

- (University of Chicago Press, 1992), especially chapter 3.
43. The frontispiece is reproduced in Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 121.
 44. David A. Waters, *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times*, 3 vols (Greenwich: Maritime Museum, 2nd edn 1978), vol. 1, p. 63. Waters has an excellent description of how the central or 'mother' compass on a chart was related to the sixteen or thirty-two subsidiary compasses.
 45. In his 1604 treatise on the union, Sir Henry Spelman designates James as 'the greate sonne of our Brytish orbe'. His use of the metaphor is notably darker than might appear, however, since James' removal from Scotland to London in 1603 is compared to the sun's movement toward the equator, a change that brings the southern kingdom 'the springe of a . . . flourishing government' but necessarily leaves the northern one in 'the winter of a desolate state'. See Sir Henry Spelman, 'Of the Union', *The Jacobean Union: Six Tracts of 1604*, ed. Bruce Galloway and Brian Levack (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1985), pp. 178-9.
 46. The table, printed opposite Speed's dedication to James, is entitled 'THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR SOVERAIGNE KING IAMES AS HE NOWE BEARETH With the ARMES of the Severall kings that have aunciently reigned within his nowe Dominions.'
 47. Exceptionally, in 1613, James claimed in support of the Muscovy Company that Spitzbergen was, by reason of discovery, English dominium, arguing thence for an English monopoly on whaling in the seas around that distant island. See Fulton, *Sovereignty of the Sea*, pp. 181-3, and Oudendijk, *Status and Extent of Adjacent Waters*, pp. 36-7.
 48. G. N. Clark and J. W. J. M. Van Eysinga, *The Colonial Conferences Between England and the Netherlands in 1613 and 1615. Part II* (Leiden: Brill, 1951), pp. 59-81. See also Oudendijk, *Status and Extent of Adjacent Waters*, pp. 37-40.
 49. IR [Robert Keale], *The Trades Increase* (London: W. Burre, 1615), p. 48. Captain Best had returned in 1614 from the tenth voyage undertaken by the East India Company. See *The Voyage of Thomas Best to the East Indies, 1612-1614*, ed. William Foster, WHS, 2nd ser., LXXV (London: Hakluyt Society, 1934).
 50. George Birdwood and William Foster (eds.), *The First Letter Book of the East India Company* (London: Quaritch, 1893), pp. 103-10.
 51. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

Literature, ~~to the~~ Mapping, and the Politics of
Space in Early Modern Britain.

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CHAPTER 9

'On the Famous Voyage': Ben Jonson and civic space

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Readers of Ben Jonson have long appreciated the significance of his representations of social space. 'To Penshurst' is commonly placed at the forefront of the Jonson canon, seen to typify his preoccupation with the 'centred self' of the pre-modern subject, and the location of that subject within a physical and psychological 'home'.¹ His satiric verse and city comedies have likewise attracted attention, for their disturbing appreciation of the ways in which social and spatial structures in London corrode human values. Jonson's most sustained non-dramatic engagement with his city, however, has received relatively little notice. 'On the Famous Voyage', which narrates a journey up the polluted Fleet Ditch from Bridewell to Holborn, is by far the longest poem in Jonson's *Epigrammes*, and almost twice the length of the famous country-house poem, yet only one critic has considered it worthy of a research article.² Recent studies of literary constructions of the city have also dodged the text: Lawrence Manley's *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* accords it only passing references; Steven Mullaney, whose exploration of marginal spaces parallels in important ways Jonson's poetic navigation, does not mention the piece.³

This history of neglect can largely be attributed to queasiness in the face of the poem's subject matter. Swinburne famously dismissed the 'Famous Voyage' as out of tune with English sensibilities. 'Coprolology', he suggested, 'should be left to the Frenchmen . . . It is nothing less than lamentable that so great an English writer as Ben Jonson should ever have taken the plunge of a Parisian diver into the cesspool'.⁴ More recently, Richard Helgerson has placed the text 'among the filthiest, the most deliberately and insistently disgusting poems in the language'.⁵ Beyond this prevalent discomfort, however, critical opinion has diverged, and the disagreements raise important questions about the

city
comedy

significance of the poem. Most notably, 'On the Famous Voyage' has been interpreted as 'a typical Renaissance parody',⁶ a studied 'satire on the age'⁷ and as burlesque underpinned by Rabelaisian humour.⁸ J. G. Nichols' assessment is less definitive, but by consequence manages to accommodate several of the predominant strategies in the multivalent poem; he adopts a 'distinction between "mock-heroic, where the treatment is grandiose; and burlesque, where the treatment is low"', and describes the 'Famous Voyage' as 'a mixture of mock-heroic and burlesque with incidental contemporary satire'.⁹

In this essay I want to contextualize Jonson's troublesome poem, situating it within the physical and cultural environment of early modern London. This aim undersets a combination of literary and spatial interpretation. As postmodern geographers and social theorists have demonstrated, space demands analysis not merely as a neutral container but as itself a product.¹⁰ Moreover, the production of space implies not only the drive of economic power across the land, but an interrelated cultural fashioning of meaning and consciousness. At a time of unsettling change in London, characterised by rapid population growth, the movement of commercial and industrial practices towards capitalist structures, and devastating outbreaks of dearth and plague, cultural products played a crucial role in shaping the spatiality of urban life.¹¹ 'On the Famous Voyage' emerges within this context as an ironic commentary on, and disruptive intervention in contemporary constructions of space. The poem interweaves strains of satire and saturnalia, as Jonson maps a journey through a grotesque urban body.¹²

My discussion will consequently look first at the construction of this body, through the poem's use of a journey along a waterway as a means of spatial cognition, and through Jonson's overt gendering of the city. This will involve a consideration of the cultural meanings attached to voyages and voyagers, a survey of the route of these voyagers, and an analysis of the cultural associations of women with water which Jonson exploits. Once the men enter this feminized body, the focus of the poem shifts to the city's excretion and consumption. My second section will thus consider the predominantly satiric strategies in these passages of the poem, as Jonson glances at various aspects of corruption, yet modulates his tone with strains of a markedly popular vitality. The infamously morose insistence on human excrement, I will argue, is enlivened by carnivalesque humour.¹³ In its conception of the city, therefore, Jonson's poem may be seen to undermine orthodox practices and discourses of civic space, allowing a glimpse of a vitally alternative spatiality.

I

At the outset of the seventeenth century the predominant conceptions of space in London were torn between tradition and nascent modernity. The demands of the former constructed spatiality upon accretions of memory and localised mythologies, while the latter suggested rather the abstract and homogeneous space which would become characteristic of the modern capitalist city. Early maps of London combined these ways of perceiving the city, introducing the concept of a cartographic guide, but also focusing on traditional landmarks and incorporating civic iconography. For the non-elite, however, London was still a city without maps, largely opaque to the outsider. Literature of the period affords countless examples of countrymen and women baffled by their first experiences of the city. As demographic, social and economic changes presented fundamental challenges to the city and its inhabitants, civic space was therefore at once a stable home and an alienating conglomeration of confusion. It was a site steeped in history, being reshaped by perplexing forces. These conditions necessitated new mentalities of settlement and innovative constructions of social space, as English men and women reassessed the functions and structures of their capital.¹⁴

The journey, particularly in an age before the street-map, offered a preeminent form of spatial cognition and articulation. Notably, the main section of John Stow's *Survey of London* (1598, 1603) is structured in the form of a perambulation of the city, ward by ward and street by street. Like any journey, Stow's is an exercise in definition and placement, as he records the history and social functions of the myriad sites of London. Stow perceives change but defers to local tradition; he records alterations to the physical landscape but endorses attempts to fix his own citizen's ethos upon the city. Tellingly, he rarely ventures into the alleys that housed large populations of immigrant poor, preferring to notice government attempts to 'stop up' such sites of disorder.¹⁵ Formal processions similarly offered a mechanism for imprinting a model of social order onto civic space. The annual lord mayor's procession – the most important of a range of ceremonial passages through London's streets – at once asserted principles of social order and shaped civic mythologies. In Manley's evaluation, such ceremonies fashioned the city as 'a sacral space, a physical embodiment of ceremonial tradition and community spirit'; customary processional routes 'helped to link the city's open, outdoor public spaces, forming a single interior of contiguous ritual zones'.¹⁶

If the orderly movement of Stow and the ceremonial procession of the civic elite participated in the construction of urban space, however, so too did countless quotidian journeys. While ceremonial movement fashions a spatiality enriched by tradition and enforced by the disciplinary mechanisms of government, the manifold itineraries of individuals suggest rather the 'procedures of everyday creativity' analysed by Michel de Certeau.¹⁷ Such paths through the city construct a spatiality of encounter and immediacy, opposed at once to the abstraction of geometry and the tradition of ceremony. 'The moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates', according to de Certeau, 'makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place.'¹⁸ Significantly, the governors of London sought to control civic space by controlling movement: by restricting entry to the city for potential provincial and continental immigrants; by limiting access to public sites; and through the imposition of curfews. The constant struggle for spatial discipline is highlighted by anxiety surrounding 'nightwalking', a crime which at this time denoted prostitution when attached to women and the threat of disorder and property crime when attached to men.¹⁹ Bridewell, which Jonson notes 'may, in time, concerne us / All, that are readers' (lines 42-3), stood as the central institution for the enforcement of that discipline.

Many works of popular literature explore the contours of spatial order. Several of the jest books which flourished from the latter sixteenth century centre on peripatetic figures exploiting the opportunities of urban space. *The Merrie Conceited Jestes: Of George Peele* (1607), for example, delineates an individual who moves most comfortably through alleys and alehouses, cheating companions and dodging the law.²⁰ Similarly, many ballads represent acts which flouted spatial discipline, occasionally in unsettling ways. In one text, 'Shameless Joan' of Finbury is said to have crawled backwards 'through the City . . . with a lighted Candle in her Back-side, and scar'd the Watch who was amaz'd at that dismal sight'.²¹ This poem narrates a journey which originated in an alehouse wager, not dissimilar to that made by Jonson's heroes in the *Famous Voyage*. When all the city was asleep:

Accordingly away she went,
And in her brawny Fundament,
A lighted Candle plac'd must be,
Which was a dreadful sight to see.

The watchman is understandably disconcerted, but does not prevent the traveller, who fulfils the terms of the bet, then 'turn'd about / And

fairly blew the Candle out'. Joan's project, which may or may not have a basis in fact, is represented by the balladeer as a singular exercise in spatial transgression, setting against popular appreciations of civic procession across the city the image of a huge, drunken, self-sodomised woman moving on her knees at night. Figures of disorderly and grotesque female bodies, I will suggest below, resonate similarly, albeit more subtly, through Jonson's images of his native city.

Shameless Joan was probably not available to Jonson as a source, but claims a place within the literature of outlandish peripatetic feats which he invokes in the *Famous Voyage*. His heroes, Shelton and Heyden, set forth

(in worthy scorne
Of those, that put out moneyes, on returne
From *Venice, Paris*, or some in-land passage
Of sixe times to, and fro, without embassage,
Or him that backward went to *Berwicke*, or which
Did dance the famous Morrisse, unto *Nonwich*). (lines 31-6)

These topical references are well known. From the late sixteenth century, a number of men had undertaken travels on the strength of wagers, and several had returned to publish accounts of their adventures. Richard Ferris rowed by sea from London to Bristol; Will Kemp, Shakespeare's first stage clown, morris-danced from London to Norwich; and at the time Jonson was writing, the long career of John Taylor, whose feats included a 'pennyless pilgrimage' in the steps of Jonson from London to Edinburgh and an unsurprisingly abortive attempt to row a brown-paper boat up the Thames from London to Kent, was just beginning.²² These travellers, of middling and lower social origins, seized on the economic opportunities of fantastic voyages. In a manner typical of the genre, Kemp's morris dance transforms a cultural form of rural festivity into a commercial venture, while his subsequent pamphlet translates the exercise in self-promotion into the realm of literary culture.²³

Such practices violated principles around which Jonson struggled to define his own work and values. In contrast to the energetic opportunism of these travellers and their social milieu, Jonson typically valorises images of circularity and 'rooted stability'.²⁴ Travel, if it is to be endorsed, must therefore be represented in accordance with this controlling ethos. For example, in the eulogistic 'To William Roc' (*Epigrammes* 128), which invites many points of comparison with the *Famous Voyage*, the commercial interests of the mercantile adventurer are sup-

pressed beneath Jonson's established moral vocabulary. Roe's 'beginnings here, prove purely sweet, / And perfect in a circle alwayes meet' (l. 7–8). Instead of highlighting the physical rigours and concrete accomplishments of England's 'good ÆNEAS' (l. 12), Jonson fixes on his travel as circular, looking to the time 'when we, blest with thy returne, shall see / Thy selfe, with thy first thoughts, brought home by thee' (lines 9–10). 'Returne', a word of financial significance for the merchant adventurer, is here loaded with ethical value, as the traveller carries only his 'first thoughts' back to the 'home' of his family and nation. Roe assimilates his experiences into a form of social enrichment; 'he changes his travels, into nourishment and profit'.²⁵

But while it is a relatively straightforward matter to contrast Jonson's attitudes towards William Roe and William Kemp, his representation of Shelton and Heyden is more complex. The introduction of the pair is not entirely satiric, as he holds them at parenthesis' length from the other voyagers, and infuses the passage with a convivial humour. The two men conceive of their act, moreover, at *Bread-streets Mermaid*' (l. 37), a tavern with which Jonson was associated, and which he mentions elsewhere in the *Epigrammes* as a source of wine which will 'take my *Muse*, and mee'.²⁶ A key to interpreting the authorial attitude towards Shelton and Heyden is Jonson's representation elsewhere of another traveller closely associated with the Mermaid. Thomas Coryate's *Crudities* (1611), perhaps the most capacious of English Renaissance travel texts, is a careful description of continental cities, written by a man of independent means and considerable learning. Jonson, though, was a central figure in the project of packaging the *Crudities* as carnivalesque, and presenting Coryate as a buffoon. Against the wishes of the author, but under the auspices of Prince Henry, the literary community poured forth prefatory poems on a travel book many knew only by its fabricated reputation.²⁷ Jonson's contributions included verses on the frontispiece. Of one image, in which a tablet portrait of the author is surrounded by three female figures (one of whom is clearly unwell), Jonson juxtaposes contrasting perceptions of Coryate's travels:

These be the three countries with their *Cornu-copia*
That make him as famous, as Moore his *Utopia*.

Or,

Here France gives him scabs, Venice a hot Sunne,
And Germanie spewes on him out of her Tunne.²⁸

Coryate clearly hoped for fame and reward. Jonson's efforts to belittle the author and his work in this respect are therefore cruel, but not

without a personable humour, which Coryate himself appears to have accepted.²⁹ Jonson is concerned to situate a peer within the London literary community, depicting a potential rival as a figure of rough fun.

'On the Famous Voyage' similarly claims a community of readers, which Jonson binds together with a mesh of puns and topical allusions. There is no reason to believe that the voyagers were not themselves members of this community. Peter Medine identifies 'Shelton' not as the Sir Ralph Shelton lauded in *Epigrammes* 119, but rather Thomas Shelton, translator of *Don Quixote*; and 'Heyden', he determines, is Sir Christopher Heydon, a prominent defender of astrology.³⁰ These two men, Medine argues, Jonson would have despised for their respective literary and intellectual endeavours.³¹ But while this argument is attractive, he can find no evidence for the identifications, beyond the suitability of the pair for his reading of the poem as 'a serious indictment of the times'.³² He appears to assume that the incident has no basis in fact, and that Jonson rather 'selected' figures 'who would have served a particular satiric purpose'.³³ Without further evidence this is a dangerous assumption, which may distort a reading of the poem. Instead, given the number of other topical referents in the poem, it seems reasonable to suggest that the voyagers were personally known to the poet (and Sir Ralph Shelton might well have been one of them), although their exact identification is not essential to an understanding of the poem. The narrative might be based on a failed search for prostitutes, which might also have been linked to a tavern wager.³⁴ Consequently, the poem might be approached similarly to Jonson's representation of Coryate: as an act of refashioning and comic embellishment. Hercules is a suitable tutelary deity, as he was associated not only with physical heroism but also with gargantuan sexual labours.³⁵ Like Aeneas, Hercules also travelled to 'hell': a word which affords Jonson a pun, suggesting both a brothel-district and the vagina.³⁶

The route of the journey, whether concocted or merely retold by Jonson, is exploited for its conjunction of institutions of civic discipline with emanations of disorder. The men begin their trip along the outside of the city wall at *Bridewell*, a former royal palace which was handed to the City of London by Edward VI and used thereafter, according to Stow's early eighteenth-century successor, as 'a Place where all Strumpets, Night-walkers, Pick-pockets, vagrant and idle Persons, that are taken up for their ill Lives . . . are forced to beat Hemp in publick View, with due Correction of whipping'.³⁷ The Fleet prison, from which 'out-cries of the damned' subsequently assail the voyagers (l. 172),

housed debtors as well as prisoners convicted by the Star Chamber. Holborn, the men's destination, was associated with both punishment and transgression. The journeys of the condemned to Tyburn executions passed through Holborn, and its thoroughfare was often used for the public carting and flogging of criminals. Its concurrent reputation for crime and prostitution, upon which Jonson draws more explicitly, is illustrated by contemporary literary references; for instance, in *A Fair Quarrel*, by Middleton and Rowley, those seeking instruction in the art of roaring are advised to 'repair into Holborn at the sign of the Cheat-Loaf'.³⁸

The journey is also a 'liquid deed' (l. 193), by water rather than by land. The poem's emphasis on the groggy flow of fluids through the body of the city explores the significance of the liquid in London. For Stow, the waters of the city were a source of civic pride, and claimed a place at the front of his *Survey*.³⁹ He celebrates particularly the controlled flow of water, issuing from conduits which themselves stand as civic monuments. In West Cheap the monument was gendered and classicised; there, Stow records, 'was set up a curious wrought tabernacle of gray Marble, and in the same an Alabaster Image of *Diana*, and water conveyed from the Thames, prilling from her naked breast'.⁴⁰ Nature, figured in the flowing water and nurturing female form, is thereby fused with the culture of a city capable of engineering and classical appropriation. The conduits, the principal source of water for Londoners, were also important stations in the lord mayors' processions. 'At these stations', Lawrence Manley comments, 'where normally the city's life welled up to be gathered by apprentices of a morning, and where water turned to wine during entries – nature, culture, and grace converged in pageant form.'⁴¹

As Jonathan Gil Harris has demonstrated, however, representations of the flow of water into London were always equivocal, as civic pride was shadowed by associations of fluidity with bodily incontinence. One of the major sources of water for Londoners was popularly known as 'pissing conduit', while many other conduit buildings were variously 'identified ... with the body's orifices'.⁴² More importantly, in the present context, the flow of fluids through both civic and human bodies was appreciated as a disturbingly murky process. Notably, Stow's typically sanguine representation of the 'watering' of the city is undermined by notes of anxiety concerning pollution in the waterways.⁴³ Houndsditch, he claims, takes its name 'for that in olde time when the same lay open, much filth ... especially dead Dogges were there layd or cast'.⁴⁴ The Fleet Ditch, once better known as the Fleet River, had

suffered a similar fate. Stow laments the failure of attempts to 'cleanse' the stream, which have left it 'woorse cloyed ... then ever it was before'.⁴⁵ But despite his concern with the provision of fresh water to Londoners, Stow generally shuns any mention of the attendant flow of sewage out of the city. He wants to see the Fleet Ditch cleansed, but does not acknowledge its vital role in the discharge of filth. His city consumes openly, but excretes discreetly; its pissing alleys, similarly, receive no mention in the *Survey*.⁴⁶ Nor does Stow discuss proposals to replenish London's water supplies, which were actually in a parlous state.⁴⁷ The original plans for the New River, an artificial waterway which drew water to the capital from Hertfordshire, intended that it would flush out all polluted ditches around the city, while also bringing water to individual houses. Until shortly before its 1613 opening, however, the work was mired in controversy, surrounding funding, the rights of landowners along the route, and the transformation of water into a private commodity.⁴⁸

For all the civic pride attached to the supply of water, then, the cultural status of London's liquid remained problematic. Channels of water tend to collapse troublingly into flows of filth; the careful civic control over nature is undermined by the unsteady passage of matter through body and city alike. This ambivalence towards the fluid was evident in the lord mayors' processions, which moved to the celebratory pageants at central conduits only after more unruly scenes by the Thames. Manley notes that the water pageant which marked the lord mayor's landing by barge was typically 'the roughest and most boisterous' of the day, adorned with 'amphibian mascots, pagan gods, giants, and heroes', and exposing the porous boundaries between nature and culture.⁴⁹ While the procession on land is carefully linked to civic monuments and tradition, the flow of water threatens to dissolve such aggrandizing strategies. Jonson plays on the attempts to manipulate images of order in the lord mayor's arrival when he suggests of the putrid barge which passes the famous voyagers, that 'one day in the yeere, for sweet 'tis voyc't, / And that is when it is the Lord *Maiors* foist' (lines 119–20). The word 'foist' admits useful puns, meaning a barge, but also a fart or a cheating rogue.⁵⁰

The image of civic ceremony which collapses in a scatological pun is paradigmatic of the poem's strategy of setting bodily ferment against discourses of spatial and social stability. Crucially, the sewer which should be a river, encumbered with the stench of excrement and disorder when civic pride requires purity and consistency, is mapped as a path through a seething body. As the heroes move upstream through

article
on 1613
survey
pageant

the 'dire passage' (l. 59), the poem moves haltingly through images of excretion to images of the preparation and consumption of food. The 'passage' thus crudely mirrors the function of the alimentary canal, understood in Renaissance medical theory to be a single channel winding through the body, which received and digested food, and subsequently ejected excrement. Theorists exercised their minds, as Gail Kern Paster notes, to separate the processes of the canal, but failed to dispel completely the 'specter of monstrous appetite, of ingestion and excretion in endless, horrible simultaneity'.⁵¹ As I will consider further in the second section, Jonson's wilful confusion of these processes exploits the attendant anxieties, suggesting at once a social and spatial corruption in the body of the city.

The heroes' 'entry / To this dire pasage' through 'A dock . . . that called is Avernus' is also, more emphatically, figured as sexual penetration (lines 58–9). 'Dock' is a suitably confused pun, suggesting the vagina but also the anus.⁵² The entrance is degraded and exhausted, like the imagined genitalia of the prostitutes who may be the object of the voyage, and who are an underlying figure throughout the poem. The men are motivated to visit Holborn in part because 'the powerfull *Moone*' has made 'the poore *Banck-side* creature wet it' shoone' (lines 29–30). This is probably a reference to an exceptional tide which has flooded the major city brothels on the south bank of the Thames, but also invokes associations of women with water and incontinence, in both senses of the word. In predominant cultural constructions, the compelling excess of the female body was seen to be evident at once in uncontrollable sexuality and unquenchable flows of fluids.⁵³ The attendant association of whores and water was underlined by the principal site of the city's brothels, and cruelly exploited in an Elizabethan punishment, recommended by William Harrison, which involved 'dragging . . . them over the Thames betwene Lambeth and Westminster at the tail of a boat'.⁵⁴

The poem's grotesque exposition of female excess continues as the men move upstream:

Thorough her wombe they make their famous road,
Betwene two walls; where, on one side, to scar men,
Were seene your ugly *Centaures*, yee call *Car-men*,
Gorgonian scolds, and *Harpyes*: on the other
Hung stench, diseases, and old filth, their mother,
With famine, wants, and sorrowes many a dosen,
The least of which was to the plague a cosen.
But they unfrighted passe, though many a privie

Spake to 'hem louder, then the oxe in LIVIE;
And many a sinke pour'd out her rage anenst 'hem;
But still their valour, and their vertue fenc't 'hem. (lines 66–76)

In the 'wombe' of the city-whore, conventional images of generation and familial identity undergo a sea-change. The 'mother' of 'stench' and 'diseases' is merely 'old filth'; 'famine, wants, and sorrowes' are 'cosen[s]' to the plague. At the end of the section, Jonson exploits a pun on 'sink', which is a receptacle for waste or sewage, and in the body an organ of digestion and excretion. In the female body, the signification of 'a place where things are swallowed up or lost' extends to the vagina (a sense exploited in *The Faerie Queene*); and this usage aligns with instances of 'sink' denoting a whore or brothel.⁵⁵ An implicit threat throughout the journey is the pox, which was itself perceived as 'flowing matter' which could move around the body.⁵⁶ At the entrance to the 'passage', Jonson plays on the corruption of the site in the injunction to 'stop thy nose', for 'this *Dock*'s no rose' (lines 59–60). As editors have noted, the sentence appropriates a botanical proverb concerning a common weed; but it suggests also the long-lost 'rose' of maidenhead, and perhaps also glances towards the colloquial nomination of syphilitic sores as 'roses'.⁵⁷ The nose is a common euphemism for the penis, the feared 'light pains' of which shade from the wanton pleasures of copulation to the pains which might result from sexual lightness. Hercules' sore 'backe, and bones' similarly combine intimations of sexual exhaustion and venereal infection.⁵⁸

The feminised civic body crudely shaped through these lines is best understood in terms of the Renaissance grotesque, which is typically derived from 'the unstable coalescence of contrary images of the flesh: indulged, abused, purged, damned'.⁵⁹ Jonson consistently couples disfigurement with bawdy word-play, disease with pleasure. The grotesque body of his city accords with Bakhtin's 'unfinished and open body (dying, bringing forth and being born)', which 'is an incarnation of this world at the absolute lower stratum'.⁶⁰ It explosively disrupts the order of civic panegyric, which shapes a closed and monumental spatiality, comparable to the body of classical statuary. Jonson rather figures the civic body as gross and misshapen, entered through the polluted orifice of the ditch at Bridewell Dock.⁶¹ This strategy is compounded in the classical grotesquerie which embellishes the poem. Centaurs, harpies, a chimera, Briareus and Hydra all combine human and animal features (lines 68, 69, 80, 81, 83). Moreover, Jonson's mock-heroic apparatus relentlessly domesticates, fusing grotesque embellishment and topical referent. The warrior Briareus is aligned with a randy beadle ('Who

hath the hundred hands when he doth meddle' (l. 82); and centaurs are 'Car-men' (l. 67), bringing their nightly loads to the Ditch. The body of the city is thereby mirrored in the bodies of its inhabitants, comically misshapen civic functionaries who highlight the city's insistent sexual and excretory energies.

II

After the early imagery of degraded sexuality, the 'Famous Voyage' in fact moves insistently towards a concentration on the city's processes of excretion and consumption. In accordance with the materialising strategy of the poem, Jonson roughly equates the 'filth, stench, noyse' of the classical underworld (l. 9), with the unsanitary condition of the Fleet. In the *Aeneid* VI, the most important classical subtext for the poem, Aeneas encounters within the jaws of the underworld 'Grief', 'Cares', 'Diseases', 'Age', 'Want', 'Death' and 'Distress'.⁶² Jonson's parallel passage offers the similarly abstract 'diseases', 'famine', 'wants', 'sorrows', but also 'old filth, their mother' (lines 70–1). Further, as he claims at the outset, 'what was there / Subtly distinguish'd, was confused here' (lines 9–10). The prevailing material and categorical confusion admits an essential connection between dirt and disorder. 'Reflection on dirt', according to Mary Douglas, 'involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death.'⁶³ Jonson's insistence on filth, which underpinned Edmund Wilson's analysis of the poet as anal-erotic, might thus be appreciated as a valuable poetic strategy.⁶⁴ The poem's mobilisation of the grotesque, within the civic body, facilitates a strain of satire remarkable for its understated sense of vitality and regeneration.

The quintessential manifestation of filth in the poem is shit, variously precipitated into the Fleet Ditch and coagulating as 'Mud' at its mouth (l. 62). The use of the city ditches as sewers was a point of common knowledge, but one sidestepped by those influenced by new ideas of bodily and spatial civility.⁶⁵ In the final line of his poem, Jonson invokes the precedent of Sir John Harington's mix of scurrility and lavatory design in *The Metamorphosis of Ajax* (1596). But while Jonson's spirited appropriation of classicism is similar to that upon which Harington bases his text, his underlying purpose is markedly different. The turd in the 'Famous Voyage' is basically a satiric device. Lying 'heap'd like an userers masse' (l. 139), it recalls Jonson's characteristic disgust for wealth hoarded rather than employed for the public good.⁶⁶ Shit 'languishing stucke upon the wall' sets the stubbornly recumbent human excrement

against the ostensibly solid achievements of human architecture (l. 136). Itself caught between categories of fluid and solid, shit threatens at once to clog waterways and corrode buildings. In Jonson's moral satire, by extension, it serves to undermine the achievements of culture, mocking human pride and ambition.

Jonson exploits the satiric potential of the turd most remarkably as the voyagers are forced to row close to the walls and thus risk injury from the privies above:

At this a loud
Crack did report it selfe, as if a cloud
Had burst with storme, and downe fell, *ab excelsis*,
Poore MERCURY, crying out on PARACELsus,
And all his followers, that had so abus'd him:
And, in so shitten sort, so long had us'd him:
For (where he was the god of eloquence,
And subtiltie of mettalls) they dispense
His spirits, now, in pills, and eeke in potions,
Suppositories, cataplasmes, and lotions.
But many Moones there shall not wane (quoth hee)
(In the meane time, let 'hem imprison mee)
But I will speake (and know I shall be heard)
Touching this cause, where they will be affeard
To answere me. And sure, it was th'intent
Of the grave fart, late let in parliament,
Had it beene seconded, and not in fume
Vanish'd away: as you must all presume
Their MERCURY did now.

(lines 93–111)

The passage frustrates attempts at visualisation. In one sense, it relies on the epic mode, which legitimises the manifestation of deities; simultaneously, in accordance with the mock-epic, it invites the reader to imagine gobbets of the metal mercury buried in a falling turd. The resultantly beshitten state of the classical god underlines a familiar Jonsonian lament about corruption and commercialisation, particularly in the author's own realm of 'eloquence'. This satiric point collapses neatly into another familiar attack on medical practices, specifically those employed by the followers of Paracelsus, who argued the physiological benefits of maintaining a balance of mercury, sulphur and salt in the human body. Paracelsus favoured purges – the common use of which threatens the voyagers with befoulment – and he may also have introduced the use of mercury in the treatment of venereal disease.⁶⁷ Jonson thus clinches his point about moral corruption and its physical manifestations through a further allusion to the disfiguring illness which haunts contemporary representations of urban sexuality. Interestingly,

Holborn was known not only for its small number of brothels, but also as the metropolitan centre for mercurial sweat baths.⁶⁸

Mercury's threat to take his case 'where they will be affeard / To answere me' carries a possible allusion to Jonson's masque *Mercury Vindicated*, performed in 1615 and perhaps already in the author's mind when he wrote the 'Famous Voyage'.⁶⁹ Immediately following this declaration, however, Jonson modifies his tone. The comment about 'the grave fart, late let in parliament', which may be intended as the continued speech of Mercury, refers to an eruption immortalised in one of the most popular poems in manuscript distribution in the early decades of the seventeenth century. 'The Parliament Fart' is an amalgam of scatological comedy and witty character sketches, its jocular tone only mildly disturbed by the insubstantiality of an interjection which resists all attempts to record, arrest or measure it.⁷⁰ Jonson's allusion therefore moderates the preceding satire.⁷¹ A turd might widely be accepted as offensive, but a fart was rather a source of humour; its literary allegiance was with the jest-book rather than formal satire.⁷² Hence the teasing intonation of a subsequent passage, in which the myriad forms of the 'ghosts . . . of farts' are employed to debunk the atom theory initiated by Democritus, pursued by Nicholas Hill, and distrusted by Jonson (lines 124–9). The humour of the lines dissipates the threat of atom theory, without the savage assault characteristic of much contemporary verse satire.

The fart thus establishes a carnivalesque momentum in the poem. This initiative is typified in the speculation on the passing barge, 'the Lord *Maiors* foist', in which Jonson undercuts discourses of civic dignity while concurrently gesturing towards the more common stench and practices of 'Beares colledge, *Paris-garden*' (l. 117). The momentum is sustained as the poem moves towards images of food and consumption. The voyagers reach the 'bankes', upon which,

Your *Fleet-lane Furies*, and hot cookes doe dwell,
That, with still-scalding steemes, make the place *hell*.
The sinkes ran grease, and haire of meazled hogs,
The heads, houghs, entrailes, and the hides of dogs:
For, to say truth, what scullion is so nastie,
To put the skins, and offall in a pastie?
Cats there lay divers had beene flead, and rosted,
And, after mouldie growne, againe were tosted,
Then, selling not, a dish was tane to mince 'hem,
But still, it seem'd, the ranknesse did convince 'hem.
For, here they were throwne in wi'the melted pewter,
Yet drown'd they not. They had five lives in future.

(lines 143–54)

The catalogue reads as a parody of Jonson's eminently civilised menu in 'Inviting a Friend to Supper' (*Epigrammes* 101). Yet couched between images of the spoiled flesh of dogs and cats is the apparently discordant couplet, 'For, to say truth, what scullion is so nastie, / To put the skins, and offall in a pastie?' The subdued note of relish that informs this aside accords with images elsewhere in Jonson's poems, of the author as a man of 'mountaine belly' and monstrous appetite.⁷³ The passage thus acknowledges signs of revitalising consumption amidst the welter of refuse, in a manner consistent with the 'material bodily principle' Bakhtin identifies in his study of Rabelais. Like the Frenchman, Jonson works through images of the lower bodily stratum, its orifices and its excrement, to glimpse a 'triumphant, festive principle'.⁷⁴ The 'confusion' of London in the 'Famous Voyage' looks towards filth and corruption but evokes simultaneously a strangely subversive vitality.

The final substantial section, centring on Banks and his horse transmigrated into the corpse of a cat, clarifies this development. In this image, Jonson audaciously juxtaposes putrefaction and sustenance, death and sexuality, in a manner which typifies his purpose in the poem. He focuses on this one cat after surveying the 'divers' other corpses, the existence of which mocks taboos against eating domestic animals and cooking corrupt flesh. As acknowledged in Jonson's aside that the corrupted bodies still have 'five lives in future' (l. 154), however, the cat is also an animal known proverbially for its ability to flout death. Further, the cat was associated with lechery and nocturnal straying for sexual purposes; more specifically, 'cat' was in use as a euphemism for a whore, a bawd, the penis and the vulva.⁷⁵ (These associations inform the punning humour of the voyagers' response to the mysterious beast, when 'They cry'd out PUSSE' (l. 183), and Bankes identifies himself.) Even this beast's 'great gray eyes' may play on another popular sign of wantonness (l. 161).⁷⁶

Within this context, Jonson's identification of Banks and his horse is particularly apt. Banks taught his horse various tricks, including counting and singling out individuals in a crowd, and exhibited the beast at taverns for over a decade from the late 1580s.⁷⁷ Although his actions were trailed by suggestions of infernal trickery, the act remained rooted in the realm of popular entertainment. One anecdote records Dick Tarlton and Banks trading jests, the horse first identifying the former as 'the veriest foole in the company', then selecting his master as 'the veriest whore-master'.⁷⁸ Their status within London street culture is reinforced by a 1595 pamphlet, in which 'Bankes Bay Horse in a Trance' performs a comparable function to 'the oxen in LIVIE' (l. 74), attacking

contemporary abuses in London, focusing especially on the exploitation of those of lower degree.⁷⁹ The role of landlords in promoting prostitution and abusing prostitutes is a recurrent theme; of one lecherous individual, the horse says, 'Let him passe for a farting churle, and weare his mistres favours, viz. rubies and precious stones on his nose'.⁸⁰ Jonson's reference to Banks and the horse being 'burned for one witch' in France need not be taken too seriously (l. 158), since in 1608 Banks was safely returned from his continental tour and employed by Prince Henry.⁸¹ Rather, the line appeals to the knowledge of Jonson's community of readers, who might be expected to set the rumour against their awareness of the living jester, and thus appreciate the essential humour of the passage.

When Banks as cat cadaver identifies himself, the voyagers 'laugh't, at his laugh-worthy fate' (l. 185). Given Banks's preceding speech, mocking the voyagers and reminding them of his 'merry pranks' (l. 184), this can hardly be read as a derisive reaction. Rather, the professional jester and the men whose likely quest for the services of 'MADAME CAESAR' (l. 180) and her whores has amounted to nothing, are united in laughter of common buffoonery.⁸² For the reader, though, the laughter is ambiguous. On the one hand, it involves the detached ridicule of a coarse form of satire, in which Banks and the voyagers alike are constructed as embodiments, in various forms, of moral dissolution. On the other hand, reader and characters share in the laughter of the jest, which carries in its licentiousness and unofficial character a 'positive, regenerating, creative meaning'. In Bakhtin's conception, 'laughter in its most radical, universal, and at the same time gay form emerged from the depths of folk culture', and in the Renaissance played 'an essential role' in the work of many prominent writers.⁸³ An apt physical context for this laughter, in accordance with the popular culture of Bakhtin's 'market-place', is evoked in the poem's final domesticating images, of the 'sope-boyler', alehouse-keeper and 'ancient pur-blinde fletcher' (lines 188-90). The fletcher, offered as a mock-epic version of the lecherous Cretan king Minos, recalls also Cupid in his occupation, and sexual over-indulgence in his lack of sight and phallic 'high nose' (l. 190).⁸⁴

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'In memorie' of the voyagers' 'most liquid deed', Jonson declares at the close of the poem, '[t]he citie since hath rais'd a Pyramide' (lines 193-4). These lines have an air of topicality, and may refer to a construction associated with the New River scheme.⁸⁵ Their principal effect, how-

ever, is derived from the paradoxical conjunction of dissolute action and solid monument. The 'liquidity' of the deed is multivalent, acknowledging the alcohol which the men consumed, and the confused mix of water and bodily fluids in which they journeyed. The very fluidity of their experience of the city marks the reference to that most ancient of monumental forms as especially ironic. Indeed the poem threatens to dissolve the carefully contrived order of monumental space, encoded as it is with values of physical and ideological durability.⁸⁶ Jonson furthers this play of irony in the final couplet: 'And I could wish for their eterniz'd sakes, / My *Muse* had plough'd with his, that sung A-JAX' (lines 195-6). Juxtaposing the inconsequential action with the eternising conceit, Jonson punningly invokes both the ancient epic poetry of Homer and the infamous work of Harington: the poetry of classical mythology and the prose of contemporary toiletry practice.

Jonson's mock-heroic practice in the 'Famous Voyage', as this pun suggests, principally operates by exposing the unmentionable. Whereas prevailing discourses of civic description tended to occlude London's sewage and its underworld of alehouses and commercial sexuality, Jonson's exploration of the Fleet Ditch and its precincts delineates a radically divergent spatiality, characterised by confusion and instability. And while confusion involves the 'filth, stench, noyse' of disorder and decay (l. 9), it also fosters a distinctive creativity, evident as much in the tumultuous character of Jonson's distended epigram, as it is in the grotesque environment of the London underworld. The Fleet Ditch is thus figured as a kind of heterotopia. For Michel Foucault, heterotopic spaces 'are something like counter-sites . . . in which the real sites, all the other sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality.'⁸⁷ The environment of Jonson's poem accordingly invites and evades identification, suggesting at once a concrete place of human activity and an alternative spatial principle informing the whole city. His heterotopia is subversive and unsettled, fusing satire and saturnalia, disgust for petty commercialisation and delight in the popular.

The most important analogy in Jonson's works is the transient carnivalesque world grafted onto the city in *Bartholomew Fair*.⁸⁸ Like the 'Famous Voyage', this play betrays a familiar Jonsonian ambivalence towards the realm of popular culture. It also contains Littlewit's translation of *Hero and Leander* into a puppet-play of London low-life, a text which marvellously parallels the epigram. The environment of the fair, with its central enclosed sites of makeshift puppet theatre and pig-

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woman's booth, is vibrantly grotesque, and pregnant with significance for the city as a whole. 'Acting as a tavern, a brothel, a public lavatory and a bank for stolen goods', Neil Rhodes notes, 'the pig-booth is also the seedy metropolis in microcosm.'⁸⁹ The embodiment of that booth is Ursula, whose vast body is 'all fire, and fat', continually replenished with pig and ale, though she claims to be in perpetual danger of 'melt[ing] away to the first woman, a ribbe again' (2.2.50-1). In the 'Famous Voyage', an analogous female body is mapped onto the city, through the spatial conceit of a journey up its 'dire passage'. This poem, too, equivocally endorses the radical materialism and festive populism of the material bodily principle. The 'Famous Voyage', with its singular blend of learning and buffoonery, urbanity and jest, constructs a spatiality of intermeshed dissolution and creativity in the very guts of early modern London.⁹⁰

NOTES

1. See especially Thomas M. Greene's seminal essay, 'Ben Jonson and the Centered Self', *Studies in English Literature* 10 (1970), 325-48; and Don E. Wayne, *Penshurst: The Semiotics of Place and the Poetics of History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984).
2. Peter E. Medine, 'Object and Intent in Jonson's "Famous Voyage"', *Studies in English Literature* 15 (1975), 97-110. (And see also Bruce Thomas Boehrer, 'The Ordure of Things: Ben Jonson, Sir John Harington, and the Culture of Excrement in Early Modern England', James Hirsh (ed.), *New Perspectives on Ben Jonson* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997), pp. 174-96.) References to Jonson's poems are from *Ben Jonson: Works*, ed. C. H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1954-70), vol. VIII. PR 2601. H4
3. Lawrence Manley, *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 87, 422, 515; Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
4. Algernon Charles Swinburne, *A Study of Ben Jonson* [1889], ed. Howard B. Norland (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), p. 95.
5. 'Ben Jonson', *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry: Donne to Marvell*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 152.
6. Sara J. van den Berg, *The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), p. 104.
7. Medine, 'Object and Intent', 98. Helgerson is broadly in agreement with this interpretation ('Ben Jonson', p. 152).
8. George Burke Johnston, *Ben Jonson: Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 24.
9. J. G. Nichols, *The Poetry of Ben Jonson* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul,

- 1969), p. 108. The distinction between mock-heroic and burlesque is adopted from Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton University Press, 1967).
10. The seminal work in this field is Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); see especially pp. 34, 36-7.
11. Edward Soja notes that '[t]he presentation of concrete spatiality is always wrapped in the complex and diverse re-presentations of human perception and cognition, without any necessity of direct and determined correspondence between the two. These representations . . . play a powerful role in shaping the spatiality of social life.' (*Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), p. 121.)
12. I am adapting here the conception of the grotesque developed in Neil Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), especially p. 7.
13. See Edmund Wilson, 'Morose Ben Jonson', *The Triple Thinkers: Twelve Essays on Literary Subjects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 213-22.
14. See Lawrence Manley, who adopts the notion of 'mentalities of settlement' as the foundation of his study of *Literature and Culture* (p. 16).
15. John Stow, *A Survey of London* [1603], 2 vols., ed. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), vol. 1, especially pp. 139, 165.
16. Manley, *Literature and Culture*, pp. 159-60, 240.
17. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. xiv, and chapter 7, 'Walking in the City'.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
19. See Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 209. (Dr Griffiths has written two articles, as yet unpublished, which deal with this matter in greater detail.)
20. [George Peele?], *The Merrie Conceited Jestes of George Peele* [1607] (London: G.P. for F. Faulkner, 1627).
21. *Shameless Joan: Or, The Old Woman of Finsbury*, in *The Pepys Ballads*, ed. W. G. Day, 5 vols. (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987), vol. iv, p. 423. The ballad is not dated, nor is it listed in the short-title catalogues for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; however its survival in the Pepys collection suggests likely publication in the latter half of the seventeenth century.
22. *The most dangerous and memorable adventure of Richard Ferris* [1590] and *Kemps nine days wonder* [1600] are reprinted in *An English Garner: Social England Illustrated, A Collection of XVIIth Century Tracts*, ed. Andrew Lang (London: A. Constable and Co., 1903), pp. 101-14, 139-62. On Taylor, see *The Pennyles Pilgrimage and The Praise of Hemp-Seed, with the Voyage of Mr. Roger Bird and the Writer hereof in a Boat of browne-paper, from London to Quinborough in Kent*, both reprinted in his *All the Workes* (1630).
23. Max W. Thomas, 'Kemps Nine Daies: Wonder Dancing Carnival into Market', *PMLA* 107 (1992), 511-23.
24. Greene, 'Ben Jonson and the Centered Self', 329, 326-7.

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25. Richard S. Peterson, *Imitation and Praise in the Poems of Ben Jonson* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 42.
26. 'Inviting a Friend to Supper' (*Epigrammes* 101), lines 28–30.
27. Michael Strachan, *The Life and Adventures of Thomas Coryate* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 124–5.
28. Thomas Coryate, *Coryats Crudities*, facsimile edn (London: Scolar Press, 1978), sig. A1v.
29. In his subsequent publication, Coryate sends his 'dutifull respect' to Jonson, who is listed among 'lovers of vertue, and literature'. (*Greeting from the Court of the Great Mogul* [1616], facsimile edn (Amsterdam: Da Capo Press, 1968), pp. 43, 45.)
30. Medine, 'Object and Intent', 100–1, 103.
31. Jonson's attitudes towards astrology are well known. Medine documents his similarly low opinion of *Don Quixote*, which was widely perceived in early seventeenth-century England as merely a popular romance ('Object and Intent', 101–3).
32. *Ibid.*, 100.
33. *Ibid.*, 101.
34. Medine himself demonstrates the search for prostitutes as a possible motivation for the voyage ('Object and Intent', 104–5).
35. In *The Alchemist*, Sir Epicure Mammon dreams of an elixir that will give him 'a back / . . . that shall be as tough / As HERCULES, to encounter fiftie a night' (2.2.37–9). See further Gordon Williams, *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature*, 3 vols. (London and Atlantic Highlands: Athlone Press, 1994), vol. II, p. 662.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 660.
37. John Strype, *A Survey Of the Cities of London and Westminster*, 2 vols. (London: n.p., 1720), vol. I, book 1, p. 191. Stow himself is less expansive, speaking of Bridewell as a place 'wherein a great number of vagrant persons be now set a worke, and relieved at the charges of the cittizens' (*Survey of London*, vol. II, p. 145).
38. Thomas Middleton, *A Fair Quarrel* (*Works*, ed. A. H. Bullen, 8 vols. (London: John C. Nimmo, 1885), vol. IV), 4.1.39. See further Edward H. Sugden, *A Topographical Dictionary to the Works of Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists* (Publications of the University of Manchester (no. 168), 1925), pp. 252–3.
39. Stow, *Survey of London*, vol. I, pp. 11–19.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 266.
41. Manley, *Literature and Culture*, p. 225.
42. 'This Is Not a Pipe: Water Supply, Incontinent Sources, and the Leaky Body Politic', Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (eds.), *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 215.
43. Even Stow's enthusiasm is surpassed by *An Apologie of the Cittie of London*, appended to his text, which declares that 'none other place is so plentifully watered with springs, as London is' (*Survey of London*, vol. II, p. 220).
44. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 128.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
46. On pissing alleys, see Sugden, *Topographical Dictionary*, p. 414; and Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 35n.
47. Anthony Munday's continuation of the *Survey* amply redresses this matter.
48. J. W. Gough, *Sir Hugh Myddleton: Entrepreneur and Engineer* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 24–58; he documents the aim to cleanse the city ditches at p. 28.
49. Manley, *Literature and Culture*, pp. 271, 285.
50. The phrase 'foysting Arse' is used in a contemporary poem to which Jonson alludes at lines 107–10, 'The Parliament Fart' (*Musarum Deliciae: Or, The Muses Recreation* [1655], ed. John Mennes and James Smith, facsimile edn (Delmar, New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1985), p. 65).
51. Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, p. 11.
52. Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. I, p. 399. The word is used to denote an arse in 'The Parliament Fart' (*Musarum Deliciae*, p. 65).
53. See Paster, *The Body Embarrassed*, chap. 1.
54. *The Description of England*, ed. Georges Edelen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 189; quoted in E. J. Burford, *Bawds and Lodgings: A History of the London Bankside Brothels* (London: Owen, 1976), p. 138.
55. Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. III, p. 1251. In *The Faerie Queene*, Error 'poured forth out of her hellish sinke / Her fruitfull cursed spawne of serpents small' (1.1.22).
56. Margaret Pelling, 'Appearance and Reality: Barber-Surgeons, the Body and Disease', A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (eds.), *London 1500–1700: The Making of the Metropolis* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), p. 99.
57. Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. III, pp. 1170–2.
58. 'Bone-ache' is a euphemism for syphilis in *The Alchemist*, 3.2.37 (Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. I, pp. 129–30).
59. Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque*, p. 4.
60. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1968), pp. 26–7.
61. The Bakhtinian theorising of Peter Stallybrass and Allon White clarifies the significance of the bodily orifices in the grotesque: 'It is an image of impure corporeal bulk with its orifices (mouth, flared nostrils, anus) yawning wide and its lower regions (belly, legs, feet, buttocks and genitals) given priority over its upper regions (head, 'spirit', reason)'. (*The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 9.)
62. 'vestibulum ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci / Luctus et ultrices posuere culilia Curae, / pallentesque habitant Morbi tristisque Senectus / et Mctus et malesuada Fames ac turpis Egestas, / terribiles visu formae, Letumque Labosque; / tum consanguineus Leti Sopor et mala mentis / Gaudia, mortiferumque aduerso in limine Bellum / ferreique Eumenidum thalami et Discordia demens, / vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis.'

- Aeneid*, vi, lines 273–81; translations from the Loeb edition, trans. H. Rush-ton Fairclough (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935.)
63. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966), p. 5.
 64. See Wilson, 'Morose Ben Jonson'.
 65. See the important discussion of Norbert Elias, in *The Civilizing Process: 'The History of Manners' and 'State Formation and Civilization'*, trans. Edmund Jeph-cott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), chapter 3.
 66. For contemporary associations of (Jewish) usurers with faeces, see Peter J. Smith, *Social Shakespeare: Aspects of Renaissance Dramaturgy and Contemporary Society* (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 166–8.
 67. Miles Weatherall, 'Drug Treatment and the Rise in Pharmacology', Roy Porter (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Medicine* (Cambridge Univer-sity Press, 1996), pp. 250–2.
 68. Burford, *Bawds and Lodgings*, p. 173.
 69. Herford and Simpson tentatively date the poem 'about 1610' (*Ben Jonson: Works*, vol. xi, p. 29); however their evidence is merely conjectural, and Jonson may have written or revised the piece at any time up to its publica-tion in the Folio of 1616.
 70. Commonly titled 'The Parliament Fart' in manuscript sources, the poem is printed as 'The Fart censured in the Parliament House' in *Musarum Deliciae*, pp. 65–71.
 71. Compare Medine, who interprets the allusion as an earnest criticism of the standard of parliamentary debate ('Object and Intent', 108).
 72. On the semiotics of the fart, see further Peter J. Smith, 'Ajax by Any Other Name Would Smell as Sweet: Shakespeare, Harington and Onomastic Scatology', André Lascombes (ed.), *Tudor Theatre: Emotion in the Theatre* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 125–58 (especially pp. 133–4).
 73. 'My Picture left in Scotland', line 17; in *Works*, vol. viii, pp. 149–50. On his 'gluttony', see, for example, 'To Penshurst', line 68; in *Works*, vol. viii, pp. 93–6.
 74. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 19.
 75. Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. 1, pp. 214–6.
 76. *Ibid.*, p. 455.
 77. *The Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, 22 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), s.v. Banks.
 78. *Tarltons Jests* [1613]; facsimile edn, *Kemp's nine days wonder [and] Tarlton's jests*, intr. J. P. Feather (New York and London: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1972), sig. c2v.
 79. The ox in Livy is accorded a weightier statement, portentous of military and political calamity, 'saying, "Rome, for thyself beware" ('Roma, cave tibi')'. (*Livy*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. Evan T. Sage, 14 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), vol. x, XXV, xxi, pp. 60–1.)
 80. *Maroccus Extaticus: or, Bankes Bay Horse in a Trance* [1595], ed. Edward F.

- Rimbault, *Early English Poetry, Ballads, and Popular Literature of the Middle Ages*, 30 vols. (London: Percy Society, 1844), vol. ix, p. 15.
81. The *DNB* records that Banks 'continued to give entertainment in London' after his return from the continent. Its earliest reference to the supposed rumour of Banks' execution is from this poem.
 82. Madame Caesar also appears as a brothel-keeper in *The Alchemist*, 5.4.142.
 83. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, pp. 71–2.
 84. On the association of excessive sexual activity and blindness, see Williams, *Dictionary of Sexual Language*, vol. 1, pp. 455–6.
 85. Ian Donaldson's edition suggests a possible reference to the New River scheme (Jonson, *Poems* (Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 84).
 86. See Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp. 220–3.
 87. 'Of Other Spaces', trans. Jay Miskowicz *Diacritics* 16 (1986), 24. See also Edward W. Soja's commentary on Foucault, in *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 154–63.
 88. Compare Foucault on fairgrounds as heterotopias ('Of Other Spaces', 26).
 89. Rhodes, *Elizabethan Grotesque*, p. 142.
 90. A version of this chapter was published in *Early Modern Literary Studies*, Special Issue 3 (1998). I am grateful for the comments of Joanne Woolway Grenfell, Kristin Hammett, Richard Helgerson, Bill Maidment, Anthony Miller, Peter J. Smith and the editors of this volume.

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