Effaced History: Facing the Colonial Contexts of Ben Jonson's *Irish Masque at Court*

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On 29 December 1613, King James I and his invited guests congregated at Whitehall to celebrate Frances Howard's now infamous second marriage to the King's favorite, Robert Carr, the Earl of Somerset. Ben Jonson's *The Irish Masque at Court*, commissioned at some considerable expense, provided the evening's entertainment. The fact that Frances Howard was embroiled in sordid divorce proceedings with her first husband, the Earl of Essex, that the King was complicit in obtaining this politically motivated divorce, and that Ben Jonson had presented a masque, *Hymenaei* (1607), in celebration of the earlier union, did not, on the surface at least, dampen the revelry. Neither, as one might expect, did Jonson's *Irish Masque* dwell on the incriminating aspects of the scandal. In fact, the masque's effacement of contemporary Jacobean politics endures as its defining characteristic. Moreover, Jonson's decision to fashion his epithalamion for the Somerset wedding around Irish visitors to court, suggests the extent to which Ireland served as an alternative arena into which Jacobean society could conveniently displace compromising realities.

Jonson's masque relates how Irish "imbashators" (206, l. 11), attending the Somerset wedding as a sign of devotion to James, lost their festive dresses while crossing the Irish sea. Four uncouth Irish footmen run into court anxious to explain the Irish ambassadors' mishap to "King Yamish," and--after squabbling as to who will tell the story, and numerous other digressions and interruptions--dance their anti-masque to "bagpipe and other rude music" (210, ll. 121-22). The aristocratic ambassadors come forth, supposedly naked under Irish mantles, and dance "to a solemn music of harps" (210-11, ll. 125-26). Unlike the footmen, who were professional actors from James I's "Gentlemen, the King's Servants" (206), Jonson's Irish ambassadors, we know, were played by five English and five Scottish Jacobean courtiers. This alliance of England and Scotland might appear coincidental, but it reflects precisely the bifurcated nature of King James's sovereignty.
addition, it parallels exactly the ethnic make-up of the New English [End Page 297] colonizers just then enforcing the Ulster Plantation in Ireland. Jonson's masque represents colonial Ireland by utilizing persons complicit in the colonizing program, and in the process, again suggests a capacity to contain cultural dislocation within James's nation state by means of its displacement to Ireland.

Ultimately, a "civil gentleman of the nation" (211, l.127), who is accompanied by an Irish Bard, silences the footmen and drives them from the stage, "Hold your tongues! . . . begone!" (211, ll. 134-36). The gentleman then solicits compliance to James's colonial plantation of Ireland, and the bard, symbolizing the King's divine power, effects a transformation in keeping with masquing etiquette. The Irish ambassadors, their "slough let fall" (212, l. 165), come forth arrayed in orthodox masquing apparel, offering an idealized portrait of Ireland's incorporation into the nation state. Such idealized portraits are the stuff that masques are made of. Meanwhile, non-conforming realities were ready to expose the masque's fictional content. Jonson's Irish ambassadors do have an historic equivalent, and the real-life delegation to James's court was not preoccupied with celebrating the Somerset wedding. In fact, while the Irish Masque was entertaining those gathered at Whitehall, a delegation of Old English, Ireland's earlier colonial settlers, was anxiously awaiting James's decision on a petition which, amongst other things, charged the King with allowing their New English rivals to gerrymander the 1613 Dublin Parliament. Needless to say, when James summarily dismissed the Old English petition at his royal adjudication in April 1614, the gap between real-life politics and Jonson's idealized alternative proved conspicuous.

Too often this Irish context is ignored or passed over in examinations of Jonson's Irish Masque. Traditional readings tend to comment on Jonson's device, outline the comic aspects of the anti-masque, and conclude by designating it yet another compliment to King James's royal power. Only David Lindley's essay, "Embarrassing Ben: The Masques For Frances Howard," illustrates the extent to which contemporary Irish politics provide the "occasion" for Jonson's Irish Masque. Lindley interrogates Jonson's complacency in representing Irish culture: he exposes the collusion between the masque and official Jacobean propaganda, and he locates the basis of the masque's fiction at the point where Jonson subordinates the politics of the real Irish delegation to the celebration of a marriage. He concludes: "The reader must register and deal with a modern embarrassment when faced with the masque, and with the specific ideological tendency of a work like The Irish Masque at Court, since it is only by such precise and detailed location that the nature of its [End Page 298] conspiracy with the prevailing direction of Stuart politics will emerge." Lindley's primary concern is with the disparity "between the idealized vision" Jonson's work attempted to create and "the stubborn intractability of the real world," and consequently on how panegyric itself compromised the high ideals of the genre. Because the fiction of the Irish Masque so distorts both domestic and Irish Jacobean politics, Lindley resolves, "it is difficult to take the comment on either seriously." The political significance of Jonson's masque resonates beyond Lindley's discerning critique. Ben Jonson's Irish Masque reveals that the writer had access to and availed
himself of an established, vigorous and malleable narrative on Ireland.\textsuperscript{11} The \textit{Irish Masque}, this paper argues, represents Jonson's contribution to that narrative, and as such, it reflects a discourse adequate to the colonization of the margins of the emerging nation state.\textsuperscript{12} This paper aims to demonstrate that the masque is a notable enactment of, contribution to, and participation in the "verbal warfare" operating between Ireland's two colonial communities in the early seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{13} As such, the masque evinces Jonson's engagement with a discourse of cultural degeneration, and consequently proclaims assimilation between Native Irish and Old English societies, simultaneously asserting the legitimacy of New English rights in James's Irish colony. In addition, the masque's effacement of religious affiliation, a key signifier in the discourse of cultural degeneration, signals Jonson's sensitivity towards religious factionalism in the Jacobean court. Furthermore, the masque's deployment of the Irish Bard as the transforming agent of the nation state confirms Jonson's reconstitution of Native Irish difference as an enabling orthodoxy. Jonson's visual rhetoric of colonization renders this once oppositional figure a pliant participant in the process of colonial subjugation. Finally, I conclude that as artist, entertainer and bureaucrat, Ben Jonson effaced the actual relationship between the colonial center and the colonized margin, and in the process Jonson helped re-make Ireland in an image ratified by the political hegemony.\textsuperscript{14}

The purpose of this paper is to re-examine Jonson's \textit{Irish Masque} as a significant cultural document. Initially, however, we need to re-contextualize the masque against a wider historical landscape. A confluence of Jacobean political agendas intersect in this broader contextualization; namely, the emerging nation state, the eradication of Native Irish opposition, and the conflict between Ireland's two colonial communities. Illustrating these three political agendas not only enables us to better assess the extent of the ideological containment in Jonson's masque; it also permits us to understand more fully his struggle with panegyric. [End Page 299]

King James I's monarchy itself motivated the formation of a narrative adequate to the contradictions inherent in the nation state. The discourse of cultural harmony which ensued concealed a palpable anxiety embodied in the person of a Scottish monarch ruling the English realm. Speaking before the English Parliament in the first year of his reign, James spoke of "that Vnion which is made in my blood":

\begin{quote}
Yea, hath hee not made vs all in one Island, compassed with one Sea, . . . ? These two Countries . . . now in the end and fulnesse of time vnited, the right and title of both in my Person . . . whereby it is now become like a little World within it selfe . . . What God hath conioyned then, let no man separate. I am the Husband, and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife; I am the Head, and it is my Body; I am the Shepherd, and it is my flocke.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

The patriarchal argument informing the characterization of James's relationship with his subjects is immediately apparent.\textsuperscript{16} As King of England, James was automatically King of Ireland too, and James's Irish subjects were denizens of another island, another family \textit{per se}.\textsuperscript{17} Jacobean policy in Ireland sought to incorporate as full subjects all inhabitants, including those once designated as enemies of the crown. Consequently, James
endeavored to express colonial expansion in unequivocally ideological terms: "For even as little brookes lose their names by their running and fall into great Riuers, and the very name and memorie of the great Riuers swallowed vp in the Ocean: so by the conjiuction of diuers little Kingdomes in one, are all these priuate differences and questions swallowed vp." Cultural homogeneity, however, is itself anomalous, for the nation state can strive towards but must never attain the eradication of "these priuate differences." To do so is to destroy the disparity upon which cultural superiority is fashioned. 

Ireland is incorporated in the union upon which the nation state is founded; but as Jonson's masque reveals, Ireland's idealized incorporation was always a fiction demanding the effacement of contemporary realities.

Jonson's *Irish Masque* apparently finds resolution in cultural harmony, in incorporation rather than in exclusion, but the inclusion of the Irish fringe within an expanding Great Britain demanded an equally devastating act of cultural elision. James's ascent to the throne coincided with Native Ireland's defeat at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, and the Irish leader Hugh O'Neill's eventual surrender in 1603. Even though James pursued a policy of pacification after their defeat, O'Neill and the rest of Ireland's native aristocracy went into exile in 1607 in what became known as the Flight of the Earls. By 1613, when Jonson had occasion to present his *Irish Masque*, Native Ireland's political and cultural infrastructure was "entirely subdued."

The survival of an alternative language, religion, and culture cannot be acknowledged in performance. To do so would be to stage the presence of the very contradictions which the masque denies.

Similarly, Jonson's masque fictionalizes Ireland as a bifurcated colonial arena where inferior Native Irish traits are opposed by superior English cultural practices. In addition to the Native Irish, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Ireland was populated by two competing colonial societies: the Old English and the New English. The New English, residing in Ireland subsequent to Tudor and Jacobean plantations, were Protestant and viewed themselves as the King's true representatives in Ireland. The Old English community, descendants of the Norman invasion of the twelfth century, proclaimed loyalty to the English throne, but were staunchly Catholic and partially assimilated to Native Irish customs. Once unified in opposition to the rebellious Irish, both Old and New English vied for political supremacy after Native Ireland's defeat in 1603. The Flight of the Earls created a vacuum in which James's Dublin administration sought to establish a Protestant colony, and in the process, manufacture a mandate for securing New English dominance of the whole island. The increasingly New English administration, monitored closely by Sir Arthur Chichester and Sir John Davies, set out to incorporate a defeated Ireland into the nation state by executing the most encompassing colonial plantation which Ireland had experienced to that point: the Plantation of Ulster. The plantation's success depended on New English Protestant colonizers' ability to disenfranchise their Old English Catholic "ancestral counterparts." Attacks on the Old English, therefore, were common practice. Elizabethan treatises evince the existence of a discourse of cultural degeneration founded on de-legitimizing the Old English for allowing the contamination of English cultural mores with Irish, and hence inferior, cultural traits. As this discourse rendered the Old English failed colonizers, the New English were simultaneously promoted as the legitimate representatives of British rule in Ireland.
The *Irish Masque* offers an idealized containment of Old English opposition. Jonson's text imagines a New English nobility, one which conforms to standard English cultural traits and speaks standard English as evidence of its incorporation within a unified Great Britain. Jonson's footmen, like the non-conforming and partially assimilated Old English, must speak with enough deviations from standard English to manifest their subordinate status. Ultimately, like the footmen, and like the Native Irish before them, the Old English too must be silenced. The victims on [End Page 301] the march towards cultural unity include those who contradict, and so implicitly question, the dominance of the incorporating power.

Jonson's four Irish footmen open the anti-masque by rushing into court anxiously looking for King "Yamish," and bickering as to who will announce the Irish ambassadors' arrival:

DONNELL: Yesh. But I tank Got I can tell my tale myself now I be here, I warrant tee: pre dee hear me, King Yamish.

DENNIS: Pre dee hear me, King Yamish. I can tell tee better ten he.

PATRICK: Pre dee hear neder noder on 'em; here'sh Dermock vill shpeak better ten eder oder on 'em.

DERMOCK: No, fait, shweet heart, tou liesht. Phatrick here ish te vesht man of hish tongue of all de four; pre tee now hear him. (207, ll. 30-36)

Critics have repeatedly read these exaggerated comic characters as representatives of Native Irish society. Rather, "Donnell," "Patrick," "Dermock" and "Dennis"--who after all "vash born in te English pale" (208, l. 50)--expose Jonson's engagement with the discourse of cultural degeneration, and this discourse elides Native Irish and Old English characteristics, rendering them indistinguishable. Degeneration is indicated by the contamination of the footmen's spoken English with derivatives of Gaelic words, for example, "bonny-clabber" (209, l. 79), "usquebagh" (209, l. 80), and "garrans" (208, l. 67), by their display of commingled Native Irish and Old English dances, "foot te fading and te fadow and te Phip-a-Dunboyne" (209, ll. 75-76) and, most damning in terms of degeneration, by their Native Irish names. The "wild," "feckless" and "charming" "Irishry" which these characters parade in front of the English court personifies for the colonial center the threat of cultural degeneration outlined in contemporary political treatises. Furthermore, the footmen's manifestation of Old English traits renders their masters, the Irish ambassadors, equally ambiguous. The masque taints footmen and masters alike with the contaminating signifiers of cultural degeneration, and in the process Jonson undermines the actual Old English delegation then petitioning James at court. In foisting Native Irish cultural traits on the four footmen, Jonson establishes a foil by which the masque's conformist courtiers and the conformist New English are indirectly yet irrefutably linked.

Every aspect of the footmen's characterization resonates with Old English political signification. Their opening facade of indecision, contradiction, and unseemly behavior in
determining a spokesman is, as David Lindley suggests, "surely a version of the disorderly Parliamentary [End Page 302] proceeding." Lindley is referring here to the ignominious opening of parliament in Dublin on 18 May 1613. The assembly was devised by Chichester and Davies to enact colonial legislation as a means of formalizing political advances made since the beginning of James's reign. Passing their legislative agenda in a parliament which was predominantly Old English and Catholic would, however, prove difficult. London initially circumvented this impediment by erecting new boroughs that duly elected 84 Protestant members, giving the New English a voting majority of 32 when parliament opened. Not to be outmaneuvered, the Old English resorted to obstructionist tactics; they ignored parliamentary procedures, they disrupted speeches, and they disregarded the election of Sir John Davies to the position of Speaker and installed their own choice, Sir John Everard. Ultimately, convinced that the New English were staging a coup d'état, the Old English walked out of parliament as William Talbot shouted: "Those within the House are no house, and Sir John Everard is our Speaker, and therefore we will not join with you, but we will complain to my Lo. Deputy and the King, and the King shall hear of this." The Old English brought their petition to London, and there ensued a royal commission of investigation, followed by the royal adjudication in April 1614.

Jonson renders the Old English parliament debacle comic in his anti-masque. He utilizes the disparaging characteristics offered by the colonial narrative to re-configure Old English parliamentary tactics as the indecorous behavior exhibited by his four footmen. Imitating the Old English parliamentarians, Dennis threatens to walk out of court exasperated by his own and his colleagues' inability to decide on a spokesman. Donnell and Dermock prove ignorant of political protocol, misinterpreting the Lord Chamberlaine's staff as the "phoit stick" used to "beat te imbashators". Similarly, Chichester and Davies's communication with London's Privy Council records Old English tactics in what by now are all too familiar terms: "disorderly"; showing "contempt of the laws and government"; exhibiting "obdurate hearts"; and being "full of pride and arrogancy". Most telling is James's own verdict: "My sentence is that in the matter of Parliament you have carried yourselves tumultuously, and that your proceedings have been rude, disorderly, inexcusable, and worthy of severe punishment". It appears "te phoit stick" alludes not only to the Lord Chamberlaine's control over admitting persons to court--during the anti-masque the Irish ambassadors "shit (sic) like poor men i' the porsh yonder"--but also implies the ever-present threat enforcing colonial politics: two of the Old English delegation were in prison while the court was entertained by Jonson's comic representation.

The correspondence of the four footmen to the Old English members of parliament is even more evident in what they eventually relate to the King. The footmen's professions of loyalty to King James reflect precisely the foundation of Old English political identity:

DONNELL: Tey be honesht men.

PATRICK: And goot men, tine own shubshects.
DERMOCK: Tou hasht very good shubshects in Ireland. . . .
DONNELL: Be not angry vit te honesht men for te few rebelsh and knavesh.
PATRICK: Nor believe no tales, King Yamish.
DERMOCK: For by Got, tey love tee in Ireland. (209-10, ll. 89-91, 105-8)

Old English political doctrine argued that Catholicism and loyalty to the English throne were perfectly harmonious. It followed that for them to enjoy property, political rights, and religious freedoms was totally compatible. Conversely, this political stance provided their New English counterparts the very ingredient with which to undermine this avowal; the seeming incompatibility of dual loyalties to king and pope.35 The discourse of cultural degeneration responded to this conflict by focusing on Old English Catholicism as a mark of their disloyalty to the King.36 Sharing religious affiliation with the Native Irish, the Old English were rendered barbaric, religion reinforcing the correlating signifiers of inferiority and disloyalty.37 Catholicism proved the filter through which Old English political and economic power could be reconstituted as signs of their opposition to English interests in Ireland. Sir Robert Jacob, a Protestant member of the Dublin Parliament, evinces religion as the ground upon which New English political advantage should be sought. In a letter dated 26 May 1613, Jacob suggests that it is in the King's power to wrest control of Ireland by demanding that the Old English choose "quis regnabit?--whether King James or the Pope" (CSPI, 350). James confronted three leading members of the Old English delegation with precisely this choice when they presented themselves at court. Sir Patrick Barnewell, forced to decide between political and religious affiliation, immediately responded in favor of the King. Sir William Talbot and Thomas Luttrell were unwilling to follow suit. The latter submitted in early January 1614, after three months in the Fleet prison. Talbot insisted that only the Pope could decide on an article of faith, and was sentenced to a year in prison.38 The choice offered to these Old English members of Parliament was exactly the [End Page 304] choice facing their community in Ireland: loyalty to the king was predicated on choosing temporal allegiance to their king over spiritual allegiance to Roman Catholicism.

The Irish Masque's effacement of Catholicism as a mark of Old English cultural degeneration manifests the ideological containment required at James's court. In England and Scotland, as in Ireland at this time, Catholicism and Catholic recusancy were potent political issues.39 John Chamberlain's letter to Sir Dudley Carleton on 5 January 1614 suggests that Jonson's masque was performed for a court audience sensitive to religious factionalism:

The loftie maskers were so well liked at court the last week that they were appointed to performe yt [The Irish Masque] again on Monday yet theyre devise (wch was a enimicall imitation of t[he] Irish) was not so pleasing to many, wch thincke [this] no time (as the case stands) to exasperat that nat[ion] by making it ridiculous.40
Chamberlain’s letter suggests that Jonson's court audience were well aware of the "exasperation" of the Old English "nation," and of their delegation attending court to plead discriminatory practices by the King's Protestant administration in Dublin. They were equally aware of the "case" at hand; namely, Sir William Talbot's trial which, within a week of the masque's performance, would sentence the Old English lawyer to a year in the Tower of London for refusing to accept the oath of supremacy at the King's request. Chamberlain's letter, however, also details an audience sympathetic to the Old English dilemma. "Was not so pleasing to many" evinces the presence at Whitehall of English Catholic sympathizers who could "read between the lines" of the idealized transformation enacted before them: to be Catholic is to be disorderly, disloyal and necessarily disempowered; to be Protestant is to be civilized, loyal and politically enfranchised.\(^{41}\)

This religious dilemma is strategically re-made, and provided with an idealized resolution, in Jonson's masque. With their promise of obedience the Irish ambassadors reach their anticipated transformation. At first glance, it appears that the choice of true subject-hood, the choice of converting from a barbarous to a civilized culture, from Catholicism to Protestantism, from Old English to New English is offered only to an Old English aristocracy. Jonson's text, however, cannot contain the unified culture these conversions propose. The incorporation of the Old English into the nation state invites a conformity at odds with New English political ambitions in Ireland. Nowhere is this gap between [End Page 305] fiction and reality better exposed than in the King's own reproach to the actual delegation at his adjudication:

> You that are of a contrary religion must not look to be the only law-makers. You that are but half subjects should have but half privileges;--you that have an eye to me one way and to the Pope another way. The Pope is your father in spiritualibus and I in temporalibus only, and so have your bodies turn one way, and your souls drawn another way. You that send your children to the seminaries of treason, strive henceforth to become full subjects, that you may have cor unum et via una, and then I shall respect you all alike. (C, 290-91)

Reading Jonson's idealized resolution endorsing James's divine harmonizing power against James's own indictment of the non-conforming Old English calls into question the very premise of the masque's transformation. David Lindley also takes issue with this denouement: "Far from insisting upon the power of masques to transform the masquers, . . . everything in this masque points towards the fiction of the masque, the fact that it is merely a dressing up for a party."\(^{42}\) The Irish ambassadors are, as Lindley adds, not Irish at all, and the audience learns nothing from their transformation, other than that the ambassadors are what they were all along, the English and Scottish courtiers of the king. As this paper proposes, Jonson's representation of colonized Ireland intentionally heralds but never delivers a "transformation" of the Old English into Ireland's nobility. Writing from the colonial center, Jonson was cognizant that the New English already filled that role, and in colonial terms they represented the seeds from which "the fruits of blessing" would blossom (211, l. 149).

There is, however, an anomaly in Jonson's representation. If the masquing courtiers undergo no transformation, and if an incorporation of the Old English into the nation state
collided with New English colonial designs, how then do we account for the Irish ambassadors, and more particularly, how do we account for Jonson's decision to dress them in Irish mantles? Jonson's use of this most politically charged signifier of Native Irish opposition makes the connections between the ambassadors and footmen incontrovertible, and renders the differences between the Old English and the Native Irish immaterial. Edmund Spenser, in *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, delineates the multiple significance of the Irish mantle; he claims "it is a fit house for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloak for a thief." Fynes Moryson further damages Old English professions by suggesting their irredeemable degeneration in wearing the mantle: "Also, they wear straight breeches, called trowses, very close to the body, and loose coats*43* like waistcoats, and mantles instead of cloaks, which are as a cabin for an outlaw in the woods, a bed for a rebel, and a cloak for a thief; and being worn over the head and the ears, and hanging down to the heels, a notorious villain lapped in them may pass any town or country without being known."*44* The mantle instantly compromises the ambassadors' claims of civility. In the process, Jonson invalidates Old English claims of devotion to the nation state, and the masque endorses New English claims to leadership in Ireland. Furthermore, such a reading demands a re-assessment of Jonson's articulation of the colonial agenda manifest in the civil gentleman's speech to the Irish ambassadors, and in his use of the Irish Bard as the agent of transformation.

Jonson never lost sight of the central function of the masque as ritual. The genre dictated that the author praise and glorify the king by creating "valid symbols for the court," and in the process ratify the long-held conception of the interdependence of the monarchy and the well-being of the nation state.*45* The civil gentleman accordingly urges the bard to proclaim acceptance of the colonial agenda:

And if her ear, then deafened with the drum,
Would stoop but to the music of his peace,
She need not with the spheres change harmony.
This is the man thou promised should redeem,
If she would love his counsels as his laws,
Her head from servitude, her feet from fall,
Her fame from barbarism, her state from want,
And in her all the fruits of blessing plant. (211, ll. 142-49)

The king's eye, "The gladding face" (211, l. 138), functions as the divine power of conversion that will ensure harmony in the nation state. Not surprisingly, this divine power eradicates Old English obstructionist tactics and symbolically enacts the very measures that the disorderly Dublin parliament failed to: Ireland must reject native Brehon law and so "love his counsels as his laws"; denizens of Ireland become James's subjects rather than vassals to their Native Irish chiefs and so will raise "Her head from servitude"; Ireland must reject native land-holding practices in favor of more profitable English husbandry and so raise "her feet from fall"; Ireland must jettison native customs to raise "her fame from barbarism." The cumulative effect of these adaptations will raise Ireland's "state from want." This process of acculturation will be delivered through dispossession and plantation: "And in her all the fruits of blessing plant." The New
English Plantation of Ulster provided, it seems, the contemporary equivalent for Jonson's idealized colony. [End Page 307]

Proclaiming the colonial program, Jonson appropriates the bard as his symbolic figure in the Irish Masque, and it is Jonson's bard who delivers prophetic praise of the monarch. Philip Edwards has questioned Jonson's use of the bard as a servant to an English polity that recently annihilated Native Irish society.46 What Edwards and other critics failed to consider is the bard's traditional role with respect to prophecy in that society, and the connections between Native Irish prophecy and the Stuart monarchy. The Irish Masque signals Jonson's awareness of these cross-cultural connections:

Advance, immortal bard, come up and view
The gladdening face of that great king in whom
So many prophecies of thine are knit.
This is that James of which long since thou sung'st
Should end our country's most unnatural broils; . . .
Sing then some charm, made from his present looks,
That may assure thy former prophecies. (211, ll. 137-41, 150-51; emphasis added)

David Lindley suggests that "prophecies" here refers to Sir John Davies's positing of James as the messianic return of King Arthur and the fulfillment of Merlin's prophecy reestablishing Great Britain.47 Certainly this proposition had currency in Jacobean England and, in fact, was circulated widely in 1603 as proof of the predestined Stuart reign.48 There exists an altogether different prophecy, however, associated with James and the Stuart monarchy, one which was equally current in the Jacobean court, and one to which James himself referred when he issued his verdict to the Old English delegation in April 1614. The King informed the delegation:

There is a double cause why I should be careful of the welfare of my people there; first, as King of England, by reason of the long possession the Crown of England has had of that land; and also as King of Scotland; for the ancient Kings of Scotland are descended from the Kings of Ireland; therefore you shall not doubt to be relieved when you complain without clamour. (C, 291)

James alludes here to his own descent, as King of Scotland, from the exiled Irish chief, Fergus Mor mac Erc, and his kingdom of Dalriada. It was in the Gaelic kingdom of Dalriada that later kings of Scotland rooted their genealogy.49 Irish bardic poetry not only recorded this genealogy and prophesied a future coming of a Gaelic king, it also heralded the accession of James I as the prophecy's fulfillment.50 Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird's "Trí coróna i gcairt Shéamais / The three crowns of James's charter" details the new King's Gaelic genealogy back through nine Stuart Kings of Scotland.51 Furthermore, it unequivocally promotes James I as the natural, and prophesied, "spouse" of Ireland:

The Saxon's land, it is
Fada a-tá i dtairngire dhuit
crioch Sagsan -- is iul orrdhruc;
duit is dú Éire amhlaídh;
is tú a céile ar
chomhardhaibh. 52
splendidly known,
has been long prophesied for
you;
Likewise is Ireland due to you;
You are her spouse by all
signs. 53

These poetic offerings advocating loyalty to a Protestant king again reflect the understanding that Catholic society in Ireland could best be served by accepting James as its lawful king. However, as already pointed out, the New English recast such expressions as evidence of Native Irish and Old English disloyalty to the throne. Jonson's collusion in promoting New English political ambition dictates that his masque strategically manipulates the bardic order, and with it contemporary Gaelic culture. The masque not only echoes but also re-deploys Mac an Bhaird's positing of James as the legitimate king of Ireland thereby enacting an idealized submission to the colonial regime from all Irish opposition. In doing so, the *Irish Masque* exposes an awareness on the part of the Jacobean court of the cultural and linguistic tropes of Irish bardic poetry not usually considered in its possession. 54

Jonson's presentation of James's new-found role as Gaelic king provides the basis for the "charm" which, in the masque, magically transforms Old English opposition into New English obedience. This conversion is followed by a series of transformations, each demonstrating James's divine power: disorderly behavior conforms with courtly convention, "bagpipe and other rude music" is harmonized by royal orchestration, mantles are discarded and reveal courtly garb, near inarticulate mispronunciation is recast as the impeccable English of the Irish gentleman, standard prose becomes fluid poetry, and all these transformations are authorized by the divine power of the king's "eye":

Bow both your heads at once and hearts;
Obedience doth not well in parts.
It is but standing in his eye
You'll feel yourselves changed by and by;
Few live that know how quick a spring
Works in the presence of a king.
'Tis done by this: your slough let fall,
And come forth newborn creatures all. (212, ll. 159-166) 55

Under James's miraculous jurisdiction the spectacle of harmony can be achieved. Harmonizing "two harps" (211, l. 157), Jonson's bard orchestrates the syncretic culture of James's fictional Great Britain. Sir John Davies, the architect of the Ulster Plantation, employs the same harmonizing instrument in his testimony to James's "civil government": "The strings of this Irish harp, which the civil magistrate doth finger, and all in tune and make a good harmony in this commonweal." 56

In keeping with the narrative of the nation state, Jonson sanctions the monarchical power underlying the masque's transformations in naturalized terms: spring will blossom in
Ireland, the sun will melt frozen streams bringing them to life, trees will bear fruit, and profitable meadows will replace wasted bogland. The bard's second song portrays James as the gardener who will set the seeds of civility in his Irish colony:

So breaks the sun earth's rugged chains  
Wherein rude winter bound her veins;  
So grows both stream and source of price  
That lately fettered were with ice;  
So naked trees get crispèd heads,  
And colored coats the roughest meads,  
And all get vigor, youth and sprite,  
That are but looked on by his light. (212, l. 170-77)

The plantation of Ireland tames Irish unruliness and the seeds of civility planted therein will be carefully pruned by English husbandry. Davies again provides the masque with a contemporary analogue, using identical language to venerate James's adoption of Ireland into the nation state:

the Irish were in some places transplanted from the woods and mountains into the plains and open countries, that being removed (like wild fruit trees) they might grow the milder, and bear the better and sweeter fruit. And this truly is the masterpiece and most excellent part of the work of reformation and is worthy indeed of His Majesty's royal pains. For when this plantation hath taken root, and been fixed and settled but a few years, with the favor and blessing of God . . . it will secure the peace of Ireland, assure it to the Crown of England forever, and finally make it a civil and a rich, a mighty and a flourishing kingdom.57

Jonson and Davies both confirm the dual roles indicated in the king's royal motto, rex Pacificus: James is unquestionably the embodiment of the nation state and the king of peace.58

There is, I suggest, an ulterior motive for Jonson's appropriation of the bard; one steeped more in the poet's conception of his own profession as inherently tied to that of the king. Jonson's masque venerating royal prerogative simultaneously asserts the poet's own authority. As Jean Le Drew Metcalfe argues, "Jonson sets his panegyrics [End Page 310] within a system of power in which praiser and praised, poet and king, are equally authoritative and offer not only equally valuable exchanges, but equal exchanges."59 The correspondences between Jonson and his bard, between James and his nation state, have a further contemporary counterpart, namely that between the bard and his Native Irish lord. The Irish bard, as a result, presents a two-fold threat to Jonson: first, the bard's relationship with his Irish lord is one based on patronage, and thus is uncannily similar to Jonson's own dependence on James; and secondly, the Irish bard perpetuates an oppositional and fractious social hierarchy in his dual role as poet and historiographer for Native Irish society.60 Spenser and Moryson wrote damning portraits of Irish bards' use of poetry to incite internal factionalism amongst competing Irish chiefs, and for indulging
Thomas Smyth, an English agent in Ireland, demonstrates the colonizer's awareness of the political threat constituted by the bards, suggesting that "these people be very hurtful to the commonweal, for they chiefly maintain the rebels." Jonson's deployment of the bard extinguishes the dual threats presented by the Irish equivalent. Jonson's bard posits a poetic tradition with James as its sole patron, and himself as chief poet, immediately eradicating internal factionalism and silencing competing historiographies which breed rebellion and dissent in the nation state. In addition, Jonson's bard proposes that royal patronage will imbue his profession with an ideological investment in maintaining the hegemonic order, in the manner that the bard in Jonson's *Irish Masque* can be read as the articulator of the New English colonial agenda in Ireland, and Jonson himself can be read as being complicit in legitimating such an agenda. Jonson's bard becomes therefore just another cog in the colonial regime.

As we might expect, the underlying threat in the colonial agenda is military force, and Jonson presents the choice between the two as absolute: Ireland can again be "deafened with the drum" of an English army on the march, or "stoop but to the music of his peace." The goal of this colonial agenda is to bolster the New English leadership by reconstituting the Old English as willing participants in their own demise:

> And firm the hopes of these obedient spirits,
> Whose love, no less than duty, hath called forth
> Their willing powers; who if they had much more,
> Would do their all, and think they could not move
> Enough to honor that which he doth love. (211, ll. 152-56)

In Gramscian terms, Jonson's masque solicits from the Old English a consensual as well as a coercive, "whose love, no less than duty," capitulation to the New English intellectual and moral leadership in Ireland. The masque's fiction and the political reality, however, never came into alignment. The colonial narrative re-configured the Old English as Native Irish, and at the core of this redesign lay their shared religious loyalties. History reveals that the New English failed to impose their hegemonic order, as Terry Eagleton points out: "Part of that failure lay in their neglect of one of the most powerful techniques of hegemony: the cooption of an upper stratum of the natives. A comprador class of that kind never fully emerged in Ireland, largely because the rulers had chosen to define their supremacy in religious terms. Since all the native classes were Catholic, they were all equally to be viewed as enemies." James's inability to provide a semantic compromise for Old English dual allegiances represents not only a missed opportunity to imagine a "comprador class," but laid the foundation for the repression of the Irish Rebellion in 1641 and the later experience of Oliver Cromwell's military force: occasions when domination rather than persuasion were called upon in support of the hegemonic order.
surrounding Ireland's role in Renaissance England, and is manifest in the general unwillingness to listen to the colonial margin in their own terms, and most importantly in their own language. For that reason Cían Ó hEachaidhéin's poem from the early seventeenth century proves an interesting counterpoint to Jonson's symbolic creation:

Agso fuighleach áir t'ollamh -
dióir éisdeacht re ar n-agallamh . . .

Do fuathaídh cách ceird ar sean
ar ndol síos do ghlóir Ghaoideal;
táinic críoch ar dtéarma isteach,
mo dhíoth sa beurla ar biseach.

Lán gach aon d'fhúath na bhfileadh;
béith mur táid do tairngireadh
a dhearc sháimh, a shúil shochair,
's dúil i ngláimh 's i ngeocachaibh.

Iar sgur d'fhéile agus d'oineach
tugsad cách go crúadhchroidheach,
sgél neamhfholaigh dhúnn nach
dleacht,
cúl re ar n-ealadhoin d'éisdeacht.

Imtheacht Gaoidheal fhuinn Fhódla
tug an éigse d'fhurfhógra;
faríor a neimhneart aniodh,
gníomh san seinreacht nár
saoileadh.65

Here is thy poet--
all that is left after the slaughter, . . .

All men have hated the art of our
fathers
since the glory of the Gaels has set,
the end of our term has come,
alas! while English increases.

O thou of mild glance and kindly eye,
Every [End Page 312]

one is full of hatred of the poets; it
was
foretold that they should be as they
are, and
that men should care only for
howling
and strolling jesters.

Since generosity and honour have
departed,
all men--a tale of misery unmerited
by us--
have with hard hearts turned their
backs
upon listening to true art.

The passing of the Gaels of the land
of Fósla
has made poetry an outlaw:
alas for her helplessness to-day,
a deed never expected under the old
law.66

Ó hEachaidhéin's poem makes evident that sections of Native Irish society understood fully the political reality informing the transformation, translation and silencing so idealized in Jonson's masque. Ó hEachaidhéin laments the protection once assured under his exiled patron's "mild glance and kindly eye." His elegy predetermines the destiny awaiting Gaelic language and culture, "while English increases." The new law, imposed through the Plantation of Ulster, negates the social position once attributed to the bard: His art is no longer appreciated; his function as historiographer no longer tolerated. Neither do the New English colonizers support "true art," preferring to sponsor "howling and strolling jesters" imported from England, and imitating, more than likely, Jonson's courtly entertainments. Ó hEachaidhéin's poem invites Renaissance cultural
critics, whose scholarship includes English representations of Ireland, to engage with Irish bardic poetry, if only in translation, as evidence that the empire was writing, if not necessarily writing back. Not to do so, I conclude, perpetuates concealment, constraint and contradiction evinced in the political, historical and literary contexts of Ben Jonson's The Irish Masque at Court.

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Notes


Since I originally wrote this article, scholarship has continued to signal a growing interest in this area. See, for example, Andrew Hadfield, Edmund Spenser's Irish Experiences: wilde fruit and savage soyl (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Willy Maley, Salvaging Spenser: colonialism, culture and identity (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); and Christopher Highley, Shakespeare, Spenser, and the Crisis in Ireland (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997).

4. Elizabethan commentaries suggest that the rebellious Irish were presumed to enter battle in this exact fashion. On Native Irish cultural traits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Nicholas Canny, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: A Pattern Established, 1565-1576* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1976); and David B. Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1966).

5. In one of two remaining accounts of the *Irish Masque*, Chamberlain wrote to Mistress Alice Carleton on 30 December 1613: "yesternight there was a motley maske of fiue english and fiue Scotts (wch are called the high dancers,) among whom Sergeant Boide, one Abraham crummie and Ackmoutie (that was at Padoua and Venice) are esteemed the most principall and loftie, but how yt succeeded I heare not" (Hereford and Simpson, 10:541). While Chamberlain intimates ten courtiers total, the masque calls for "a doshen of our besht mayshters" (208, l. 63). The variance may be deliberate, as the ability of the Old English to count parliamentary seats is central to the political history informing Jonson's masque. See below.


for their audience: "though their voyce be taught to sound to present occasions, their sense, or doth or should always lay hold on more remov'd mysteries" (Hereford and Simpson, 7:209). See Marcus, 7 and Lindley, Introduction, 9.


12. Paul Brown argues persuasively for the role that Ireland played in the formation of "a coherent discourse adequate to the complex requirements of British colonialism in its initial phase." He describes this discourse as taking "the form of a powerful and pleasurable narrative which seeks at once to harmonize disjunction, to transcend irreconcilable contradictions and to mystify the political conditions which demand colonialist discourse," but which ultimately foregrounds "precisely those problems which it works to efface or overcome." See Brown, 48.

13. Nicholas Canny suggests the roots of this conflict stretch back to 1579 when "an all-out verbal warfare" began between the two communities as they jockeyed for position with respect to claims of loyalty to Elizabeth. It was from this verbal warfare, Canny adds, "that a sense of self-awareness was developed by the New English settlers and officials in Ireland, a sense that was to make them increasingly conscious of their distinctiveness from both the apparently civil Old English and the clearly uncivil Gaelic Irish." See Canny, "Identity Formation in Ireland: The Emergence of the Anglo-Irish," in Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500-1800, ed. Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), 159-212, 164.

14. If as Martin Butler claims, Renaissance masques were positioned "at the point of intersection between politics and the arts," then Jonson, as the leading masque-writer for James's court, and because of the ideological relationship between the masque as a genre and the monarch as its chief audience, was complicit in upholding and bolstering the political status quo. See Martin Butler, "Reform or reverence? The politics of the Caroline Masque," in Theatre and Government Under the Early Stuarts, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 118-56, 118. J. R. Mulryne's "Introduction: theatre and government under the early Stuarts," in the same collection, is particularly helpful in delineating the "series of strategic adjustments, suppressions and re-makings" that render such texts political in nature (1-28, 11).


16. See Jonathan Goldberg, "Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images," in Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourse of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe,

17. The King of England became King of Ireland in 1541 under King Henry VIII. As Nicholas Canny explains, "What was decided in 1541 was therefore that those Gaelic elements of the Irish population who previously had been designated 'Irish enemies' were being provided with the opportunity to become subjects of the crown" (161).


22. Nicholas Canny explains the conflict between the two communities as follows: "Nevertheless there was a palpable sense of failure among the [New English] settlers; and their more perceptive spokesmen were aware that the recommended conquest had fallen short of full implementation because whole tracts of the country, including most of the provinces of Leinster and Connacht, remained under the control of Old English proprietors or Gaelic landowners who had remained loyal to the crown during the decades of revolt" (177).


24. Edmund Spenser claims the Old English had "become mere Irish with marrying with them, fostering with them and combining with them against the queen." See Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, ed. W. L. Renwick (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 151. Sir William Herbert also contributes to this discourse of cultural degeneration: "Had these laws been properly observed and established, then . . . the degeneration of all the colonies planted there would have been averted. For my part I find it annoying when I observe how many families of noble and illustrious lineage in that kingdom have degenerated to the point where they have rejected not only their ancestral institutions, their innate concept of who they are and their nature but also their manner of speech and their way of life." See Herbert, *Croftus, Sive, de Hibernia Liber*, ed. Arthur Keaveney and John A. Madden (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992), 81-83. Also see James P. Myers, *Elizabethan Ireland: A Selection of Writings by Elizabethan Writers on Ireland* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1983).

25. Rosalind Miles describes the footmen as "These characters, naive, feckless and
charming in the time-out-of-mind caricature of stage-Irishmen" (164); Lisa Jardine suggests that they are "a group of 'wild' Irish footmen" (60). Similar readings include: Edwards, 96; Limon, Masque, 180; Lindley,"Embarrassing Ben," 350.

26. "bonny-clabber" bainne clabhair or a curdled milk drink, "usquebagh" uisce beatha or whiskey, "garrans" géarrán or horses. See Hereford and Simpson, 10:541-44; and Quinn and Canny.

27. The provenance of all these dances are unclear. The point however, is the contrast between the "fading" and the "fadow" as Native Irish dances, and the "Phip-a-Dunboyne" for which there is no commentary except, "Evidently, 'Philip O' Dunboyne'--a dance tune otherwise unknown." The latter I suggest has obvious Anglo overtones, if only in the name, and thus contrasts with the native equivalents. See Hereford and Simpson, 10:543-44; and Breandan Breathnach, Folk Music and Dances of Ireland (Dublin: The Mercier Press, 1977).

28. See Herbert above for the contempt in which the Old English were held for forsaking their names. Published just months before the Irish Masque was performed, Sir John Davies's treatise on Ireland also manifests his contempt for the Old English in similar terms: "For as they did not only forget the English language and scorn the use thereof, but grew to be ashamed of their very English names (although they were noble and of very great antiquity) and took Irish surnames and nicknames: . . . And this they did in contempt and hatred of the English name and nation, where of these degenerate families became more mortal enemies than the mere Irish." See Davies, A Discovery of the True Causes Why Ireland Was Never Entirely Subdued [And] Brought Under Obedience of the Crown of England Until the Beginning of His Majesty's Happy Reign (1612), ed. James P. Myers, Jr. (Washington: The Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1988), 172.


30. The legislative agenda is indicated in "An Abstract of Acts" brought back from England in 1612. A sampling of proposed acts includes one for recognizing "His Majesty's just and lawful title to the crown of Ireland," an "Act for the attainder of Hugh, Late Earl of Tyrone" and the possessing of his lands in the King's name, an "Act for the utter abolishing of the Brehon law and custom of gravelkind used among the Irishry, and to declare all persons of the mere Irish septs and nations to be natural subjects and denizens of this kingdom," and an "Act against Jesuits, seminary priests, and other disobedient persons." See Calendar of State Papers, Relating to Ireland, of The Reign of James I. 1611-1614, ed. C. W. Russell and John P. Pendergast, 5 vols. (London: Longman and Co., 1877), 4:249-50. Further references to volume 4 of the state papers will be cited parenthetically in the text by page, and abbreviated as CSPI.

32. Everard was the last "avowed catholic to hold high office," and had been forced to resign from the King's bench in 1607 because he refused to take the Oath of Supremacy. See Clarke and Edwards, 214.


34. Critics usually suggest that "te phoit stick" refers to Jonson gaining his comic revenge on Thomas Suffolk, the Lord Chamberlaine who barred Jonson from court in 1604. See Lindley, "Embarrassing Ben," 356; and Hereford and Simpson, 10:542.

35. Aidan Clarke explicates this dilemma as follows: "The true question was not whether the loyal professions of catholics were genuine, but whether they were free to make them. . . . In short, even those who experienced no difficulty in reconciling their spiritual allegiance to the pope with their temporal obedience to the king could not be confident that their position was doctrinally valid" (60-61).

36. Fynes Moryson's *An Itinerary* manifests this socio-cultural-religious juxtaposition when he berates the Old English as follows: "They have been . . . infected with the barbarous customs of the mere Irish and with the Roman religion, so as they grow not only as adverse to the reformation of civil policy and religion as the mere Irish, but even combined with them and showed such malice to the English nation, as if they were ashamed to have any community with it, or country, blood, religion, language, apparel, or any such general bond of amity" (Myers, 205); and Barnabe Rich's *A New Description of Ireland* is equally explicit in attacking the Old English "papists": "And for these, whatsoever they speak with their lips, their hearts are at Rome. . . . With what face may they then avouch themselves to love the King, that doth with such fervency embrace His Majesty's deadly enemies!" (Myers, 139).

37. It would, however, be erroneous to contend that Catholicism itself is a homogeneous entity in Ireland at this time. Rather, it served New English political interests to tar all Catholics with the one brush. As Aidan Clarke has argued, the Old English espoused Tridentine Catholicism not only to differentiate themselves from Native Irish pre-reformation Catholicism, but also so as to fashion for themselves claims of modernity and "civility"--thus counterbalancing New English suggestions of their inferiority--by aligning themselves to the reformation church in France and Spain (70-71).

38. Talbot's decision is recorded in the *Calendar of State Papers*: "he returned the paper, that of the oath, as he received it refusing to subscribe it, . . . in which he makes these doctrines to be a matter of faith, and will not take upon him to judge of them, but submits himself to the judgment of the Church of Rome. He was thereupon remanded to the Tower, and here he is like to remain" (CSPI, 465).

40. It was hoped that the Carr/Howard marriage would smooth over the religious divisions in the English court. A number of critics, Lindley included, suggest that the second marriage was a setback for the "more bellicose, pro-Protestant faction." See Lindley, "Embarrassing Ben," 347. These political divisions were evident at the performance of Ben Jonson's *A Challenge at Tilt* (*Complete Masques*, 198-205), also commissioned to celebrate the Somerset wedding and performed at Whitehall just two nights before the *Irish Masque*. The Agent of Savoy reported that "Many lords have been invited to a certain tilt, but many of them have refused because they are relatives of the Earl of Essex, and others have excused themselves, not being part of this [Somerset] faction." See John Orrell, "The London Court Stage in the Savoy Correspondence, 1613-1675," *Theatre Research International* 4 (1979), 80. The block quotation is from Jesse Franklin Bradley and Joseph Quincey Adams, *The Jonson Allusion-Book: Collection of Allusions to Ben Jonson from 1597 to 1700* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1922), 85-86.

41. The quotation is from Annabel Patterson; she claims that "in the early modern period, reading between the lines . . . was already clearly understood to be a political strategy with liberating consequences" (7).

42. Lindley, "Embarrassing Ben," 357.

43. Spenser enumerates the many uses of the mantle, and concludes with an application Jonson utilizes to further undermine the masque's traveling ambassadors: "Besides all this, he or any man else that is disposed to mischief or villainy may, under his mantle, go privily, armed without suspicion of any, carry his headpiece, his skeine or pistol, if he please to be always in a readiness." See Spenser, 50-52.

44. Myers, 206-7. Sir John Davies also identifies the abrogation of the mantle in favor of the more civilized English cloak as an objective when the colonial project is successfully concluded under King James's guidance: "Moreover, these civil assemblies at assizes and sessions have reclaimed the Irish from their wildness; caused them to cut off their gibs and long hair, to convert their mantles into cloaks, and conform themselves to the manner of England in all their behaviours and outward forms" (217).

45. Orgel, Introduction, *Complete Masques*, 5. Also see Orgel's *The Illusion of Power* on how the optics of Whitehall's perspective stage operated in union with the masque's affirmative role of monarchy (10-11).


49. For a history of this genealogy see Caroline Bingham, *The Stewart Kingdom of Scotland 1371-1603* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974). Bingham points out a connection between the bard and preserving the history of this genealogy. "The coronation of Alexendar III in 1249, the first coronation of which detailed descriptions have survived, serves very well to illustrate the successful balance which was held between the cultures. It took place at Scone, the traditional place of coronation. The King was ceremonially seated upon the Stone of Destiny, the ancient throne of the Celtic Kings, . . . and at the conclusion of the ceremony a Gaelic-speaking "seannachie" or bard recited his genealogy, beyond Fergus Mor mac Erc, through a line of legendary forbears to a probably mythical progenitor who also bore the name of Fergus" (8-9).

50. For James's genealogy, see *Analecta Hibernica* 3 (1931): 68-70; and Breandán Ó Buachalla, "Na Stíobhartaigh agus an tAos Léinn: Cing Séamas," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 83 C (1983): 81-134. Bernadette Cunningham points out that, "His (James I) accession to the throne in 1603 was marked by poetic offerings from at least two Ulster poets, Eochaidh Ó hEodhusa and Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird. They were careful to portray him as the legitimate spouse of Ireland, as predicted by prophecy, and with the appropriate genealogy descending from the Clanna Mileadh." See Cunningham, "Native Culture and Political Change in Ireland, 1580-1640," in *Natives and Newcomers: Essays on the Making of Irish Colonial Society, 1534-1641*, ed. Ciaran Brady and Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), 148-70, 156.


52. Mac Kenna, 179.

53. Translation by the author.


Since I originally wrote this article, Breandán Ó Buachalla has published an authoritative book on Irish poetry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Ó Buachalla, *Aisling Ghéar: Na Stiobhartaigh Agus An tAos Léinn, 1603-1788* (Baile Átha Cluith: An Clóchomhar Tt, 1996).

55. David Norbrook points to a similar use of optical effects by Jonson as a symbol of royal power in an epigram from 1613: "Except your Gratious Eye as through a Glass/made prospectiue, behould hym, he must pas[s]e / still that same little poynte hee was; but when / your Royal Eye which still creat[es] new men / shall looke, & on hym soe, then arte's a lyer / yf from a little sparke hee rise not fier." See David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 181.


57. Davies, 222.


60. On the similarity between the bard and the court poet, see Declan Kiberd's discussion of Spenser in *Inventing Ireland* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 11-12.

61. For Fynes Moryson, see Myers, 202. Also see Spenser, 72-73.


65. For the original in Irish see *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe*, ed. Tadhg Ó
Donnchadha (Baile Átha Cliath: Coimisiún Láimhscríbhinní Na hÉireann, 1931), 120-23.


67. I refer here to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (New York: Routledge, 1989). While Ireland is not considered in their work, much of their argument is applicable in the Irish context.

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