Volpone's ongoing deceit of the other men in the play than to the attempted rape. It's difficult to determine Jonson's final point on sexual oppression. It may be argued, nevertheless, that Jonson considers that the moral lesson about having too much desire and greed is more essential than the subjugation of women, even if he portrays sexual oppression and violence as abhorrent. In other words, rape and lust are only wrong because they are examples of avariciousness. In the play, Volpone's inordinate thirst for money at the cost of Voltore, Corbaccio, and Corvino seems to be the crime for which he is most notorious [1].

The play's second female character, Lady Would-Be, is the antithesis of Celia. The drama contrasts her marriage to Sir Politic Would-Be, which is very English, with Corvino and Celia's union, which is uniquely Italian. The idea that married English women were granted greater independence than married Italian women was supported by the fact that Lady Would-Be is more self-reliant than Celia. Lady Would-Be is independent enough to explore Venice on her own, and she is seen both with and without her spouse. Compared to Celia, Lady Would-Be is also a lot chattier, though the play doesn't precisely say this is a positive thing. When Lady Would-Be comes to see Volpone, he makes asides about how her "flood of words" is torturing him and that even if he's just acting unwell, she's really making him feel worse by chatting nonstop. Since a large portion of this scene is based on the ancient Greek text "On Talkative Women," it is possible that Jonson thought the stereotype that women speak too much is true. However, Lady Would-Be also deviates from the stereotype of a renaissance lady in that she seems educated, unquestionably more so than Celia. Peregrine is surprised when she shouts at him since she often uses literary allusions and references in her protracted monologues.

Lady Would-Be and Celia's differences show how society views women differently in Italy and England, indicating that gender roles are culturally constructed rather than biologically set. The drama challenges gender norms and preconceived notions about women in this manner, even as it sometimes reinforces stereotypes as well. The fact that Volpone demonstrates that women may, like males, be well read, moral, intelligent, and articulate complicates the position of women in society at the very least.

The first literary autocrat, poet laureate, and author of poetry, prose, satire, and critique was Ben Jonson. He caught the eye of renowned antiquarian William Camden while he was a young usher at Westminster School, where the poet built the strong foundations of his classical education. In addition to dedicating his first theatrical hit, "Every Man in His Humour," to Camden, Jonson always had a deep respect for the man, noting that he owed him "all that I am in arts, all that I know." The instant success of "Every Man in His Humour" cemented Jonson's position as one of the most significant playwrights of his period. In other words, Jonson's comedy of humours created stage personas based on a dominant quality or emotion. By juxtaposing these characterized qualities in their conflict and contrast, the comic was ignited. Galen's medical philosophy is where Jonson gets his sense of humor. Galen and his disciples believed that the harmony of the four humours bile, phlegm, choler, and blood was necessary for optimal health.

When a humour crossed its normal line, it caused systemic disturbances. For instance, a reddish complexion and a burning fever indicated that the choleric humour had taken control. Jonson developed a more straightforward, bipolar theory based on mental illnesses connected to choler and blood. According to Jonson's taxonomy, choler, the root of the irascible and concupiscent temperaments, presents itself as extreme rage. These types of humor are personified by Captain Bobadil and Matthew. According to recent academic opinion, Jonson actively promotes and implements sexism in his tragedies. The Oxford English Dictionary claims that it wasn't until 1656 that the word "misogyny," which means "hostility to women," was first used. Clearly, the patriarchal system that maintains that males are superior to women is what the feminists are referring to. According to Lawrence Stone's The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500-1800, the new Renaissance state purposefully promoted the growth of patriarchy on the grounds that the subordination of the family to the head is analogous to, and also a direct contributory cause of, the subordination of subjects to the sovereign [2].

DISCUSSION

In Ben Jonson's Plays, Women and Human Foolishness

Both the males and the women characters in Jonson's works get the same treatment. Satire's primary goal is to make fun of human stupidity in order to impart wisdom. Jonson does not assign a gender to this binary, but his dramatic vision favors wit over folly. In Jonson's dramatic universe, men are not always cunning and women are not always foolish. This does not imply that Jonson always treats his female characters well, because he most definitely does not. However, a lot of masculine depictions also exhibit the sharpness of their creator's knife. If Jonson's treatment of female characters is unequal, the same may be said of his portrayal of men. This is due to the fact that, in contrast to Shakespeare, he does not have characters that evolve during his play. Jonson is not interested in characters having hidden motivations; instead, he visualizes them on a scale of mental acuity, a standard metric in Jonsonian play [3].

Characters who lack intelligence do not become enlightened, while characters who are intelligent are just replaced by others who are more astute. The interplay between the cheats and the cheated leads to the development of the storyline. Despite the presence of exceptionally talented women in the two tragedies Sejanus, His Fall and Catiline, His Conspiracy most notably the murdering Livia the emphasis on the satirical aspect of Jonson's play requires that the scope be kept to

comedy. There aren't many female characters in Jonson's early works, such Every Man in His Humour, but the seeds are there for the more powerful, fully realized women in his later works. When seen in this context, Bridget from Every Man in His Humour is significant because she becomes Grace in Bartholomew Fair, then Pru in The New Inn, and Frances in The Devil Is an Ass. If Jonson's treatment of female characters is unequal, the same may be said of his portrayal of men. This is due to the fact that, in contrast to Shakespeare, he does not have characters that evolve during his play. Jonson is not interested in characters with hidden motivations; instead, he visualizes them on a scale of mental acuity, a standard metric in Jonsonian play. Characters who lack intelligence do not become enlightened, while characters who are intelligent are just replaced by others who are more astute.

When seen in this light, Celia, the troubled wife in Volpone, is the innocent victim of Volpone and Corvino's nasty game. Celia is not well equipped with coping mechanisms, making her perhaps the most vulnerable female in Jonson's pantheon of female characters. Jonson never implies that she deserves her destiny despite her poor mental capacity, and in the end The author shows kindness for Celia by giving her a way out of her tough situation. Other female characters, particularly the Collegiates in Epicoene, can be interpreted as the objects of Jonson's sexism. The foppish male characters in that comedy get the same, or worse, scathing characterization, which makes it clear that Jonson had an entirely different technique in mind. It may be argued that the intention behind such a derogatory representation of the Collegiates is to highlight the most repulsive traits of the men. Additionally, Morose, the purported misogynist, is really a misanthrope, which raises an alternative interpretation of Jonson's dramatic intent [4].

Recent academics approach Jonson's dramaturgy with the preconceived notion that masculine characters are dynamic and powerful while feminine characters are docile and foolish because of the emergence of new historicist critique. According to the claim, Jonson created absurd female characters that show his overt sexism. In such a perspective, the characteristic of wit is an essentially male attribute that is accentuated in the presence of so much feminine foolishness. This conclusion is obviously untrue since Jonson depicts a number of masculine characters who are outwitted by sharper counterparts, such as Kitely in Every Man in His Humour and Sir Diaphanous Kilkworm in The Magnetic Lady. Wit, however, need not be intellect; rather, it may also be common sense combined with inventiveness or cunning, or the capacity to "think on one's feet."

Such mental sharpness is also not gender-specific, as the debate that follows will demonstrate. C. J. Gianakaris offers a taxonomy in "Identifying Ethical Values in Volpone" that logically classifies levels of wit to create a hierarchy in Volpone. Celia and Bonario are two examples of the creatures who make up the first level, the witless, who lack the ability to take autonomous action. The medium level is characterized by intelligent individuals who can somewhat manage their own actions. These individuals include the unimaginative Sir Pol and the adaptable Voltore. Unfortunately, their mental capacity is limited, and they fall prey to personalities who are even more cunning. Volpone and Mosca are examples of the near-brilliant individuals who make up the upper echelon and control the behavior of all the other characters.

Because the cheater/cheated thematic device relies only on such a hierarchy of mental ability, careful analysis will show that the theme concentrating on a hierarchy of wit is not just present in

Volpone but also occurs inside the dramatic universe of all of Jonson's plays. Jonson acknowledges that wit's level of quality varies throughout the Discoveries, which were published after his death. In defining the attribute, Jonson uses the Latin word ingenium to signify that it is an innate quality. A three-tiered hierarchy of excellent, middling, and imos the blatantly bad is proposed by Jonson, who also argues that good wit is "thin and rare among us." He quotes Justice Clement's last remark from Every-Man in His Humor, in which he said, "It is only a king or a poet that is not born every year," to summarize the exegesis on the rarity of such a feature. On one extreme of the wit-spectrum, Jonson presents individuals who lack common sense and are born victims, while on the other he depicts circumstances in which persons overestimate their skills and suffer from conceit. Both male and female characters may be judged on their wit using Jonson's three-tiered system.

One character in the Alchemist who exemplifies the capacity to carry out a certain course of action is Dol Common, a coney-catcher. Dol not only excels in her many parts over the majority of the play, but she also mediates conflicts amongst the quarreling male characters. The conduct of secondary characters is controlled by active planners like Ursula in Bartholomew Fair and Polish in The Magnetic Lady. In other words, women with excellent intellect are able to govern not just their own conduct but also that of others, all the while projecting an air of sympathy. Like Dol, Ursula is the sole woman among a group of male tricksters, but unlike Dol, her male colleagues love and admire her. Polish, on the other hand, commands a group of ladies while blatantly attempting to replace her own daughter with a different one in order to get an inheritance. Dol, Ursula, and Polish are three of the best female wits in the play, and Jonson treats them all kindly and refrains from harshly punishing them for whatever transgressions they may do while acting as leaders [5] [6] [7].

Traditional Gender Roles

The plays of Ben Jonson, which were written in the early 17th century in England, do, in fact, often follow conventional gender roles. Celia, a character in "Volpone," is a perfect example of how women are portrayed in line with these conventional norms. In "Volpone," Celia is presented as embodying the ideal of the virtuous and virginal wife. Her persona complies with the social norms of the time of Jonson, which placed an emphasis on women's modesty, submission, and loyalty to the institution of marriage. From Celia's portrayal in the play, many important conclusions may be drawn:

Virtue and Modesty: Celia is shown as a model of both virtue and modesty. Despite his shortcomings and maltreatment of her, she continues to be true and dedicated to her husband, Corvino. She embodies the conventional idea of women's virginity and faithfulness with her unshakable commitment.

Obedience and Submission: Throughout the play, Celia is constrained in what she can do by social norms that demand feminine submission. She acquiesces to her husband's requests, even though they are immoral, underscoring the inferior position women often had in early 17th-century society.

Vulnerability to Male overtures: Celia's personality also illustrates how susceptible women are to the overtures of strong, predatory males. Volpone's lewd pursuit of her highlights the risk that women face when dealing with males who misuse their power or social standing.

Themes of Virtue versus. depravity: Celia's virtue acts as a counterbalance to the moral decay and depravity that are pervasive throughout the play. Her integrity stands in stark contrast to the dishonesty and immorality of other characters, bringing complexity to the story's thematic examination of virtue and vice.

In "Volpone," Jonson utilizes Celia's persona to not only uphold gender stereotypes but also to emphasize the difficulties and vulnerabilities that women experience in this patriarchal society. Her noble image contrasts with the moral deterioration and manipulation seen in other characters, adding to the play's satirical and moralistic themes. Her role acts as a criticism on the limited agency and autonomy granted to women in a patriarchal society.

CONCLUSION

The varied and nuanced topics of gender and sexuality in Ben Jonson's writings mirror the societal mores and views of his period. The plays and poetry of Ben Jonson provide a window into the complex interactions between gender and sexuality in the early 17th century. His approach to these issues is characterized by a blend of conformity to conventional gender roles and sporadic rejection of social conventions. On the one hand, Jonson's writings often follow the dominant gender conventions of the time. Female characters are typically portrayed as dutiful spouses or objects of desire, which conform to the patriarchal norms of the period. In plays by Jonson like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," stock female characters are sometimes used to depict women as tools for achieving money or social status. But sometimes Jonson subverts these expectations by giving his female characters wit, initiative, and intellect. For instance, Lady Wishfort in "The Way of the World" defies stereotypes of women's passivity by displaying a keen intelligence and a determination to exploit the social system in order to attain her aims. In terms of sexuality, Jonson often makes references to the bawdy and the erotic, especially in his comedies, which are rife with sexual innuendo and double entendre. The darker aspect of human sexuality is shown in characters like Subtle from "The Alchemist" who use their sexual appetites for selfish gain. But Jonson's view of sexuality is not only licentious; it also has moral implications. By the play's conclusion, many of his characters who indulge in sexual immorality are subject to punishment or moral condemnation.

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CHAPTER 9

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON CLASS AND STATUS IN JONSON'S SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT:

Ben Jonson, a well-known dramatist and poet of the English Renaissance, was acutely aware of the complexities of class and rank in the society of his day and made insightful observations about them. This summary examines how social hierarchies, the effects of money and social position, and the mutable nature of class are all explored by Jonson in his literary works. The intricate social stratification that existed throughout the Renaissance is reflected in Jonson's plays, which often include a wide variety of characters from different socioeconomic origins. Jonson examines how class and position affect people's behavior, ambitions, and relationships via characters like the clever Volpone, the ambitious Mosca, or the credulous Toby Belch. The examination of class and rank by Jonson is heavily reliant on wealth and tangible items. Characters in his plays, such as "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," are motivated by their desire for material gain and social progress. These characters use lies, trickery, and social ascent to elevate their standing, exposing the allure and deceptive nature of monetary achievement. The depiction of the naive and easily tricked folks who fall victim to the ingenious plans is part of Jonson's societal critique. These people often serve as cautionary examples and as representatives of the poorer classes of society. Jonson emphasizes the dangers that persons with little social capital confront in a class-based society as well as their susceptibility. The fluidity and transience of these notions are further highlighted by Jonson's handling of class and status. Depending on their behavior, humor, and social savvy, characters may advance or regress in society. When a female character in "The Silent Woman" manages to pass as a man, she challenges established gender and class limits and serves as an example of the mobility of class.

KEYWORDS:

Socioeconomic Origins, The Alchemist, The Silent Woman, Toby Belch, Volpone.

INTRODUCTION

Literature enthusiasts have long treasured poems that are written in honor of a certain location. "Cooper's Hill," "Grongar Hill," lyrics by Herrick and Gay about rural Devon, Pope's "Windsor Forest," and John Betjeman's poems about simple English scenes all immediately come to mind as examples of "local" poetry that has existed since before the Middle Ages, possibly as far back as Ausonius' laudatory poems of the Moselle valley. Other, possibly even earlier works also come to mind. Indeed, it seems to be in man's nature to enjoy his homes, no matter how magnificent or mundane they may be; after all, doing so has been a manner of celebrating life itself. To be devoted to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the fundamental principle ,

according to Burke, and it is the wellspring of more expansive attachments [1]. It is the first step in a sequence that will lead to a love for both our nation and humanity.

The celebration of location is carried out under the aspect of a potentially tragic peril, in which the very existence of the item praised is perceived as being endangered. However, this large stream of poetry in favor of place is strongly related with another and more unique genre. This is a distinctly modern that is, post-Renaissance genre because it is interested in the collision between the traditional and the unfamiliar, tradition and innovation, habit and the critical awareness. I'm thinking of the poems that are part of a special tradition in English literature that praise grand homes, such as Jonson's "To Penshurst," Marvell's "Upon Appleton House," perhaps Pope's "On Taste," and Yeat's poems about Coole Park, with its swans and antiques, its storied gardens, and its great rooms "where none has reigned that lacked a name and fame [2]."

Coole Park represented for Yeats a ceremonial and even heroic way of life, a lifestyle redeemed by imagination, which was about to be destroyed by democracy and industrialism. Since Nietzsche noted that the holy life requires a lot of leisure, Andrew Marvell was given access to the Fairfax family estate, although Appleton House had been endangered by the turmoil of the Civil War. Alexander Pope observed that the opulent ostentation of a commercial plutocracy was supplanting the architectural style that represented the fine taste of the Earl of Burlington, as well as the social presumptions associated with that style the need for decorum, moderation, and balance. These poetries inherently uphold traditional ideals like as ritual, order, contemplation, decorum, moderation, and continuity.

However, it is important to note that the French Revolution period gave rise to a kind of counter-tradition. The large mansion represents frightening and antiquated authority in the Gothic imagination of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, rather than order and beauty. It was mysterious and devilish, the home of dwarfs, infidel noblemen, Jesuits, insane slaves, and even Italians. The Gothic style suggests that it ought to be demolished, much like the House of Usher, Rochester's castle, or Satis House in Great Expectations [3]. The poems of Yeats, Marvell, and Pope cited above have gotten a lot of critical attention, albeit maybe not from the perspective given here. However, Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" has gotten relatively little attention, perhaps as a result of the well-known fact that Jonson is more revered than read. However, "To Penshurst" is a really good and probably outstanding poetry.

The Penshurst Jonson was aware of was a Sidney family estate located in the Kentish valley, close to the banks of the Medway River. A nobleman and London resident named Sir John de Pulteney had constructed the home in the fourteenth century. Periodically, the original building underwent additions. In 1341, Edward III granted permission for Penshurst to be reinforced with walls built of chalk and stone. Later, others added their own touches in different architectural styles and materials, including stone and brick, without covering up the gray buttressed walls and imposing Gothic arches. The estate went through multiple owners, with more than one owner losing his head due to political foolishness [4]. Finally, Sir William Sidney and his successors received it in 1552. At the time of Jonson's poem, Sir Robert Sidney, the illustrious Sir Philip's younger brother, and his capable but, rumor has it, rather shrewish wife, the former Barbara Gamage, lived there.

In contrast to Penshurst, these newer houses are "grudged at," while Penshurst, unlike them, was "reared with no man's ruin, no man's groan." In his references to these new and ostentatious houses, Jonson has in mind a particular social problem: a whole class of newly rich had emerged as a result of wealth largely derived from disco. It would be hard to exaggerate, said L. The relevance of the flood of American gold and silver in hastening the collapse of the medieval economic system is highlighted by C. Knights. A few numbers will give you an idea of the scope of the economic revolution. It is believed that the stock of precious metals in Europe tripled between 1500 and 1600. For instance, a Persian voyage of the Russian Company in 1581 earned a payout of just 106% and was consequently deemed a failure. Sir Francis Drake's trade syndicate, on the other hand, paid a dividend of 4700 percent in 1580. The East India Company made over 300 percent on some of their expeditions. Never in the history of the modern world has there been such a long-lasting and lucrative opportunity for the businessman, the speculator, and the profiteer, according to Keynes. Knights does a great job of describing the impact this unexpected prosperity had on society [5]:

The stated intense economic activity led to the emergence of a group of "new men" who worked as retailers, bankers, businessmen, and entrepreneurs. Like the previous feudal aristocracy, they attributed their status primarily to their financial acumen rather than to political or administrative prowess. In "To Penshurst," as in The Alchemist, where Sir Epicure Mammon dreams of social and moral transformations to be brought about by money, and indeed in many of his other plays and lyrics, at the time of Elizabeth and James I, the nouveaux riches acquired social and political power and exercise

The poem starts by defining what Penshurst is not, and the fundamental goal of the poem which shifts from rejection to celebration is to elaborate on this initial idea. The poetry is exclusive, much like the society at Penshurst. In fact, Jonson made it a point to reject the debased, whether it be in society or poetry, and his aesthetic and social perspectives are quite similar. Although Jonson makes a point of emphasizing this dichotomy between moral and aesthetic by starting the poem with it, some of the opening lines' subtlety may have gone unnoticed. "Thou art not, Penshurst, built to envious show/ Of touch or marble," begins the opening line. It is undoubtedly true that part of the energy of "not" sticks to "built," giving rise to a secondary reverberation of meaning that hints to later-met meanings that will be more directly encountered. While Penshurst has developed, it hasn't actually been "built" way the newer homes have.

Such recommendations relating to "not. In fact, there was a sense in which the house, like that famous oak on its grounds, had grown. In truth, it had evolved organically, with additions being built as needed, preparing us for later passages that compare Penshurst and the social structure it supports to the order of nature. The method of addressing the house as if it were a person is used throughout the poem to emphasize this aspect of Penshurst: "Thou are not, Penshurst. The estate is further humanized by Jonson's metaphors: it "joy'st" in soil, air, wood: and water "; it "hast thy walks, for health as well as sport." Of course, what has humanized Penshurst is its history, the essences it has gathered from the lives it has contained. However, Jonson's metaphors create a kind of analogy: the poet's imagination may also bestow essences; and possibly, we infer, tradition and the imagination share many characteristics. Both are given and have nothing to do with how the

conscious will works or how proud or ambitious a person is; neither can be created; they can only be acknowledged and cherished [6].

DISCUSSION

When Jonson informs us that Pan, Bacchus, and the dryads visit the "mount," or high land, in the park at Penshurst, the past enters the poem in a different way, imbuing the property with memories derived from classical tradition. Despite the fact that Penshurst's past is English, Jonson has a legitimate basis for invoking classical tradition because Penshurst was also deeply entwined with the political and cultural history of the Renaissance, particularly with one of its most prominent figures, Sir Philip Sidney, whose birth "all the muses met." Jonson, as is well known, saw a similarity between the real England and the classical world he had read about, and the presence of both in Penshurst's past in a later section of the poem, we see Jonson himself at Penshurst, where he is clearly there to reflect the role that the poet is given in humanist ideology. Because of the recognition of poetry's social role as the ruling class's moral guide, Jonson felt comfortable in his position at Penshurst. Additionally, his commitment to language refined and strengthened the national lexicon, and his accomplishments raised the stature of his nation. Both through his plays and his songs, Jonson methodically completes these responsibilities. However, the invocation of Pan and Bacchus has still another purpose. It foreshadows the two themes of food and fertility that flow through the poem and tie it together. Penshurst is vibrant, as we eventually realize. It reproduces and eats. But a thorough order holds all of its potent powers in check [7].

The sensual subject that Pan started is continued in lines 13–18, and the tree, which has been inscribed with "the names/ Of many a sylvan," serves as the ideal symbol of the poem's meaning. The Sidneys cherish nature, and the objects created as a consequence of this affection have joined nature much like Penshurst itself. Penshurst is to the landscape what the names are to a tree: a symbol of affection. And as we all know, Castiglione, Sidney, and other Renaissance philosophers believed that society was kept together by love. These phrases also allude to the distinctive features of Sir Philip's literary creations, which focus on pastoral and romantic themes. The following couplet emphasizes the close relationship the Sidney family has with nature: Sidney's "amorous flames" mirror the "ruddy satyrs" who pursue the "lighter" fauns to Lady Sidney's oak.

The sensual implications of these words foreshadow the "ripe daughters" and the "fruitful" Lady of the house and get us ready for the poem's main allegory, which contrasts the natural order of the estate with the social order of its residents. The society based at Penshurst has its feasts and its fecundity, much like the tutelary spirits of nature [8]. Beginning with line 19, the second portion of the poem elaborately and hyperbolically portrays the connection between nature and the enormous home. A wood near the home, called the Gamages after Lady Sidney's ancestors, provides food for the Sidneys' "seasoned deer," while the meadows feed horses and other animals. The Medway River and the ponds provide "tribute fish," which are characterized as being anxious to be eaten that is, to play their function in the overall order of the estate. The woodlands and the riverbanks provide rabbit, pheasant, and partridge. This text may be seen to include a lot of intriguing aspects.

For starters, the sequence of the different kinds of life livestock and other warm-blooded creatures, wild birds, fish, and lastly fruits and flowers suggests the enormous chain of existence. This arrangement strengthens the impression of deliberate order that the paragraph seeks to convey and praise. However, the extravagantness of the conceit shouldn't hide from us another interpretation of the section, one that qualifies and complicates, but in no way subverts, the interpretation of the poem as a whole. For the sake of the order of Penshurst, the fish and the animals must make the ultimate sacrifice; we are to realize that joining this order, no matter how just or natural it may be, implies suffering. In the same way that the fish sacrifice their lives for Penshurst and all it stands for, it seems that the people in the following part also sacrifice something for order. Moreover, they are placing a cap on their own ambition since, unlike the Parvenus, they do not strive to be flashy and do not ascend socially, at least not very much. There are even the slightest hints that the Sidneys' union itself entails some self-sacrifice: just as the Gamage family "serves" seasoned deer to the Sidneys, so does the Gamage family "serve" Barbara to them. However, the Penshurst residents are rewarded for their selflessness with a sense of belonging and harmony; they are also freed from envy, which is typified by the homes constructed "for envious show [9]."

Furthermore, it wouldn't seem outlandish to me if I saw in this chapter any similarities between the universe of the animals and fish and the realm of people I faced in court. This theory is supported by Jonson's diction. The Sidney table is crowned with the purple pheasant, and the ponds honor the fish. One might even argue that James I , the uninvited visitor and hence in some respects the cruel one, behaves toward the Penshurst home in much the same manner that a king behaves toward his courtiers or perhaps the household itself. The passage's secondary allusion that the fauna resembled a court is made with a great deal of humour. The "fat, aged carps," "pikes, now weary of their own kind to eat," and "bright eels," inexorably conjure up images of all-too-familiar court figures. If courtiers are like fish, then fish are like courtiers, according to the sophisticated and not without a critical edge wit. However, the poem's affirmations naturally include these important difficulties, just as the Penshurst order naturally includes the forces represented by Pan and Bacchus, not to mention the author who is feasting.

The next section of the poem moves up the human scale from the "farmer and the clown" to King James himself, whereas the second section moves down the chain of being to the vegetable world. This establishes the social analogy of the order we have already seen in nature. Furthermore, there is an indirect relationship between the natural and social spheres of order as well as a subtle but powerful rhetorical strategy. It should be noted that while the matured fruit stated at the conclusion of section two, the "blushing apricot" and the "wooly peach," are given adjectives often linked with human activity, the farmers' daughters are characterized by a fruit-appropriate adjective: they are "ripe." In this way, Jonson supports the premise that there is a connection between the two worlds, which has previously been established. But the comparison between the second section's discussion of the natural order and the third's discussion of the human order is much further developed. No one arrives in Penshurst "empty handed," just as nature brings presents with it, and like nature itself, so do the locals, who also bring food. It is amazing how many lines in this poem are dedicated to eating [10].

Peasants, servants, Jonson himself, the Sidneys, Prince Henry, and King James make up Penshurst's social hierarchy. It serves as a model for traditional English society, in a sense. Since each rank is acknowledged to be essential to the operation of the whole system, no one who participates in it is made to feel inferior to anybody else despite having his or her proper position. The role of a peasant is just as important as that of a king or a poet, and if lack of mobility keeps someone in their position, it also avoids the jealousy that often arises when someone has the chance to advance. And last, the Sidney home itself is a model of organization. The "high housewifery" of Lady Sidney makes sure that everything is prepared for King James and the Prince when they suddenly arrive after a day of hunting: "To have her linen, plate, and all things nigh. When she was far; and not a room but dressed/As if it had expected such a guest."

Jonson demonstrates the ability of the community at Penshurst to endure over time; it is the ideal example of Allen Tate's definition of a traditional society: one that can pass on, provide for succeeding generations, "a moral conception of man in relation to the material of life." The Sidney children have been raised to carry on the family's traditions, culture, and way of life. I believe that in these lines about the Sidney children, Jonson touches upon a matter of great complexity and importance that is, the whole problem of the mode by which culture, defined as the entire way of life of a person, is transmitted. This is the whole problem of how one transmits culture, which is defined as the way in which a person lives their entire life, without exception. Since Jonson is referring to "manners" here, it is clear that he does not mean "good manners" or etiquette, but rather what Lionel Trilling refers to as the buzz of implication that is always present; specifically, the implication that "of assumption and value that never gets fully stated."

Coming in the tone of greetings and quarrels, in slang and humor and popular songs, in children's play, in the gesture the waiter makes when the puts down the plate, in the very nature of the food we prefer, these are the things "that for good or bad draw the people of a culture together and that separate them from the people of another culture." Culture conceived in this way is, T.S. According to Eliot, one manifestation of core values is the "incarnation" of a people's beliefs. Culture is passed down via the family in Jonson's account of the traditional community at Penshurst. It is not passed down via conventional education, which has never been entirely effective in passing down culture. We can see that Jonson is concerned to praise this sort of transmission, and not so much the promotion of intellectual preeminence; though it may well be argued that the life of the mind ultimately depends upon the transmission of culture in this sense. Eliot notes that the family is still by far the most important channel of cultural transmission. When family life fails to play its part, we must expect our culture to deteriorate. The development of character comes before the development of intelligence, according to both Aristotle and Jonson [11].

Therefore, Jonson raises a topic in these lines that is far from moot and is actually of particular interest to those who have thought about the issues in education. For the modern teacher must undoubtedly be suspicious that while he may be developing a sort of intellectual elite in Eliot's words, a "collection of individuals united only by their common interests and separated by everything else" he is in no way transmitting a culture, as opposed to knowledge about cults.

The poem's language is understated, seems to be humble and unpolished on purpose, and is similar to the architecture of Penshurst. There is no attempt to create the kind of regularity that can be

achieved by end-stopping the couplets, and many of the 102 lines seem purposefully devoid of mellifluousness, such as "Thy sheep, thy bullocks, kine, and calves do feed." Like Penshurst, which lacks polished pillars and a roof of gold, Jonson's verse rejects the high polish he could have easily given it of public affections. It is obvious that under the circumstances described by Van den Haag, mitigated though they may well be in some places, there is little opportunity today for these affections to develop; men have tended to become, in Burke's words again, the flies of a summer. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind. The bulk of people who live in cities nowadays don't care much about their surroundings, thus they often see patriotic sentiments as hollow. The different urban generations stop passing on any specific culture or distinctive way of life because they are cut off from both their surroundings and from one another. The typical search of our modern writers is for a radical kind of innocence, which is associated with childhood and ultimately with death. Under these circumstances, as might have been expected, modern thought has developed, in Chesterton's words, "not only a touch of mania, but of suicidal mania." Additionally, among American and European intellectuals, enthusiasm for the protection of political liberty, which still prevails in the West, is becoming harder to come by [12].

CONCLUSION

Class and position were important, defining characteristics of Ben Jonson's society, and these themes are prevalent in many of his works. In his plays and poems, Ben Jonson explores class and rank, offering a vivid and sharp commentary on the stratified and hierarchical society of early 17th-century England. His writings demonstrate a profound awareness of the intricacies, desires, and disparities that pervaded this society structure. The desire of persons from lower socioeconomic classes to go up the social scale is one of the recurrent themes in Jonson's works. Characters in "The Alchemist" like Volpone, Subtle, and Face serve as examples of the urge to advance one's social status, often at the cost of others, whether via cunning, deceit, or ambition. The relentless quest of riches and prestige is highlighted, as is the appeal of upward mobility and the persistent effect of class disparities. Along with mocking the excesses and pretenses of the affluent, Jonson also created characters like Sir Epicure Mammon in "The Alchemist" and Sir Politic Would-Be in "Volpone." These characters illustrate the foolishness of people who think their social connections may shield them from repercussions or that their heightened position entitled them to lavish indulgence. Furthermore, themes of morality and justice recur often throughout Jonson's plays. He emphasizes the value of upholding social integrity by punishing wrongdoers, especially those who try to manipulate or abuse the social system. This moral component of his writing implies that Jonson was aware of the potential damage and corruption that unrestrained class-based goals may cause.

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CHAPTER 10

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON RELIGION AND MORALITY

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ABSTRACT:

Religion and morality have long been connected ideas that have a significant impact on social norms, ethics, and human conduct. The complicated and diverse link between religion and morality is explored in this study, which also acknowledges the variety of viewpoints on this delicate relationship. It looks at how religious beliefs, practices, and institutions influence moral ideals and conduct. Religion, which often serves as a fundamental source of moral instruction, has a big impact on how people think about morality. It offers doctrines, precepts, and moral standards that aid followers in determining what is good and wrong. The ethical compass for followers of different religious traditions is provided by the moral precepts they uphold, such as the Five Pillars of Islam or the Ten Commandments in Judaism and Christianity. Additionally, religious organizations and groups operate as moral gathering places where people may exercise their shared ideals and strengthen ethical conduct. A feeling of community and a sense of shared moral obligation among believers is fostered through places of worship, religious texts, rituals, and religious leaders. Religious tales and narratives often include moral teachings and parables that highlight virtues, moral challenges, and the repercussions of one's choices. These stories give a framework for moral inquiry and moral judgment as well as instructions on how to live a good and decent life.

KEYWORDS:

Christianity, Morality, Judaism, Religion, Volpone.

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson's comedies include a substantial amount of religious satire, which is indicative of his proclivity for scathing social criticism and moral critique. Religious satire is often woven into larger social satire in Jonson's comedies like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," producing a complicated tapestry of comedy and criticism. The depiction of persons who use religious pretenses for selfish advantage is a key feature of Jonson's religious satire. For instance, in the play "Volpone," the lawyer Voltore utilizes religious vows and feigned devotion to further his personal agenda [1]. This satirical picture emphasizes the opportunism and hypocrisy that Jonson saw in several societal groups.

Jonson often uses characters that prey on religious beliefs and phobias in his plays. In "The Alchemist," the figure of Subtle exploits the faith and yearning for supernatural solutions sometimes connected with religious beliefs by posing as an alchemist capable of turning ordinary

materials into gold. Here, Jonson's satire criticizes the credulity of those who are readily won over by claims of superhuman strength.

Additionally, Jonson satirizes the greed and moral decline that are common in his culture using religious themes and images [2]. His characters' preoccupation with money and worldly success—often at the cost of moral and religious values serves as a caustic commentary of the moral climate of the day. Jonson was not addressing religion itself but rather the exploitation and corruption that may take place inside religious environments, despite the fact that his religious satire may seem disrespectful on the surface. His satire prompted viewers to consider the moral and ethical ramifications of using religion as a front for one's own benefit or as a tool for social control.

Ben Jonson essentially uses religious satire to investigate the moral and ethical issues in his culture via the prism of his plays. His plays are both amusing and thought-provoking reflections on the complexity of faith and society during the English Renaissance because of his humorous and sharp analysis, which compels audiences to think about the connection between religion, morality, and human conduct.

The Place of Morality in Jonson's Works: The Place of Morality in Jonson's Works

Ben Jonson was a significant author of the English Renaissance who often wrote on morality. He used his plays, poems, and masques as venues for moral reflection and societal criticism. This debate dives into the fundamental place of morality in Jonson's works, exploring the ways in which he used satire, character development, and moral principles to impart moral teachings and make observations on the moral climate of his day [3].

1. **Moral Framework and Didacticism:** Jonson's writings often exhibit a distinct moral philosophy. He had faith in the ability of literature to instruct and uplift its readership. His poems and plays usually include moral teachings that inspire spectators and readers to think about issues related to goodness, evil, and human conduct. Many of Jonson's plays, like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," show the results of greed, dishonesty, and moral decay and act as cautionary tales.

2. **Satire and Social Criticism:** One of Jonson's most notable literary traits and a means of ethical criticism is his sardonic wit. He attacked the vices, foolishness, and hypocrisy of his day via satire. His characters are the subject of debate and mockery because they are often exaggerated and morally repugnant. Jonson pushed listeners to consider their own conduct and ideals by mocking cultural standards and the moral flaws of his day.

3. **Character Development and Morality:** Jonson employed his multi-faceted characters to examine the complexity of human nature and morality. These characters often reflect different moral stances or personality types. Jonson challenged audiences to think about the moral decisions people make and the effects of those decisions via their moral conflicts, exchanges, and problems.

4. **Moral Ambiguity:** Although Jonson's writings often teach moral truths that are both plain and nuanced, they also recognize the moral complexity of human life. His characters are hardly one-dimensional, and they often face difficult moral decisions. This awareness of moral ambiguity gives his writings depth and encourages readers to consider the difficulties involved in making ethical choices.

5. **Moral Thought and Intellectual Engagement:** Jonson's dedication to morality in his writings included his involvement with ancient philosophy and ethics, notably Stoicism. Through the moral travels of his characters, he examined the Stoic concepts of restraint, virtue, and reason, enhancing the intellectual complexity of his writings.

The moral conviction that permeates Ben Jonson's writings is a testament to his faith in literature's ability to enlighten and inspire. Jonson pushed his audience to consider their own moral compass and connect with the moral conundrums of their society via satire, character development, and moral contemplation. His ability to utilize writing to explore morality and criticise society has left him with a lasting legacy that makes his works both enjoyable and ethically enlightening. Ben Jonson's religious beliefs are a topic of academic dispute and interpretation since there isn't much direct proof for them. A complicated and a little mysterious feature of Jonson's life and work is his theological attitude, which he expressed during a time of religious strife in England that was characterized by the conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism [4]. Consider the following important details about Jonson's religious beliefs:

1. **Catholic Origins:** Ben Jonson was a Catholic by birth and is thought to have been baptized as such. Catholics had to often hide their faith throughout Queen Elizabeth I's reign due to persecution of the religion. It's possible that Jonson's upbringing as a Catholic had an impact on his early experiences.

2. **Conversion to Protestantism:** Jonson is believed to have converted to Protestantism at some time, indicating that his religious allegiance may have changed. The social and political context at the period may have had an impact on this conversion since it was beneficial to support the Church of England, which was the recognized religion under James I's rule.

3. **Lack of Overtly Religious Themes:** Jonson's writings don't prominently include overtly religious themes or theological arguments, in contrast to some of his contemporaries like John Donne. In contrast to religious topics, his plays, masques, and poems often center on secular topics, satire, and social criticism.

4. **Stoicism and Moral Philosophy:** Jonson's works demonstrate a fondness for moral issues and Stoic philosophy. Stoicism, while not openly religious, places a strong emphasis on virtue, reason, and self-control, all of which are consistent with certain ethical standards. This fascination with moral and philosophical issues may be seen in Jonson's investigation of moral quandaries and character development in his writings.

5. **Diverse Social Circles:** Jonson was friends with a wide variety of people, including professors, members of the court, and authors. Both Catholics and Protestants were part of his social circles, and his writings often show a wide variety of influences and viewpoints.

6. **Personal views vs. Artistic Expression:** It's important to differentiate between the subjects that an author explores in their artistic works and their personal views. Although Jonson's religious beliefs may have had an impact on his life, it is not always easy to infer his personal beliefs from the themes and characters portrayed in his works of literature.

DISCUSSION

Women, Families, and Morality in Volpone by Ben Jonson

In England throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the family and church morality fought with more institutionalized forms of values brought about by the emergence of a money economy. Volpone, a theatrical satire by Ben Jonson written in 1606, diagnoses societal issues brought on by the nascent proto-capitalist civilization of the period. Although Jonson criticizes the destructive effects of a money culture, his play provides nothing in the way of effective resistance to its influence. In his scenario, no agents of good succeed in silencing the opportunistic voices; instead, the immoral are silenced by the fallout from their own plots. Celia and Bonario, the two distinct moral ideals in Jonson's play, fail to stop the eroding value changes brought on by money; in part, their failure results from structural flaws in Early Modern conceptions of the family and gendered roles within such a structure. The gendered roles that Celia plays as a wife and Bonario plays as the oldest son and heir limit their capacity to fight declining morality and advancing economic change. Celia and Bonario's words and deeds combine to paint a disturbing image of morality and conventional family structures that are ill-prepared to handle the unpleasant consequences of greed. In my thesis [5], I closely examine the relationship between Celia and Bonario as it is portrayed in Jonson's play and I carefully examine sixteenth-century conduct books that express ideas about the family and gender roles during a moment of proto-capitalist transition. By doing this, my endeavor combines a number of literary scholarly methods, including historical and archival research, literary criticism, and analysis.

The Man Who Knew Shakespeare

Ben Jonson claimed to appreciate Shakespeare in addition to knowing him well. He said in 1619, three years after Shakespeare's death, "I loved the man and do honour his memory (this side idolatry) as much as any." Additionally, he made up criticisms of various plays, particularly "Julius Caesar." Why? The inevitable response is jealousy and anger of the only writer and poet he knew to be better than him. Jonson was chosen as England's poet laureate by King James in February 1616, when Shakespeare was still alive [6].

Did this make Jonson less envious of his competitor? No, the 1619 paragraph in which he professed his admiration for Shakespeare goes on to criticize him, saying, "Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter." According to Jonson, examples include when he responded in the role of Caesar to someone who exclaimed, "Caesar, thou dost me wrong," by saying, "Caesar never did wrong but with just cause." Since the First Folio wouldn't be published for another four years and the text of "Julius Caesar" wasn't accessible in quarto, Jonson was quoting from memory. He mentions lines he believed he heard in performance without any method of verifying (not that he would have). He was mistaken.

He was referring to a brief episode when Metellus Cimber begs Caesar to release his brother from exile right before the conspirators stab Caesar. Caesar, who is disgusted by this "base spaniel fawning," refuses to forgive the brother, saying: "Know, Caesar doth not wrong" (in banishing the

brother) and "nor without cause / Will he be satisfied." Metellus never says, "Thou dost me wrong," as claimed by Jonson. His interpretation of the lines is absurd.

He naturally despised the play, which was a great success, despite the fact that his own Roman drama, "Sejanus, His Fall," had been a failure. They clenched their rotten mouth and stared askew, like hissing snakes, judging it to die," William Fennor, a fan of Jonson, said of the audience's behavior at the debut. In retaliation, Jonson published "Sejanus" in quarto, with laudatory poetry by George Chapman and John Marston, and with 300 classic texts crammed into the margins in tiny type, "all in the learned tongues," as if this would make the play better. Despite having a horrifying plot Sejanus seduces the emperor's wife, poisons his son, and plots to usurp Tiberius "Sejanus" is nonetheless tedious to read and hardly performed. As seen by "The Alchemist" and "Volpone, or The Fox [7]," Jonson was stronger at humor and satire. Shakespeare provided him with a much-needed helping hand in 1598 when he produced "Every Man in His Humour," his first theatrical hit, when he was just 26 years old. Shakespeare was a member of the cast in addition to the Globe producing the play. Jonson ought to have loved him and undoubtedly did, but in a flawed and inconsistent manner. Shakespeare, Michael Drayton, and Ben Jonson got together in April 1616 for what the rector of the Stratford church, John Ward, described as "a merry meeting and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted." Is it feasible to speculate that Jonson's recent laureateship motivated the festive gathering and maybe accelerated his demise? Naturally, we will never know.

Insane claims that Shakespeare's plays were created by someone else, such as the Earl of Oxford, who passed away in 1604, before "Lear" and "The Tempest," have little chance of being refuted by Jonson. Shakespeare is referred to as the "man who can only withhold" by Edmund Wilson in his essay "Morose Ben Jonson," who also labels him a "anal erotic" and attributes his lifelong resentment to "two sources": "first, the grievance of the man of good birth unjustly deprived of his patrimony; second, the sulky resentment of the man who can only withhold, against the man who can freely lavish."

He was named Benjamin Johnson with a "h" at birth. Ben's father was a Scottish priest who lost everything during the reign of Queen Mary and passed away before Ben was born, leaving his wife and kid in such dire straits that they had to live in one of London's worst slums. Ben revealed in 1619 that he was enrolled in Westminster School at the age of 7 by a family friend, the antiquarian William Camden, "to whom I owe / All that I am in arts, all that I know," while a guest of William Drummond, the poet and laird of Hawthornden Castle near Edinburgh (who recorded their conversations). Camden was a professor at Westminster, a royal institution where every Christmas, Queen Elizabeth attended the school performance. Ben's lifelong dedication to the classics earned him honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge because of his solid foundation in them. This would also account for his sarcastic remark about Shakespeare's "small Latin and less Greek".

At sixteen, catastrophe! He was expelled from Westminster and "sentenced" to a menial job as a bricklayer, which he said he "could not tolerate." Ben's stepfather, the expert bricklayer Robert Brett, may have determined that Ben needed to acquire a skill since his mother had remarried when

he was 2 years old in an effort to escape poverty. He labored as a bricklayer until he discovered an escape route—the army. He served in the Low Countries, when he "killed an enemy in the face of both camps. He picked up bricklaying again until his marriage to Anne Lewis in 1594, when his apprenticeship was officially over. He started performing with playwagon companies in the country when his children arrived, working his way up to a position at the Swan where he portrayed Hieronimo in Thomas Kyd's "Spanish Tragedy." He was such a terrible actor that Thomas Dekker made light of his "ranting. Jonson started writing on his own when theater owner Philip Henslowe employed him to edit plays. A new play he co-wrote with the poet Thomas Nashe, "The Isle of Dogs," was so subversively satirical of the aristocracy (the queen's kennels were on the Isle of Dogs) that Jonson was imprisoned for it. He murdered Gabriel Spencer, a fellow actor, in a duel in 1597. In his statement to Drummond, he claimed that Spencer had "hurt him in the arm with a sword 10 inches longer than his, for which he was imprisoned and almost at the gallows" because of the incident [8]. He avoided execution by arguing for the benefit of the clergy (he could read Latin), but he was given a T for Tyburn, the location of the gallows, as a mark of honor. Jonson toiled over 16 plays between 1597 and 1633, lamenting bitterly that his total career income was just £200. Come, abandon the wretched stage / And the more hateful age" from his last "Ode to Himself" demonstrates how much he despised the theater, the times, and his own destiny.

His major break came in February 1616 when James I awarded him a lifelong royal income of 100 marks with a butt of Canary wine every year. Despite the fact that the phrase was absent from the warrant, he began to be known as the "poet laureate." His career took off, and he discovered Lord Aubigny (Esme Stuart), a kind young patron and blood related of the monarch, with whom he shared five years. His wife "was a shrew, but honest," he told Drummond. He had been with my Lord Aubigny instead of her for the last five years. The Earl of Pembroke handed him £ 20 every New Year's Day to acquire books, and Sir Walter Raleigh employed him to instruct his son. His creation of masques for court performances may have been his greatest success. Anne of Denmark, the new queen, enjoyed masques and sometimes danced in them. They were better compensated and shorter than plays with five acts. Jonson was now groomed by the wealthy and renowned as well as by noblemen and ladies who collected poets. He also had access to their libraries [9].

Jonson, as opposed to Shakespeare, made use of the marketing and commercial benefits of book publishing. He was the first English playwright to publish his plays in a folio book under the title "Works" (unheard of!), which elevated his stature beyond all others. He had developed into a literary superstar in the contemporary sense possibly the first. When you consider where he began, his life as a whole is a remarkable achievement. However, he referred to himself as "poor" with justice in his latter years. The "pension for life" essentially ended under Charles I, and the court paid little attention to his sweet beggarly lyrics. The tribe of Ben, a group of his youthful followers, honored him at a dinner a year before his death, and he humiliated them by disparaging his fellow poets and praising himself. He is a great lover and praiser of himself, a contemner and scorner of others particularly after alcohol, which is one of the components in which he livesth, said Drummond, his admirer and patron, in scathing terms [10].

Shakespeare was probably responsible for many more ridiculous errors than Jonson could ever list in his insults against him. However, he only mentioned two more errors: Shakespeare included

many persons who claimed to have been shipwrecked in Bohemia, where there is no sea for a hundred miles, in one of his plays. This was disproved by Harvard professor George Lyman Kittredge, who revealed that Robert Greene's novel, set in an earlier time when Bohemia's shoreline reached the sea, served as the inspiration for "The Winter's Tale." The most absurd accusation is that made by Jonson: Shakespeare wished for art. In his sonnet from the First Folio four years later, he reversed himself and said, "Yet must I not give nature all; thy art, My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part." He knew this was untrue. To his credit, Jonson went all out in his epic homage, "To the Memory of My Beloved Author, Master William Shakespeare," which soars to the cries of "Soul of the Age! / The praise, thrill, and wonder of our stage / My Shakespeare, rise! Few people thought Ben Jonson was buried in Westminster Abbey while still standing for centuries. According to legend, Jonson once suggested to the abbey's dean that because he couldn't afford a grave six feet long, maybe they might bury him upright instead. Up until the 19th century, this seemed amusing until workers excavating next to his burial saw a coffin standing erect in a 2-by-2 area. O RARE BEN JONSON is inscribed on the stone square above the location [11].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ben Jonson's examination of religion and morality in his writings throughout the English Renaissance reveals his intense interest in these basic facets of human life. Jonson debated issues of virtue, vice, ethics, and spirituality in his plays, poems, and essays. As a result, he left behind a substantial body of work that continues to spark debate. Jonson often expressed a complex viewpoint on religion in his writings. He was not afraid to criticize the excesses and hypocrisies of religious people and organizations, but he also understood the moral and ethical underpinnings of religion. His characters, such the morally reprehensible Volpone or the religious Alchemist Subtle, provide as excellent examples of the intricate interaction between religion and morality in his plays. Furthermore, Jonson's investigation of morality went beyond strictly religious settings to take into account larger society issues. He was able to criticize social vices and personal vices with his razor-sharp wit and scathing humor, compelling his audience to consider their own conduct and ideals. Jonson often reflected on themes of death, human fragility, and the fleeting aspect of life in his poetry. His elegies and epitaphs were heartfelt analyses of the human condition and the transitory nature of material success. These writings emphasized the value of moral reflection and the pursuit of virtue. Thought-provoking, Jonson's views on religion and morals were sometimes critical. He urged his listeners to examine their moral character and think about the moral ramifications of their choices. His works serve as a constant reminder of the relevance of these ageless ideas and their influence on both personal character and society norms.

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CHAPTER 11

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON LANGUAGE AND WORDPLAY

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ABSTRACT:

Language and wordplay are essential components of human communication and creative expression, acting as potent vehicles for expressing ideas, arousing emotions, and promoting originality. This study examines the many ways language and wordplay are used in literature, comedy, and linguistic innovation, highlighting how these elements may be used to engage readers, amuse them, and provide light on the nuances of human expression. Authors, poets, and playwrights create their stories and express their thoughts using the dynamic and adaptable medium of language. Tone, style, and emotional resonance of a literary work are shaped by the words, phrases, and sentence patterns used. Readers are able to fully immerse themselves in the worlds that authors have created by using language to produce vivid pictures, unforgettable characters, and sensory experiences. Language becomes more meaningful and complicated because to wordplay, which includes devices like puns, metaphors, and double entendres. It forces readers to interact with texts on many levels, revealing hidden meanings, and understanding how words work together. In literature, wordplay often contributes to the humor, wit, and cunning, making it a crucial component of satire and comedy. The influence of language on identity, culture, and interpersonal relationships is extensively explored in literary works. Authors explore the subtleties of linguistic variety, the impact of regional dialects, and the historical development of language.

KEYWORDS:

Dialects, Geneva Bible, Language, Linguistic Innovation, Wordplay.

INTRODUCTION

Ben Jonson, a choleric biblical scholar and one of the greatest Hebraists in early modern England, took great pleasure in mocking Hugh Broughton's reformed language. Broughton produced dozens of crabbed and knotty biblical commentaries, with a focus on biblical chronology and genealogy. His first, and probably most well-known book, A concent of Scripture, attempted to show that “the whole Booke of God,” that is the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Bible together, “hath so great a harmony, that euery part of it may be knowen to breath from one Spirite” despite its various human amanuenses. These efforts to iron out apparent chronological and prophetic inconsistencies between the texts originally written in Hebrew and those written in Greek to call witnesses to the truth of Christ “from Salem and Athens to speake in Englande the tongue of Eber and Iauan”, the supposed fathers of the Hebrew and Greek languages set Broughton on a path to additional chronological and genealogical studies that he felt would render impossible the Jewish denial of

Jesus Christ as Messiah. Having alienated powerful figures both in the Elizabethan hierarchy and among those demanding additional reformation, Broughton spent the better part of two decades in self-imposed exile on the Continent, improving his Hebrew through debates with Jews about the truth of the New Testament [1]. He claimed that Avraham Reuven urged him to take part in a "triall of lerning" before the Jews of Constantinople, whose "Lerning religion from vs" reformed Christians would start a process of conversion that would usher in the millennium. This was done in an effort to boost his reputation as an expert in Hebrew, and in 1597 he made his correspondence with Reuven, a Turkish Jew, public.

Broughton was one of the most accomplished Hebraists of his day, and he had strong feelings about the English translation of the Bible. The Bishops' Bible, Geneva Bible, and Rheims New Testament all had errors that a Hebrew scholar like himself, with access to rabbinic texts, could correct. He felt a great urgency to produce a new English translation, "better done then yet we haue in England." He outlined eight principles that could guide such an endeavor. However, Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury did not extend an invitation to Broughton to participate when King James I approved a plan to carry out a new translation. Broughton provided a now-famous, exasperated critique of the new translation when it appeared in 1611, just before his return to England and his death.

The English reformer Broughton uses his proficiency in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew to address the crucial issue of making available in the vernacular scripture materials written in a language inaccessible to most audiences for the Old and New Testaments. His unique, not to mention quirky, language of reform may be described as the ease with which he glides between different linguistic traditions, his attachment to Hebrew and Hebrew supplemental sources, and his preoccupations that sometimes bewilder the untrained reader. He assumes that the Bible as a whole must be coherent and that any apparent discrepancies are the consequence of erroneous interpretation on the part of people. Broughton argued that a skilled Hebraist, using the Talmud and Masoretic texts, would recognize the perfection of the Bible and the errors of human translators and editors, in contrast to some translators who might assert that the Hebrew Old Testament or Greek New Testament had somehow become corrupt.

He laments the harm done to the "publike good" when translators doubt that "the certeintie of Gods worde" is in itself "so pure, so wise, so watchfully kept" and can When seeing a person of imperfect study laboring to translate, a well-trained Hebrew scholar "will tell almost for every place where a Translatour would misse" . The apocalyptic book of Daniel, which is at the center of many of Broughton's chronological treatises and which he had personally translated with in-depth commentary, is a work that often suffers from amateurish errors in translation [2], which Broughton goes on to demonstrate in great detail how to fix. Regarding the challenge of translating the meaning of "Sheol" into other languages, Broughton demonstrates the issues with using the terms "Hell" or "Hades" or "Gehenna" in the Old Testament or the "New Testament," contending that these terms represent a fundamental misunderstanding of human nature that enables Jews and other non-Christians to assert that Christianity is false. He ends that part with a peroration in Broughton's signature fashion:

However, I will say this: the Bible is the only book of all books, and as such, all other books are bables in relation to it. Unlearned babble cannot be thrust into it; rather, what has crept in must be removed . Right should therefore prevail over might, skill, will, money, and homosexuality.

This wordplay and multilingual punniness provide a glimpse as to how much joy the glum Broughton had in language usage [3].

Broughton spoke in a haughty way that was typical of a reformer. He can sometimes speak elliptically and writes for an audience that is aware of the disputes he enters. He uses his knowledge to great use, making it clear on every page. His English translation of Daniel might serve as an example. A recent critic who commented on both the content and style of his commentaries noted that his "curt prose and seemingly odd exegetical decisions" rest on a "much more profound engagement with a range of Jewish sources and scholarship" than could be found among other Hebraists of his era. A prophetic text that split the Hebrew and Christian traditions is not presented in a clear translation by Broughton. The device, created from Broughton's standpoint to assist the English reader with a challenging text, obstructs any direct access to the text.

A table of the powerful men relevant to the text is provided by Broughton after dedications and addresses to the Privy Council and the Christian Reader and a tangled summary of the book's significance: the Chaldean kings, the Persian kings, Alexander and his descendants, the warring successors of the Hellenistic period, whom Broughton identifies as "the iron of the two legs, and somewhat of the iron and clay" of the monarchies mentioned in Daniel 2, followed by the The book is organized into verses, there are chapter titles and arguments, the type is Roman, and there are comments in the outer margin that are linked to symbols in the main text. Broughton's text transforms to black font when the source language is changed to Aramaic, or "Syriacque," and the number of marginal remarks increases. The visions in the book seem to be illustrated by images taken from the Concent of Scripture. Broughton pauses his translation at the conclusion of the fifth chapter with a lengthy remark in italic type explaining "why the Chaldeans coulde not reade this Scripture" scrawled on the wall. He quotes Xenophon for a description of Babylon's fall to Cyrus in his lecture on the history of the area.

The notes keep expanding and taking over the text once again, and after Daniel 7's vision of the four beasts, Broughton again breaks up the text with a lengthy note outlining the switch from Aramaic to Hebrew. Daniel 9:24 is the last verse to be translated by Broughton in Roman type. At this point, he again interrupts the translation with a protracted tangent on chronology, one of his favorite subjects, explaining "Of the 70.seuens" that preceded the birth of Christ and making a comment on the "Fiue, as it were, chains of time are in the Scripture" , a favorite theme of his chronologies. After quickly returning to the translation, he goes into great detail on the remaining passages in the ninth chapter, "A reduction of the Gospell vnto the oration of Gabriel". The last two chapters of Daniel, which include a total of only 53 verses, are where Broughton most fully demonstrates his knowledge, taking up the final 45 pages of the book.

Due to how frequently the tyrants especially Antiochus Epiphanes appear in the Hellenistic period's secular histories, Broughton's notes become longer and more frequently interject asides like "How Antiochus bestowed the spoils of Egypt and of other countries, as Polybius in Atheneus

redordeth". His final remark, that Daniel "had a sufficient Cathechisme for all the world" and that the great historians might have improved their accounts if they could have consulted Daniel, is followed by the conceited assertion that "the matters are so plaine that if men would but grope, they might haue found Christ in Daniel", which is another of his favorites [4].

This reform-oriented discourse is what led to Jonson's contemptuous portrayal of Broughton and his colleagues. Although Jonson makes fun of puritan canting throughout all of his theatrical works, he specifically mentions Broughton multiple times. However, Jonson does not make fun of Broughton's demeanor or character. What Jonson mocks as jargon or gibberish, if not cant, is the Hebraist's serious acceptance of his own expertise and the peculiar language he uses to communicate his firm opinions about holy scriptures. For example, in the middle of Volpone, the protagonist, posing as Scoto of Mantua, delivers a lengthy oration in praise of his elixir as "an abstract of the theoric and practice in the Aesculapian art," curing a long list of ailments. When the credulous Sir Politic Would-Be expresses his wonder at the mountebank's "language rare," the cynical Peregrine feigns The Alchemist contains Jonson's longest critique of Broughton's showy language of reform.

Robert Schuler notes that the piece pierces a number of canting, false discourses. Its central character, Subtle the false alchemist, speaks in terms of the chimerical quest to turn base metals into gold; the skeptic Surly dismisses this as "a brave language... Next to canting" He and Sir Epicure Mammon, his primary gull, also extol the virtues of the quest for the philosopher's stone, "Above the art of Aesulapius". Tribulation Wholesome and Ananias, a greedy pair of ostensibly "holy brethren", pay into the scam and lose their money. They are among the numerous avaricious individuals seeking to benefit from the alchemist's craft. These puritanical "faithful Brother", whom Subtle claims to confuse with fellow alchemists, speak their own obscure language but are ignorant of "sapor pontic" or "Spagyrica," stating instead that "All's heathen, but the Hebrew" of the holy book. While Jonson's humor progressively exposes the brethren's dishonesty throughout the day, he often mentions Broughton and his writings to punctuate his parody of the reformed love of Hebrew [5].

Doll Common, a prostitute, is one of the groups of confidence men and women in The Alchemist. She pretends to be a rich lord's insane sister in order to divert Epicure Mammon at a crucial juncture in the plot. Mammon begs Face to elaborate on Doll after he gets a peek of her. He discovers that Subtle is supposed to help her recover from a form of madness that she contracted from "studying Broughton's works" and that "If you but name a word, touching the Hebrew," one of Broughton's specialties, "She falls into her fit, and will discourse learnedly of genealogies, / As you would run mad, too, to hear her". Face introduces Mammon and Doll later in the play, leading the knight into a garden while admonishing him to "make no mention of the Rabbins".

Later, when the pair is back on stage, Mammon laments that he disregarded Face's advice. Doll had in fact gone into her "fit" in response to Mammon's mention of the Fifth Monarchy, entering the scene with a reference to the time "after Alexander's death", a crucial point for comprehending the cryptic apocalyptic prophesies in Daniel. As she quotes the heads of Broughton's chronology in the Concent of Scripture: "And last Gog-dust, and Egypt-dust", it had nearly as great of an impact on Broughton as it does on Doll at this time. Doll continues to talk endlessly about this

point in biblical history while repeating Broughton's dedication of the Concent of Scripture to Elizabeth, oblivious to Mammon and Face's suffering. Doll asserts, "To come from Salem, and from Athens / And teach the people of Great Britain. To speak the tongue of Eber, and Javan.

We shall know nothing" until we turn to the commentaries of "the Rabbins, and the heathen Greeks." Her final words in this argument are a parody of a quotation from Broughton's commentaries, demonstrating that "by Talmud skill, / And profane Greek" it is possible to "raise the building up / Of Helen's house" against "the Ismaelite, / King of Thogarma," and others "Which Rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos, / And Aben-Ezra," the Hebrew authors dear to Broughton After all, the dramatist assembled this mosaic of Hebrew knowledge by turning the pages of several of Broughton's works. If we may call Broughton's English comfortable, he spoke at least four languages fluently. He persistently pointed out the flaws in English translations of the most significant of texts. He imagined a plan to assist bring in the new century. And a number of important European towns throughout the reform period, such as London, Basel, Middelburg, and Amsterdam, are represented in the imprints on his books. Broughton was an important character in the early modern language of reform despite being shunned by his colleagues and made fun of by Jonson.

DISCUSSION

Substance, Satire, and Style: The Language of Reform

The first two pieces in this issue of Reformation, which were first presented at the 2017 Renaissance Society of America conference in Chicago, constitute a unique cluster on the topic of "The Language of Reform [6]." The Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies at Victoria University of the University of Toronto presented five panels on the subject of "The Language of Reform" during the RSA's annual conference to commemorate Martin Luther's posting of his Ninety-Five Theses on January 31, 1515. The range of ways language important for religious transformation were noted in the call for papers for the session:

When Martin Luther wrote his 95 theses at Wittenberg five hundred years ago, he engaged Johan Tetzel in a Latin debate. But soon after, Luther's reformational writings jumped into everyday German, reportedly helping to standardize that tongue. In the European period of reformation, arguments and exhortations crossed language boundaries in a variety of ways: from Latin into the vernaculars, from vernaculars into Latin, from one vernacular into another with or without Latin mediation, and so on. It was important to consider the types of language that were utilized throughout the reformation. Scholarly theological disagreements in sophisticated academic registers clashed with popularizations and sarcastic and scatological jokes. As a result of reformation, other languages were employed and underwent pressure to change. There have been substantial shifts in the ways that music conveys meaning will create a broad, interdisciplinary umbrella under which to gather papers that take up "language" and "reform," broadly conceived. Old iconographic "languages" were thrown out and replaced by new programmes of visual language or were revivified and transformed in the service of the Catholic Reformation.

For these well-liked panels, many dozen academics from across the world submitted suggestions. Papers on philology, translation, continuity with the medieval past, book history, and fundamental

theological ideas revealed the complexity and liveliness of the languages used for religious change. In order to publish them in this publication, the authors of the two articles listed below expanded upon their ideas. These two studies examine the English literature from the Reformation in different ways. The development of collage psalms is the subject of one, which focuses on a conservative literary phenomena, while the other examines the sonnet, a popular literary form, in terms of its approach toward language [7].

Susannah Brietz Monta examines an unexpected incident in a well-liked Reformation literary genre in the first article. Collage psalms, which are devotional poetry made from a pastiche of biblical verses and may include paraphrase or imitation, were popular among religious people from all confessions. Its "found language," or the notion that no one could complain to any particular line of the author's writing since the words themselves originated in holy book, is one of the apparent appeals of this conservative, creative style. These new psalms served as a language of change in Tudor England, spreading in English among both Protestants and Catholics. Monta demonstrates how this literary genre refutes the idea that the reception of devotional content was dictated by confessional identification. Bishop John Fisher 's Latin collage psalms were published throughout Europe in 1525. An anonymous Latin edition of these psalms with an English translation was concurrently issued by an English publisher over twenty years later.

These poems were published in preparation of King Henry VIII's resumption of hostilities with France, even though Queen Katherine Parr's involvement in their translation into English was unknown until the latter half of the twentieth century. By being known as "The King's Psalms," these English compositions ensured their overtly Protestant nature. However, forty years later, George Flinton's 1583 Manual of Devotion, a vernacular Tridentine devotional book, included this Protestant English translation of the Catholic Fisher's Latin poetry. A Catholic martyr's orthodox Latin composition was translated into English by Parr, the Protestant sixth wife of Henry VIII, and then nearly verbatim appropriated by Elizabethan English Catholics. Monta situates this extraordinary circumstance within the context of this common devotional form. According to Monta, devotional literature could overcome confessional barriers in early modern England with little difficulty if they were properly guarded. Despite the fact that the reformers were responsible for translating religious writings into English, English Catholics yearned for such texts in their own tongue [8].

Catherine Bates addresses the issue of language itself and its relationship to reformed meaning in the second article in this cluster. Bates turns to Sir Philip Sidney’s famous sonnet cycle Astrophil and Stella to make his case, claiming that the sonnets demonstrate three crucial linguistic strategies for the Reformation. Bates starts by demonstrating that the Protestant poet's sonnets display a profane, unreformed attitude toward that "key word if not central concept within Reformation theology”, focusing on the poet's return to the euphemism notion of grace in these sonnets. Pushing above the simplistic dichotomy of a Protestant or Catholic language of reform, Bates instead focuses on three linguistic perspectives in Sidney's sonnet cycle, focusing on how they each perceive the divine. Astrophil and Stella can be seen as representatives of a transcendent "cult of the signified”, in which the supreme power of the divine reduces poetry to a kind of secular

diversion and serves as an unfortunate illustration of worldly pursuit that, at least in Astrophil's case, is never sufficiently abandoned.

Meanwhile, elsewhere in the sonnets, an immanent "cult of the sign" occurs, placing the divine in the greatest poetry's language and raising poetic effort to a noble endeavor. Finally, Bates contends that Sidney's concept of language's relationship to the divine may be best explained by a third kind of reformed poetic language, a "cult of the signifier". This approach, which exalts the poet to the status of a god, prioritizes the joy of poetic creation, not as a diversion to be avoided or as a language of instruction leading to salvation, but rather as a kind of imitatio Christi in the sense of creating something stirring and productive that will be judged by its fruits, like the fig tree in Luke 6. In the end, Bates contends that reading poetry with an eye on language's expressive power aids in the change carried out in sixteenth-century England.

These writings on the language of reform demonstrate how closely connected early modern England's literary and theological concerns may be, as does Jonson's choice to parody Broughton's complex, multilingual worries. Such questions might take the researcher in unexpected ways, such as reading devotional genres from other confessions or looking at secular love poetry that isn't often taken into account in studies of this nature. The Reformation had such a profound impact on early modern culture that its language was present almost everywhere. Although this statement is a given in Reformation studies, its implications for the study of early modern genre or poetics are not generally thoroughly examined [9]. These writings are intended to provide fresh perspectives on the several overlapping languages of the Reformation.

CONCLUSION

Ben Jonson is a literary giant of the English Renaissance because of his skillful use of language and wordplay in his literary works. He made an enduring impression on the worlds of theatre and literature with his deft use of language, sophisticated wordplay, and humor. Jonson's wordplay served as a means of expressing deeper ideas and several levels of interpretation, not only as a means of amusement. His plays, like "Volpone" and "The Alchemist," are excellent examples of how adept he is at combining puns, double entendres, and other ingenious language tactics to produce comedy and satire. He successfully used wordplay to criticize cultural conventions, human vices, and the moral framework of his period. Jonson's proficiency with language also showed itself in his poetry, where he used a variety of poetic meter and forms to create lines that were both visually attractive and intellectually interesting. His ability to distill deep truths into pithy and humorous formulations is best shown by his epigrams. The more general topics of Jonson's writings were not unrelated to his skill with language and wordplay. They played a crucial role in his investigation of social satire, ethics, and the human condition. His use of language was a potent instrument for informing and entertaining his audience, making them laugh while also provoking them to consider the more profound meanings of his words. The vocabulary and wordplay of Ben Jonson had a lasting impression on poets, playwrights, and humorists of later generations. His methods have persisted in inspiring authors who understand how language may be used to wittily and creatively express difficult thoughts and emotions.

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CHAPTER 12

A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON RECEPTION AND CRITICISM OF JONSON

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ABSTRACT:

Ben Jonson is a well-known author of English Renaissance literature, and throughout the years, his reception and criticism have changed to reflect shifting academic viewpoints, societal conventions, and literary preferences. This study discusses how Jonson's writings have been received from his time to the present, stressing the wide variety of reactions and critical interpretations that have influenced his literary legacy. His writings were praised and criticized in Jonson's own time. For his plays, masques, and poetry, he received royal sponsorship and praise from critics. He was also praised for his humor, linguistic finesse, and commitment to classical ideals. But Jonson's fondness for sarcasm and his public quarrels with other playwrights, including William Shakespeare, also drew criticism and sparked literary rivalries that lasted for ages. Following Jonson's passing, his reputation experienced a number of changes throughout the years. His classical sensibilities and theatrical tactics were outmoded during the Restoration because more emotional and morally didactic play was in vogue at the time. But in the 18th century, Samuel Johnson's writings had a rebirth as authors like Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson praised them for their moral profundity and intellectual rigor. Throughout the 19th century, opinions of Jonson's works varied, with some reviewers praising his realism and others decrying his supposed lack of emotional complexity. As academics and theater professionals acknowledged Jonson's contributions to English theatre and the investigation of complicated characters and moral quandaries, the 20th century witnessed a renaissance in interest in his works.

KEYWORDS:

Ben Jonson, Criticism, Philosophical Beliefs, Samuel Johnson, Shakespeare.

INTRODUCTION

Johnson holds the top spot among the most well-known critics. Although we often find ourselves at odds with what he says and some of his arguments may not hold up, most of his viewpoints are well supported and understandable. Although he sometimes appears to dispute some of the new-classical school's fundamental beliefs and exhibits truly extraordinary imagination and impressionism, he is widely considered as a cornerstone of the movement. He is a real new-classicist in terms of his modes of expression, but we should be cautious when labeling him as one when it comes to his philosophical beliefs. Johnson is unmistakably a moralist in his criticism, yet he also seems capable of seeing and appreciating works for their pure literary characteristics. Shakespeare's plays were edited by him, and he also wrote prose and had a significant impact on succeeding critics [1].

The critical temperament of Johnson. Some important elements are included in Johnson's literary beliefs. Johnson prioritized reason above emotion, which led to the logic of his strategy. In a way, he was experimental and logical as opposed to adhering to a certain viewpoint that has been long-established and uncontested. Second, the development of his critical I viewpoint was greatly influenced by his conservative views. The third argument is that Johnson often colors his opinions with his own judgment [2]. They are founded on his solid common sense, experience, and extensive knowledge gained from reading classics and literary works. His own moral and religious worldview, which he formed via an austere philosophy of life, is the fourth crucial element. The sum of all the aforementioned elements is the core of Johnson's fundamental principles. Johnson is not in the least romantic, yet it is possible to understand how some passion may have impacted his reasoning. He was opposed to sentimentalism, nevertheless, at the same time.

Despite having authoritarian ideas, he had no trouble accepting anything that had been shown, generally sound, and tested. Johnson approaches an author with maturity, an open mind, and good moral principles rather than as a critic who comes at him with the intention of tearing him down. He thus approaches Shakespeare in a thoughtful and personal manner. However, his own code also developed a dogmatic quality and hardened against any prospect of modification. He displayed a complete mistrust of any literary originality. The heroic couplet, in his opinion, is the ideal form of poetry. He considered rhyming to be essential to poetry. He rejected any suggestions to mimic the Spenserian stanza. As a result, rather of being maintained via the straightforward and obvious demands of aesthetic inclinations, classicism suddenly became a dogma connected to the moral and social necessities of tradition, order, and authority.

Criticism's definition and purpose. Johnson has made an effort to characterize criticism in a number of different places [3]. His dictionary describes a critic as "a man skilled in the art of judging in literature." Johnson refers to Aristotle as the founder of criticism and Dryden as the father of English criticism, and he endorses Dryden's view that criticism, as it was initially introduced by Aristotle, was designed to be a "standard of judging well." He claims that Dryden was the one who first instructed Englishmen "to determine upon principle the merits of composition" and he admires Dryden's contribution to English criticism. Johnson saw criticism as both an art and a science. He was very worried about the distortion of criticism in the hands of'modern' critics. It may immortalize a piece of art, enlighten it, as well as reveal its hidden truths and ideals.

He who nature has created weak, and laziness keeps uneducated, may nevertheless bolster his pride by the appellation of a critic. In actuality, criticism is a study by which persons become important and formidable at very little price. According to Johnson, the purpose of criticism is to create norms and turn opinion into knowledge. Because it is a vocation rather than a job or even a career, it requires a disciplined approach. Johnson claims that critique should be based on reason and intellect rather than being solely the art of appreciation or having its guiding principles based on whimsy or fantasy. He will never describe how a piece of art has touched him personally until the majority of readers find it to be similarly moving. He is in opposition to the "impressionistic" school of criticism in this way.

Johnson placed a high value on memory since it is the faculty in which experience is kept. He also heavily depended on experience and experimental research. This is succinctly stated in the passage

that follows and appears in the first section of his Preface to Shakespeare: "To works of which the excellence is not absolute and definite, but gradual and comparative; to works not raised upon principles demonstrative and scientific, but appealing wholly to observation and experience, no other test can be applied except length of duration and continuance of esteem what mankind have long possessed they have often examined and compared and contrasted and compared and contrasted and compared and the excellence of Demonstration shows its strength right away and has nothing to fear or hope from the passage of time [4], while tentative and experimental efforts must be valued according to how they fit into a lengthy line of endeavors.

purpose of poetry. Johnson adds a new dimension to the traditional idea that a work of art's primary goals should be to pleasure and inform. For him, the primary goal of art is to please while instructing. To put it another way, great art is inseparable from the act of bringing pleasure because it awakens consciousness and starts a process of enlightenment in people who encounter it. We can get the impression that moral education is being stressed when Johnson says that literature educates us through pleasing. Johnson, however, expressly agrees that fun should serve as a teaching tool. He asserts that although there might be writing that only entertains, there cannot be literature that merely informs [5].

Johnson and the established tenets. Dr. Johnson is often cited as one of the neo-classical movement's supporters. This is in some ways accurate, yet from another angle, he seems to be against the neo-classical ideals. He does, however, blatantly subscribe to the neo-classical notion of "generality" or "universality." He also adheres to the new-classical preference for character "types," but Johnson is not willing to follow this idea to its logical conclusion. He vehemently rejects the criticism that Shakespeare's Romans are not sufficiently Roman; for Johnson, it is enough that they be sufficiently human. Additionally, he disagrees with the neo-classical concentration on genre purity. He disagrees with the idea that comedy and tragedy should never coexist. The proponents of this regulation provide two arguments in favor of their position. First of all, they insist that a tragedy should never include a humorous moment since doing so may dilute the genre's integrity and disrupt the natural flow.

Second, they believe that humor and tragedy are unique genres, exclusive in their effects, and that juxtaposing comic and sad events might have the opposite impact. Both of these arguments have been shown to be fallacious by Johnson. He feels that the fundamental aspect of art is truth, and that the blending of sad and comedic components is appropriate since it is genuine to reality. True cannot possibly be unartistic. Once again, the diversity of the mixed drama makes us happy. Because it offers a range of pleasures, mixed drama should be better able to fulfill this duty than pure drama if the fundamental purpose of art is to teach via delighting [6]. Thus, he establishes that mixing serious and lighthearted aspects is not only acceptable but also successful in carrying out literature's purpose.

The Unity's and Johnson. Neo-classicism is a time when regulations were in place. There was a propensity to incorporate art into the structure of discipline and order. Therefore, the supporters of this literary movement argued that art should be sensible and logical. The classics were acknowledged as their role models. Their guiding principle was to use the right word at the right place. They also had some preconceived ideas about organization, story, and characters in play.

Their emphasis on the three unifies was one of them. Shakespeare's disrespect was attacked by neo-classical critics [7]. the unity of the. Johnson, though, is more flexible and when evaluating a play, he looks to reason and common sense as opposed to strict guidelines. He criticizes the gullible adherents of absolute realism in a play and emphasizes that theater contains elements other than realism and that these elements are just as significant in a critical assessment of a dramatic work. The dramatic illusion is not destroyed by a change in setting or the passage of time. The fact that a spectator believes that by serves as the evidence for this claim. When a person enters a theater, they may assume that they have gone from their own time's London to Antony's Rome, and they can equally assume that they have traveled from Rome to Alexandria in a subsequent act. In actuality, the audience is well aware that the theater is merely a theater and the actors are only actors.

The ability of human imagination causes people to draw parallels between the scenes being played out and actual events and to assess the value and relevance of the theatrical performance. Neoclassicism made an effort to construct, mostly on one side of experience, on order, organization, unity, and uniformity [8]. Its goal was to create a highly stylized, generic output from the experience's completely subjective substance. According to Aristotle, art imitates nature. The ultimate goal of classicism is effect unity. However, this consistency of influence is not in the least bit helped by either the change in location or the longer than one-day length of the activity. Additionally, it is unaffected if the sad and comedic elements of a piece are combined artistically.

Johnson and loyalty to poetry. Johnson's critique of the notion of unities is based on a doctrine that is completely at odds with his argument against poetic justice. He may have been receptive to the concept of praising the righteous and chastising the wicked due to his intrinsic predilection for a moral ending in a work of art. Therefore, he could not tolerate the innocent Cordelia's death in King Lear. He rejects the legitimacy of poetic justice as a stylistic technique or a guiding concept, nevertheless. Johnson disallows Dennis' critique of Addison's Cato on the grounds that it contravenes the poetic fairness criterion. He argues that because dramatic poetry is nothing more than an imitation of reality, showing the world as it really is does not violate its norms. Johnson could have known that Shakespeare's plays are very powerful despite breaking the rules of so-called poetic justice, in contrast to the works of authors who adhere to the rules of poetic justice to the letter. He may justify the plays by saying that they depict the true condition of sublunary things as a result of this inner consciousness.

Johnson makes good logic. Currently, Johnson is most known for his literary criticism and the book Rasselas. Johnson has developed a reputation as a critic, and his two most well-known works are The Preface and the Lives of the Poets. The power and acute insight he has into Shakespeare's work underpins the importance of his criticism, particularly in his Preface. This impression, although generally amazingly true, does include certain aspects that are false. Johnson bases his critiques of Shakespeare's plays on his preexisting notions. He is so astonished by Shakespeare's disregard for morals, his use of anachronism, and his penchant for wordplay and quibbles. Johnson really focuses on the areas where Shakespeare's aesthetics diverged from his own. It may be claimed that his judgment remains fundamentally dogmatic even if the majority of his statements

are reasonable and even though his favorable assessment is entirely motivated by a heartfelt affection.

'Rules' was renovated by Johnson. Although Johnson adheres to the neo-classical standards, he has made significant improvements to them that make them understandable and applicable to all works. With the use of literary psychology and an appeal to inner perception, he updates the conventional theory. He supports Shakespeare's tragedies-comedies and contrasts the realities of life and art. He appears to suggest that different experiences may improve a person's life, yet there is little question that both joy and grief can enrich a life. Shakespeare did well to intersperse comedic situations with sad ones. Even if it doesn't follow the rules, it complies with life's facts. Similar arguments had previously been made by Dryden, but Johnson's audacious mind expanded them. He forcefully challenges the unities and pushes the notion of dramatic experimentation in a very daring way. He only recognizes the unity of action and believes that the unity of location and time was a result of a theatrical illusion.

Without broad goodwill, no theatrical performance is feasible, and the fake movement from one location to another or from one time period to another does not require additional faith from the audience. Again, in this case, Dryden's shaky intuition is strengthened, and the Romantic conception of freedom is promoted. The claim that Johnson often transcends the bounds of neo-classicism and exhibits his autonomous mind with its mature insight and vision has previously been made. Even in his praise of a "regular and correct" writer, we detect a trace of sarcasm. He talks positively of the times of youth, freshness, and vigor when writing depended only on observation and natural intuition and didn't steal anything from books. He praises Shakespeare in colorful language. It demonstrates that he shared the shift that was beginning to emerge among his contemporaries in his subconscious mind.

Conclusion. The "indispensable eighteenth century" of English literature is often only criticized by Dr. Johnson as a judge. He was an artist, philosopher, moralist, and to some degree, a guy who made decisions based on instinct and common sense, as any interested student of literature may quickly learn. He had an excellent awareness of how form and content related to one another, and he generally evaluated form with felicity and certainty. He placed a high value on literary devices including tone harmony, structure, and other literary devices. He was someone who could appreciate a verse's or an image's allure, evocative power, melody, supreme beauty, and great rhythm. He was also an author of creative intuition or a critic.

Nevertheless, he remained a man of limits and misgivings despite all of these positive qualities. He wasn't ready to embrace novel motions since they were unfamiliar to him. He critiqued Gray and Collins, who were the Romantic Revival's forerunners and deviated from accepted literary ideals and norms. He was unable to predict the rise of Romanticism; instead, he made an effort to solidify classicism in the literary world. The important components of Johnson's literary criticism are his extensive research, his reliance on psychological concepts, and his unwillingness to cower before any prescriptive authority [9]. But ultimately, it is impossible to deny how compelling and thought-provoking his ideas are.

His whole critical career is noteworthy for both the things it attacked and the things it sought to. establish. He fought relentlessly against authority, prescription, and outmoded tradition throughout the entire book, both in the earlier topical essays on subjects like pastorals, versification, cordial verses, romances, and letter-writing and in the later consideration of specific literary works one at a time, as they had appeared chronologically in the production of an author's lifetime. He made an effort to remove the layering and concealing proliferation of pseudo-statements and to replace them with just those conclusions that could be verified via personal experience. Johnson never asks the reader to accept that a universal rule applied from Homer to Blackmore or Virgil to Pomfret.

Instead, he is simply requested to accept any general principles that appear as a result of an inductive and empirical process of particular study, which might sometimes be done line by line, stanza by stanza, or even work by work across an author's whole career. The stages of the therapy are often excessively short and summarized [10]. A hasty conclusion obscures the logic. However, these assessments are often meant to vigorously urge the reader to do their own investigation. The views of Johnson prompt us to reread the supporting documentation, rephrase the argument, and critique the critic, as Professor Tinker has said. His critical initiatives get the greatest commendation for being both empirically lively in and of themselves and the source of empirical vivacious in others.

As "One of the most vigorous minds that ever added to the strength of English literature," Jonson was a towering literary figure with a significant impact. The "Tribe of Ben" praised him before the English Civil War, and during the Restoration, Jonson's satirical comedies and his philosophy and practice of "humour characters" had a significant impact, serving as the model for many Restoration comedies. In Brief Lives, John Aubrey wrote about Jonson. By 1700, Jonson's standing started to deteriorate. As the popularity of Jonson's kind of scathing humor declined throughout the Romantic age, he suffered from the destiny of being wrongly compared to and contrasted with Shakespeare. Although the Romantics sometimes admired Jonson enormously, he was often derided for not writing in a Shakespearean style. The first updated version of Jonson's entire works in 60 years was released by Cambridge University Press in 2012, after more than 20 years of study.

DISCUSSION

Drama

Shakespeare and Jonson: Their Reputations in the Seventeenth Century Compared by G. E. Bentley points out that Jonson's reputation in the 17th century was comparable to Shakespeare's in several ways. Jonson's plays, together with those by Shakespeare and Fletcher, constituted the first core of the Restoration repertory once the English theaters were restored during Charles II's Restoration. Shakespeare's plays were not played more regularly than those of his Renaissance contemporaries until around 1710. Since the 18th century, many commentators have placed Jonson, among English Renaissance playwrights, second only to Shakespeare. The realism and appropriateness of his language, the sharpness of his sarcasm, and the care with which he structured his comedies are precisely the virtues that Jonson himself extols in his prefaces, in Timber, and in his scattered prefaces and dedications.

The temptation to compare Jonson to Shakespeare, which some critics have fallen prey to, may have been started by Jonson himself in the second folio. Later in the century, Samuel Butler made the same analogy in his commonplace book.

This perceived distinction developed into a kind of critical doctrine during the Restoration. Jonson was referred to be the father of English comedy by Charles Gildon and Charles de Saint-Évremond, who ranked Jonson's comedies above all other works of English play. In the "Essay of Dramatic Poesie," written by John Dryden, his Avatar Neander compares Shakespeare to Homer and Jonson to Virgil, arguing that the former represented genuine originality and the later refined artifice. However, in the 17th century, "artifice" was nearly a synonym for "art"; for example, Jonson used the term "artificer" to mean "artist". In contrast to Shakespeare, the born genius, Jonson "owes all his Excellence to his Art," according to Lewis Theobald as well [11]. Nicholas Rowe, whose name is associated with the myth that Jonson produced Every Man in His Humour thanks to Shakespeare's intervention, also ascribed Jonson's brilliance to study, albeit this did not nearly elevate him to the status of genius.

There was agreement that Jonson was the first English poet to comprehend classical principles with any degree of precision and to effectively apply those principles to modern life. There were, however, other, more unfavorable interpretations of Jonson's studied craft. For example, in the 1750s, Edward Young made a passing comment on how Jonson's scholarship, like Samson's power, used against him. Aphra Behn had previously mentioned Jonson as a writer whose intelligence did not make him famous; unexpectedly, she compares him unfavorably to Shakespeare in her defense of female playwrights. With their long monologues that were stolen from Sallust and Cicero, Augustan critics recognized a writer whose knowledge had overridden his artistic judgment, particularly in the plays.

Alexander Pope stands out from other critics of the time because he recognized the tendency for exaggeration in these competing portraits: "It is ever the nature of Parties to be in extremes; and nothing is so probable, as that because Ben Jonson had much the most learning, it was said on the one hand that Shakespear had none at all; and because Shakespear had much the most wit and fancy, it was retorted on the other, that Jonson wanted both."

Despite his declining reputation, Jonson continued to be read and discussed throughout the 18th century, usually in the contemptuous and comparison tones that were just mentioned. Parts of Peter Whalley's edition were translated into German by Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg in 1765. As a dramatic poet, Ben Jonson "has very poor pretensions to the high place he holds among the English Bards, as there is no original manner to distinguish him and the tedious sameness visible in his plots indicates a defect of Genius," according to Edward Capell shortly before the Romantic movement. The disastrous failures of Volpone and Epicoene productions in the early 1770s no doubt strengthened a general perception that Jonson had at least some talent.

The critical opinion of Jonson has generally decreased as a result of the romantic revolution in criticism. Coleridge, who is more respectful, calls Jonson a psychologically shallow observer: "He was a very accurately observing man; but he cared only to observe what was open to, and likely to impress, the senses." Coleridge ranked Jonson second only to Shakespeare; other romantic critics

were less enthused by Jonson. Early 19th-century play that was inspired by the Renaissance flourished throughout this time. In comparison to authors like Thomas Middleton or John Heywood, who were in some ways "discoveries" of the 19th century, Jonson, whose reputation had endured, seems to have had less appeal for certain readers. Furthermore, if it also made them more conscious of the distinction between Shakespeare and Jonson that is often acknowledged, the romantic authors' reliance on imagination and their related predisposition to reject academic art diminished Jonson's prestige. The first editor of Jonson's works in the 19th century, William Gifford, did a lot to protect Jonson's reputation at this time of widespread decline, thus this tendency was by no means widespread. The flowers of his growing have every quality except one that belongs to the rarest and finest among flowers: they have color, form, variety, fertility, and vigor: the one thing they want is fragrance, by which Swinburne means spontaneity. Swinburne, who was more interested in Jonson than most Victorians, wrote this in the following era [12].

A wider range of assessments of Jonson's corpus of work have been conducted in the 20th century, generally in line with the goals and strategies of contemporary literary criticism. T. S. Eliot sought to refute the accusation that Ben Jonson was an arid classicist in an article that was published in The Sacred Wood by examining the function of imagination in Jonson's dialogue. Eliot was complimentary of Jonson's general design and his "surface," a position that was consistent with the modernist response to Romantic criticism, which tended to disparage playwrights who focused less on psychologically nuanced portrayals. Around the middle of the century, many critics and academics followed Eliot's example and produced thorough analyses of Jonson's verbal style. Studying Elizabethan themes and traditions, such those used by E. Both M. and E. C. Bradbrook gave readers a more vivid understanding of how the expectations of Jonson's period influenced his writing.

After the middle of the twentieth century, a variety of fresh critical viewpoints inconsistently addressed Jonson. The foremost reviewer who recognized Jonson's artistic talent was Jonas Barish. However, compared to some other playwrights, Jonson got less attention from the new critics, and Freudian analysts were uninterested in his work from a systematic standpoint. However, Jonson's professional success soon made him the center of the resurgent social criticism. In addition, Jonson's career at the center of London's developing literary world has been seen as exemplifying the development of a fully commercialized literary culture. This is especially true of his masques and pageants, which provide important information about the relationships between literary production and political power, as well as his contacts with and poems for aristocratic patrons. He is seen as a transitional figure in this regard, a writer whose abilities and drive propelled him to a prominent position both in the eroding patronage culture and the burgeoning mass media culture.

Poetry

'The first poet laureate' is how Jonson has been referred to. Shakespeare has historically been associated with Jonson's reputation as a playwright, while since the early 20th century, John Donne has been associated with Jonson's reputation as a poet. In this comparison, Donne epitomizes the metaphysical school of poetry with its dependence on strained, convoluted metaphors and sometimes ambiguous wording, whereas Jonson symbolizes the cavalier strain, emphasizing

elegance and clarity of speech. This parallel often hurt Jonson's image since the critics who used it were, in varied degrees, rediscovering Donne.

Jonson was at least as well-known during his lifetime as Donne. He was recognized as the greatest and most accomplished English poet in 1623 by historian Edmund Bolton. The acknowledged impact he had on later poets suggests that this view was generally held. The claim that Jonson is the "father" of cavalier poets is supported by the fact that many of them identified as members of his "tribe" or "sons" in their own works. Herrick portrayed gatherings at "the Sun, the Dog, the Triple Tunne" as having a social as well as lyrical significance for certain members of this tribe. All of them drew inspiration from Jonson's restoration of ancient forms and themes, his delicate melodies, and his disciplined use of humor, even those like Herrick whose skills in verse are often considered as greater to Jonson's. In these ways, Jonson may be considered one of the key players in the development of English neoclassicism.

The greatest of Jonson's lyrics have persisted in popularity since his day; on occasion, they go into prominence, as they did when Peter Whalley's version was published in 1756. The insights Jonson's poetry provides into aspects of English literary history including politics, patronage structures, and intellectual attitudes continue to pique the curiosity of researchers. The epitaph on Salomon Pavy, a boy actor kidnapped from his parents who performed in Jonson's plays, as well as "On My First Sonne" and "To Celia" are among the few Renaissance poems that, despite being brief, surpass Jonson's lyrics for grace and precision [13].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ben Jonson's writings have been read and critiqued throughout history, evolving as people's preferences, worldviews, and literary trends have. The literary legacy of Jonson has stood the test of time, and his works continue to elicit praise and criticism. Throughout his life, Jonson received both praise and backlash. His status as a well-known poet and dramatist during the Jacobean period earned him respect and sponsorship, especially from the royal court. His critical writings on English literature, including "Discoveries" and "Timber," helped to define literary standards and build a critical tradition. Jonson was not without his critics, however, and his direct and somewhat aggressive manner caused him to run afoul of other writers of the day, most notably John Marston and Thomas Dekker. These literary conflicts were expressed in satirical writing and verbal spats, which shed light on the competitive and aggressive spirit of the early modern English literary landscape. Following Jonson's passing, his reputation changed throughout the decades. His neoclassical approach lost popularity during the Romantic period as Romantic poets sought more passionate and impromptu ways of expressing themselves. A renewed interest in Jonson's writings, however, emerged in the 20th century as a result of appreciation for his linguistic wit, astute satire, and nuanced characters. Modern literary criticism has looked at Jonson's plays and poems from a variety of perspectives, examining his linguistic choices, his social satire, how he depicted gender roles, and how he examined moral and ethical issues. His writings' ongoing relevance and capacity to deal with current concerns and viewpoints have been acknowledged by academics.

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