John Donne Journal,
Vol. 5 (1986)

Icon and Mystery in Jonson's *Masque of Beautie*

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Ben Jonson's fondness for invention "grounded upon *antiquitie*, and solide *learnings*" is well known. Though the voice of such inventions "be taught to sound to present occasions," he continues in this crucial statement in *Hymenaei*, their sense "or doth, or should alwayes lay hold on more remov'd *mysteries*."[1] The "more remov'd *mysteries*" of the *Masque of Beautie*, with its teasing turns of the conditional tense and its quicksilver movement, have remained more or less unexamined since D. J. Gordon's important pioneering excursion into some (primarily neoplatonic) sources of this masque and its companion masque of *Blacknesse*.[2] I would like to approach these mysteries once more, hoping to get beyond the neoplatonic outline and such surface details as the symbolic intricacies of the inanimate figures surmounting the throne of beauty, to the vital central presence of the masque—a hidden presence that merges with, and is portrayed in terms of, the motion that animates the whole. To do so will be to appreciate that at the heart of *Beautie* lie not forbiddingly hermetic texts and symbols but a playful use of some widely disseminated classical literary and iconographical traditions related to hiddenness itself, which in turn intersect with the neoplatonic ideas in witty and unexpected ways.

The *Masque of Beautie*, performed at Whitehall on Twelfth Night, 10 January 1608, three years after its sister masque of *Blacknesse*, continues the story told there of twelve Ethiopian nymphs who make their way to Britannia in hopes of bleaching their black complexions in the rays of England's temperate "*sunne*," King James.[3] Like *Blacknesse*, *Beautie* was commissioned

by Queen Anne, who specified that in this sequel the twelve nymphs, now whitened, should be joined by four more. Building also on the three-year delay in the nymphs' return—in reality occasioned by the intervention of two successive Twelfth Night marriage masques—Jonson inventively supposes that the twelve have been wandering all this time in search of four of their sisters, who have been imprisoned on a floating island by jealous Night for seeking a like transformation.

As the masque begins, the North wind Boreas brings news of the nymphs' predicament—for all sixteen now languish on the island—to Januarius, who presides over the Twelfth Night festivities. But almost immediately the East wind Vulturnus arrives to announce that the spell of Night has been broken by the nymphs' goddess, the Moon. The nymphs are even now approaching Britannia's shore on the floating island, which supports an elaborate turning throne of beauty that "their *Queene* / Hath raised" for them (ll. 127-28)—an oblique compliment to Queen Anne, who as patroness of the masque had in fact caused the throne to be raised and who, as we shall see, is indeed the queen of these nymphs in a more profound sense within the context of the masque itself, its mystery properly understood.[4]

The spectacular throne, which now shoots forward to "fixe" itself to the mainland (ll. 153, 264-65), is a fitting central device for a masque in which various elements flow, float, rotate, wander or stray, and above all dance, turning with planetary precision. In a lively evocation of the Ptolemaic (and Platonic) universe, the two tiers of the throne—the upper one carrying the women masquers, the lower their attendant cupids, bearing torches—revolve slowly in opposite directions, representing the movements respectively of the outer sphere of fixed stars and the inner spheres of the moving planets (ll. 128-34, 256-62). "And who to *Heavens* consent can better move," asks Vulturnus, succinctly voicing the preoccupation with motion, "Then those that are so like it, *Beautie* and *Love*?" (ll. 135-36).

The Jonsonian paradox of turn and stand, of combined motion and stasis,[5] found here in wordplay about the cupids' torches as "still moving fires" (l. 134) and in the turning yet fixed throne, is also seen in the nymphs themselves. For although they are like fixed stars (ll. 130-31) they are also, we should remember, flowing rivers, daughters of the River Niger and grand-daughters of Oceanus,

akin to the river nymphs who populate contemporary maps such as that of Kent in Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (Figure 1).[6] If the word "nymph" had become rather worn coinage, Jonson restores its luster by making each detail of the masque wittily support this identity.[7] Thus it makes perfect sense that the Moon, which governs the ebb and flow of waters, has both inspired the nymphs' original bold excursion to Britannia and guided them safely back to these shores, where they should now, she directs, "flow forth, drest in her attyres" (l. 155).

It is appropriate, too, that the nymphs are escorted into view by winds—after the moon, the prime movers of water—and that they are entrusted to the care of an older river, the venerable Thames, "leaning upon his Urne (that flow'd with water)" (ll. 294-95). Having arrived at the eastern coast of England with the East wind Vulturnus, the visiting rivers can proceed to London for their royal audience only by way of a river channel, and thus Thames is their host in a special sense. As the geographically precise exhortation by Vulturnus suggests, Thames is to teach them to make their way gracefully along his meandering channel: "in those curious *Squares*, and *Rounds*, / Wherewith thou flow'st betwixt the grounds / Of fruitfull *Kent*, and *Essex* faire . . . Instruct their silver feete to tread" (ll. 302-06). A further joke about identity—one of a number in the masque—lies in the fact that the figure of Thames was personated by Thomas Giles, the court's dancing master (ll. 296-98), who as the creator of the dances for the masque literally guided the women's feet. In this respect and others *Beautie* seems to prefigure the successful integration of dance with other dramatic elements that Stephen Orgel finds in the later masques.[8]

These details, which would have charmed and captivated by their fitness, are typical of Jonson's usual skill in teaching his invention to "sound to present occasions." But what of the inner mystery of the masque, and of the "solide *learnings*" which must guide us to it? One may begin by noting that the returning nymphs appear to have undergone a sea change as well as a change of color since they were last seen in *Blacknesse*, where indeed the closing lines bade them to

> steepe
> Your bodies in that purer brine,
> And wholesome dew, call'd *Ros-marine* :
> Then with that soft, and gentler fome,

> Of which, the *Ocean* yet yeelds some,
> Whereof bright VENUS, BEAUTIES Queene,
> Is said to have begotten beene,
> You shall your gentler limmes ore-lave,
> And for your paines, perfection have. (ll. 338-46)

When the nymphs then departed in a shell, as the stage direction following this speech indicates ("they returned to the Sea, where they tooke their Shell"), they were more than a little reminiscent of the sea-born goddess of Renaissance art and courtly entertainment. The effect created by the "great concave shell, like mother of pearle," decorated with "a *chev'ron* of lights" (ll. 59-62) must have been one of a lavish triumph of Venus (Figure 2).[9]

The key to the nature of the nymphs' transformation in *Beautie*, I would suggest, lies in a ekphrastic vision of the late classical word-painter Philostratus the Elder (*Eikones* I.6, "Erotes") —"whom," Jonson states in an emphatic marginal note, "I have particularly followed, in this description" of the masque's setting.[10] "On the sides of the *Throne*," specifies the description, "were curious, and elegant *Arbors* appointed: and behinde, in the back part of the *Ile*, a *Grove*, of growne trees laden with golden fruit, which other little *Cupids* plucked, and threw each at other, whilst on the ground *Leverets* [hares] pick'd up the bruised apples, and left them halfe eaten" (ll. 236-41). The arbors hold musicians, who represent "the *Shades* of the olde Poets" (l. 246), and the ground plan of the whole is "a subtle indented *Maze*" (l. 242)—an allusion to the meanderings of the river nymphs, who in *Blacknesse* were summoned to "Indent the *Land*, with those pure traces / [You] flow with, in [your] native graces" (ll. 260-61).[11] In the "two formost angles" of the scene, two fountains symbolizing youth and pleasure "ran continually" (*Beautie*, ll. 243-44), like little rivers themselves. As the fountains "from their bottomes spring" to echo the closes of the songs (l. 147), they recall not only, as we shall see, a vigorous Philostratean "spring" (*nama*), but the very origins of the nymphs, whose first "spring"—a word that, like "traces," contains a punning reference to dance—is also described in *Blacknesse*.[12]

Philostratus' invitation to the reader to enter the realm of Venus, traversing a grove of apple trees in which a flock of cupids described as "children of the Nymphs" variously pluck the fruit, engage in mock battles, and pursue an apple-nibbling hare, had

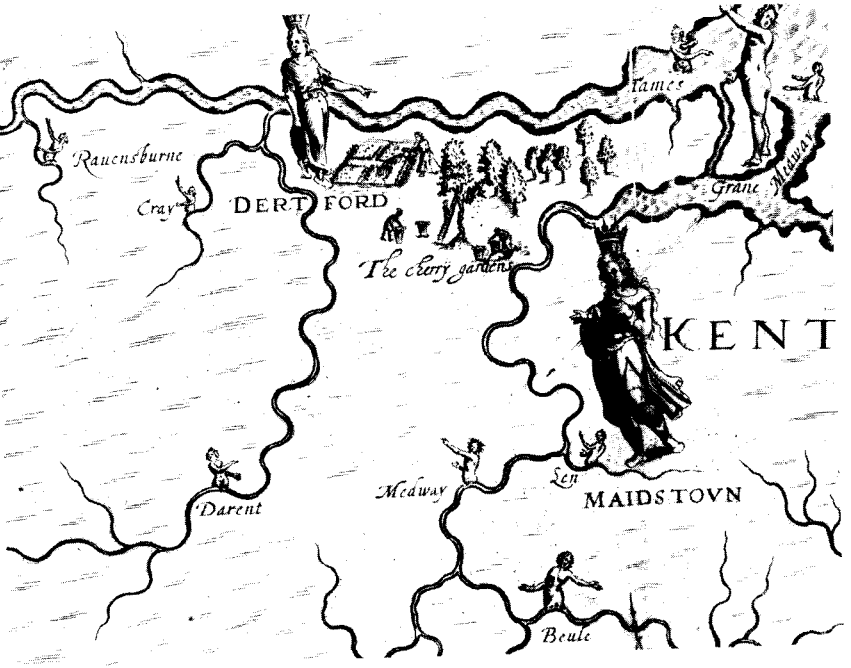

Fig. 1. *River Nymphs*. Detail of engraving by William Hole, from Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion*, 1613

Fig. 2. *Triumph of Venus*. From Raffaello Gualterotti, *Feste nelle nozze . . .*, 1579

already proved irresistible to both commentators and artists. The passage was a favorite with the mythographers, and the French humanist Blaise de Vigenère (d. 1596) published a detailed, moralizing analysis of the text in his annotated translation of the elder Philostratus (1578), which went through several editions, including illustrated versions of 1614 and later.[13] A flourishing tradition of visual interpretation of Philostratus' scene is found as early as the start of the sixteenth century, and boasts a major treatment by Titian (1518-19) commissioned by Alfonso d'Este at Ferrara and later copied by Rubens, who also painted his own interpretation of the passage.[14]

At the heart of Philostratus' meditation, beyond the avenue of apple trees and the romping cupids, is the mystery itself, as we penetrate to a grotto and enter the very presence of the goddess:

> But let us leave these matters . . . and do you look, please, at Aphrodite. But where is she and in what part of the orchard yonder? Do you see the overarching rock from beneath which runs a spring of the deepest blue water, fresh and good to drink, which is distributed in channels to irrigate the apple trees? Be sure that Aphrodite is there, where the Nymphs, I doubt not, have established a shrine to her, because she has made them mothers of Cupids and therefore blest in their children.
>
> (304K.8-16)

Vigenère calls this "une description de Venus fort fantastique & bizarre: Car elle n'est pas peinte icy en forme ou apparence humaine, telle qu'ont accoustumé de donner à leurs Dieux, les Poëtes & les Peintres; Mais comme un creux de rocher, d'ou bouillonne un petit sourgeon d'eau. Toutes choses mystiques. . . ." The image challenged both verbal and visual interpreters. Vigenère himself, while recognizing in his commentary that Venus is intended to be mysteriously incarnate in the spring rather than visibly present, took the liberty of translating Philostratus' ambiguous term "shrine" (*hidrema*) in a way that stresses its other meaning of statue or image: "Où est elle . . . [?] Sachez pour vray là estre une Venus, que les Nymphes y ont dressée [raised] (à mon advis) . . . ?"[15] This verbal embellishment was picked up by the anonymous illustrator of the scene in the 1614 edition, where the

statue "raised" by the nymphs appears (Figure 3).[16] Titian's *Worship of Venus* (Figure 4) interprets the mystery by presenting the goddess as an aloof statue on a high pedestal.[17] In Rubens' copy of Titian's painting, the goddess is doubly present, as a statue and as the celestial occupant of a translucent chariot drawn by swans in the clouds above.[18] When Rubens painted his own version (c. 1630) of Philostratus' scene, he created a still more accessible Venus, a lifelike statue who gazes at a scene of teeming plenty and dancing nymphs and cupids (Figure 5).[19] A living goddess emerges in several sixteenth-century versions, such as Giulio Romano's drawing of c. 1560 (Figure 6)[20] and Ugo da Carpi's chiaroscuro woodcut after Raphael or Perino del Vaga (Figure 7);[21] a similar solution, elegantly handled, is found in Poussin's later rendering.[22] The motif penetrates other subjects as well: a living goddess with cupids and hare is found, for example, in a mid-sixteenth-century drawing of *Flora* (possibly by Antoine Caron) and, even more surprisingly, in another drawing of that period of the *Flight into Egypt* (by an artist of the circle of Niccolò dell'Abate).[23]

The point here, of course, is not whether Jonson was directly acquainted with one or another of the visual treatments before 1608, or even with Vigenère's commentary (though it seems likely he knew it in one of the early, unillustrated editions), but rather that a vigorous tradition existed, of which *Beautie* is another, highly original manifestation. In the masque Jonson wittily uses these "choses mystiques," as Vigenère calls them—this image of the deity simultaneously revealed and hidden—as the occasion for a wordless transformation of Queen Anne from river nymph to flowing water of a more potent kind. Having bathed in the "fome" at the end of *Blacknesse*, she now becomes manifest as Venus herself, source of the fertility of the surrounding "Nymphs" that form her court.

If we look closely we find this transformation foreshadowed in *Blacknesse* both by Jonson's choice of "a golden tree, laden with fruit" (l. 275) as Anne's device, prefiguring the "Grove, of growne trees laden with golden fruit" that surrounds her in *Beautie* (ll. 238-39), and by the fact that the Queen is paired in the earlier masque with "Aglaia" (the Countess of Bedford), one of the three Graces that traditionally attend Venus. The nymphs, too, have undergone a subtle change. "Full of life, and light" in *Blacknesse* (l. 105)—doubtless an allusion to the fact that their leader, Queen Anne,

Fig. 3. *Les Amours*. From Blaise de Vigenère, *Les Images . . . des Deux Philostrates*, 1614

Fig. 4. Titian, *Worship of Venus*

Fig. 5. Peter Paul Rubens, *Feast of Venus*

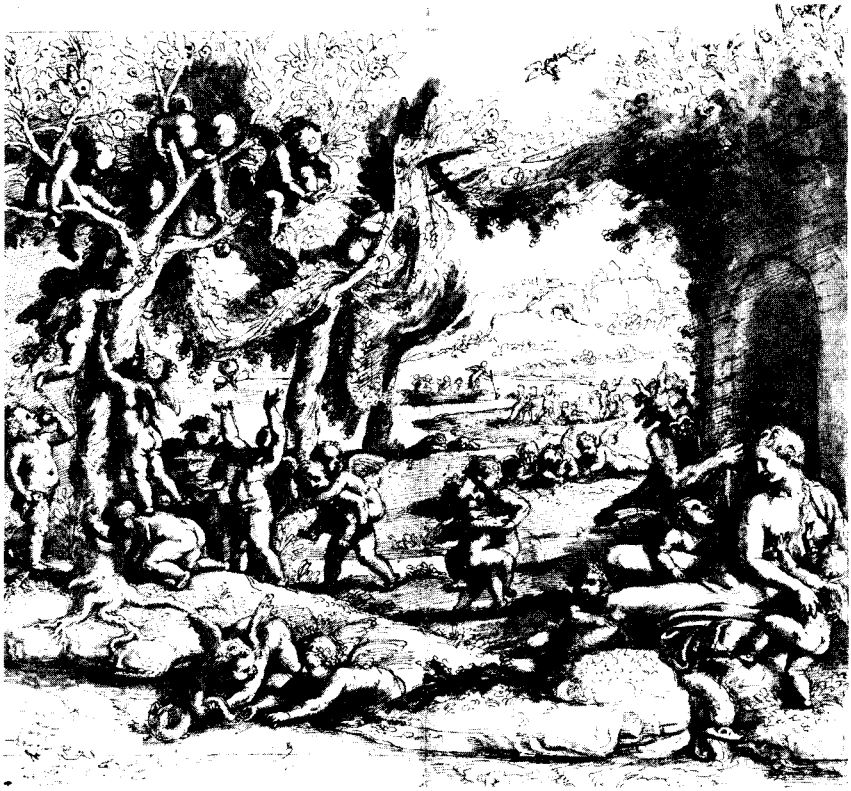

Fig. 6. Giulio Romano, *Erotes of Philostratus*

Fig. 7. *Erotes of Philostratus.* Chiaroscuro woodcut by Ugo da Carpi after Raphael or Perino del Vaga

portraying the nymph "Euphoris" ("fertility" or "abundance"),[24] was about six months pregnant at that time—the nymphs themselves have since given birth to a crowd of little Philostratean cupids, and their watery nature has now become a symbol of generative force as they pay tribute to the source or "spring" of their motherhood.

The text of *Beautie* is reticent about these momentous matters —the name "Venus" is mentioned only in a marginal note[25]—for several reasons. Words are traditionally superfluous in identifying both royalty and divinity: witness Januarius' sharp reproof to Boreas upon his inquiry into the whereabouts of "ALBION, NEPTUNES sonne" (ll. 28-39), that is, King James, who is enthroned in the midst of the hall. Moreover, the situation required tact; although the Queen had already shown daring by darkening her skin in *Blacknesse*, some of the manifestations of Venus flirted with here are potentially subversive. Finally, and most important, to explicate a mystery is to destroy its very nature. The presence of the "hidden" goddess would have been dazzingly clear to anyone familiar with the centerpiece of Philostratus' scene.

Possibly, moreover, the mystery lay open even to one who simply used his eyes. In an Italian poem published in London in 1609 but overlooked until recently, one Antimo Galli, a cultured young diplomat who seems to have witnessed the masque, describes the scene through a lengthy complimentary fiction in which he imagines that the real Cupid, expelled from Olympus by his mother, happens upon the brilliant occasion at Whitehall.[26] Although the poem charmingly garbles much of the masque's plot, Cupid's report is clear in its central point. He is startled and puzzled to see his mother, whom he has just left behind on Olympus, enthroned below him at the center of the scene, surrounded by her nymphs:

> Di nuovo sdegno ingombra allor la mente
> Cupido, che Ciprigna esser qui crede:
> Poi che Diva Celeste, à lui si scopre,
> D'Angelici sembianti, d'atti, e d'opre.
>
> Donna Real sotto il bel trono assisa
> Splende, frà vaghe Ninfe, a lei d'intorno;
> In quel sembiante istesso, in quella guisa,
> Che frà le stelle il sol si mostra adorno. . . .

> (Now Cupid's mind is cumbered with a new emotion, for he thinks the Cyprian to be there when the celestial goddess shows herself to him, angelic in appearance, in gestures and in deeds.
>
> The royal lady seated beneath the lovely throne shines among her beautiful nymphs and is surrounded by them, in that regard and in that fashion the same as when the sun shines forth brilliant among the stars. Whence is reason for the blind archer to think himself in heaven, where the day is everlasting.)[27]

Cupid is next enraged to find himself impersonated in the scene below by a handsome youth, and when his attempt to kill the impostor with an arrow is thwarted he learns that this is none other than Prince Henry (sts. 21ff.)—our first confirmation of other playful touches in the masque having to do with true identities. Although a rather mature Cupid at nearly fourteen, Prince Henry had an indisputable right to the role of son of this Venus, and it seems likely that some of the other cupids as well, chosen as they were "out of the best, and most ingenuous youth of the *Kingdome*, noble, and others" (ll. 233-34), were literally the children of the masquing women, living proof that the nymphs had become, as in Philostratus, "mothers of Cupids."

If the Cupid of Galli's verses must puzzle out whether the Venus of the masque is his mother or some other remarkable being who resembles and even surpasses her, a similar task is set by Jonson for the alert mind and eye. The spectacle of a Venus attended by a "multitude of *Cupids*" (ll. 232-33) in an enticing paradisial bower whose locale is moreover a floating island would have evoked yet another kind of motion, this time mental. The setting up of a teasing vibration between possible identities, posing a kind of riddle that must be resolved through clues both visual and textual, is a favorite Jonsonian strategy in the masques: Truth must be distinguished from her lookalike Opinion in *Hymenaei*, Cupid from Plutus in *Love Restored*, Eros from Anteros in *A Challenge at Tilt* and in *Love's Welcome at Bolsover*, and the way of virtue from the way of pleasure in *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*. In *Beautie*, as in all these cases, a good part of the drama

lies in the unfolding of true identity, and the figure of Venus was particularly rich in possibilities that would have lent zest to the occasion.

If we are to believe the evidence of the mythographers, it was second nature to this age, when the subject of Venus arose, to talk about the many Venuses received from antiquity. Thus the French translator of Natalis Comes, for example, points out that Cicero distinguishes four Venuses, each of different parentage; that Pausanias makes mention of three; and that Plato—an important authority on such matters through his *Symposium*—posits two, with their corresponding cupids: "L'une . . . plus ancienne, & sans mere, fille du Ciel, laquelle aussi nous appellons Celeste: pure & nette, n'ayant autre soing, ne cherchant rien quelconque qu'une splendeur reluisante en la divinité, . . . elle tasche continuellement d'attirer nos ames & les unir à l'essence de Dieu. . . . L'autre . . . plus jeune, fille de Jupiter & de Dione; & se nomme Populaire, charnelle, voluptueuse, coustumierement retiree és grottes, cavernes & autres lieux escartez & obscurs, sçachant assez que ses actions & comportemens ont besoing de couvert."[28]

Although the masque seems at points to endorse this rigid Platonic scheme of a narrow choice between a celestial and a base Venus, and between the higher and lower cupids associated with them, the matter is more complicated. The possibility that we might be dealing with "blind" and "wanton" lower cupids is saucily raised in the songs (ll. 341-55) only to be refuted:

> Yes, were the *Loves* or false, or straying;
> Or *beauties* not their beautie weighing:
> But here, no such deceipt is mix'd,
> Their flames are pure, their eyes are fix'd:
> They doe not warre, with different darts,
> But strike a musique of like harts. (ll. 358-63)

These cupids are "chaste Loves, that attend a more divine beautie, then that of *Loves* commune *parent*," Jonson asserts in a marginal note (l. 42), and he goes on in the penultimate song to gloss the precise nature of the "more divine beautie" upon which they wait by specifying the ultimate source of the dancers' movements:

> So they doe move each heart, and eye
> With the *worlds soule*, true *harmony*. (ll. 373-74)

Jonson's use of the phrase "*worlds soule*" provides an insight into the ingenious way in which he has modified the Platonic duality for this royal occasion, and leads us directly to Ficino's commentary on Socrates' dialogue with Diotima in the *Symposium*, an extended eulogy of love as the procreative force.[29] Jonson seems to have singled out for attention a section entitled "On the Birth of Love" (Oration VI, ch. 7), where Ficino meditates on Diotima's description of how Love came to be born to Plenty and Poverty on Aphrodite's birthday. In Ficino's striking reinterpretation, that birthday is rather the occasion on which two kinds of love roughly corresponding to Plato's heavenly and earthly Venuses become incarnate as "twin Venuses": the Angelic Mind and the World-Soul, respectively the "ability of the soul to know divinity" and its ability "to propagate lower forms." The Angelic Mind, says Ficino,

> aroused by the first sensation of the divine light itself, is drawn by love to the whole richness of the full light, and by this force clinging more closely to her parent [God], she glows immediately with His fullest light. . . . Just as the Angelic Mind cleaves to God, so does the World-Soul cleave to the Angelic Mind and to God, for, turning from those toward the Supreme, it also receives light in exactly the same way. . . . Hence, adorned by the forms of all things, it moves the heavens according to the pattern of these forms, and through the power of generating it creates forms like them in the matter of the elements.

The World-Soul, though the lower of the two Venuses, is by no means to be regarded as inferior, Ficino goes on to explain, for the "creation of offspring is considered just as necessary and honorable as the quest after truth."[30]

This paradox of a generative Venus who is not "*Loves commune parent*," as Jonson calls Plato's concupiscent lower Venus, is anticipated by the Philostratean setting of the masque, which surrounds the Queen with a flock of cupids. It is significant that three of the four classical authorities cited here by Jonson as precedent for "the inducing of many *Cupids*" (l. 232n.)—Statius,

Claudian, and Sidonius Apollinaris—are writers of epithalamia. Jonson himself, invoking the same names, had recently introduced a flock of a "thousand . . . *loves*" in *Hymenaei*, where they are imagined busily "warm[ing] the chaste *bowre*, which CYPRIA strowes, / With many a lilly, many a rose" (ll. 370-75). The many cupids of *Beautie* are thus not simply Philostratean; they constitute a clue that this may be a celebration of the copiousness of the chaste marriage bed. Jonson is in effect making room for a third Venus between the two extremes. In this context, the Queen, leading the turning dancers, seems to replicate the motion not only of the World-Soul as it turns the heavens, but of Pausanias' mediating figure of the Venus Apostraphia,[31] who (as her name implies) "turns" men from concupiscence to loyal love. The combination of flowing copiousness and chaste fixedness dominates the closing song:

> Still turne, and imitate the heaven
> In motion swift and even;
> . . . . . .
> May *youth* and *pleasure* ever flow.
> But let your state, the while,
> Be fixed as the Isle. (ll. 399-405)

Yet even this marriage of Philostratean and neoplatonic elements does not fully exhaust the wit behind the Venus of the masque and the pairing of *Blacknesse* and *Beautie*. In *Blacknesse*, white pearls had been chosen as "best setting off from the black" (l. 78), as seen in Inigo Jones's design for one of the daughters of Niger (Figure 8).[32] A similarly exotic effect appears in sixteenth-century cameos, which may use the natural layers of the stone to superimpose a black profile upon a white one, as in the Drake Jewel,[33] or portray a black Diana with a pearl for an earring (Figure 9).[34] So in *Beautie*, the brilliant neoplatonic light of Ficino's generative Venus, explicitly evoked by Jonson as "the *worlds soule*," is the more dazzling for being set against the foil of another well-known ancient possibility: the Aphrodite *melanis* or black Venus mentioned by Pausanias,[35] a goddess of night whose deeds (like those of Plato's unrehabilitated earthly Venus) require the cover of darkness. This alternative, the mirror image as it were of the Venus of *Beautie*, would have been common knowledge through the mythographers, who sometimes expanded

Fig. 8. Inigo Jones, *A Daughter of Niger*

Fig. 9. *Black Diana*. Cameo, collection of Rudolph II

Fig. 10. *Black Venus*. Attributed to Danese Cattaneo

upon Pausanias' brief mention.[36] The type was apparently well enough established to be rendered in several sixteenth-century bronzes attributed to the Italian sculptor Danese Cattaneo (Figure 10), who also depicted other types of Venus.[37]

The movement from *Blacknesse* to *Beautie* is among other things, we should remember, a turn from East to West. In *Beautie* the women masquers in the throne are appropriately whirled "from the *East* to the *West*" (l. 258), heralded by Vulturnus, "his face blacke . . . showing he came from the East" (ll. 113-14). Januarius, the master of ceremonies, is descended from an Ovidian Janus who beholds "at once East and West" (*Fasti* I.139-40). Thus by implication the dusky Eastern origins of the goddess provide a further foil for the brilliance of this Western Venus of the aptly named "Whitehall." The fact that Venus was dark-skinned in some of her manifestations—a matter of geography rather than of association with deeds best hidden by night—was known in the Renaissance through Giraldi's comparison of the goddess with the Egyptian Isis and the near Eastern Astarte or Dea Syria[38] as well as through such classical sources as Plutarch. To the point also is a central passage in Apuleius' *Golden Ass* (XI.2-5) in which an awesome goddess rises Venus-like out of the sea; simultaneously Venus, Diana, Ceres, and a host of other deities both Eastern and Western, she is known to the Ethiopians and Egyptians, Apuleius states, by her "true name" of Isis.

Particularly instructive here is Shakespeare's contemporary (c. 1606-07) portrait of a queen who plays both Isis[39] and floating Venus. In the famous passage based on Plutarch (*Antony*, xxvi), the temptress Cleopatra, "with Phoebus' amorous pinches black" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, I.v.28), is shown as a living image of a dark-skinned Venus, enthroned in a golden boat that is a floating bower of music and fragrance and attended by would-be nereids and cupids (II.ii.191-209):

> The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
> Burnt on the water. The poop was beaten gold;
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
> The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were
> silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,

> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggar'd all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion—cloth of gold, of tissue—
> O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
> The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
> Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids. . . .
> Her [gentlewomen], like the Nereides,
> So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
> And made their bends adornings. At the helm
> A seeming mermaid steers. . . .

The dazzling light that suffuses *Beautie*—the bright torches borne by the cupids and particularly the "Mine of light" struck from the masquing women's jewels and costumes, filling the turning throne with brilliance (ll. 252-55)—is thus not only an important element of the spectacle but a crucial clue to the nature of the masque's Western, essentially humanist Venus. We are seeing, in effect, an exorcism of the dark grotto and its temptations. Light was always a major ingredient of such occasions, but here it is made integral, like motion, to the very meaning of the masque, in which the image of the Queen as a generative Venus of light answers and reflects (in the Ficinian sense) the image of the King as the sun of his realm. A contemporary account stresses the indulgence (unusually extravagant even for this court) in light-refracting jewels that distinguished the event, and both the report of the Venetian ambassador[40] and Galli's poem suggest that the effect was one of radiant light and even—though the masque was performed at night—of "day."

This is not to say that the almost imperialistic conquest of night by day ("Yeeld, *Night*, then, to the light, / As *Blacknesse* hath to *Beautie*," ll. 286-87) overcomes the genuine strain of seductiveness in the masque. In keeping with the conditional tense of the songs, Jonson further troubles the waters—or causes the ground to shift beneath our feet—by introducing another purposely ambiguous element. An island is the most appropriate of vehicles for foam-born Venus, that insular deity who first set foot on the island of Paphos and later made Cyprus her home. But like the person of Venus herself, the motif of a floating island wore more than one aspect for the Renaissance. A persistent tradition—seen in benign form in the floating pleasure isle that Venus prepares for the

sailors in Camoens' *Os Lusíadas* but becoming more menacing in the island paradises of Ariosto's Alcina and Tasso's Armida and in the treacherous floating bowers of Phaedria and Acrasia in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*—identified such places as the haunts of temptresses. A. Bartlett Giamatti notes that the seductive quality of the enchanted garden is felt as early as Petrarch: "Venus has begun to acquire some of the traits of Circe, her isle of Cyprus those of Circe's island of Aeaea."[41] Jonson plays with this side of the tradition in his later *Neptunes Triumph*, prepared for Twelfth Night 1624. In a clever turn of the motif, a floating island is there sent to *rescue* Prince Charles from the "arts" of Spain and the Infanta:

> He [Proteus] doth dispatch a floting Ile, from hence,
> Unto the *Hesperian* shores, to waft him thence,
> Where, what the arts were, usde to make him stay,
> And how the *Syrens* woo'd him, by the way,
> What Monsters he encountred on the coast,
> How neare our generall Joy was to be lost,
> Is not our subject now. . . .
> Now he is safe. . . . (ll. 142-52)

In a further turn, the Cook offers up as antimasque a "sprightly greene" island floating in broth and garnished with "twentie *Syrens*, singing," an evocation of a floating Venus' bower that deliberately subverts the Poet's rival, heroic theme of a floating "*Delos*" (ll. 180-92).[42]

Introducing in *Beautie* his "Iland . . . / That floted in the mayne" (ll. 86-87), Jonson in a marginal note humorously gives it an absurd pedigree, presenting as its antecedents a number of obscure natural curiosities recorded by Pliny and the Renaissance writer Cardanus—including, anticlimactically, a floating island in Loch Lomond—and punningly suggesting that he will "let passe [the example] of *Delos*, &c." But of course the story of wandering Delos, which became fixed when Latona took shelter there from Juno's persecution to give birth to Apollo and Diana, is very much to the point here. Pindar's early tribute celebrates this event: "Hail, O heaven-built isle . . . thou unmoved marvel of the spacious earth. . . . For aforetime, that isle was tossed on the waves by all manner of whirling winds." With Latona's labor, Pindar continues, "four lofty pillars rose from the roots of earth, and on their capitals held

up the rock with their adamantine bases"[43]—an image perhaps transmuted in the raising of the pillars of the throne of beauty on Jonson's own floating, then fixed island.

The nymphs' efforts to "labor to this Prince, and place" (l. 99)—a witty conflating, in this context, of Aeneas' *labor* and the labor of Latona—associates them with this heroic tradition, in which the fate of Delos becomes a resonant metaphor for the struggle of the epic wanderer to reach a safe harbor. Thus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* Niobe mockingly compares the trials of Latona to those of the island: "Delos, pitying the wanderer, said to her: 'you are a vagrant on the land, I on the sea,' and gave her a place that stood never still" (VI.189-91). Similarly, it is to Delos that the much-buffeted Aeneas sails for advice, pleading at Apollo's altar as one wanderer (*errans*) to another: "Whom should we follow? or whither dost thou bid us go? Where fix our home [ubi ponere sedes]?" (III.88).

The fixing of Delos is associated not only with the end of epic wanderings but also, as is especially fitting here, with a revelation of what was formerly hidden. In Lucian's *Dialogues of the Sea-Gods* (10), Jonson's acknowledged source for the Poet's "emergent" Delos in *Neptunes Triumph* (ll. 180-82n.), the goddess Iris brings strict instructions to Poseidon from Zeus: "That wandering island . . . which . . . is still propelling itself about under water—Zeus says you are to make it stop now, and bring it into view. You are to fix it quite securely, and make it stand firm, clearly visible [*delon*]." To make the wandering fixed and the invisible visible is a project akin to the incarnation of the godhead shortly to occur on the island with the birth of Apollo and Diana—and indeed akin to Jonson's program in *Beautie*. Abraham Fraunce in his *Amintas Dale* (1592) puts the case even more strongly: "They [Apollo and Diana] are sayd to be borne in *Delos* . . . because presently after the creation of light, things began to come to light, to be seene, to be knowen, which first lay confused and not perceaved, in the darkesome bottome of that all-including *Chaos.* Hereof came the name Delos, of δελιω [δηλόω], to shew, or make playne and manyfest."[44] It is surely no coincidence that we hear echoes of such notions—as well as of more purely neoplatonic ones—in the first song of the masque, where Beauty is born, like Love, "out of *Chaos*" in a blaze of light (and where, one might add, the reference to the central figure of the reigning queen is clear):

When *Love*, at first did moove
From out of *Chaos*, brightned
So was the world, and lightned,
As now! *Eccho*. As now! *Ecch*. As now!
Yeeld, *Night*, then, to the light,
As *Blacknesse* hath to *Beautie*;
Which is but the same duety.
It was for *Beauty*, that the World was made,
And where she raignes, *Loves* lights admit no shade.
Ecch. Loves lights admit no shade.
Ecch. Admit no shade. (ll. 282-92)

The motif of the floating island as a locus of revelation in turn intersects in typical Jonsonian fashion with a third insular tradition, that of the Fortunate Isles, identified with remote and fertile England itself in such works as Camden's *Britannia* and Selden's *notes on Drayton's Poly-Olbion*.[45] This lost paradise merged in literary legend with the Elysian Fields, which (coming full circle) were sometimes described as a place of music and dancing that partook of the qualities of Venus' bower, as Tibullus for example suggests: "me . . . shall Venus' self escort to the Elysian fields. *There never flags the dance and song*" (1.3.57-58). The true ancient location of this mythical realm of course remained purely speculative, and touched on a matter of national pride. Thus the "fixing" of an island to which the old poets have come "as to their new *Elysium*" (*Beautie*, ll. 137ff.) is no less than an extremely satisfying act of poetic imperialism, one that foreshadows the annexation of the island of "Macaria" in Jonson's later masque *The Fortunate Isles* (1625), a revision of *Neptunes Triumph*. There King James is told:

That point of Revolution being come
When all the Fortunate Islands should be joyn'd,
MACARIA, one, and thought a Principall,
That hetherto hath floted, as uncertaine
Where she should fix her blessings, is to night
Instructed to adhere to your BRITANNIA:
That where the happie spirits live, hereafter
Might be no question made, by the most curious,
Since the *Macarii* come to doe you homage,
And joyne their cradle to your continent.
(ll. 443-52)[46]

The final line of *Beautie*—"the'*Elysian* fields are here"—twice amplified by echo, thus both states a fact taken for granted by every proud Briton and celebrates an arrival that is an imperialistic acquisition. What is revealed to King James most broadly from his vantage point of the chair of state is, as the Latin motto on the title page of the 1608 quarto of *Blacknesse* and *Beautie* suggests, the sweep of his empire: "salve, festa dies, meliorque revertere semper." The motto—which also appears at the head of all the masques in the 1616 Folio—is taken almost unchanged from Janus' festive apostrophe to the New Year in Ovid's *Fasti*, and its context is significant (l.85-88): "When from his citadel Jupiter looks abroad on the whole globe, naught but the Roman empire meets his eye. Hail, happy day! and evermore return still happier, day worthy to be kept holy by a people the masters of the world."[47]

In *Beautie* the heavily laden apple tree of Venus' grove becomes in effect a dynastic tree of marriage, as in Jonson's *Hymenaei* (1606): "The golden tree of *marriage* began / In *paradise*, and bore the fruit of *man*" (ll. 727-28). In his entertainment at the coronation (1604) Jonson had celebrated in Queen Anne "the stile of mother, / In which one title you drowne all your other" (ll. 360-61). In *Hymenaei*, again, he expanded on the theme:

> the same is he,
> The *king*, and *priest of peace!*
> And that his *Empresse*, she,
> That sits so crowned with her owne increase!
>
> O you, whose better blisses
> Have proov'd the strict embrace
> Of UNION, with chast kisses,
> And seene it flow so in your happie *race*. . . .
> (ll. 91-98)

It is not as far as it might appear from these tributes to the brilliant figure at the center of this masque, surrounded by her "nymphs" and by flocks of children, among them her own son. The situation is not without its consolatory aspect: the child Anne was carrying when she danced in *Blacknesse* had died, as had another child born in the interim.[48]

James's mind was also on births of a dynastic nature, as we know from the account of the Venetian ambassador: "[The Queen] reaped universal applause, and the King constantly showed his

approval. At the close of the ceremony he said to me that he intended this function to consecrate the birth of the Great Hall which his predecessors had left him built merely in wood, but which he had converted into stone."[49] When the doors of the new Banqueting Hall—and of the more removed mysteries at the heart of *Beautie*—swing open, what is revealed is a new icon for the court: a generative Venus of light rather than darkness, which as the World-Soul serves both as still pivot of the world and source of the motion of the masque, and which offers a witty reassertion of the procreative powers of the realm.

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Notes

Research for this study was aided by a Fellowship from The American Council of Learned Societies. Classical writers are cited from the following editions in the Loeb Library, published at London (Heinemann) and New York (Putnam) or Cambridge, Mass. (Harvard Univ. Press): Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, tr. W. Aldington, rev. S. Gaselee (1935); *Lucian*, tr. A. M. Harmon et al., 8 vols. (1913-67); *Ovid's Fasti*, tr. Sir James G. Frazer (1931); Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, tr. F. J. Miller, 2 vols. (1977); Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, tr. W. H. S. Jones, 5 vols. (1931-35); Philostratus, *Imagines*, tr. Arthur Fairbanks (1931); *The Odes of Pindar*, tr. Sir John Sandys (1937); *Suetonius*, tr. J. C. Rolfe, 2 vols. (1928); Tibullus, in *Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris*, tr. F. W. Cornish et al. (1962); *Virgil*, tr. H. R. Fairclough, 2 vols. (1960). I have occasionally altered the free readings of the Loeb translators to stress the literal sense of a crucial word or phrase; in such cases I have interpolated the original Greek or Latin.

1 *Hymenaei*, ll. 15-19; *Ben Jonson* [Works], ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925-52), VII, 209 (all masques and entertainments cited are in this volume). In all quotations use of i, j, u, and v has been normalized, and contractions have been expanded.

2 "The Imagery of Ben Jonson's *Masques of Blacknesse and Beautie*," in his *The Renaissance Imagination*, ed. Stephen Orgel (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: Univ. of California Press, 1975), pp. 134-56 (a revised version of the original article in *JWCI* 6 [1943], 122-41). Gordon concluded of *Blacknesse* that its scheme is "a highly recondite one, and there is much in it which awaits fuller explanation" (p. 140). See further Ann Cline Kelly, "The Challenge of the Impossible: Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blacknesse*," *CLA Journal* 20, no. 3 (March 1977), 341-55; and on both masques, Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 57-60, and Joseph Loewenstein, *Responsive Readings* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 93-102, 112-13.

3 *Blacknesse*, ll. 253, 264; cf. *Beautie*, ll. 76-77, 156-60, 389-91.

4 Gordon ("Imagery," p. 141) reads the word "*Queene*" here as indicating the Moon (though the latter is twice termed the nymphs' "*Goddesse*" [ll. 122, 151]), and takes the term "Beautie" to describe not a central figure but the ideal embodied by the throne and its occupants (pp. 140-54). For him the mystery of the masque resides entirely in "the doctrines of Beauty and Love held by the Platonists of the Renaissance and expressed in Ficino's commentary on the *Symposium* and Pico della Mirandola's commentary on Benivieni's *Canzona de Amore*" (p. 136).

5 See my *Imitation and Praise in the Poems of Ben Jonson* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1981), esp. chs. 1 and 5.

6 Michael Drayton, *Poly-Olbion* (London, 1613), preceding p. 283, "The eighteenth Song." (Reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.) Engraved by William Hole; see A. M. Hind. *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1952-64), pt. II, *The Reign of James I*, pp. 330-31, pl. 208.

7 Contrast Daniel's nearly contemporary *Tethys Festival* (1610), where many of the same masquers portray specific rivers of England, but where their watery identity is not integrated into the masque's meager device.

8 For Orgel's view of the place of *Blacknesse* and *Beautie* in the evolution of Jonson as a writer of masques see *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965), pp. 63-69, 113-30, 141, 189.

9 Anonymous engraving, illustrating an entertainment by Raffaello Gualterotti, *Feste nelle nozze Del Serenissimo Don Francesco Medici Gran Duca di Toscana; Et della Sereniss. sua Consorte la Sig. Bianca Cappello* (Florence, 1579), between pp. 40-41. (Reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.) On the scene see A. M. Nagler, *Theatre Festivals of the Medici 1539-1637* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1964), pp. 55-56, fig. 37. Cf. Gordon's citation ("Imagery," p. 141, fig. 66), in connection with *Beautie*, of the chariot of Venus illustrated in this same volume.

10 See Jonson's note to l. 232. Philostratus mentions many cupids, an apple orchard, playful combat, and a hare. Gordon claims that Jonson is drawing on the mythographers for these details rather than "directly on this source" ("Imagery," p. 144), but the aptness for Jonson's scheme of the rest of Philostratus' description—particularly the concluding passage on the spring, quoted below—suggests that here, as on so many other occasions, he is working with the classical text itself.

11 Cf. also, in *Blacknesse*, the chevron of lights "indented to the proportion of the shell" in which the ladies sit (l. 62). On indenting as a characteristic action of water see *OED*, vb.[1] 1b. The "indented *Maze*" may further be an evocation of the Philostratean streams flowing "in channels" to irrigate the grove of apple trees (see below).

12 In ll. 182-83 of *Blacknesse* the nymphs sit "cooling their soft Limmes" in the lake "where their first spring they gain'd"—a deft poetic anatomy of how lake and rivers join; see also l. 19. For "spring" as a dance or dance tune see *OED*, sb.[2] 1, 2a-b, and for "trace," *OED*, sb.[1] 3.

13 I have quoted from the 1614 ed. (Paris), *Les Images ou Tableaux de Platte Peinture des Deux Philostrates* . . . (rpt. New York: Garland, 1976), where the text varies only slightly from that in the last unillustrated ed. (1602).

14 On these renderings and an earlier sketch by Fra Bartolommeo (before 1618) also commissioned by Duke Alfonso see Philipp Fehl, "The Worship of Bacchus and Venus in Bellini's and Titian's Bacchanals for Alfonso d'Este," *Studies in the History of Art* 6 (1974), 54-68, 79, 85-86, figs. 15, 17a, 21; and Fehl, "Rubens's 'Feast of Venus Verticordia,'" *Burlington Magazine* 114, no. 828 (March 1972), 159-62, figs. 25, 27, 28.

15 *Les Images*, 1614, pp. 43, 45.

16 *Les Images*, 1614, p. 41, "Les Amours"; reproduced by permission of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

17 Prado, Madrid; reproduced by permission (photo: Mansell Collection).

18 Nationalmuseum, Stockholm; see Fehl, "Worship," fig. 21, and "Rubens's 'Feast,'" fig. 25. On the difficulty of dating the painting see John Walker, *Bellini and Titian at Ferrara* (London: Phaidon, 1956), p. 113.

19 Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; reproduced by permission.

20 Chatsworth, Devonshire Collection; reproduced by permission of the Chatsworth Settlement Trustees (photo: Courtauld Institute of Art). Cited by Fehl, "Worship," pp. 63, 65, fig. 19, who says this is not Venus; but see Frederick Hartt, *Giulio Romano*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1958), I, 159-60, no. 217, II, fig. 354.

21 Bartsch XII.107.3 (identifying Venus); in *Italian Chiaroscuro Woodcuts*, ed. Caroline Karpinski, Illustrated Bartsch 48 (New York: Abaris Books, 1983), p. 173. Reproduced by permission of Abaris Books, Inc.

22 C. 1650; see Richard W. Wallace, "Venus at the Fountain and the Judgment of Paris: Notes on Two Late Poussin Drawings in the Louvre," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 55 (1960), 11-15, fig. 1.

23 *Flora* (destroyed) formerly at Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans; *Flight* in the Albertina, Vienna. See W. McAllister Johnson, "Prolegomena to the *Images ou Tableaux de Platte Peinture* with an Excursus on Two Drawings of the School of Fontainebleau," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 73 (May-June 1969), 286-87, figs. 6, 8. Cf. also Rubens' late *Garden of Love* (Prado); Fehl, "Worship," pp. 85-86, fig. 32.

24 As glossed, respectively, by Gordon ("Imagery," p. 140) and Orgel (ed., *Ben Jonson: The Complete Masques* [New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1969], p. 57n.). The term may be still more suggestive; *Euphoros* literally means "patiently borne," or "bearing well," and there would appear in addition to be a pun on *euphortos*, "well freighted or laden," echoing the description of the "tree, laden with fruit" that is the heavily laden Queen's symbol in *Blacknesse* (l. 275, cited above). The fact of the Queen's approaching confinement, reported in a letter of the Venetian ambassador on 29 December 1604 (in *Jonson*, X, 446), is noted by Kelly, who points to the association between giving birth and bringing to "light" ("Challenge," pp. 341, 344-45). Anne gave birth to a daughter, Mary, on 8 April 1605 (John Nichols, *The Progresses . . . of King James the First*, 4 vols. [London, 1828], I, 505 and n.).

25 In a teasing marginal note to l. 240, Jonson says of his leverets, or hares: "They were the notes of *Lovelinesse* and sacred to *Venus*. See *Phil[ostratus]* in that place mentioned." Philostratus' account in fact stresses not the hare's loveliness but its astounding fertility, which makes it an offering most pleasing to Aphrodite ("while she suckles the young she has borne, she bears another litter to share the same milk; forthwith she conceives again, nor is there any time at all when she is not carrying young"). Cf. Valeriano: "the hare is the symbol of loveliness and therefore is considered dearest of all creatures to the Venus of fecundity" ("Est . . . venustatis symbolum Lepus, Venerique foecunditatis ergo charissimus omnium existimatur"). G. P. Valeriano Bolzani, *Hieroglyphica* (Lyons, 1602), Bk. III, "Venustas," p. 127c; cf. also "Foecunditas," p. 128f.

26 "Stanze fatte con l'occasione d'un balletto guidato da la Real M[ajes]ta de la Regina de la gran Brettagna &c. Li 6 di Genaro del 1608," in *Rime di Antimo Galli all' illustrissima Signora Elizabetta Talbot-Gray* (London, 1609). See John Orrell, "Antimo Galli's Description of *The Masque of Beauty*," *HLQ* 43, no. 1 (Winter 1979), 13-23. Orrell points out (p. 14) that Galli's account gives every sign of being that of an eyewitness; there is no hint that he consulted an annotated text. A letter from John Chamberlain two days before the performance suggests that the plot and the Queen's role were not common knowledge: "whatsoever the devise may be, and what succese they may have in theyre dauncing, yet you shold have ben sure to have seen great riches in jewells" (*Jonson*, X, 456).

27 Sts. 13-14; tr. Orrell, "Antimo Galli," pp. 18-19. Cf. sts. 15-20, summarized in Orrell, p. 15 (Galli, *Rime*, pp. 6-7).

28 *Mythologie*, tr. Jean de Montlyard (Lyons, 1600 [1st ed. 1597]), pp. 373-74 (Bk. IV, ch. 13), embellishing Comes' Latin. Cicero's four Venuses include the daughter of the sky, the foam-born, the daughter of Dione (wife of Vulcan, and lover of Mars), and Dea Syria or Astarte (wife of Adonis). Pausanias' three (*Description of Greece*, IX [Boeotia].16.2) are Urania or heavenly, Pandemos or common, and Apostraphia, an intermediate figure who turns men from concupiscence (in VIII [Arcadia].6.5 he adds a fourth Venus, Melanis; on this and Apostraphia, see below). A similar summary appears in L. G. Giraldi, *De Deis Gentium* (Basel, 1548; rpt. London: Garland, 1976), Synt. 13, pp. 532-34. Pausanias' list is repeated in Vincenzo Cartari, *Le Imagini de i Dei degli Antichi* (Venice, 1571; rpt. New York: Garland, 1976), p. 540.

29 Jonson's marginal note to l. 374—"The *Platonicks* opinion"—supports the Ficinian reference. "See also *Mac[robius] lib.* 1. and 2. *[In] Som[nium] Scip[ionis]*," he con-

tinues. Macrobius' harmonious World-Soul, described in Bk. II, ch. 2, sects. 1, 19, stirs the world to motion but is not associated with love and generation.

30 Oration VI, chs. 7-8; *Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Symposium*, ed. and tr. Sears Jayne, University of Missouri Studies 19, no. 1 (Columbia, 1944), pp. 190-92; see also Or. II, ch. 7 (pp. 142-43). At VI.8, distinguishing the World-Soul from Plato's lower, "bad daemon," Ficino resorts to a tripartite division of love like that in Pausanias: contemplative, practical, voluptuous (pp. 192-93).

31 Pausanias, IX(Boeotia).16.2; cited by Natalis Comes, *Mythologia* (Geneva, 1651 [1st ed. 1551]), Bk. IV, ch. 13, pp. 379, 395. Ovid discusses the Roman equivalent, Venus Verticordia, "Changer of the Heart" (*Fasti* IV.133-62); cited by Giraldi, 1548, pp. 536-37, and Cartari, 1571, pp. 539-40.

32 Chatsworth, Devonshire Collection; reproduced by permission of the Chatsworth Settlement Trustees (photo: Courtauld Institute of Art). On the costume see Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, 2 vols. (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: Univ. of California Press, 1973), I, 43, 44, 88, 96-98, no. 1, figs. 1-3.

33 On the Drake Jewel (c. 1586-87), see *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance 1500-1630* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1980), cat. 40, illus., p. 61, and John Murdoch et al., *The English Miniature* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 76-77, color pl. 10. A turbaned negress is carved on the case of the Gresley Jewel (1580s), which opens to reveal two Hilliard miniatures (*Princely Magnificence*, cat. 46, illus., pp. 62-63). An elaborate sixteenth-century Italian pendant ornament now in the Royal Collection, Windsor, includes several other moor cameos together with a dark recumbent Venus, possibly antique; see *Exhibition Catalogue of Gemstones and Jewellery* (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 1960), cat. 301, p. 79, pl. 7.

34 C. 1580-90 (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna); one of nine cameos depicting blacks in the imperial collections of Rudolph II at Prague. See *Princely Magnificence*, cat. 70, p. 70 (illus., p. 4) and Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery* (London: Sotheby, 1979), p. 197, no. 546.

35 See Pausanias, VIII(Arcadia).6.5, on "a sanctuary of Black Aphrodite" near the site of Dionysian orgies: "This surname of the goddess is simply due to the fact that men do not, as the beasts do, have sexual intercourse always by day, but in most cases by night." Other such sanctuaries are mentioned at II.2.4 and IX.27.4; see also Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* XIII.588c.

36 See Giraldi, 1548, p. 549; Valeriano, 1602, Bk. XXXIV, p. 351c; Comes, *Mythologie*, tr. 1600, p. 374 (an interpolation). Vigenère, in associating Philostratus' Venus of grotto and shade with those whose actions "ont besoin de couvert," adds: "Et Pausanias en ses Arcadiques, parlant de Venus Melanis, c'est à dire noire, dit *que c'est pource que les hommes n'y vacquent pas tant le jour, à guise de bestes bruttes, comme ils font la nuict*" (*Les Images*, 1614, pp. 54-55).

37 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; reproduced by permission. The Museum considers the attribution doubtful. For other examples of this type see *Apollo* 107 (May 1978), 138, and *Burlington Magazine* 105 (January 1963), 58, fig. 32, and 112 (April 1970), fig. 90. For a "Venus Marina" attributed to Cattaneo, see Charles Seymour, "An Attribution to Ricci . . . ," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* 27, nos. 1-2 (April 1962), 17, figs. 14-15.

38 Giraldi, 1548, pp. 532-33, 535, 537-38, 554.

39 Publicly enthroned in the marketplace with Antony, Cleopatra "in th'habiliments of the Goddess Isis / That day appeared, and oft before gave audience" (III.vi.17-19; cf. Plutarch, *Antony*, liv). Text here and below from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974). See Michael Lloyd, "Cleopatra as Isis," *Shakespeare Survey* 12 (1959), 91-93.

40 "[T]he abundance and beauty of the lights [were] immense. . . . But what beggared all else and possibly exceeded the public expectation was the wealth of pearls and jewels that adorned the Queen and her ladies, so abundant and splendid that in

everyone's opinion no other court could have displayed such pomp and riches" (*Jonson*, X, 457). Vast sums were spent on jewels; Chamberlain reported that one woman "is saide to be furnished for better then an hundred thousand pound, and the Lady Arbella goes beyond her, and the Q. must not come behinde" (p. 456).

41 *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), p. 126n. On the island paradises mentioned above, see chs. 3-5.

42 In the main masque, the motif of a seductive Venus resurfaces in Proteus' song inviting the court ladies to dance: "Why do you smell of Amber-gris, / Of which was formed *Neptunes* Neice, / The Queene of Love; unlesse you can, / Like Sea-borne *Venus*, love a man?" (ll. 494-97). See also *The Fortunate Isles*, ll. 608-11.

43 Frag. 58, Processional song "On Delos." Cf. *Homeric Hymns* iii (To Delian Apollo), ll. 1-88.

44 *The Third Part of the Countesse of Pembrokes Yvychurch. Entituled Amintas Dale* (London, 1592), fol. 32v. For the etymology of Delos, cf. Servius on *Aen.* III.69-79, in Virgil, *Opera* (Venice, 1544; rpt. New York: Garland, 1976), fol. 239a; and Comes, *Mythologia*, 1651, pp. 965, 968 (IX.6, "De Latona").

45 On the tradition see Josephine Waters Bennett, "Britain Among the Fortunate Isles," *SP* 53 (1956), 114-40.

46 Jonson may have had in mind Comes' report of a tradition that before Venus arrived on Cyprus, it was called Macaria or blessed on account of its fertility (*Mythologia*, 1651, p. 378; IV.13, "De Venere"). On Jonson's Macaria, all "dance the *Graces* Hay, now *Venus* Ring" (l. 516), and the revels are compared to those of "Sea-borne *Venus*" (l. 611; see n. 42, above).

47 Jonson substitutes "festa" for the "laeta" of the original (*Jonson*, X, 451). Ovid offers his account of Janus, heralding a "lucky year" (l. 63), to Germanicus, nephew and heir of Augustus.

48 Mary, born 8 April 1605 (see n. 24 above), died 16 September 1607 (Nichols, *Progresses*, II, 153-54). Sophia, born in June 1606, lived just long enough to be christened (Agnes Strickland, *Lives of the Queens of England*, rev. ed., 6 vols. [London, 1888-91], IV, 91).

49 *Jonson*, X, 457; James is perhaps recalling Suetonius' report that Augustus "so beautified [Rome] that he could justly boast that he had found it built of [sun-dried] brick and left it in marble" (*Lives of the Caesars*, II.xxviii.3). On this new banqueting house, which stood until 1619, see H. M. Colvin et al., *The History of the King's Works*, IV (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1982), pp. 322-25.