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Michael Drayton and John Donne

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In 1612, anticipating an approach that New Historicists have labeled cultural poetics, Michael Drayton draws a theoretical distinction between his printed *Poly-Olbion* and the scribal publication of coterie poets.

> [t]here is this great disadvantage against me; that it commeth out at this time when Verses are wholly deduc't to Chambers, and nothing esteem'd in this lunatique Age, but what is kept in Cabinets, and must only passe by Transcription.[1]

Drayton does not identify John Donne by name, but the patronage connections outlined below make it highly probable that Drayton was describing Donne.[2] Although *Poems* by J. D. did not appear until 1633, by

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[1]All references to Drayton's work are to the standard edition, *The Works of Michael Drayton,* ed. William Hebel, Kathleen Tillotson, and Bernard H. Newdigate, 5 vols. (1941; rprt, Oxford: Basil Blackwell for the Shakespeare Head Press, 1961), 4:v. References are cited by volume and page and, where appropriate, line numbers. Drayton's editors used the 1619 folio as the copy text for the standard edition and printed all of the early and excised versions of poems, prefaces, and dedications as textual variants in volume 5 of the standard edition. Kathleen Tillotson edited this volume; I have cited the excised and revised material below as Tillotson, 5.

[2]See also *John Donne: The Critical Heritage*, ed. A. J. Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 2–3: Smith juxtaposes Drayton's quotation from the Preface to *Poly-Olbion* (1612) with Donne's comment: "of my *Anniversaries,* the fault that I acknowledge in myself is to have descended to print anything in verse, which though it have excuse even in our times by men who profess and practice much gravity; yet I confess I wonder how I declined to

1612, Drayton had defined scribal publication, characterized Donne as a "chamber" or "cabinet" poet, and distinguished coterie poems from public poetry.

In his well-known poem, "The Canonization," Donne differentiates his amatory subject matter from that appropriate to public verse:

> And if no peece of Chronicle wee prove,
> We'll build in sonnets pretty roomes (32–32)[3]

Donne agrees with Drayton that chronicles relate the public events of importance to a nation and recount the deeds of heroes, but he memorably signals that lovers can also find a suitable memorial:

> As well a well wrought urne becomes
> The greatest ashes, as halfe-acre tombes (33–34)[4]

Drayton was not a courtier; he resented what he viewed as the elitism of those who circulated poetry in manuscript.[5] His sense of social inferiority exacerbated his antipathy toward coterie poetry. He also particularly resented Donne's friendship with the Gooderes and through them his connection with Lucy, Countess of Bedford. We are aware that poets competed for the favors of a relatively limited number of literary patrons; it is rarely possible to identify specific instances of rivalry. Drayton and Donne are exceptions.

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it, and do not pardon myself." Smith describes Donne as a "gentleman-wit" and Drayton as a "professional poet" (p. 3).

[3]Donne, "The Canonization," in *The Elegies and the Songs and Sonnets,* ed. Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 74.

[4]Arthur Marotti, *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), has shown that "The Canonization" is essentially an ironic performance, that Donne did indeed desire worldly preferment.

[5]For Donne's access to the court through "long-standing associations with the ancient Catholic nobility," see Dennis Flynn, "Donne, Henry Wotton, and the Earl of Essex," *John Donne Journal* 14 (1995): 185–212. For a summary of conflicting biographical views, see Maurine Sabine, "'A Place of Honor': Dennis Flynn's Biography of Donne," *John Donne Journal* 15 (1996): 203–211 and Dennis Flynn, "Donne the Man, the Legend," *George Herbert Journal* 22 (1998–1999): 41–54. Flynn concentrates on the nobility; more research is needed on Donne's connections with the Gooderes and other Catholic gentry.

A factual summary of Drayton's attempts to win patronage throws light on his relationship to Donne. Sir Henry Goodere (1534–1595) inherited Polesworth from his father Francis. His two brothers, Thomas (second son) and William (youngest son), had two sons, both of whom were named after Sir Henry of Poleworth. One of these nephews, Sir Henry Goodere (1571–1627) the younger, was knighted by Essex in 1599 and became one of Donne's closest friends. Most of Donne's surviving letters are addressed to this Henry Goodere, the son of William Goodere, youngest brother of Sir Henry of Polesworth. Sir Henry of Polesworth had no male heir in his immediate family, and at one time apparently considered making his brother Thomas, or Thomas's son, his heir. Michael Drayton was a servant in the household of Thomas Goodere.[6] Sir Henry of Polesworth, however, changed his mind and arranged for his property to pass to Donne's friend, Sir Henry Goodere the younger, the son of his brother William. In 1593 Frances, the older daughter of Sir Henry of Polesworth, married her first cousin Henry Goodere the younger; Frances Goodere and Donne's friend inherited the Polesworth estate when the older Sir Henry died in 1595.

The single surviving documentary source for Drayton's early years is his deposition in a suit brought by Margaret, Thomas Goodere's widow, against William Goodere and his son Henry Goodere the younger, again Donne's close friend. In this 1598 deposition it is made clear that Drayton was a servant in the household of Thomas Goodere (d. 1584 or 1585), which was in Collingham, Nottinghamshire, seventy miles from Polesworth. Drayton elaborated a Polesworth connection in the dedications to some of his early poems to enhance his eligibility for literary clientage.[7] A second suit over the Polesworth estate was brought in 1606 by Thomas's Henry, the son of Margaret and the deceased Thomas Goodere, against Sir Henry Goodere the younger. Drayton,

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[6]Newdigate uncritically treats Drayton's dedications and prefaces as factual statements. Depicting Drayton as growing up at Polesworth as a page, he speculates that Sir Henry Goodere educated him with his daughters and then fictionalizes a romance between Drayton and Anne Goodere, Sir Henry's younger daughter, whom he identifies as Drayton's Idea. For corrections and additions, see my *Michael Drayton Revisited* (Boston: Twayne, 1990), pp. 1–23.

[7]R. C. Bald, *John Donne, A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 163 relies on the Newdigate biography and so misconstrues Drayton's social status; see Brink, *Michael Drayton Revisited,* pp. 1–16, 87–135.

who had previously testified on behalf of Margaret and her son Thomas, was not called as a witness during this suit, which was settled on 3 November 1606. The Gooderes of Polesworth were not wealthy because the estate was encumbered by debt, but they were the neighbors and friends of the Harington family and were especially close to Lucy Harington, later Countess of Bedford. When Sir Henry the younger and Frances Goodere had their first child in 1594, their daughter was named Lucy after her godmother, Lucy Harington. Later in the same year, Lucy Harington married Edward Russell, Earl of Bedford. Lucy remained a lifelong friend and patron of the Gooderes; it was she who supplied the dowry that made possible the marriage of her goddaughter Lucy Goodere to Sir Francis Nethersole.[8]

Drayton, who was probably established in London before the death of Sir Henry of Polesworth, dedicated his earliest works to the gentry who had estates near Hartshill where he grew up. He also made the almost obligatory bid for the patronage of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, whom he represented as an ideal patroness in both *Idea: The Shepheards Garland* (1593) and *Ideas Mirrour* (1594). By 1594, however, he was actively seeking the patronage of Lucy Harington; he published *Matilda* (1594) with a glowing dedication to her. In this dedication he mentions the Gooderes in order to explain why he is dedicating a poem to her. His tone suggests that he may not have personally met Lucy. He alludes to the "exceeding kinde affection (which I knowe) the House of POWLESWORTH doe beare you." He then describes his own connection to the Gooderes:

> (a Family where-unto I must confesse, I am both in love and dutie more devote then to any other) hath mooved mee, for a more particuler proofe of that honor which both they and I are willing to doe you, to dedicate my Poeme to your protection.
>
> (1:210)

This effort to secure Lucy's patronage seems to have borne fruit. In 1595 Drayton dedicated *Endimion and Phoebe: Ideas Latmus* to Lucy, now the Countess of Bedford, alluding to her "sweet golden showers" and

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[8] *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman E. McClure, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 2:291.

pledging his muse to her (1:126). In 1596 he dedicated his epic *Mortimeriados* to Lucy as well as revised versions of *Peirs Gaveston* and *Matilda*, and his new complaint, *Robert of Normandy*.

Though Drayton, later in *Poly-Olbion*, criticized chamber poets for flattering their patrons and basely soothing "the Humour of the Time" (167–168), his 1596 dedication to Lucy of Morimeriados concludes:

> And in despight of tyranizing times,
> This hope great Lady yet to thee is left,
> Thy name shall lyve in steele-out-during rimes,
> Still scorning ages sacraligious theft,
> What fame doth keepe, can never be bereft:
> Nor can thy past-priz'd honour ever die,
> If lynes can gyve thee immortalitie.
> . . . . . .
> Proclayming unto ages yet to come,
> Whilst Bedford lyv'd, what lyving Bedford was,
> Enclosing thee in this immortall toombe,
> More durable then letter-graven brasse,
> To shewe what thy great power could bring to passe,
> And other hopes I utterly refuse,
> And thou my hope, my Lady, and my Muse.
> (1:307, 43–49, 57–63)

Promising to confer immortality on his patroness and "ad more vigor to thy fame, / Then earthly honors or a Countesse name" (55–56), Drayton proclaims her "my hope, my Lady, and My Muse" (63).

The following year Drayton's *Englands Heroicall Epistles* (1597) appeared with no fewer than nine dedications; the Bedfords, however, remain the central figures. In the 1597 dedication to the Earl of Bedford, Drayton describes the now deceased older Sir Henry Goodere as the "first cherisher of [his] muse" and claims that before his death Sir Henry had bequeathed Drayton as a client to "that Lady [Lucy, Countess of Bedford]whom he so dearly loved" (Tillotson, 5:112). Drayton had not dedicated his poems published in 1593 and early 1594 to Sir Henry Goodere of Polesworth, nor had he addressed these early poems to Lucy Harington; he dedicated *Idea: The Shepheards Garland* (1593) to Master Robert Dudley; *Piers Gaveston* (1593) to Henry Cavendish, Esq.; *Ideas Mirrour* (1594) to Anthony Cooke, Esq., and first turned to Lucy

Harington in *Matilda* (1594). The sequence of Drayton's allusions to the Gooderes makes sense only if we assume that he did not know these people intimately. He appears to have hoped to consolidate his position as Lucy's client by exaggerating his service in the household of Thomas Goodere into a close relationship with the Gooderes of Polesworth.

Drayton's effusive dedications to Lucy, Countess of Bedford, come to an end with *Englands Heroicall Epistles* (1597). His position as a client of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, is likely to have been adversely affected by the litigation in 1598 and 1606 over the settlement of the Polesworth estate. The property dispute involved the Gooderes, Lucy's friends, and Drayton's former mistress, Margaret (now Saunders), Thomas Goodere's widow. In his 1598 deposition Drayton testified that during the lifetime of Thomas Goodere, his son Henry Goodere, not Donne's friend, had been regarded as the older Sir Henry's heir. Eight years later, in 1606, a second suit was brought against Sir Henry Goodere the younger by Henry Goodere, the son of Margaret and Thomas. The case was finally settled on 3 November 1606 in favor of Frances and her husband, but this costly and lengthy litigation burdened an already impoverished estate. Sir Henry the elder, a Catholic who belatedly conformed, had paid heavy fines for his support of Mary Queen of Scots.

Drayton's *Englands Heroicall Epistles* (1597) was an immediate and astonishing success, rapidly going through five separate editions before 1602. Though Drayton added new epistles in 1598 and 1599, the 1597 edition seemed to support the succession of a Suffolk-Grey candidate. In 1597 Drayton concluded Englands *Heroicall Epistles* with letters between two sets of lovers who were ancestors of Viscount Beauchamp, the son of Catherine Grey and Edward Seymour. The featured lovers were Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, and wife to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk; and her descendant Lady Jane Grey and Guilford Dudley. Henry VIII in his will and by act of parliament had settled the succession on the Greys, descendants of his younger sister Mary, rather than on the Stuarts, offspring of his older sister Margaret. Drayton may not have intended to oppose James's succession, but the conclusion of his poems was unfortunate. He also dedicated the epistles relating to Richard II to Lucy's husband, Edward Russell, Earl of Bedford. Bedford, who

belonged to the Essex circle, later joined the 1601 rebellion.[9] In 1597, the year that *Englands Heroicall Epistles* appeared in print, King James of Scotland had stepped up pressure to be identified as Elizabeth's successor; he asked to be created Prince of Wales. The Haringtons and the Bedfords supported James's claim to the English throne, and after his succession, James made the Haringtons the guardians of Princess Elizabeth. Lucy became a major figure in the Jacobean court. Drayton cannot have been wholly ignorant of the political thrust of *Englands Heroicall Epistles,* but he must have underestimated the risks of writing about contemporary history. His additions brought the poems into line with mainstream Tudor-Stuart politics, but may have come too late to rehabilitate Drayton's image. A prominent courtier, particularly a supporter of James's succession, as were the Bedfords, would not have regarded Drayton as an especially safe client.

Prior to the end of Elizabeth's reign, Lucy, Countess of Bedford, had decided to promote the career of Samuel Daniel. Ben Jonson alludes to Lucy's patronage of Daniel in *Epistle* 12 in the *Forrest.* The epistle was addressed to Elizabeth, Sir Philip Sidney's daughter, sometime after her marriage in 1599 to Roger Manners, fifth Earl of Rutland. Playing upon the meaning of Lucy's name, Jonson describes her as "that purest light, / Of all *Lucina*'s [Elizabeth's] traine; *Lucy* the bright" and dismisses Daniel as her "verser":[10]

> Then which, a nobler heaven it selfe knowes not.
> Who, though shee have a better verser got,
> (Or *Poet,* in the court account) then I,
> And, who doth me (though I not him) envy.
> Yet, for the timely favours shee hath done,
> To my less sanguine *Muse,* wherein she'hath wonne
> My gratefull soule. . . .
>
> (66–74)

Jonson is alluding to Daniel, whom Lucy sponsored at court and whose preface to *Tethys Festival* (1610) is sometimes interpreted as an attack on

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[9]For Drayton's problems with patronage, see Brink, *Michael Drayton Revisited,* 14–18, 38–65, 66–67.

[10]Jonson, *The Poems, The Prose Works,* ed. C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 8 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), 8:115.

Jonson in which Daniel sides with Inigo Jones.[11] Daniel's muse is "sanguine" because he is the author of the historical epic, the *Civile Wars* (1595 and 1599, five books; 1601, six books; 1609, eight books). In addition, Jonson, like Sidney, thought that fiction was essential to poetry; a verser might be skilled in metrics, as Daniel certainly was, but a poet had to create fictions.[12] Daniel was criticized by both Jonson and Drayton for being too much the historian in verse.[13]

In 1603, if Lucy had still regarded Drayton as a poet to whom she wished to extend patronage, she would have invited him, as well as Samuel Daniel, to welcome the new monarch. When James stopped at Burleigh Harrington on his progress south, Lucy arranged for Samuel Daniel to present to James his *A Panegyrike Congratulatorie to the Kings Majestie.* The poem was entered in the Stationers' Register on 30 May 1603 and printed with an inscription on the title page stating that it had been delivered to the "Kings Most Excellent Majestie at Burleigh Harrington in Rutlandshire," one of Lucy's residences. Daniel, formerly the client of the Countess of Pembroke and tutor to her son William, was Drayton's social superior. At least in this instance, he also seems to have been alert to the political reception of his poetry. Just prior to the presentation, he eliminated an allusion to Sir Walter Ralegh, not a favorite of King James, replacing it with a much safer reference to Sir Francis Drake.[14] Lucy also arranged for Daniel to provide entertainments at court. His *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* was presented at Hampton Court on 8 January 1604, and she assisted him in obtaining the position of the licenser for the Children of the Queen's Revels. His ascendancy as a court poet is further indicated by his appointment as one of the grooms of the privy chamber to Queen Anne. Daniel's success as a court poet

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[11]In "A Pendant to Drummond of Hawthornden's *Conversations,*" J. R. Barker cites Drummond's manuscript annotation to prove that Daniel was Jonson's "sanguine rival" (*Review of English Studies,* n. s. 16 (1965): 284–288). Cecil Seronsky, *Samuel Daniel* (New York: Twayne, 1967), p. 137.

[12]Jonson, 1:133. Jonson commented to William Drummond that he "thought not Bartas a Poet but a Verser, because he wrote not fiction."

[13]Jonson, 1:132. In keeping with this distinction, Jonson describes Daniel as a "good honest man, had no children, but no poet." Drayton concurred in this judgment, saying that Daniel was "too much the historian in verse" and that his "maner better fitted prose" (3:229, Elegy 8, "Of poets and poesie," 126, 128).

[14]Seronsky, pp. 113–114.

and his secure position as Lucy's client did not last. By 1605, he was in disgrace over topical allusions in *Philotas,* a play widely thought to be about the downfall of Essex.[15]

It is well-known that Donne wrote the majority of his patronage poems for Lucy, Countess of Bedford. However, in studies of Donne, it has been assumed that his connection with Lucy, Countess of Bedford, began in 1607 when she acquired the lease to Twickenham Park in close proximity to his residence in Micham.[16] This assumption fails to take account of the importance of Donne's close friendship with Sir Henry Goodere the younger; they are likely to have met during the Essex expeditions to Cadiz or the Islands in 1596 or 1597. The Gooderes were neighbors and friends of Lucy, who in 1594 became the godmother of their first child. Donne wrote to Henry Goodere when he was in disgrace after his marriage.[17] Henry Goodere made every effort to promote Donne's interests and would have introduced him to the countess when he became a Groom of the Privy Chamber after James's accession. Donne acknowledged that Goodere's patronage was essential to him, candidly observing: "I owe you what ever Court friends do for me."[18] In a letter that Donne wrote to Goodere 23 February 1602, he mentions the loss of a child by the Countess of Bedford: "I hope somebody else hath had the ill luck to tell you first that the young Bedford is dead."[19] In April 1606 when Donne returned from a trip abroad with Sir Walter Chute, he sent his regards to the countess and her brother.[20]

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[15]For an argument that Daniel was indeed writing political allegory, see Hugh Gazzard, "'Those Graue Presentments of Antiquitie': Samuel Daniel's *Philotas* and the Earl of Essex," *Review of English Studies,* n. s. 51 (2000): 423–450.

[16]Marotti, for example, says that it was "about the end of 1607" when he made Lucy's acquaintance (p. 202).

[17]Bald, p. 137.

[18]*Letters* 146, cited in Bald, p. 170. Donne may have composed letters for Goodere; it is certain that Goodere pilfered Donne's letters and poems for passages to use in his own correspondence (Bald, pp. 166–167).

[19]Bald, p. 172.

[20]By 1608 the relationship between Donne and the countess was close enough so that she acted as godmother to his daughter born on 8 August 1608 and named Lucy after the countess.

Drayton did not forget his promise that he would make Lucy immortal. By 1603 the countess had made it clear that she preferred to act as the patron of Samuel Daniel; Ben Jonson, too, had received her sponsorship at court. By 1606, the year that coincidentally the litigation over Polesworth was finally settled, Drayton realized that he was going to be ignored by the court. In 1606, he revised *The Shepheards Garland* (1593) to comment upon the injustice of the patronage system. In the first eclogue Rowland (Drayton's poetic pseudonym) charges that "those that can faine" are "exalted basely" (Tillotson, 5:51), adding that "none regards just *Rowland of the Rocke*" (Tillotson, 5:52). The sixth eclogue of *The Shepherds Garland* is revised as the eighth in *Poemes Lyrick and pastoral. Odes, Eglogs, The Man in the Moone.* After commenting generally on the fickleness of women, Drayton launches an extraordinary invective against Lucy, the chief patroness of the Jacobean court, and then attacks James, the reigning monarch.[21] Drayton, the "faithfull Rowland," has been betrayed by Selena (Lucy). The name Selena, an alternate name for the goddess of the moon, plays on the etymological meaning of Lucy as light.[22] Rowland is devastated because Selena "who purposd to have raysed" his estate has deserted him in favor of the "deceitefull *Cerberon*":

> And to deceitefull *Cerberon* she cleaves
> That beastly clowne to vile of to be spoken,
> And that good shepheard wilfully she leaves
> And falsly al her promises hath broken,
> And al those beautyes whilom that her graced,
> With vulgar breath perpetually defaced.
> (Tillotson, 5:189)

[21]Lucy, next to Queen Anne, was the most important patroness of the Jacobean court. For Lucy's patronage of Daniel, Jonson, and Donne, see Barbara Lewalski, "Lucy, Countess of Bedford: Images of a Jacobean Courtier and Patroness," in *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth Century England,* ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 52–77. For a general comment on Jacobean patronesses, see Franklin B. Williams, Jr., "The Literary Patronesses of Renaissance England," *Notes and Queries* (October, 1962): 356–366.

[22]In *Endimion and Phoebe* (1595) Drayton engages in similar wordplay with Lucy's name to compliment her.

Drayton contrasts the dainty flower-crowned Queen Elizabeth, to Selena whose brow causes those "goodly chapplets" to wither:

> What daintie flower yet ever was there found
> Whose smell or beauty mighte the sence delight
> Wherwith *Eliza* when she lived was crowned
> In goodly chapplets he for her not dighte.
> Which became withered soon as ere shee ware them
> So ill agreeing with the brow that bare them.
> (Tillotson, 5:189)

In a tone remarkable for its harshness, Drayton curses Lucy and calls on "age" to make her "ugly." Drayton's printed and public attack on his former patroness sets him apart from those of his contemporaries who criticized those in power but more covertly.[23] Consigning Lucy to oblivion, he pictures her "forgotten grave."

> Let age sit soone and ugly on her brow,
> No sheepheards praises living let her have
> To her last end noe creature pay one vow
> Nor flower be strew'd on her forgotten grave,
> And to the last of all devouring tyme
> Nere be her name remembred more in rime
> (Tillotson, 5:189)

In 1594 Lucy was "Idea," a muse of poetry and the inspirational mistress of *Endimion and Phoebe*, but in 1606, Drayton vowed never to remember her name in rhyme. When he revised the pastorals for publication in his 1619 folio, he misrepresented her patronage of his early work. He removed his earlier compliments and dedications to the Countess of Bedford, and he removed the passage attacking her as Selena, but not

[23]For analysis of self censorship and covert criticism, see Leah Marcus, *Puzzling Shakespeare: Local Reading and Its Discontents* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) and Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1984).

necessarily because he forgave her.[24] By 1619 this notable Jacobean patroness, a woman whose beauty and wit were celebrated by Daniel, Jonson, and Donne, had lost her beauty in a severe case of small pox which settled in her eye socket and even jeopardized her sight.

Drayton's censure of James focuses on the king's ingratitude. He describes his early expectations that Olcon (James) would be a Phoebus to his shepherds, but criticizes him for his neglect:

> Nor of his Bag-pipes takes at all no keepe,
> But to the sterne Wolfe and deceitful Fox,
> Leaves the poore Shepheard and his harmlesse Sheepe.
> (2:562, 98–100)

Drayton takes back his previous praise of James:

> An all those Rimes that he of *OLCON* sung,
> The Swayne disgrac'd, participate his wrong.
> (2:562, 101–102)

As with Lucy, Drayton never forgave James. He dedicated *Poly-Olbion* first to Prince Henry and then to Prince Charles, and he omits James from his list of great British rulers.

Drayton resents Lucy's desertion, but his indignation is intensified because she has chosen to favor Cerberon, "a beastly clowne to vile to be spoken of." Raymond Jenkins first suggested that Drayton's "deceitful Cerberon" is an allusion to John Donne and argued that a later poem *The Shepheards Sirena* (1627) is an attack on the school of Donne.[25] Because of the widely accepted view that John Donne was not introduced to the Countess of Bedford until 1607, Jenkins's suggestion has been virtually ignored.[26] There is little doubt that Drayton intends his portraits of the

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[24]The dedications were retained by the printers until 1619. On the bibliography, see Dick Taylor, "Drayton and the Countess of Bedford," *Studies in Philology* 49 (1952): 214–228.

[25]Raymond Jenkins, "Drayton's Relation to the School of Donne, as Revealed in *The Shepheards Sirena*," *PMLA* 38 (1923): 557–587.

[26]See, for example, R. W. Short, "Ben Jonson in Drayton's Poems," *Review of English Studies* 16 (1940): 149. Short was unaware of the Goodere-Bedford connection and dismisses Jenkins's argument in a footnote: "This case is

ungrateful and faithless patrons, Selena and Olcon, to be Lucy and James, but the identification of Donne as Cerberus is less certain. Even though Drayton and Donne were closely connected to the Gooderes and to Lucy, Drayton, oddly, never mentions Donne by name. Drayton is also more than an outspoken critic of coterie poetry; he seems to interpret scribal publication as an attack on his values and personal worth.

In the *Owle* (1604) Drayton satirizes the Essex Rebellion and launches a symbolic theme that informs much of his later poetry. He expected serious poets to undertake great poetic enterprises and those who do not he depicts as swineherds, who defile the Muses' springs, or rustic clowns, bent on rooting up the traditions that allow poetry to flower. He particularly resents court poets and accuses them of currying favor with the rich and powerful. The "jetting *Jay*" of the *Owle* is one of Drayton's earliest portraits of a poet who flatters courtiers and betrays the traditions of poetry:

> This Carion *Jay*, approching to the Spring,
> Where the sweet *Muses* wont to sit and sing,
> With filthy Ordure so the same defil'd,
> As they from thence are utterly exil'd.
> (2:497, 663–666)

Drayton's Jay may be a general portrait of the poet who tries to find a position at court, but some specifics, such as the "J" for John, point to Donne. The Jay, like Donne, knows several languages and has engaged in military service, but Drayton thinks that the Jay has prostituted his poetic talent:

> O Bastard Mindes unto this vilenesse brought,
> To loath the meanes which first your Honours wrought!
> But who their great Profession can protect,
> That rob themselves of their owne due respect?
> For they whose Minds should be exhal'd and hie,
> As Free and Noble as cleere Poesie,
> In the slight favour of some Lord to come,

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invalidated by the fact that Lady Bedford did not patronize Donne's poetry until 1608, hence it will not be discussed here."

> Basely doe crouch to his attending Groome.
> Immortall gift that art not bought with Gold,
> That thou to Peasants should be basely sold.
> (2:498, 684–694)

In 1604, when the *Owle* was printed, Donne was trying to win preferment and recoup his fortunes after his marriage to Anne More. It may be suggestive that when Drayton revised *The Owle* for the 1619 edition, he inserted the portraits of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and his wife Frances Howard immediately after the description of the Jay. With James's full support the notorious Carr had married Frances Howard after her scandalous divorce from the Earl of Essex. Donne had courted Carr's favor, and he was the author of an epithalamion composed in honor of the Somerset-Howard wedding.

By 1606, when Drayton printed his invective against Lucy, he recognized that he was and would remain isolated from the court, the principal source of the kind of recognition he sought. To understand the depth of Drayton's resentment of court poets, we need to note that he is one of the only seventeenth-century poets of literary stature who did not write entertainments for the Jacobean court. The list of poets achieving this distinction includes Samuel Daniel, Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, Thomas Campion, Francis Beaumont, John Marston, William Browne, John Fletcher, and Thomas Middleton. Drayton seems to have had the kind of talent appropriate for court entertainments. Later, in the eighteenth century, Drayton's *Nymphidia* was produced as an entertainment, indicating that what have been labelled his "fairy" poems could easily have been adapted for presentation.

Philosophical as well as personal differences may have led Drayton to criticize Donne and other coterie poets. Intellectually a humanist, he believed in the tradition of *bonae literae* or humane letters and defined the poet as a spokesman for public values.[27] During his lifetime the division between poetry and history broadened and that breach

[27]In early twentieth-century criticism Drayton was dismissed as a poet who lacked the perception to understand that epics had become unfashionable. For a pioneering argument that seventeenth-century Spenserians were engaged in a critique of Jacobean court politics, see David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984; rev. ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 195–214.

undermined the humanist tradition and its assumption that epic poetry grounded in the history of a nation towered over all other genres. Drayton's own remarkable historical consciousness enabled him to understand and record the changes in the concepts of poetry and poets that occurred during his lifetime.

In Song XXI of the second part of *Poly-Olbion* (1622), Drayton attacked chamber poets as "bastards," not the "Muses only heires," taking them to task for their lack of heroic aspiration and accusing them of profanity:

> Inforcing things in Verse for Poesie unfit,
> Mere filthy stuffe, that breakes out of the sores of wit:
> What Poet reckes the praise upon such Anticks heap'd,
> Or envies that their lines, in Cabinets are kept?
> Though some fantasticke foole promove their ragged Rymes,
> And doe transcribe them o'er a hundred severall times.
> (4:421, 177–182)

His phrase, "filthy stuffe, that breakes out of the sores of wit" (178), is aimed at the school of Donne. Drayton condemns chamber poetry as "lewd beggery trash, nay very gibbrish" (184) and insists that those who are "rightly christ'ned" in the "Helliconian Fount" (166) do not become coterie poets. For him, politics and genre are linked: chamber poets are "such as basely sooth the Humour of the Time, / And slubberingly patch up some slight and shallow Rime" (167–168).

To illustrate the social and political role of the true poet, Drayton turns to the myth of Orpheus, whose playing persuaded the rocks and trees to follow him. The moral of this fable, Drayton says, is that the music of Orpheus brought civilization to those who had previously lacked culture:

> . . . his knowledge drew
> The stony, blockish rout, that nought but rudenesse knew,
> T'imbrace a civill life, by his inticing Layes.
> (4:421, 197–199)

Drayton opposes obscurity because the role of the poet is to guard and celebrate the public values that contribute to a "civill life."[28] He observes that if Orpheus, the bringer of civilization, had deliberately tried to obscure his communication, behaving "like many of these dayes, / Which to be understood, doe take in it disdaine" (4:422, 200–201), then he would have been ignored or dismissed as a mad man, "a veryer blocke, then those to whom he sung" (4:422, 206). His resentment of chamber poets is so great that even when he is depicting his ideal poet, he cannot resist making sarcastic asides against them.

In the 1627 folio Drayton's important elegy "Of poets and poesie" offers an evaluation of poets beginning with Chaucer in the fourteenth-century and concluding with William Browne in the seventeenth-century. His catalog is remarkably inclusive because translators and dramatists are treated as poets. He includes Sir William Alexander and William Drummond of Hawthornden, making him one of the first critics to regard Scottish poetry as part of a British tradition. Drayton's very inclusiveness draws attention to his omissions. His most significant omission is John Donne. Turning the "stigma of print" inside out, Drayton defiantly states that he will ignore privately circulated manuscript poems.

> . . . but if you shall
> Say in your knowledge, that these be not all
> Have writ in numbers, be inform'd that I
> Onely myselfe, to these few men doe tye,
> Whose works oft printed, set on every post,
> To publique censure subject have bin most
> (3:230–231, 181–186)

Striking a familiar note, he condemns courtier poets who produce their verse in "private chambers" for an elite audience:

> For such whose poemes, be they nere so rare,
> In private chambers, that incloistered are,

[28]In his conversations with Drummond, Jonson said that he esteemed "John Done the first poet, in the world in some things" (1:133), but perhaps he, like Drayton, overvalued clarity. He thought Donne "for not being understood would perish" (1:138).

> And by transcription daintyly must goe;
> As though the world unworthy were to know,
> Their rich composures. . .
> (3:231, 187–191)

In a possible allusion to Donne's "The Relique," he criticizes the elitism of scribal publication because its practitioners assume that the world is "unworthy" to know "their wonderous reliques."

Drayton seems to be paying off an old score in his 1627 catalog. His omission of Donne is striking. Although he says that his catalog concerns only works "oft printed" and subjected to "publique censure" (185–186), he could have included Donne on the basis of the *Anniversaries, Pseudo-Martyr, Ignatius his Conclave,* and sermons and other poems printed by 1627. Drayton may have recognized his own prejudice. Of coterie poetry and scribal publication, he says prophetically: "let such Peeces bee spoke by those that shall come after me" (193–194). Both Jonson and Daniel, who outshone Drayton as literary clients, are included in his catalog of poets, but Donne, the legendary preacher and the preeminent coterie poet, is not "remembred" in Drayton's "rime."

The Muses Elizium contains Drayton's last critical statement on the craft of poetry. England, which he portrays as an unhappy isle, he ironically renames Felicia. It is useful to note that Felicia is a Latin equivalent of the Greek pun used to render the title *Poly-Olbion* as "happy Albion." In *The Muses Elizium* Drayton retracts *Poly-Olbion*, his valiant effort to realize the humanist ideal of the poet as spokesman for public values. He may have deliberately left *Poly-Olbion* unfinished because he had concluded that epic poetry could no longer be written with conviction since heroic values had disappeared from life and art. *The Muses Elizium*, his last pastoral, forecasts that poets will turn to satire and romantic escape. The Orphic bard, the civilizer who embodies Drayton's ideal of the poet, cannot escape into a romantic world in which poetry becomes an end in itself. For Drayton satire is preferable. In the frontispiece to his 1619 folio he is depicted as a discontented and disapproving laureate poet (see fig. 1). In *The Muses Elizium* he abandons his pastoral name Rowland and becomes the old Satyr, a satirist whom the muses favor because of his truthfulness. The old Satyr prophesies a bleak future for England and no future at all for the national poetry he

Fig. 1. This portrait of Michael Drayton is reproduced from his *Poems* (1619) with the permission of the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

had spent his life trying to write. Drayton was only partly wrong. There was a great epic printed after the Civil War, but Milton's poem was not an Arthurian epic celebrating Albion.[29]

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[29]I would like to acknowledge that a preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association meeting at the University of Colorado, Boulder, on 26 April 2008.