

Structural organization in The Alchemist

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Ben Jonson has contributed significantly to the development of post-Shakespearean English drama. He is considered as the most influential dramatist after Shakespeare, drama making significant contribution to the structural organization of English drama and seems to have an edge over Shakespeare if structural organization is taken into consideration. He was a scholarly genius. His scholarship is successfully reflected in his comedies which include *The Alchemist*, *Volpone*, *Everyman in his Humor* and *Everyman out of his Humor*. He is considered to have pioneered the school of comedy of humor of which he is the only exponent. He is of the opinion that humor is caused by certain disorder in

rectified in human anatomy.

Unlike Shakespeare Ben Jonson championed the art of classical drama. He had firm faith in Aristotelian concept of classical drama. His dramas are based on the pattern of the principles of three entities which characterize a classical drama, whereas Shakespeare launched a rebellion against the formulations of classical drama expressing solidarity of people which craved more for romantic approach in which there is plenty of scope for enjoyment. Ben Jonson did not follow the beaten track and modelled his dramas on the pattern of classical drama. He wrote dramas with the sole objective of revealing human follies. He was hurt at heart over the prevailing condition of Jacobean society which was marred by avarice, deception and duplicity. Human values have been receded to the lowest ebb. The Alchemist presents the a graphic picture of the heinous designs of

three deceitful persons taking advantage of people's desire to become wealthy overnight by spreading the message of turning base metals into gold.

The entire drama has been staged at a single place where these deceitful persons assemble and try to misguide people to serve their purpose. Besides this, the entire drama revolves round the ^{single} incident of duplicity reveals the weaknesses latent in society. In this way he successfully practised the tenets of time, place and action which present a fine blend of classical drama in which Ben Jonson is unparalleled.