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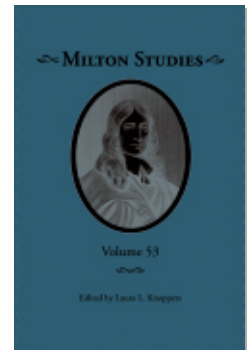
## The Experimental Form of *Lycidas*

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# The Experimental Form of *Lycidas*

*James Rutherford*

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As Thomas H. Luxon observes in his widely read online edition of the poem, “the structure of *Lycidas* remains somewhat mysterious” despite an enormous body of critical literature purporting to explain it.<sup>1</sup> In this essay I plan to untangle some of that mystery. Certain facets of the poem seem designed to provoke uncertainty about its structure, and Milton deliberately undermines the reader’s expectations about the metrical and formal structures of *Lycidas* in order to generate complex meanings and reactions. Such a claim entails reconsideration of some perennial questions about verse form, including the possibility or desirability of expressive acoustics, the tension between narrative movement and stanzaic organization, and the political and philosophical implications of metrical and formal choices. *Lycidas* is *about* such questions, and particularly their difficulty, if not in some cases their ultimate insolubility.

Most discussions of *Lycidas*, beginning with Samuel Johnson’s notorious attack, have focused on the poem’s style and structure. Indeed, determining the formal principles underlying the poem’s construction has been one of the great collaborative projects of contemporary criticism. Edward Weismiller’s masterful and comprehensive reviews of the scholarship on the verse form of Milton’s

poems for the variorum are like good mysteries, or detectives' reports on elaborate crimes that have just been solved. There is drama in the recounting of early stumbles with foot prosody and quantitative metrics before the gradual revelation of what metrists commonly refer to as the "two-line approach" to versification.<sup>2</sup> In his review of scholarship about *Lycidas*, Weismiller seems excited when he discusses Thomas Keightley's discovery of the ottava rima stanza at the end of the poem, and Keightley's own doubts that it is intentional after having learned that there is a second ottava rima section within a longer verse paragraph earlier in the poem.<sup>3</sup> When subsequent critics see in this repetition not accident but a transition from "drift to discipline," or even "the inevitability and logic of a mathematical progression," one feels that, despite all the remaining critical disagreements about the poem's structure, new problems have been identified, and progress has been made.<sup>4</sup> By the middle of the century, the editors of the Milton variorum could feel satisfied that the gradual improvement in the collective understanding of Milton's metrical and formal techniques mimicked a pattern of prosodic improvement within the poem itself: in reading *Lycidas*, ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.

The complex pattern of prosodic development that Milton invents for *Lycidas* reflects a deep change in his conception of the political and philosophical implications of verse form. While most studies of the prosody of *Lycidas* examine the poem in relation to antecedent literary contexts, including the seventeenth century reemergence of the Pindaric ode, the Italian canzone and madrigal tradition, and the neo-Spenserian movement of the 1620s and 1630s, I suggest that the most crucial facets of Milton's compositional strategy anticipate theoretical reflections on creativity in his polemical prose tracts and *Paradise Lost*.<sup>5</sup> In particular, Milton's idiosyncratic approach to prosodic composition in *Lycidas* is in keeping with his representations of the construction of a Christian temple in *The Reason of Church-Government* and *Areopagitica*, and God's creation of the universe in *Paradise Lost*. Through a comparative analysis of these images of various kinds of building manufacture, I will suggest that the verse form of *Lycidas* provides

the earliest intimation of Milton's mature thoughts about human and divine creativity, and of the nature and human consequences of his much-discussed metaphysical monism. With respect to its form, *Lycidas* looks forward as much as it looks backward.

### The Metrical Line

The meter of Milton's poem is more of a problem than it should be, if one compares it to most of the other poetic compositions of its moment. By the 1630s, when the controversies over the accentual or quantitative bases of English meter had died down, there were few outstanding conceptual problems pertaining to metrical form. It should be emphasized that seventeenth century readers tended to learn about meter through practice rather than theory. There is negative corroboration for this proposition in the relative lack of theoretical statements about English prosody after the 1590s. In addition, there is ample evidence that educators often sent their students to read poetry rather than handbooks. Simon Daines, for example, begins his conventional grammatical treatise, *Orthoepia Anglicana*, with some commonplaces about the typical four-part division of grammar into orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody. In order to understand the last two subjects, he leaves the student to "practice in reading such oratours and poets as our tongue affords, wherewith every stationers shop is amply repleat."<sup>6</sup> In his own Latin grammar book, Milton briefly observes that "Prosodie, after this Grammar [is] well learnt, will not need to be Englisht for him who hath a mind to read it."<sup>7</sup> Milton seems to have practiced what he preached, observing in *Apology against a Pamphlet* that he mastered the rhythms of the elegiac poets through imitation (YP 1:889). Milton's grammar-school teacher, Alexander Gill, similarly emphasizes practice over precept when it comes to understanding the prosody of words and verse scansion. Although he supplies some rules concerning poetic meter and rhyme, he makes numerous allowances for deliberate transgressions (to achieve *cacemphaton*, or expressive "ill-sounding," for example), and endorses what he calls the "mixed form" in English

poetry.<sup>8</sup> Major critics, such as Julius Caesar Scaliger, tended to demystify perennially problematic concepts like rhythm and meter: a poem's meter is simply its "measure," a standard of mere length, and the writing of rhythms is a kind of practical, even physical, affair.<sup>9</sup> Torquato Tasso, an important influence on Milton, influentially compared composing a poem to building a ship.<sup>10</sup> In general, early modern writers employed rhythm and meter like tools, and readers appreciated their effects through habitual experience of them and through comparison, just as they do with any other piece of craftsmanship.

There is evidence that many early readers did keep track of a poem's rhythms as they read along, though they often did not pay the kind of attention a poet like Milton would have desired them to. In her recent contribution to the Oxford edition of the complete works of John Milton, Laura Lunger Knoppers describes the kinds of handwritten marginalia that can be found in extant early copies of *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. She shows that early readers of these poems sometimes *did* notice Milton's unorthodox metrical techniques, but that their only concern seemed to have been to *correct* them.<sup>11</sup> There is, however, evidence that more sensitive readers were prepared to notice when a poet included eight strong beats in a single pentameter line, and to think about how such an unusual metrical structure might reinforce or extend the semantic content of the poetry. Thomas Fuller, Milton's contemporary, gives some indication of the kind of complex response that one poet might have had toward the metrical choices made by another. At the beginning of the third chapter of his *Church-History of Britain*, Fuller quotes a "monkish" epitaph for the ancient king Lucius—in Latin, because it has "nothing worthy of translating": "*Lucius tenebris prius Idola qui coluisti, / Es merito celebris ex quo Baptisma subisti*" (You, Lucius, who formerly in the darkness worshipped idols, are justly famous from the day you underwent baptism). While it is not strictly necessary to his historical narration, Fuller engages in some brief stylistic analysis: "It seems the *puddle-Poet* did hope, that the jingling of his *Rhyme* would drown the sound of his *false Quantity*. Except any will say, that he affected to make the middle Syllable in *Idola* short,

because in the days of King *Lucius* Idolatry was curb'd and contracted, whilst Christianity did dilate and extend it self."<sup>12</sup> This is the first instance I know of in which an early modern reader clearly admits that there may be deliberation and meaning behind a metrical irregularity. Nevertheless, we can probably assume that this type of metrical allegorizing is not unique to Fuller since he himself implies that it is not.<sup>13</sup>

The opening of *Lycidas* would have challenged any reader, however. Outside of some previous poems by Milton himself—including "On Time," "Upon the Circumcision," and "At a Solemn Music"—and selected poems by Edmund Spenser and John Donne, it is difficult to find accentual-syllabic lines exemplifying a degree of prosodic freedom comparable with these:

Yet once more, O ye laurels and once more  
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,  
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,  
 And with forced fingers rude,  
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.  
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,  
 Compels me to disturb your season due:  
 For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,  
 Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer:  
 Who would not sing for *Lycidas*? he knew  
 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.  
 He must not float upon his watery bier  
 Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,  
 Without the meed of some melodious tear. (1–14)

The very first line of *Lycidas* presents conceptual problems for a method of scansion. Historically, many critics have been concerned that it does not comport with foot prosody; as Henry Cotterill puts it, one cannot find five iambic rhythms without "so altering the natural length of a word that one shudders as at a note in music."<sup>14</sup> Even though the line is susceptible to a flat metrical pronunciation, its apostrophic character, the presence of heavy assonance, and the two strong caesuras probably make a more unorthodox rendering preferable (such as "Yét ónce móre, Ó ye láurels, ánd ónce móre"). Such distortions were permissible, though hardly

common, in the early modern period.<sup>15</sup> In any case, it is easy to imagine an early reader, conditioned by the previous poems in the collection in which *Lycidas* originally appeared, which are almost unrelentingly iambic, stumbling right at the outset as a result of a powerful expectation for a sequence of regular rhythms. The line also presents difficulties because the terminal word "more" lacks a rhyme in the paragraph. On his or her first encounter with the poem, a reader might even have been confused about whether or not it is supposed to be treated as a partial rhyme for "sere," since the next four lines comprise rhymed couplets. This response would be particularly appropriate given that all the other English obsequies for Edward King are in rhymed couplets.<sup>16</sup> The first line of *Lycidas* thus thwarts any reasonable presuppositions about its rhythmic structure and its place within a rhyme scheme.

The fourth line is even more obviously problematic than the first, both as a result of its shorter length and the presence of only one pair of syllables that is clearly iambic. The trimeter structure of the line and alliteration serve to intensify the jarring quality of the first four syllables, despite the ubiquity of what Derek Attridge calls the "rising inversion" in English poetry; indeed, in this case, we might prefer George T. Wright's more contemptuous terminology for the same metrical phenomenon: "lurching rhythm."<sup>17</sup> There are other rhythmic reversals, including initial trochees and the deadening *epizeuxis* in the eighth line, and the presence of dramatic enjambments and a second end-word lacking a rhyme further obscures the integrity of the decasyllabic line, especially in a vocal performance. Only gradually over the course of the paragraph does the rhythmic structure repair itself, culminating in an unenjambed, and perhaps "melodious," line.

It is, of course, easy to find semantic justification for the rhythmic dissonances present in the first verse paragraph of *Lycidas*, and indeed in many places in which they appear throughout the remainder of the poem. In *Lycidas*, as in the monodic musical compositions of sixteenth and seventeenth century Italy, there are clear indications of word painting and of the adjustment of metrical technique to the mood or psychological state of the poem's

speaker.<sup>18</sup> The poem weaves in and out of coherent rhythmical and rhyme patterns so that at any moment smooth versification may suffer a “heavy change” (37). The “dread voice” (132) of Peter, in particular, is grating, and Neil Forsyth observes that “it is central to the pastoral convention of the poem that bad preaching should be equated with bad singing and that the lines stand out vividly in the midst of this mostly mellifluous verse.”<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, underlying this occasional alternation between iambic regularity and expressive deviation from the iambic norm there is a clear progression from disorder to order, represented by the initial chaos of *Lycidas*’s opening, and the security of iambic pentameter and ottava rima at its close.

The reader, even an ideal reader, ought to be confused by Milton’s prosody at the beginning of *Lycidas*. It is one thing for a poet to deviate from a firmly established rhythm for expressive effect, but it is quite another to transgress a pattern the existence of which the reader might not yet have apprehended. The metrical line and the various deviations from it that one encounters in the first paragraph are easier to understand in retrospect, after having proceeded further through the poem. This is because, after shifting in and out of a relatively regular rhythmic pattern over the course of the entire poem, Milton only demonstrates conventionally defined mastery at the very end. In the final paragraph, there is for the first time an unbroken succession of regular iambic pentameters, without conspicuous rhythmic substitutions, and without enjambment. Milton *withholds* a close approximation of the abstract metrical structure of his verse until the very end of his poem; rather than providing a theme and variations, he provides variations followed by a theme.<sup>20</sup>

### The Verse Paragraph

Milton’s approach to form in *Lycidas* is comprehensive, affecting every element of his prosody. There is a sense in which the metrical line puts itself together over the course of the poem, achieving full clarity only at the end. Meter is intimated before it is embodied.



The developmental character of the metrical line is replicated on a larger scale in the gradual improvement of selected paragraph forms and rhyme schemes. Such a complex, all-embracing pattern of prosodic development is potentially captured by Milton himself in the phrase “build the lofty rhyme,” since the word “rhyme” could signify both rhyme and rhythm in the early modern period, and was frequently a synecdoche for a whole poem.<sup>21</sup> On the level of the verse paragraph, as in the line, it is useful to retain a concept of building that is akin to kinds of material craftsmanship like carpentry or architecture. Milton begins with rough material, works and fashions it, only gradually producing an object that possesses symmetry and proportion.

The use of semantically and structurally parallel verse passages is the key to the design of *Lycidas*. In making this claim, this essay differs from previous detailed accounts of the prosody and structure of the poem in marked ways. Most obviously, it offers an alternative to A. E. Barker’s extremely influential—indeed, almost unchallenged—discussion of the tripartite form of *Lycidas*. In his classic essay, Barker argues—on the basis of patterns of imagery and early thematic anticipations of the Christian climax prior to paragraph 10—that the poem possesses three distinct “movements” that are “practically equal in length and precisely parallel in pattern.”<sup>22</sup> In contrast, I am describing a twofold pattern, in which there are two five-paragraph sections followed by a coda. The presence of paragraphs of the same length at the beginning and conclusion of each of the main sections establishes this symmetrical pattern. The first section begins and ends with sonnets, the second of which corrects formal deficiencies in the first; the second section possesses 21-line paragraphs, and replicates the pattern of formal improvement discernible in the first half of the poem.

In examining Milton’s handling of the verse paragraph in *Lycidas*, it is useful to consider the theory and practice of Torquato Tasso, whose writings—cited positively in *The Reason of Church-Government* and *Of Education*—may indeed have been a direct influence on Milton’s thinking about prosody in the 1630s. Tasso, like many other early modern theorists, emphasizes how the poet

must select his subject, which he calls the “rough material” (*materia nuda*), and gradually bring it to perfection of form. Throughout his *Discourses on the Art of Poetry* and the later *Discourses on the Heroic Poem*, Tasso places a great deal of emphasis on the word “size” (*la quantita*). Near the end of the first discourse in his *Art of Poetry*, for example, Tasso summarizes his analogy between “what we have come to call the raw material with what philosophers call primary matter”: “Just as these philosophers, in considering primary matter (entirely without form though it is), nonetheless take account of its size, which is its constant and eternal attribute, evident before the birth of form and remaining after form decays, so the poet, likewise, should attend to the size of his subject; for when choosing any subject for treatment, he must choose it together with a certain size, this consideration being inseparably part of it.”<sup>23</sup> This is, in the first instance, a caution against choosing a subject too large for the chosen poetic medium, lest the poet lapse into excessive digression or confusion in the plot. Nevertheless, it is likely that, in addition to this comparatively unusual usage, Tasso also has the poem’s prosody in mind, especially given his own habits of composition. In *Il mondo creato*, for example, Tasso describes the subject of his hexameral narrative in an introductory paragraph of 77 lines, and concludes his poem with a 77-line passage in praise of the finished creation.<sup>24</sup> The two comprehensive statements of the poem’s contents occur in paragraphs of the same size. It would be interesting to know if Milton, when he read his predecessors, was attentive to such formal patterns; and whether or not, for example, Tasso’s beginning and concluding his cosmological poem with paragraphs of the same length prompted him to do the same in *Paradise Lost*.<sup>25</sup> At the least, it is a suggestive structural correspondence, indicative of the kind of influence that metaphysical ideas had on practical considerations of prosody and verse construction.

In *Lycidas*, Milton introduces new kinds of complexity to Tasso’s method of ring composition. It is a peculiar consequence of the design of the poem that one may be haunted by a pattern in a paragraph that one is only able to comprehend at a later stage

of one's reading. Despite the prosodic difficulties that critics have found in the first verse paragraph of *Lycidas*, for example, many have been able to perceive in it a "broken sonnet."<sup>26</sup> It is true that the paragraph is 14 lines long, but it fails even to approximate the division into an octave and sestet that is characteristic of all of the independent sonnets Milton published over the course of his life. It is therefore surprising that critics do not discuss the sonnet form of the fifth verse paragraph:

Where were ye nymphs when the remorseless deep  
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?  
For neither were ye playing on the steep,  
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,  
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:  
Ay me, I fondly dream!  
Had ye been there . . . for what could that have done?

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What could the muse herself that Orpheus bore,  
The muse herself for her enchanting son  
Whom universal nature did lament,  
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,  
His gory visage down the stream was sent,  
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore. (50–63)

There are some technicalities about the versification in this passage that may be troubling, including the anacoluthic syntactical structure of line 57, the lack of a rhyme for the word "Lycidas," and the presence of a trimeter line prior to the main semantic division of the paragraph—and yet it more perfectly approximates the sonnet form than the first paragraph does. The fifth paragraph contains 14 lines, and could be divided into two segments that are eight and six lines long.<sup>27</sup> There is a conventional distribution of thematic content in the octave and the sestet: the first eight lines concern the nymphs and their failure to rescue Lycidas while he is stranded at sea, and the following six concern the similar failure of Calliope to aid Orpheus. There is, thus, a typically Miltonic transition from terrestrial to divine concerns at the main division of the paragraph.

There is another way in which the fifth paragraph may improve upon the first: in the presence of three rhyme-words—"bore," "roar," and "shore"—for the word "more," which is unrhymed in the first paragraph. The earliest surviving work on *Lycidas* in the Trinity manuscript draws attention to this detail.<sup>28</sup> The verso side of the last page of *Comus* contains work on three paragraphs. The first is complete, and the phrase "build the lofty rhyme" is underlined. After some draft work on what would become the ninth paragraph, there are the six concluding lines of the fifth, which may be taken as further evidence that these should be treated as a unit. The close juxtaposition in the Trinity manuscript of the first verse paragraph and the final six lines of what would become the fifth is tantalizing evidence of their early connection in the poet's mind.

The rough isomorphism of the first and fifth paragraphs indicates, I believe, that they are closer in meaning than is customarily understood. The fifth paragraph in a sense completes the thoughts in the first, just as it more fully realizes the form and thematic function of the sonnet. These formally and thematically related paragraphs serve to demarcate all the paragraphs in the first half of *Lycidas* as a group. In the first five paragraphs of the poem, the muse is the main subject: the speaker affirms that he will sing for Lycidas even though he is not ready, hopes that some "gentle muse" will do the same for him, and considers in retrospect how Lycidas exemplified the ideal poet—only to conclude these meditations with a despairing sense that no human muse, nor even "the muse herself," can forestall death.

The second half of *Lycidas*, in which there is a transition from human to heavenly perspectives, possesses an analogous but more complex formal organization than the first. It is bracketed by paragraphs that are similar in form and content. The paragraphs are 21 lines in length, and both subdivide into sections of approximately 13 and 8 lines in length. As is the case with the two sonnets, the second of these paragraphs more closely approximates an ideal form only imperfectly manifested in the first.<sup>29</sup>

Jon S. Lawry observes that, in the sixth verse paragraph, "for the first time in the poem, synthesis—in the partly disclosed

theme of resurrection and right judgment—tentatively reveals itself."<sup>30</sup> The tentativeness of Apollo's argument is consistent with the imperfection of the formal organization of the paragraph as a whole:

Alas! What boots it with uncessant care  
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,  
And strictly meditate the thankless muse,  
Were it not better done as others use,  
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,  
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?  
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
(That last infirmity of noble mind)  
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;  
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,  
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,  
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,  
And slits the thin-spun life.

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But not the praise,  
Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears;  
Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,  
Nor in the glistening foil  
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,  
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,  
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;  
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,  
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed. (64–84)

I have introduced a boundary at the middle of line 76, where there is a grammatical stop, and a transition in subject akin to the one I described in the fifth verse paragraph. The larger first section concerns the unceasing efforts of the true artist, his need to abstain from worldly delights, and the compensatory attractions and dangerous elusiveness of fame on earth. The shift to a divine perspective could not be more clean-cut: at the very end of the first sentence the blind fury "slits the thin-spun life," and at the start of the next we are immediately confronted with the voice of Apollo. Despite the clarity of this paragraph's organization, the form may

be seen to be slightly imperfect, because the main division comes partway through a line, and there is a word, “Jove,” that is lacking a rhyme.

The tenth paragraph of *Lycidas* corrects formal deficiencies of the sixth, in ways that should by now be predictable:

Weep no more, woeful shepherds weep no more,  
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,  
 Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor,  
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,  
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,  
 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore,  
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:  
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,  
 Through the dear might of him that walked the waves;  
 Where other groves, and other streams along,  
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,  
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,  
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.

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There entertain him all the saints above,  
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies  
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,  
 And wipe the tears from ever from his eyes.  
 Now Lycidas the shepherds weep no more;  
 Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,  
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good  
 To all that wander in that perilous flood. (165–85)

Whereas in the earlier paragraph the main division came after the sixth syllable of line 177, this one has major and minor sections that are thirteen and eight lines, respectively. These passages subdivide into halves, as the scene changes from the “watery floor” to heaven, and from heaven back to the “perilous flood.” There is also a parallel in what I have described as the corrective use of rhyme. Just as the fifth paragraph contains three rhyme words for one that is unrhymed in the first, this paragraph has three rhymes for the word “Jove”: “love,” “above,” and “move.” Moreover, as many critics have noticed, there are five “more-rhymes” at the poem’s

climax, which is suggestive of the final reparation of discordant elements from the very beginning of the poem.<sup>31</sup>

The parallel use of form in the sixth and tenth paragraphs is concomitant with numerous semantic and verbal echoes. Of course, the entire poem is dense with inner allusions, but there is an impressive—almost line-by-line—series of correspondences between these paragraphs in particular. The despairing question about the utility of meditating the thankless muse with “uncessant care” in the first line of the sixth paragraph is paralleled by the injunction to “weep no more” in the first line of the tenth. The “homely slighted shepherds” have their counterparts in the “woeful shepherds.” There are similar oscillations between images of light and darkness: in the sixth paragraph, the speaker juxtaposes the laborious days he actually goes through with the sport he might find in the shade; in the tenth the day-star sinks in the morning bed, only to flame in the forehead of the morning sky. Both paragraphs have capillary images: the negligent poet might play with the “tangles of Neaera’s hair” while the ocean laves the “oozy locks” of Lycidas. According to Apollo, “Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise”; in the tenth paragraph, Lycidas is “mounted high, / Through the dear might of him that walked the waves.” Jove witnesses and judges with his “pure eyes,” but the sweet societies of saints “entertain” Lycidas and “wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.” In general, images in the sixth paragraph are repeated with variations in the tenth, usually with more lofty diction, and carrying more serious connotations. In the end, the cumulative weight of these invidious comparisons causes the “meed” described in the sixth paragraph to be overwhelmed by the “large recompense” of the tenth.

The apprehension of invisible forms can aid our interpretation of *Lycidas*. The use of corrective metrical and verse-paragraph structures has implications for understanding the tone of Milton’s language. The majority of critics have concurred that Milton represents his psychological recovery, following his recognition of his own mortality and his doubts concerning his vocation, over the course of the poem, finding final consolation through his recognition

of the redemptive power of Christ. Nevertheless, there have always been readers who believe that this traditional solution is too pat, and perhaps even ironic. For example, in his challenging essay, Neil Forsyth suggests that paragraph 10 contains "a deliberately false climax."<sup>32</sup> However, if we are willing to say, as a result of the presence of irregular meter and the confused disposition of thoughts in the first paragraph, that both the speaker and the sonnet are "broken," it seems reasonable to correlate improvements in metrical and paragraph forms with the resolution of the speaker's, and perhaps the poet's, emotional equilibrium. The prosodic reparation evident in the tenth verse paragraph of *Lycidas* echoes the optimistic note that many critics hear in its language. In this case, I would suggest that deeper familiarity with Milton's formal artifice only deepens the emotional register of the poetry.

In a famous early article, G. Wilson Knight characterizes *Lycidas* as "an effort to bind and clamp together a universe trying to fly off into separate bits," and Stanley Fish admonishes critics for trying to do the same thing to the poem itself.<sup>33</sup> However, I hope that my focus on reparative patterns in a sampling of lines and structurally significant paragraphs provides further evidence for the discernment by many critics of unity in *Lycidas*. Despite its manifold difficulties in terms of meter, tense, point of view, logic, psychology, and so on, the perception of unity is not merely the result of formalist bias, but rather is reflective of Milton's deliberate prosodic invention. The movement of *Lycidas* is anything but entropic: after a radically defamiliarizing opening, it drives toward increasingly well-ordered formal designs. This has a significant impact on how the reader approaches the poem. Metrical irregularities can encourage readers to participate in the formation of the verse that they are reading: they might desire to correct problematic rhythms in accordance with a preconceived notion of what a metrical line should sound like, or find a semantic justification for them, or deliberately alter the natural emphasis of words to give them greater dramatic force. All of these possibilities are open to the reader at the beginning of *Lycidas*; only gradually is one educated in the proper nature of versification as the poem achieves its



Christian climax. Similarly, the reader is exposed to an imperfect version of a paragraph form before being introduced to an improved version at a subsequent stage of the poem. It is a significant innovation of Milton's method of composition to make meter and paragraph forms follow an analogous pattern of development. Indeed, Milton may be the first poet in the English language (perhaps in any language) to distribute, systematically and deliberately, imperfect and corrected versions of the same prosodic form in the same poem for rhetorical effect.

### **The Meaning of Miltonic Invention**

After having encountered Milton's Trinity manuscript for the first (and presumably only) time, Charles Lamb was appalled: "I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter Cantos of Spenser into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable, at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and these fluctuating, successive, indifferent!"<sup>34</sup> Lamb's comments reflect disappointment that Milton is like many of us, making mistakes and alterations in the course of composition. Nevertheless, in the previous section of this essay, I indicate that what is more remarkable about the draft work on *Lycidas* is that it gives hints of a rationale for some of the most disruptive prosodic features in the final version of the poem, including, most obviously, the irregular appearance of end-rhymes. It should also be noted that Milton himself evinces some pride rather than embarrassment in a slow process of composition characterized by frequent deletion, revision, and reordering of material.

One of Milton's early biographers, Jonathan Richardson, reports his having been told that Milton "would Dictate many, perhaps 40 Lines as it were in a Breath, and then reduce them to half the Number." Gordon Campbell observes the Virgilian precedent for such behavior, slyly suggesting that "it would seem that the same muse that visited Milton's slumbers when the morn purples the

east had many centuries earlier visited Virgil's bedside."<sup>35</sup> Virgil's painstaking methods of composition, and his final dissatisfaction with his *Aeneid*, were immortalized in Donatus's famous biography, though Milton may well have read in his acquaintance Franciscus Junius's *De pictura veterum* (The Painting of the Ancients; Latin 1637, English 1638) about how Virgil "brought forth his verses after the manner of Beares, which bring forth their young ones without shape or beauty, and afterwards by licking, fashion what they have brought forth; that such were the new births of his wit, rude and imperfect to looke on, untill he by handling and polishing gave them perfect lineaments." Junius's book, which is generally concerned with "the beginning, progresse, and consummation" of poetry and painting, contains many examples of this kind, often emphasizing how artists "outwardly fashion" works until they are gradually made to conform to "exemplarie and supernall numbers." This kind of casual artistic Platonism was, of course, pervasive in the early modern period, and examples could be multiplied.<sup>36</sup>

Milton probably had these ancient images of artistic creation in mind when he composed *Lycidas*, but his achievement gives them a new force. The views about artistic creation collected above reflect a similar limitation: writers like Virgil and Cicero, Augustine and Plutarch, explain what goes on in the artist's mind *before* he or she puts pen to paper, brush to canvas, or chisel to rock. Milton's art of perfection, which he inaugurates in *Lycidas*, incorporates this thought process into the fabric of the poem itself. In opposition to Philip Sidney's observation about the creative process, it seems that Milton's technique stands not in the idea or fore-conceit of his work, but in the work itself. Milton, that is, breaks down the barrier between planning his poem and building it.

It has not been remarked how significantly Milton's representations of "spiritual architecture" differ from the normative architectural theory of his contemporaries. Marvin Trachtenberg describes how Leon Battisti Alberti and subsequent early modern architects and theorists originally opened up the "unbridgeable chasm between designing and building" that has been with us ever since.<sup>37</sup> This change is evident in seventeenth century English

texts, including the *Elements of Architecture* by Henry Wotton, who Milton met shortly before his journey to the Continent in 1638. In this work Wotton, drawing on the theories of Vitruvius and Alberti, contrasts natural and mathematical reason, giving precedence to the latter. The work of the common laborer is minimized, indeed almost irrelevant in comparison with the intellectual work done by the architect, "whose glory doth more consist, in the designement and idea of the whole worke," and whose "truest ambition should be to make the forme, which is the nobler part (as it were) triumph over the matter."<sup>38</sup> The real work of architecture is in making the design for a project, which is to be imitated carefully as the artisans gradually bring form to matter. The artisans play merely an instrumental role in the architectural project; they do not introduce significant changes to a building's design.

Milton's conception of the building process, particularly in his descriptions of the perfection of the Christian church, is different. Milton, in effect, reintroduces the older notion of the master builder, who revises plans in accordance with the exigencies and pressures of the moment. That is to say, he includes the practical difficulties and accidents of the process of construction in his notion of an architectural plan. The material processes of manufacture and the abstract elements of design become blurred. In the following passage, taken from *The Reason of Church-Government*, there is a much greater role for extemporaneous innovation:

If sects and schismes be turbulent in the unsetl'd estate of a Church, while it lies under the amending hand, it best beseems our Christian courage to think they are but as the throws and pangs that go before the birth of reformation, and that the work it selfe is now in doing. For if we look but on the nature of elementall and mixt things, we know they cannot suffer any change of one kind, or quality into another without the struggl of contrarieties. And in things artificiall, seldome any elegance is wrought without a superfluous wast and refuse in the transaction. No Marble statue can be politely carv'd, no fair edifice built without almost as much rubbish and sweeping. Insomuch that even in the spirituall conflict of S. Pauls conversion there fell scales from his eyes that were not perceav'd before. (YP 1:795–96)

The work is in “doing,” not designing, and so it is unsurprising that the perfected church will possess features that “were not perceav’d before.” Milton basically repeats the metaphor in *Areopagitica*, when he likens men “cried out against for schismatics and sectaries” to artisans building the “Temple of the Lord.” Milton states in this work, as he did in *The Reason of Church-Government*, that it is both inevitable and desirable that a series of schisms and dissections will occur before the whole structure can be completed. Even in the end there is no simple uniformity: “And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every peece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderat varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportionall arises the goodly and the gracefull symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure” (YP 2:555). It is easy to pass over such passages as these, which can seem to be casual repetitions of contemporary theoretical preferences for complex kinds of harmony. It is mistaken, however, to see them as conventional endorsements of *concordia discors*. Milton, in contrast with many contemporaries, identifies with the worker, rather than the architect, when he describes how Christians should build the lofty temple.<sup>39</sup>

Many scholars have been sensitive to the relationship Milton’s prosody has to his temperament, his ideas about liberty, and his mistrust of domestic political authority. In making a comparison with Milton’s earliest radical exhortations to a “perfect” reformation, it is my intention to change our conception of the political—and, perhaps, ontological—implications of Milton’s prosody. Milton does not just endorse deviations from a conventional form, but asserts that imperfect, and even anarchic, actions may be required before political progress is possible. It is important to recognize the implications of Milton’s belief that, in poetic and church matters, imperfections may speed up reformation. As he says in *The Reason of Church-Government*, “those many Sects and Schismes by some suppos’d to be among us, and that rebellion in *Ireland*, ought not to be a hindrance, but a hastning of reformation” (YP 1:794).<sup>40</sup>

Such statements as these, which basically encourage violent protests against the state, are related to the invention of a prosodic art that is predicated on the deliberate incorporation of imperfect versions of metrical and paragraph forms. Milton's practical innovations in poetics precede, and in some sense underlie, his revolutionary politics.

It is no accident that some of the most radical elements of Milton's mature theology are communicated in scenes involving architectural design and building in *Paradise Lost*. John Rumrich's influential ideas about Milton's monism suggest that "for Milton the created order of material being in time cannot advance without disorder."<sup>41</sup> Rumrich is especially useful in drawing attention to the monistic implications of the architectural images in *Paradise Lost*. He defends the creative potential of chaotic primordial matter by pointing out that it is not God, but Satan, Sin, and Death who impose order on Chaos, in the form of a bridge extending from earth to hell. Rumrich counterintuitively observes that "the Fall has imposed a created order on his [Chaos'] realm: the tyrannically oppressive, ontologically shriveled structure of evil."<sup>42</sup> It is worth dwelling on the complex imagery of this moment, which derives some of its force from Milton's rethinking of the role of the architect in the 1630s and 1640s. Milton not only depicts different consequences of building in Chaos, but different antecedents for it; heavenly and satanic *processes* of building manufacture are radically opposed. When the Son set out on his "great expedition" to build the universe, "all his Father in him shone" (7.196). Indeed, at no point is God altogether apart from the Son during the Creation: it is the Father who speaks at the beginning of every day of the Creation, and on the seventh day we learn that the Father "also went / Invisible, yet staid" (7.588–89). Satan, by contrast, is an utterly detached—indeed, unconscious—architect, taking no part in Creation though he reaps all the credit. Following the construction of the bridge, Sin tells Satan of "[his] magnific deeds, / [His] trophies, which [he views] as not [his] own" (10.354–55), and of how his "virtue hath won / What [his] hands builded not" (10.372–73). Despite Satan's ignorance of the plan or building of the bridge, Sin assures him that he is "their author and prime architect" (10.356).

There is a deep conceptual cohesion in Milton's depictions of architectural fashioning over the course of his career, from the early 1640s to the completion of *Paradise Lost* more than two decades later. In each of these depictions, there is disproportionate emphasis on the process of manufacture rather than its planning or even completion, especially in the images of temple construction from *The Reason of Church-Government* and *Areopagitica*. For Milton, it is the gradual process of repair, without necessarily having a definite conception of what one is working toward, that makes all the difference. When Samuel Butler mockingly writes of the Puritan belief that "religion [was] intended / For nothing else but to be mended," he may well have had Milton in mind.<sup>43</sup>

Simon Jarvis asserts the centrality of a detailed analysis of meter and verse form to poetics, even when it does not bear a clear mimetic relation to linguistic content, and despite the generally acknowledged fact that, "far from having been solved, most of the main descriptive questions concerning what rhythm and meter actually are and how they work remain controverted."<sup>44</sup> In this essay, I have tried to go beyond traditional techniques of mimetic prosody in order to provide evidence for Jarvis's suggestion that prosodic analysis can help us to appreciate more than occasional instances of onomatopoeia. A growing body of criticism shows that Milton's metaphysical monism affects modes of representation and verse form in *Paradise Lost*; my work extends such research by showing that the prosody of *Lycidas* prefigures, and in some sense instantiates, monistic principles that Milton, as far as we know, only consciously affirmed many years later.<sup>45</sup> Milton's compositional methods both reflect and influence his philosophical principles, thereby demonstrating his frequently stated idea that poems can teach us as well or better than metaphysicians can.

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## Notes to Rutherford, “The Experimental Form of *Lycidas*”

I would like to thank Lee Johnson, Jeff Dolven, Nigel Smith, Vance Smith, Stephen Fallon, Sean Keilen, and the late Marshall Grossman for their comments on this essay.

1. *The Milton Reading Room*, June 2011, [www.dartmouth.edu/~milton](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton). John Carey reviews much of the best scholarship on the structure of *Lycidas* in *Milton: Complete Shorter Poems*, rev. ed. (New York, 2007), 237–43. Quotations from *Lycidas* are from this edition. See C. A. Patrides, ed., *Milton's "Lycidas": The Tradition and the Poem*, rev. ed. (Columbia, Mo., 1983), for additional fundamental bibliography.

2. See Edward Weismiller, "Studies of Style and Verse Form in *Paradise Regained*," in *A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton*, vol. 4, ed. Walter MacKellar (New York, 1975), 253–82. A series of essays by John Creaser, "'Service Is Perfect Freedom': Paradox and Prosodic Style in *Paradise Lost*," *Review of English Studies* 58, no. 235 (2007): 268–315, places Miltonic scansion on a new footing. Creaser rejects classical approaches to verse form in favor of the method of Derek Attridge, providing particularly persuasive evidence of the latter's superiority in dealing with problem lines. I do not engage recent controversies about beats and feet here, since it is my principal intention to indicate how it can be problematic to approach *Lycidas* with any theory of metrical prosody.

3. Edward Weismiller, "Studies of Verse Form in the Minor English Poems," in *A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton*, vol. 2, part 3, ed. A. S. P. Woodhouse and Douglas Bush (New York, 1972), 1070.

4. *Ibid.*, 1072.

5. For an analysis of Pindaric characteristics of *Lycidas*, see Stella Revard, "Alpheus, Arethusa, and the Pindaric Pursuit in *Lycidas*," in *Poetry and Politics: New Essays on Pindar and His World*, ed. P. G. Stanwood (Binghamton, N.Y., 1995). David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 2002), 252–69, situates *Lycidas* in a neo-Spenserian context. I owe particular debts to scholars who have located Italian poetic and musical precedents for Milton's formal techniques. See F. T. Prince, *The Italian Element in Milton's Verse* (Oxford, 1954); Ants Oras, "Milton's Early Rhyme Schemes and the Structure of *Lycidas*," *Modern Philology* 52, no. 1 (1954): 12–22; Clay Hunt, *Lycidas and the Italian Critics* (New Haven, 1979).

6. Simon Daines, *Orthoepia Anglicana* (Menston, 1967), A4–A5.

7. John Milton, *Accedence Commenc'd Grammar*, in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols., ed. Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven, 1953–82), 8:86, hereafter cited as YP. There is a similar comment in *Of Education* about how "the prosody of a verse . . . could not but have hit on . . . among the rudiments of grammar" (YP 2:404).

8. Gill's concluding remark, in his chapter on accented rhymed verse, is telling: "To sum up, our poets indulge in such license with types of poems and rhythms, and combinations of both that almost



nothing can be devised which you will not find exemplified in them." *Alexander Gill's Logonomia Anglica*, part 2, ed. and trans. Bror Danielsson and Arvid Gabrielson (Stockholm, 1972), 185.

9. George Saintsbury, *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe*, vol. 2 (London, 1902), observes that in the second book of Scaliger's *Poetices libri septem*, entitled "Qui et Hyle," "this hyle—this 'material' of poetry—is frankly acknowledged to be verse," adding in a footnote that "the decision of this is all the more remarkable in that Scaliger does not, as unwary moderns might expect, make verse the *form* of Poetry, but the *matter*" (72).

10. *The Genesis of Tasso's Narrative Theory: English Translations of the Early Poetics and a Study of their Comparative Significance*, ed. and trans. Lawrence F. Rhu (Detroit, 1993), 116. Milton extols Tasso as a critical model in *Of Education*, 403–05.

11. Laura Lunger Knoppers, *The 1671 Poems: Paradise Regain'd and Samson Agonistes*, in *The Complete Works of John Milton*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 2008), instances the practice of Samuel Say as an example (lxviii). For more on metrical transformations of Milton's poetry, see Raymond Dexter Havens, *The Influence of Milton on English Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass., 1922); and Dustin Griffin, *Regaining Paradise: Milton and the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1986).

12. Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain: From the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year 1648* (1655), ed. James Nichols (Oxford, 1868), 31.

13. Although there is a dearth of explicit metrical analyses like Fuller's, there is extensive implicit evidence that poets expected their readers to understand the significance of deliberate metrical irregularities. John Creaser, "Prosody and Liberty in Milton and Marvell," in *Milton and the Terms of Liberty*, ed. Graham Parry and Joad Raymond (Rochester, N.Y., 2002), is correct to declare that "seventeenth-century poets were as aware as any that verse-form is embodied meaning, not just an envelope" (37). For further information on engagements with Milton's prosody in early editions of *Paradise Lost*, see John Leonard, "'Doing What He Describes': Enactment in Milton's Poetry," *Cithara* 49, no. 1 (2009): 7–25, accessed June 22, 2011, [www.ProQuest.com](http://www.ProQuest.com).

14. Henry Cotterill, *Milton's "Lycidas"* (London, 1902), 97. Although many critics acknowledge the unusual metrical structure of this (arguably) eight-stress line, it has not engendered the kind of lengthy and notoriously acrimonious prosodic debate that surrounds the line 621 in book 2 of *Paradise Lost*. Donald Hall, *To Read Poetry* (New York, 1981), provides a conventional discussion of this problematic line, which captures the different effect of the first line of *Lycidas*: "If you were asked to scan the single line—'Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades

of death'—you would be right to refuse. But if you came upon this line deep in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, when you had learned to step to the tune of iambic pentameter, you would sort it by twos, giving a sharp beat like a foot tap to the even-numbered syllables" (77). Perhaps in consequence, one could say that critics have been right, by and large, to refuse to scan the opening of Milton's most metrically inventive shorter poem.

15. There are salient exceptions to this rule, especially within the sonnet tradition. Poets including Donne and Shakespeare frequently open their poems with metrically deviant lines, such as "Batter my heart, three personed God," or "When to the sessions of sweet summer's thought." Spenser's *The Shepheardes Calender*, an important source for both the content and form of *Lycidas*, provides even more radical metrical experimentation. For an analysis of the "contest" between different metrical forms throughout the *Calender*, see Jeff Dolven, "Spenser's Metrics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser*, ed. Richard A. McCabe (Oxford, 2010), 385–402.

16. Edward Le Comte, ed., *Justa Edovardo King: A Facsimile Edition of the Memorial Volume in which Milton's "Lycidas" First Appeared* (Norwood, Pa., 1978). Only William More's contribution to the volume, "I do not come like one affrighted," has prosodic irregularities at the start, beginning as it does with a series of partial end-rhymes and irregularly placed caesuras. Unlike in *Lycidas*, however, every line is clearly iambic, and the couplet rhyme scheme is immediately clear.

17. Derek Attridge, *Poetic Rhythms: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 1995), 120–22; George T. Wright, *Hearing the Measures: Shakespeare and Other Inflections* (Madison, Wis., 2001), 172–79.

18. For discussion of the "concent of words and music," and of Milton's knowledge of music theory, see Diane Kelsey McColley, *Poetry and Music in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1997).

19. See Neil Forsyth, "Lycidas: A Wolf in Saints' Clothing," *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009): 695. The clergy's bad music "grates" against the ottava rima form at the close of the ninth paragraph.

20. My argument, in the end, is meant to complicate previous arguments about meter by theorists as different as Derek Attridge, Edward Weismiller, and John Hollander. It is common among metrists to discuss the prosody of a line in terms of rhythm and meter. In *Vision and Resonance* (Oxford, 1975), Hollander explains, "The word of flow, 'rhythm,' characterizes the series of actual effects upon our consciousness of a line or passage of verse: it is the road along which we travel. The meter, then would apply to whatever it was that might constitute the framing, the isolating; its presence we infer from our scanning" (135–36). My argument, in effect, conflates the distinction, since the reader of *Lycidas*, at the beginning of the poem, is not given a

sufficiently regular rhythmic pattern from which to make definitive judgments about the metrical frame.

21. Edward Weismiller, "Rhymes and Reasons," in *Classical, Renaissance, and Postmodernist Acts of the Imagination*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Newark, Del., 1996), 239. Milton's own uses of the word "rhyme" usually connote poetry in general, as it does in the first paragraph of *Paradise Lost*.

22. A. E. Barker, "The Pattern of the *Nativity Ode*," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1941): 171–72. For an equally compelling, though much less influential, analysis of the bipartite design of the poem, including an impressive list of imagistic correspondences in the first and second parts, see J. Martin Evans, *The Road from Horton: Looking Backwards in Lycidas* (Victoria, B.C., 1983), 62–63.

23. Tasso, qtd. in Rhu, *The Genesis of Tasso's Narrative Theory*, 116.

24. See Paolo Luparia, ed., *Il mondo creato* (Alessandria, 2006), 1.1–77; 6.1051–1127. There has been a great deal of examination of numerological patterns in Milton's poetry and the contemporary cultural significance of numerology. See Alastair Fowler, ed., *Paradise Lost*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York, 2007), 25–33; all quotations to the poem are from this edition. For more on the "numerological onslaught" and discussion of the methodological problems of numerological analysis, see John K. Hale, "Paradise Lost, A Poem in Twelve Books—or Is It Ten?" *Philological Quarterly* 74 (1995): 131–49. In any case, I focus on structural, as opposed to numerological, correspondences in *Lycidas*.

25. This fact about Milton's epic has not, to my knowledge, been noticed. If my argument that Milton creates patterns of allusion between paragraphs by giving them similar structures is correct, it may be worthwhile to look for evidence of this technique in *Paradise Lost* (although discriminating accidental from intentional structural correspondences in paragraphs within an epic poem would require a great deal of tact on the part of the critic).

26. Keith Rinehart, "A Note on the First Fourteen Lines of Milton's *Lycidas*," *Notes and Queries* 198 (1953): 103.

27. Punctuation that is crucial to my argument is stable across the various texts of *Lycidas*. See Creaser's "Editing *Lycidas*: The Authority of Minutiae," *Milton Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2010): 73–103, for a sophisticated exploration of textual issues and an eclectic text of the poem.

28. Harris Francis Fletcher, ed., *John Milton's Complete Poetical Works, Reproduced in Photographic Facsimile*, vol. 1 (Urbana, Ill., 1943).

29. These paragraphs do not possess a conventional form like sonnet structure, but it is possible that Milton attributed symbolic sig-

nificance to numbers taken from the Fibonacci sequence. See Lee M. Johnson, "Milton's Mathematical Symbol of Theodicy," in *Symmetry: Unifying Human Understanding*, vol. 2, ed. István Hargittai (New York, 1986).

30. Jon S. Lawry, "'Eager Thought': *Dialectic in Lycidas*," *PMLA* 77, no. 1 (1962): 30.

31. For more on the cyclical rhyme patterns in *Lycidas*, see Joseph Wittreich, "Milton's 'Destined Urn': The Art of *Lycidas*," *PMLA* 84, no. 1 (1969): 60–70.

32. Forsyth, "*Lycidas*: A Wolf in Saints' Clothing," 691.

33. G. Wilson Knight, *The Burning Oracle: Studies in the Poetry of Action* (Oxford, 1939), 70; Stanley Fish, "*Lycidas*: A Poem Finally Anonymous," in Patrides, *Milton's "Lycidas"*, 319–40.

34. Qtd. in Stephen Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade* (Cambridge, 1999), 4.

35. Richardson qtd. in Helen Darbishire, *The Early Lives of John Milton* (1932; reissued Ann Arbor, 1972), 291; Gordon Campbell, "Milton and the Lives of the Ancients," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 47 (1984): 237.

36. Franciscus Junius, *The Literature of Classical Art*, ed. Keith Aldrich, Philipp Fehl, and Raina Fehl (Berkeley, 1991), 181, 227. Junius intersperses such commonplaces throughout his work; see, in particular, the second chapter of the third book (225–38), which concerns proportion.

37. Marvin Trachtenberg, "Building Outside Time in Alberti's 'De re aedificatoria,'" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 48 (2005): 125, accessed June 22, 2011, [www.jstor.org/stable/20167681](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20167681).

38. See Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture: Its Record in Early Printed Books Published in Facsimile* (New York, 1970), 11–12. Milton sought the retired diplomat out in Eton, only a few miles away from his residence at Horton, prior to undertaking his journey to the Continent; for more on this meeting, see Thomas Corns and Gordon Campbell, *John Milton: Life, World, and Thought* (Oxford, 2008), 104.

39. For alternative analyses of the meaning of Milton's temple-building imagery, see David Loewenstein, *Milton and the Drama of History: Historical Vision, Iconoclasm, and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, 1990), 35–50; and Noam Reisner, "Spiritual Architectonics: Destroying and Rebuilding the Temple in *Paradise Regained*," *Milton Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (2009): 166–82.

40. Milton refers to the revolt in Ulster that began on October 23, 1641, which he thought constituted evidence of the inefficacy of Charles I and episcopal governance. Corns and Campbell observe that

Milton's sympathy for Protestants in Ireland was "deep-felt and long-standing" (*John Milton*, 214).

41. John Rumrich, "Milton's God and the Matter of Chaos," *PMLA* 110, no. 5 (1995): 1041.

42. John Rumrich, *Matter of Glory: A New Preface to "Paradise Lost"* (Pittsburgh, 1987), 126.

43. Samuel Butler, *Hudibras, Parts I and II and Selected Other Writings*, ed. John Wilders and Hugh de Quehen (Oxford, 1973), 1.1.203–04.

44. Simon Jarvis, "For a Poetics of Verse," *PMLA* 125, no. 4 (2010): 933.

45. For a detailed analysis of the monistic implications of Milton's prosody in *Paradise Lost*, see Beverley Sherry, "Milton, Materialism, and the Sound of *Paradise Lost*," *Essays in Criticism* 60 (2010): 220–41.