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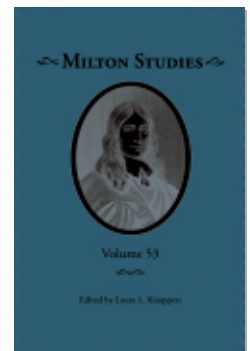
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From Judgment to Interpretation: Eighteenth Century Critics of Milton's *Paradise Lost*

Esther Yu

In the fateful separation scene of book 9 of *Paradise Lost*, Eve surveys the abundant growth in the garden before her and suggests to Adam that a more effective way of tending to the garden might be devised:

Let us divide our labors, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The Woodbine round this Arbour, or direct
The clasping Ivie where to climb, while I
In yonder Spring of Roses intermixt
With Myrtle, find what to redress till Noon:
For while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our dayes work brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of Supper comes unearn'd.¹

In his examination of this passage, Christopher Ricks demonstrates the technique of close reading to brilliant effect. He turns a critical eye upon individual words, searching for secondary and tertiary definitions that enrich the sense of the entire passage. He seizes, for example, upon Eve's desire to "redress" nature. The most obvious definition of "redress" in a botanical context relates to setting or raising a plant to an upright position. "But it seems improbable," Ricks writes, "that Milton is unaware of the moral resonance of the word—its moral meaning is also ancient, and found in Chaucer. Eve may believe that she is going to set the plants upright and erect. In fact, she 'herself, though fairest unsupported flower,' will be 'drooping unsustained'" (9.432, 430). Eve's reference to the "casual discourse" that would prevent the pair from working similarly invites Ricks's scrutiny. For "casual" may signify not only that "which befalls" but also that "which falls"—a denotation only too appropriate for reminding us that the discourse that ultimately distracts Eve not only brings the "day's work . . . to little," but precipitates the fall of humankind.² By exploring the different registers of key words, Ricks goes well beyond a literal understanding of what Eve communicates to detect the undercurrents of language that seem to reveal the irresistible force of some greater design, be it God's or the poet's. Readers armed with Ricks's insights are better prepared to grasp the poignancy of a scene in which Eve remains tragically unaware of the dangers attendant upon her suggestion.

Ricks's use of new critical methods in his reading of *Paradise Lost* serves, of course, as a pointed vindication of Milton's style against well-known New Critics like T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis, who had accused Milton of neglecting sense for sound. The early-twentieth-century movement of New Criticism in which these critics played a part, as we recall, elevated the text into a self-sufficient unit for critical analysis and emphasized the value of textual analysis over belletristic, historical, or biographical approaches to literary studies.³ The main work of literary analysis, the New Critics insisted, should consist of careful, sustained attention to selected portions of a text in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the work as a unified whole. By the time the methodology

was codified in William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley's 1954 essay, "The Intentional Fallacy," the central stance of New Criticism could be formulated in this way: "poetic analysis and exegesis" was to be considered no less than the "true and objective way of criticism." The textual meaning so highly prized by New Critics was to be uncovered through examining a poem's internal features; in Wimsatt and Beardsley's words, such meaning could be accessed "through the semantics and syntax of a poem, through our habitual knowledge of the language, through grammars, dictionaries, and all the literature which is the source of dictionaries, in general through all that makes a language and culture."⁴ Ricks's analysis, as we have seen, explores meaning in just this manner, as the poet's language becomes the principal point of departure for acquiring interpretative insight.

If New Criticism today tends to be dismissed as a state of innocence—or willful ignorance—before the sophistication of theory and New Historicism, the techniques associated with the movement are still readily employed in professional journals and deeply entrenched in American educational institutions. The legacy of New Criticism has been largely pedagogical and powerfully so; as John Guillory and others argue, the New Critics shaped literary criticism into the form that made it acceptable to twentieth century universities as an academic discipline.⁵ A genealogical exploration of New Criticism's pedagogical dimensions takes us to Cambridge University in 1929, when I. A. Richards called attention to the shortcomings of literary education with the protocols of *Practical Criticism*; it would, however, fall to his pupil William Empson to further develop the interpretive procedures of close reading in such works as *Seven Types of Ambiguity*.⁶ Across the Atlantic, a group of American Southerners took up the formulation of close reading and gave the practice institutional weight, first in southern universities, then elsewhere.⁷ The transatlantic origins of close reading are worth considering, if only to complicate the usual alignment of the practice with a particular conservative ideology.⁸ The Southern Agrarians who endorsed and eventually codified close reading, after all, found it congenial to a conservative

agenda that had little to do with the ideological preferences of the English progenitors of the method. The adaptability of close reading to such distinctly motivated critical enterprises has seldom been acknowledged.

I wish to suggest, however, that the versatility of close reading has allowed it to span historical divides as well as ideological ones. Empson's writing provides compelling evidence that his advocacy of close reading and taste for ambiguity were heavily informed by a much earlier set of practices. In *Some Versions of Pastoral*, he devotes a great deal of attention to the responses of two eighteenth century critics of Milton, Richard Bentley and Zachary Pearce, and virtually builds his argument upon observations they make. Though Empson's conclusions are, as readers have come to expect of him, idiosyncratically original, his engagement with the earlier critics suggests a common approach underlying more apparent differences.⁹ Empson mimics the eighteenth century critics' method of subjecting verbal minutiae to scrutiny, and draws his final argument out of the same evidentiary pool of individual word choices and grammatical constructions. Furthermore, he reserves his highest praise for these early critics in the instances in which they advance interpretations of Milton's language—precisely the work that he, and other New Critics after him, would come to see as the main burden of literary criticism.¹⁰

In his close readings of Milton, Empson drew inspiration from an earlier historical period that was itself a significant turning point in the development of literary criticism. As the focal point of over three centuries' worth of literary criticism, *Paradise Lost* provides an ideal locus from which to examine such historical shifts in reading. My own survey of early-eighteenth-century critics of *Paradise Lost* confirms what a thoughtful reading of Empson's work already suggests: the key principles behind the mid-twentieth-century practice of close reading are far from new. Furthermore, a study of the eighteenth century critics of *Paradise Lost* reveals a perceptible shift in the approach to reading—one that exhibits the same inward turn to the text that New Criticism later recapitulates. On the earlier end of the eighteenth century transition, critics like

Joseph Addison and Richard Bentley produce evaluative readings by relying on principles of classical criticism to assess the poem's aesthetic value; later commentators including Zachary Pearce and the two Jonathan Richardsons, however, explore textual meaning with interpretative practices prefiguring modern techniques of close reading. As the commentators of *Paradise Lost* led the move away from neoclassical modes of criticism, they, in turn drew from another well-established mode of reading—biblical hermeneutics. Our fascination with textual meaning and our sense of the enormous potential of literary works to yield multiple readings cannot be understood apart from recognizing the powerful influence of biblical hermeneutics. Ultimately, my reading provides yet one more way to register the magnitude of Milton's achievement: *Paradise Lost*, for eighteenth century readers, becomes the text that lays bare the insufficiency of existing critical tools and calls forth new approaches to reading.

Judgment

The explosive growth of the literary marketplace in the early eighteenth century produced a newly diversified range of reading materials for a growing community of readers. For Joseph Addison and other prominent men of letters, however, this expansion signaled a crisis of taste. The cultural elite found themselves contending with the increasingly forceful tides of public opinion in deciding questions of literary value. "The existence of a public itself," as David Marshall observes, seemed "to undermine the universal judgment and agreement upon which the standard of taste [was seen to be] founded."¹¹ Leading literary men like Addison attempted to maintain order in the Republic of Letters by insisting upon guidelines that would allow readers to recognize literary works of distinction. The ancients, by Addison's time, had come to be regarded among the English literati as undisputed authorities on poetry and literary criticism. The French neoclassical critic René Le Bossu, whose work had circulated in translation since 1695, articulates the prevailing view: "Aristotle and Horace left

behind them such rules, as make them by all men of learning, to be look'd upon as perfect masters of the art of poetry: and the poems of *Homer* and *Virgil* are, by the grant of all ages, the most perfect models of this way of writing, the world ever saw."¹² Addison's evaluation of *Paradise Lost* thus draws on the principles of classical criticism set forth by Aristotle, Horace, and to a lesser extent, Longinus—the three figures who had most influenced the development of European criticism.¹³

When the classical critics approached works of literature, the plot of any given piece was considered on the basis of its composition and emotional effectiveness. The French neoclassical critics, for example, insisted that each work fulfill two criteria: the plot "must be *admirable*, and it must be *probable*."¹⁴ It was not enough to fashion a delightful plot; as the French critic René Rapin argues in the spirit of Aristotle, readers are more powerfully affected if the events presented are also believable.¹⁵ Thus, Addison, in keeping with neoclassical principles, praises Milton's work for the most part, and reserves his strongest objections for Milton's depiction of Sin and Death and the Limbo of Vanity. Sin is famously depicted as a woman "to the waste, and fair / But ended foul in many a scaly fould / ... About her middle round / A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd" (2.650–54). Passages such as these, Addison writes, "are astonishing, but not credible; the reader cannot so far impose upon himself to see a possibility in them; they are the descriptions of dreams and shadows, not of things or persons."¹⁶ Addison rejects these representations as inappropriate to the classical epic; in his own words, these fantastical images "favor of the spirit of *Spenser* and *Ariosto* [rather] than of *Homer* and *Virgil*."¹⁷ His aversion to these more fanciful depictions accords with the taste of neoclassical critics like Rapin, who dismissed the "visions, enchantments, and prodigious adventures [of poets like Ariosto as] the vain *imagination*s of a sick brain [to be] pitied by all men of *sense*, because they have no color of likelihood. The same judgment must be pronounc'd of the other *Italian* and *Spanish* poets, who suffer their wits to ramble in the romantic way: 'tis too great an honor to call them poets, for they are for the most part but rimesters."¹⁸

Addison's criticism of Milton reflects a broader concern among neoclassical critics with generic integrity, and a particularly deep investment in defending the dignified form of the classical epic from the corruptions of the epic romance.¹⁹

For Addison, however, the classical principles decline in power as critical tools over the course of his essays. Aristotle in the *Poetics* enjoins epic poets to avoid lengthy narrative asides and digressive self-references, and commends Homer for being "the only poet who rightly appreciates the part he should take himself." "The poet," he writes, "should speak as little as possible in his own person, for it is not this that makes him an imitator."²⁰ Addison, in turn, also takes such nonmimetic divagations as evidence of poor poetic judgment, and offers up Lucan's negative example: "*Lucan*," he writes disapprovingly, "was an injudicious poet [who] lets drop his story very frequently for the sake of unnecessary digressions." Milton too, Addison continues, lacks Homeric self-restraint and exposes himself to the same charges: "*Milton's* complaint of his blindness, his panegyrick on marriage, his reflections on *Adam* and *Eve's* going naked, of the angels eating, and several other passages in his poem, are liable to the same exception [of injudiciousness]." Ultimately, however, Addison recognizes that Milton excels despite, and even because of, his transgression of the classical guidelines. "I must confess," he writes, "there is so great a beauty in these digressions, that I would not wish them out of his poem."²¹ Addison begins the critical series by drawing upon the classical framework of criticism to prove the merits of *Paradise Lost*, but discards these evaluative standards as they seem increasingly unsuited for arriving at a fair judgment. "Our language," Addison famously wrote, "sunk under [Milton], and was unequal to that greatness of soul, which furnished him with such glorious conceptions." Classical criticism, too, was arguably unequal to the task of measuring his merits.

Addison's efforts are fascinating for the extent to which he relies on classical criticism to prove Milton's genius, while simultaneously demonstrating an awareness that such principles do no justice to what Empson would later identify as the "delicacy and subtlety" of Milton's style.²² By the close of the series, Addison

privileges his own aesthetic sense as a means of specifying the poem's merits. He praises Milton's portrayal of Adam's first waking moments, and explains that these "wonderful incidents... have in them all the beauties of novelty, at the same time that they have all the graces of nature.... In a word, though they are natural they are not obvious, which is the true character of all fine writing."²³ Addison never explicitly states that Milton transcends the constraints of classical criticism. As he proceeds, though, he devises a much more loosely formulated concept of the "beauties" of *Paradise Lost*—essentially, his own favorite passages—to extol its virtues. The insights of Irving Howe into twentieth century literary criticism apply equally well to Addison's time in the eighteenth century when the English critical enterprise was beginning: "Criticism became the vehicle through which a cultivated elite... exercised its powers of perception.... The critic became the guardian of taste, a priest of values, a protector of the undefiled word. And in some ways he seemed even more accessible to the audience than the poet or novelist, for the critic talked directly about the problems which the poet or novelist presented imaginatively."²⁴ Addison's critical horizons, of course, lie beyond Milton's poem, for the series of judgments he passes on *Paradise Lost* are also to be read more generally as models for helping readers to develop discriminating literary palates. As Addison directs readers to admire the delicacy and subtlety of the depictions in *Paradise Lost*, however, Homer and Virgil diminish in importance as exemplars, and Milton's poem rises to become a model of tasteful writing on its own merits.

Though Addison's commentary reveals a growing awareness of the limitations of traditional benchmarks, Richard Bentley, in his infamous edition of *Paradise Lost*, takes a rather different view. By the time his emendations were published in 1732, Bentley had secured a reputation as the foremost classicist of his age. A century and a half later his achievements would still inspire the poet A. E. Housman to praise him as "the greatest scholar that England or perhaps that Europe ever bred."²⁵ "Conjectural criticism," Dr. Johnson once remarked, "demands more than humanity

possesses"; Bentley, it seems, possessed more of those requisite abilities than most.²⁶ Bentley's keen intuition and extraordinary knowledge of the classics allowed him to restore long-corrupted passages of classical manuscripts. When he finally turned his critical eye to *Paradise Lost*, he approached it with the same, although in this case somewhat disingenuous, desire to restore authenticity, and proposed more than 800 changes to Milton's text on the basis of a dubious claim that copyists and editors corrupted the text.²⁷ Bentley's edition is now often dismissed as a strange outlier in the history of literary criticism—a monument of intellectual snobbery, yet Bentley employs essentially the same standards of evaluation used by Addison. But where Addison directs our gaze upward to the pillar of classical standards in order to show how *Paradise Lost* rises to a comparable stature, Bentley uses his classical taste as the straightedge against which every metrical foot of Milton's poem is measured for its quality of craftsmanship. Where the text conflicts with Bentley's sense of the classical style, the text is modified.

According to Aristotle in the *Poetics*, critics can justly censure texts on the basis of five criteria, of which one of the most interesting is a concept that has been translated as "artistic correctness."²⁸ Though Aristotle leaves this idea vaguely defined, Bentley asserts a very definite sense of this artistic propriety based on his understanding of the classical tradition. An example from book 4 illustrates the remarkably specific nature of Bentley's aesthetic sense. Milton, in giving us a first glimpse of the lovely pair, pauses to dwell on Adam's majestic features:

[His] fair large Front and Eye sublime declar'd
 Absolute rule; and Hyacinthin Locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad. (4.300–03)

Bentley's comments show the extent to which he reads Milton with parallels to the ancient poets in mind. "*Broad shoulders*," he notes approvingly, "are always assign'd to the antient heroes; in *Homer* they have εὐρέας ὤμους, in *Virgil*, *latos humeros*."²⁹ Milton's portrayal of Adam's broad shoulders is appropriate, since the

first man in all his perfection should embody ideal conceptions of masculine beauty. Bentley goes on, however, to voice disapproval of what he sees as an oversight: "I wonder," he writes, "that Milton has given no indication that Adam has a beard; nor the least down or blossom on his chin, the first access to manhood; which the *Greek* and *Latin* poets dwell on, as the principal part of manly beauty" (IV.303). The authority Bentley accords to the ancient poets is remarkable. Instead of suggesting that the classical portrayals of beauty are worthy of emulation as Addison might, Bentley makes them the very standard from which the epic poet deviates only in error.

Bentley likewise objects to the description of Eve in book 8 and rewrites it to conform to classical tradition. Adam rapturously reports to Raphael that "to consummate all, / Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat / Build in her *loveliest* and create an awe / About her as a guard angelic placed" (XIII.556–59; Bentley's italics). Bentley finds this description—especially the use of the phrase "her loveliest"—absurd. ("In her *loveliest*?" he bursts out incredulously. "Pray what?") He asserts that Milton actually intended to write, "Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat / Build in her *FORHEAD*, and create an awe" (VII.557–58). Bentley correctly identifies what the modern reader finds strange about the diction, for it is indeed unclear how exactly this phrase should be interpreted. Is "her loveliest" a noun referring to Eve in a manner comparable to the use of "my dearest" or "her highness?" Is it an adverb? If so, why should it be related to the verb "build"? Bentley perceives this difficulty but fails to examine carefully the context in which the passage appears. Adam, in the course of his discussion with Raphael, is describing an internal conflict: he "understand[s], in the prime end / Of Nature [Eve to be] th'inferior; [both] in the mind / And inward Faculties" (8.540–42). He confesses, though, that her physical beauty so overwhelms him that in her presence, "what she wills to do or say, / Seems wisest, vertuousest, discreetest, best" (8.549–50). The use of "loveliest" in Bentley's contested line clearly echoes these earlier superlatives.

Bentley fails to grasp the subtle way in which Milton's diction participates in the poem's larger reflections upon external beauty

and its authority. Eve, upon being created, flees from Adam, who seems “less faire,” before God leads her to see “how beauty is excelled by manly grace / And wisdom, which alone is truly fair” (4.478, 490–91). Adam inherently differs from his beautiful wife in that his excellence is primarily manifested through his noble conduct and intellectual strength. That “greatness of mind and nobleness their seat / Build in [Eve] loveliest” is troubling, then: Adam is overcome by a sense that the masculine stronghold of wisdom and magnanimity is best held by Eve instead. The verbal ambiguity that Bentley detects furthermore reflects the suspiciously circular turn of Adam’s logic. Wisdom and majesty, he wants to say, are most attractively displayed in Eve’s person—perhaps, crucially enough though, as his language betrays, because Eve is loveliest of all to begin with. Raphael must reprimand Adam for such a comparison, urging him to “weigh with her thy self; / Then value” (8.570–71).

Such a reading of the passage is lost on Bentley, however, and he argues instead for a reference to the forehead. As he explains it, “greatness, nobleness, authority, awe, are by all *Greek* and *Latin* poets plac’d in the *forehead*” (VIII.557–58). Bentley, given his immense learning, is probably right with regards to the practice of the ancient poets, but his accuracy in the matter is beside the point. What is important to note here is the way he approaches reading: upon encountering a portion of the text that seems insufficiently lucid, he relies on his classicist knowledge to dictate how it should read instead. This insistence on an Aristotelian “artistic correctness” seems absurd, though again, it is significant to recognize that Addison relies on similar methods when he uses classical principles to evaluate *Paradise Lost*. Both critics, moreover, privilege classical principles over Milton’s own style in at least a few instances. Bentley, however, places full confidence in his own interpretation of classical principles, and as a result, presents us with a markedly different text than the one Milton wrote.

Of the five criteria for criticism laid out in the *Poetics*, three are closely tied with the proper use of logic and reason. Passages of the text that are “impossible”—that is, illogical in reality, “irrational,” or lacking coherent logical cause, and “contradictory,” or logically inconsistent, are all to be condemned according to Aristotle.³⁰

Bentley's application of this classical injunction against the illogical in its most harmless form is rather amusing, but in its more subversive form completely undermines the use of poetic language. Bentley attacks the epic simile used in book 1 to describe Satan as he lies partially submerged in the fiery lake. Satan is compared to the Leviathan who,

Haply slumbring on the *Norway* foam
The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,
Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind
Moors by his side. (1.203–07)

Milton, in the space of five lines, draws for us a vivid picture of the dangers faced by unsuspecting sailors on the open sea, but Bentley focuses in on two problems: "SKALY rind is unlucky here," he writes, "for it falls out contrary, that the whale has no skales, or if he had them; by proportion with other fish, they would be so large, thick, and solid, that no seaman could *fix his anchor* through them." What Milton really intended to say, Bentley tells us, is that the seaman fixed an anchor in the Leviathan's "SKINNY rind" (I.206). Bentley demands a level of realism from the text that seems wholly unnecessary and idiosyncratic; at its core, though, this objection to the word choice can be understood as a rigid and overly scrupulous application of the Aristotelian demand for logical consistency.

One realizes upon reading Bentley that he is engaging in an entirely different activity altogether. It could be said that Bentley is a close reader of a certain type, but one who probes the text and searches for flaws in its logic and aesthetic representations. It is, of course, quite difficult to define the limits to which an aesthetic standard can be considered valid. Bentley's adherence to classical principles, in a sense, could be seen as a purer, more faithful application of the prevailing aesthetic standard to a work that other English critics defended out of nativist biases. Bentley's work, presumptuous as it is, must yet be recognized as a logical, if extreme, extension of the evaluative critical impulse. If, as classical critics claim, poems aspiring to the status of epic forbears must fulfill

certain criteria, then no one would be more qualified to perfect the modern epic than an exacting critic familiar with Aristotelian principles. Bentley called attention to the problem, though he was not the problem itself—instead, as later literary critics recognized, the entire authority of the classical aesthetic either had to be tempered or replaced by a different orientation to reading.

Interpretation

The publication of Bentley's work galvanized the scholars of the literary community, and within two years, valuable commentaries emerged in defense of Milton's text. The writers of these commentaries were less concerned with Bentley's claims of editorial interpolation than with his negative appraisal writ large of *Paradise Lost*. The first of these commentaries, Zachary Pearce's *Review of the Text of the Twelve Books of Milton's "Paradise Lost,"* thus methodically disproves each of Bentley's emendations in turn. Pearce, the vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields at the time of writing, assumes an impressively evenhanded tone in giving due consideration to Bentley's proposed changes before drawing upon his classical and biblical knowledge to prove the authenticity and superiority of Milton's text.³¹ Two years later, Jonathan Richardson partnered with his namesake son to produce a critical work of *Explanatory Notes and Remarks on "Paradise Lost"* that, notwithstanding the occasional note of exuberant admiration, begins to assume a more familiar scholarly, interpretative approach to the work.³²

One of the most salient characteristics of Pearce's and the Richardsons' commentaries is the deferential tone of the commentators toward the poet and text. For example, in book 5, Raphael describes to Adam the bliss of heavenly repast, where all partakers are "secure / Of surfet where full measure onely bounds / Excess" (5.638–40). Bentley, in keeping with the classicist emphasis upon clarity and intelligibility, improves Milton's diction. "What the import of *only bounds excess*, is difficult to conceive," he writes disapprovingly, before replacing the offending phrase with "NEVER KNOWS excess" (V.638). Pearce, on the other hand, defends Milton's

word choice by exploring the significance of the lines. "The meaning of the expression may be," he suggests, that "full measure has no other effect than to set bounds to excess; and not, as it happens often among men, to tempt to it."³³ "Or rather," he proposes upon further consideration, "the word *only* may belong to full *measure*, and the sense may be this, where excess is not restrain'd and prevented by want, nor by any quantity less than full measure" (5.638). Pearce shows respect for Milton's diction by preserving and justifying his creative use of language; he strives, furthermore, to understand all possible meanings that could be extracted from a potentially ambiguous phrase. His deference to the text is even mirrored in his use of language: "The meaning of the expression *may* be," Pearce ventures to suggest, "or rather, the word...*may* belong to...and the sense *may* be this" (5.639; italics mine). This critical humility—the reluctance not only to intervene in the text but also to legislate a single, definitive interpretation—places Pearce in a strikingly different relationship to the poem.

A backlash against Bentley's heavy-handed approach surely accounts at least in part for the rise of the critical humility that Pearce and the Richardsons exhibit. Even if Bentley's brazen attack on *Paradise Lost* served as an impetus for change, however, it does not explain the choice of this divergent form of criticism with its distinctive conceptual foundations. The key to understanding the central influences here may lie in Pearce's identity: he was a prominent clergyman, and more importantly for our purposes, a biblical commentator.³⁴ Scriptural exegesis since the Renaissance had served as the mode of scholarship par excellence for theologians as well as other influential thinkers.³⁵ Leading scholars of seventeenth century Europe, including Hugo Grotius and Daniel Heinsius, weighed in on theological issues from the margins of their own scriptural commentaries, and Milton himself would resort in *Tetrachordon* (March 1645) to arguing in favor of divorce through biblical exposition. Alongside the erudite and polemical works, a tradition of vernacular homiletic commentary existed as well. Such works would have been familiar to a broader base of English Protestant readers since they supplied explicatory and hortative support without the

burden of more esoteric debates.³⁶ It was common for the biblical scholars behind these commentaries to express a sense of inadequacy to the task, and to assume a position of humility and deference to the text. In one well-known set of seventeenth century biblical annotations, the author, Henry Ainsworth, expresses a typical attitude toward his work: "But forasmuch as my portion is small, in the knowledge of holy things; let the godly reader try what I set downe, and not accept it, because I say it: and let the learned be provoked unto more large and fruitfull labours in this kinde."³⁷ Ainsworth emphasizes the limitations of his endeavor and urges readers to see his work as only part of a larger effort to advance biblical scholarship and interpretation in general.

More than a century earlier, the Reformation leader Martin Luther had urged readers of Genesis to approach the text from a similarly deferential perspective. In his discussion of the Creation account, he effectively advises readers to refrain from reading as Bentley did: "If we cannot attain unto a comprehension of the reason [for the interval of six days for Creation]...let us remain scholars, and leave all the preceptorship to the Holy Spirit!"³⁸ For Luther, the author of the text implicitly assumes the position of instructor, and readers must strive to learn the text's lessons while recognizing their own inherent limitations as students and scholars. Readers are in no position to insist upon a particular interpretation of the text as final; at best, they can venture provisional readings. When Matthew Poole comes across Genesis 3:1 in his commentary (1683), he attempts to explain what the biblical author means in identifying the serpent as "more subtil than any beast of the field":

But this text *may* and *seems* to be understood not of the whole kind of serpent; but of this individual, or particular serpent [who] acted...by the Devil.... There *seems* indeed to be an allusion here to the natural subtilty of all serpents, and the sense of the sacred Penman *may seem* to be this, as if he said, the serpent, indeed in itself is a subtil creature...but howsoever this be in other serpents, it is certain that this serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field.³⁹

Pearce works within this tradition of qualifying his interpretations as educated conjectures and adopts a similarly tentative tone. The Protestant approach to biblical annotations corresponds with Pearce's preference for providing commentary that aims to be heuristic rather than dogmatic.

In the experience of Milton's Protestant readers, the demand for individual involvement in the act of reading is relatively high. All believers, after all, are expected to take an active role in understanding the Scriptures, though they might contain, as the apostle Peter himself writes, "some things hard to be understood" (2 Pet. 3:16 AV). From such a perspective, readers are expected to persevere despite difficulty in the quest for comprehension.⁴⁰ A challenging text is problematic from Bentley's point of view but completely acceptable and even evocative of divine authorship to later commentators viewing Milton's epic through the lens of biblical hermeneutics. Readers are charged with the task of making sense of the author's aesthetic choices—even those more obscurely motivated ones. Thus, the Richardsons, in dealing with the passage that lists inhabitants of the Paradise of Fools, defend Milton's choice to switch abruptly from naming specific classical figures (Empedocles, Cleombrotus) to more general groups, including "Eremites and Friars" (3.474). "'Tis his concise manner," they write in response to Bentley's objections, before offering up a challenge that resonates throughout the expository commentaries: "Let the reader do something for himself."⁴¹ Where Bentley finds fault with the poet, Pearce and the Richardsons put the onus on the reader both to make sense of the text on a literal level and to reflect upon possible motives for distinctive authorial decisions. The New Critics two centuries later promote a view of the active close reader that bears strong resemblances to this eighteenth century concept. When Cleanth Brooks writes in *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947) about the requirements placed upon readers by modern poets, his description serves equally well for elucidating the challenge of *Paradise Lost* to eighteenth century readers: "The modern poet has, for better or worse, thrown the weight of the responsibility upon the reader. The reader must be on the alert for shifts of

tone, for ironic statement, for suggestion rather than direct statement....He is further expected to be reasonably well acquainted with the general tradition—literary, political, philosophical, for he is reading a poet who comes at the end of a long tradition and who can hardly be expected to write honestly and with full integrity and yet ignore this fact.”⁴² The eighteenth century critics, like the more recent advocates of close reading, are prepared to understand the activity as a potentially challenging one that requires readers to grapple with complex texts.

The conception of an active reader who can both determine the sense of the text and judge between the opinions of commentators is rooted in the Protestant emphasis on the abilities of all readers of Scripture. Milton himself speaks from this position in *Of Reformation* (May 1641), when he insists that all readers can and should attain an understanding of the Bible irrespective of age, class, gender, or level of schooling: “The scriptures protesting their own plainness and perspicuity, [call] to them to be instructed, not only the wise and learned, but the simple, the poor, the babes, foretelling an extraordinary effusion of God’s Spirit upon every age and sex, attributing to all men, and requiring from them the ability of searching, trying, examining all things, and by the Spirit discerning that which is good” (YP 1:566). In Luther’s writings as well, each and every Protestant believer is accorded a great deal of agency; as he expresses it, “through the Holy Spirit of a special gift from God, anyone who is enlightened concerning himself and his own salvation, judges and discerns with the greatest certainty the dogmas and opinions of all men.”⁴³

This stress on the capability of the early modern lay reader extends beyond Scripture to secular texts as well, and shapes the role of commentaries for readers of *Paradise Lost*. When the Richardsons in book 5 conclude a lengthy exploration of the representation of celestial bodies, they gesture toward a reader who is conceived of as a fellow scholar and equal: “We have offer’d the several ways which occur to us in which the passage may be understood; the reader is at liberty to make use of any he likes best. Or if he is not yet satisfy’d, he may perhaps find a better; in that

case we shall be thankful, if he is so good as to communicate it to us" (5.175). The attitude of critical humility corresponds with a heightened sense of the reader's ability. As seen before, readers are expected to shoulder the largest part of the burden of making sense of the text. Where further assistance is required, readers are to look with a discerning eye upon commentaries to determine whether the suggestions offered therein may be considered valid, and to produce better readings if they exist.⁴⁴ Twentieth century New Critics resurrect this relationship between the commentator and the reader in the relationship of critic and close reader. As Wimsatt expresses it, "the critic is...[an] explicator of meanings. His readers, if they are alert, will not be content to take what he says at testimony, but will scrutinize it as teaching."⁴⁵ With the proper level of attention, the fit reader in Wimsatt's conception, as well as the one imagined by Pearce and the Richardsons, is capable of correctly evaluating the critical pronouncements of even highly qualified scholars.

For Protestants, the Scriptures are accessible to all, but not without the diligent exercise of individual effort and the aid of the Holy Spirit. As Milton notes, the act of reading Scripture necessarily involves "searching, trying, [and] examining all things" (YP 1:566). This textual probing is a form of close reading that might be stretched to encompass Bentley's detail-oriented criticism, but the crucial difference that distinguishes the latter critics is their reliance upon a scholarly approach. This scholarly focus, which places an emphasis upon determining the meaning of the text, differs from a criticism primarily concerned with aesthetic or experiential issues. The expository critics build instead upon a repository of knowledge to allow readers to rise to Milton's level in terms of literary scholarship, linguistic knowledge, and scientific awareness. Consider, for example, the possible responses to Milton's imaginative description of the Edenic guards closing in around Satan in the garden:

th' Angelic Squadron bright
Turnd fierie red, sharpening in mooned hornes
Thir Phalanx, and began to hemm him round

With ported Spears, as thick as when a field
 Of *Ceres* ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded Grove of ears, which way the wind
 Swayes them; the careful Plowman doubting stands
 Least on the threshing floore his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. (4.977–85)

Bentley is incensed by the mixed metaphor. He approves of the first portion in which the phalanx is “compar’d to a crop of ripe wheat, which wav’d with a gentle wind bend all their heads the same way,” but protests against the phantom editor who “deserts the notion” and unnecessarily contributes “a tempest, and frightens the husbandman with the loss of all his grain” (IV.983). “What an injury is this to the prior comparison?” Bentley demands, exasperated. “Where’s the least similitude?” (IV.983). The Richardsons have none of the same objections. They calmly explain that the angels’ spears are “ported” because they are “held sloping toward the enemy, the right hand before, and the other behind [in] a defensive posture, ready also to attack” (IV.980). *Ceres*, they go on to remind the reader, is the goddess of corn. The Richardsons reroute the discussion of aesthetic propriety by taking it as the very premise for interpretation, and turn to focus instead on advancing the reader’s comprehension.

Bentley may disapprove of the use of mixed metaphors, but the expository critics work within a tradition of biblical commentators who have long accepted mixed metaphors in Scripture without questioning their aesthetic merit. Biblical poetry abounds in mixed metaphors; think, for example of the injunction in Psalm 34 to “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Ps. 34:8 AV). Another Davidic psalm uses richly varied imagery to depict the sun: the rising sun “is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race” (Ps. 19:5 AV). In his biblical *Annotations*, Poole offers an interpretation of these lines: the sun is both like the groom in that it is “gloriously adorned with lights as with a beautiful garment, and [smiles] upon the lower world with a pleasant countenance”; it furthermore resembles the athletic champion who has “rested all night, and break[s] forth

as it were on a sudden...promising to himself victory...[and setting] upon his work with great pleasure."⁴⁶ Had Poole been a literary critic with rigidly classicist tastes, he could have noted that neither metaphor adequately conveys the sun's majesty, and that each metaphor lacks a logical relationship to the other. Instead, aesthetic discussion is entirely subjugated to an exploration of the psalmist's intended meaning. In a similar passage from *Paradise Lost*, Milton borrows from the imagery of the psalm to depict the "glorious Lamp / Regent of Day and all th'Horizon round / Invested with bright Rayes, jocond to run / His Longitude through Heav'n's high rode" (7.370–73). The Richardsons' corresponding note similarly focuses on interpretation of intent: "What Milton means to say here," the Richardsons explain, is "very poetically...[to] tell us that at the sun's first appearance the dawning of that day was in joy, and all the delights of the sweetest season were in their utmost perfection" (8.373). The established framework of biblical hermeneutics thus provides a model for textual criticism that foregrounds the interpretation of poetic language against a tacit respect for its aesthetic achievement.

In another move that foreshadows the close readings of New Critics and Miltonists like Empson and Ricks, early commentators pay a great deal of attention not only to Milton's poetic use of language, but to his diction more generally as they offer probing examinations of etymological significance. In one instance from book 7, the celestial inhabitants hail the return of their king, praising him as "greater now in [His] return / Than from the Giant Angels" (7.604–05). The Richardsons extract a great deal of significance from the single word "giant" by looking beyond the bounds of the English language. "The Hebrew word *Gibbor* rendred giant by the *Septuagint* signifies a proud, fierce, and aspiring temper," they explain, "His readers having it in their thoughts would be assisted by that idea to conceive better of his story" (7.605). Readers familiar with Milton's style could argue that Milton's use of Latinate, Hebraic, and Grecian phrases in his verse naturally gives rise to this etymological commentary.⁴⁷ The learned Richardsons possess a wealth of literary and linguistic knowledge that allows them

to release what Ricks would call the “enhancing suggestions [of meaning] from the burial-places of memory,”⁴⁸ but it does not then follow that such etymological discoveries would be considered legitimate scholarship and literary criticism. Addison in his essays, after all, was not terribly preoccupied with individual words, and Bentley was only so when he detected an instance of improper usage.

Again, biblical commentaries are crucial to understanding the origins and acceptance of this distinctive element of criticism. Although historians often associate the rise of philological scholarship with the restoration of classical texts, biblical scholars initially developed the discipline as a means of working with different scriptural manuscripts.⁴⁹ Because these scholars studied a text that had been translated out of Hebrew and Greek and into Latin and English, knowledge of the original languages greatly contributed to a more accurate understanding of the biblical authors’ original intent. The literal sense of one Greek word might be successfully translated into English without losing its general meaning, though richer nuances of the phrase could be discerned by returning to the original Greek. Take, for instance, the Authorized Version’s translation of the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus urges his disciples to “be reconciled to thy brother [before going to] offer thy gift [to God]” (5:24). In his *Annotations on the New Testament* (1659), Henry Hammond provides a fuller understanding of what the reconciliation entails by referring to the active register of the original word: in Greek, the word translated “reconciles” is, “literally, *think thou well, or be friends with thine adversary*, [and] clearly signifies *make, or get him, to be friends with thee*” (Mark 14:54).⁵⁰ According to this reading of Scripture, even the most basic units of text—individual words—are replete with meaning. The commentators on *Paradise Lost*, as readers familiar with biblical scholarship, were prepared to encounter words and phrases in English that took on additional meaning when traced back to earlier linguistic roots. Twentieth century critics like Empson have recognized the eighteenth century annotators’ contributions in this area as excellent examples of close reading, and have built directly upon their

methods. The form of the commentary restricted interpretation to smaller units of analysis, but in doing so, opened up enormous possibilities for understanding texts in their entirety; the methods of verbal analysis used by Empson and Ricks function in much the same way. The eighteenth century commentators grasped the significance of the “potentialities of language” that later New Critics like Brooks so greatly valued.⁵¹

Conclusion

We in the academy often take it for granted that it would be misguided to impose a uniform set of aesthetic expectations on all literary works, preferring instead to imagine that our aesthetic judgments are the result of objective efforts to describe and interpret the structure and meaning of literary texts on their own terms. Literary studies, however, has not always been thus, and a reflection upon the activities of Bentley and the neoclassical critics reminds us that the history of literary criticism might have developed quite differently if critics like Pearce and the Richardsons had not pioneered a different protocol of reading.

It would scarcely be an overstatement to say that the application of the methods of biblical exegesis to *Paradise Lost* in the early eighteenth century changed the way we read today. It is no accident that *Paradise Lost* played this important role. It took the appearance of a modern, vernacular work whose power seemed to rival that of the classics to encourage readers to conceive of English literature as a body of work that deserved the reverence previously reserved for the ancients. And it took a poem “hid...by its own luster,”⁵² as the Richardsons described it, to elicit all the interpretive energies previously reserved for sacred texts.

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Notes to Yu, "From Judgment to Interpretation"

I would like to thank Blair Hoxby for the guidance that allowed this article to take shape.

1. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Barbara Lewalski (Oxford, 2007), 9.214–25; cited hereafter by book and line number in text.

2. Christopher Ricks, *Milton's Grand Style* (Oxford, 1963), 146.

3. John Guillory, *Literary Study in the Age of Professionalism*, forthcoming. I am grateful for access to an early version of Guillory's manuscript; the chapter entitled "The Origins of Close Reading: I. A. Richards and William Empson" provides a fuller account of the brief outline I attempt here. See also Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis, 1996), 37.

4. W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley, *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (Lexington, Ky., 1954), 18, 339.

5. Guillory, *Literary Study in the Age of Professionalism*, forthcoming.

6. I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism* (London, 1929). From his review of a series of undergraduate responses to poetry, Richards concludes that "a large proportion of average-to-good...readers of poetry frequently and repeatedly *fail to understand it*, both as a statement and as an expression...[Readers of poetry consistently] misapprehend its feeling, its tone, and its intention" (12).

7. The specificities of the historical context ensured the success of New Criticism in American universities: as Eagleton points out, it provided a sensible method for teaching the growing number

of undergraduates who were arriving with different levels of literary knowledge. Moreover, the academic community found the seeming silence of close reading on political matters appropriate to the cold war climate (*Literary Theory*, 43).

8. Eagleton argues that the New Critics' exclusion of historical context and political concerns from textual analysis effectively reduced criticism into "a recipe for political inertia, and thus for submission to the political status quo" (*Literary Theory*, 43).

9. William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (New York, 1935), 149–92. Empson insists that the strange ambiguities Bentley attempts to amend are not errors but telling signs of Milton's ambivalence toward the appeals of the Christian paradise.

10. Empson's most commendatory line comes upon reading Pearce's interpretation of the construction of Pandemonium. Where Satan and the fallen angels "op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound / And dig'd out ribs of Gold," Pearce sees an allusion to the creation of Eve (1.689–90). "I call this a profound piece of criticism," Empson writes (*Some Versions of Pastoral*, 176).

11. David Marshall, "Shaftesbury and Addison: Criticism and the Public Taste," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols., ed. H. B. Nisbet and Claude Rawson (Cambridge, 1997), 4:633.

12. René Le Bossu, *Treatise of the Epick Poem...Made English from the French...by W. J.* (London, 1719), 2. The original treatise in French was published in 1675.

13. Though *On the Sublime* was first translated into English in 1652, Longinus's influence is mainly felt later in the eighteenth century. Addison may have been familiar with Nicholas Boileau-Despréaux's French translation (1674). For the distinctively English assimilation of classical principles, see Colin Burrow, "Combative Criticism: Jonson, Milton, and Classical Literary Criticism in England," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols., ed. Glyn P. Norton (Cambridge, 1999), 3:487–99.

14. René Rapin, *Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie* (London, 1674), 31. "Admirable" can be understood in the sense of marvelous or wonderful. It is difficult to define exactly what can be considered "probable" according to Aristotle's *Poetics*, but this idea of "probable" should not be confused with the realism of the novel. Stephen Halliwell, "Aristotle's Poetics," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols., ed. George A. Kennedy (Cambridge, 1989), believes that Aristotle likely meant that "the denouements of plots should issue from the plot as such, and not from a *deus ex machina*.... The *deus ex machina* should be employed for events

outside the drama—preceding events beyond human knowledge, or subsequent events requiring prediction and announcement ...there should be nothing irrational in the events; if there is, it should lie outside the play" (1:15).

15. Rapin, *Reflections*, 15, 32.

16. Joseph Addison, no. 315 (Mar. 1, 1712), *The Spectator*, 5 vols., ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford, 1965), 3:145–46.

17. *Ibid.*, 3:145–46.

18. Rapin, *Reflections*, 34.

19. A contested division dating back to the sixteenth century, when Italian epic theorists attempted to define the proper bounds of epic as a genre in the wake of the popular success of such romances as Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*.

20. Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher, *The Internet Classics Archive*, available at classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.1.1.html. See also George Whalley's translation of *Poetics* (Montreal, 1997), 1462a1–7.

21. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 297 (Feb. 9, 1712), 3:61.

22. Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral*, 22. Compare with Leopold Damrosch Jr., "The Significance of Addison's Criticism," *SEL* 19, no. 3 (1979): 421–30. Damrosch places a stronger emphasis upon Addison's independence from the classical critics.

23. Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 345 (Apr. 5, 1712), 3:284.

24. Irving Howe, "Modern Criticism: Privileges and Perils," in *Modern Literary Criticism: An Anthology*, ed. Irving Howe (Boston, 1958), 8–9. Though New Criticism in general privileges interpretation over judgment, the latter component, as Howe recognizes, is never altogether absent. New Criticism implicitly generates new standards of judgment. T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis, for example, frowned upon what they took to be Milton's imprecise grandiloquence on the grounds that it could not withstand the scrutiny of close reading.

25. A. E. Housman, *Introductory Lecture* (1892), in *Selected Prose*, ed. John Carter (Cambridge, 1961), 12.

26. Samuel Johnson, preface to *The Plays of William Shakespeare*, in *The Major Works*, ed. Donald Greene (Oxford, 1984), 443.

27. Margaret Kean, *John Milton's "Paradise Lost": A Sourcebook* (New York, 2005), 45.

28. Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Butcher; cf. Whalley translation, 1461b25.

29. Richard Bentley, *Milton's Paradise Lost: A New Edition* (London, 1732), IV.303. I have drawn from this edition throughout for Bentley's emendations; subsequent citations will be found in the text with reference to book and line number. The book number is printed

as a roman numeral in keeping with Bentley's own practice to distinguish his comments from Milton's text.

30. Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Whalley, 1461b23–26.

31. For other early commentators, see Ants Oras, *Milton's Editors and Commentators from Patrick Hume to Henry John Todd (1695–1801): A Study in Critical Views and Methods* (Tartu, Estonia, 1929) and John T. Shawcross, ed., *Milton: The Critical Heritage* (New York, 1970).

32. I have omitted Patrick Hume, Milton's earliest annotator, from this discussion; see Patrick Hume, *Annotations on Milton's "Paradise Lost"* (London, 1695). It is sufficient to recognize that Pearce and the Richardsons returned to and developed a form of exegetical criticism for reading *Paradise Lost* first used by Hume but subsequently displaced by the authority of neoclassical perspectives in the early eighteenth century.

33. Zachary Pearce, *A Review of the Text of Milton's "Paradise Lost," in which the Chief of Dr. Bentley's Emendations are Consider'd* (London, 1732), 5.638; hereafter cited in the text.

34. His commentary was published posthumously in 1777. See Zachary Pearce, *A Commentary with Notes on the Four Evangelists and the Acts* (London, 1777). For further reading, see Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing* (Cambridge, 1997), 78. Walsh lays the groundwork for this argument much more thoroughly than I have been able to do. He offers extensive support for the view that the relationship of biblical scholars to Holy Scripture was eventually transposed to critics of secular scriptures.

35. Arnold Williams, preface to *Tetrachordon*, in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, 8 vols., ed. Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven, 1953–82), 2:572; hereafter cited as YP.

36. This distinction between English homiletic commentaries and other forms is worth drawing, even after taking into account the similarities among medieval and Latin continental commentaries. The English Protestant commentaries, either written in or translated into English, were done so for those of what one commentary calls "vulgar capacities." Thus, the annotations provided include neither the concatenation of patristic viewpoints from Catholic exegetical works nor the lengthy textual and philological passages of more technically inclined commentaries. For a different view regarding the uniqueness of these commentaries, see Richard A. Muller's introduction in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1996), 1–16. Muller, with an eye toward the text-critical approaches of modern biblical interpretation, emphasizes the continuity of Renaissance with medieval exegesis.

37. Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the Five Bookes of Moses; the Book of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs, or Canticles* (London, 1627), v.

38. Martin Luther, *The Creation: A Commentary on the First Five Chapters of the Book of Genesis*, trans. Henry Cole (Edinburgh, 1858), 25. Luther, of course, is more specifically speaking against the practice of layering more creative, allegorical interpretations upon the text to expand its meaning; such interpretations effectively constitute auxiliary narratives that make preceptors out of interpreters.

39. Matthew Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*, 2 vols. (London, 1683–96), 1, Gen. 3:1; italics mine.

40. Scholars from Balachandra Rajan and Stanley Fish onward have been fascinated with Milton's relationship to reading and the reader, and many have approached the topic through close readings of his poetry and prose. Dayton Haskin, *Milton's Burden of Interpretation* (Philadelphia, 2004) chronicles Milton's personal history of biblical interpretation, and Sharon Achinstein, *Milton and the Revolutionary Reader* (Princeton, N.J., 1994) argues that Milton attempts to shape a politically literate citizenry.

41. Jonathan Richardson, father and son, *Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton's "Paradise Lost"* (London, 1734), 3.474.

42. Cleanth Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry* (San Diego, 1975), 76.

43. Luther, *The Creation*, 156.

44. Milton himself would insist in *Areopagitica* upon the centrality of the individual in uncovering truth: "A man may be a heretick in the truth; and if he believe things only because his Pastor sayes so . . . without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds, becomes his heresie" (YP 2:543).

45. Wimsatt and Beardsley, *The Verbal Icon*, 34.

46. Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*, 2, Ps. 19:5.

47. There is some basis for this usage according to classical thought as well. Aristotle in the *Poetics* advocated the use of "language . . . [that] is elevated and remote from the vulgar idiom which employs unusual words. By unusual I mean foreign, metaphorical, extended—all, in short that are not common words. . . . These will raise the language above the vulgar idiom." See the translation by Richard Janko (Indianapolis, 1987), 1458a22–24, 32–33; cf. also Twining's translation (London, 1947).

48. Ricks, *Milton's Grand Style*, 109.

49. Kevin Sharpe, "Reading Revelations: Prophecy, Hermeneutics and Politics in Early Modern Britain," in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge, 2003), 123.

50. Henry Hammond, *A Paraphrase, and Annotations upon all the Books of the New Testament* (London, 1653), 194.

51. Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, 74.

52. Richardsons, *Explanatory Notes*, clxxxi.